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**UNAMSIL'S NEW DEPUTY FORCE COMMANDER CONDUCTS
FAMILIARIZATION TOUR IN FREETOWN**



Freetown – The newly appointed Deputy Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Maj. Gen. Syed Athar Ali, has been touring the country to familiarize himself with UNAMSIL peacekeepers in their areas of deployment.

Maj. Gen. Athar, who also serves as the Chief Military Observer, started his tour with a visit to UNAMSIL Sector 2 Headquarters in Freetown where he held discussions with Sector Commander Brig. Gen. Emmiliano Tonui on the security situation in the area. This was followed by visit to the Nigerian Battalion (NIBATT) 14 Headquarters based on Spur Road in Freetown. NIBATT 14 has just joined the Mission following the departure of its predecessor, NIBATT 10, whose members recently completed their tour of duty.

Addressing the peacekeepers, Maj. Gen. Athar urged them to work as hard as their predecessors in consolidating peace in Sierra Leone, particularly in Freetown. He called on the troops to work closely with the Sierra Leone Police in maintaining peace and security within their areas of deployment.

During his visit today to NIBATT 13 peacekeepers deployed in Goderich just outside Freetown, the Deputy Force Commander commended the Nigerian Army for its contribution to the attainment of peace in the country. He told the peacekeepers, who were also recently inducted following the departure of NIBATT 9, that Nigerian troops were not new in Sierra Leone since, in addition to serving with UNAMSIL, they also served with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG).

The Deputy Force Commander, urged the peacekeepers to observe strictly the rules of engagement in their execution of duty as the dynamics of Freetown demand extra skills and caution due to presence of large numbers of ex-combatants and the youth groups coming into the city.

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