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DSRSG asks local administration:
“How do we help you to tell the story of Grand Bassa?”

Buchanan, Liberia – The Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Recovery and Governance and United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia, Mr. Jordan Ryan, and senior officials from the UN Country Team, visited Buchanan, Grand Bassa County yesterday.

The objective of the mission was to support Liberia’s on-going efforts to restore civil authority and to ascertain first hand the development challenges facing the



DSRSG and UNCT in a welcoming briefing by Superintendent Duncan-Cassell

people of Grand Bassa. This visit was part of an innovative joint programme of the UN to establish Country Support Teams (CSTs) in each of the 15 counties. During the visit, the team met with County Superintendent, Ms. Julia P. Duncan-Cassell, and more than 40 representatives of line ministries, local and international non-governmental organizations in Grand Bassa.

In praising the work underway at the county already, Mr. Ryan noted, “The people of Grand Bassa are lucky to have you as their leaders. The truth is that UN does not have enough resources to do everything that needs to be done in Grand Bassa. The truth is that you will achieve far more by doing what you are doing today: by working together, articulating the common needs, coming up with a profile of Grand Bassa.” County profiles developed by decentralized government will identify gaps and help the UN get the message out to donors in advocating for more resources. Mr. Ryan also stressed the importance of the CSTs that have been set up to strengthen the capacity of the local administration. By bringing together the activities of the various UN actors in each county under one umbrella, the CSTs will ensure that the knowledge, tools and resources of the UN can best contribute to the restoration of state authority and realization of the national development vision.

County Superintendent Duncan-Cassell and her colleagues briefed on the many challenges faced by the local population. She noted in particular the high prevalence of HIV/AIDS. Stressing the need for county leadership to work closely with the national government and the UN to tackle HIV/AIDS, Mr. Ryan said: “It is important that patients living with HIV/AIDS have access to proper treatment, they lead a productive life and are not discriminated against”. He urged the county authorities to take the lead role in the campaign against the pandemic.

As part of the day-long visit, Mr. Ryan and representatives from FAO, ILO, UNDP, UNHCR, UNICEF, UNIFEM as well as UNMIL also visited Buchanan’s port and the city’s main market area.
