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## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **GHANBATT 10 RECEIVES UN MEDALS**

*Freetown, Sierra Leone* – Thirteen officers and 116 soldiers of the Ghanaian Battalion (GHANBATT 10) of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) were today decorated with UN medals of honour by the UNAMSIL Force Commander Major General Sajjad Akram, the Ghanaian High Commissioner to Sierra Leone, Kabral Blay-Amehere, and Sierra Leone's Deputy Defence Minister Joe Blell during a ceremony at the southern Bo School football field.

In his address, the Force Commander said since he assumed office, the significance of medal presentation days had not been lost on him because they were historic moments which captured and gave recognition to the immense contributions and sacrifices demonstrated by all peacekeepers in Sierra Leone's peace process.

Major General Akram congratulated the recipients for discharging their duties as the Force Reserve flawlessly and for "conducting air-inserted and mobile patrols to virtually all parts of Sierra Leone". He also mentioned the battalion's humanitarian assistance rendered to the local community.

GHANBATT 10 arrived in Bo on 31 August 2004 and assumed command of its area of responsibility on 10 September. On arrival in the Mission, the troops were relocated from Lungi in the north to Bo in the south as one of the consequences of UNAMSIL's Adjustment, Drawdown and Withdrawal (ADW) programme.

The UNAMSIL Force Commander used the opportunity to express confidence in the capabilities of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), noting that "UNAMSIL has taken the backseat and the SLP and RSLAF have become the guarantors of security [in Sierra Leone]".

UN medals are awarded to peacekeeping forces after 90 days of continuous and unblemished service in any UN Mission.

Today's parade was also attended by Major General Nii Carl Coleman who led an eight-man delegation of senior officers and the Forces' Sergeant-Major from Ghana.

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