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UNMIL Nigerian Contingent Receives United Nations Peacekeeping Medals

Monrovia, Liberia – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, on 8 July 2006 decorated UNMIL Nigerian peacekeepers for their contribution to peace in Liberia. The peacekeepers received UN peacekeeping medals at a colourful ceremony held at the ATS in Monrovia.

Decorating the Nigerian peacekeepers, the Special Representative said “your task of guarding key government and UNMIL establishments; escorting top Liberian government officials; conducting joint patrols with the Liberian National Police; manning checkpoints throughout Sector 1 and providing communications between the force headquarters and all contingents have all contributed greatly towards UNMIL’s mandate of maintaining a stable and peaceful environment.”



Nigerian peacekeepers provide medical assistance in the village of Pleemu, Todee District

Mr. Doss pointed out that with the efforts of the new democratically elected government and the international community, “Liberia is now on the path to recovery after long years of conflict and violence,” adding, “as you all know, Secretary-General Kofi Annan was in Liberia just a few days ago and during his visit, the Secretary-General personally expressed his appreciation for the valuable contribution that you and your fellow peacekeepers have made to the cause of peace in Liberia. He said that your commitment and dedication merits the gratitude and recognition of the entire international community.”

Reminding the peacekeepers of their responsibility to steadfastly uphold the United Nations Code of Conduct, Mr. Doss urged them to ensure that the Secretary-General’s policy of zero tolerance for sexual abuse and exploitation is fully respected. “All UNMIL personnel are on notice that they will be severely disciplined if they engage in any form of abuse, exploitation or fraud. It is up to each and every one of us as individuals through our actions, words and deeds to ensure that the Secretary-General’s policy is fully respected,” he said.

SRSR Doss then paid tribute to the Contingent Commander of the Nigerian contingent, Brig. Gen. DM Edi, and the men and women of the contingent for their dedication and professionalism in carrying out their responsibilities. He said this reflects well on the commitment made by the Nigerian Government towards peace and security not only in Liberia, but the region as a whole. “Without Nigeria’s contribution, the return of peace to West Africa would have been far more difficult to achieve,” Mr. Doss stressed.

The Chief of Defense Staff of the Nigerian Army, General Martin Luther Agwai, led a high-powered Nigerian Government delegation to participate in the medal presentation ceremonies. Other members of the delegation included Chief of Operations of the Nigerian Army, Maj. Gen. LKF Aprezi and Military Chief of Staff, Brigadier General John Forkuo. Other dignitaries attending the ceremony were Nigerian Ambassador accredited to Liberia, Mr. Eineje E. Onobu, UNMIL Force Commander, Lt. Gen. Chikadibia Obiakor, and other UNMIL senior civilian and military officials.

Currently, there are 1,949 members of the Nigerian contingent serving in Liberia from battalions 8, 9 and Signal Regiment 3. Nigeria first began contributing peacekeepers to the United Nations in 1960 and since then has served in over 25 United Nations peacekeeping missions throughout the world.