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UNMIL launches report on human rights situation in five rubber plantations

Monrovia, Liberia – The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) today launched its report on the human rights situation in five of Liberia’s rubber plantations. The report outlines a broad range of human rights concerns.



A 12 year-old boy helping his father meet his monthly quota at the plantation

The report contains a number of key findings, including the fact that concession agreements concluded in the past with the Government of Liberia impose minimal obligations on plantation management to protect the human rights of individuals and communities living and working on the plantations.

In addition, the report documents serious human rights abuses, including the exposure of workers to hazardous working conditions without adequate training or safety equipment; the denial of workers’ rights to a fair wage or equal remuneration; the frequent use of child labour; non-existent or inadequate health care for workers and their families; the negative effect of rubber production on the environment; and the detention and arrests which have been carried out in some cases by private security officers without the knowledge of the Liberian National Police.

“The failure to respect basic human rights affects every aspect of life on Liberia’s rubber plantations,” said Ms. Dorota Gierycz, Chief of the UNMIL Human Rights and Protection Section. “However, given the commitment of the new Government to upholding human rights and the unprecedented scrutiny which the plantations have been receiving, there has never been a better time to address human rights abuses on the plantations,” Ms. Gierycz added.

The recommendations made in the report for immediate and long-term action are intended to assist the Government, plantation management, civil society and international partners to make acceptable living and working conditions on the rubber plantations a reality. UNMIL will continue to monitor the rubber plantations, including progress made on these recommendations. The National Task Force on Rubber Plantations is also preparing a study which looks holistically at the economic and social aspects of the rubber plantations and which builds upon the analysis of human rights concerns undertaken by UNMIL.

A copy of the report is available on the UNMIL website: www.unmil.org.

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