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PRESS RELEASE

SRSG EMPHASIZES CHILDREN'S RIGHTS ON DAY OF AFRICAN CHILD

Freetown – Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago recently emphasized "the right of children to grow up in a protective environment". Ambassador Mwakawago was addressing a cross-section of Sierra Leonean school children at the town hall in the southern town of Bo during a ceremony commemorating the International Day of the African Child on 16 June.

L – R: Vice President Berewa, Minister of Children's Affairs Mrs Shirley Gbujama, SRSG Mwakawago, Minister of Internal Affairs George Banda-Thomas and the UNICEF Rep Aboubacry Tall. Addressing is a primary school pupil.

Citing the Sierra Leonean Government's commitment to children's issues, Ambassador Mwakawago urged that children should be made aware of their rights and responsibilities.

Also present at Wednesday's event, which was organized by the Sierra Leone Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, were the UNICEF Representative in Sierra Leone, Mr. Aboubacry Tall and a number of senior Government officials, including Vice-President Solomon Berewa.

Earlier in the day, at the site of the Bo Clock Tower, Ambassador Mwakawago and Vice President Berewa unveiled a memorial plaque for children who lost their lives during the country's decade-long conflict from 1991 until 2002 when the President declared the "war don don," (The war is over).

According to the Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Mrs Shirley Gbujama, this year's commemorative events were held outside of Freetown in recognition of the Government's commitment to its decentralization policy.

The International Day of the African Child is observed on 16 June each year.

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