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**UNMIL and Liberia National Police re-launch police recruitment drive; targets 3,500 police officers**

**Monrovia, Liberia** -- The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the Liberia National Police (LNP) today launched the second phase of the LNP recruitment campaign. This campaign, involving the Ministry of Gender and Development, will attract qualified female candidates to apply.



New LNP recruits at today's ceremony at the LNP Headquarters

Speaking at the launch at the LNP Headquarters in Monrovia, Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Operations and Rule of Law, Mr. Luiz Carlos da Costa, called upon the women of Liberia to come forward and join the LNP in increasing numbers. "Though a milestone, it is not enough that the Chief of the LNP is a woman. The new LNP must have a proper gender balance. More women must be encouraged and facilitated to join. We are committed to that and we are working towards that goal," Mr. da Costa assured.

The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General described the launch as "the second phase in our collective efforts to reform and restructure the LNP and transform it into an organisation that is governed by democratic principles and serves the people rather than those in power and authority." Mr. da Costa added that "for too long in Liberia, state institutions have been subservient to those in positions of authority rather than the people in whose trust they are supposed to work."

"We have come a long way to get to this point of recreating a law enforcement body that is accountable to the people. Sustainable peace is founded on the bedrock of a genuinely democratic law enforcement agency. This is our common goal and jointly we must strive to achieve it," Mr. da Costa concluded.

According to the United Nations Police Commissioner, Mr. Mohammed Alhassan, "the UN Police in full cooperation with the leadership of the LNP recognizes that it is crucial to give to Liberia the police that it deserves. That is a national police known for proper conduct; that protects the rights of citizens and democratic life; that is transparent and accountable to the law; and that maintains a safe and secure environment for all. It is time for a police force that is staffed by the best of the best."

LNP Director, Ms. Beatrice Munah Sieh, said the re-launch of the recruitment campaign was due to their inability to reach the target of recruits of 3,500. "The Police remain unattractive to the public due to low salary, incentives, and negative perceptions. You and I have a natural responsibility to serve our country," the LNP Chief said. Ms. Sieh is therefore calling on the youth, particularly females, to make history by coming forward to be a part of the Police.

Since the first LNP recruitment campaign was launched on 5 May 2004, 1,633 officers, comprising qualified LNP officers and new recruits underwent training. This new recruitment drive targets 1,374 police officers, and will simultaneously take place throughout the country. The projected strength of the LNP is 3,500.

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