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## **SIERRA LEONE RUBBER CO. LTD.**

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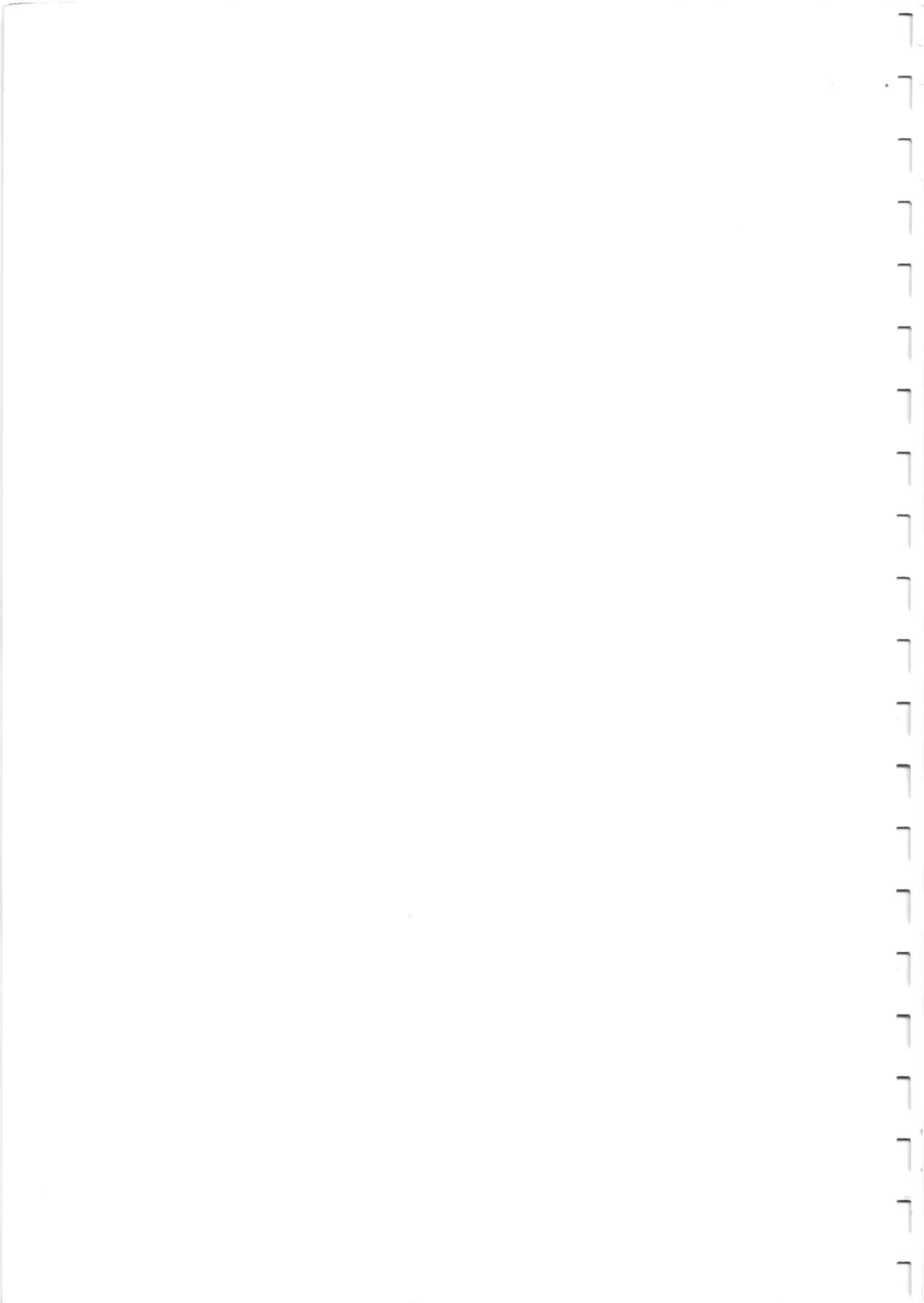
14<sup>th</sup> April, 2008

Hon. Suffian Kargbo  
Chairman Parliamentary Committee  
Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security  
Parliament Building  
Freetown

Dear Sir,

### **REQUEST FOR ACCESS INTO LEASE LAND FOR RUBBER DEVELOPMENT**

In a bid to increase Private Sector participation into the Agriculture and Forestry Sector geared towards the overall economic development of Sierra Leone we secured a lease of the Government five Rubber Estates in Potoru, Barrie Chiefdom, Pujehun District, Levuma, Sorogbema Chiefdom, Pujehun District, Gondama, Tunkia Chiefdom, Kenema District, Kwaoma, Tunkia Chiefdom Kenema District and Boajibu Simbaru Chiefdom, Kenema District in January 1991, for a term of 72 years. Our Company reimbursed the Government for all the expenditure incurred in the development of these estates from 1964 to 1990. The said lease was prepared by the Law Office's Department and registered with the Registrar General's Department in compliance with the laws of Sierra Leone. A copy of the sub-lease from Government to the Company - Sierra Leone Rubber Company (SLRC) - is enclosed therein for your kind attention.



Sir, unfortunately, we were unable to exploit the leases and develop the estates owing to the outbreak of the rebel war in March 1991. Upon the official declaration by his Excellency, the President Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabba, in January 2002 that the rebel war was over, we commenced operation in three of the lease areas in 2004.

Our records indicate that inspite of our inability to develop the estates because of "force majeure" conditions we continued to pay the rent/royalties to the Government of Sierra Leone. The Company pays rent/royalties in advance biannually. We have now made payments to the Ministry of Agriculture up to the end of December 2008. Copies of these receipts are attached for your attention.

In 2004 we were unable to gain access to the two estates in the Pujehun District (i.e. Potoru and Levuma) and the matter was referred to His Excellency the President for an amicable solution of this impasse. In his kind wisdom a committee was set up in June 2007, headed by Mr. Ahmed Akar Ahmed to investigate the said matter. A ban was imposed in October 2007 on the exploitation of the estates while the investigation was being carried out. We immediately complied to this ban, even though the intruders continued to exploit the estates and exporting the rubber to the sister Republic of Liberia, with no benefit to our nation and the local inhabitants.

During our operation in the three estates we have undertaken community development activities as illustrated in the photographs attached and our intention for further development of the regions were made know to the Tribal authorities and local inhabitants.

On the 24<sup>th</sup> of January, 2008 a letter was addressed to the Honourable Minister of Agriculture, Food Security and Forestry explaining our difficulties in having access to all the estates and our inability to meet our development objectives for the benefit of the nation, the regions and the local inhabitants. In the said letter we highlighted possible action we intend to pursue that will benefit all parties concern. A copy of which is likewise attached. We however patiently await the reaction of the said Honourable Minister.

We wish to solicit the assistance of your committee to compliment the effort of the Honourable Minister of Agriculture Food Security & Forestry in ensuring that justice prevail by returning the estates to the rightful owner (i.e. Sierra Leone Rubber Company), that had a lawful lease from the Government of Sierra Leone.

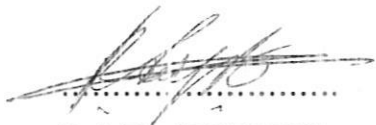


We can only say that action of such nature, undertaken by the local authorities and unprogressive inhabitants will have negative effect on Private Sector involvement in agricultural development activities in Sierra Leone.

Sir, it is against this background of events that we thought it necessary to inform your committee of this matter while pleading for your kind assistance in the protection of our company and the investment made in Sierra Leone.

We thank you for your patience and grateful for your gracious assistance in this matter.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'R.A.B. Johnson', written over a dotted line.

R.A.B. JOHNSON  
SIERRA LEONE RUBBER COMPANY

