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**UN Envoy visits Lofa County to assess road development projects**

**Monrovia, Liberia** – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, together with senior UNMIL officials, on 2 May traveled to Voinjama, Lofa County, in north-western Liberia to monitor the progress of UN support for road rehabilitation in the County, which is coordinated by the Road Task Force, established by the Liberian Government. It was also an opportunity to meet with UNMIL and UNHCR personnel in the field.



Pakistani contingent demonstrates how emergency road repairs are carried out

Special Representative Doss was briefed by the Pakistani UNMIL contingent on the current status of the roads in Lofa County and the efforts being taken to repair as many roads as possible prior to the rainy season. Following the briefing, the contingent gave a vivid demonstration of the poor road conditions in the County. The contingent demonstrated how emergency road repairs can be carried out, using local materials and manual labour, to keep the tracks passable.

“The rehabilitation of the roads is a top priority” said Special Representative Doss. “Without roads, there will be no development”.

A Road Task Force coordinates road rehabilitation in the country. The Task Force is chaired by the Department of Public Works of the Government of Liberia and is assisted by the UNMIL Rehabilitation, Recovery and Reintegration Section (RRR). The main project in Lofa County has been the rehabilitation of the Voinjama-Kolahun-Foya track, connecting the three districts in Lofa County.

UNHCR and its implementing partner GTZ, a German NGO, started the rehabilitation of this road in order to facilitate the return of refugees from Sierra Leone and Guinea. The 68km track is scheduled to be finalized in just over two months. This UNDP funded project will cost approximately \$300,000.

The road will allow UNHCR to continue facilitating the returns of Liberian refugees even during the rainy season and will also keep the road open for the delivery of food, medical supplies and other support from UN agencies and NGOs.

Speaking on UNMIL Radio on the issue of security in the region, Mr. Doss reiterated that “UNMIL will continue to work for the security of Lofa County. This is a county that was devastated by war and borders two countries, which themselves were deeply affected by the conflict in Liberia.”

During his visit, Mr. Doss also met with the Head of the UNHCR Sub-Office, Mr. Cesar Pastor-Ortega, UNDP Head of Sub-Office, Ms. Chiara Capozio, LNP commander for Lofa County, Mr. Stephen Bangalu, and representatives from the various agencies. He was briefed by the civilian and military components of UNMIL.

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