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**SIERRA LEONE POLICE, ARMY SHOW PREPAREDNESS IN CROWD
CONTROL AHEAD OF SECURITY HANDOVER**

Freetown – Ahead of the official handover next week of security primacy for the eastern province, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) yesterday handed over security primacy for the eastern district of Kono to the Government of Sierra Leone.

Prior to yesterday's event, UNAMSIL, the International Military Advisory Training Team (IMATT) and the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Programme (CCSSP) held a mock-exercise aimed at testing the preparedness of the Sierra Leone Police and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) when UN peacekeepers eventually withdrew from the area.

The simulation exercise, which took place in Yengema and Motema involved command post and field-training exercises that saw a large crowd of demonstrators agitating for improved conditions of living and justice. The police could not control them as they apparently had some armed insurgents among them who opened fire and took over the office of the Senior District Officer. The army then intervened, killing the insurgents and retook the building.

Briefing journalists, UNAMSIL Chief of Staff, Colonel Roland Ladley said the exercise was to ascertain the preparedness of the local security forces, as well as the assess the liaison between the police and the army, which had been excellent but still needed some improvement.

Major Ian Moody of IMATT expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the exercises, saying they showed how far the country's forces had gone. The commander of the ninth battalion of the RSLAF based in the district, Lt Col. Tamba Allieu, said his troops were prepared to defend the country. He appealed for logistics his battalion lacked. The SLP Local Unit Commander, Chief Superintendent Joseph Kabbia said there was a cordial relationship between his officers and the army. He asked for an increase in the number of police officers in the district saying the current number of 350 needed to be increased by 300 – 400 officers if they were to be deployed to the borders.