



PRESS RELEASE

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GHANBATT 11 HOLDS MEDAL PARADE IN BO

Freetown, Sierra Leone- Seven hundred and fifty-three soldiers including 34 officers of the Ghanaian Battalion 11 (GHANBATT 11) were today at the battalion's headquarters in Bo, southern Sierra Leone, decorated with United Nations medals which are usually given to those peacekeeping personnel who have successfully completed 90 days of service without any blemish.

The recipients were decorated by the Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago, the UNAMSIL Force Commander Major General Sajjad Akram, the Deputy UNAMSIL Force Commander Brigadier General Paul K. Opoku, the Ghanaian High Commissioner in Sierra Leone Kabral Blay-Amihere and the Ghanaian Deputy Minister of Defence, Hon. William Ofori Bofofo who led a six-member delegation from Ghana.

GHANBATT 11 arrived in Sierra Leone about three months ago and took over peacekeeping duties from GHANBATT 10. As the Force Reserve Battalion, the entire Sierra Leone is this battalion's area of responsibility. Apart from undertaking several patrols in the country, GHANBATT 11 has also provided humanitarian assistance to needy institutions in Bo and other places where its patrols are conducted.

In his keynote address as Guest Speaker, Ambassador Daudi Mwakawago stated that, "Today, the officers, men and women of GHANBATT11 have fulfilled the necessary condition for the award of UN medal, and that is why I was very pleased to award the medals to deserving personnel." He reiterated that the award of the UN medal should not be seen as just a routine affair but as recognition by the Secretary General of the commitment and contribution of each peacekeeper to the UN ideals.

The SRSG disclosed that over the past three months, GHANBATT 11 had exhibited excellent peacekeeping skills and techniques and that it had executed its role as the Force Reserve Battalion of UNAMSIL with resolute dedication and commitment, adding "with the eventual completion of operations of GHANBATT 11, it signals the end of all Ghana battalions in Sierra Leone." He reminded them that they had high standards to keep as they were "one of the over 66,000 peacekeepers worldwide in a global population of over six billion people!"

Highlights of the medal parade, which coincided with the 45th Republic Day Anniversary of Ghana, were cultural dances from both the Ghanaians and Sierra Leoneans.