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PRESS RELEASE

**SRSG VISITS SECTOR CENTRE IN MAGBURAKA,
INAUGURATES SCHOOL**



Ambassador Mwakawago addressing the contingent. He is flanked by Deputy Force Commander, Brig. Gen. Adrian Foster and Sector Centre Commander, Brigadier General Shafiqzaza-Man

Freetown – The Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (SRSG) in Sierra Leone, Ambassador Daudi Ngelautwa Mwakawago yesterday visited the Sector Centre contingents in Magburaka and inaugurated the Bangla Sierra RC Primary School at Malong, Northern Sierra Leone.

In his address to soldiers of the Bangladeshi battalion in Magburaka, Mr. Mwakawago expressed appreciation for the warm reception accorded him and used the opportunity to

congratulate the Nepalese battalion in Moyamba, in the South, who had also been contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone.

He noted that, “although I have been associated with peacekeeping efforts of the United Nations, I am very happy that I am now heading a peacekeeping mission, which affords me the opportunity of joining hands with you in contributing to peace and stability in Sierra Leone and in the West African sub-region”.

The SRSG expressed condolences to the Bangladeshi contingent for the deaths of their colleagues last December in a plane crash in Benin Republic. He added that he was quite satisfied with the way they had been handling the draw down plan but cautioned against complacency.

“During the course of your duties you have not only accomplished what is demanded of you by the mandate of UNAMSIL, but you have gone beyond it by providing humanitarian assistance to the people in your sector,” he said, adding, “you have thus

established yourselves as men and women who have won the hearts and minds of Sierra Leoneans. I congratulate you on this achievement and urge you to keep it up.”

Sector Centre Commander, Brigadier General Shafiquzza-Man, in his briefing said he was delighted to be the Commander of the first sector to formally welcome Ambassador. Mwakawago. He disclosed that the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) were making steady progress in their deployment throughout the country.

The SRSG later inspected the “BANMED Level II hospital.”

In a another engagement, Ambassador Mwakawago today inaugurated and handed over to the Malong local community keys to the six-classroom Bangla Sierra R. C. Primary School at Malong. “I’m so happy to be here. I thank the commanders for making it possible for me to be here,” he stated and also thanked the teachers and local authorities for their cooperation in making the day memorable.

He told them about the importance of peace. “If you were fighting, the UN will not be here. There can never be development without peace. Even in the home. So peace is fundamental. That’s the message we bring you today,” he said and asked them not to be onlookers, witnesses, but partners in the reconstruction of the country.

The Contingent Commander, Col Nazrul Islam, said he was grateful to the SRSG for his presence and that contributions toward reconstructing the school came from the pockets of Bangladeshi soldiers. He thanked the local community for providing free labour and wood during the reconstruction.

Bishop Biguzzi, the bishop of the Makeni diocese in northern Sierra Leone, lauded UNAMSIL for restoring peace to the country and congratulated the Bangladeshi contingents for their “friendly approach and determination to help the locals” in their areas of deployment.

Highlights of the occasion were traditional dancing and welcome songs by school kids. Acting Force Commander, Brig Gen Adrian Foster, Chiefs of Civil Affairs and Public Information sections, Mr. Ismael Diallo and Mr. Kemal Saiki respectively, as well as Special Advisers to the SRSG, Ambassador Jaiyeola Lewu and Ms. Cherrie-Anne Vincent, accompanied the SRSG.
