



NATIONAL PROBATION SERVICE
for England and Wales

Enforcement, rehabilitation and public protection

Press statement

April 24, 2002

National Probation Service – Thames Valley forges link with Mali

On Monday, April 29, at 5pm at the Bicester headquarters of the National Probation Service – Thames Valley, Kingsclere Road, the Chief Officer, Gerry Marshall, and members of the Thames Valley Probation Board will host an official welcome for Mahmadou Kone, the director of a small charity in Mali, West Africa, called Jeunesse et Developpement.

The Probation Service has decided to support the charity after Probation Service staff helped set up the UK-based Mali Development Group to support the work of Jeunesse et Developpement, after establishing links with a development worker in Mali.

Mali is a democratic country in West Africa and is the fifth poorest in the world. The Mali Development Group raises money for items Jeunesse et Developpement deems most useful. The two organisations are in regular contact via email. Recently, the group bought a moped for a health worker and a grain-grinding mill.

Other activities the Mali Development Group are involved in include hosting Mr Kone, who is currently undertaking a course in English at Regents College, Oxford; having a display of literature at the Barbican for the recent Mali Music concert, which featured some Malian musicians and Damon Albarn; making an application to Comic Relief for funding for a major adult literacy project; and running an art competition with some children's organisations in Mali (which included a detention centre).

Probation Service staff will support the Mali Development Group by buying the greeting cards designed by the children and through a 50/50 club.

ENDS

NOTE TO EDITORS:

The National Probation Service – Thames Valley deals works with adult offenders, supervising them through their court orders and assisting with rehabilitation. The main aim of the service is to increase public protection and reduce the reoffending rate.

The Mali Development Group is a registered charity formed in 2001. Its formal objectives are: to relieve persons in Mali suffering from poverty, sickness and distress; to advance for public benefit the education of the inhabitants of Mali; and to educate the public about the causes of, and ways of relieving, poverty, sickness and distress in Mali.

For further information, contact:

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