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**UNAMSIL DEPUTY FORCE COMMANDER BIDS FAREWELL TO
PEACEKEEPERS AS HE COMPLETES HIS TOUR OF DUTY**

Freetown - The Deputy Force Commander of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), Maj. Gen. Martin L. Agwai, has been touring the country to bid farewell to peacekeepers in all five UNAMSIL operational sectors following the end of his tour of duty. Maj. Gen. Agwai is scheduled to leave for New York soon to take up a new assignment with the UN Headquarters as the Deputy Military Adviser in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

In Koidu in the eastern district of Kono, the Deputy Force Commander toured UNAMSIL's Sector 5 Headquarters and units operating in the area before holding discussions with senior commanders. He also visited Pakistani battalions in Kailahun and Daru where he delivered farewell speeches.

The Deputy Force Commander also visited Kombayende village in Kono District, the first place in the district he visited in May 2000 when the Donsos, a former militia group, were fighting to retake Koidu from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and in the process disrupted the disarmament process that was taking place at the time in Kambia District. He said he wanted to see how the situation has changed in the village as compared to more than two years ago when one "did not find any chicken or woman, except the Donsos."

In his speeches to various peacekeepers he visited, the Deputy Force Commander thanked them for their support during his tenure of office and commended them for their "commitment and dedication to duty." He expressed his conviction that the peacekeepers would continue from where their predecessors left off and expressed the hope that they would leave their footprints on which future generations will appreciate their contribution in bringing peace to Sierra Leone.

During his visit to Bo and Moyamba yesterday where he had flown to bid farewell to Guinean and Nepalese peacekeepers, the Deputy Force Commander wished them success in their assignments.

In Hastings just outside Freetown, Maj. Gen. Agwai thanked Bangladeshi engineers and logisticians for their contribution with plant equipment and logistical support to UNAMSIL. He also extended the same courtesy to the Ukrainian Aviation Unit, based in Hasting, bade farewell to the Bangladeshi Battalion 7 peacekeepers based in Lungi as well as the Nigerian peacekeepers in Freetown.

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