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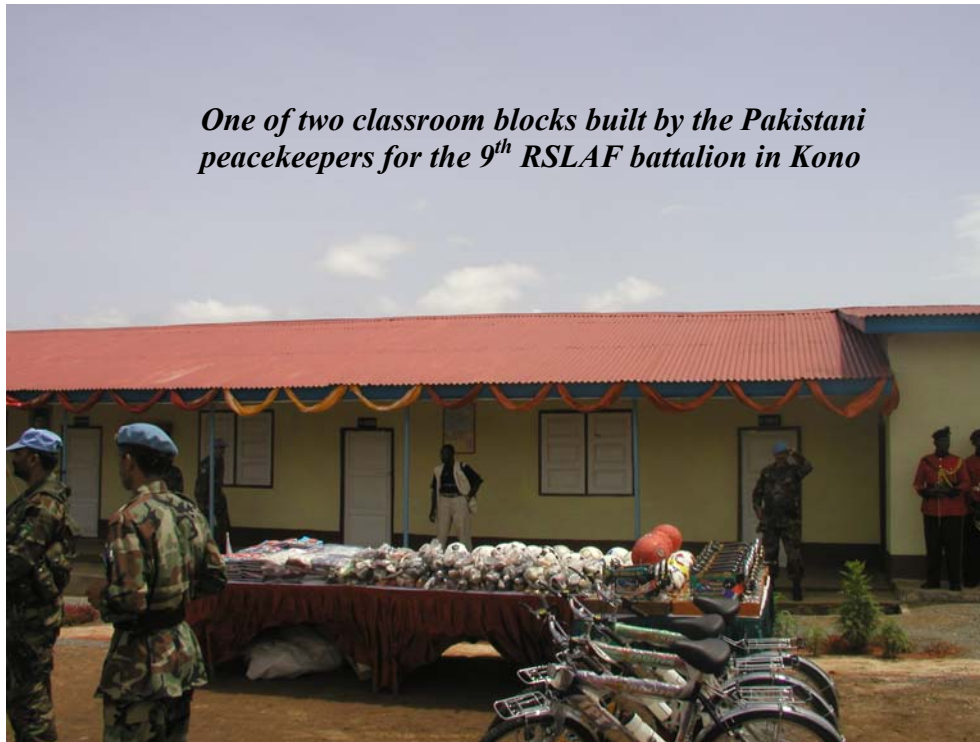
**UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNAMSIL)**

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**PRESIDENT KABBAH, SRSG INAUGURATE UNAMSIL HUMANITARIAN PROJECTS
IN KONO, KENEMA**

Freetown – President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, accompanied by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone (SRSG), Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago yesterday inaugurated several development projects in the eastern provincial towns of Koidu and Kenema, undertaken by the eighth Pakistani Battalion (PAKBATT 8) serving in the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).



One of two classroom blocks built by the Pakistani peacekeepers for the 9th RSLAF battalion in Kono

Inaugurating the projects at the ninth RSLAF battalion at Simbakoro outside Koidu, which included two classroom blocks for a primary school, a playground for children, swings and a football ground, President Kabbah praised the Pakistani peacekeepers whom he said came to the country when they were most

needed. He said the Government and people of Sierra Leone would, forever, be grateful to the peacekeepers whom he said had gone “far beyond [their] mandate of maintaining peace ... [which] merits all our appreciation and gratitude... You have put your trust in us and we shall not let you down” he said, assuring that the Mohammad Ali Jinnah Primary School would be well taken care of. President Kabbah paid glowing tribute to UNAMSIL without whom he said the peace in the country would have remained an illusion. “We respect and thank UNAMSIL for the perseverance of its leadership in the pursuit of peace...” he said.

While handing the school’s keys to the RSLAF Battalion Commander, Lt. Col. Tamba Allieu, the President urged him and his soldiers to take good care of the structures so that future generations can benefit from the school. He entreated the soldiers to sacrifice, “be united, discipline and

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faithful”. President Kabbah also handed over text and exercise books, games tunics, footballs and volleyballs to the families of the RSLAF battalion, which were also donated by the Pakistani peacekeepers.



Responding Lt. Col. Tamba Allieu assured they would take good care of the school which he said would benefit not only families of the soldiers but also members of the Simbakoro community.

Earlier, the SRSRSG said years had passed when hardly success for UNAMSIL would be shrugged of as “wishful thinking”, adding, however, that “today when we look back a few years, we feel relieved that we have achieved the mandate given to us by the

international community.” He said “all the component and constituents of UNAMSIL have strived for excellence in their respective spheres of responsibility and I feel enthralled over their performance”.

Ambassador Mwakawago praised the Government and people of Sierra Leone “who have discredited violence, pursued DDR and rebuilt their shattered economy and political process”. He said the work of the Pakistani peacekeepers would “go a long way towards capacity building of law enforcement agencies” for which he saluted the Pakistanis.

The SRSRSG urged the people of Sierra Leone and Kono in particular to embark on food production and called on the new Local Council members to pass bylaws that would make it mandatory for diamond miners to cover all mining pits after extraction of gravel. This, he said, would not only be environment friendly but would also be used for agriculture. He went on that the new councilors should strive to do the best for their people. A point he emphasized in Kenema.

The Pakistani peacekeepers in Kono also donated three 6-seater rickshaws to the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), which according to the PAKBATT 8 Commanding Officer, Lt. Col. Zafar Iqbal, would “enhance the mobilization of the SLP”.

Speaking on the occasion of the handover of a lawn tennis court constructed by the Pakistanis with support from the International Rescue Committee beside the Koidu Community Centre, Minister of Youth and Sport, Dr Dennis Bright said the facility would serve as an important tool for the consolidation of the peace as “sport is a good healer”. He said it would also improve on the health of the youth and would cut down on the crime rate as the youth would have their minds engaged. He called for unity among the youth and urged them to take good care of the facility.

While thanking the peacekeepers for the rickshaws donated to the police, the Inspector General of Police, Brima Acha Kamara said they were crucial for community policing which his officers were

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at present embarking on. He said they would replicate the technology in other parts of the country. The rickshaws are an adaptation of motor bikes which were bought in Sierra Leone.

Accompanied by several cabinet ministers including Education, Youth and Sport, Agriculture, Local Government as well as his Deputy Minister of Defence, the Inspector General of Police and the Chief of Defence Staff, President Kabbah and the SRSG proceeded to Kenema where the Pakistani peacekeepers also donated to the 3rd Infantry Brigade of the RSLAF a welfare center comprising a vocational institute stocked with 19 sewing machines, a computer room with 5 computers and a medical clinic. Responding to the donation, the Chief of Defence Staff, Maj. Gen. Sam Mboma said he was “overwhelmed” referring to the gesture as “wonderful”. Maj. Gen. Mboma promised the centre would be put into good use, adding the President had promised to provide a resident medical doctor for the clinic.

The UNAMSIL Sector East Commander, Brig. Gen. Sajjad Ahmed Bakhshi, pledged that the Pakistani peacekeepers would continue with their humanitarian assistance which has included the operation of a free eye clinic and other health care delivery system, reconstruction of roads, the building of mosques and churches among others

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