



UNMIL/PIO/PR/42

Press release, 25 March 2006

UNMIL's Russian Police Contingent Decorated with UN Peacekeeping Medals

Monrovia, Liberia - The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and Rule of Law, Mr. Luiz Carlos da Costa, today awarded UN peacekeeping medals to the Russian police officers serving in the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) at a ceremony held at the Conference Center of the former German Embassy in Monrovia.



DSRSG da Costa awards peacekeeping medals to Russian Police Contingent

Recognizing that Russia is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, DSRSG da Costa said “your invaluable support to United Nations peacekeeping operations has demonstrated Russia’s strong commitment to international peace and security.”

Mr. da Costa praised the contingent for playing “a key role in achieving the Mission’s mandate of establishing the rule of law in Liberia, by providing a valuable service in training, advising and mentoring Liberian police officers.” In addition, he stressed that “the fundamental purpose of the International Police Service in United Nations peacekeeping missions is to build national capacity in post-conflict environments.”

The DSRSG also commended the officers for the role they played in providing security during Liberia’s recent historic and violence-free elections but noted that “despite UNMIL’s numerous achievements in recent years, the mission’s work is not over yet.” He reminded the officers that they must uphold the ideals of the United Nations at all times and strictly abide by the Secretary-General’s policy of zero tolerance for sexual abuse and exploitation and the peacekeepers code of conduct.

UNMIL Police Commissioner, Mohammed Alhassan, who leads 1,100 police officers from 38 UN member states, said “the UN Police officers from the Russian contingent have served in an exemplary manner with both dignity and professionalism. They have served in a multinational environment with courage, tolerance, understanding and respect for others to fulfill the mandate of the mission.”

Addressing those in attendance, Russian Police Contingent Commander, Colonel Valery Chuzhikov, extended his gratitude to the UN family and all those “who worked shoulder to shoulder with the contingent to ensure the success of the mission.” He said that his officers were proud to be part of the overall achievements of UNMIL “to restore peace and maintain law and order.”

There are currently 17 Russian police officers serving in Liberia. Russia began contributing to United Nations peacekeeping missions in 1992 in Croatia and subsequently in Georgia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, East Timor, Haiti, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone and the Sudan.

* * * * *