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## PRESS RELEASE

### FORCE COMMANDER WELCOMES NIBATT 17

The Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL, Major General Sajjad Akram December 30 visited the Nigerian Battalion 17 (NIBATT17), to welcome them to the mission area. Nibatt 17, with headquarters at Spur Road in Freetown, recently rotated with Nibatt 14.

General Akram told the officers and soldiers that he was impressed with their “gallantry, military professionalism and commitment to duty since their deployment areas are in sensitive locations”.

He advised them to be on their guards and to be pro-active at all times. He recalled the sacrifices that previous Nigerian Battalions made since the days of ECOMOG towards peace and stability of Sierra Leone and enjoined that that tradition must continue.

The deployment of the battalion in Freetown was planned because of the professional commitment and gallantry of the Nigerian soldiers, he said.

The Commanding Officer Nibatt 17, Lieutenant Colonel Steve Ovadje, welcomed the FC and briefed him on the history of the battalion, its operational deployment and the general security situation within areas of responsibility which he said was calm and peaceful.

Lt. Col. Ovadje mentioned that the battalion was responsible for the security of Freetown including providing security for the Presidential Lodge, Special Court, Vice President’s Lodge and the Parliament Building. Its deployments stretch up to Guma Valley and Kalaba town while it regularly goes on routine joint patrols with the Sierra Leone Police, SLP.

Major Gen. Akram reviewed a Quarter Guard mounted in his honour on arrival at the battalion headquarters.

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*UNAMSIL Headquarters, Mammy Yoko, P. O. Box 5, Freetown, Sierra Leone*  
*Tel: 232-22-295-000 Fax: 232-22-295-189*

**MEDIA CONTACTS:**

Chief PIS and Spokesman, Kemal Saiki, Tel. 232-22-295-583 mobile 076-692801 email: [saiki@un.org](mailto:saiki@un.org)  
Editor: Kingsley Lington Ighobor, Tel. 232-22-295294, mobile 076-601686 email: [ighobor@un.org](mailto:ighobor@un.org)

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