

UNITED NATIONS



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*UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE  
(UNAMSIL)*

**PRESS RELEASE**

23 September 2002

**FESTIVITIES TO MARK INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE  
HELD AROUND THE COUNTRY**

*Freetown* – The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone, UN agencies and other partners marked the International Day of Peace on 21 September with a Peace Day Run and various other activities in Freetown and the main provincial towns.

In Freetown, more than 500 runners wearing T-shirts with the message “I Am For Peace! Are You?” participated in races that started from different points of the city and ended at the National Stadium where a sizeable crowd had gathered to hear peace messages from UNAMSIL and Government officials. The race was part of a series of sporting events that included a soccer competition, a 5,000-metre run and some sprint events.

Addressing the crowd, Vice President Solomon Berewa paid tribute to UNAMSIL and the international community for bringing peace Sierra Leone and urged the youth to be guardians of peace. Youth and Sports Minister Dennis Bright disclosed that the Government had just approved a national youth development policy and called on the youth to be responsible citizens.

Speaking on behalf of the UN, the chief of UNAMSIL’s Public Information Section, Ms. Margaret Novicki, described the day as a “special day for Sierra Leone,” particularly for the young people, adding that UNAMSIL would not have resolved the war without the participation of the youth in the peace process.

Other activities at the National Stadium included the launching an audio cassette with peace songs in five local languages by the chief of the UNAMSIL Human Rights Section, Mr. Rodolfo Mattarollo, and the presentation of prizes to race winners by the Acting Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, Mr. Behrooz Sadry.

In the southern provincial headquarters of Bo, runners in different categories took off from three ends of the town and converged at the Kakua Mini-Stadium, where Government and UNAMSIL officials addressed them. In the northern town of Makeni, the youth ran from the two ends of town and converged at the Wusum stadium, where they were addressed by the Commanding Officer of UNAMSIL’s Nigerian Battalion 11, Col. Olukayode Keshinro, and Government officials. Similar activities also took place in Kenema and in Port Loko.

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