



Embassy of the United States of America
Public Affairs Office

PRESS RELEASE

Freetown

November 10, 2011

Contact: Mark Carr

Tel: 076 515 000

U.S. Department of Defense Donates Motorbikes to RSLAF

Ambassador Michael S. Owen today handed over four motorbikes donated by the U.S. Department of Defense (DoD) to the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). These motorbikes were provided through the DoD's HIV/AIDS Prevention Program (DHAPP) which has been working in collaboration with RSLAF since 2001 to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS in the military.

The four Honda XR 125L off road motorbikes are the first of a 26-bike fleet which DHAPP will donate to RSLAF over the course of the coming year. The recipients of the first shipment of bikes represent the four highest-performing Peer Educator Units in RSLAF: the Joint Medical Unit, 4 Brigade, 5 Brigade, and 9 Battalion. These units demonstrated an exceptional ability to reach large audiences, manage resources wisely, and report accurately on their activities. Peer educators will use the motorbikes to reach remote areas and disseminate more information to service members and surrounding communities on how to avoid HIV/infection and transmission.

Ambassador Owen -- who presented the donation to Acting Chief of Defense Staff Brigadier S.O. Williams -- praised the joint achievements of DHAPP and RSLAF, noting that "It is only with support from the highest levels of RSLAF that

DHAPP has been able to succeed – and only your sustained interest and commitment can consolidate the gains we have made together.”

DHAPP funding for programs in Sierra Leone has more than tripled since 2002, growing from a \$200,000 budget to \$700,000. Today this innovative program serves the needs of more than seven thousand military personnel and their families, as well as providing health benefits to neighboring communities. DHAPP has supported the renovation of the 34th Military Hospital Lab, providing equipment such as CD-4 machines and hematology analyzers. This initiative also supports other aspects of public health by supplying malaria test kits and drugs for the treatment of a range of sexually-transmitted illnesses.

For more information on DHAPP’s programs in Africa and throughout the world, please see <http://www.dhapp.org/>