

UNIOSIL staff welfare committee brings joy to a good neighbour in Freetown

By Abdul Kuyateh & Hannah Koroma (text) and Michael Mondeh (photos)

Every attending member of the Aberdeen Community in Freetown - which hosts the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) - during the handing over ceremony of the Cape Community Primary School on 30 June 2007, had in their face clearly written, beams of joy and hope for the future. Signs of gratitude were obvious for all the assistance the community had received towards the construction project of the School, culminating in its recent rehabilitation by the Staff Welfare Committee (SWC) of UNIOSIL.



The UNIOSIL Chief Administrative Officer, Ms. Mary C. Roth, officially cutting the tape into the new encouraging learning environment of the Cape Community Primary School in Aberdeen, Freetown, on 30 June 2007, at the handing over ceremony of the School following its rehabilitation by the Staff Welfare Committee (SWC) of UNIOSIL.

The founding father of the School, Gabriel Scott, a beach boy, summarized the community's mood, when he said "the community appreciates the good work of SWC".

The low key, but brief and light-hearted event took place at the School's grounds back of the Cape Sierra Hotel graced by the Executive Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General in Sierra Leone, Mr. Victor Angelo; and the Chief Administrative Officer of UNIOSIL, Ms. Mary C. Roth among other UN Staff.

In her welcome address, the chairperson of the SWC, Rosemarie Hoosein, said in selecting the Cape Community Primary School as a renovation project,



The Head Girl of Cape Community Primary School in the Aberdeen Community at the west end of Freetown, presenting a bouquet of flowers to the Chairperson of the Staff Welfare Committee (SWC) of the United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL), Ms. Rosemarie Hoosein, as a token of appreciation of the Committee's efforts in rehabilitating the only Community School in the vicinity.

"SWC was mindful of the fact that children of a nation are its greatest resource", which she noted was no less true of Sierra Leone. The gesture, she went on, "...marks the belief of UNIOSIL in the truth of that statement ...and also represents the UN missions modest efforts to be a good neighbour".

On behalf of the Committee she expressed her gratitude to the donors for their generous contributions including St. Mary's Supermarket; IPC; Sierra Rutile; Shankiel Enterprise; Crown Bakery; Atlantic

Restaurant; Freetown Super Market; Pay Less Supermarket and Country Lodge, which made it possible for the rehabilitation work to be completed on time.

In her key note address the CAO gave a run down of the involvement of the SWC in the renovation of the School noting UNIOSIL's concern in helping the locals. " The SWC undertook to raise some funds for giving something back to the local community from among its activities...we came to know about the Cape Community School and that it could need some help in renovating its premises" she revealed. She registered her appreciation to the Engineering Section of UNIOSIL for their assistance in the project.

"We are here to formally recognize that this assistance has been provided and to hand back the premises in such a very good and improved condition for the benefit of all children and staff of the School" Ms. Roth noted and encouraged the SWC to keep up with the good work.

The Head Teacher of the School, Mr. Moriba Ben Swaray, expressed her thanks to UNIOSIL on behalf of the teachers, pupils and their parents, describing the intervention of the SWC as a "laudable venture for the development of education in this nation".

He disclosed that though his School was the youngest it was the fastest growing in the community, with a current role of 378 pupils between the ages of 5 and 15. He said the School had presented three sets of candidates for the school leaving National Primary School Examinations (NPSE) with good performance record. He said with the declaration of free and compulsory primary education, the role was bound to increase next school year noting that the face-lifting of the school had given it a new lease of life to meet the challenges of next school year.

The Principal appealed to the Ministry of Education Science and Technology to approve the new teachers who had worked since September 2006 without a dime of salary.

The rehabilitation work included painting, plastering and the construction of a water tank that harvests rain fall. Mr. Swaray, however, highlighted the acute lack of furniture as the major challenge facing the school which needs urgent attention.

A bouquet of flowers was presented by the head girl to the CAO and the Chair of the SWC, while the cutting of the tape by the former, marked the new entry point into an encouraging teaching and learning environment.



A cross section of pupils of the Cape Community Primary School in Aberdeen, Freetown, attentively listening to speeches made at the handing over ceremony of their School after been retouched by the Staff Welfare Committee of UNIOSIL.