



Security Council

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Twenty-second progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia

I. Introduction

1. By its resolution 1938 (2010) of 15 September 2010, the Security Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) until 30 September 2011 and requested me to report on progress made in achieving the core benchmarks elaborated in my reports of 10 February 2009 (S/2009/86) and 10 June 2009 (S/2009/299), and on joint planning, with the Government of Liberia, for the transfer of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities, and to propose revised benchmarks measuring progress made in that regard. The present report contains the requested transition benchmarks and provides an update on major developments since my report of 11 August 2010 (S/2010/429).

II. Major developments

A. Political situation

2. During the reporting period, political developments in Liberia were dominated by preparations for the 2011 elections. In August 2010, the legislature adopted a joint resolution proposing amendments to the election-related provisions of the 1986 Constitution. These amendments include changing the requirement of the electoral system from an absolute to a simple majority for all elections except for president and vice-president; moving election day from October to November; and revising the residency clause for presidential and vice-presidential candidates from 10 to 5 consecutive years immediately prior to the elections. The Constitution requires that amendments be ratified in a referendum held at least a year after the legislature's action. After considerable discussion about the feasibility of holding the referendum before the 2011 elections, the National Elections Commission decided to schedule it for 23 August 2011, so that any approved amendments would apply to the current electoral process.

3. Meanwhile, political parties continued to strategically position themselves for the elections. The Unity Party, led by the President, finalized its merger with the Liberia Action Party and the Liberia Unification Party and, in October, officially nominated President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as its standard bearer. Opposition parties also continued to explore mergers and coalitions to enhance their prospects of



presenting a credible challenge to the incumbent, but have faced challenges. In October, the Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) announced that it would pursue a merger with the Liberty Party, abandoning the four-party Coalition for Democratic Change that it had previously considered, but the party's leadership fragmented over the conditions of the merger, and negotiations remained inconclusive. Another opposition alliance, the National Democratic Coalition (NDC), was established, comprising some former prominent members of CDC, the National Patriotic Party and a number of smaller parties. After voter registration commenced, NDC brought a challenge to the Supreme Court, seeking to halt the process on the grounds that a constitutional provision, requiring constituency demarcation before voter registration, had been bypassed. It is still unclear whether the Court will entertain this petition.

4. The National Elections Commission certified three new political parties, the National Union for Democratic Progress, the Movement for Progressive Change and the Original Congress Party, bringing to 20 the number of certified parties, and two additional parties are in the process of being certified. The Inter-Party Consultative Committee met on a monthly basis to forge a common understanding on election-related issues, and the Committee prepared a revised code of conduct for political parties, which has been signed by 17 parties so far, a positive indication of the commitment to peaceful elections. President Johnson-Sirleaf initiated bilateral consultations with prominent opposition leaders, as part of confidence-building measures to facilitate peaceful elections.

5. On 13 November, President Johnson-Sirleaf placed her Cabinet on administrative leave, explaining that, as her administration was entering a critical period, she wanted to assess each minister's performance before reinstating them. The President reconstituted her Cabinet in December, reinstating 14 of 22 ministers, reassigning one, and appointing new Ministers for Foreign Affairs; Lands, Mines and Energy; Posts and Telecommunications; and Transport, as well as a new Chairman of the National Investment Commission. The President's decision elicited mixed reactions from opposition parties and the public.

6. Limited progress was made in the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. In her second quarterly progress report to the legislature on implementation of the recommendations, submitted in August, President Johnson-Sirleaf proposed tasking for various bodies but offered few specifics on how implementation would be taken forward. After considerable delay, the Senate confirmed the nominees for the Independent National Commission on Human Rights in September. In addition to its human rights mandate, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act gives the Independent National Commission on Human Rights a key role in following up the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations. The President tasked the Independent National Commission on Human Rights with developing a road map for implementation, and her third quarterly report, dated 14 January 2011, outlined the proposals of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights. These emphasized consultations leading to the design of a national reconciliation road map; the launch of Palava Hut discussions, a mechanism for perpetrators to seek public forgiveness; and a study intended to lead to a reparations strategy. Meanwhile, on 21 January, the Supreme Court ruled in favour of a petitioner recommended by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission for public sanction and

30 years debarment from public office, who claimed that the recommendation was inconsistent with the constitutional right to due process.

B. Security situation

7. The security situation in Liberia remained generally stable but fragile. Disputes over access to land and resources, as well as ethnic and communal tensions, continued to present significant challenges. Security risks are also posed by high unemployment, severely limiting livelihood opportunities for ex-combatants and high-risk youth, many of whom resort to illegal activities. Also of concern are enduring ethno-religious divides, particularly in Lofa County, where violence broke out between two communities in Zorzor in December, prompted by the invitation to a witch doctor to practice in the communities.

8. Disputes arising from the development of concessions and land issues constituted potential threats. In September, a labour dispute at the Liberia Agricultural Company rubber plantation in Grand Bassa County escalated into a riot involving more than 2,000 persons. On 16 September, community members at the Maryland Oil Palm Plantation in Maryland County staged a demonstration against the takeover by an Ivorian-based company, while on 25 November, former workers of the Cavalla Rubber Corporation, also in Maryland County, demonstrated to demand redundancy benefits. On 2 September, workers of a rubber farm in Margibi County were attacked by members of a neighbouring village over a land sale, resulting in several injuries.

9. Some security incidents related to electoral preparations occurred, demonstrating the potential for small-scale incidents to rapidly escalate in the highly charged electoral context. On 28 December, in Grand Kru County, youths demonstrated at a local school where National Elections Commission officials were conducting training, claiming irregularities in the hiring of voter registration officers. On 31 December, members of CDC became violent during a march in Monrovia, stoning police vehicles when officers attempted to redirect their route.

10. Maintaining law and order remained a challenge, with frequent reported incidents of rape and armed robbery, as well as the prevalence of drugs and mob violence. An increasing number of incidents involve firearms. Seizures of locally manufactured single-barrel shot guns from Guinea have increased. In the absence of firearms control legislation, the President signed an executive order on 26 October banning the use of firearms by private citizens, excluding hunting guns. Mob violence continued to be a concern with four incidents occurring in September and October against police officers, and in December, UNMIL had to intervene to prevent a crowd from burning down a police depot.

C. Economic situation

11. Recovery from the global economic crisis continued, with growth in 2010 expected at 6.3 per cent, up from 4.6 per cent in 2009, driven by expansion in the agriculture, mining and construction sectors, as well as the recovery of global commodity prices. Growth in 2011 is projected at 8.8 per cent, reflecting an expectation of further expansion in these sectors.

12. The fifth review under the Extended Credit Facility Arrangement of the International Monetary Fund was completed in December, and public external debt was reduced to an estimated \$87.1 million from \$1.67 billion during 2010. The national budget for the 2010/11 fiscal year of \$369 million was adopted by the legislature in September. Direct budget support increased, totalling \$58.5 million in the present fiscal year. The Ministry of Finance has begun releasing quarterly donor aid reports and records in line with the Paris Principles on Aid Effectiveness.

13. Inflation, which was 7.6 per cent in 2009, is expected to stabilize at 7.2 per cent for 2010. Unemployment and underemployment are still major concerns, with most livelihood opportunities being in the informal sector. In September, the World Bank launched a three-year project, with a budget of \$16 million to create 45,000 short-term jobs and provide vocational skills training for 4,000 youths. The Government has signed five iron ore concessions with an estimated investment value of \$10 billion, which are expected to create some 13,000 jobs and improve rural infrastructure. The first shipment of iron ore is expected in 2011, but full investment and job creation will take place over 25 years. Also, offshore oil exploration along the Liberian coast is expected to begin. In September, the legislature approved an agreement with Chevron Corporation covering 9,600 square kilometres.

14. In October, the Government held its annual poverty reduction strategy review retreat in Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, to take stock of progress, prioritize interventions, and develop strategies to maximize achievements by the strategy's end date, which was extended from June to December 2011. During the retreat, each ministry undertook to develop 90-day action plans covering the remaining period.

D. Regional aspects

15. The completion of the political transition in Guinea during the period significantly lessened tensions along Liberia's border with Guinea. The Government of Liberia and UNMIL continued to conduct joint border operations with the Governments of Guinea and Sierra Leone.

16. Developments related to the presidential election in Côte d'Ivoire posed a serious threat to the security of the entire subregion, particularly Liberia, and are being monitored closely. Liberia has received most of the Ivorian refugees, who have been absorbed peacefully. Amid reports that Liberian mercenaries were involved in Côte d'Ivoire, President Johnson-Sirleaf made two public statements in December warning citizens not to participate in the crisis. However, there are reports of new recruitment of combatants from the Liberian side of the border. The Government and UNMIL have increased their patrolling and presence along the Ivorian border to monitor recruitment activities and the possible return of any of the estimated 2,000 Liberian former fighters associated with Ivorian militias, who remained in western Côte d'Ivoire after the Liberian conflict.

17. Liberia remains vulnerable to drug trafficking, and small quantities of cocaine and heroin are regularly found by Liberian agencies. Domestic production of marijuana was apparently greater than consumption, suggesting possible cross-border trafficking. Within the framework of the West Africa Coast Initiative, the Government signed a project proposal in November for the establishment of a transnational crime unit to address organized crime and drug trafficking.

E. Humanitarian situation

18. The ongoing influx of Ivorian refugees since November, primarily into Nimba County, but also into Grand Gedeh and Maryland Counties, presents major challenges for refugees and border communities absorbing them. As at 7 February 2011, 36,318 Ivorian refugees were registered in Liberia by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). The construction of a refugee camp in Nimba County is under way, and a second camp is being planned. The inter-agency contingency plan was triggered in mid-December to enable a comprehensive response to a potential influx of 50,000 refugees. An emergency humanitarian action plan for Liberia, requesting \$55 million, was launched in January. UNHCR, in collaboration with other United Nations agencies, is managing the refugee influx into Liberia and is assisting national authorities to monitor population movements along the borders. The humanitarian country team also discussed the impact on host communities should the influx continue at the current rate.

III. Mandate implementation

A. Security sector reform

National security strategy and architecture

19. The poverty reduction strategy retreat in October, referred to in paragraph 14 of the report, helped to identify and focus attention on a number of critical outstanding requirements for security sector reform, particularly infrastructure, logistics and mobility. There has been overall progress in implementing the various security agencies' strategic plans, though more is needed to ensure completion of the national security sector reform strategy and its implementation matrix, much of which is donor-dependent. While some security-related allocations were increased in the 2010/11 national budget, security agencies are still not receiving sufficient resources for their progressive growth and development.

20. There is growing recognition that rule-of-law issues, especially an efficient criminal justice system, need to be addressed comprehensively, including in the context of security sector reform. The Government of Liberia and the United Nations are developing a joint justice and security programme that will partly address this challenge, as will the Peacebuilding Commission's focus on decentralized security and justice service delivery.

21. Progress was made in rolling out county security councils, which have been established so far in four counties. Roll-out in the others will continue should funding become available. However, the National Security Reform and Intelligence Bill remained pending before the legislature. The 2006 draft gun control legislation was updated by a joint Government of Liberia/United Nations technical group, which will soon be submitted to the legislature.

Armed Forces of Liberia

22. Fifty United States military mentors continued to support the Armed Forces of Liberia to build a professional and capable force, including developing army staff to assume greater command responsibilities, improving operational relationships with

the Liberia National Police and matching budget-to-mission requirements. At present, the army is implementing an annual training plan of six training cycles, which so far has focused on individual and basic skills, occupational specialty training and small unit collective skills training. UNMIL has provided the new army with training in preventive medicine, radio operations, unexploded ordnance identification and reporting, civil-military cooperation and other areas.

23. The new army is officially scheduled to attain full operational capability by mid-2012. However, there remain obstacles to meeting this timeline, including delays in endorsing the national defence strategy, raising uncertainties about the army's future strategic direction and use. Challenges are also posed by insufficient budgetary allocations for the army to maintain its infrastructure, logistics and equipment, or procure new assets. Meanwhile, planning continued for the army to conduct joint operations with UNMIL, which will provide essential confidence-building for the force and the population. Incidents of misconduct by members of the new army continued to cause concern. On 25 December, two soldiers were arrested for assaulting police officers and, in January, there were three separate incidents of army personnel assaulting police and stealing equipment, including one in which eight personnel broke into a police station in Monrovia while in uniform.

24. Progress is being made in the development of a small coast guard with the support of the United States and, in January, the Coast Guard received specialized training on equipment handling. Two out of the projected four vessels have been acquired so far, and overall training is scheduled for completion in mid-2012.

Liberia National Police

25. The development of the Liberia National Police continued, with emphasis on training and equipping the armed Police Support Unit. The development and deployment of the Unit throughout the country is critical, especially for securing the elections and for the eventual assumption by Liberian authorities of UNMIL security responsibilities. The first class of the current round of training graduated in October, increasing the Unit's operational strength to 306 officers, out of the 2011 target of 1,000, including 19 women. The second class is under way, comprising 129 officers, including 5 women. Salary incentives were provided in January 2011 for personnel of the specialized police units, including the 344-strong specialized Emergency Response Unit, which could increase interest in recruitment. However, the procurement of basic equipment continued to lag behind training, leaving graduates with limited resources to carry out their duties.

26. Some institutional progress was achieved in line with the Liberia National Police. Through bilateral support and UNMIL quick-impact projects, the construction and rehabilitation of stations and barracks continued with the completion of 21 projects, and the construction of one regional headquarters completed. In October, the Ministry of Education issued the National Police Training Academy a permanent permit, a step towards its recognition as the primary institution for training security agencies. Also, the Women and Child Protection Section of the police service instituted protocols for addressing complaints regarding missing children. However, capacity shortfalls remained in the vital areas of administration, logistics, mobility, finance and community relations. Meanwhile, an increase has been noted in the number of investigations into allegations of crime or corruption against police officers.

27. In September, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization officially launched its strategic plan, outlining reform priorities and development needs. However, its implementation remains largely dependent on donor support. The Bureau is emerging as an important player in the security sector, particularly in the light of the situation along Liberia's border with Côte d'Ivoire and the need for enhanced border management to mitigate trafficking. While the immigration and police services cooperated effectively in monitoring the border with Côte d'Ivoire, including joint patrols, the operations demonstrated the dependence of both agencies on UNMIL for mobility and communications.

28. The Peacebuilding Commission is supporting a project to establish five regional security and justice "hubs" around the country, which will include police and immigration personnel. The police and the immigration service both have regional administrative and operational centres within their organizational structures that have never been operationalized. The hubs will help to enable that process, which will be particularly critical for the police to effectively extend command and control and operational reach beyond Monrovia.

B. Strengthening judicial, legal and corrections institutions

29. Limitations in human capacity, infrastructure and equipment in the judicial, legal and corrections sectors continued to impede justice delivery. These persisting challenges were acknowledged by the Government during its poverty reduction strategy retreat, and were prioritized by the Peacebuilding Commission, as described in paragraph 66 below.

30. The Ministry of Justice and the Law Reform Commission provided leadership in following up on the national conference on access to justice that was held last April, and are planning to conduct nationwide consultations early this year to further inform the development of policy for harmonizing the formal and customary justice systems. However, access to justice remained a critical challenge, as the criminal justice system is under-resourced and lacks qualified personnel. Consequently, there remained a severe backlog of cases and 81 per cent of the prison population consisted of pretrial detainees. Outdated laws, such as on the limited jurisdiction of magistrates' courts, contributed to delays.

31. While there was a 3 per cent reduction in pretrial detention during the period, deficiencies in investigation and prosecution resulted in the release of detainees on procedural grounds. Government-led measures are ongoing to address system-wide weaknesses, including a pilot case management project expected to begin in early 2011. Meanwhile, the Law Reform Commission has undertaken a review of a number of key laws. Diversion programmes are also being developed as an alternative to incarceration, and newly trained probation officers will be deployed in early 2011. The Judicial Institute continued to make steady progress, and is now conducting regular training for trial judges, prosecutors and public defenders.

32. Efforts continued to improve the prevention, response and management of sexual and gender-based violence, including through the United Nations/Government of Liberia joint programme on sexual and gender-based violence. However, the criminal justice system struggled to deal with them effectively. The specialized prosecution unit for sexual violence was compelled to request the designated court

for sexual and gender-based violence to dismiss a significant number of rape cases owing to lack of evidence.

33. Security at corrections facilities remained a challenge owing to weak infrastructure, limited staff and poor capacity, which were exacerbated by low staff morale and high rates of absenteeism due to salary delays. During the reporting period, 10 escape incidents involving a total of 24 inmates were recorded, and disturbances occurred at prisons in Monrovia, Gbarnga, Kakata and Buchanan, requiring the intervention of the Police Support Unit, with UNMIL support. Calm was only restored in each instance following assurances that inmate demands, including for medical care and an end to prolonged pretrial detention, would be addressed. As part of its strategic plan, the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation initiated some rehabilitation projects, including training in agriculture and other skills. The Bureau also became less dependent on the international community in providing food to inmates.

C. Human rights

34. The Government continued its efforts to improve the promotion and protection of human rights. As described in paragraph 6, the Independent National Commission on Human Rights was established, representing a significant development in view of its mandated responsibility as the publicly accessible institution to address human rights complaints and violations. To address the plight of children in care, the Government has taken action to deinstitutionalize children with next of kin, close some substandard institutions, and accredit and monitor suitable care institutions.

35. Challenges persisted in several areas, including with respect to institutionalizing human rights standards and principles. The National Human Rights Action Plan Steering Committee made some progress on the action plan, but prioritized preparations for Liberia's universal periodic review, which took place in November. The United Nations Human Rights Council made 113 recommendations during the review, 72 of which the Government supported. The Government response to the remaining recommendations, including those relating to the death penalty, female genital mutilation and trial by ordeal, as well as issues pertaining to the implementation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, were deferred until the Council meeting in March 2011.

D. Consolidation of State authority

36. Some progress was made in consolidating State authority throughout the country, but the Government still faces challenges in delivering services outside of Monrovia, owing to persistent logistical problems and insufficient operational budgets. Local officials, with the exception of those in the southeastern counties, which are difficult to access, are becoming less dependent on UNMIL for mobility and communication. Improvements were also made in the timely payment of salaries and the increased presence of ministry officials. While county development steering committees, the mechanisms for implementing the poverty reduction strategy at the county level, are becoming institutionalized, irregular participation in coordination meetings, weak reporting, and a lack of effective monitoring mechanisms remain major challenges. At the same time, a lack of appropriate

guidelines and action against misuse of county and social development funds continued to undermine confidence in local authorities.

37. Infrastructure development, particularly of roads, remains central to the extension of State authority and economic revitalization of rural areas. UNMIL continued to rehabilitate sections of primary and secondary roads critical for its operations, and spot maintenance was carried out with funding from the World Bank, which is also funding the rehabilitation of major roads and bridges. On 7 January, the Minister of Public Works launched a project funded by the African Development Bank to rehabilitate the road linking River Gee and Maryland Counties, which will connect the southeast to the rest of Liberia.

E. Governance

38. Despite efforts towards strengthening governance reform processes and monitoring performance, legal bottlenecks in the prosecution of corruption cases continued to hamper effective implementation of the Government's anti-corruption policy. In October, President Johnson-Sirleaf recommended that punitive measures be taken against several prominent individuals, including a sitting senator and a former minister of internal affairs, in connection with allegations that they had been involved in a fraudulent carbon credit deal. Follow-up by the Ministry of Justice is still pending in that matter, and no high-profile officials from the current administration have yet been convicted, reinforcing public perception that the Government is weak on corruption.

39. Constraints were also experienced in follow-up of the General Auditing Commission's audit of the county development fund, which was frozen by the President in August owing to reports of corruption and mismanagement. The prosecution of government officials for financial impropriety remained a challenge, and the passage of the bill establishing a code of conduct for public officials, which would widen the scope of illegal acts, remained pending.

40. The operational capacity of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission continued to improve, and the Commission conducted sensitization activities around the country. The President has proposed an expansion of the role of the Commission to include prosecutorial powers, which could expedite the required process.

41. Both the Law Reform Commission and the Land Commission became operational, with the latter establishing its secretariat, securing funding, and developing a five-year reform programme and communications strategy. However, resource constraints and weak coordination with land administration agencies could slow implementation. Meanwhile, the Constitutional Review Task Force remained inactive, owing to a lack of budgetary allocations. The Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative enhanced financial transparency in the mining, forestry, agriculture and oil sectors. The majority of reports on company payments and audited receipts in preparation for the third reconciliation report were collected.

42. The bloated civil service remained a challenge for the Government, which is vetting the list of civil servants to eliminate "ghost workers". Meanwhile, the legislature continued to face challenges in carrying out its representation, law-making and oversight functions. The Liberia Democratic Institute noted in its quarterly Legislative Report Card, one of civil society's monitoring tools, that bills

concerning concessions or other economic matters were processed faster than others, and recommended that lawmakers refocus efforts on pro-people legislation.

43. In September, the Governance Commission and the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs introduced a concept paper on national visioning entitled “Liberia Rising 2030”. A possible successor to the poverty reduction strategy, the paper seeks to consolidate good governance and build a reconciled and unified national identity through citizenship and decentralization, while supporting economic growth and long-term development. Since September, the Cabinet has endorsed a road map for formulating the vision, including planning for national consultations. A secretariat has been established in the Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs and President Johnson-Sirleaf is expected to appoint a steering committee in early 2011 to guide the process

F. Management of natural resources

44. Progress in controlling diamond mining and trade was limited. The plan of the Presidential Task Force on Diamonds for the implementation of recommendations made by the Kimberley Process review mission and the Panel of Experts on Liberia (see S/2009/640) experienced delays owing to weak leadership of relevant government officials. Presidential approval of a proposal to transform the diamond task force into a precious minerals oversight committee remained outstanding. Meanwhile, the enforcement of mining laws and the curbing of illegal practices remained a challenge, though progress was made in the registration of small-scale miners, with the number of mining licences increasing from 300 in December 2009 to 470 in December 2010. Efforts are being made to expedite the surveying of exploration and mining licences to complete the Mineral Cadastre Information Management System database and the drafting of mining regulations.

45. Further progress was made in commercial forestry, which is expected to generate an estimated \$15 million in government revenue this fiscal year. Thirteen timber companies are operating, covering 1 million hectares across 11 counties. Liberia and the European Commission concluded the fourth round of voluntary partnership agreement negotiations, so that only legally harvested timber is exported to Europe. Meanwhile, the Forestry Development Authority concluded countrywide consultations on regulations for the implementation of the Community Rights Law. While Liberia is building on established partnerships to develop appropriate forest management strategies to provide benefits to forest communities, some communities have complained about not benefiting from social agreements with logging companies, and have petitioned the legislature to revise agreements and increase the community share of land rental fees from 30 to 60 per cent.

46. In September, the Government signed a concession agreement valued at \$1.6 billion to establish palm oil plantations and processing plants in Grand Kru, Maryland, River Cess, River Gee and Sinoe Counties. Though concessions create some formal employment, legal and regulatory frameworks need to be strengthened, as does the oversight of concession implementation, to more effectively address emerging labour, land and social conflicts.

47. During the reporting period, efforts were made by local officials and security personnel to remove illegal occupants from Sapo National Park, where thousands were reportedly engaging in illicit gold mining, hunting and logging. While most

camps are now reportedly vacant, many former occupants are believed to have settled near the park, where they have few alternative livelihood options, which could undermine the sustainability of the action.

G. Preparations for elections

48. Most stakeholders have welcomed the decision to hold a national referendum to amend three election-related provisions of the Constitution in August. Although holding a referendum at the height of the rainy season will present formidable logistical challenges, if approved, the modifications would facilitate not only the current electoral process, but also future elections.

49. The voter registration exercise has been an important test of the capacity of the National Elections Commission and other national institutions to conduct a major nationwide event. The Commission established 1,780 voter registration centres, trained staff, distributed materials, and conducted civic education in collaboration with civil society organizations. The Liberia National Police provided security for the voter registration exercise, and worked together with the Commission to define security requirements for the entire electoral period, including with respect to manpower, mobility and deployment. Registration began as scheduled on 10 January, with no major security incidents and only minor challenges, including late openings in some remote locations and logistical problems. In view of these challenges, the Commission extended the registration period until 12 February, from the original planned closing date of 6 February.

50. The United Nations system in Liberia has established a task force to coordinate overall United Nations support to the electoral process. UNMIL provided logistical support for the delivery of voter registration materials to remote locations, and assisted the national police in developing an integrated security and contingency plan. The United Nations and other partners are also working closely with the National Elections Commission on measures to strengthen women's participation in the electoral process.

51. Donors have responded positively to fund the \$46 million overall electoral budget that covers electoral operations, personnel costs and capacity-building activities. The Government has committed \$15 million, the donor fund managed by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) will cover \$27 million, and a bilateral donor has provided \$4 million. However, there remains a shortfall of \$4 million, to be covered by the UNDP-managed fund, and efforts are being made to fill that gap. Meanwhile, Liberian authorities are working to find funding to cover the cost of security personnel during the elections, currently estimated at around \$700,000. To support the transparent and accountable use of election funds, the General Auditing Commission is assisting the National Elections Commission to establish budget and financial management systems.

H. Integration of the United Nations system

52. A high-level meeting comprising representatives from the Government, the United Nations and key donors was held in October to officially launch the initiative "One UN", delivering as one in Liberia. A joint steering committee, comprising four representatives each from the Government and the United Nations and three from

the donor community, was established to guide the reform process. The Committee will be co-chaired by the Minister of Planning and Economic Affairs and my Deputy Special Representative for Recovery and Governance, who is also the resident and humanitarian coordinator for Liberia.

53. In December, an independent review of the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) noted its contributions towards achieving the Millennium Development Goals, but also identified limitations in its use as a management and coordination tool. Recommendations will inform future UNDAF planning and “delivering as one” reforms.

IV. Cross-cutting issues

A. Public information

54. The United Nations family worked closely with the Government and other partners to implement the second phase of the national anti-rape campaign, launched simultaneously with the 16 Days of Activism against Gender Violence Campaign. The former involved sensitizing local communities on community policing and access to assistance, such as the women and children protection centres of the Liberia National Police. Also, the Government and UNMIL jointly organized the annual talent competition “A Star Is Born”. UNMIL Radio launched a new programme to support the electoral process, *The Ballot Box*, focusing on civic education. Outreach campaigns were also conducted on HIV/AIDS, sexual exploitation and abuse, and other issues.

B. Gender

55. Ahead of the commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, Liberian women leaders met with my Special Representative as part of the United Nations system-wide review of progress in implementing the resolution on Global Open Day. They identified sexual violence, peacebuilding and security sector reform as the critical concerns of Liberian women. These areas were contained in a policy statement as part of the global United Nations review of progress in implementing that resolution.

C. HIV/AIDS

56. UNMIL conducted awareness and prevention training on HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections for newly deployed peacekeepers, offered voluntary HIV testing, distributed condoms and post-exposure prophylaxis, and conducted a behaviour change campaign.

D. Conduct and discipline

57. UNMIL continued efforts towards full compliance with my zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse through preventative measures, such as induction and refresher training for all United Nations personnel, spot checks of

off-limits establishments and awareness-raising on sexual exploitation and abuse among local communities. During the period under review, 2,405 United Nations personnel received training on all conduct and discipline issues and integrated training on the zero-tolerance policy, stress management and HIV/AIDS awareness. UNMIL also trained 870 members of communities in close proximity to United Nations installations on awareness and community-based reporting mechanisms.

58. During the reporting period, 21 allegations of misconduct of a serious nature were reported, including 8 allegations of sexual exploitation and abuse, a number similar to the previous reporting period. There was a decrease in minor infractions.

E. Security and safety of United Nations personnel

59. Crime continued to pose the greatest security threat to United Nations personnel and property, especially in Monrovia. Three incidents of armed robbery targeting United Nations personnel were reported during the period, in addition to 53 non-weapon-related crimes, including burglary and assault. During the reporting period, one UNMIL national staff member, six military personnel and one police officer died as a result of illness or accidents.

V. Mission deployment

A. Military component

60. The authorized strength of UNMIL stands at 8,102 military personnel, including 7,952 troops in Liberia and a 150-strong military guard force deployed at the Special Court for Sierra Leone in Freetown. The force headquarters is based in Monrovia, and there are six infantry battalions deployed in two sectors, in addition to a battalion-sized quick reaction force. There are 158 women in the force.

61. In my letter to the President of the Security Council dated 28 December 2009 (S/2009/679), I advised that the continued deployment of the guard force at the premises of the Special Court was required to secure its facilities and the remaining personnel and sensitive archives. In recent months, the Special Court has undertaken a number of steps to complete its activities in Sierra Leone, including the transfer of its archives to The Hague in December. Prior to that transfer, on 13 October 2010, the Registrar of the Special Court informed the United Nations Secretariat that, following the relocation of its archives and the further reduction of international staff, the deployment of the guard force at the premises of the Special Court would no longer be required after January or February 2011. In view of the determination made by the Special Court, and following consultations with Sierra Leonean authorities, I informed the President of the Security Council in my letter dated 11 February 2011 (S/2011/74) that preparations had been initiated for the withdrawal of the UNMIL guard force, which will be completed in early March.

62. Pursuant to Security Council resolutions 1609 (2005) and 1938 (2010), UNMIL provided reinforcement for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, temporarily redeploying three infantry companies and an aviation unit, consisting of two military utility helicopters, in accordance with resolutions 1951 (2010), 1962 (2010) and 1967 (2011).

B. Police component

63. As at 1 February, the UNMIL police strength stood at 1,327, out of an authorized ceiling of 1,375, including 472 police advisers, 842 officers in seven formed police units and 13 immigration advisers. There are 184 women in the police component. The authorized UNMIL police ceiling also includes 32 uniformed corrections personnel, of which 28, including 4 women, are presently deployed. Three formed police units are deployed in Monrovia and one unit each in Bong, Grand Bassa, Grand Gedeh and Lofa Counties.

64. In accordance with Security Council resolution 1938 (2010), UNMIL continued to help in building the institutional capacity of the Liberia National Police, which is necessary for the national police to reach a level of sustained operational effectiveness. The UNMIL police component also began the process of seeking highly technical advisory capacities needed to support the further institutional development of the national police, including civilian expertise in the areas of administration, communications, criminal investigation, finance, institutional capacity-building, logistics, project management and public information.

VI. Peacebuilding Commission

65. In September, the Liberia configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission was formed and the Permanent Representative of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan to the United Nations was appointed as Chair. In November, the Chair visited Liberia to consult with key stakeholders and participated in the formal groundbreaking of a regional security and justice hub in Gbarnga funded by the Peacebuilding Fund. On 15 November, a Peacebuilding Commission statement of mutual commitments was adopted in Monrovia with the participation of President Johnson-Sirleaf, focusing on the priorities of support to the security sector, rule of law and national reconciliation, which are essential for peace consolidation in Liberia. On the basis of the statement of mutual commitments, the three-year Peacebuilding Fund priority plan for Liberia was endorsed in January 2011.

VII. Transition planning

66. In September, the joint transition working group, comprised of Government and United Nations representatives, prepared a draft comprehensive situational and threat assessment, outlining the security environment and an initial review of basic capability gaps, which was considered by the transition core group and the National Security Council in December. At that time, the National Security Council established task groups to conduct detailed technical gap analyses in the areas of border security and airports; law and order; security of assets and VIPs; and logistics.

67. These groups began the process of dividing all UNMIL security tasks into the following three broad categories: tasks that could be handed over given current national capabilities; tasks that could be handed over after the implementation of planned or ongoing national capacity enhancements; and tasks that are beyond national capacity without the provision of considerable additional resources. Once

that process has been completed, and receives the endorsement of the National Security Council, development of the transition plan will begin. I hope to be able to provide further information about the plan in my next report.

68. In its resolution 1938 (2010), the Security Council requested that the current benchmarks for the UNMIL drawdown phase be revised to reflect those benchmarks considered necessary for a successful transition, including the handover of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities. These transition benchmarks are set out in the annex to the present report.

VIII. Observations

69. Liberia has reached a critical juncture with the start of the electoral process. I am encouraged by the peaceful voter registration process, and wish to commend the national institutions involved in organizing and securing the exercise, with the support of the United Nations. The success of the elections will be largely determined by their credibility. It is important that the National Elections Commission remains objective, transparent and balanced, and maintains a level playing field, while adhering to the electoral calendar. Moreover, it is paramount that political personalities take responsibility for their words and actions, which will help ensure a political climate conducive to credible, peaceful elections and the smooth transfer of power. This would attest to the tremendous progress the country has made in the last seven years.

70. I also encourage national authorities to conduct early and intensive civic and voter education campaigns to ensure that all eligible voters are fully informed of their choices, both for the referendum and the elections, and the process for participating. I am particularly encouraged by the emphasis on the participation of women. Meanwhile, the political, security and logistical challenges should not be underestimated and early planning and coordination will be essential.

71. While progress continues in developing the security and justice sectors, accelerated support for the security sector will be an essential aspect of consolidating the fragile peace in Liberia, and considerable work remains to be done in view of the eventual handover of UNMIL security responsibilities to national authorities. Concerted efforts are required to fill critical capacity gaps in the Liberian security and justice sector, identified in the joint Government/United Nations transition planning process, with coordinated financial and technical support from key partners. It is vital that core pieces of security sector reform-related legislation be passed as a matter of priority. I would urge Liberia's partners to provide generous financial assistance through mechanisms aligned with national priorities, such as the Peacebuilding Fund and the UNDP Justice and Security Trust Fund. I am hopeful that the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commissions in Liberia will offer tangible added value in the priority areas of security sector reform, rule of law and national reconciliation, which would also support a successful transition of key security and other responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities.

72. In that regard, the joint planning under way by the Government and the United Nations for the eventual transition of the peacekeeping operation must remain a priority. It will be crucial that determined efforts are made towards the achievement of the transition benchmarks annexed to the present report, which seek to elaborate

on those critical tasks that must be achieved in order to effect a responsible transition, as they hold the key to a smooth and sustainable security handover. I strongly encourage the Government of Liberia to fully engage in the transition planning process, since government leadership will help to better shape and define the actions that will need to be taken.

73. I welcome the long-awaited establishment of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights, which is vital to the national reconciliation process and to Liberia meeting its international human rights obligations. Now that the Commission is operational, I urge the Government to swiftly move forward with specific planning towards the implementation of the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, including creating structures to comprehensively address institutional reform, and taking other areas of the report forward.

74. I am concerned that legal bottlenecks and other constraints have hindered progress in the fight against corruption. Increased political will is needed to ensure the effective prosecution of outstanding cases. I therefore call upon the Government to systemize good governance and uphold the rule of law so that it might overcome its credibility gap with respect to impunity for corruption.

75. Economic growth and increased foreign investment in Liberia are encouraging signs that the country is on the right track to economic recovery, including increasing employment and government revenue, vital for effective social and other service delivery. At the same time, it is important that the Government ensures sufficient oversight of the implementation of concession agreements, so as to mitigate labour and land disputes frequently arising from their development or expansion. I am encouraged by efforts made so far in this regard, and call on the national authorities to enhance efforts in this area.

76. The troubling developments in Côte d'Ivoire risk undermining the security of the subregion. I wish to express my deep appreciation to the Government and people of Liberia for graciously hosting tens of thousands of Ivorian refugees, mostly women and children, fleeing the turmoil in their own country. The burden placed on Liberia as a result of this serious humanitarian situation is considerable. I am calling on donors to respond generously to the Emergency Humanitarian Action Plan for Liberia, so that there are adequate resources to respond to the crisis. I welcome the proactive efforts of the Government and UNMIL to monitor the situation along the border, and call for continued vigilance to ensure that there is no spillover of the violence. I am troubled by reports that Liberian mercenaries are involved in the Ivorian crisis, and welcome President Johnson-Sirleaf's public stance against any possible recruitment.

77. In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my Special Representative for Liberia, Ellen Margrethe Løj, and UNMIL civilian and uniformed personnel for their contribution to peace consolidation in Liberia. I would also like to thank all troop- and police-contributing countries, the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the International Contact Group on Liberia, the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, multilateral and bilateral donors, and international and local non-governmental organizations, for their commitment and contributions to sustain peace and support development in Liberia.

Annex

UNMIL transition benchmarks

The United Nations strategic goal in Liberia is to assist the Government of Liberia to consolidate peace and achieve a steady state of security with national institutions that are able to maintain security and stability independently of a peacekeeping mission.

Core benchmarks ^a	Indicators of progress
Completion and implementation of a strategy and plan for the handover of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities	A situational assessment is conducted by the Government of Liberia and the United Nations, including a nationwide threat assessment and mapping of existing national security capabilities and gaps. Specific critical capacity gaps that must be filled prior to the UNMIL withdrawal are identified. A strategic approach to the handover of security responsibilities from UNMIL to national authorities is developed by the Government of Liberia and the United Nations. A detailed plan for the progressive handover of security responsibilities to national authorities is developed, including criteria for handing over responsibility for security in a phased manner. Vital national installations are secured by national authorities.
Institutionalization of the national security architecture in line with the national security strategy	Essential legislation is adopted, including the National Security Reform and Intelligence Act. The national defence strategy is approved and implemented. National budgetary allocation for the security sector is progressively increased alongside increased international support to specifically enhance the capacity of the security sector through logistics, mobility and infrastructure. Civilian oversight of the security sector is strengthened, including enhanced effectiveness of existing legislative security committees and the establishment of mechanisms for civil society engagement.
National security institutions effectively maintain law and order	Essential logistics, mobility, communications and infrastructure for the Liberia National Police, including its specialized units, are established and sustained nationwide. Institutional development and administration of the Liberia National Police is enhanced for greater accountability and effectiveness.

1,000 Liberia National Police Police Support Unit officers are trained, armed, equipped and deployed throughout the country. The Liberia National Police Police Support Unit is declared operational.^b

The Liberia National Police Emergency Response Unit is declared operational and is equipped to respond to security challenges in rural and urban areas.

Command and control of the Liberia National Police, including its specialized units, are enhanced and decentralized.

The strength of the Liberia National Police is reviewed and adjusted and posts rationalized to ensure effective coverage throughout the country.

The National Police Training Academy provides effective training to statutory law enforcement agencies.

Capacity for routine security of the national prisons, including response to disturbances, is developed and effective.

Sustained progress is made in the implementation of strategic plans of the Liberia National Police and the Bureau of Corrections and Rehabilitation.

Enhanced national capacity to secure and control the borders

The Armed Forces of Liberia completes its annual training plan, including planned joint training with UNMIL.

The Armed Forces of Liberia conducts border patrols independently of UNMIL.

The Armed Forces of Liberia is declared operational at the battalion level, including its service support units.

The Liberian Coast Guard is at a minimum operating level, including the provision of basic level training and vital equipment.

Essential logistics, mobility, communications and infrastructure for the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization are put in place, alongside an operational plan to ensure that capability can be sustained over time.

The Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization officers are trained, equipped and deployed to 36 official border crossing points.

Sustained progress is made in implementation of the strategic plan of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization.

A transnational crime unit is established and achieves operational readiness.

Increased effectiveness of State authority throughout Liberia

Government of Liberia officials are able to access key parts of the country through enhanced mobility of its personnel, including through vital infrastructure development.

County administration offices continue to develop operational capacity.

Five regional security and justice hubs are established.

Basic security structures are established and operational at the county level, including county security councils.

Conduct of peaceful, credible and accepted national elections in 2011

The National Elections Commission electoral timeline is maintained, and all critical events are successfully carried out.

National security agencies provide the first line of security for electoral activities, including the elections.

Peaceful and credible general elections and related run-offs are conducted.

There is a peaceful transition to the democratically elected Government.

Contextual benchmarks^c

Indicators of progress
Enhanced access to justice and effectiveness of the criminal justice system

The presence of criminal justice components (i.e., police, prosecution, defence, judiciary and corrections) is established in all counties with personnel, equipment and facilities. Essential legislative reform is completed as recommended by the Law Reform Commission and is undertaken in conformity with international human rights standards.

System-wide case management mechanisms and record-keeping systems are developed and functioning. Legal training and educational institutions are established and operational to provide training to judges, magistrates, defence counsel, prosecutors, law students and the Bar.

Accountability mechanisms are established for money paid or entrusted to courts.

The Bureau of Corrections develops capacity to provide basic care for prisoners.

The Independent National Commission on Human Rights is operational and accessible countrywide.

A baseline for the military justice system is established, including doctrine, policy and laws.

National reconciliation progress

Structures are established to take forward the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The constitutional Review Task Force and Law Reform Commission produce proposals for legislative and constitutional reforms.

Alternative dispute resolution mechanisms are formalized and institutionalized for dispute resolution (land and ethnic).

The public land sale law is enacted, promoted and implemented.

Enhanced government capacity to mitigate conflict factors

The Government has capacity to mitigate security challenges relating to disaffected persons, such as unemployed youth, including programmes targeting high security-risk areas.

Mechanisms are developed and institutionalized to mitigate tensions related to the regularization of natural resource exploitation and concession development, including major labour disputes.

Progress towards improved public financial management

The Public Financial Management Act is promoted and implemented.

Transparency is established in natural resource exploitation, including compliance with the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative requirements and Kimberley Process.

Recommendations from General Audit Commission audit reports are implemented. Anti-corruption strategies are implemented and promoted by the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission.

^a Core benchmarks are markers towards the achievement of the mandate of UNMIL and the attainment of the conditions to achieve its strategic goal in Liberia. A steady state of security is the point where national security institutions are developed to a level at which they are able to operate independently without the support of a United Nations peacekeeping mission, and can be further developed by the Government of Liberia in a sustained manner with assistance from bilateral partners.

^b Operational: existence of functional capabilities, with clear command structures and management; transparent, accountable and appropriate organizational structure; conducting continuous skills-based training and re-training; and having adequate logistical facilities, including financial resources, materials and communications. The capabilities should be underpinned by a core doctrine/vision, and be deemed nationally sustainable in the long run.

^c Contextual benchmarks are conditions or factors that could reignite violent conflict or interact with the core benchmarks to undermine security.