

UNITED NATIONS



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**PRESS RELEASE**

**UNAMSIL HELICOPTER CRASH**

*Freetown* – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General in Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago, regrets to inform that a United Nations helicopter crashed into a hillside earlier today. The aircraft was on a scheduled flight from Hastings to Yengema in eastern Sierra Leone when all contact with it was lost at 9.17 a.m. According to the Air Operations Centre, an MI8-MTV -- UNO 091 -- took off from Freetown with 21 passengers along with 3 crew members on board after 8 this morning. Rescue operations comprising three aircraft were dispatched at 10.07 a.m.

At 11.27 a.m. rescuers spotted the burning aircraft from the air approximately 5 minutes from Yengema. Military personnel later confirmed that there were no survivors.

The area has been secured and investigations are ongoing.