

Pioneer ECOWAS Volunteers Complete their Tour of Service in Liberia

14 ECOWAS Volunteers deployed to Liberia since August 2011 completed their tour of service, will return home enriched and greater regional peace spokespersons

MONROVIA, MONSTERRADO, LIBERIA, August 12, 2013 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The 14 ECOWAS Volunteers who were deployed to Liberia since August 2011 have completed their tour of service will return to their home countries enriched with their experience in the country as regional peace spokespersons as never before.

The Nigerian representative to Liberia, H.E. Ambassador Chidozie Obi-Nnadozie has urged graduating ECOWAS Volunteers to be worthy ambassadors of Liberia as they go back to their various countries.

Delivering a farewell speech in Monrovia on Wednesday, 7th August, 2013 at the margin of a three-day post-mission training aimed at equipping them with additional skills for life after their two-year duty tour, H.E. Obi-Nnadozie urged volunteers to use their personal experiences in Liberia to sensitize other Member States on the dire rebuilding and reconstruction need in the country.

The Ambassador commended the volunteers for choosing to serve in Liberia despite the obvious challenges they encountered during their two-year service.

Her Excellency also used the opportunity to hand the 14 pioneer ECOWAS Volunteers their certificates of service before making the symbolic gesture of accepting a posthumous one on behalf of Stephen Udu Arusi, one of the volunteers deployed to Liberia who died while on duty earlier this year.

Speaking on behalf of the Commissioner for Gender and Human Development, Dr. Adrienne Diop, the Regional Coordinator of the EVP, Mr. Ibrahim Ouedraogo commended the volunteers for their diligence during the service and then urged them to maximise on the skills and experience they acquired while serving in Liberia and during the training as they return the job market.

The EVP country representative in Liberia, Ms. Josephine Ndao also commended the volunteers for their selfless services and used the opportunity to read a very emotional letter written by two students who benefitted from the volunteers' assistance.

Also present at the event were delegates from the embassies of the Republic of Sierra Leone and Republic of Ghana in Liberia, and the Administration Assistant of the United Nations Volunteers Programme (UNV).

Organized by the ECOWAS Volunteers Programme, the end of mission training workshop ran from the 05 to 07 August 2013 and sought to equip the volunteers with life skills and other competencies relevant for easy post-service integration into the labour market. The modules covered include entrepreneurial skills, micro financing, project planning and management, as well as grooming and etiquette for job searching techniques.

The pilot phase of the ECOWAS Volunteers Programme (EVP), for citizens aged between 18 and 35, was officially launched in Liberia in March, 2010 with the purpose of developing young leaders who, thanks to their training and their common faith in the benefits of peace, will be agents of peace, reconciliation, regional integration and development of their nations and regions.

Liberia has been the first country to receive ECOWAS Volunteers and since December 2011, these young men and women have contributed their quota to the country's development efforts in the Health and Education sectors. They are laboratory technicians; environmental health specialists; curriculum development specialists; nurses; mental health specialists; mathematics, physics, chemistry, geography, English, and electronic teachers who have commendably committed two years of their life and expertise to the Liberian Peace and Development process. They were deployed across the country in the counties of Montserrado, Bong, Nimba, and Maryland. from Nimba County to Harper, and Bong County.

ECOWAS Volunteers Programme is presently operational in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea and its Regional Office is based in Ouagadougou within the ECOWAS Youth and Sports Development Centre (EYSDC). The African Development Bank (ADB), the United Nations Volunteers Programme under the ECOWAS Peace and Development Programme (PADEP), support the Programme, in its current pilot phase. It is expected that the EVP will eventually expand and reach out to all ECOWAS Member States and efforts are underway to involve more partners_

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