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(UNAMSIL)

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UNAMSIL HANDS OVER PROJECTS TO THE PEOPLE OF LUNSAR

Freetown – The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Coordination Section of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), on 12 September, handed over two completed projects to the people of Lunsar in the western district of Port Loko. The projects, a refuse dump and a mini-stadium, were funded by the UN Development Programme and the British Department for International Development, with the Council of Churches of Sierra Leone as the implementing partner.

In his statement at the handing_over ceremony, the Chief of the DDR Section, Mr. Mitonga Zongwe, said that while the war was now over, more needed to be done in the area of reconstruction and national development. He pointed out that the rehabilitated projects were part of current recovery efforts by the international community in support of the Government of Sierra Leone.

The Development Secretary of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone, Mr. Albert T. Kanu, gave a brief background, explaining that a project proposal was drawn up and submitted to UNAMSIL with four main objectives: engagements of the youth; dumping of solid waste by market women in order to create a healthy environment; the provision of a daily refuse bin in the market; and the rehabilitation of roads.

Another representative of the Council commended peacekeepers from the Bangladeshi Battalion based in Lunsar for providing security in the area. He called on Sierra Leoneans to come together and allow the fragile peace to mature, underscoring the difficulties that UNAMSIL and the religious community had to tread to bring peace in the country.

The chairman for the ceremony, Rev. L. B. Roger-Wright, said President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah's end-of-conflict declaration marked the beginning of community reintegration throughout the country. He thanked UNAMSIL for its resilience in bringing peace to war-weary Sierra Leoneans. Mr. Alimamy Kanu, speaking on behalf of ex-combatants, appealed for forgiveness from the people and acceptance back into society, as well as job opportunities.

The ceremony was climaxed by a comic football match between the women of the township and another between the ex-combatants.

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