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**BANGLADESHI ARMY DELEGATION PAYS COURTESY CALL ON
UNAMSIL OFFICIALS**

Freetown – The visiting delegation from the Bangladeshi Army yesterday paid separate courtesy calls on the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, Ambassador Oluyemi Adeniji, and the Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Lt. Gen. Daniel I. Opande at UNAMSIL Headquarters in Freetown.

The 10-man delegation, led by Maj. Gen. Mohammad Abul Hossain, Director General of Medical Services in the Bangladeshi Armed Forces, is in Sierra Leone to assess the welfare and performance of the Bangladeshi contingent serving with UNAMSIL. According to Maj. Gen. Abul, the visit will also give the delegation the opportunity to assess humanitarian activities being provided by the troops, which he said would remain indelible landmarks of Bangladesh’s contribution to the peace process in Sierra Leone.

In his remarks during a meeting with Ambassador Adeniji, Maj. Gen. Abul expressed his appreciation for the support the UN is providing to Bangladeshi peacekeepers deployed throughout the world, and especially in Sierra Leone. He commended UNAMSIL for its role in last month’s elections, adding that Sierra Leoneans now need sustainable peace to rebuild their nation. In this regard, he emphasized the medical assistance provided by Bangladeshi battalions and expressed the wish that this could help to restore basic public services.

In his welcome remarks, Ambassador Adeniji said UNAMSIL could rely on Bangladeshi battalions to help lay down “strong foundations” for sustainable peace in Sierra Leone. He commended the peacekeepers for their “tremendous contribution” to the peace process, stressing that visits of high-ranking officers always “contribute to the overall performance of UNAMSIL.”

Recalling the pioneering deployment of Bangladeshi battalions in the diamond-rich eastern district of Kono and their logistical assistance during the 14 May elections, the Special Representative said the peacekeepers’ adaptability was an important asset to the Mission. Amb. Adeniji also expressed the gratitude of the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan for the commitment and contribution of Bangladesh to peacekeeping.

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During his meeting with the visiting delegation, the Force Commander said visits by senior officials from troop-contributing countries have been noted to be a source of inspiration and encouragement to the troops. He commended the steadfastness and dedication of the Bangladeshi troops and the enormous contribution they have made to the Mission, which he noted, has impacted positively on their professional competence. The Force Commander also advised the delegation to extend its visit to other contingents to give them a wider view of UNAMSIL's activities.

Maj. Gen. Abul used the opportunity to express his country's appreciation for the concern shown by UNAMSIL, especially the Force Commander, on the misfortune that befell some of their officers who were involved in a road traffic accident in the Mission area.