

**Farewell Speech for Special Representative of the Secretary  
General to Liberia Alan Doss  
Friday 14 December 2007**

Mr. Vice President, Mr. Speaker, Mr. President Pro-Tempore and Members of the National Legislature, Mr. Chief Justice and Members of the Judiciary, Members of the Cabinet, Officials of Government, Members of the Diplomatic Corps, Special Representative of the Secretary General, Members of the United Nations family, the Non-governmental organization community, Civil society members, Distinguished guests:

Today we have the opportunity to honor Special Representative of the Secretary General in Liberia (SRSG), Alan Doss, a true friend of Liberia, a strong and committed leader and a champion of peace and development. Mr. Doss, as head of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, has played a critical role in the establishment and consolidation

of peace in Liberia and has provided key assistance to rebuilding the economic, political and social foundations of our country.

His has been a life devoted to the service of humanity, where he has focused on some of the most urgent contemporary situations facing our world. Some people are forced to embark on difficult journeys; Mr. Doss voluntarily chose a challenging career path, a career dedicated to improving the lives of the world's poor and those affected by conflict. Such demonstration of a strong and principled character is rare indeed. It should serve as inspiration to us all of the great progress we can achieve through hard work and act as a reminder of the duty we all share to improve the lives of our fellow human beings.

Mr. Doss arrived in Liberia in 2005 and found a country shattered by war, devastated by economic mismanagement and other social ills. As Head of the United Nations Mission, he was able to make an impact immediately as he put his experience to practice. He had an intimate feel for our sub-region and also for post-conflict situations. He knew us and he knew our problems. He knew that a peace agreement alone is insufficient for lasting peace, just as holding elections is itself not enough to ensure a robust democracy. Durable peace, sustainable development and true democracy require skilled implementation of carefully planned interventions, strong partnerships among stakeholders and a holistic worldview. These truths guided the way that he approached UN engagement in Liberia.

Mr. Doss also understood the need to coordinate action, especially in such a complex environment as Liberia. To increase coordination, consistency and coherency among UN actors, Mr. Doss has actively engaged with all stakeholders to focus on the main priority and responsibility of those involved in Liberia's reconstruction – improving the lives of the Liberian people and solidifying those gains through robust institutional frameworks. Open, honest dialogue between the various partners in this collective endeavor has characterized Mr. Doss's leadership of UNMIL. His interaction with and commitment to Stakeholders in the rural areas is particularly noteworthy.

Speaking with one voice is a difficult but essential task in order to achieve the most productive partnership between Liberia and the UN, and thus the most productive relationship for the Liberian people. I have always been

impressed with Mr. Doss's energy and ability to enhance cooperation among UN agencies so as to make the UN a stronger, more effective partner in our pursuit of durable peace and sustainable development. We look forward to building on this established relationship with Mr. Doss's successor, Amb. Ellen Loj.

The specific accomplishments of UNMIL under Alan Doss's leadership are far too numerous to recite here, but there are three accomplishments that are too important to avoid mentioning.

First, since 2003 brave UN soldiers have guaranteed our people's security by enforcing the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement. With a keen eye to the complex problems of our sub-region and the need for peace, Mr.

Doss has been a strong advocate of a continued robust UNMIL troop presence in Liberia in the short-term despite some international pressure for a drawdown. The 14 thousand troops and police officers that remain in Liberia today are necessary to ensure peace until we finish building the capacity of our security institutions. Alan Doss, from the beginning, has been a strong advocate of a Liberia that can stand securely on its own two feet.

Second, in a country that was once littered with arms, UNMIL successfully completed a comprehensive Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Rehabilitation program, wherein former combatants turned in their tools of destruction for assistance that enabled them to become productive members and important partners of the new Liberia. When totally completed, this is bound to be

a key milestone along our road toward peace and prosperity.

Third, UNMIL fostered the growth of our young but robust democracy by overseeing our country's first truly free and fair democratic elections. Since 2005, UNMIL has supported this government's four-pillared reconstruction and development agenda focusing on security, economic revitalization, infrastructure and basic services and the rule of law. This support comes in many forms and without it our efforts would have been badly handicapped.

One could go on and on. Nearly every aspect of progress in Liberia, in every county, across every sector, has been touched in some way by UNMIL and Mr. Alan Doss. He has indeed been an integral part of Liberia's recovery.

UNMIL's engagement in Liberia has not been static over the years. Mr. Doss clearly and correctly recognized that UNMIL's role would change as the Government of Liberia builds in strength and capacity. As we made progress, UNMIL and the many UN agencies adapted to reflect the evolving situation on the ground in Liberia. This adaptation is especially evident in the transition from emergency phase programming to longer-term development planning. Mr. Doss helped manage the growing pains of our progress – the move from relief to development in only a few years.

In addition to strong leadership, Alan Doss also brought to Liberia a strong sense of optimism, which was both inspiring and contagious – the mark of a true leader. He carried a message of hope and a vision for a better tomorrow that

was reinforced by his can-do attitude, exemplified by the statement: "it can be done!"

His leadership comes not from only having unique foresight and a clear vision of a better future, but also from being a natural listener with a strong moral compass that guides him in his work to improve the lives of all those around him. These are truly extraordinary talents from which Liberia is fortunate to have benefited.

Mr. Doss is more than a consummate diplomat. He is a Statesman for all states, for all peoples. He embodies the spirit of the United Nations at its best: compassion for all of God's children, determination to end suffering, and commitment to make the world a better place. His UNDP Culture puts development at the core of his agenda.

This is thus a bittersweet moment. It is certainly a joy to celebrate the considerable contributions Mr. Doss made to Liberia and to celebrate a man that I have come to know over the years – as many here have – as a dedicated partner in Liberia’s post-conflict transition. But the very fact that Mr. Doss was such an energetic and positive force for change makes it hard to part ways without emotion. His energy, optimism and ability will be missed and fondly remembered.

To memorialize Mr. Doss’s significant contributions to Liberia, his dream for a better tomorrow and as a testament to the lasting friendship between Mr. Doss and Liberia, the Government of Liberia in partnership with UNMIL will soon dedicate the Alan Doss Peace Park on a plot of land across from the City Hall in Paynesville.

In this grove, children will be able to be children, play and dream of their future, a future free from conflict and full of opportunity. I cannot think of a more fitting testament to the enduring friendship between the people of Liberia and Mr. Doss, a man who empathized with Liberians and had the courage to dream of a bright future.

We are pleased that Alan Doss will lead the UN Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In Mr. Doss, the UN will have the most capable and experienced person for the job. And DRC will have a strong partner in the pursuit of peace and development.

As you make the transition to the DRC, you will be in the good hands of your charming wife, who for the past 30 years has been your steadfast companion and partner. I am

sure you will continue to gain strength from such a strong woman.

Mr. Doss, Liberia wishes you and Mrs. Doss all the best as you embark on this new challenge. And we thank you from the bottom of our hearts for all your lasting contributions to our country's recovery efforts.

Thank you.