

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNAMSIL)

PRESS RELEASE

Ref No UNAMSIL/PIO/PR251 /2005

SRSG MEETS DELEGATION FROM NEYA CHIEFDOM

Freetown, Sierra Leone, 21 July 2005 – An eighteen-man delegation from the Neya Kankaylain Association, including four women and the current National Security Advisor, Brigadier (rtd) Kelly Conteh, yesterday met with the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago, at his Mammy Yoko office in the capital Freetown, to express their profound gratitude for the role the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) “played in bringing peace, unity and understanding to our chiefdom in particular and Sierra Leone in general.”

Neya Chiefdom is one of the eleven chiefdoms that form the Koinadugu district, northern Sierra Leone. Its people depend on subsistence farming and it is the poorest chiefdom in the country.

In a statement read and handed over to the SRSG, the delegation wished “every man and woman in the Mission, now and before every success in their endeavours” and showed particular “appreciations to the entire Pakistani contingent for having such fine soldiers.”

Responding, Ambassador Mwakawago said the essence of the UN was to establish peace globally but that, “however if you do something that you should do and it is appreciated then you feel very good.” He stated that the message he wanted to give them was that the best gratitude they could show to UNAMSIL was to ensure that peace stayed in their chiefdom.

The SRSG noted that, “if your chiefdom stands for peace and other chiefdoms emulate that, then there will not be any reason for UNAMSIL to stay,” adding that UNAMSIL had been a wonderful guest in their midst but that like any guest the time would come when it would have to go.

Ambassador Mwakawago urged the Paramount Chiefs to give education the highest priority. “With education you can identify the potentialities of your chiefdoms...there is no alternative to education,” he told the delegation which he said he was happy with because it had a representation of women. He promised to share their message to the entire UNAMSIL staff.