

Report of the Hamada Mission to Sierra Leone

For further enhanced efforts for peacebuilding in Sierra Leone and successful development of an Integrated Peacebuilding Strategy for Sierra Leone

Masayoshi Hamada
Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan
10 August 2007

Summary

A mission by a Japanese delegation to the Republic of Sierra Leone took place from 30 July to 4 August 2007. The main objectives of the mission were (a) to observe the status of the preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone scheduled for 11 August 2007 and, in order to encourage their smooth and successful conduct, hold discussions with national and international stakeholders; (b) to assess at first hand specific needs and gaps in peacebuilding priorities in Sierra Leone following Japan's inauguration as the chair country of the UN Peacebuilding Commission in June, with a view to the practical and productive development of an integrated peacebuilding strategy for Sierra Leone; and (c) to explore the future possibility of Japan's further contribution to the consolidation of peace and development in Sierra Leone.



Aerial view of Freetown

During the visit, the mission, led by Mr. Hamada, was able to observe active election campaigning by candidates and felt this to be a clear indication of the steady development of democracy in Sierra Leone. On the eve of the elections, the leader of the mission reiterates his sincere hope that the elections will be held in a free, fair and peaceful manner. Following certification of the election results, the Peacebuilding Commission and the new Government of Sierra Leone must enter into in-depth discussion on the development of a full IPBS, or Sierra Leone Compact.

For wider efforts in peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, every actor in addition to the PBC must play its respective role. The Government of Sierra Leone, while continuing to exercise genuine ownership, must address issues of international concern, particularly that of good governance, including the provision of assurances of transparency and zero tolerance of corruption. The resident donor community and civil society actors can also play a role in ensuring the implementation of this critically important endeavor.

International partners, for their part, must maintain their attention to Sierra Leone's peacebuilding needs and extend assistance that leads to tangible results on the ground. They must actively take into consideration the main peacebuilding challenges identified by the PBC and the Government, and prioritize to the extent possible their specific assistance projects to meet these vital short- and medium-term needs, with a view to preventing the recurrence of conflict.

In recognition of such needs, Japan is determined to continue to extend assistance for Sierra Leone on a bilateral and multilateral basis and through the activities of the PBC. More broadly, Japan will maintain and accelerate its efforts for peacebuilding and further development of the African continent as a whole, under the vision expressed in the theme of the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) scheduled for 28-30 May next year: "Towards a Vibrant Africa: Continent of Hope and Opportunity."

The mission observed at first hand that Sierra Leone is facing enormous and daunting challenges in post-conflict reconstruction and development. But no matter how difficult the reality is, all mission members believe that we must maintain our confidence in peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. The Peacebuilding Commission is in a unique position to stimulate and accelerate the efforts for Sierra Leone in this regard, and therefore must actively seize the opportunity.

I. Background

1. A mission by a Japanese delegation to the Republic of Sierra Leone took place from 30 July to 4 August 2007. The eight-member delegation was led by Mr. Masayoshi Hamada, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. The main objectives of the mission were (a) to observe the status of the preparations for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone scheduled for 11 August 2007 and, in order to encourage their smooth and successful conduct, hold discussions with national and international stakeholders; (b) to assess at first hand specific needs and gaps in peacebuilding priorities in Sierra Leone following Japan's inauguration as the chair country of the UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) in June, with a view to the practical and productive development of an integrated peacebuilding strategy (IPBS) for Sierra Leone; and (c) to explore the future possibility of Japan's further contribution to the consolidation of peace and development in Sierra Leone.

2. The mission held meetings with President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Mohamed Lamin Kamara, Executive Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General and head of the United Nations Integrated Mission in Sierra Leone (UNIOSIL) Victor da Silva Angelo, National Electoral Commission (NEC) Chair Christiana Thorpe, Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC) Chair Sydney Warne, Special Court Registrar Herman von Hebel and National Election Watch (NEW) representative Frances Fortune. The mission also conducted site visits related to peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, which included military barracks in Freetown and a community development project near Makeni, the capital of the Northern Province.



Meeting with President Kabbah

3. The report of the PBC mission to Sierra Leone (A/61/901-S/2007/269), which was a very useful and informative output of the PBC's March field visit, should continue to be used as a reference hereafter. It is the hope of the Japanese delegation that the present report will supplement the findings contained in the PBC's outcome report. We also hope that this report will contribute to the future development of a full IPBS, or Sierra Leone Compact, following the upcoming elections. The members of the delegation present herein their observations and recommendations regarding the elections in Sierra Leone as well as the four peacebuilding priority areas jointly identified by the PBC and the Government of Sierra Leone in October last year.

II. Elections

4. The forthcoming elections will be the first such effort since the withdrawal of the UN peacekeeping operation, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), and thus will serve as a touchstone for the achievement of peace and security in Sierra Leone. Besides the high rate of voter registration mentioned in the Secretary-General's report to the Security Council in May (S/2007/257), I was able to observe during this visit active election campaigning by candidates, with their campaign bills posted on the streets and a number of supporters surrounding the candidates' offices. I felt this to be a clear indication of the steady development of democracy in Sierra Leone.

5. On 1 August, I had the opportunity to observe a conference, the Elections Security Consultative Conference, in which President Kabbah made a keynote speech and representatives of the NEC, the PPRC, security sectors, all major political parties, civil society organizations and the media participated. While the atmosphere at the conference was very relaxed and cordial, the exchanges of views that took place were active and serious. I sensed through this experience that efforts to build trust among major stakeholders were vigorously under way in view of the elections. Furthermore, it was also encouraging to hear and watch active reporting of election-related subjects and discussions in both English and local languages by the Sierra Leone media on radio and TV throughout the visit.

6. There were reports that some regrettable violent incidents had occurred in relation to the elections in some provincial areas. Although I was informed that these incidents had been largely contained, I reiterate that any form of violence relating to the elections must be firmly condemned and avoided. Regarding logistics for the elections, I was informed by all stakeholders that preparations were well under way. The fact that the voting is to be held at the height of the rainy season is a matter of concern, but I expect that the Sierra Leonean people will show their determination to promote democracy and express their will



Meeting with NEC Chair Thorpe

through the election process, regardless of the circumstances that are beyond their control. In order to facilitate the smooth conduct of the elections, Japan, for its part, provided \$US 2.8 million for equipment assistance through UNDP in March, as was mentioned in the report of the Secretary-General in May.

7. It is crucial that transparency and credibility in the management of the elections be fully and effectively ensured. In this regard, all political parties were encouraged to send monitors to all polling stations on the day of the balloting, while international observers were also expected to be dispatched. In this connection, it was interesting to learn that an NGO coalition group, New Election Watch (NEW), was planning to send observers to these stations and report any irregularity by text messaging on mobile phones, in order to make a prompt assessment of the fairness of the elections. The role of such “eyes and ears” will be essential in guaranteeing the free, credible and peaceful conduct of the elections. The Government of Japan will also send electoral observers from its Embassy in Ghana.

Recommendations

8. The Political Parties Code of Conduct and the Media Code of Conduct, both of which were products of the exercise of ownership by the Sierra Leonean people, must be strictly observed by all parties, while paramount chiefs must act decisively and in an impartial manner to convince the population to actively participate in the elections and to refrain from any resort to violence. The media, for its part, must continue to report matters related to the elections in a professional manner in line with the Media Code of Conduct, in order to promote understanding among the voters about the elections and to encourage their participation in the voting.



Meeting with ERSG Angelo

9. It is also of utmost importance that all parties respect and abide by the results of the elections, once they are properly certified. In case of any disagreement on the results for any reason, those disputing the outcomes must submit complaints in accordance with legal procedures. They should keep in mind that the international community is closely watching their actions, and any major violence or disruption relating to the elections will greatly undermine the credibility of Sierra Leone as a democratic country. The future of the country rests on the good conduct of all parties.

10. The international community, including the PBC, must continue to keep close watch on the developments in Sierra Leone up to and beyond the elections. It may wish, at an appropriate time, to send a strong and determined message to the people in Sierra Leone to the effect that further solid consolidation of peace in the country through the democratic process is expected. Upon the successful implementation of the elections, international partners, while respecting the sense of ownership of Sierra Leone, should take concrete actions to help to further promote democracy in Sierra Leone, by extending their assistance for that goal. For the PBC, dedication to an early and credible elaboration of an IPBS in collaboration with the newly elected leadership would be one of the specific ways to provide such support.

III. Observations and recommendations on peacebuilding priority areas

Youth employment and empowerment

11. I was struck during the visit by the sight of a number of young people loitering on the streets in Freetown. As I have visited about a dozen of countries in Africa, including the other country being considered by the PBC, Burundi, I am well aware that more or less the same situation can be observed in other parts of the continent. But, to my mind, the problem seemed to be most evident in Sierra Leone. It should be recalled that many of the unemployed youth were mobilized as rebel soldiers during the civil war years from 1991 on. As mentioned in the reports of the PBC and the Secretary-General, the unresolved issue of youth unemployment without question remains a potential threat to peace and security in Sierra Leone. Serious measures to create jobs for young people in Sierra Leone with at least minimally satisfactory wages must be taken promptly.

12. The high rate of unemployment is a result of the country’s weak economic base. As emphasized in paragraph 12 of the PBC field mission report, appropriate development of basic infrastructure is urgently needed to stimulate the economy of Sierra Leone and create job opportunities. During the visit, I found the critical lack of infrastructure to be apparent everywhere in Sierra Leone. For example, for travel between Freetown and Lungi Airport, which is the international gateway to the country, there were only limited means of transportation, which entailed either expensive fees or unreasonably long travel times. The condition of the only partially paved roads to and from the Airport was also very poor,

with very uneven surfaces and no street lights to provide illumination at night. Such conditions would undoubtedly discourage visits by potential business investors and tourists from the rest of the world. Another prominent example of the deficiency of infrastructure was the lack of electricity. When I had a meeting in the Foreign Ministry in Freetown, the uninterrupted noise of generators outside the building constantly interfered with our conversation. In this connection, it is worth mentioning an observation made by government officials on that occasion. They pointed out that, even if former soldiers have been successfully disarmed and demobilized, it is too difficult and expensive for the Government to obtain enough generators to guarantee decent lives and jobs for those demobilized. The lack of adequate infrastructure thus is not only an economic concern but also a potential security threat.

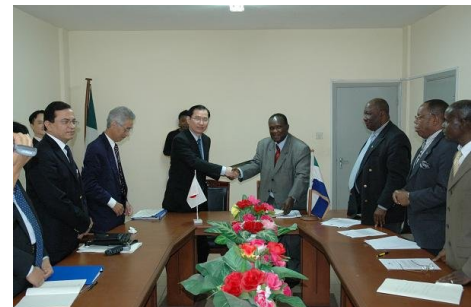


Hovercraft connecting Freetown with Lungi Airport

13. It was somewhat encouraging to see many new construction and rehabilitation activities being carried out in Freetown. However, we must bear in mind that, in addition to infrastructure, as elaborated in the sections that follow, the confidence of investors with regard to good governance is also critically important for sustainable economic growth in Sierra Leone.

14. It is welcome that the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) allocated in May funds amounting to approximately \$US 4.08 million to assist a project aiming to create employment opportunities for youth in small- and medium-sized enterprises. I hope that this project will have the effect of inviting follow-up donor assistance in this field, as envisaged upon the establishment of the Fund.

15. For Japan's part, I exchanged notes with Acting Foreign Minister Kamara on 1 August regarding Japan's assistance for the improvement of the electric power supply system in Freetown, amounting to approximately \$US 5 million. This assistance was based on Japan's recognition that the recovery of the system was urgently needed as well as the belief that it will contribute to broader peacebuilding efforts in Sierra Leone by stimulating the economy and creating job opportunities for the people of Sierra Leone, including the many unemployed youth.



Exchange of notes with Acting Foreign Minister Kamara

Recommendations

16. Prioritization of infrastructure needs by the Sierra Leonean Government and allocation of funds in accordance with those needs, after adequate consultation with its partners, are urgently required. The Government may also wish to consider providing, as a matter of priority, job opportunities for young people, in a systematic manner, through appropriate government organs such as a vocational training agency. Equal and transparent provision of such opportunities is absolutely essential. Consideration must also be undertaken for the employment and empowerment of youth in rural areas, for the sake of both development of the rural areas and avoidance of an excessive concentration of youth in Freetown. In addition, over and above the construction of new infrastructure, maintenance and improvement of existing infrastructure is also of the utmost importance. Furthermore, youth organizations in Sierra Leone have an important role to play in appealing for patience and restraint among young people, as they endeavor to find opportunities for collaboration with the Government and international partners to assist the country's youth in accessing vocational opportunities.

17. Infrastructure is a necessary foundation for economic activities, and economic activities stimulate employment, which the youth in Sierra Leone so urgently need. Therefore, bilateral and multilateral international donors should continue to provide assistance for reconstruction activities in Sierra Leone, with particular emphasis on rebuilding basic infrastructure in response to the priority needs identified by Sierra Leone and its partners, while also relying, when appropriate, on advice from international organizations. When necessary, they should provide assistance for the maintenance of such infrastructure as well. International organizations working in the area of reconstruction and development in Sierra Leone should continue to present specific and attractive assistance projects to members of the donor community for consideration, taking into account the priority needs identified by Sierra Leone and its partners.

Good governance

18. While promotion of democracy through the successful conduct of the upcoming elections is the most immediate challenge for the people of Sierra Leone, it is the fundamental task of the Government to firmly and thoroughly tackle the

issue of corruption in the country's political and economic life. This is particularly critical in order for Sierra Leone to make the necessary strides to achieve solid good governance. It should be noted that both the Secretary-General's report and the PBC's mission report identified corruption as an issue that needs to be urgently addressed.

19. It was pointed out in one of the meetings in Freetown that widespread corruption was actually presenting a major hindrance to business investment in Sierra Leone. The lack of clarity in procurement procedures is another governance-related issue of particular concern for the promotion of any business opportunities in the country. In this regard, it was an encouraging sign that, in a meeting with Government officials, I was able to gain assurances of their determination to strongly support transparent procurement procedures and zero tolerance of corruption. What is now required based on that statement is decisive and concrete action on the part of the Sierra Leonean Government.

20. Sierra Leone is a country with rich potential in the tourism, agriculture, fishery and mineral sectors. It is up to the Government to successfully utilize such potential for the welfare of the people and the prosperity of the country. The international community is strongly expecting and closely watching for decisive action by the Government in this area. In addition, proper management of precious minerals, particularly diamonds, is critical for revenue generation and the success of Sierra Leone's future economy. It is widely reported that diamonds are still being smuggled and the poorly managed local industry is not producing satisfactory revenue to support the work of the Government. Generally speaking, lack of revenue owing to ineffective taxation leads to the failure of timely payment of civil servants' salaries. This failure to pay salaries may cause temptation on the side of civil servants to resort to corruption. Collusive relations between civil servants and industry could result in the creation of loopholes to evade effective taxation, with a lack of sufficient revenue resulting therefrom. This kind of vicious circle needs to be broken.

Recommendations

21. The Government of Sierra Leone must take concrete action in the fight against corruption. Review of the past and present work of the Anti-Corruption Commission may be necessary, including the possibility of drastic reforms in its policy and structure if appropriate. As observed above, the failure to pay the salaries of civil servants creates a potential breeding ground for corruption. It is therefore necessary to guarantee an acceptable level of payment of salaries for them. I explicitly reminded the leadership of the country that determined action by the Government in the fight against corruption would lead to enhanced trust on the part of outside investors and eventual stimulation of the economy of Sierra Leone.

22. The international community should provide further encouragement to the Government to make progress in the fight against corruption. Implementation of this policy is not only a domestic concern for Sierra Leone. It is also essential in helping the country to gain further international credibility. I am certain that the international community is anticipating the exercise of strong ownership by Sierra Leone in addressing this issue. As recent history has demonstrated, the world community will extend its fullest support for the implementation of determined action in such a critical area.

Justice sector and security sector reform

23. In Freetown, I had an opportunity to visit the Barrack Services Maintenance Unit Headquarters in the Wilberforce area escorted by military commanders. The living conditions in the barracks were much harsher than I had imagined. After inspecting the Guards of Honor of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), I was guided to the office of the commanders, where no electricity was provided and no lights were shining. Meanwhile, the most urgent needs in the barracks compound were clearly water and sanitation. Pipes were exposed everywhere, and the water supply system thus was not reliable. The sanitary situation was far from satisfactory, and the threat to the health conditions of those residing in the barracks, including many children, must be regarded as a matter of serious concern. In this regard, it is encouraging that the PBF approved on 11 July utilization of approximately \$US 2 million for an assistance project entitled "Rehabilitation of the water and sanitation facilities for the RSLAF barracks in Freetown," the targets of which included the compound I visited. However, as the project is intended only for initial renovation, there is an urgent need to follow up the project to ensure that conditions will at least meet minimum standards.



Inspection of soldiers at military barracks in Freetown

24. During the visit, I was impressed by the efficient and dedicated services provided by the Sierra Leone Police. I hope that efforts will continue at the same level in addressing the remaining issues identified in the PBC mission report,

including the enhancement of police-community relations and further capacity-building and training for police.

25. With regard to justice sector reform, two separate but equally important issues that require particular attention were identified during my visit. One is the improvement of the situation in the prisons. Although I did not have an opportunity to visit the prisons at first hand, it was noted by UNIOSIL in its report in June entitled “Behind Walls: An Inventory and Assessment of Prisons in Sierra Leone” that, without improvement in the conditions of the prisons, including overcrowding, the situation could potentially pose a threat to the stability of the nation. In fact, President Kabbah mentioned this matter in his meeting with me and emphasized the need for urgent assistance to resolve this problem.

26. The second urgent issue in the area of justice sector reform relates to the support for the work of the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL). The Court launched many groundbreaking initiatives upon its establishment, including its own hybrid nature, combining domestic and international characteristics, and the selection of a trial venue in the country where the crimes were committed. The Court is planning to finalize its work by the end of 2009 and, in addition to its core task of conducting the trials in both Freetown and The Hague, it is implementing so-called “legacy” programs in order to promote understanding among the local people regarding legal matters, with a view to strengthening the domestic judicial system in Sierra Leone. In that sense, the SCSL is contributing to justice sector reform of the country through its activities. At the same time, as the Court is currently facing a serious shortage in the funds for its activities, some kind of financial arrangement needs to be considered on an urgent basis.



Special Court buildings

Recommendations

27. In recognition of the severe conditions in the military barracks, including a lack of privacy, it is fair to say that a further increase in the frustration being felt by members of the armed forces could be imminent. It is thus reasonable to speculate that, without action to address the current situation, no matter how high the morale of the military may be, the difficulties produced by the severe living conditions could potentially lead to negative actions by members of the armed forces. I therefore would like to appeal to, on the one hand, the members of the RSLAF, to exercise maximum restraint and patience and, on the other, the Government of Sierra Leone, recognizing the resolution of this issue concerning the military forces as an effort for further stabilization of the country, to address the problem promptly and sufficiently.

28. International donors, for their part, should accelerate their consideration of assistance for improvement of the living conditions surrounding the military personnel in Sierra Leone. In this context, it is worth recalling that an important role passed on to the PBF is to utilize its funds to produce a catalyst effect in helping to bring about medium- and long-term assistance from bilateral and multilateral donors. In this regard, follow-up assistance to address the urgent issues concerning the RSLAF will have the dual effect of contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of RSLAF personnel while strengthening the *raison d'être* of the PBF. On the part of the PBF, those on the management side must ensure the speedy disbursement of funds and full implementation of the project. The PBC should closely monitor this process.

29. With regard to the justice sector, international partners may wish to consider assistance for the two imminent issues concerning, first, the conditions in prisons and, second, the work of the SCSL. As discussed above, the prison issue could pose a security threat to Sierra Leone and must be urgently addressed accordingly. As concerns the SCSL, while assistance from donors is urged, the Court must make further vigorous efforts in obtaining financial assistance from interested donors. In addition, as outlined in the PBC mission report, efforts must also continue to assist in the reform of laws, synchronization of customary and traditional justice, addressing the delay in court cases and capacity-building of justice sector personnel.

Capacity-building

30. Capacity-building is necessary in virtually all areas of Sierra Leone’s public sector, including the security and judicial sectors and the entire civil service. Securing opportunities for proper training of the personnel in these areas is key to building their capacity. In this context, in order to address the issue in a holistic manner, it would be practical and valuable to explore the possibility of expanding South-South cooperation, implementing projects by sharing expertise and experience in reconstruction and development activities among countries at similar stages in their development. In the

meetings held during the visit, key stakeholders in Sierra Leone regarded my recommendation for such cooperation activities as critical and fundamental to the success of capacity-building efforts.

31. On the side of civil society, I was very much impressed to hear that civil society organizations in Sierra Leone had been making efforts to establish a solid network among them in order to facilitate their participation in and contribution to the discussions in the PBC. I welcome the fact that the PBC process is promoting the capacity-building of such local organizations as well.

32. In the broader perspective on capacity-building, empowerment of communities in rural provinces is also essential. I visited a village on the outskirts of Makeni, the capital of the Northern Province, where a community empowerment project organized by UNDP and funded by the Government of Japan was being implemented under the concept of “weapons for development.” Through the various events in the village, I was quite impressed by the high degree of energy and solidarity of the members of the community under the leadership of their paramount chief.



Welcome dance by village residents

33. Community is a fundamental source of power for people in their development efforts. In this context, preserving traditions as well as empowering all segments of a society, including women and young people, are essential to creating a strengthened community. It has been indicated in other relevant reports that ensuring wider participation of women and youth in decision-making, for example, was necessary for their capacity-building. When such needs exist in traditional communities, the exercise of leadership by paramount chiefs is critically important.

Recommendations

34. In terms of administrative capacity, the Government of Sierra Leone should identify specific needs for the capacity-building of civil servants and, when appropriate and feasible, explore possibilities for South-South cooperation with appropriate donor assistance. At the community level, as mentioned above, while striving to preserve the traditions that exist in rural communities, enhanced participation by women and youth in community activities such as decision-making should be encouraged through able and innovative leadership by the paramount chiefs.



Speech at a community gathering in Makeni

IV. Peacebuilding Fund and Peacebuilding Commission

35. Lastly, I would like to touch upon the question of the relations between the PBF and the PBC. During the visit to Sierra Leone, I observed that, as occasionally pointed out in previous reports and discussions in the PBC, there seemed to be some misperception regarding the respective roles of the PBC and the PBF. I personally provided explanation to local stakeholders regarding the different functions of as well as the interconnectedness between these two components of the UN peacebuilding architecture. I take this opportunity to emphasize once again the need to effectively link the PBF, which addresses immediate, short-term peacebuilding requirements, and the PBC, which deals with medium- and long-term strategies to build durable peace over a number of years.

36. I found during the visit both high expectations and sore disappointment on the part of the Government regarding the blessings that it had been able to enjoy from the Fund. There even seemed to exist some sort of tension between Sierra Leonean Government officials and international stakeholders in regard to the management of the Fund. The former was urging the assurance of two aspects, speed and ownership, while the latter emphasized the need for fulfillment of two conditions, transparency and accountability.

37. It is understandable that, in the face of immediate and daunting challenges in peacebuilding, the Government is hoping to receive project funds, namely, actual disbursements from the Fund, as soon as possible, in order to fill the gaps in the peacebuilding needs in the country. It is also reasonable that the international partners, represented by the Steering Committee in Freetown, which is working in collaboration with the Government, wish to follow necessary but often bureaucratic procedures, so as to ensure accountability to the financial contributors to the Fund regarding its operation.

38. Considering these two equally compelling requirements, it is of utmost importance that the Government and international partners work in still closer cooperation, with sincerity, honesty, perseverance and understanding, in order to urgently address the overwhelming peacebuilding needs of Sierra Leone and to solidly ensure the credibility of the work of the Fund.

39. In order to verify the proper flow of funds, acceleration of the disbursement of funds while ensuring transparency in procurement processes, wider participation in the Steering Committee for the Peacebuilding Fund, which is my Government's particular interest, and utilization of a monitoring system that is independent of the Steering Committee may be necessary.

40. Furthermore, at the broader level of the operation of the Fund, those involved in the management of the Fund should provide more detailed information to the PBC regarding its operational aspects, in order to ensure sustainable contributions from donors. Otherwise, despite embracing the objectives of the PBF, donors may lose the incentive to extend cooperation to the Fund due to a lack of opportunities to engage in the elaboration and implementation of Fund projects. In this context, the PBC, for its part, must consider actively exercising its authority to provide policy guidance on the use of the Fund, as stipulated in sections 5.1 and 5.2 of the terms of reference of the PBF (A/60/984).

V. Concluding remarks

41. While drafting this report, I have been closely monitoring the developments in Sierra Leone on the eve of the elections. Let me once again reiterate my sincere hope that the elections will be held in a free, fair and peaceful manner. Following certification of the election results, the Peacebuilding Commission and the new Government of Sierra Leone must enter into in-depth discussion on the development of a full IPBS, or Sierra Leone Compact.

42. For wider efforts in peacebuilding in Sierra Leone, every actor in addition to the PBC must play its respective role. The Government of Sierra Leone, while continuing to exercise genuine ownership, must address issues of international concern, particularly that of good governance, including the provision of assurances of transparency and zero tolerance of corruption. The resident donor community and civil society actors can also play a role in ensuring the implementation of this critically important endeavor.

43. International partners, for their part, must maintain their attention to Sierra Leone's peacebuilding needs and extend assistance that leads to tangible results on the ground. They must actively take into consideration the main peacebuilding challenges identified by the PBC and the Government, and prioritize to the extent possible their specific assistance projects to meet these vital short- and medium-term needs, with a view to preventing the recurrence of conflict.

44. In recognition of such needs, Japan is determined to continue to extend assistance for Sierra Leone on a bilateral and multilateral basis and through the activities of the PBC. More broadly, Japan will maintain and accelerate its efforts for peacebuilding and further development of the African continent as a whole, under the vision expressed in the theme of the Fourth Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD IV) scheduled for 28-30 May next year: "Towards a Vibrant Africa: Continent of Hope and Opportunity." In preparing for the Conference, we will endeavor to mobilize the knowledge and resources of the international community on priority issues: boosting economic growth, ensuring human security and addressing environmental issues, particularly climate change.

45. I observed at first hand that Sierra Leone is facing enormous and daunting challenges in post-conflict reconstruction and development. But no matter how difficult the reality is, we must maintain our confidence in peacebuilding in Sierra Leone. The Peacebuilding Commission is in a unique position to stimulate and accelerate the efforts for Sierra Leone in this regard, and therefore must actively seize the opportunity.

46. Finally, the members of the mission express their deep gratitude to the Government of Sierra Leone and UNIOSIL for their assistance during the visit. Sincere appreciation is also extended to the Sierra Leone police and army authorities, the NEC, the PPRC, the Special Court, NEW and UNDP. In addition, all delegation members are particularly grateful to our colleague Dr. Shankerdas for his dedicated assistance in the arrangement of the mission.



Beautiful beach at the shores of Freetown

Annex I

Schedule of the mission

31 July 2007

Arrival in Freetown

19:30 Dinner with Japanese nationals in Freetown

1 August 2007

8:30 Meeting with Executive Representative of the Secretary-General Angelo

10:00 Exchange of notes and meeting with Acting Foreign Minister Kamara

11:00 Meeting with Political Parties Registration Commission Chair Warne

15:00 Meeting with National Electoral Commission Chair Thorpe

17:00 Meeting with Special Court Registrar von Hebel

19:00 Dinner hosted by Dr. Shankerdas with attendance of ERSG Angelo, Acting Foreign Minister Kamara, Presidential Adviser Dumbuya, senior government officials, resident ambassadors and UN agency representatives

2 August 2007

8:30 Site visit to military barracks in Freetown

10:00 Courtesy call on President Kabbah

11:30 Meeting with National Election Watch representative Fortune

13:00 Site visit to weapons for development project near Makeni

17:30 Press conference

Departure from Freetown

Annex II

Composition of the delegation

H.E. Mr. Masayoshi Hamada, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan

H.E. Mr. Masamichi Ishikawa, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Japan in Sierra Leone
(resident in Ghana)

Dr. Kishore H. M. Shankerdas, Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Sierra Leone

Mr. Mikio Mori, Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

Mr. Shigeru Ushio, Director of Africa I Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Mr. Yoshiyasu Iseki, Executive Assistant to the Vice-Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Mr. Shinichi Tamamitsu, First Secretary, Embassy of Japan in Ghana

Mr. Shojiro Nishimura, Official of United Nations Policy Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan

Annex III

Japan's recent assistance for Sierra Leone (as of August 2007)

Year	Month	Subject	Agency	Amount (US\$, approx.)
2001	Feb	Food aid**	WFP	2.91 million*
	Jun	Refugees	UNHCR	2.3 million
	Nov	Special Court for Sierra Leone	SCSL Trust Fund	0.5 million
2002	Jan	Radio program capacity development	NGO (Search for Common Ground)	0.07 million
	Mar	Food aid**	WFP	4.17 million*
	May	Reintegration of ex-combatants (Human Security Fund)	UNDP/UNAMSIL	3.09 million
	Jun	Refugees	UNHCR	2.72 million
	Dec	Community reintegration	Bilateral (jointly with UK)	2.46 million
2003	Feb	Debt relief	Bilateral	0.83 million*
	Mar	Food aid**	WFP	3.33 million*
	Mar	IRIN Radio (Human Security Fund)**	OCHA	2.09 million
	Mar	Infrastructure for agriculture	Bilateral	0.08 million
	May	Infrastructure survey	WB PHRD Fund	1.18 million
	May	Capacity-building in education	UNESCO	0.2 million
	Jun	Refugees	UNHCR	3 million
	Dec	Refugees	UNHCR	1.17 million
2004	Jun	Refugees	UNHCR	2 million
	Oct	Child vaccination	UNICEF	1.23 million
	Dec	Infrastructure for water	Bilateral	0.16 million
2005	Mar	Community recovery	UNICEF	4.73 million
	Mar	Small arms collection and rural development	UNDP	2 million
	Jun	Food aid**	WFP	2.58 million
	Nov	Special Court for Sierra Leone	UN regular budget	6.42 million
	Dec	Child vaccination	UNICEF	2.58 million
	Dec	Food aid**	WFP	1.42 million*
2006	Feb	Community empowerment	UNDP	2.11 million
	Mar	Small arms collection and community development	UNDP	1.65 million
	May	Refugees	UNHCR	2.5 million
	Nov	Child vaccination	UNICEF	1.96 million
	Dec	Food aid	WFP	1.41 million
2007	Mar	Election equipment	UNDP	2.8 million
	Jul	Food aid	WFP	2.9 million
	Aug	Debt cancellation	Bilateral	33.35 million
	Aug	Infrastructure for electricity in Freetown	Bilateral	4.91 million

* \$US 1 = JP Yen 120

** Indicates the assistance includes multiple target countries