

Annex to the letter dated 6 June 2006 from the Permanent Representative of Liberia to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

The Government of Liberia presents its **compliments** and avails itself of this **opportunity** to request the lifting of the **regime** of **sanctions** imposed under United Nations Security Council Resolution 1521 (2003). The resolution revised the basis for action under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to reflect the changed circumstances in Liberia. It dissolved the Committee established under resolution 1343 (2001) and established the 1521 Committee. It **further** imposed for a period of twelve months, revised prohibitions in connection with arms, diamonds, timber, and the travel of designated individuals.

The Liberian Government believes that Resolution 1521 (2003) was necessitated by the rapid changes occurring both in Sierra Leone and **Liberia** as well as the **sub-region**. For instance, at the time of its passage, peace and security had generally been restored to Sierra Leone with all stakeholders, including the RUF which had been **transformed** to a political party, playing key roles in **process**. The initial principal objective which Resolution 1343 (2001) sought to achieve, **was** for the government of former President Taylor to sever any link **between** Liberia and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF); end **the** crisis and restore democratic rule in **Sierra** Leone, and curtail any threat of insecurity in the **sub-region**. Under Security Council Resolution 1343 (2001), the **Government** and people of Liberia were given **assurance** that the sanctions were to be applied **even handedly** and in a non-porous way, and that having complied with the demands of the Security Council, it will **fulfill** its commitment and lift the sanctions. Those demands have since **been** met, giving rise to the changed situation which necessitated Resolution 1521 (2003)

The Government of Liberia has fully complied with the demands in paragraphs **4(a), 5, 6, 7, 8, 10, 11, 13**, of Resolution 1521 (2003) and taken additional measures to satisfy the demands of the United Nations Security Council for the lifting of the sanctions on Liberia

With specific reference to the demands in paragraph **4(a)** of resolution 1521 **(2003)**, the Government of Liberia is pleased to note that Liberia, **Sierra Leone** and the sub-region are at peace, ~~former~~ President Charles Taylor is currently in the custody of the **UN-backed Special Court** for Sierra Leone, and that most of the individuals considered to be of threat to peace in the sub-region **are** positively engaged in the country either in private business or public offices. Additionally, the war in Liberia has ended; all combatants disarmed and demobilized, and a democratic government elected. **Currently**, the military and security ~~sectors~~ **are undergoing reform** and restructuring in keeping with the terms of the Accra Comprehensive **Peace** Accord.

In respect to the diamond industry, the Government of Liberia has effected the following measures:

1. An Act providing for controls on the export, import and transit of rough diamonds **was** passed **into** law in 2004. The Act lays out the basic **procedures** and processes for the productions, sales, **export** or transit of Liberian rough diamonds,
2. **Through** assistance **from** the High Diamond Council in Belgium, a sample of the **Kimberley** Process Certificate for use by Liberia upon the lifting of sanctions has been **designed**;
3. A National Diamond Certification and Database Center which is currently under construction with assistance ~~from~~ the US **Government** will be ready for occupancy in June. In an effort to support Liberia's participation in the world diamond trading market, the US **Government** recently initiated a **US\$1.4m** program to **assist** Liberia in implementing the **Kimberley Process**;
4. In collaboration with the United States Geological Survey through the Futures Group, a geological assessment was conducted in April of this year. This assessment is a **cardinal** requirement for membership in the KPCS as it determines ~~the~~ diamond potential of a participating country;

5. **The Government has** instituted several measures including the **training** of mineral inspectors and **mining** agents, establishment of regional offices, conducting **the** re-demarcation of all mining claims **through** cadastral **survey aimed** at satisfying the requirements of the **KPCS**;
6. With the **assistance** of the **UNDP** Monrovia office, Government is undertaking the diamond for development (**D4D**) **initiative which** will organize small scale miners into cooperatives to **ensure** that a portion of the sale value of minerals produced in any given community for development purposes through **the** District Development **Committees (DDCs)**;
7. The **Government**, in collaboration with the **UNDP** and **UNMIL** will organize a Regional Diamond **Conference** in Monrovia **from** June 28-30, 2006 with aim of discouraging the illicit mining and trade in diamonds, and at the same time **address** issues on the harmonization of policies, taxation, **legal** frameworks, environmental concerns and labor practices; and
8. The Government played host to a Kiberley Process Technical Review Team which visited the **country from** 22-27 May, 2006 to verify what **has** been achieved by the **Government** in meeting the requirements of the United Nations Security Council and the **Kimberley** Process Certificate Scheme.

Excellency, the Government of Liberia is aware that in spite of the immense **sacrificial efforts** being **exerted to** meet the conditions **for lifting the regime of sanctions**, there continue to be certain **unlawful** action on the part of those bent on frustrating **positive attempts**, to the detriment of the Liberian **nation-state AND** **country** **image**. **Forceful** actions **by** the government is underway to **address** this problem.

Concerning the timber Industry, the following actions **have been** taken by the Government of Liberia:

1. Enhanced the capacity of the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) by organizational **restructuring** and new management; training of personnel in forest law **enforcement**; chain of custody grading and scaling, forestry inventory among **others**; amending laws to allow for independent monitoring; establishment of the Liberia Forest Initiative 2004 comprising the US Government, European Commission, World Bank, etc.

2. Commissioned audit of the FDA for the purpose of transparency and accountability. Also adopted a system of depositing all forestry revenues in Government accounts instituted at the Central **Bank** of Liberia under control of the **GEMAP Controller** and the Managing Director of the FDA;
3. Reviewed and **declared** all seventy concession agreements null and void **ab initio** as per Executive Order **#1** issued by the President. Forest Reform Monitoring **Committee** also established to address **efficiency** in **future** concession administration. While the export of timber products is strictly restricted, pit sawing is allowed to supply timber for domestic market only. Addendum to concession agreements reflecting conservation policies and environmental policies under preparation;
4. With World **Bank** assistance, FDA is conducting a forest inventory to ascertain the potential value of forest resources and to provide information for monitoring, taxation, and enforcement;
5. **Undertaking** park protection and development program. This exercise has allowed for the removal of illegal miners **from** Sapo National Park and deployed trained **park** personnel and FDA staff to the Sapo National Park and Nimba Nature Reserves; and
6. Fully participate in donors meeting and other promotional activities as well as undertake bilateral discussions.

Excellency, the severe social, humanitarian and economic effects of the sanctions on the Liberian Government and the general population are well documented in the Report of the Panel of **Experts** in pursuance of paragraph **14(e)** of Resolution **1607** (2005) concerning Liberia. Your own reports have highlighted the dehumanizing humanitarian and economic plight the **Liberian** nation has been subjected to. A New Partnership for **Africa's** Development (**NEPAD**) **Humanitarian** Response and Post-Conflict Recovery Sub-cluster report on Liberia specifically indicated In **7.3.1** that **"Liberia** faces severe unemployment and underemployment problems, as well as dehumanizing urban and **rural** poverty levels. Estimates In **2003** indicate that

85% of the labour force was without jobs. All reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts must focus on creating employment and reducing poverty. It would be **difficult** to defend patterns of economic growth that do not result in substantial poverty reduction, since the post-conflict political and economic order will largely depend on it. It would be preposterous to expect peace and stability in a society where 85% of the people live below the poverty line and are deprived of such basic necessities as adequate nutrition and access to safe drinking water, **minimum** schooling, primary healthcare and **gainful employment**". The report made it clear that "**progress in poverty** reduction in Liberia will come **through** broad-based economic **growth, complimented** by **efficient** provision **of infrastructure** and social services such as education and health care."

It is highly unlikely that the Government of Liberia **can** make any significant stride in poverty reduction and the provision of social **services** when the diamond and timber industries, two significant life wires in the economy of the country continue to be under United Nations sanctions. Additionally, the continued existence of the regime of sanctions is a direct threat to the newly installed peace process and the democratic government which was instituted in its wake. Peace is a pre-requisite of economic recovery, growth and development. Without the guarantee of enduring peace, economic recovery and development can not be assured. **Imagining** peace in an atmosphere of severe deprivation and poverty is an illusion.

Finally, the government asks for a review of circumstances regarding sanctions in the travel of designated individuals. This review should take into account the fact that such sanctions were imposed because of the relationship with involvement in activities of former President Taylor. In those cases where no such relationship continues to exist or there is no risk to the security of Liberia by activities of those individuals, the government seeks to have these sanctions lifted to send a clear signal to all that law abiding citizens of good behavior that they can enjoy the rights granted them by the Liberian constitution.

Your Excellency, it is against this background, especially not to allow the costly **investment** in the search for, and restoration of peace in Liberia, that the recent ECOWAS Ministerial Conference held in Monrovia on May 15, 2006 called on the United Nations to lift the sanctions on the country for the new **government** to have access to needed resources to execute its

programmes and improve the standards of the people. The conviction of the ECOWAS Ministers was that if a **democracy** such as ours does not **produce** quick dividends, especially with regard to **employment** for the **youths**, the provision of basic **socio-economic** infrastructure, and **security** sector reform, the tendency for apathy and cynicism to set in is high, and this poses direct danger to such democracy.

Excellency the lifting of sanctions on Liberia will also simultaneously compliment calls for international economic assistance to consolidate the gains already made. The United Nations can not and must not be seen as contradicting its own goodwill or mitigating its own massive investment in the search and restoration of peace in Liberia.

In this regard, the Government of Liberia recommit itself and looks forward to a more positive and **rewarding** engagement with the international community, particularly the various organs of the United Nations, and requests the United Nations Security Council, through Yow Excellency, to empathize with the suffering people of Liberia and have these sanctions suspended or **lifted**.

(Signed) Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
