

UNITED NATIONS



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UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNAMSIL)

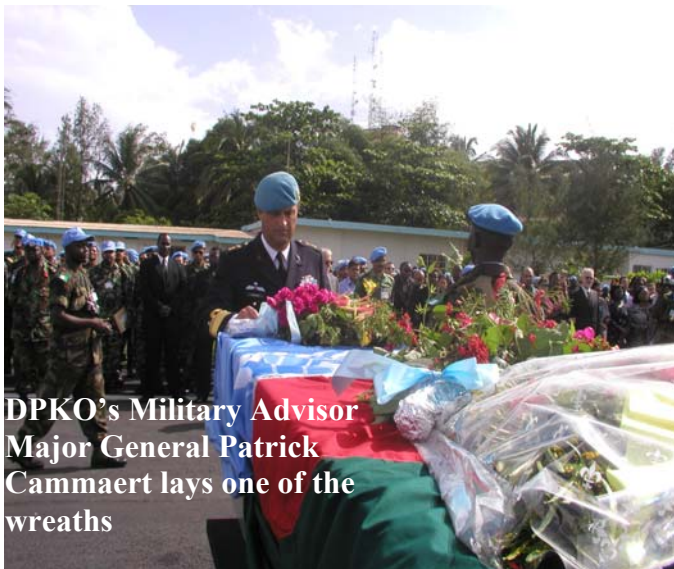
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PRESS RELEASE

WREATHS LAID IN HONOUR OF HELICOPTER CRASH VICTIMS

Freetown – United Nations peacekeepers who lost their lives in last Tuesday’s (29 June) helicopter crash were earlier today (Sunday 4 July) honoured in a wreath laying ceremony at the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) Headquarters at Mammy Yoko Hotel in Freetown.



DPKO’s Military Advisor
Major General Patrick
Cammaert lays one of the
wreaths

Among those who laid wreaths were Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago; Acting Force Commander and Deputy Force Commander, Brigadier General Paul K. Opoku; Bangladeshi Contingent Commander, Lieutenant Colonel Kazi Masud-UI-Mahmud; Pakistani Contingent Commander, Brigadier General Sajjad Ahmed Bakshi; and UNAMSIL Director of Administration, Mr. Steinar B. Bjornsson. Vice-

President of Sierra Leone, Solomon Berewa, also laid a wreath on his country’s behalf. The Military Advisor in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations, Major-General Patrick Cammaert, represented Secretary-General Kofi Annan. A cross-section of UNAMSIL staff members also turned out to pay respects to their colleagues.

In his message, which was delivered by Major-General Cammaert, the Secretary-General mourned the loss of “our fallen comrades [who] represented the whole spectrum of peacekeeping and peace-building – representatives of the military, UNVs, NGOs, support personnel”. He paid tribute to their service pointing out that “the mission they served has already made great strides in setting Sierra Leone on the path of peace and respect for human rights. Each one of them made a vital contribution to that progress”.

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The Secretary-General also stated that “those we lost were part of a proud tradition of service by the Pakistanis and Bangladeshis” to the Organization. Almost 15,000 peacekeepers from those countries currently serve in UN peacekeeping operations worldwide.

Sympathizing with the families of those who died, he hoped “their pain would one day be eased by the knowledge that their loved ones gave their lives for a noble cause, serving people in need under the blue flag of the United Nations”. The Secretary-General reassured that “those we lost will find a fitting tribute in a Sierra Leone whose citizens can live free from fear and hopeful for a better future”.

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