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PRESS RELEASE

UNAMSIL EARMARKS MORE QUICK IMPACT PROJECTS FOR THE NEXT YEAR

Freetown – The United Nations has approved more than US\$100,000 for the implementation of Quick Impact Projects by its mission in Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL for the period spanning July 2004 – June 2005. UNAMSIL's Civil Affairs Section has earmarked several projects for the next one year, with some due to be completed by the end of this year.

The Quick Impact Projects form part of a strategy aimed at improving the relationship between peacekeepers and civilians, to be implemented for the first time in Sierra Leone. The UN aims at replicating it in other parts of the world once this pilot phase is successful.

According to the Coordinator of the UNAMSIL Trust Fund, which releases funds for the QIPs, Cherno Jallow, the projects would include a primary school in the eastern district headquarters of Kailahun for the first battalion of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). It will be implemented by the seventh Pakistani battalion (PAKBATT 7), the partial refurbishment of a part of the 34 Military Hospital for the RSLAF, the Koidu School for the Blind, a building for the Voice of Children Project.

Mr Jallow said since the northern district of Koinadugu had not benefited from earlier projects, its headquarters of Kabala would be among the target beneficiaries. He said proof that the UN attached tremendous importance to the project. The organisation, for the first time last year, included US\$ 240,000 for their implementation in its regular budget for the Mission rather than depending on voluntary donations.

A post office in the eastern town of Kailahun, several schools, health centers and agricultural projects in other parts of the country have already been implemented with these funds.

On distribution of the projects, Mr Jallow said due consideration was taken of deployment of peacekeepers who implemented the projects and geographical locations to ensure equitable distribution.