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PRESS RELEASE

DSRSG COMMISSIONS TWO SCHOOLS IN LUNGI



DSRSG Alan DOSS dedicates school built by GHANBATT 8 Peacekeepers at Lungi

Freetown – The Deputy Special Representative of the UN Secretary General (DSRSG) For Governance and Stabilisation, Mr. Alan Doss, commissioned yesterday two six-classroom blocks built by the eighth Ghanaian battalion (GHANBATT 8) under the Quick Impact Project (QIP) modality, in the northern district of Port Lolo.

In his address before commissioning the Baptist

Primary School at Masoila and the Ansarul Islamic Secondary School at Rotifunk, Mr. Doss said “the commitment of Ghana to peace in the sub-region and the personal interest of President Kufuor in the resolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone, have been greatly appreciated by the UN and above all the Sierra Leonean people,” adding that “the construction of these schools by UNAMSIL shows that peacekeeping is about helping rebuild...communities for a better future.” In closing his remarks, Mr. Doss urged the community to register for the local government elections as a way of showing its appreciation for the UN which had contributed so much to help Sierra Leoneans regain that right.

The DSRSG noted it took sacrifice, commitment and fortitude from GHANBATT 8 to execute the project, and paid glowing tribute to the UNAMSIL staff both at the headquarters and in the field whose direction and assistance contributed to the successful execution of the projects. He advised the pupils to “use this unique opportunity offered to you to learn and chart bright futures for yourselves” and the communities to care for the edifices so that they “could serve this present generation and the next ones.”

The Ghanaian Contingent Commander, Col. Michael Amuzu thanked all for their presence and assistance towards the implementation of the projects and assured that the

incoming GHANBATT 9 would step adequately into their shoes. He asked the government and NGOs to provide the structures with furniture.

Earlier the Deputy Chief of Civil Affairs, Mr. Abiodun Bashua said that as UNAMSIL was about to withdraw, it was the Mission's hope that peace would be sustained. "Education is no longer a men's affair," he added, and urged the communities to ensure that every girl child was given the same opportunity as their male counterparts.

A representative from the Ministry of Education, Mr. Dickson Rogers lauded the efforts of GHANBATT 8, saying that the government appreciated such efforts especially at a time when Government was striving towards improving access to education for all.

The Head Teacher of the Baptist Primary School, Daniel A. Kamara said the project was an accomplishment of what was started in 1994 by Ghanaian soldiers of the ECOWAS peacekeeping force, ECOMOG. He expressed gratitude that school which started off 30 pupils could now boast of over 700. He said 60% of the pupils are girls, noting that he was proud of GHANBATT 8 which completed the school within three months, and asked the community to rename the school The Ghana-Sierra Baptist Primary School.

Paramount Chief of Kuffu Bullom chiefdom, Bai Shebora Komkanda II thanked the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community for bringing peace to the country, referring to the days "a day of thanksgiving ... [and] a day of joy. Today we are enjoying the benefits of peace. GHANBATT 8 has performed and is still performing humanitarian gestures" including the opening of a clinic in his chiefdom and rehabilitation work on the roads. "A friend in need is a friend indeed," he said rounding up with a song of praise which his people sang along with him.

Mr. Doss and entourage then took a conducted tour of the classrooms after unveiling the dedication plaques.
