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UN Envoy Meets with Representatives of Civil Society Organizations

Monrovia, Liberia – The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, together with the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Recovery and Governance, Mr. Jordan Ryan, on Tuesday, 25 April 2006, met with representatives of Liberia’s civil society organizations (CSOs) to discuss ways to strengthen the cooperation between the UN Mission and civil society.



SRSR Doss, DSRSR Ryan and other guests at the NACCSOL workshop

Addressing the CSO representatives at the YMCA building in Monrovia, the Special Representative stressed the important contribution a vibrant and active civil society can make towards the sustenance of democracy. He urged them to maintain an open dialogue with the three branches of Government and to promote reconciliation and tolerance.

Mr. Doss highlighted the recent positive developments in the country. But he cautioned that “much work still needs to be done” and assured the audience that in line with its mandate from the United Nations Security Council, UNMIL will continue to work for a secure and stable environment, which will allow the new administration to push forward with its reform and development agenda. He emphasized the importance of providing assistance to help promote stability through employment opportunities for youth.

The SRSR also reminded the audience that “UNMIL stands ready to respond robustly to any threat to peace and security in the country.” He stressed that protest should be peaceful and non-violent.

Other issues that were highlighted included community-based recovery programmes, the disarmament process, the importance of fighting drug abuse, the reintegration and rehabilitation programmes for ex-combatants and protection against human rights abuses, including sexual violence against women and children.

The National Coalition of Civil Society Organizations of Liberia (NACCSOL), a conglomeration of one hundred CSOs, is holding its third assembly on 25-26 April 2006. The workshop will address a variety of national issues, including the role of civil society in the work of the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC), the establishment of a war crimes court and its effects on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the government response to the petition submitted by 81 civil society organizations regarding the security sector reform and the progress of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Programme (GEMAP).
