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UN Envoy commits US\$1million towards Liberia's Emergency Employment Programme

Monrovia, Liberia - In recognition of Liberia's high unemployment rate, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, committed US\$1million towards the creation of employment opportunities for the country's youth as the Liberia Emergency Employment Programme (LEEP) was launched by President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in Monrovia yesterday.



President Johnson Sirleaf meeting young people at the launch of LEEP

Launching the LEEP, President Johnson-Sirleaf commended the Ministry of Labour and various partners for coming together to address the unemployment problem in Liberia. She urged Liberian youth to use the temporary employment opportunities provided under the programme to sharpen their skills and learn about work discipline. "We must set a good example of performance so that our partners will see that Liberia is ready to work hard and take responsibility for its own development objectives," the President said.

Special Representative Doss characterized peace building in Liberia as "jobs, jobs and jobs." Recounting the old proverb 'idle hands are the devil's workshop,' he stressed the importance of creating immediate job opportunities for young people but stressed the importance of investment, trade and the development of the private sector as the long-term solution.

The Liberia Emergency Employment Initiative is an 18-month programme aimed at creating labour-intensive job opportunities to address Liberia's high unemployment rate that currently stands at 85 per cent.

The launching ceremony was attended by senior government ministers, members of the House of Representatives, the ILO Regional Director for West Africa, and government and UN officials.
