

UNITED NATIONS



NATIONS UNIES

UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE  
(UNAMSIL)

**PRESS RELEASE**

4 June 2002

**SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE INAUGURATES MOTHERLESS HOME  
DORMITORY IN MOYAMBA**

*Freetown* - The Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Sierra Leone, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, today inaugurated an orphanage in the southern town of Moyamba for Sierra Leonean children built by Nepalese peacekeepers serving with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

Inaugurating the 32-bedroom dormitory, “Bal Ashram,” which means “House of Children” in Nepalese, Ambassador Adeniji described the peacekeepers work as “a classic example of peacekeeping efforts integrated with peace-building activities to win the hearts and minds of the people.” He observed that besides maintaining its peacekeeping duties, the Nepalese Battalion (NEPBATT) 1 has been so immersed with humanitarian assistance to local communities such that were it to be neglected, the peacekeeping task would have been half achieved.

The SRSG commended the peacekeepers for their work, noting that it was a magnificent example of peacekeeping with the projects carried out with funds provided by the peacekeepers thus sharing with the less privileged. He also congratulated the initiator of the orphanage project, Rev. Deborah Freeman, for her foresight and relentless service to the community. “I hope this type of project will be replicated all over the country,” he said.

In his welcome address, the Commanding Officer NEPBATT 1 Lt Col Victor Rana said the inaugural event also marked the last ceremony to be conducted by his Battalion as they are scheduled to leave UNAMSIL at the end of this month following the completion of their tour of duty. The SRSG stressed that the peacekeepers should leave with a sense of accomplishment of tasks that included disarming ex-combatants, maintaining general security, and assisting in the conduct of free and fair elections. He added that through personal sacrifice, the peacekeepers have contributed to the lives of these young children and orphans. “They will be eternally grateful and they will remember that you put a smile on their faces,” he said.

Rev. Deborah Freeman said the home, which is tagged “ground of the needy and disadvantaged,” started two years ago. She indicated that the home can accommodate

about 15 boys and 25 girls. Some UN agencies and non-governmental organizations assisted the home with food supplies and non-food items such as blankets and toys. She called for support in providing formal education to the children and more assistance in sustaining the home.

UNAMSIL Deputy Force Commander Maj. Gen. Martin L. Agwai, Sector 3 Commander Brig. Gen. George Ayi-Bonte, other senior UNAMSIL officials, paramount chiefs and government officials also witnessed the ceremony.