



UN Workshop for Police Officers Focuses On Gender, Human Rights

UN News Service (New York)

NEWS

3 August 2007

Posted to the web 4 August 2007

New York

The United Nations in collaboration with Sierra Leone's Government today concluded a three-day workshop for national police officers covering gender issues, human rights, mediation and other topics aimed at ensuring next week's parliamentary and presidential elections are free of violence in the formerly war-torn West African nation.

The workshop, which began on Wednesday, was attended by 40 female and 10 male mid-level police officers from the Republic of Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and also focused on such issues as crowd control, security and electoral laws ahead of the 11 August polls, the second since the country emerged in 2002 from a brutal decade-long civil war.

"We are here to strengthen the capacity of the SLP to address post-war challenges and consolidate the hard-won peace in the country consistent with the mandate of UNIOSIL (the UN Integrated Office in Sierra Leone)," Navaraj Dahkal of the UN Police (UNPOL) told the officers.

In a joint presentation on gender relations and the status of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Jebbeh Forster of the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and Enshrah Ahmed of UNIOSIL focused on improving the way officers' deal with the public and particularly how they handle domestic violence.

Further, Sheik Bakarr Kamara, a UNIOSIL outreach officer, emphasized the training's consistency with Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) which is geared towards providing greater protection and building the capacity of women so that they "may become partners rather than followers."

Copyright © 2007 UN News Service. All rights reserved. Distributed by AllAfrica Global Media (allAfrica.com).
