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UN Envoy Hails Indian Female Police Unit for Gender Equality Role, Performance

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NEWS

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The United Nations all-female Indian police unit in Liberia, the first such unit deployed in peacekeeping missions, not only demonstrates gender equality but also serves as an encouragement for Liberian women to become police officers themselves, the top UN envoy to the West African country has said.

Speaking at the weekend as he awarded medals to members of the Indian Formed Police Unit (FPU) in Liberia's capital Monrovia, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Alan Doss, congratulated the women for their work in responding to emergency situations, crime prevention, and the support given to Liberia's National Police (LNP).

"Though a new beginning for gender equality in peacekeeping, this deployment is a continuation of India's consistent commitment to peacekeeping operations," said Mr. Doss. "This ceremony is not only about gender equality. It is about performance. You have all performed your duties well and met our high expectations."


"Your presence is an encouragement for Liberian women to come forward, and help rebuild their country by participating in the forces of law and order," he added. The all-female FPU arrived in Liberia in January this year to join UN efforts in helping to rebuild the country after a devastating 14-year civil war.

The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) is currently assisting the LNP in attracting more women into the police. Out of more than 3,500 new police officers who have so far received training, only 203 are women, well below an agreed target of 20 per cent. A special programme to encourage more women to join the police was launched earlier in the year.

In the fifteenth progress report on Liberia, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon recommended that FPUs remain with UNMIL to help ensure continuing stability. FPUs are better armoured than normal units and are usually made up of around 125 officers from a single country.

India is the third largest troop contributing country to the UN, with police and military peacekeepers deployed worldwide under the blue flag. UNMIL currently has more than 15,300 uniformed personnel, including almost 1,200 police officers.

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