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**Joint Rubber Plantations Task Force present findings to the President of Liberia**

**Monrovia, Liberia** - The final report of the Joint Government of Liberia – United Nations Rubber Plantations Task Force was submitted to the President of Liberia, H. E. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, at the Executive Mansion on Tuesday. The report outlines key findings and recommends joint action to better secure and manage Liberia’s rubber plantations.



A tapper at work in one of Liberia’s rubber plantations

Presenting the report to President Sirleaf, the Minister of Agriculture and Chair of the Joint Task Force, Dr. Chris Toe, outlined the critical issues identified and elaborated on the recommendations made by the Task Force.

President Johnson-Sirleaf expressed her appreciation for the work of the team and endorsed the recommendations of the report. She expressed concern over the recurring violence at the plantations and requested the continued support of UNMIL to provide security and to stop the illegal sale of rubber. The President directed the repossession of illegally occupied plantations, the review of concession and management agreements at the plantations, the establishment of interim management teams at selected plantations and the extension of the Task Force’s mandate through December 2006 to ensure follow up.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Alan Doss, commended the excellent cooperation between the various government ministries on the Joint Task Force and UNMIL. SRSR Doss pointed out the importance of ensuring that the plantations are a source of benefit for the people of Liberia and not a source of insecurity and lawlessness. He pledged UNMIL support for the implementation of the Task Force recommendations.

The Task Force, led by the Ministry of Agriculture was established in February this year and comprises the Government of Liberia (Ministries of Finance, Gender and Development, Health and Social Welfare, Internal Affairs, Justice, Labour, and Planning and Economic Affairs, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, and the Liberia Rubber Development Authority), the private sector (Rubber Planters’ Association of Liberia), and the United Nations.

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