



Security Council

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Letter dated 28 November 2002 from the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia addressed to the President of the Security Council

On behalf of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia, I have the honour to transmit herewith a copy of a letter dated 25 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations.

I would appreciate it if this letter were issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Kishore **Mahbubani**
Chairman

Security Council Committee established pursuant
to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia

Annex

Letter dated 25 November 2002 from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations addressed to the Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) concerning Liberia

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to transmit a letter dated 22 November 2002 addressed to you as Chairman of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) from Solomon Berewa, Vice-President of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

I should be grateful if the present letter and its enclosure could be issued as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Ibrahim M. **Kamara**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative

Enclosure

Please refer to our letter of 31 October 2002 in which the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations informed you, *inter alia*, that the Government of Sierra Leone was preparing its definitive official comments on the report of the Panel of Counsel on Liberia (S/2002/1115, annex).

The Government of Sierra Leone has taken note of the report and wishes to make the following observations on those parts that relate directly to the situation in Sierra Leone, and in particular to its continuing effort to consolidate the peace and establish a measure of justice and national reconciliation.

As far as Sierra Leone is concerned, the Liberian Government has offered no credible and convincing evidence that it has taken action, including legislative action, to expel all Revolutionary United Front (RUF) members and prohibit all RUF activities on its territory, as demanded by the Security Council in paragraph 2 (a) of its resolution 1343 (2001). It will be recalled that Sierra Leone, for its part, had taken the necessary legislative action to effect the transformation of RUF into a political party, namely, the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFPP). RUFPP contested the recent parliamentary and presidential elections.

The symbolic declaration of the end of the rebel war in Sierra Leone and the completion of the so-called metamorphosis of RUF into a political party now known as the RUF Party do not automatically render paragraph 2, subparagraphs (a) to (d), of resolution 1343 (2001) redundant.

A clear distinction should be made between RUFPP in Sierra Leone and those armed members of RUF who refused to participate in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process — and who chose to settle outside the country, especially in Liberia. The existence of these hard-core remnants of RUF, especially in Liberia, has been and remains a matter of serious concern for the Government of Sierra Leone.

In this connection, the Government of Sierra Leone notes with deep concern the Panel's observations that:

- Reports still persist that hundreds of RUF members form the core of some of the offensive units on the side of the Government of Liberia;
- The hard-core elements of RUF had been integrated into the Anti-Terrorist Unit in Liberia, and the Unit's continued loyalty to Sam Bockarie is the latter's guarantee to continued Liberian patronage;
- RUF strength in Liberia is estimated at between 1,250 and 1,500 men, who represent the last coherent surviving structure of the armed RUF, are maintained by the Liberian Government and continue to play an important part in Liberia's military capability;
- Citizens and diplomats in Monrovia still regard the area where the Panel met Sam Bockarie's wife as an RUF stronghold and are frightened to go there.

The Panel reports that Sam Bockarie is thought not to be staying in Liberia and that his wife claims she had not seen him for at least six months. This in no way implies that the Government of Liberia has expelled Sam Bockarie from Liberia or that he no longer has any direct links, including military and financial ones, with the

remnants of RUF presently in Liberia and with the Government of Liberia. Furthermore, lack of information on his whereabouts does not imply that Sam Bockarie no longer enjoys the patronage of the Liberian Government.

In this connection, the Government of Sierra Leone notes that the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Liberia was, until recently, reluctant to allow the Panel to talk to Mrs. Bockarie. The Sierra Leone Government also notes that one of the sources of the Panel's observation is a key former member of RUF, someone who among other things, is known to have been an RUF commander of operations; a signatory, on behalf of RUF, to documents negotiated with international organizations; and a known active participant in transactions involving rough diamonds from Sierra Leone, which were used to fuel the rebel war.

On the issue of diamonds, the Panel has not made any specific comment concerning implementation of paragraph 2 (c) of resolution 1343 (2001). However, the Government of Sierra Leone believes that until the introduction of a credible certificate of origin scheme for Liberia, a scheme that is compatible with the Kimberly Process, it would be very difficult to determine whether in fact the Government of Liberia has complied with the Security Council's demand that it cease "all direct or indirect import of Sierra Leone rough diamonds which are not controlled through the Certificate of Origin regime of the Government of Sierra Leone ..."

The Government of Sierra Leone is disturbed by the findings of the Panel concerning violations of the arms embargo provisions of resolution 1343 (2001). This, together with the continued presence in Liberia of the "last coherent surviving structure of the armed RUF" fighters, should **not** under any circumstances be taken lightly.

It is relevant to draw the attention of the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) that for over three years in the course of vicious rebel attacks, the Government of Sierra Leone met its obligations under Security Council resolution 1171 (1998). The Government still continues to scrupulously implement the measures imposed by the resolution relating to transparency in arms imports.

Finally, the Government of Sierra Leone recalls recent developments in the Mano River Union subregion, including the effort of President Kabbah, to facilitate confidence-building measures for peace and stability in the subregion. These developments notwithstanding, the Government of Sierra Leone strongly urges the Committee established pursuant to resolution 1343 (2001) and the Security Council to take the above concerns into consideration in deciding on the next step towards fulfilment of the objectives of subparagraph (a) to (d) of paragraph 2 of the resolution. As the Panel itself observes, the demands contained in those subparagraphs were intended to lead to *the consolidation of the peace process in Sierra Leone* (emphasis added) and to further progress in the peace process in the Mano River Union.

(Signed) Solomon E. **Berewa**
Vice-President