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Mr. President,

priorities put forward by the government in its letter of request addressed to the Security Council on 27 May 2010, namely in the areas of: rule of law, security sector reform, and national reconciliation. What needs to be mentioned here is that it is entirely to the credit of the Liberian Government for highlighting these three points. It takes strength and courage to expose one's own weaknesses before the UN like that, and they should be commended for having done so.

Turning now to rule of law, it was clear to me during my visit the court system of Liberia is gravely ill and its condition becomes progressively worse the further one moves away from Monrovia – a point that converges with the conclusions of the PBC August Assessment mission.

Liberia is a common law country with a three-tier court system: the Magisterial Courts, the Circuit Courts and the Supreme Court. The Magisterial Courts can only process about a third of the cases placed before them because of a narrow jurisdictional regime and because there are only a few properly trained magistrates. Most cases, therefore, are sent up to the Circuit Courts if the relevant files are not lost altogether. While there is now an attempt to create a pilot case tracking system, given the poor state of the judiciary, it will require a great deal of effort before the entire process becomes properly functional.

Moreover, the trials held at the circuit level are jury trials and each trial averages 40 days. Therefore, only a very limited number



Turning to my second question: how could the PBC help given what the earlier assessment mission and I saw. Clearly we need to do three things building on what UNMIL, the UN family more broadly speaking, and the international community have already achieved, which is very substantial. We must mobilize further resources for Liberia. Second we must provide it with advice on how they, the Liberians, could better marshal resources themselves. Third, we need to give expression to the strengthening of judicial and security services in regions beyond the capital Monrovia by supporting the creation of five (5) security/justice hubs throughout the country – beginning with the first in Gbanga to which I will get to shortly. I will now touch in greater detail on all three points.

We have a Statement of Mutual Commitment already agreed to with the Government of Liberia. The document was adopted on 15 November and drawn up on the basis of an excellent report provided by the aforementioned PBC assessment mission led by the United States in August. A Joint Steering Committee created for the purpose of an earlier disbursement of funds by the PBF will now be reconfigured to work with the PBC and adopt a priority plan reflecting the Statement of Mutual Commitment. Following this, a project list will be drawn up and targets will be in place – hopefully by the third week of January.

In view of Liberia's needs in these three areas, nothing presently in the PBF or in the Justice and Security Fund could come remotely close to satisfying them. I believe, however, there is considerable room to broaden the donor base and am formulating ideas on how best to approach new potential donors. Liberia is fortunate to have a number of natural resources and has been successful recently in signing concession agreements. This provides a sound basis for future discussion.

Second, I believe it is important for the Liberians to have a clear top-down strategy when it comes to raising the necessary funds themselves from the international community, quite beyond the President's own herculean efforts, to cover the start-up costs of new projects or the maintenance costs of existing projects. And this they can do, need to do, with the right people in the right posts and all anchored in a well-thought through strategy.

While I was in Gbanga, in Bong County, the central part of Liberia, I had also the honour of breaking ground for the first Hub designed to be the pilot Hub – in the presence of senior government officials, the ASG for the Peacebuilding Support and senior UNMIL officials. As members of the Council will recall, the concept of the Hubs came from the LNP Strategic Plan. A sum of \$3 million has now been approved by the PBF as initial financing and UNOPs is leading in the building at the chosen site. Some local 300 youth will be immediately employed to create the materials necessary for building and a further 100 with building skills will also be drafted to help, coming from other parts of the country. And this is a crucial point. When I met with the Gbanga Motorcyclist Union - young ex-combatants who used their DDDR money to purchase motorcycles and run courier and passengers services - it was clear that if they were not gainfully employed it would not be difficult in time to recruit them for other activities. We hope that a youth employment project, formulated following the completion of a study of recent attempts by UNDP and the World Bank to do the same, will begin a process of soaking up as many of the unemployed youth as possible.

Mr. President,

