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**The UN Observes International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers in Liberia**

**Monrovia, Liberia** –During a solemn ceremony held at the United Nations Mission in Liberia headquarters in Monrovia to observe the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers, the Vice President of Liberia, H.E. Joseph Boakai and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, laid wreaths to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.



Vice-President Boakai laying a wreath to honour the memory of those who lost their lives in the cause of peace

“The days of lightly armed peacekeepers conducting foot patrols along ceasefire lines between sovereign states are long over. UN peacekeeping operations are now increasingly complex and multi-dimensional, going beyond monitoring a ceasefire to actually bringing failed States back to life, often after decades of conflict,” said United Nations Secretary-General Kofi Annan, in his remarks read out by SRSR Doss. “The demand for UN peacekeeping reflects growing confidence in the Organization’s ability to calm tensions and restore stability. This, in turn, is being matched by support from Member States. One hundred and eight countries now contribute uniformed personnel,” he added.

With 15,000 troops and over 1,000 UN Police officers, UNMIL is the second largest peacekeeping mission in the world today. To demonstrate UNMIL’s support towards the recovery and development of Liberia, peacekeepers deployed throughout the country took part in a number of activities to mark peacekeepers’ day including free medical camps for local communities, cleaning up and painting of school



Special Representative Doss joining the clean-up campaign in Monrovia

buildings, side walks, community centres, health centres and local markets, and rehabilitation of roads and bridges. Recognizing the powerful role sports can play in building peace, friendly football matches were played between peacekeepers and community members.

Wielding the broom himself at the G.W Gibson High School in Monrovia, SRSR Doss encouraged Liberians to play an active role in the recovery and development of their country. “Liberians have a collective and individual responsibility to keep their city clean and contribute towards the development of the country in every way possible,” he said.

In December 2002, the UN General Assembly decided to designate 29 May as the International Day of United Nations Peacekeepers to be observed annually to pay tribute to all the men and women who have served and continue to serve in United Nations peacekeeping operations and to honour the memory of those who have lost their lives in the cause of peace.

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