



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **CAO COMMISSIONS KOIDU SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND**

**Freetown, Sierra Leone** – The newly rehabilitated and constructed Koidu School for the Blind, costing \$14,964 and which will cater for about 86 pupils, was today commissioned by UNAMSIL’s Chief Administrative Officer, Mr. Kiplin Perkins, at Koidu, eastern Sierra Leone.

The project, which is one of UNAMSIL’s Quick Impact Projects (QIPs), was undertaken by the Pakistani Engineers (PAK ENG IV) through the facilitation of UNAMSIL Civil Affairs with the Kono Branch of the local Rokel Commercial Bank donating 17, 964, 340 Leones towards the venture. The entire project originally had three components; first the rehabilitation of an existing structure which is being used as residential accommodation, a dinning house, and lecture halls. The second component is the construction of one block comprising a multipurpose hall, two classrooms and office for the headmaster. The third component is the construction of KVIP toilets.

At the commissioning, Mr. Perkins said the project was significant because it was undertaken to help one vulnerable group in the country. “We shall continue to contribute in our small way to the socio-economic development of this country,” he noted adding that since his arrival in Sierra Leone he noticed that UNAMSIL had engaged in developmental projects by its contingents.

The Chief Administrative Officer congratulated those who came up with the idea to help the blind in Kono and asked educational and local authorities to strive for proper education of every child in their community.

Deputy Education Minister II, Martin S. Banya, stated that his presence at the commissioning was a manifestation of Government’s commitment to those with deformities and told those present that, “it’s the responsibility of everyone to provide for the handicapped.”

The manager of Rokel Commercial Bank in Kono, Conton Sesay, said he was “sure this building and other projects undertaken by the Pakistani contingents will never be forgotten by the people of Kono.” He disclosed that this was not the first project the bank had contributed towards.

Mr. Matthew Gbessay, Head Teacher of the school, described the commissioning as “historic and significant” because it was a dream come true and thanked all those who contributed towards the school’s rehabilitation and construction.

The chairman of the occasion who is also chairman of Kono District Council, Saa Lebbie, said it had been a long time they had been trying to provide facilities for the blind. He thanked UNAMSIL and Rokel Commercial Bank for coming to their aid and prayed that in the near future something would be done to increase the facilities for the blind.

Highlights of the commissioning were an interlude performance by pupils of the school and an inspection of the building and crafts produced by the pupils.