



PRESS RELEASE

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MILOBS SUPERVISE RSLAF AND SLP MANO RIVER JOINT PATROL EXERCISE

Freetown, Sierra Leone – Military Observers (MILOBS) of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) yesterday supervised a joint patrol exercise conducted by the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) at Gendema, along the Mano River that marks the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia to the south.

The patrol was conducted according to a scenario in which Sierra Leone forces would be able to provide adequate security along the borders in the absence of UN peacekeepers, while at the same time trying to man the 43 illegal crossing-points and one legal crossing point on the Mano River.

About a dozen RSLAF personnel and half a dozen SLPs, in two vehicles, were involved in the whole exercise that lasted for four hours. Along the Mano River, a mock exercise in which a canoe coming from neighbouring Liberia with three people was stopped by the Sierra Leonean security agencies and its occupants asked their mission to Sierra Leone. Villagers who witnessed the scenario were told the essence of the patrol.

Before the patrol, Superintendent of Police of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) at Gendema, Karifa Keita disclosed that the border was calm and quiet and that the SLP were now embarking on sensitising the local population about policing. He also said they were having good relationship with the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) personnel on the Liberian side of the border.

In his briefing, Captain Milton Bangura of the RSLAF said that the armed forces were now conducting joint patrols with the SLP, to cement the relationship between both security agencies and that crime rate in the area was low.

MILOBS present were Lieutenant Colonel Rupert Robson, Lieutenant Colonel Aggrey Nyambe, Lieutenant Colonel Aru, Major Brett Subritzky and Capt. Patrick Hanson. The exercise was also witnessed by Jennifer Hazen from UNAMSIL's Political Affairs and staff of the Public Information Section.

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