

## Four Liberians Benefit from Development Diplomats Programme Begin deployment shortly in West Africa

**Monrovia, Liberia: April 1, 2009:** The Minister of Foreign Affairs Hon. Olubankie King-Akerele has launched the Development Diplomats Training Programme aim at grooming young Liberians diplomats and preparing them for career in the Foreign Service with a strong development orientation. The programme is in support of the national capacity development strategy led by the Government of Liberia with support from UNDP.



*Minister King-Akerele speaking at the ceremony*

Speaking at the ceremony held at the Foreign Ministry on Tuesday, Minister Akerele said four beneficiaries of the programme will be deployed to Liberian embassies in Guinea, Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast and Ghana for a period of 12 months under the general guidance of the ambassadors. She said the development diplomats will undergo practical training in development diplomacy acquiring practical skills in development cooperation, economic

diplomacy, political and economic integration, private sector development

and regional cooperation. “The four development diplomats will serve in their respective countries for a period of six months and will return home for 2 weeks to share lessons learned and later return to complete the remaining 6 months” she noted.

The beneficiaries are products of the Gabriel L. Dennis Institute of Diplomatic Studies at the Foreign Ministry and have also completed advanced studies in development diplomacy from the Egyptian Institute of Diplomacy in Cairo, Egypt. They include Sarah Brownell, Sierra Leone, Emmanuel Larmeh, Guinea, Stephen Marsh, Ghana and Mayumi Grigsby, Ivory Coast.

UNDP Country Director Dominic Sam said the Development Diplomats Training



*(L-R) M. Grigsby, S. Marsh, S. Brownell, E. Larmeh*



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Programme is part of UNDP short term capacity building support to the ministry of Foreign Affairs in the restructuring of the Liberian Foreign Service. He described capacity building as a key challenge for early recovery in Liberia and stressed the need for building long term capacities in government institutions to adequately deliver the poverty reduction strategy.

Mr. Sam noted that the 10 year capacity development strategy and action plan for Liberia will provide a platform for the government to coordinate capacity development efforts in a holistic fashion and prioritized national programmes. He named the Ministries of Finance, Public Works, Planning and Economic Affairs and the Liberia Reconstruction and Development Committee as key government functionaries essential to the growth and recovery of Liberia and for which initial “quick-wins” capacity development interventions are being designed and implemented

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