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PRESS RELEASE

**SOUTH AFRICAN GOVERNMENT AND UNAMSIL CIVPOL SEND
FOUR SIERRA LEONE POLICE OFFICERS ON TRAINING**

Freetown – Four junior and middle-ranking officers of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) today left Freetown for the Republic of South Africa for a 6-week training in diamond-mining investigation and policing. Their trip is sponsored by UNAMSIL Civilian Police (CIVPOL) and the South African Government.

Addressing the officers at the UNAMSIL headquarters at Mammy Yoko shortly before their departure, the CIVPOL Commissioner, Hudson Benu entreated them to take the course seriously, as they were going “not only as ambassadors of the SLP and CIVPOL, but also as ambassadors of (their) country”.

Meanwhile, the CIVPOL Director of Operations, Michael Holdsworth recommended them to absorb everything they would be taught and return to implement it so that “Sierra Leone’s diamonds can help its people”. “The future of this country benefiting from its diamonds depends on you,” he said. Mr Holdsworth said CIVPOL would be getting regular feedbacks about the SLP officers, and expressed the hope that these feedbacks would be positive.

Speaking on behalf of his colleagues, Assistant Superintendent of Police, Teddy Kargbo said that they would put all their best into the course in a way that will make the SLP, CIVPOL and the country proud. “We will perform to your satisfaction,” he assured.

The other three officers are ASP Mohamed B. Kamara (a lawyer), Detective Sgt. Miller Bangura and Detective Sgt. AR Samuka. They will be trained by Safe Africa, a private firm specialized in diamond-mining investigation training. Their departure comes about a week after 24 other middle-ranking police officers left for police training in Botswana in a course sponsored by Commonwealth Secretariat and UNAMSIL’s CIVPOL.

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