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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **SRSG COMMISSIONS SCHOOL AT LAKKA AND HOSPITAL BLOCK MILITARY HOSPITAL**

*Freetown* – Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago, yesterday commissioned a six-classroom building for the Sierra Leone Bangladeshi Friendship Primary School at Lakka village outside Freetown, and two refurbished blocks for the Accident and Emergency Department, and the Surgical and Laboratory Department at the 34 Military Hospital for the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) at Wilberforce, Freetown.

Both projects were implemented by the Bangladeshi contingent serving with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), under the Quick Impact Project supervised by the Civil Affairs Section of the Mission, and funded by the UNAMSIL Trust Fund.

Commissioning the school block, Ambassador Mwakawago said it was a testimony to the commitment of UNAMSIL in consolidating peace in the country. “A literate population guarantees growth and development,” he said, adding that education was the right of every child.

The Lakka village headman, Mustapha Bendu, praised UNAMSIL “for not only bringing peace back to Sierra Leone, but also helping rebuild its capacity”. A point underscored by the Acting Inspector of Schools, Western Area, Augustine Alpha, who said the school would enhance the realization of education, which is a key Millennium Development Goal.

At Wilberforce, Ambassador Mwakawago said the renovation of the two blocks and re-supply of pipe-borne water to the hospital emphasized that good health care for men and women in uniform was essential. However, he lamented the lack of adequate equipment, communication gear and vehicles for the army and assured that UNAMSIL and its partners were working hard to ensure their provision.

Deputy Minister of Defence, Joe Blell, reiterated that a professional army was not only measured by training and equipment but also by the health and other welfare needs of those in service. Other speakers, including the RSLAF Director General of Force Medical Services and the Chief Administrator of the Freetown City Council paid glowing tribute to UNAMSIL, saying its assistance to the country was immeasurable.

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