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**UN Envoy hands over of new police station in Ganta to the Liberia National Police**

*Nimba County, Liberia, 1 November, 2006* -- In a move that further strengthens the Liberian National Police (LNP), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, has handed over the newly-constructed Ganta Police station in Nimba County, about 240 kilometers northeast of Monrovia, to the LNP. Rehabilitation work on this police station was financed by the UN Mission in Liberia, UNMIL, through its Quick Impact Projects as part of the mission's overall efforts to support the Liberian Government in re-establishing the Rule of Law across



SRSG Doss, *center*, joined by Superintendent Kamei, *right*, and Ganta City Mayoress, Ms. Tensonnon, *left*, to open the new police station

the country.

Speaking during the handover ceremony, Mr. Doss stressed the crucial role of the LNP in ensuring that Liberia remains safe and secure for the future. "We've trained over 2,000 police officers and we hope that, by this time next year, we will have 3,500 trained LNP officers deployed throughout the country". He noted that the LNP is also receiving new equipment including arms. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General gave the assurance that more police stations would be built or rehabilitated in the coming months. Already several prisons, magistrate courts and police stations have been renovated by UNMIL.

The UN Envoy appealed to the people of the area to work closely with UNMIL in securing Liberia's hard won peace. "We need you to work with our police and military forces. We must avoid mob justice. We can not allow violence to come back to this community, otherwise everything that we have worked for will be at risk" he said. Mr. Doss stressed that the citizens of Nimba County must help UNMIL protect Liberia from any cross border trafficking of arms or recruitment of mercenaries. He also called on the people of the County to deal peacefully with the outcome of the Presidential Commission on land disputes, which is expected to report shortly.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that sustained peace in the area is paving the way for local economic recovery, and he expressed his satisfaction to see a branch of Ecobank being opened in Ganta.

Liberia's Solicitor General, Counselor Tiawan Gongloe, stressed the need for citizens of Ganta and Nimba County to work closely with the police. "The law established the police to be the force that will protect the rights of all Liberians; but in order for the police to be effective, they must have the cooperation of the community," he said. "You must be the one to provide information on the presence of criminals in your areas and be the witnesses in the court rooms so that there could be proper prosecution and convictions of criminals," he implored, adding that Liberian citizens must respect the police and not frustrate the work of the police through interference with due process of law.

The ceremony was attended by the visiting Director of the Africa Division in the Department of Peacekeeping Operations at UN Headquarters, Mr. Dmitry Titov, UNDP Country Director, Mr. Steven Ursino, UN Police Commissioner, Mr. Mohammed Alhassan, Sector Commander Brig.-Gen. Zia, Deputy Inspector-General of the LNP, Mr. Gayflor Tarpeh, and Nimba County Superintendent, Hon. Robert Kamei.

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