



United States Mission Sierra Leone

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March 23, 2016

Notice to the Press

U.S. Chargé d’Affaires Laurie Meininger Welcomes Peace Corps Volunteers

On Wednesday, March 23, the U.S. Mission in Sierra Leone, Chargé d’Affaires, Laurie Meininger, warmly welcomed ten Peace Corps Volunteers to Sierra Leone in a much-anticipated event marking the reopening of the Peace Corp program following the Ebola crisis. After an official swearing-in ceremony at the Peace Corps office in Freetown, the Volunteers will go into their respective communities to serve as literacy, science, technology, engineering and math secondary school teachers and Teacher Trainers.

Charge d’Affaires Meininger heralded the arrival of the Peace Corps volunteers to Sierra Leone noting the long tradition of Peace Corps Volunteers serving in Sierra Leone. “Peace Corps represents some of the best ideals of America – service above self, the importance of education and fostering mutual understanding between people. The United States is proud to renew our partnership with the Government of Sierra Leone with the reopening of Peace Corps.”

The U.S. Peace Corps program in Sierra Leone opened in 1962, then halted during the 11-year civil war. In 2010, the program returned by the invitation of the Government of Sierra Leone, and then in July, 2014, Peace Corps announced the evacuation of its 130 Volunteers due to safety concerns during the Ebola outbreak. Today’s event heralds the arrival of Peace Corps Response Volunteers, a unique group of short-term professionals who have previously served in either Sierra Leone or other African countries. In August, the next group of volunteers will arrive to take on their two-year assignments.

The U.S. Peace Corps is an independent, U.S. government agency which was launched by then-Senator John F. Kennedy for Americans to serve their country by deepening cross-cultural understanding between the U.S. and the host country. Since 1961, more than 200,000 Peace Corps volunteers have served in 139 developing countries in Africa, Latin America and Asia. More information is available at: www.peacecorps.gov.