



# Friends of Sierra Leone

## Sierra Leone Journal, August 2002

by Mike O'Neill

"Lahai Hindowa, I do not believe it!" said the young man astride a battered Honda motorcycle, "I never thought you'd ever return to Sierra Leone." I was walking down Pultney Street in Freetown having just breakfasted on fry soup and rice when the young man skidded to a halt to greet me with a beaming smile. Many were the happy meetings and reminiscences throughout my recent two-week visit to Sierra Leone. I had traveled under the auspices of the Peace Corps to conduct an assessment to determine if the situation in the country had stabilized sufficiently for Volunteers to return. I had the opportunity to meet with the President and government officials, the US Ambassador and numerous NGO representatives and members of civil society in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Makeni. But the official mission notwithstanding, I had returned to Sierra Leone ten years after an abrupt departure, to reacquaint myself with the place I had called home for twelve years.

I had arrived at the height of the rainy season, just in time for the legendary seven-day rains, not

exactly the tourist season. From the vantage point of several helicopter rides and from the passenger seat of a bucking Toyota pick-up I watched the countryside present itself in green splendor. Every inch of swamp was under intense cultivation and many upland farms appeared to have been community enterprises due to size and multiple farmhouses; a clear sign to me that people engendered hope and confidence for the future. The evening I arrived in Mbundobu, the village where I served as a Peace Corps Volunteer, I met the majority of the townsfolk, including Chief Siaka Surbeh, toiling in the swamps under a steady rain. The place looked small and decrepit in that veil of rain and gray gloaming. Everyone had fled, abandoning the village for some time, the elders reported. Thankfully most of the people had returned, but the merciless tropics wreak havoc on a village untended. Over palm wine we recalled earlier, happier days and wondered with guarded hope about the future. "*Oh! ting na Gohd!*"

Much like Mbundobu, the wider country has been run through the wringer and shows it. But

there are hopeful signs. In addition to the agricultural activities, cellular phone coverage has spread to many corners; gutters and roadbeds are being prepared for the resumption of re-surfacing once the rains cease; the police have embarked upon a community policing approach that I twice witnessed in action; schools are in session with high enrollment. The word on the street is one of determination and resiliency. Many issues still abound: re-integrating amputees and ex-combatants, stimulating investment in Freetown and the provinces, controlling the effects of the conflict in Liberia. But with continued commitment from the government and people of Sierra Leone, and with the support of many friends and allies, the country is ready to rebound and begin to move toward a brighter future.

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## Message from the President

Una kushe-O. Since joining FoSL ten years ago, I have been continuously impressed with FoSL's many accomplishments and the dedicated efforts of its Board members. Space constraints prevent me from mentioning the many accomplishments here, but you know them as well as I do. It is a very distinguished list of activities for an organization of this size, and it shows what a committed group of volunteers can accomplish when they work closely together with a broad base of support. My appreciation goes out to Billie Day and the rest of the out-going members of the Board for all of their hard work and dedication to the people and country of Sierra Leone.

Looking forward to the next two years, the new Board is in a great position to carry the work of FoSL forward. We have a truly nationwide Board. Aside from Board members in Maryland, Virginia and Washington, DC, we have Board Members in Georgia, a committee

co-chair in Wisconsin, our Newsletter Editor in New York, and our Webmaster in Alaska. Four of our ten Board members are from Sierra Leone. Three of our last four Annual meetings have been held away from the Washington area (South Carolina, Minnesota and Connecticut) and if any of you are willing to help us plan an annual meeting in your area in 2003 or 2004, please let us know. At the new Board's first meeting in August, we linked three locations through telephone conference facilities and had what I consider to be one of the best Board meetings ever. We agreed to survey the membership to hear your goals and expectations of FoSL for the next few years.

We plan to expand Billie Day's initiative to develop state and regional contacts. We already have some states covered and we want to strengthen our support to local groups and help them and us to build a bigger membership

base. One widely supported proposal is to have a social event, such as a dinner, in each state or region on April 26th every year to commemorate Sierra Leone's National Day. Let us know if you would like to organize this event in your state or area. We also want to renew and strengthen our ties to Sierra Leonean organizations in the US and we'll try to have some joint events. Another goal is to have more events, both here in Washington and for our members across the country, cultural events, educational events, and also (especially) social events. And one more item for our agenda: to lay the groundwork for bringing Peace Corps back to Sierra Leone. The new Board has two years to move FoSL's agenda forward. We look forward to hearing from you all.

Take time,

Mike Diliberti

## Book Review

### **BLOOD DIAMONDS: Tracing the Path of the World's Most Precious Stones by Greg Campbell**

Reviewed by Michael O'Neill, FoSL Vice President

Mr. Campbell introduces the reader to a broad range of informants as he unfolds the sordid process that moves "the world's most precious stones" from fetid swamp to delicate ring finger. From the amputees forced to watch as their families are executed before having their own limbs lopped off, to the unrepentant RUF rebels who have visited upon Sierra Leone a most brutal conflict ("a ten-year long jewelry heist"), to the Lebanese diamond merchants, foreign smugglers, and well-dressed executives of De Beers, the reader is in turns horrified, enthralled and ultimately outraged that the tragedy of Sierra Leone is being driven by the lust of Westerners, mostly Americans, for a stone that until 1930 was deemed as worthless as gravel.

*Blood Diamonds* is driven by a compelling, straightforward narrative. The words and

personalities of the victims, perpetrators, smugglers and executives of the international De Beers cartel enliven the book with an intimate insider's view as Campbell leads the reader through the history of diamond extraction and exportation from Sierra Leone. Just as his journalistic descriptions of the shallow pit mining in the alluvial swamps, the shadowy world of smuggling among freelance pirates, RUF commanders and Al Qaeda operatives, or the monopolistic business strategy of De Beers, lures the reader into an edified state of "How interesting!", Campbell inserts an unobtrusive reminder that "the sale of diamonds to customers around the world is what has kept the war churning." Again and again he confronts the reader with the harsh reality that the cost of the bauble that adorns a fair woman's hand is the severed limb of an innocent

child.

This work is not for the faint of heart. Campbell does not flinch from the gruesome barbarity inflicted by the RUF and others on innocent civilians during the eleven-year conflict. The prose is explicit, perhaps a bit too explicit at times. "The blade slammed through the bones of his arm just above the wrist. The hand came off with one clean chop, a blessing considering many such crude amputations required more than a dozen blows to sever the limb. He saw his hand bounce off the edge of the stump, gleaming white ulna bone seeing the sun for the first time." Yet the counterpoint of explicit violence to the clean lines and brilliant color of diamonds and the sterile business practices presented to the world by diamond merchants led by De Beers resonates.

### **Keeping Kennedy's Promise by C. Payne Lucas and Kevin Lowther**

Reported by Carl Onken, Newsletter Editor

First published in 1978, this was a critical assessment of the Peace Corps' first decade and a half. This paperback reprint includes a new introduction which places the Peace Corps in a post-9/11 context and proposes steps to strengthen its relevance both at home and abroad. The authors believed and still believe that the Peace Corps is a uniquely human attempt to make the world a better place. Jack Vaughn, Peace Corps Director from 1966 to 1969 wrote, "Their having had access to the internal evaluations of the Peace Corps helps lift their insights and judgments beyond the anecdotal. Every Peace Corps staff member should have this book as a prime reference."

Books are available for \$17.50 from Kevin Lowther, 8404 Golden Aspen Court, Springfield, VA 22153.

## 2002 Annual Meeting Speakers by Cynthia Barron

U. S. Ambassador John L. Hirsch, Chief Prosecutor David M. Crane, and PCV James V. Sheahan were the featured speakers at the Friends of Sierra Leone June 22, 2002 Annual Meeting. The following are some of the highlights of their presentations.

### Ambassador John L. Hirsch

U.S. Ambassador John L. Hirsch asked, "How will Sierra Leone take ownership?" Ambassador Hirsch served in Sierra Leone from 1995-1998 and is the author of *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy* (Lynn Reinner Publishers, January, 2001). Hirsch said that a new Sierra Leone army and police force need to be trained not only in competency, but attitude. Sierra Leoneans, overall, need to think about how they can help themselves.

Even with outside funding, there are complexities. People need to go back to farming in order for the country to be stable. But as Hirsch inquired, "How do you retrain boys and men who have been toting guns to go back to agriculture?"

Hirsch proposed a reverse Peace Corps for Sierra Leone nationals living outside of Sierra Leone. This would enable expatriate Sierra Leoneans to return to Sierra Leone to work for 6 months to a year. About 90% of educated Sierra Leoneans have left the country.

With their knowledge and skills and outside financial support, Hirsch believes Sierra Leone can experience a reacquisition of ownership.

### David M. Crane

Mr. David M. Crane has recently been appointed Chief Prosecutor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Crane explained that the Special Court is different from the Truth and Reconciliation courts or the Rwandan tribunal because the Special Court of Sierra Leone was created by the people of Sierra Leone and will be in Freetown, not some place remote from the people.

Crane complimented the people of Sierra Leone for having the courage to create the Special Court. The UN negotiated to create the Special Court, but the Special Court is totally independent of the UN and serves as its own international organization. Eleven nations have contributed to the formation of the Special Court.

The Special Court is mandated to try 200 people within three years. After three years, the Special Court will work with an NGO liaison office. Crane plans to go to Sierra Leone in July. During his 3 years as Prosecutor, the court will try those people most responsible for crimes and atrocities. The proceedings will be open to the public and will be broadcast on the radio. The message Crane wants everyone to hear is, "No one is above the law." The Special Court will work with the Truth and Reconciliation court to share information and to seek

justice and start healing."

### James V. Sheahan

James Sheahan spoke last and shared photographs of his latest trip to Sierra Leone, where he served as an election monitor. This was a meaningful trip for Sheahan for two reasons. First, it meant a "homecoming" for him to the beloved country where he served as a Peace Corps Volunteer as a young man. Secondly, he was happy to have the opportunity to help monitor a "free, fair and transparent" election in a scarred country.

The elections were held on May 14, 2002. By the time the polls opened at 7:00 am, seven hundred people were peacefully standing in a winding line at one voting location. A special campaign had encouraged women to register to vote, and Sheahan reported that nearly every other person in line was a woman. When the polls closed no disturbances were reported. Votes were also counted without disturbance.

The two forces that brought Sheahan to Sierra Leone again came together before he left. Sheahan monitored the elections in the school where he taught as a Peace Corps volunteer and he was reunited with one of his former students. The student is now a successful businessperson. Sheahan was uplifted by the peaceful elections and by Sierra Leoneans, like his former student, who are working to rebuild Sierra Leone.

## Rebuilding Lives In Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has been through one of the cruelest wars in recent history. Over the last decade, almost everyone has been displaced at one point or another, and almost everyone has lost one or more relatives. Today, the war is over and the country is trying to rebuild. However, much of this will depend on others. With help from major international donors, supplemented by organizations such as Friends of Sierra Leone, there is good reason to believe that Sierra Leone will pull through and sustain peace.

This section is dedicated to others helping to rebuild Sierra Leone. If you know of an individual or group that is helping Sierra Leone, please share their stories with us. This quarter, our featured organization is Bread and Water for Africa.

Bread and Water for Africa, an affiliate of Christian Relief Services, was created in 1986. Working with indigenous partners, the organization supports programs in various African countries.

Over the past six years Bread and Water for Africa has provided food and medical relief for over 50,000 people in Sierra Leone, and supports multiple self-help initiatives. In July this year, expanding on a unique concept for supporting widowed women get back on their feet, Bread and Water for Africa provided funds to sponsor these women. The concept, *Hope in Poverty*, was started by a handful of Sierra Leonean women in the United States who had been sponsoring ten widows with monthly stipends of \$20.00 since 1999. Financial support from Bread and Water for Africa will sponsor a micro credit program to help these women to be able to support their families, as well as empower them to rebuild their communities.

BREAD & WATER FOR AFRICA  
8815 Telegraph Road  
Lorton, VA 22079

Phone – 1800 –33-RELIEF  
[info@africanrelief.org](mailto:info@africanrelief.org)  
<http://www.africanrelief.org>

## FOSL Awarded the 2001 Loret Miller Ruppe Award for Outstanding Community Service

The Ruppe Award is presented annually by the National Peace Corps Association(NPCA) to an outstanding affiliated group for a project or projects that promote the Third Goal of the Peace Corps or continue to serve host countries, build group spirit and cooperation, and promote service. This award was presented to FoSL at the NPCA Annual Conference in Washington in June 2002. The award recognizes the great work that its groups are doing and is intended to generate ideas that other groups may emulate in their communities. This award was given to all members of FoSL, and we want to thank all of you for the support and participation that makes the work of FoSL successful.

During the presentation, NPCA stated that FoSL was selected for this award because FoSL celebrates Sierra Leone-American historical connections while educating others and organizing advocacy and relief efforts on behalf of Sierra Leone. FoSL has hosted public events featuring U.S. and Sierra Leone government officials, donor community officials, anthropologists, artists, historians and leaders of civil society. Members have participated in speaking engagements in schools throughout the US. FoSL sponsored or co-sponsored advocacy days in 1998, 1999, and 2000. Between 1991 and the present, the organization also sponsored twenty relief and medical supply shipments totaling over six hundred thousand dollars. In 2000 the group collaborated to bring victims of the Sierra Leone conflict to New York for treatment.

Billie Day, Immediate Past President of FoSL, accepted the award on behalf of all members of FoSL. She said, "While fulfilling the first two goals of the Peace Corps, contributing a skill and sharing our culture, we also learned from Sierra Leoneans and grew in our own maturity and enhanced our own skills. This knowledge and these skills and talents were then brought back and have been contributed to many communities throughout the United States. Many of us acknowledge the contribution that living and working in Sierra Leone made in our lives. It is why many of us personally continue to respond to the needs there."

## BUY YOUR 2003 PEACE CORPS CALENDAR FROM FOSL!

The 2003 International Calendar from the Madison Wisconsin RPCVs is available through FoSL. This calendar features beautiful color photos and information about past and present Peace Corps host countries each month. Order now for yourself and for gifts. The calendars are \$10.00 each and bulk pricing is available for orders of six or more calendars. A portion of the proceeds will go toward FoSL projects. Make your checks to Friends of Sierra Leone.

**Mary Onken**  
**74 Edgewood Drive**  
**Central Valley, NY 10917-3205**

**Telephone: (845) 928-2420**  
**Fax: (845) 928-3057**  
**e-mail: [carlonken@aol.com](mailto:carlonken@aol.com)**

Quantity	Price/Calendar	Shipping
1-5	\$10.00	included
6-24	\$6.50	\$7
25-49	\$6.00	\$9

### Election Video

by Jim Sheahan

Experience the sights and sounds of Sierra Leone's May 2002 election success. This video shows how the candidates campaigned, how the people responded, why these elections were so important and, above all, the determination of the Sierra Leonean people, especially the women, to exercise their constitutional rights. See and understand the mechanics of the count and why the elections were declared "Free and Transparent." All this is in a professionally edited documentary by one of the country's new media outlets. There is also a CD that puts into very rhythmic song all the voter education materials. Hear how the media reporting took place, how the voting was carried out and, more importantly, understand how these elections were conducted in such a peaceful manner. These two products of the budding Sierra Leone entertainment industry are historical collectors items to be cherished for generations to come. All proceeds go to the artists and organizations in Sierra Leone that put together the materials. Each item costs \$10.

Checks or money orders can be made payable to AFRICR, 335 Mckees Rock Lane, Lawrenceville, GA 30044. Inquiries may be made at [bconton@bellsouth.net](mailto:bconton@bellsouth.net).

## Sierra Leone Related Websites

1. "Change in Plan Let Down Others," by Sylvia Moreno (*Washington Post*), May 26, 2002

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A11042-2002May25.html>

2. "Winning Hearts - - and Homes," by Sylvia Moreno (*Washington Post*), May 26, 2002

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A11055-2002May25.html>

3. "Hope and Aid for Soothing Pain of War," by Sylvia Moreno, *Washington Post* staff writer, September 22, 2000.

<http://washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A56022-2000Sep21.html>

4. "Sierra Leone: The State that Came Back from the Dead," Michael Chege, *The Washington Quarterly*, Summer 2002

<http://www.twq.com/02summer/chege.pdf>

5. "Special Court to Sit Soon," *Concord Times* (Freetown), July 29, 2002

<http://allafrica.com/stories/200207290261.html>

6. "Sierra Leonean Refugee Women and the Challenge of Reintegration," US Committee for Refugees, July 19, 2002

[http://www.refugees.org/news/press\\_releases/2002/071902.cfm](http://www.refugees.org/news/press_releases/2002/071902.cfm)

7. Friends of Sierra Leone

<http://www.fosalone.org>

This site includes some of Mike O'Neill's pictures from his recent trip to Sierra Leone (see front page story).

8. "Sierra Leone: The path from pariah to peace" - How one African country went from a bloody 10-year civil war to a stable democracy," by Danna Harman (*Christian Science Monitor*), September 18, 2002.

<http://www.csmonitor.com/2002/0918/p01s03-woaf.html>

## American International School of Freetown Seeks Teachers

The American International School of Freetown (AISF), a private, non-profit, U.S. Dept. of State-assisted PreK-8th grade school, invites applications for teaching positions from US- or Canadian-trained teachers resident in Freetown. AISF is located at Hill Station in Freetown, where its multicultural staff provides an American curriculum to a multinational community.

At AISF the emphasis is on process-based learning and English second-language acquisition is supported in a

caring atmosphere. The school values problem solving at higher cognitive levels, parental involvement in the educational program, cross-curricular subject integration, teaching through varied learning styles, and using a variety of methods to assess learning growth. They provide for continuous staff development, and strive to assist all members of the school community to acquire the communication skills and values that characterize effective members of a changing, multicultural society.

Applications may be sent to the school in care of the US Embassy, taken to the school, or sent to the principal at [jacquelineleigh@yahoo.com](mailto:jacquelineleigh@yahoo.com). Hiring preference is given to teachers trained in countries where English is the primary language, especially to those trained in the United States.

Jacqueline Leigh, Principal  
American Int'l. School of Freetown  
24 Hillcot Brow, Hill Station  
Freetown, Sierra Leone  
[jacquelineleigh@yahoo.com](mailto:jacquelineleigh@yahoo.com)  
Fax (US) (703) 995 0357

## ***LAST CHANCE FOR PEACE***

by Aiah Fanday

The first screening of *Last Chance for Peace* took place Monday, April 29, at the National Press Club in D.C. There were roughly 200 people at the presentation.

The panel discussion after the screening was made up of former US Ambassador to Sierra Leone, Joseph H. Melrose, Jr.; James L. Cairns, Director, Program on Children at the World Conference on Religion and Peace; Sierra Leone Ambassador to the US, John Leigh; an Activist Sierra Leonean, Aiah Fanday; and representing the documentary makers were the Producer Miles Roston, Sarah Lambert, Peter Leahy and Christian.

According to the documentary producers, "Babelfish" undertook the project because Sierra Leone is a country ever in the news for its brutal civil war and the extraordinary atrocities committed there. But behind this incomprehensible violence are two stories: the history of Sierra Leone and the little known story of the Interreligious Council and its role in fighting for peace.

*Last Chance for Peace* tells the story of the roots of the war, from the period when the British deposited ex-slaves from all over Africa in Freetown, to the discovery of diamonds, and to the corruption and poverty that led to RUF leader Foday Sankoh's campaign of terror. But it also depicts a courageous group of Muslim and Christian leaders who overcome their own differences and face personal death threats to forge the peace that is now severely threatened. Whether or not the peace holds, this film is about the bravery of the religious leaders working together.

In a world where religious divisions often fuel wars, from Indonesia to Ireland, the Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone tried to do the opposite, to stand together.

In addition to dramatic original footage filmed on location, the film beautifully incorporates rare archival stills and previously unseen war footage to create a tense and yet touching story.

Miles Roston, the producer, said that Babelfish did the story because they would like to educate the American public about the atrocities in Sierra Leone because the major media do not carry much about Africa in their news coverage. He added that they hope Americans will become more concerned and maybe get involved.

Videotape copies of the documentary, "Last Chance for Peace: Sierra Leone," may be purchased for \$15.00 (\$10.00 per tape plus \$5.00 S&H). Order from:

Babelfish Productions/Attention: Sarah  
928 Broadway, Suite 500  
New York, NY 10010

Telephone: (212)254-8400, FAX: (212)254-9486, URL: <http://www.babelfishproductions.com>

Brad Smith, At-large Board Member from Beaufort, South Carolina has resigned from the Board due to an overload of personal responsibilities at this time. He plans to remain active in FoSL. We thank him for his contributions. The Board has appointed Jim Sheahan to replace him. Jim served as an independent observer in Sierra Leone's election (see the annual meeting report on page 4).



One highlight of the Annual Meeting was the presentation to FOSL of the flag and log book from the Peace Corp rest house in Kambia. These articles were saved from destruction by the missionaries in Kambia and found their way to Dave O'Neill. We are working to get the log book online for members to view. Pictured, from left to right, are Mark Hagar, Dave O'Neill, and Carolyn and Jim Hitter.

**Gift of Limbs Update  
by Lynne Loomis-Price**

All members of the group, including the two chaperones, have received asylum from the Immigration and Naturalization Service. One of the chaperones has left the group. The other has been trained as a LPN. Muctarr is working toward his BA degree at Wagner College. Pa Foday is learning English. The three adults live with the kids in a house on Staten Island.

A 15-year-old double amputee boy joined the original group of six children in April 2001. Sheku is currently engaged in English language and computer training at Bellevue Hospital's Survivors of Torture program. He is aiming to complete his GED sometime next year. He commutes daily via bus and ferry.

Mariama and Bintu have been adopted by a couple in Michigan. Fatu and Damba have completed 3rd grade at a Catholic school. Memnua and Mohammed have completed kindergarten. The Rotary Club continues to cover their expenses. They are actively seeking foster/adoptive homes for the remaining children. The Sierra Leonean parents have expressed their wish that their children be adopted.

For more information, please contact Joe Mandrino.

phone: 718-698-2500.  
email: MNADF@aol.com.

FoSL is no longer associated with the Gift of Limbs project, but we thought many members would like an update on the children and chaperones we helped bring to the U.S.

*(Chaveas - cont. from page 10)*  
service in Freetown and was expanding into Bo, until the Ministry of Communications withdrew their approval. Ambassador Chaveas noted, however, that one needed tenacity to stick with Sierra Leone in long term investing, noting that there would not likely be improvements in the infrastructure for several years.

During the question and answer period, the Ambassador noted that he was unaware of any formal teams assessing the overall situation and basic needs in Sierra Leone at that time.



## Ambassador Chaveas' Address to FoSL in DC

by Linda Slonksnes

While in Washington for a State Department meeting, US Ambassador to Sierra Leone Peter Chaveas spoke to a group of members on 19 April at the Sumner School. The Ambassador was hopeful for the possibility of Crisis Corps after the elections (which took place last May), citing a need for HIV/AIDS awareness, basic health care, and teacher training. He also said he was impressed with the "real hunger all Sierra Leoneans have for education". Many missionaries and churches have been coming from the US to provide health and other care in many areas up country as well as Freetown.

Amputee victims are rarely seen outside of the Western area since the infrastructure for prosthetic assistance is in Freetown. There has been some resentment among Sierra Leoneans who have seen a great amount of targeted support for amputees and less support in other relief areas.

The US has been one of the top providers of relief in areas of non-traditional education and HIV/AIDS. Although USAID does not have a mission in Salone, there is one representative in country and operations principally out of Guinea. The long-term goals for the start of a new USAID program would be in three main areas: training in democracy/governance (including training of women), education, and HIV/AIDS. The HIV/AIDS problem in Salone

"scares me to death", said Ambassador Chaveas, and there is a "dismal level of awareness". The Embassy would like to see expertise in the field to make recommendations. Njala College continues in Freetown and, while its destruction in the southern province has been substantial, a few facilities have been rebuilt at the old campus.

While it was still extremely difficult and, therefore infrequent, for Embassy staff to travel outside of Freetown prior to this year, life seemed to be improving and staff were getting into the provinces more often. Though there is still a need to be attentive to security and violent crime is up in Freetown, the Ambassador noted that it is still less than in Lagos. Flights into Sierra Leone are still difficult to come by and the best route is to get to Conakry first. Travel along the Liberian border was still not possible.

Sierra Leone refugees have been returning from Liberia, and following behind them, Liberians refugees had been arriving in Kenema and Bo. Sanctions for Liberia were up for renewal and Taylor has argued that they have destroyed the economy; however several cite mismanagement of resources as the biggest threat to the Liberian economy and security. "Charles Taylor remains one of the principal threats" to improvements, the Ambassador stated. The US had wanted to see sanctions strengthened in Liberia. [Note: On May 7, the

UN Security Council voted for a 12 month extension to the current sanctions, which consist of an arms embargo, a ban on diamond sales from Liberia, and a travel ban on Liberia's leaders. A human rights group's argument to include the timber trade and shipping registry did not result in additional sanctions.]

Many Sierra Leoneans are returning to their home areas. Chaveas noted that there are many needs in Sierra Leone and it will be a very long time before the SL government would be able to provide for the country. As a result, all are very dependant on the international community and will likely remain so for the near term. There will be some reintegration, but there is no economic structure. Rather than an economy supported by international assistance, foreign investment is needed in the private sector. But the investment environment is hostile. The Ambassador hopes the rutile mine (with 25% American ownership) will make a comeback. The Lebanese population was cited at approximately 40-50 thousand in the mid-80s; it was roughly 4 thousand in the mid-90s. When asked, Chaveas said he believed Seaboard Milling, which had been in Salone since the 60s, could be a good investment. He also noted that Celtel, the cellular service provider in Freetown, was owned in small part by American investors. Celtel provides decent wireless (Chaveas - cont. on page 9)

FRIENDS OF SIERRA LEONE

FoSL  
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Washington, DC 20003-0875

**NEW AND RENEWAL MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Name (include maiden) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ 9-digit zip code \_\_\_\_\_

Day Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Evening Phone \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ FAX number \_\_\_\_\_

Current Employer \_\_\_\_\_ Occupation \_\_\_\_\_

Relationship to SL (e.g., Sierra Leonean, PC, CUSO, VSO, Missionary, etc.) \_\_\_\_\_

Sierra Leone Home Town/Village/Chiefdom/District \_\_\_\_\_

Residence in SL: From \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

**FoSL needs your participation; please circle your areas of interest:**

Advocacy                      Education                      Membership                      Projects

Would you be willing to be part of a network to receive information and contact your members of Congress at important times? (please include e-mail address, if available) Yes

**Membership:**      New \_\_\_\_\_      or      Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

Select one category below:

- FoSL Circle (\$1000 and up) \_\_\_\_\_
- Supporter (\$599 to \$999 ) \_\_\_\_\_
- Sponsor (\$100 to \$499) \_\_\_\_\_
- Friend (\$50 to \$99) \_\_\_\_\_
- Individual Membership (\$20) \_\_\_\_\_
- Household Membership\* (\$36) \_\_\_\_\_ \*two memberships, one newsletter per household

The bottom line:

Membership \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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Thank you for your support! Please return this form with a check payable to Friends of Sierra Leone at the above address. Remember, all membership dues and contributions are tax deductible.

**Suggestions:**

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Check the date on the address label.

If it indicates a date in the past, it is time for you to renew your FoSL membership.

Please use the form on page 11.

If there is no expiration date, you are not yet a member. Please take advantage of the opportunity to join today.