



Rapport fra flyvende attache mission til Monrovia, Liberia

7. juni - 13. juni 1998

København, juli 1998

Oversigt over fact-finding rapporter
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- *Rapport fra flyvende attache mission til Monrovia, Liberia, juli 1998:6*



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1.0 Indledning

1.1 Baggrund for missionen

Gennem de 7 års borgerkrig i Liberia (december 1989 – februar 1997) er der kommet et antal liberianske asylansøgere til Danmark. Det har vist sig vanskeligt for de danske udlændingemyndigheder at behandle disse asylsager, idet forholdene i Liberia dels har været vanskelige at vurdere på baggrund af de omskiftelser landet har været igennem, dels på grund af, at det har vist sig vanskeligt overhovedet at fremskaffe relevante oplysninger til brug for asylsagsbehandlingen. Krigens afslutning og afklaringen af den politiske situation, som fandt sted med valget i juli 1997, kan antages at have medført en ændring af de asylbegrundende forhold for liberianske asylansøgere generelt.

På denne baggrund besluttede Udlændingestyrelsen at gennemføre en flyvende attaché-mission til Liberia. Missionen blev gennemført i perioden 7. – 13. juni 1998 af repræsentanter for Udlændingestyrelsen.

Missionen fik assistance af UNHCRs Liberia-kontor i Monrovia. UNHCR identificerede og organiserede således en række møder med relevante organisationer og myndigheder i Monrovia. Disse kontakter blev undervejs suppleret med andre kontakter, som delegationen fandt relevante under dens besøg. UNHCR sørgede endvidere for størstedelens af delegationens transporter under besøget i Monrovia, ligesom organisationen orienterede delegationen om de generelle forhold i landet og i Monrovia i særdeleshed. Som afslutning på missionen orienterede delegationen UNHCR om missionens forløb.

Delegationen afholdt møder med repræsentanter for statslige myndigheder, FN, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO'er) og menneskerettighedsorganisationer i Monrovia.

Delegationen blev alle steder godt modtaget og havde ikke på noget tidspunkt behov for beskyttelse af vagter. Alle samtaler foregik på engelsk og der blev ikke fundet anledning til at anvende tolk. Det bemærkes, at ingen af de af delegationen benyttede kilder anmodede om anonymitet. Dog anmodede to af fire repræsentanter for INGO'er, at deres navne ikke blev offentliggjort.

Det bemærkes, at delegationens mandat alene var at besøge Monrovia. Derfor omhandler en del af oplysningerne i rapporten alene forholdene i Monrovia. Dog skal det understreges, at rapporten tillige indeholder en række oplysninger, som er gældende for hele Liberia.

1.2 Missionens formål

Formålet med rejsen var, at foretage følgende afgrænsede undersøgelser og forundersøgelser:

- Identificere og etablere kontakter med kilder, der kan anvendes løbende i forbindelse med tilvejebringelse af information til brug for asylsagsbehandlingen.
- Foretage en forundersøgelse med henblik på en eventuel senere fact-finding mission til Liberia.
- I det omfang det er muligt vil følgende forhold søges afklaret:

1. Indrejseforholdene for afviste liberianske asylansøgere, herunder mulighederne for at tage sikkert ophold i Monrovia og i Liberia generelt.
2. Sikkerhedsforholdene i Monrovia.
3. Politiske- og menneskeretlige forhold i Monrovia og i Liberia generelt.
4. Etniske-religiøse forhold i Monrovia.
5. Den generelle humanitære situation i Monrovia.
6. Eventuelle asylmotiver.

2.0 De generelle politiske og humanitære forhold i Liberia

2.1 Baggrund

American Colonization Society, der arbejdede for at hjemsende frigivne afrikanske slaver i USA til Afrika, fik i 1822 USAs regering til at opkøbe et landområde ved Kap Montserrado i Vestafrika. Hermed var grunden lagt til Liberia - et friområde for frigivne slaver. Liberia fik en forfatning som den amerikanske. I 1824 grundlagdes Monrovia, som fik sit navn efter den amerikanske præsident James Monroe. I alt indvandrede godt 20.000 frigivne slaver til Liberia i perioden 1822 til 1892. Disse tidligere slaver og deres slægtninge - Americo-liberianerne - grundlagde Liberia i 1847 og blev hurtigt en politisk dominerende kraft, som gennem deres parti True Whigs Party egenhændigt styrede landet frem til 1980. Liberias oprindelige befolkningsgrupper fik ikke stemmeret før i 1980, hvor spændingerne mellem Americo-liberianerne og urbefolkningen dannede basis for et blodigt statskup. Præsident William R. Tolbert blev myrdet og militæret indsatte sergent Samuel Doe som ny præsident. Denne afskaffede landets 133-år gamle forfatning og generelt fik de oprindelige befolkninger større politisk indflydelse, men præsident Doe favoriserede efterhånden stærkt sin egen etniske gruppe, Krahn-befolkningen.

Samuel Does regime viste sig imidlertid, at være ligeså autokratisk og undertrykkende som de foregående regimer, og var endda endnu mere brutal i sin undertrykkelse af den politiske opposition. Derfor blev National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFLs) oprør, under ledelse af Charles Taylor modtaget med store forventninger, især blandt Gio- og Mano-folkene i Nimba County. NPFL startede borgerkrigen i Liberia den 24. december 1989, med sin indtrængen i det østlige Liberia fra Elfenbenskysten, med henblik på at fravriste præsident Samuel Doe magten.

NPFL udnyttede, som også Samuel Doe havde gjort siden 1980, etnicitet som mobiliseringsgrundlag. Den "etniske taktik" medførte, at Liberias hær, Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), gennemførte en række særdeles blodige overgreb på bl.a. Gio- og Mano-befolkningerne, som følge af disse befolkningers støtte til NPFL. NPFL svarede igen med vilkårlige nedslagtninger af Krahn, Mandingo og andre befolkningsgrupper, der mistænktes for at støtte Samuel Does regering. Etnicitet har ikke tidligere været en betydende faktor i liberiansk politik, men blev det til en vis grad under borgerkrigen.

Efterhånden som NPFL kæmpede sig frem til hovedstaden Monrovia i juni 1990 opstod der i stigende grad plyndringer og etniske uroligheder i landet. Som følge af den meget voldsomme konflikt flygtede tusindvis af liberianere over grænsen til nabolandene. Det vestafrikanske økonomiske fællesskab Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), sendte en multinational fredsbevarende styrke til Liberia. Styrken, der blev betegnet ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), var domineret af nigerianske tropper, hvis militære ledere havde tætte bånd til præsident Doe. ECOMOG's første mål var at sikre Monrovia mod NPFL's fremrykning. Ikke destomindre blev Doe i september 1990 fanget tortureret og myrdet af en fraktion, der var brudt ud af NPFL, nemlig Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), ledet af Prince Johnson.

I flere år derefter var der en anspændt situation i Liberia, hvor Monrovia var under kontrol af forskellige midlertidige civile overgangsregeringer, der var beskyttet af ECOMOG. Resten af landet

var under NPFLs kontrol, eller andre fraktioner, som var blevet dannet i løbet af borgerkrigen. Af de vigtigste fraktioner kan nævnes United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), der blev støttet af Sierra Leone som følge af Taylors støtte til oprørsgruppen Revolutionary United Front (RUF) i Sierra Leone. ULIMO blev senere splittet i to grupper, dels i ULIMO-K under ledelse af Alhaji G.V. Kromah, som var en Mandingo-domineret fraktion og dels i ULIMO-J under ledelse af Roosevelt Johnson, der var Krahn-domineret. Liberian Peace Council (LPC) ledet af George Boley, var en Krahn-domineret fraktion, der opererede i den sydøstlige del af Liberia.

Den seneste alvorlige krigshandling fandt sted i Monrovia i april 1996, da overgangsregeringen ønskede lederen af ULIMO-J, Roosevelt Johnson arresteret for mord. NPFLs og ULIMO-Ks forsøg på, at arrestere Johnson førte til de voldsomste sammenstød i Monrovia siden 1990. Kampene fandt især sted mellem NPFL og ULIMO-K på den ene side og ULIMO-J, AFL og LPC på den anden side. ECOMOG mistede total kontrol over situationen. Det lykkedes samtidig Roosevelt Johnson at forlade Liberia under forvirringen. ECOWAS forsøgte da at få en fredsproces i gang på ny. Dette førte til den seneste fredsaftale, kaldet Abuja-aftalen, på ECOWAS-topmødet i Abuja, Nigeria den 17. august 1996.

Borgerkrigen havde enorme menneskelige omkostninger. Ifølge U.S. Department of State, Liberia Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1997 (US 1997) medførte den 7 år lange borgerkrig, ud af en befolkning på 2,8 millioner, omkring 200.000 dræbte, omkring 750.000 flygtninge i nabolandene og mindst 1,2 millioner internt fordrevne.

2.2 Den aktuelle politiske situation

Abuja aftalen af den 17. august 1996 er det grundlag, som den seneste fredsproces i Liberia hviler på. Aftalen fastsatte en ny tidsplan for afholdelse af valg samt afvæbning og demobilisering af militserne. Der blev også nedsat en ny overgangsregering under ledelse af den tidligere senator, Ruth Perry.

Valget, der både var præsident- og parlamentsvalg, blev afholdt med et par måneders forsinkelse den 19. juli 1997. Valget, der havde deltagelse af 13 partier, forløb fredeligt. Den tidligere leder af oprørshæren NPFL, Charles Taylor og hans nye parti, National Patriotic Party (NPP), vandt stort med hele 75,3% af stemmerne. Det næststørste parti blev Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson's Unity Party (UP) med 9,6%. Valget blev overvåget af internationale valgobservatører og blev efterfølgende internationalt anerkendt. Valget betød, at Charles Taylor fik absolut flertal i begge kamre i den liberianske nationalforsamling (Human Rights Watch/Africa, Liberia Emerging from the Destruction, Human Rights Challenges Facing the New Liberian Government, Vol.9, No.7 (A), November 1997 (HRW/A, 1997), s.12 - 13).

Præsident Charles Taylor blev officielt indsat den 2. august 1997 og nedsatte en regering hvis erklærede hovedformål var national forsoning. Denne regering gik straks i gang med at udbrede sin myndighed i Liberia, samt at genopbygge retssystemet og politiet fra grunden.

På den baggrund trak FN sit observatørkorps, United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), ud af Liberia og den internationale embargo mod Liberia blev ophævet med undtagelse af våbenembargoen. UNOMIL blev erstattet af en ny enhed, nemlig United Nations Peace-Building

Support Office in Liberia (UNOL), som er et kontor der har til formål at støtte og følge den fredelige genopbygning af Liberia. (Final Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia, S/1997/712 af 12. september 1997). Liberias økonomi og infrastruktur er, som følge af borgerkrigen fuldkommen nedbrudt, og landet modtager international bistand til genopbygningen.

Den politiske stabilitet i Liberia er dog endnu meget skrøbelig. Den politiske opposition fra de øvrige politiske partier, der deltog i valget, er efter Taylors overvældene sejr meget svag. Det er kun United Party, der tegner den civile politiske opposition. De tidligere modstandere af Taylor, fraktionslederne Alhaji Kromah, George Boley og Roosevelt Johnson er tilsyneladende blevet kørt ud på et politisk sidespor. Men delegationen fik fra adskillige kilder det indtryk, at det endnu er for tidligt at afskrive dem en rolle i fremtiden. I hvilken udstrækning den nye opposition kan få lov til at udfolde sine aktiviteter i fremtiden, er uvist.

Der har ikke været rapporter om alvorlige overtrædelser af de politiske menneskerettigheder under og umiddelbart efter valget. Men den ustabile situation understreges af at en fremtrædende oppositionspolitikker til, og tidligere allieret med, præsident Taylor, Samuel S. Dokie, blev rapporteret dræbt den 29. november 1997, angiveligt af medlemmer af Taylors sikkerhedstjeneste Special Security Service (SSS) (United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa (IRIN-WA), Weekly Round-Up 25-97, 5-12-1997 og Human Rights Review, Vol.2, No.2, April 6-12, 1998).

Ifølge Felix Downes-Thomas, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Liberia/Head of the United Nations Peace Building Support Office in Liberia (UNOL), er udviklingen i retssikkerheden, den almindelige sikkerhedssituation, demobiliseringen og forsoningen samt tempoet i den økonomiske genopbygning afgørende faktorer for den fremtidige politiske stabilitet i Liberia.

Stabiliteten i Liberia må endvidere anses at være truet af udviklingen i nabolandet Sierra Leone, hvor ECOMOG fortsat kæmper mod den afsatte junta og RUF. Kampene har i flere tilfælde fundet sted på begge sider af grænsen, og der har været rygter om, at en af de formelt opløste militære fraktioner i Liberia, nemlig ULIMO-K skulle operere i Sierra Leone (Se S/1997/712 og IRIN-WA Update 94-97).

Konflikten i Sierra Leone har sendt store flygtningestrømme ind i Liberia. Ifølge UNHCR er der således indenfor de seneste 3 måneder kommet 44.000 flygtninge fra Sierra Leone til en lejre i Vaihun i Liberia nær grænsen til Sierra Leone.

2.3 Flygtningesituationen

Den humanitære situation i Liberia er i dag stærkt præget af, at næsten halvdelen af den liberianske befolkning stadig er flygtninge i nabolandene eller er internt fordrevne i Liberia.

Der er ifølge Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC) 266.000 registrerede internflygtninge i Liberia, hvoraf 157.000 er registreret i lejre i og omkring Monrovia. Omkring 19.000 anslås at bo uregistreret i tomme bygninger eller i ruiner i Monrovia. Derudover er der omkring 700.000, der lever fjernt fra deres oprindelige hjemsted. UNOPS og LRRRC oplyste, at de netop har gennemført et fælles pilotprojekt, hvor ca. 50.000 internflygtninge fra lejrene i

Montserrado og omkring Monrovia er blevet genbosat i deres hjemegn. Se i øvrigt bilag 9 om dette pilotprojekt.

Ifølge "Briefing Kit on Liberia, UNHCR Branch Office, Liberia, March 1998", er der ca. 480.000 registrerede liberianske flygtninge i nabolandene. Ifølge LRRRC er der, når de uregistrerede flygtninge tælles med, stadig omkring 800.000 flygtninge i nabolandene. Ifølge UNHCR er 48.378 liberianske flygtninge siden juli 1997 vendt frivilligt tilbage fra nabolandene, med assistance fra UNHCR. Se i øvrigt bilag 8.

Der findes således stadig et betragteligt antal flygtninge og internt fordrevne, der endnu ikke har ønsket, eller endnu ikke har haft mulighed for at vende tilbage til deres hjemegn.

2.4 Fødevaresituationen

E.O. Camara, UNHCR Representative i Liberia oplyste, at der ikke hersker hungersnød nogen steder i Liberia. Han kunne dog ikke udelukke, at der kan findes eksempler på fejlernæring i visse begrænsede områder. Samtidig understregede han, at mennesker i landdistrikterne i mange tilfælde har mulighed for at supplere den daglige føde med naturreserver såsom rødder, frugter og vildt, såfremt der er mangel på de normale ressourcer og fødevarer. Samlet konkluderede Camara, at der er en tydeligere tendens til stabilisering af fødevareforsyningen end det modsatte. Camara anså i øvrigt, at nøglen til en stabil fødevareforsyning i Liberia er, at befolkningen dyrker jorden, hvilket på sin side forudsætter fred i landet.

2.5 Sundheds- og uddannelsesforhold

Sundhedsforholdene er præget af elendig sanitet og mangel på rent vand, hvorefter følger en række sundhedsproblemer. Der er således ofte kolera-epidemier (IRIN/WA Update 231, 17 June 1998). Ifølge Johan P. Buwalda, Project Manager, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) arbejder UNOPS, i forbindelse med genbosætningsprogrammerne, på at renovere skoler og sundhedsklinikker, vandprojekter, latriner, genopbygning af veje og broer samt på at hjælpe de genbosatte i gang med at dyrke jorden.

Elizabeth Boyenneh, President, Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) antog, at ca. 40% af alle børn i skolealderen faktisk går i skole i Monrovia. Hun fremhævede dog, at der er et meget stort antal børn, der kan betegnes som gadebørn.

3.0 Monrovia

3.1 Geografiske forhold

Liberia er et, i afrikansk sammenhæng forholdsvis lille land på 97.754 km². Befolkningens størrelse før borgerkrigen skønnes til at have været på omkring 2,8 millioner mennesker. Heraf boede der omkring en halv million i hovedstaden Monrovia. I dag bor der ifølge UNHCR op imod 900.000 mennesker i Monrovia, hvilket især skyldes de mange intern-flygtninge, som har bosat sig i hovedstaden og dens omegn.

Liberia er inddelt i 13 såkaldte "Counties": Lofa-, Grand Cape Mount-, Bong-, Nimba-, Grand Bassa-, River Cess-, Sinoe-, Grand Gedeh-, Maryland-, Montserrado-, Bomi-, Margibi- og Grand Kru County. Se kort over Liberia i bilag 6.

Der er 16 etniske grupper, hvoraf de største er Kpelle i Bong County, Bassa omkring Buchanan og Gio i Nimba County. Disse tre grupper udgør tilsammen omkring en tredjedel af Liberias befolkning. Andre vigtige etniske grupper er Kru og Vai. Efterkommerne af de frigivne slaver fra USA betegnes Americo-liberianere, og udgør kun en mindre del af befolkningen. Etniske grupper, der blev kendt i forbindelse med borgerkrigen er Krahn i Grand Gedeh og Sinoe Counties og Loma og Mandingo i Lofa County.

Liberias infrastruktur og økonomi blev stort set lagt øde under borgerkrigen. Således antages landbrugsproduktionen at være langt under niveauet fra før krigen. Liberias økonomi bygger i høj grad på eksport af råvarer såsom jernmalm, træ og gummi. Desuden er der betydelige forekomster af diamanter og guld i landet. Diamantsmugling og eksport af træ har under krigen udgjort en vigtig indtægtskilde for forskellige oprørsbevægelser. Størstedelen af befolkningen lever af landbrug, men allerede før borgerkrigen var landet tvunget til at importere store mængder fødevarer (Utrikespolitiska Institutet, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Stockholm 1996, s. 16-18).

3.2 Hovedstaden under borgerkrigen

Monrovia var som hovedstad hovedmålet for Taylors oprørsgruppe NPFL. I løbet af den syv år lange borgerkrig var Monrovia først og fremmest præget af en slags belejringstilstand, hvor det næsten udelukkende var ECOMOG, der var i stand til at beskytte hovedstaden. Monrovia undgik dog ikke omfattende ødelæggelser og uhyrlige overgreb på menneskerettighederne. Kamp-handlingerne var dog primært koncentreret om nogle enkelte større episoder.

NPFL angreb Monrovia i juni 1990. Kampene var meget hårde og grusomhederne gik hårdt ud over civilbefolkningen, ligesom mange bygninger blev lagt øde ved samme lejlighed.

Menneskerettighedskrænkelserne omfattede også voldtægter, tortur og drab. De fleste af Monrovias knap 500.000 indbyggere flygtede, som følge af disse kampe ud af byen. ECOMOG styrkerne ankom til Monrovia den 24. august 1990. Det lykkedes ECOMOG at drive NPFL ud af byen. NPFL bevarede dog kontrollen med resten af Liberia (Carver 1996 og AI 1995).

I oktober 1992 angreb NPFL igen Monrovia, men blev drevet tilbage af en fælles front bestående af ECOMOG, AFL og ULIMO.

Det seneste og mest alvorlige sammenbrud af sikkerheden i Monrovia skete i april 1996 da NPFL sammen med ULIMO-K forsøgte at anholde lederen af ULIMO-J, Roosevelt Johnson. Dette førte til voldsomme kampe mellem NPFL og ULIMO-K på den ene side og ULIMO-J, AFL og LPC på den anden side. ECOMOG mistede fuldstændig kontrollen over situationen. Det lykkedes dog for ECOWAS at få en våbenhvile i stand den 26. maj 1996. I løbet af de seks uger kampene stod på i Monrovia blev 3.000 mennesker dræbt og mere end halvdelen af de 1,3 millioner mennesker, der opholdt sig i Monrovia flygtede ud af byen.

For Monrovia betød konflikten at forretninger, regeringsbygninger, banker, hoteller og mange private boliger blev plyndret og brændt ned. Regeringsinstitutionerne var nærmest blevet udslettet. Mange huse blev brændt ned og står stadig tomme hen. Elektricitetsforsyningen til hovedstaden blev afbrudt og havnen i Monrovia har været lukket i lange perioder.

3.3 Monrovia i dag

I dag er Monrovia en livlig og relativt fredelig by, der er præget af småhandel overalt. Byen bærer præg af en vis genopbygning, bl.a. er hovedvejene i Monrovia nyasfalterede. Der er megen trafik, især falder byens mange gule taxier i øjnene. Men der er stadig ingen central elektricitetsforsyning. Det er således kun de mest velstående samt hoteller, restauranter, offentlige kontorer og forskellige organisationer, der har råd til generatorer. Flere af ministerierne er nu placeret i nye bygninger. Universitetet er genåbnet og Monrovias hospital John F. Kennedy Hospital fungerer i et vist omfang.

Der er stadigvæk udgangsforbud i Monrovia om natten mellem klokken 02 og 05. Præsident Taylor har, ifølge Star Radio den 18. maj, meddelt, at udgangsforbudet vil blive ophævet på Liberias 151 års uafhængighedsdag.

Byen er desuden præget af de mange internflygtninge, som har slået sig ned i tomme eller udbrændte bygninger, samt i mere midlertidige former for husly.

Se kort over Monrovia i bilag 7.

4.0 Sikkerhedsforhold

Sikkerhedsforholdene i Monrovia og i Liberia i øvrigt er på afgørende vis bestemt af to forhold, nemlig tilstedeværelsen af de vestafrikanske ECOMOG-styrker på den ene side og landets militær og politi samt præsident Taylors egne sikkerhedsstyrker på den anden side. Desuden pegede de fleste kilder på det forhold, at den manglende støtte til landets demobiliserede soldater samt tilstedeværelsen af våben hos mange tidligere kombattanter, udgør en alvorlig trussel mod stabiliteten, sikkerheden og freden. Generelt gav kilderne udtryk for en alvorlig frygt for, at Taylor-regeringen ikke vil være i stand til at hindre en forværring af sikkerhedsforholdene eller en direkte genopblussen af borgerkrigen, såfremt ECOMOG trækker sine styrker ud af Liberia.

John Hare, Operations Manager, Save the Children Fund (SCF), Liberia gjorde det klart, at såfremt ECOMOG forlod Liberia, ville han også selv straks forlade landet af sikkerhedshensyn. Dette til trods for at han selv har opholdt sig i Liberia gennem de seneste 5 år. John Hare anså ECOMOGs tilstedeværelse som den ultimative garanti for freden i landet under de nuværende forhold.

Samtidig understregede John Hare, at situationen generelt i Liberia har forbedret sig betydeligt siden sommeren 1997. Han henviste i den forbindelse til, at der er tydelige tegn på, at udenlandske investeringer igen er kommet til Liberia. Således er Firestone Plantation Co. kommet tilbage og han vurderede, at Liberias vigtige gummiindustri snart vil ekspandere. Også EU konsoliderer og udvider sine aktiviteter i Liberia. Han anså disse forhold som en klar indikation på en fornyet tro på fremtiden, og som et udtryk for en klar forbedring af sikkerhedssituationen.

UNHCRs Representative i Liberia, E.O. Camara var også af den opfattelse, at der var sket en betydelig forbedring af sikkerheden i Liberia. Han oplyste således, at det i dag er muligt at rejse overalt i landet samt, at FN har kontorer og projekter mange steder i regionerne, inklusive Lofa-regionen, som er et relativt usikkert område i Liberia og i de forholdsvis urolige grænseområder til Guinea i nord og Sierra Leone i vest. E.O. Camara, der har været Representative for UNHCR i Liberia siden september 1997, understregede, at UNHCR i hans periode aldrig har været udsat for væbnede overfald med skydevåben. De overfald, der har fundet sted er sket med macheter og har været mindre alvorlige. Han gjorde dog samtidig opmærksom på, at FN-organisationen World Food Programme (WFP) har været udsat for enkelte væbnede overfald, men at dette muligvis kan relateres til en dårlig fødevareforsyning.

Felix Downes-Thomas, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Liberia/Head of the UN Peace Building Support Office fandt, at sikkerhedssituationen i Liberia ikke på nogen måde kan karakteriseres som særdeles skrøbelig. Han henviste til to afgørende forhold:

- 1) Der er sket et betydeligt fald i kriminaliteten, især grove forbrydelser som mord og væbnet røveri.
- 2) Under de givne omstændigheder fungerer politistyrken relativt godt.

Han pegede på, at der stadig er mangler og problemer i politikorpset, således mangler man teknisk udstyr og uddannelsen af politifolk er ikke tilstrækkelig og passende. Han henviste til, at politiet ikke skal uddannes som soldater, men som politifolk. Disse problemer og mangler skyldes dog ikke myndighedernes modvilje, men den alvorlige mangel på økonomiske ressourcer i landet. Derfor kan man opleve sporadiske eksempler på overgreb fra politiets side.

4.1 Demobiliseringen

Ifølge Pascal Karorero, Deputy Resident Representative (Programme), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Liberia er den fremtidige sikkerhed i landet stærkt afhængig af en mere omfattende støtte til de mange demobiliserede, tidligere kombattanter og soldater i landet. Han oplyste, at der aldrig er blevet gennemført et egentligt demobiliseringsprogram i Liberia. Fra den 25. november 1996 til den 7. februar 1997 blev der gennemført en omfattende demobilisering af kombattanter i landet, hvor enhver, der afleverede sine våben, modtog en demobiliseringspakke på 1 måneds madforsyning samt et såkaldt demobiliseringskort, der er et bevis for, at vedkommende er blevet demobiliseret og dermed er eks-kombattant. ECOMOG var ansvarlig for gennemførelsen af denne demobilisering. Projektets relativt korte levetid og den manglende opfølgning af demobiliseringen i form af et støtteprogram for de tidligere soldater har, ifølge Karorero betydet, at der er en udbredt skuffelse hos de demobiliserede soldater, som i mange tilfælde står bag væbnede røverier.

Taylor-regeringen har ikke ønsket at igangsætte særlige opfølgningsprojekter for demobiliserede soldater. Karorero oplyste, at myndighederne frygter en modvilje hos befolkningen, såfremt man gennemfører støtteforanstaltninger for demobiliserede soldater, som dermed modtager en støtte som ingen anden befolkningsgruppe får.

John Hare, SCF anså demobiliseringen i Liberia for mangelfuld. Han antog således, at kun ca. 40% af alle våben blev afleveret til ECOMOG under demobiliseringen. Hvor resten af våbnene befinder sig vil han kun gætte på, men mest sandsynligt er disse våben stadig hos en del tidligere kombattanter, som dermed kan udgøre en trussel mod sikkerheden i landet. Han oplyste, at han har bemærket, at hæren er i besiddelse af helt nye våben, hvilket han anser som noget af et mysterium, idet den internationale våbenembargo mod Liberia stadig er i kraft.

John Hare vurderede, at der stadig er risiko for, at oprørsledere i udlandet kan finde på at komme tilbage til Liberia med henblik på at indlede et væbnet oprør mod regeringen. Der er i den forbindelse risiko for, at utilfredse regeringssoldater eller eks-kombattanter vil støtte et sådant oprør og deltage på oprørernes side i plyndringer og andre overgreb. På den anden side var John Hare overbevist om, at præsident Taylors sikkerhedsapparat er tilstrækkeligt effektivt til at kunne afsløre ethvert forsøg på i Liberia, at indlede et organiseret, væbnet oprør mod regeringen.

John Hare afviste i øvrigt, at der ikke findes beskæftigelsesprojekter for demobiliserede soldater. Han henviste til, at der bl.a. findes en lang række vejprojekter i Liberia, der støttes af forskellige Non-Governmental Organisations (NGO'er) og den Europæiske Union (EU). Disse vejprojekter beskæftiger netop demobiliserede soldater. Han antog således, at alene EUs vejprojekter for 95% vedkommende anvendte demobiliserede soldater som arbejdskraft.

UNHCRs Representative i Liberia E.O. Camara vurderede, at en meget stor del af Liberias mandlige befolkning under 25 år "har blod på hænderne" som en følge af konflikterne under borgerkrigen. Han fandt dog ikke, at der var sandsynligt, at myndighederne ville forsøge, at straffe de som havde begået overgreb og forbrydelser mod menneskeheden under krigen. Han kunne dog ikke udelukke, at en person, der var kendt for at have begået forbrydelser mod Taylor-sympatisører under krigen, kunne være i risiko for chikane eller alvorligere overgreb fra myndigheder eller Taylor-sympatisører.

4.2 Politi og militær

Ifølge Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) har også politifolk deltaget aktivt i borgerkrigen. Dette udtrykte sig i, at medlemmer af de kæmpende fraktioner under borgerkrigen blev optaget i politiet uden forudgående politiuddannelse. Disse har under borgerkrigen optrådt som repræsentanter for deres respektive fraktioner og de har dermed sat deres egne fraktionsinteresser over deres pligt til at varetage overholdelse af lov og orden. JPC oplyser i sin Situation Report on Liberia for the Period August 1997 - January 1998 (vedlagt som bilag 1), side 4, at Taylor-regeringens afvisning af at gennemføre en reform af politiet, hvorunder rekrutteringen ville afspejle en etnisk og geografisk balance samt sikre professionalisme og disciplin, har medført, at USA har trukket sin støtte til uddannelse af politifolk i Liberia tilbage.

Disse oplysninger bekræftedes af UNHCRs Senior Protection Officer i Liberia, Yacoub Ali el Hillo, der oplyste, at mange lande har kritiseret Taylor-regeringen for dens uvilje til at forbedre rekrutteringen af politifolk. Han tilføjede, at USA trak sin støtte til uddannelse af politifolk tilbage i efteråret 1997 og i stedet støtter etableringen af et velfungerende retsvæsen.

Ifølge JPC var Liberias hær, kaldet Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) domineret af Krahn-medlemmer under borgerkrigen. Dette betød, at store dele af hæren handlede ud fra egne stamme-interesser, og var ansvarlig for nogle af de grusomste krænkelser af menneskerettighederne under konflikten. Derfor indeholdt Abuja-fredsftalen fra august 1996 en række bestemmelser vedrørende omstrukturering af hæren. Det blev ECOMOG, der fik ansvaret for denne omstrukturering, men efter gennemførelsen af valget i juli 1997 afviste Taylor-regeringen at tillade ECOMOG, at gennemføre omstruktureringen. Regeringen begrundede dette med, at Abuja-aftalen ikke længere var gyldig, da der nu var indsat en lovlig valgt regering i landet.

Regeringen påbegyndte derfor sin egen omstrukturering af hæren og ca. 2.000 soldater blev afskediget i efteråret 1997. Som erstatning for de afskedigede har regeringen i stedet, ifølge JPC, rekrutteret adskillige eks-kombattanter fra Taylors tidligere oprørsbevægelse NPFL. JPC oplyste, at i vinteren 1997/98 var ca. 90% af alle ledende poster i hæren besat af tidligere NPFL-kombattanter. Denne ensidige rekruttering beklagedes JPC meget. Han frygtede, at de tidligere kombattanter kan blive kriminelle, samt at de vil påbegynde en heksejagt på tidligere modstandere.

Felix Downes-Thomas fandt, at det er et problem, at hæren har etnisk slagside. Han oplyste, at før borgerkrigen var hæren domineret af tidligere præsident Does Krahn-medlemmer. Det internationale samfund kræver, at hæren i dag skal have en neutral og ikke en etnisk karakter. Downes-Thomas så to muligheder for at imødekomme dette krav:

- 1) Enten en udvidelse af hæren, og i den forbindelse at lade andre etniske grupper blive repræsenteret, eller
- 2) Begrænse hæren og reducere antallet af Krahn-soldater.

Under alle omstændigheder vil regeringen komme i en alvorlig klemme ifølge Downes Thomas, idet en udvidelse af hæren kan medføre kritik fra udlandet om regeringen i Liberia er militaristisk eller, i det andet tilfælde, at regeringen er anti-Krahn.

4.3 Etniske konflikter

Borgerkrigen i Liberia kan ikke alene forklares som en konflikt mellem etniske grupper i landet. På den anden side har borgerkrigen til en vis grad været domineret af etniske forhold og alliancerne mellem visse grupper. Det vil sige, at nogle af de væbnede oprørsgrupper har haft sin støtte i bestemte befolkningsgrupper, mens andre grupper har støttet det tidligere Doe-diktatur.

Således tilhørte tidligere præsident Doe Krahn-befolkningen, som derfor generelt anses af mange liberianere som Doe-tilhængere. Camara oplyste, at der findes et stort antal Krahn-flygtninge i Elfenbenskysten, hvor der i forvejen findes en betydelig Krahn-befolkning. Han kunne dog fortælle, at Krahn-flygtninge i Elfenbenskysten nu er begyndt frivilligt at vende tilbage til Liberia fra Elfenbenskysten. I begyndelsen var dette en overraskelse for UNHCR, idet man havde forestillet sig, at Krahn-flygtningene først ville vende hjem langt senere.

Camara oplyste i øvrigt, at UNHCR kun har begrænset viden om eventuelle konflikter mellem de etniske grupper i landet. Han gjorde dog opmærksom på, at han godt kunne forestille sig, at medlemmer af befolkningsgruppen Americo-liberianere kunne tænkes at være udsatte for chikane eller overgreb i Monrovia. Indtil Samuel Does militærkup i 1980 var Americo-liberianerne den dominerende politiske og økonomiske befolkningsgruppe i Liberia. De anses ofte af de øvrige liberianere for en slags "intruders", der har taget landets kystområder fra den oprindelige befolkning. Americo-liberianerne lever især i kystområderne og udgør mellem 3 og 5% af Liberias befolkning.

I Lofa County i det nordvestlige Liberia lever foruden det hovedsageligt muslimske, nomadiske handelsfolk Mandingo bl.a. også Loma-befolkningen. Den forholdsvis ringe sikkerhed i Lofa-regionen skyldes især de historiske og tilbagevendende konflikter mellem Mandingo og områdets faste beboere, herunder ikke mindst medlemmer af Loma-befolkningen, hvis religion er en blanding af et kristent og animistisk livssyn (animister er af den opfattelse, at alt har en sjæl - selv døde ting). Mandingo er en befolkningsgruppe som traditionelt har undgået at blande sig i liberiansk politik, men under borgerkrigen begyndte Mandingo at tage aktivt del i krigen, muligvis på baggrund af overgrebene fra oprørsgruppen NPFL. Mandingo organiserede sig i den Mandingo-dominerede fraktion af ULIMO under ledelse af Alhaji Kromah. Denne bevægelse, kaldet ULIMO-K og var i væbnet konflikt med ULIMO's anden fraktion, den kristne og Krahn-støttede ULIMO-J, som blev ledet af Roosevelt Johnson.

4.4 Religiøse konflikter

Liberiansk lov forbyder religiøs diskrimination. Elizabeth Boyenneh, President, Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) oplyste, at der også i praksis er fuld religionsfrihed i Liberia.

Downes-Thomas bekræftede dette og tilføjede, at de nyligt gennemførte nedbrændinger af muslimske moskeer i bl.a. Lofa County, som især benyttes af Mandingo-befolkningen, ikke er sanktionerede af regeringen. Han oplyste, at dele af pressen skriver om begivenheden som om regeringen står bag dåden eller i det mindste sanktionerer den. Downes-Thomas beklagede dette, og henviste til, at regeringen rent faktisk har kritiseret nedbrændingerne og allerede anholdt nogle af de mistænkte.

Dette bekræftedes i dele af pressen i Monrovia. Således kunne avisen *The Inquirer* den 11. juni 1998 oplyse, at præsident Taylor gentagne gange har fordømt de nævnte nedbrændinger af moskeer i Lofa og Nimba Counties. *The Inquirer* citerer Taylor for at skulle have sagt: "I don't want to be a President of a nation where there is religious crisis". Avisen oplyste også, at præsident Taylor har haft flere møder med repræsentanter for det muslimske samfund i Monrovia, samt at han dybt har beklaget det skete, og instrueret politiet i Liberia om, at eftersøge og anholde de som har været involveret i nedbrændingerne af moskeer. Som reaktion på nedbrændingerne afholdt muslimerne i Monrovia en demonstration, hvor man udover at lukke egne forretninger også krævede, at regeringen reagerer hurtigt og anholder de mistænkte. Det bemærkes, at en forholdsvis stor del af forretningslivet i Monrovia er domineret af Mandingo.

Nedbrændingerne af moskeer og huse i Lofa og Nimba Counties er mere en etnisk strid mellem forskellige grupper end en religiøs konflikt. Baggrunden for striden er, ifølge Liberia Humanitarian Situation Report, No. 4, April 1998 (OCHA 4/1998) en modvilje blandt Loma-befolkningen i Lofa County mod, at Mandingo-befolkningen er begyndt at vende tilbage til deres tidligere hjemsteder i Lofa County. Konflikten mellem Mandingo og Loma er historisk og bunder i Loma-befolkningens mistænksomhed over for Mandingo, som man ikke anser at være "rigtige" liberianske statsborgere.

Downes-Thomas oplyste, at Mandingo også findes i Sierra Leone og i Guinea. Under borgerkrigen flygtede mange Mandingo-medlemmer til Sierra Leone og Guinea, hvorfra de først er kommet tilbage efter krigens afslutning. Mange Mandingoer har derfor mistet ejendomme i Liberia og det eneste synlige der var tilbage var moskeerne. Derfor var det også moskeerne, der var målet for Loma- og Gio-befolkningens angreb på Mandingo. Downes-Thomas bekræftede, at såvel Gio som Loma anser Mandingo som er fremmedelement i Liberia og ikke som statsborgere i landet. Han fandt dog, at problemerne er temporære og de snart vil forsvinde.

5.0 Menneskerettighedssituationen

Præsident Taylor erklærede i sin indsættelsestale den 2. august 1997, at regeringen ville oprette en National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) med henblik på at sikre, at alle regeringsorganer ville overholde respekten for menneskerettighederne. Den 27. oktober 1997 underskrev præsident Taylor en lov, der skulle sikre oprettelsen af NHRC. En såkaldt Human Rights Committee (HRC) blev allerede i efteråret nedsat med henblik på at organisere og administrere NHRC.

Senior Protection Officer Yacoub Ali el Hillo oplyste, at den af regeringen nedsatte NHRC kun eksisterer i teorien og ikke i praksis, idet regeringen ikke synes at tage dens arbejdsopgaver alvorligt. El Hillo anførte, at der måske kunne være tale om et taktisk skridt fra regeringen, da den i sin tid erklærede at man ville oprette en menneskerettighedskommission. UNHCR anfører dog i rapporten "Liberia, 1998 Programme and Budget, Voluntary Repatriation and Reintegration of Liberian Refugees, April 1998", s. 4, at "The creation of a National Reconciliation Commission and a National Human Rights Commission are encouraging signs...".

Loven om NHRC er blevet kritiseret af JPC, der hævder, at den blev underskrevet af præsidenten uden der var blevet gennemført en offentlig høring om dens indhold. Præsident Taylor udpegede efterfølgende en komite, bestående af 5 personer, som skulle have ansvaret for den daglige administration af NHRC. Komiteen bestod bl.a. af direktøren for JPC, Samuel Kofi Woods. Denne afviste udnævnelsen, bl.a. under henvisning til, at menneskerettighedskommissionens arbejde var begrænset af den lov, som oprettede den. JPC oplyser i sin "Situation Report on Liberia for the Period August 1997 - January 1998" (se bilag 1), s. 11, at NHRC ikke fungerer. Kommissionen har intet kontor og der er ikke fundet nogen afløser for Kofi Woods. JPC oplyser videre i ovennævnte rapport, at ifølge formanden for kommissionen har NHRC endnu ikke modtaget økonomiske midler til administration og daglig drift.

Elizabeth Boyenneh, AFELL, var generelt af den opfattelse, at menneskerettighedssituationen i Liberia er blevet forbedret siden valget i 1997. Hun fremhævede i den forbindelse, at der aldrig er sket anholdelser af menneskerettighedsaktivister i Monrovia.

Der er flere eksempler på, at politiet har stået bag voldelige overgreb på civile i Liberia. Således kunne el Hillo oplyse delegationen om, at kort tid før dens ankomst til Monrovia var et medlem af den regeringsnedsatte National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) blevet overfaldet og pisket af politiet på åben gade i Monrovia. Dette fandt angiveligt sted, mens chefen for Monrovias politi så på.

Menneskerettighedsorganisationen JPC har registreret overgreb begået af politiet og sikkerhedstjenesten på angiveligt kriminelle og oppositionelle. JPC udsender en halvårlig rapport om menneskerettighedssituationen i Liberia. Rapporten, der indeholder detaljer om disse overgreb vedlægges som bilag 1

5.1 Asylmotiver og særligt udsatte grupper

E.O. Camara, Representative, UNHCR gjorde opmærksom på, at stort set alle de ledere, der aktivt kæmpede mod Taylors styrker under borgerkrigen, har forladt Liberia. Han kunne samtidig ikke udelukke, at fremstående modstandere af Taylor under borgerkrigen eventuelt kunne være i risiko for forfølgelse fra de nuværende myndigheders side. Dette forhold gælder for såvel tidligere væbnede oppositionsledere som fremstående forretningsfolk. Det blev dog anset som en afgørende forudsætning, at disse personer er kendt i kredsen omkring præsident Taylor.

UNHCRs Senior Protection Officer, Yacoub Ali el Hillo gjorde opmærksom på, at der findes etniske grupper, der er udsatte. Det drejer sig især om medlemmer af Krahn-befolkningen, som ofte anses som tilhængere af tidligere præsident Doe, der selv var Krahn. Lederen af oprørbevægelsen ULIMO-J, Roosevelt Johnson er også Krahn.

Lederen af den anden ULIMO-fraktion, ULIMO-K, Alhaji Kromah var Mandingo. Præsident Taylor er kendt for at være mistænksom over for Mandingo-befolkningen, da han og mange andre anser denne befolkning for at være et fremmedelement i Liberia. Deres adfærd som nomadiske handelsfolk og hyppige bevægelser over landegrænserne i regionen samt længerevarende ophold i nabolandene har medført, at mange anser dem som en slags udlændinge i Liberia. El Hillo understregede, at der i dag er en udbredt opfattelse blandt ikke-muslimske liberianere gående ud på, at Mandingo-befolkningen alle er muslimer, hvilket ikke er rigtigt. Mandingo er især udsatte for modvilje, chikane og voldelige overgreb, især i landdistrikterne og i mindre grad i Monrovia.

Ifølge el Hillo har borgerkrigen generelt bidraget til at øge spændingerne mellem de etniske grupper i landet i forhold til situationen før borgerkrigen. Således er det åbenbart, at medlemmer af Mandingo- og Krahn-befolkningerne hos andre etniske grupper og hos visse myndighedspersoner betragtes med skepsis, og i nogle tilfælde anses som en slags landsforrædere. Han understregede dog samtidig, at Monrovia som hovedstad rummer repræsentanter for samtlige etniske grupper i Liberia samt, at der ikke hersker åbenbare konflikter mellem de etniske grupper i byen. Heller ikke mellem religiøse grupper, f.eks. muslimer og kristne.

El Hillo fremhævede tre kategorier af asylmotiver, som han anså som seriøse:

- Den første kategori omhandler de personer han betegnede som: "high-ranking officials with links to one of the opposing factions who fought against NPLF and Taylor especially".
- Den anden kategori vedrører forhold efter borgerkrigen. Han fandt således, at personer der verbalt kritiserede Taylor under valgkampagnen i sommeren 1997 og verbalt eksponerede Taylor som krigsforbryder kunne være i risiko. En del af disse oppositionelle forlod rent faktisk Liberia efter afslutningen af valget. Generelt kunne el Hillo ikke udelukke, at også aktivister, der arbejdede for politiske ledere, som stillede op imod Taylor, kunne være i risiko for overgreb fra de nuværende myndigheders side.
- Den tredje kategori omhandler etniske og religiøse asylmotiver. F.eks. nævnte han muslimerne i Liberia. Mange muslimer føler ikke, at staten er i stand til eller har vilje til at beskytte dem mod overgreb fra andre liberianere. Han anså således, at der kan være et legalt asylmotiv i, at de etniske og religiøse spændinger i landet er voksende. Den såkaldte National Reconciliation Commission fungerer ikke, idet den ikke får tilført de nødvendige økonomiske ressourcer. Dette svarer i øvrigt til forholdene for den menneskerettighedskommission, National Human Rights Commission, som regeringen nedsatte i efteråret 1997.

Helen Moore, Coordinator, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGO) var af den opfattelse, at Mandingo-befolkningen i Monrovia ikke var udsatte for nogen form for forfølgelse, men at medlemmer af Krahn-befolkningen måske ikke føler sig sikre i byen.

Benedict F. Sannoh, Executive Director, Center for Law & Human Rights Education (CLHRE), oplyste, at der i dag findes personer, der ikke tør returnere til Liberia. Det er vanskeligt at forsvinde i mængden, idet Liberia er et lille samfund og "alle kender alle". Han fremhævede, at der f.eks. kan findes mere eller mindre profilerede personer, som har problemer med myndighederne i Liberia. F.eks. tidligere ansatte i Samuel Does administration samt Krahn-medlemmer som kæmpede mod præsident Taylor. Sannoh tilføjede, at der også findes en udbredt frygt hos mange Krahn-medlemmer, der opholder sig i udlandet. Som et eksempel anførte han, at Krahn-medlemmer, der var inviteret til at deltage i en Liberia-konference i Chicago i USA udeblev fra denne, idet de frygtede for deres sikkerhed. Denne frygt var angiveligt baseret på oplysninger om, at præsident Taylor føler sig usikker i sin nuværende position, samt at hans uenighed med Johnson har givet anledning til rygter om, at Johnson planlægger at vende hjem til Liberia for at organisere en væbnet kamp mod Taylor.

Benedict F. Sannoh understregede dog, at det ikke alene er regeringen og myndighederne i øvrigt, der kan udgøre en trussel mod visse personers sikkerhed, men også privatpersoner kan eventuelt have interesse i at forfølge politiske modstandere.

Personer, der har begået forbrydelser mod menneskeheden under borgerkrigen, kan have grund til at frygte at vende tilbage til Liberia, ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh. Han anså således, at forsoningsprocessen langt fra er fremskreden nok til, at disse ikke risikerer at blive stillet til ansvar for deres handlinger, enten af bekendte og slægtninge til ofrene eller af myndighederne.

Samuel Kofi Woods, Director og James N. Verdier, Legal Aid Officer, Justice & Peace Commission (JPC), var begge af den overbevisning, at der findes en række konkrete forhold, som kan motivere liberianere til at søge asyl i udlandet. De henviste til JPCs "Situation Report on Liberia for the Period August 1997 - January 1998", hvoraf det bl.a. fremgår, at politiet og sikkerhedstjenesten i flere tilfælde har begået forbrydelser mod angiveligt kriminelle og fremstående oppositionsledere (se bilag 1, s. 5 ff.).

5.2 Internt flugtalternativ i Liberia

El Hillo. UNHCR fandt anvendelsen af et internt flugtalternativ som problematisk i Liberia. Dette skyldes især, at Liberia er et lille og forholdsvis gennemskueligt samfund, hvor eventuelle overgreb fra regeringens og statens side kan være særdeles vanskelige at undvige. Derfor vil UNHCR ikke anbefale, at asylansøgninger afslås under henvisning til, at ansøgerne kan tage ophold andre steder i hjemlandet.

5.3 Retssikkerhed og myndighedernes evne og vilje til at yde beskyttelse

El Hillo. UNHCR vurderede, at det juridiske system i Liberia stort set er brudt sammen som følge af borgerkrigen. Der er udbredt mangel på advokater og dommere. Det er ikke i dag lukrativt at

være dommer eller advokat. Lønnen for disse er meget lav og derfor søger mange advokater over i det private erhvervsliv. Han kunne videre oplyse, at Liberias Højesteret mangler ressourcer til at varetage dens arbejde og at det er tydeligt at regeringen ikke giver retssystemet og retssikkerheden nogen høj prioritet. Højesteretsdommer Gloria Scott blev af flere kilder tillagt stor respekt og troværdighed, og det blev stærkt beklaget, at hun ikke fik tildelt de nødvendige ressourcer. El Hillo oplyste, at Scott har forsøgt at iværksætte flere projekter til sikring af retssikkerheden, men at dette har vist sig næsten umuligt.

Advokat Benedict F. Sannoh, CLHRE, vurderede at retssystemets formelle struktur fungerer i Liberia. Han gjorde dog opmærksom på, at dommerne udpeges af præsidenten og senatet. Han så gerne, at det i stedet blev National Bar Association (NBA), der udpegede landets dommere. Angående muligheden for at appellere en dom oplyste Benedict F. Sannoh, at i henhold til forfatningen kan alle kriminalsager appelleres og dette fungerer i praksis. Han fandt desuden, at der i kriminalsager normalt vil være sikkerhed for en såkaldt *fair trial*.

E.O. Camara fandt, at myndighedernes evne til at håndhæve loven var ringe. Dette forhold gælder også for Monrovia. Han fremhævede dog, at der på den anden side findes en del dommere og advokater, der er uddannede i faget, og som trods de vanskelige betingelser stadig tillægger retssikkerheden stor værdi og forsøger at arbejde i overensstemmelse hermed.

E.O. Camara oplyste videre, at regeringen ikke har planer om at etablere en form for *Truth Commission*, med henblik på at fremme forsoningen i landet. Han sagde, at en del donorlande var skuffede over dette og understregede, at FN ikke har taget initiativer til at støtte etableringen af en sådan kommission.

Benedict F. Sannoh fastslog, at myndighederne ikke har ressourcer til at beskytte personer mod forskellige former for overgreb. Han kunne dog godt forestille sig, at visse fremstående personer kan opnå beskyttelse hos myndighederne, men den almindelige borger vil ikke kunne forvente at opnå dette. Desuden vil mange personer sandsynligvis afstå fra at søge myndighedernes beskyttelse for ikke at eksponere sig selv. Dette blev bekræftet af JPC.

Benedict F. Sannoh oplyste, at han personligt har medvirket til at få ulovligt tilbageholdte personer løsladt. Han sagde dog også, at dette ikke udelukkede at de selvsamme personer kunne risikere at blive tilbageholdt igen.

Korruption og dermed manglende retssikkerhed har ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh sin oprindelse i Liberias dårlige økonomiske forhold. Han anså således, at de meget lave lønninger for ansatte i statens tjeneste udgjorde en reel fare for retssikkerheden og sikkerheden i Liberia. En dommer aflønnes med ca. 20 US dollars om måneden og en familie på 4-5 medlemmer har brug for mindst 150 US dollars om måneden til blot de mest elementære fornødenheder. Derfor må alle i statens tjeneste, ifølge Sannoh, nødvendigvis supplere sin indkomst på anden måde, og derfor er korruptionen så udbredt. Dette forhold blev bekræftet af Elizabeth Boyenneh. Hun fremhævede, at de lave lønninger i politiet uvægerligt gør korpset korrupt. Sannoh anslog, at en politimand modtager ca. 10 US dollars i løn om måneden. Boyenneh beklagede, at et flertal af politikorpset bestod af tidligere kombattanter og at mange af disse var medlem af NPFL. Dermed kommer de etniske forhold til at spille en vis rolle med hensyn til den enkeltes retssikkerhed. Hun henviste desuden til, at der er flere eksempler på, at politiet har stået bag arbitrære anholdelser og slået tilbageholdte. Der er eksempler på, at væbnede røvere er blevet udsat for direkte nedskydning af politiet, angiveligt under flugtforsøg.

El Hillo, fremhævede, at personer der føler sig i risiko for overgreb eller har været udsatte for sådanne hændelser, som regel ikke vil søge beskyttelse hos myndighederne, men snarere vil henvende sig til en af Monrovias menneskerettighedsorganisationer. Men såfremt en menneskerettighedsorganisation anbefaler vedkommende at opsøge politiet, afvises dette som regel af ofret selv, angiveligt af frygt for politiet. Han bemærkede desuden, at det er vigtigt at være klar over, at blot det, at statsmagten forholder sig passivt til f.eks. overgreb og konflikter mellem f.eks. etniske grupper kan betyde, at man eksponerer én befolkningsgruppe mod andre og dermed legitimerer at overgrebene finder sted.

Downes-Thomas, bekræftede, at mange ofre for overgreb forsøger at løse sine problemer uden om retssystemet. Han udtrykte i øvrigt beklagelse over det som han betegnede som "betydeligt fokus på menneskerettighederne. Enhver opposition fokuserer på dette spørgsmål og det er måske betænkeligt, idet overgrebene ikke er koncentreret om almindelige mennesker, men mere på oppositionelle politiske ledere".

5.3.1 Kvinders retssikkerhed

Elizabeth Boyenneh, oplyste at AFELL arbejder for at fremme kvinders rettigheder i Liberia og yder hjælp til kvinder, der har brug for advokatbistand. Ifølge Boyenneh har Liberias retssystem store mangler, ikke mindst når det gælder kvinder.

AFELL har gennem længere tid arbejdet for, at kvinder generelt sikres retten til at arve en afdød ægtefælle. Dette er ikke tilfældet i dag for de kvinder, der har indgået ægteskab i henhold til Customary Law. Der findes to former for lovlig ægteskabsindgåelse i Liberia, nemlig Customary Marriage og Civil Marriage. Der er dog en afgørende forskel på de to ægteskabsformer, idet Civil Marriage sikrer den kvindelige ægtefælle retten til at arve efter den mandlige ægtefælles død således, at Customary Marriage diskriminerer kvinden. Boyenneh understregede, at det ikke blot er i landdistrikterne, at Customary Law finder anvendelse. Dette sker også i stort omfang i Monrovia. AFELL har arbejdet intenst for, at få et lovforslag vedtaget, der sikrer en ensartet behandling af kvindelige ægtefæller uanset hvilken form for ægteskab de har indgået. Loven er ikke blevet vedtaget endnu, men der findes i dag en komite, som arbejder på at sikre et parlamentarisk flertal for loven. Spørgsmålet diskuteres ifølge Boyenneh åbent i Monrovia blandt almindelige borgere. Hun gjorde opmærksom på at kritikerne af lovforslaget ofte fremfører, at AFELL og de som i øvrigt støtter lovforslaget er ude på, at få afskaffet polygami i Liberia. Hvilket Boyenneh dog kategorisk afviste.

Boyenneh gjorde opmærksom på, at kvinder som regel ikke anmelder overgreb i form af seksuelt misbrug og voldtægt. Hun understregede, at seksuelle overgreb mod kvinder er et stort problem i Liberia, herunder også i Monrovia. Sådanne overgreb er en stor skam for ofrets familie og for ofret selv og derfor vil de fleste ofre søge at skjule overgrebet. Desuden frygter mange ofre, at såfremt de anmelder seksuelle overgreb vil de risikere repressalier fra voldsforbryderen.

James N. Verdier, Legal Aid Officer, JPC gjorde opmærksom på, at JPC ikke har fået mange henvendelser vedrørende voldtægtssager. Han oplyste således, at siden januar 1998 har JPC kun behandlet 1 voldtægtssag. Denne forbrydelse var til gengæld særdeles alvorlig og fandt sted i

Monrovias fængsel, kaldet Monrovia Central Prison. Her blev en kvindelig fange udsat for gentagne voldtægter af mandlige fanger. Dette skete under overværelse af fængslets fangevogtere.

Verdier kunne endelig oplyse, at JPC har en aftale med Ministry of Justice om, at JPC har tilladelse til at inspicere Monrovias Central Prison 2 gange ugentligt.

5.4 Organisationsfrihed - politisk frihed

Der findes et antal menneskerettighedsorganisationer i Liberia. Langt størstedelen af disse findes kun i Monrovia, men der ses ikke at være nogen form for begrænsninger i disse organisationers virke. Delegationen afholdt møder med flere af disse organisationer og ingen af dem hævdede, at de blev begrænset i at udføre deres aktiviteter eller i at rapportere offentligt om krænkelse af menneskerettigheder i Liberia. Således erklærede Elizabeth Boyenneh, at der ikke under det nuværende styre har fundet anholdelser sted af menneskerettighedsaktivister. En anden menneskerettighedsorganisation Center for Law & Human Rights Education udgiver en ugentlig avis kaldet Human Rights Review, som uden begrænsninger har rapporteret om menneskerettighedsproblemer og -krænkelser samt politiske forhold i Liberia. JPC gjorde dog opmærksom på, at dens medlemmer har været udsatte for forskellige former for chikane af politiet.

Ifølge Elizabeth Boyenneh, er der ingen politiske fanger i Liberia i dag og det er karakteristisk, at politiet ikke interesser sig for politiske aktiviteter generelt.

Helen Moore, Coordinator, International Non-Governmental Organisations (INGOs) oplyste, at der netop havde fundet en deportation af to personer sted i Monrovia, som måske kunne være politisk motiveret. Deportationen fandt sted kort før delegationens ankomst til Monrovia. De to deporterede blev anholdt blot dagen før de blev deporteret. Ifølge Moore var baggrunden for deportationerne usikre, men muligvis var der tale om personer med forbindelse til fremstående modstandere af præsident Taylor. Hun gjorde dog også opmærksom på, at der på den anden side var rygter om, at de deporterede var beskæftiget med illegal import af våben til Liberia samt at disse våben var bestemt for dele af oppositionen.

Endelig kunne Helen Moore oplyse, at der er rygter om, at der findes en såkaldt dødsliste hos politiet i Monrovia. Hun understregede dog, at der ikke findes et entydigt mønster for de overgreb og mord, der har fundet sted i Liberia og hvoraf en del henføres til politiet. Hun gjorde endelig opmærksom på, at der er stor forskel på politiets adfærd i Monrovia og ude på landet. Der er således en række eksempler på at politiet i Monrovia står bag chikanerier af medlemmer af den politiske opposition.

Benedict F. Sannoh, oplyste, at forfatningen sikrer retten til politisk frihed. Problemet drejer sig imidlertid ikke om retten til denne frihed. Snarere er problemet, at de mange mindre partier, der stillede op til valget i 1997 i dag står i store økonomiske vanskeligheder samt at en række af disse partier ikke har en egenetlig parti-ideologi eller blot et partiprogram. De er som regel baseret på enkeltpersoners politiske og/eller økonomiske interesser snarere end samfundsmæssige interesser. Disse forhold hindrer en åben politisk debat i Liberia og de udgør en trussel mod demokratiet.

Benedict F. Sannoh og flere andre kilder gjorde dog opmærksom på, at når så stort et flertal af vælgerne havde stemt på Taylor ved valget i 1997 skyldes det, at mange liberianere frygtede, at

såfremt de ikke gjorde dette, ville der være risiko for, at en eventuelt forsmået oprørsleder som Taylor atter ville gribe til våben for at erobre magten i landet.

5.5 Bevægelsesfrihed

Elizabeth Boyenneh, oplyste, at der i princippet ingen begrænsninger er i den fri bevægelighed i Liberia, men at der kræves udrejsevisa for at man kan forlade landet. Hun fortalte dog, at der er mange eksempler på, at politiet i Monrovia og andre steder standser billister og afkræver disse et pengebeløb. Ofte sker dette helt ubegrundet og uden nogen form for lovovertrædelse fra billisternes side. Den lave løn på 3-10 US dollars om måneden til en politimand gør, at dele af politikorpset er korrupt og det er almindeligt kendt, at politifolk søger at skaffe sig et ulovligt supplement til lønnen gennem nævnte metode.

Ugeavisen *Human Rights Review*, der udgives af menneskerettighedsorganisationen Center for Law & Human Rights Education og har direktøren for denne organisation, Benedict F. Sannoh som ansvarshavende redaktør, rapporterede i bladet den 9. - 15. juni 1998, vol. 2, nr.9, s.1 og 5, at regeringens sikkerhedskontrol på landevejene i Liberia begrænser den fri bevægelighed i landet og fortsætter:

"If the social contract theory under which the people surrender portion of their rights to the government in return for the protection of their lives and properties is to have any meaning in Liberia, government has got to instill in its security forces a sense of civil responsibility. The Monrovia-Buchanan, Kakata-Gbarnga highways, among others, have again come to be like the days of war when numerous checkpoints were manned by individuals who acted in the fashion of *every man is his own government*...On several occasions, especially at night highway security personnel chase vehicles plying these highways only to cross in front of them to demand few dollars as a way of allowing the travellers to continue their journeys".

Downes-Thomas anså, ligesom Elizabeth Boyenneh, at der er fri bevægelighed i Liberia, og hvad angik sikkerheden i den forbindelse var han personligt overbevist om, at det er mere frit og sikkert at bevæge sig omkring i Monrovia end i f.eks. New York City.

5.6 Ytringsfrihed

Benedict F. Sannoh, oplyste, at forfatningen sikrer pressefrihed i Liberia og ifølge ham er der reel pressefrihed i Liberia. Downes-Thomas, bekræftede dette og anså, at pressefriheden i Liberia er én af de mest liberale i hele Vestafrika og undertregede, at "pressen kan skrive hvad den vil". Han mente således, at det er en grov overdrivelse, at pressefriheden er kuert, af regeringen, sådan som visse journalister og menneskerettighedsforkæmpere hævder. Downes-Thomas gav tydeligt udtryk for, at han ikke kunne forstå, hvorfor der er nogen, der hævder, at pressen er undertrykt i Liberia.

Ifølge Sannoh findes der ca. 12 aviser i Monrovia, inklusive ugebladet *Human Rights Review*, der udgives af Center for Law & Human Rights Education. Der findes en enkelt decideret regeringsvenlig avis kaldet *The Patriot*. Af andre aviser nævnte Sannoh bl.a. *The New National*, *The*

Inquirer, National Chronicle, The News, The Heritage og New Democrat. Desuden findes *Daily Times, The Independent Eye og The Post.*

Sannoh oplyste at mange af de ovennævnte aviser blev etableret af nuværende oppositionspolitikere, men et antal aviser er helt uafhængige. Aviserne udkommer i ca. 2.000 til 3.000 eksemplarer. Det er dog sjældent at aviserne beskæftiger sig seriøst med menneskerettighedsspørgsmål. Han beklagede, at mange af aviserne alene drives som økonomiske forretninger, der serverer de historier, der kan sælge avisen.

Der findes også et antal radiostationer i Liberia. *Radio Star* anses af Sannoh som en mere seriøs radiostation, der ikke blot drives som økonomisk forretning. *Radio Kiss, Radio Hope, Radio Liberty, Radio Veritas* samt andre stationer drives rent kommercielt og betegnes af Sannoh som mindre seriøse. Han oplyste, at der i alt er 6-7 radiostationer i Monrovia.

Benedict F. Sannoh oplyste, at der trods pressefriheden af og til har været problemer for enkelte journalister og redaktører. Således anførte han, at der er enkelte medlemmer af regeringen, som ikke respekterer pressefriheden i landet. Der er eksempler på, at pressefolk har været tilbageholdt i kortere perioder, i intet tilfælde længere end 1-2 døgn, og som oftest i kortere tid. Disse tilbageholdelser har som regel fundet sted på baggrund af angiveligt falske historier i pressen. Der er ikke eksempler på yderligere overgreb fra myndighedernes side. Sannoh beklagede dog, at visse aviser og journalister ikke synes at kende sit ansvar og bragte falske historier i omløb, blot der var penge at tjene på disse historier.

Elizabeth Boyenneh, kunne bekræfte Sannohs oplysninger om, at anholdte journalister alle er blevet løsladt efter kortere tids tilbageholdelse.

James N. Verdier, oplyste, at journalister er blevet anholdt og udsat for nedværdigende behandling og direkte vold af politiet. I samtlige tilfælde er JPC gået ind i sagerne og har fået de pågældende journalister løsladt. James N. Verdier, oplyste videre, at JPC og Press Union of Liberia (PUL) har indgået et såkaldt memorandum, dateret den 17. april 1998. Heri er JPC og PUL blevet enige om, at JPC repræsenterer pressen i alle sager mod myndighederne, og yder gratis advokatbistand til medlemmer af PUL. Memorandumet vedlægges som bilag 2. Verdier oplyste, at der på baggrund af dette memorandum er sket en betydelig forbedring af forholdene for journalister i Liberia, og at der ikke har været eksempler på anholdelser af journalister i længere tid. Han henviste til, at der i en kortere periode op til februar 1998 var blevet anholdt i alt 7 journalister, som havde skrevet historier, som angiveligt var pinlige for regeringen. De er alle blevet løsladt, og siden da har problemerne for journalister været minimale.

James N. Verdier fandt dog stadig, at regeringen søger at lægge hindringer i vejen for pressen og pressefriheden. Han gjorde i den forbindelse opmærksom på, at det koster meget, helt op til ca. 15.000 Liberianske dollars, dvs. 375 US dollars, at få en avis registreret. Verdier fandt, at en registreringsafgift af denne størrelse er et reelt forsøg på at begrænse pressefriheden fra regeringens side.

Delegationen indkøbte ved flere lejligheder dagens aviser i Monrovia og samtlige aviser koster 20 Liberianske dollars stykket, dvs. 1/4 US dollar. Aviserne bar alle præg af en åben og fordomsfri journalistik, og de fleste aviser bragte læserbreve med kritiske kommentarer til tidens politiske spørgsmål.

5.7 Menneskerettighedsorganisationer i Monrovia

Der findes i dag et antal menneskerettighedsorganisationer i Monrovia. Delegationen fik lejlighed til at mødes med repræsentanter for 4 af disse organisationer, nemlig Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), The Movement for the Defence of Human Rights (MODHAR), Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL) og Center for Law & Human Rights Education. En del af menneskerettighedsorganisationerne har organiseret sig i paraplyorganisationen National Human Rights Center of Liberia. Se bilag 3.

6.0 Genopbygningen af statsinstitutioner

Den mangeårige borgerkrig medførte et næsten totalt sammenbrud af den liberianske stat og, uden undtagelse, af alle statens institutioner. Genopbygningen af den liberianske stats institutioner er afgørende for, at staten kan garantere for befolkningens sikkerhed. Dette gælder ikke mindst for genopbygningen af retssystemet, politistyrkerne og militæret.

Ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh er retssystemet principielt genetableret. Ifølge UNOL er politistyrkerne, under de givne omstændigheder, blevet genetableret relativt hurtigt og effektivt. Men de savner moderne udstyr, har et meget begrænset budget, og mangler den rette uddannelse. Omstruktureringen af den liberianske hær AFL står tilbage som den største udfordring. ECOMOG er i dag stadig den primære og eneste militære styrke, der er i stilling i og omkring Monrovia.

Benedict F. Sannoh fandt, at statsinstitutionerne er potentielt korrupte. Dette skyldes de meget lave lønninger. Ifølge UNOL er korruption derfor en nødvendighed som supplement til den meget lave løn, de ansatte i statsinstitutionerne får. Korruption findes således overalt i staten.

Det bemærkes at, Liberias nuværende forfatning er stort set identisk med den forfatning, som blev vedtaget af Samuel Does regering den 6. januar 1986.

6.1 Justitsministeriet og retssystemet

Det liberianske justitsministerium, Ministry of Justice, har ifølge Human Rights Watch/Africa's rapport "Liberia Emerging from the Destruction" (HRW/A 1997 s.23) ansvaret for retssikkerheden i Liberia. Justitsministeriet er således ansvarlig for administrationen af domstolene, politiet (National Police Force - NPF) og fængslerne.

Ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh, er den liberianske forfatning grundlaget for retssystemets virke. Forfatningen foreskriver statsmagts tredeling i en udøvende, en lovgivende og en dømmende magt. Liberias præsident er udstyret med den udøvende magt og er den øverste chef for den liberianske hær, AFL. Den lovgivende magt ligger i nationalforsamlingen, som består af to kamre henholdsvis Senate og House of Representatives. (Se Africa South of the Sahara, 1998, s.611).

Ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh, er strukturen i retssystemet principielt genetableret. Det øverste niveau af det liberianske retssystem består af en Supreme Court. Denne har fem medlemmer, en Chief Justice og fire Associate Justices. Under Supreme Court findes de såkaldte Circuit Courts, der korresponderer til Liberias 13 counties, hvilket svarer til amter. Herunder kommer Magistrates courts og endelig Justice of Peace Courts (se HRW/A 1997 s.23).

Herudover findes der Traditional Courts, der blandt andet varetager Customary Law. Afgørelser i disse domstole kan appelleres til domstolene i det almindelige retssystem (HRW/A 1997 s.23). Alle i Liberia har ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh en grundlovssikret ret til at appellere domsafgørelser til den højere instans.

Ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh er det i dag sådan, at det er præsidenten, som nominerer dommerne til Supreme Court, mens senatet skal godkende dem. The National Bar Association (NBA) havde

ønsket, at det var NBA, som skulle udpege dommerne, hvilket ville styrke Højesteret yderligere og sikre adskillelsen af retssystemet fra regeringsmagten.

Regeringen yder ikke retshjælp. Ifølge Kofi Woods, fra JPC, mangler regeringen det nødvendige engagement, men også tilstrækkelige midler til, at kunne yde borgerne retshjælp.

Ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh findes der dødsstraf i Liberia.

6.2 Politi

Det liberianske politi hedder The National Police Force (NPF). NPF hører under Justitsministeriet. Der findes flere forskellige politienheder i Liberia, blandt andre trafikpoliti, og immigrationsmyndigheden, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN). De forskellige politienheder kan kendes på deres uniformer.

Ifølge Kofi Woods, JPC, findes der i dag politienheder over hele landet. Politiet er i dag ubevæbnet. Flere af de kilder delegationen talte med pegede på, at til trods for at der nu findes politi over hele landet, er der en række problemer, som knytter sig til politiets uddannelse og rekrutteringsgrundlag. Se i øvrigt afsnit 4.2.

NPF får stadig assistance af ECOMOG til blandt andet kriminalitetsbekæmpelse (HRW/A 1997 s.24). Ifølge Downes-Thomas, kompletterer ECOMOG for politiets mangler med hensyn til udstyr og træning.

Ifølge Jappah Nah, Executive Director, The Movement for the Defence of Human Rights (MODHAR), er de fleste politifolk tidligere kombattanter, og bliver primært rekrutteret fra Charles Taylors tidligere oprørsbevægelse NPFL. Fordi politistyrkerne består af tidligere kombattanter, som ikke er blevet behandlet for krigstraumer og som ikke er blevet trænet i korrekt politimæssig adfærd, er der ofte tilfælde af politimisbrug og tilfælde hvor politiet optræder endog særdeles voldeligt.

Udover det almindelige politi findes der forskellige slags sikkerhedsstyrker. Ifølge Helen Moore, INGO facilitator, ligner strukturen med de mange sikkerhedsstyrker den sikkerhedsstruktur Taylor havde opbygget i NPFL. Af de vigtigste sikkerhedstjenester kan nævnes Special Security Service (SSS). El Hillo, oplyste, at SSS er præsidentens egne sikkerhedsfolk og angiveligt består af tidligere NPFL-kombattanter. Executive Mansion Special Safety Unit (SSU) er en særlig styrke, der beskytter præsident Taylors præsidentbolig. Endelig kan National Security Agency (NSA) nævnes.

6.3 Militær

The Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), er stadig den officielle hær i Liberia. Men, ECOMOG er i dag den eneste militære styrke, som er opstillet i og omkring Monrovia. AFL, der består af omkring 7.000 soldater, er endnu ikke blevet omstruktureret og genopbygget. Soldaterne ligger foreløbig i barakkerne i Barclay Training Center, Monrovia og i Schiefflin Barracks udenfor byen. AFL har indleveret deres våben som en del af demobiliseringen. (HRW/A 1997 s.24).

Genopbygningen af AFL, er ifølge UNOL, genstand for strid imellem Taylors regering på den ene side og ECOMOG, UNOL og det internationale samfund på den anden side. UNOL ønsker at AFL skal afspejle liberias befolkningsmæssige, og især etniske sammensætning.

Det var en del af Abuja-aftalen, at ECOMOG skulle omstrukturere og genopbygge AFL. Dette var dog ikke sket før valget den 19. juli 1997. Dette forhold medførte, ifølge Benedict F. Sannoh, at Charles Taylor kom i verbal strid med ECOMOG om hvem, der skulle gennemføre genopbygningen af politi og AFL efter valget. Charles Taylors standpunkt var, at efter valget måtte det være den nyvalgte nationale liberianske regerings suveræne ret til selv at genopbygge AFL og politiet mens ECOMOG mente, at det fortsat var ECOMOGS opgave.

Baggrunden for striden er, at tidligere præsident Doe fortrinsvis rekrutterede sin egen etniske gruppe Krahn til AFL. AFL var under borgerkrigen ansvarlige for alvorlige menneskeretskrænkelser og etnisk forfølgelse. Især var AFL ansvarlige for de udbredte drab på de etniske grupper Gio og Mano, der var allierede med Taylors NPFL i starten af borgerkrigen (HRW/A 1997 s.24).

Genopbygningen af politi og AFL har derfor været gået i stå på grund af striden om ECOMOGs rettigheder. Den verbale strid mellem Taylor og ECOMOG er indtil videre blevet løst efter underskrivelsen af en ny aftale, den 5. juni 1998 mellem ECOWAS og den liberianske regering, der fastlægger rammerne for ECOMOGs fortsatte tilstedeværelse i Liberia. Ifølge avisen *The Inquirer* (Vol.7, No. 102, Friday, June 12, 1998) skal ECOMOG respektere Liberias suverænitet og love, hvilket dog ikke betyder at ECOMOG kommer under den liberianske regerings kommando. Kommandoen over ECOMOG forbliver således under ECOWAS. Ifølge IRIN-WA Update 228 of Events in West Africa, 12. juni 1998, er uenighederne om hvem, der har ansvaret for genopbygningen af AFL foreløbig løst ved, at den nye ECOMOG general har valgt at "droppe" spørgsmålet.

6.4 Fængsler

Alle fængsler i Monrovia blev ødelagt og tømt under borgerkrigen. Det eneste fungerende fængsel i Monrovia i dag er Monrovia Central Prison. Fængslet er dog ikke blevet fuldt repareret og trænger til renovering. Fængslerne i Liberia administreres af Bureau of Rehabilitation, som hører under Justitsministeriet (HRW/A 1997 s.25).

Det liberianske justitsministerium har til Star Radio, den 16 maj 1998 udtalt, at der sidder 120 fanger i Monrovia Central Prison. Heraf er der 13 børn, som venter på at deres sager kommer for retten. Ifølge Elizabeth Boyenneh, og Jappah Nah, findes der ingen politiske fanger i Liberia i dag.

7.0 Ind- og udrejseforhold i Monrovia

Siden Monrovias internationale lufthavn, Robertsfield, der ligger 56 km. uden for hovedstaden, blev genåbnet den 15. december 1997 kan man atter rejse til Monrovia ad luftvejen, også med større rutefly. Ghana Airways og andre regionale flyselskaber beflyver således Robertsfield. Ghana Airways flyver til Monrovia fire gange ugentligt fra Accra, Ghana. Lufthavnen blev totalt ødelagt under borgerkrigen og de udbrændte lufthavnsbygninger er nu erstattet af en midlertidig bygning.

Delegationen erfarede, at forholdene i ankomst- og afgangshallen i Robertsfield er præget af kaos. Myndighederne formår ikke at holde uvedkommende ude af lufthavnsbygningen, end ikke fra paskontrollen, baggagemodtagelsen og toldkontrollen. Til trods for dette fungerer de forskellige lufthavnsmyndigheder. Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN), varetager således paskontrollen. Vaccinationskort bliver kontrolleret af sundhedsmyndighederne og baggagen bliver grundigt kontrolleret af toldmyndighederne samt et større eller mindre antal uvedkommende personer, som også forsøger at opkræve penge af de rejsende.

Det er også muligt at indrejse over land til Liberia. Vejen til Elfenbenskysten er således åben og farbar.

BIN er en enhed under Ministry of Justice, der blandt andet varetager kontrollen med ind- og udrejse af Liberia. Alle, der ønsker at udrejse af Liberia skal forinden have udstedt et udrejsevisa, et såkaldt exit-visa, hos BIN.

Det liberianske Udenrigsministerium, har ansvaret for udstedelse af rejsepas.

7.1 Pas og andre identifikationspapirer

Ifølge det liberianske Udenrigsministerium, stadfæster det liberianske nationalitetspas det liberianske statsborgerskab. Det er alene det liberianske udenrigsministerium, der kan udarbejde rejsepas til liberianske statsborgere.

Den liberianske regering begyndte at udstede nye nationalitetspas i august 1997, på grund af problemer med falsknerier og uregelmæssigheder omkring udstedelsen af de gamle pas. Det liberianske Udenrigsministerium, meddelte samtidig med, at udstedelsen af de nye pas begyndte, at alle gamle liberianske nationalitetspas ville være ugyldige efter den 31. december 1997. De nye nationalitetspas kaldes "Ordinary" og har et mørkeblåt omslag (de gamle var grønne). Udover det normale nationalitetspas "Ordinary" findes der to andre typer pas, nemlig et såkaldt "Diplomatic" og såkaldt "Official" pas. "Diplomatic" svarer til et normalt diplomatpas mens "Official" anvendes til personer, som ikke arbejder for diplomatiet, men som er på særlige tjenestepgaver for den liberianske stat. Se bilag 4.

Ansøgning om et liberiansk nationalitetspas sker ved fremsendelse af en udfyldt formular, "Application for Liberian Passport," til Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Formularen er vedlagt som bilag 5. Sammen med formularen fremsendes en skriftlig ansøgning samt dokumenter, der kan underbygge ansøgerens liberianske statsborgerskab, f.eks. en fødselsattest. Det liberianske

Udenrigsministeriet oplyste at, ægte fødselsattester er udstyret med et "Dry C" stempel og ikke et gummi-stempel. Fødselsattester udstedt under borgerkrigen kan være forfalskninger.

Nationalitetspasset udleveres kun ved ansøgerens personlige fremmøde, da denne skal underskrive passet ved overværelse af den udstedende myndighed. Passet udleveres mod betaling af 20 US dollars

Liberianere i udlandet kan få udstedt et nyt pas ved en liberiansk ambassade eller, hvis en sådan ikke findes, hos den liberianske generalkonsul. Proceduren er den samme som beskrevet ovenfor. Derudover vil f.eks. generalkonsulen foretage et interview af pasansøgeren for at kunne fastslå ansøgerens liberianske identitet. Herefter sendes ansøgningsformularen, sammen med eventuelle dokumenter og et brev fra generalkonsulen til det liberianske udenrigsministerium i Monrovia, der vil vurdere ansøgningen for først derefter eventuelt at udstede et pas. Passet vil derefter blive sendt til ambassaden, eller generalkonsulatet, hvor pasansøgeren ved personligt fremmøde kan få udleveret passet.

Ifølge det liberianske udenrigsministerium er der ikke blevet udstedt ID-kort i Liberia siden 1990.

7.2 Udsendelsesforhold

George Wallace, Senior Ambassador at Large, Udenrigsministeriet, understregede, at de danske myndigheder bør orientere de liberianske myndigheder med henblik på identifikation i tilfælde af udsendelser med politieskorte til Liberia. Dette krav skyldtes en række uheldige fortilfælde, hvor europæiske myndigheder har returneret angivelige liberianske statsborgere, der ved de liberianske immigrationsmyndigheders kontrol ved ankomsten til Liberia viste sig ikke at være liberianske statsborgere.

Det liberianske udenrigsministerium oplyste, at ved returnering af liberianske statsborgere uden gyldige rejседokumenter vil det liberianske generalkonsulat kunne være behjælpelig med at opnå et Laissez Passer.

Dr. Alexander Kulue, fra Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission, LRRRC, oplyste at LRRRC vil kunne assistere i forbindelse med returnering af liberianske statsborgere til Liberia. LRRRC kan kontaktes i forvejen med identitetsoplysninger, såsom navn, alder og hvilken del af landet personen ønsker at returnere til. Herefter vil LRRRC tage sig af det fornødne, herunder kontakt til de relevante liberianske myndigheder.

Ifølge James N. Verdier, kan de liberianske myndigheder være meget hurtige til at stemple folk. Derfor finder JPC, at der kan være en stor sandsynlighed for, at udsendte liberianere vil kunne blive mistænkt ved ankomsten til Monrovia. I sådanne tilfælde vil de kunne blive sendt til afhøring af sikkerhedspolitiet. Sker det, vil der i værste fald kunne ske det, at personen forsvinder.

JPC understregede at der godt kan være tale om misforståelser, og at alene mistanken til en person kan være nok til at denne sendes til forhør. JPC fandt således, at immigrationsmyndighederne endnu ikke er tilstrækkeligt uddannede og parate til at modtage udsendte liberianere.

John Hare, SCF, fandt, at det er for tidligt, at tvangsudsende afviste liberianske asylansøgere til Liberia. Han anså, at dette ikke burde finde sted førend om nogle måneder, når sikkerhedsforholdene er bedre afklarede. Han begrundede dette yderligere med oplysningen om, at

der findes oprørsledere som stadig har mange soldater under våben og som derfor har mulighed for at igangsætte et oprør mod regeringen. Derfor var han også uenig med UNHCR om de repatrieringer der nu finder sted til Liberia. Han var således overbevist om, at flygtninge i udlandet af sig selv ville returnere, når de fandt tiden passende, dvs. af hensyn til sikkerhedsforholdene.

8.0 Kilder til fremtidig informationsindhentning

Justice and Peace Commission (JPC) udgiver en halvårlig situationsrapport. Samuel Kofi Woods oplyste, at JPC godt kunne være behjælpelig med eventuelle spørgsmål, som Udlændinge-myndighederne måtte have i forbindelse med konkrete asylsager og generelle spørgsmål i øvrigt.

Benedict F. Sannoh (CLHRE), stillede ligeledes sin organisation til rådighed og oplyste, at han personligt også kunne være behjælpelig med konkrete ægthedsvurderinger af dokumenter.

El Hillo kunne oplyse, at Samuel Kofi Woods og Benedict F. Sannoh begge kan anses at være særdeles troværdige kilder, også hvad angår eventuelle asylmotiver blandt liberianske statsborgere.

John Hare, SCF oplyste, at han og hans organisation gerne stiller sig til rådighed med logistisk støtte m.m. i forbindelse med en eventuelt kommende dansk fact-finding mission til Liberia, herunder også til rejser rundt i indlandet.

UNHCR, Liberia stillede sig også til rådighed med hensyn til undersøgelser af generelle asylrelevante spørgsmål.

9.0 Konsulterede personer, organisationer og myndigheder

Biong, P., Legal Officer, United Nations Peace Building Office in Liberia (UNOL)

Bishop, Timothy L., Catholic Relief Services (CRS)

Boyenneh, Elizabeth, President, The Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia (AFELL)

Buwalda, Johan P., Project Manager, United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS)

Camara, Ebou O., Representative, UNHCR Branch Office in Liberia

Downes-Thomas, Felix, Special Representative of the Secretary General for Liberia/Head of the United Nations Peace Building Support Office in Liberia (UNOL)

el Hillo, Yacoub Ali, Senior Protection Officer, UNHCR Branch Office in Liberia

Hagoss, Gebremedhin, Political Advisor, United Nations Peace Building Office in Liberia (UNOL)

Hare, John, Operations Manager, Save The Children Fund

Karorero, Pascal, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP

Kassir, Alphonso B., Legal Analyst, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Kulue, Alexander, Executive Director, The Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission (LRRRC)

Moore, Helen, International NGO Facilitator

Nah, Jappah, Executive Director, The Movement for the Defence of Human Rights (MODHAR)

Sandimanie, Lydia W., Director of Passports/Visas, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Sannoh, Benedict F., Executive Director, The Center for Law & Human Rights Education (CLHRE)

Verdier, James N., Legal Aid Officer, The Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)

Wallace, George, Senior Ambassador at Large, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Williamson, Aaron Von, Legal Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

Woods, Samuel Kofi, Director, The Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)

To repræsentanter for Internationale NGO'er

10.0 Litteratur

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11.0 Anvendte forkortelser

AFELL	Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
AFL	Armes Forces of Liberia
BIN	Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization
CLHRE	The Center for Law & Human Rights Education
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
HRC	Human Rights Committee
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organisation
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
JPC	The Justice and Peace Commission
LPC	Liberian Peace Council
LRRRC	The Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission
MODHAR	Movement for the Defence of Human Rights
NBA	National Bar Association
NHRC	National Human Rights Commission
NPF	The National Police Force
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP	National Patriotic Party
NSA	National Security Agency
PUL	Press Union of Liberia
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SCF	Save the Children Fund
SSS	Special Security Services
SSU	Executive Mansion Special Safety Unit
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia
ULIMO-J	United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia-Johnson

ULIMO-K	United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia-Kromah
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commission for Refugees
UNOL	United Nations Peace Building Support Office
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNOPS	United Nations Office for Project Services
UP	Unity Party

12.0 Bilagsfortegnelse

- Bilag 1 Situation Report on Liberia for the Period August 1997 - January 1998, Justice and Peace Commission.
- Bilag 2 Memorandum of Understanding between Justice and Peace Commission og Press Union of Liberia.
- Bilag 3 National Human Rights Center of Liberia – Participating Organizations.
- Bilag 4 Meddelelse om nye liberianske pas.
- Bilag 5 Pasansøgningsformular: "Application For Liberian Passport."
- Bilag 6 Kort over Liberia.
- Bilag 7 Kort over Monrovia.
- Bilag 8 Voluntary Repatriation Statistics, UNHCR Monrovia, 8-June-98.
- Bilag 9 Relocation of 50.000 Displaced People. Pilot Programme: Final Report. From the Working Group: (LRRRC, Federation-LNRCS, UNDP/UNOPS), 08 June 1998.
- Bilag 10 Justice and Peace Commission (informationsfolder).

Bilag 1



JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

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SITUATION REPORT ON LIBERIA FOR THE PERIOD AUGUST 1997- JANUARY 1998

INTRODUCTION

Following 7 years of a brutal civil war, Liberians ushered in a new chapter on July 19, 1997, with the election of a post-war government. The Government was seated on 2 August 1997- amidst hopes and anxiety for a new era of Peace, Justice, respect for human rights and the rule of law.

The present government is thus confronted with the compelling problems of reconciliation, rehabilitation, repatriation and reintegration.

On August 2, 1997, inauguration Day, the President committed his government to the respect for the rule of law and reconciliation by promising to establish a National Human Rights Commission and National Reconciliation Commission.

RECONCILIATION

The need for reconciliation is a compelling necessity if Liberia must achieve genuine peace, reconciliation and development. This represents the fulcrum for prosperity after years of divisiveness, violence, mutual fear and suspicion.

A well organized reconciliation program must be designed to address and heal the deep wounds of the civil war and restore respect for the history, culture and traditions. The absence of a meaningful reconciliation program will undermine our fragile peace.

In apparent recognition of this fact, President Taylor, during his inaugural address, pledged the commitment of his Government to the reconciliation process. He revealed plans to set up a National Reconciliation Commission and form a Government of inclusion and national unity. The Government also promised that it would undertake a number of programs aimed at fostering reconciliation and consolidating peace.

"Love God Above All Things and Your Neighbor as yourself"

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION COMMISSION

Inspite of these pronouncements, hardly any substantial program has been undertaken by the Government. Even though President Taylor announced plans to set up a Reconciliation Commission on August 2, 1997, the first and only step so far in setting up such a Commission was taken on December 12, 1997, with the appointment of Mr. Alhaji Kromah to head the Reconciliation Commission. Mr. Kromah is a former warring faction leader (leader of the Mandingo wing of the United Liberation Movement in Liberia For Democracy- (ULIMO). Mr. Kromah left the Country shortly following the elections. He has been accused by Government security forces of planning to launch an insurrection against the Taylor Government.

In the wake of such persistent accusation it is unlikely that he will return. He was appointed in his absence.

With Kromah still out of the Country and no other members appointed to the Commission, there is no reconciliation Commission as yet.

OTHER PROGRAMS

Shortly following his inauguration, President Taylor announced that as part of the healing and reconciliation process, the bodies of the two immediate past Presidents; Presidents William R. Tolbert and Samuel K. Doe would be exhumed and given state funeral and burial.

Since that pronouncement, nothing has been done nor heard of the plan. Tolbert was overthrown and killed on April 12, 1980 by seventeen armed soldiers headed by the then MST. Samuel K. Doe. Tolbert and some other Government officials were buried in a mass grave in Monrovia. President Samuel K. Doe was killed in September, 1990, during the height of the civil war by the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), a breakaway group of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). He was buried in the Caldwell sub-burb, about 6 miles from central Monrovia.

GOVERNMENT OF INCLUSION

President Taylor has reiterated his commitment to include elements of opposition political parties in his government.

Following six months in place, the Liberian Government still remains an NPP Government.

The National legislature is overwhelmingly dominated by the NPP.

Of the 26 seats in the Senate (the upper House) the NPP has 21 seats, and 41 seats in the 64 member House of Representatives. With the power to appoint personnel of the Judicial and Executive branches of Government, the participation of opposition politicians or non NPP technocrats depends upon the magnanimity of President Taylor.

A government of inclusion would certainly accelerate the process of reconciliation and unification. Except for the appointment of Roosevelt Johnson and Philip Kamah(both war time rivals of president Charles Taylor) to cabinet positions, no known opposition figure occupies any high government post. A Government of inclusion would have helped accelerate the process of reconciliation and unification as it would have emphasized the oneness of purpose and destiny of all Liberians.

NATIONAL SECURITY:

Security is of paramount concern to all Liberians. Years of extortion and violence will slowly disappear. Increase in crimes such as armed robbery etc. are challenges to be met. A restructured, well-trained security apparatus will be best suited for this undertaken. A trained, disciplined and well organized police, army, immigration and other security institution is key to the achievement of this necessity.

ARM RELATED CRIMES

There has been a rise in arm related crimes, particularly armed robbery, in Liberia. This can be attributed to a number of factors among which is the fact that many arms used in the war were not turned in to ECOMOG during disarmament. Some of the arms were hidden by fighters.

Another factor is the fact that disarmed fighters were never demobilized nor taken through any detraumatization process. Thus the mentality of violence and making livelihood through the barrel of the gun still remains. A third factor is the failure or apparent refusal of the government to render functional the criminal Court "D". Court "D" was established to provide speedy trial for crimes of armed robbery, terrorism and hijacking. In the absence of such a court, suspected armed robbers are detained for prolonged periods (beyond statutory periods) and later released to ease the over crowdedness of prisons.

Of serious concern is the enlistment into the security forces and the rearming of a number of former fighters by the Government. These former fighters are not given any formal training neither have they been subjected to any form of detraumatization. Recent acts of brutality of civilians have been attributed to them.

THE POLICE:

The Liberia National Police Force is charged with the protection of the law and order. During the years of war however, the force assumed a partisan character. Factional fighters and loyalists, without any police training, were enlisted into the police force. These fighters fought with their factions or pursued factional interests above the protection of lives and properties of all citizens. Many of these untrained police officers were also involved in a number of criminal activities.

This created the need for the restructuring of the police to reflect ethnic, geographic balance, professionalism and discipline. The refusal of the government to adhere to these standards raises serious security concerns. Most of these new police officers were responsible for serious human rights abuses during the war.

The International Criminal Investigation Training Program, (ICITAP), an American based police training institution, hired by the American Government to help in the training of a new police Force pulled out as a result of Government's refusal to adhere to the standards of professionalism in recruitment, training and the exercise of authority.

Not only is the Force being infested with untrained and unprofessional men, but the trained and professional police officers are being dismissed at the will and pleasure of the police Director without cause.

The police has been officially armed without proper screening and training to reflect discipline and professionalism. Emphasis seems to be placed on rearming rather than training for the Police Force. President Taylor, on Tuesday, January 20, 1998, granted official rights to the police to use firearms. The authorization was given at the graduation of the highway patrol unit of the police.

THE ARMED FORCES:

The Armed Forces of Liberia also became partisan during the course of the war and elements of the force were responsible for some of the worst human rights abuses. Dominated at the time by elements of the Krahn ethnic group of the late President Doe, the Armed Forces of Liberia abandoned its constitutional mandate and assumed an ethnic posture during the civil war. The public confidence in the army was thus eroded.

To address this problem, the Abuja peace Agreement of August 1996, on Liberia provided for the restructuring of the AFL by ECOMOG (The West Africa Peace Monitoring Group).

Following elections the Government refused, to allow ECOMOG carry on the restructuring exercise on grounds that the Abuja Peace Agreement ceased to be effective with the inauguration of an elected Government.

The government has since embarked upon a restructuring exercise with the retirement and dismissal of over 2000 soldiers. Already several former fighters of the dissolved NPFL are being enlisted into the Army. Currently almost 90% of the command position in the Armed Forces are being occupied by elements of the NPFL.

With the enlistment into the army and the subsequent rearming of these former factional fighters it is feared that recommitment and witch-hunting could be undertaken.

HUMAN RIGHTS

Liberia has a dismal human rights record dating back to its founding as a nation when a few citizens operated functionaries of the state and its resources at the disadvantage of the indigenous majority. Ten years of a bloody military dictatorship and seven years of brutal civil war have intensified this experience.

Many believed that the seating of an elected Government, would have improved the human rights situation in the Country.

As part of its program towards creating respect for human rights, President Taylor announced in his inaugural speech that his Government would uphold respect for human rights. In pursuit of this, Taylor announced that Government would establish a National Human Rights Commission and ensure that all functionaries of Government commit themselves to upholding respect for human rights and the rule of law.

In spite of these continuous pronouncements, the human rights situation in the Country remains unimpressive. Police brutality, extra-judicial executions, summary arrests and detention, prolonged detention without charge or trial, threats and attacks against Journalist and media institutions continue to be common occurrences.

On September 12, 1997, police in Monrovia shot and Killed Aloysius Kieh. Kieh was arrested from his home in the early morning hours of September 21, 1997, on suspicion of armed robbery.

According to the Police Director, Joseph Tate, in a statement shortly after Kieh was killed, the deceased admitted his involvement in armed robbery and agreed to take the police to where he had his arms hidden. While in enroute to the arms hideout, according to police Chief Joe Tate, the late Aloysius Kieh jumped out of the police vehicle and attempted to escape and was gunned down by the police.

The fiancée of Aloysius Kieh disputed this claim noting, that Aloysius was not involved in armed robbery.

Inspection of the body showed that Aloysius was shot in the back of his head, seemingly at close range. Something which suggest that his murder might have been otherwise motivated.

ARREST, DISAPPEARANCE, AND BARBARIC MURDER OF THE DOKIES/ INVOLVEMENT OF THE JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION

Barely one month after the signing into law of an Act establishing the National Human Rights Commission and the persistent pronouncements by President Taylor of his commitment to the rule of law and respect for human rights, many ugly and inhumane acts continue to occurred.

On Friday November 28, 1997, opposition politician and Former Deputy Speaker of the Transitional Legislative Assembly, Mr. Samuel Dokie, his wife, Janet Dahn Dokie, sister, Serrina Dokie and cousin, Emmanuel Voker were arrested by security personnel at the "Iron gate" security check point in Gbarnga, Bong County at about 7:30 P.M.

The Dokies were later taken to the police station in Gbarnga, Bong Country where Mr. Dokie was interrogated until the morning hours of Saturday, November, 29, 1997. He and three others were later turned over to a group of men from the Special Security Service upon the orders of its Director, Mr. Benjamin Yeaten.

On Sunday, November, 30, 1997, the incident was reported to the Justice and Peace Commission by family members of Mr. Dokie. On Monday and Tuesday, the Commission sought to obtain the release of the Dokies through several meetings with the Minister of Justice and the Director of Police who are responsible for security in the country. These efforts yielded no fruitful results.

Rapport fra flyvende attache mission til Monrovia, Liberia

In a bid to alert the public and create awareness for the disappearance of the Dokies, the Justice and Peace Commission on December, 2, 1997, issued a press release expressing concern about the incident and called on the government to release Mr. Dokie and family in safety, or appropriate legal action would be taken.

Following the failure of government to account, the Justice and Peace Commission, on December 3, 1997, filed a writ of Habeas corpus against the Government of Liberia in the first judicial circuit court at the Temple of Justice in Monrovia to compel the government to produce the living bodies of the Dokies as provided for in Article 21: f & g.

Article 21: f & g of the Constitution states "EVERY PERSON ARRESTED OR DETAINED SHALL BE FORMALLY CHARGED AND PRESENTED BEFORE A COURT OF COMPETENT JURISDICTION WITHIN FORTY-EIGHT HOURS. SHOULD THE COURT DETERMINE THE EXISTENCE OF A PRIMA FACIE CASE AGAINST THE ACCUSED, IT SHALL ISSUE A FORMAL WRIT OF ARREST SETTING OUT THE CHARGE OR CHARGES AND PROVIDE FOR A SPEEDY TRIAL. THERE SHALL BE NO PREVENTIVE DETENTION". "THE RIGHT TO A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS, BEING ESSENTIAL TO THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS, SHALL BE GUARANTEED AT ALL TIMES, AND ANY PERSON ARRESTED OR DETAINED AND NOT PRESENTED TO COURT WITHIN THE PERIOD SPECIFIED MAY IN CONSEQUENCE EXERCISE THIS RIGHT".

The Justice and Peace Commission was represented by a team of its legal aid lawyers including Atty Samuel K. Woods, Director of the Justice and Peace Commission and Cllrs. Wiefueh Sayeh, Tiawon Gongloe and Alexander Zoe, while the state was represented by Cllrs. Mardia Chenoweth and Sikajipo Wolo, County Attorney and deputy respectively. The case was heard on December 4, 1997.

Following arguments, the Judge of the Criminal Court C, Judge Joseph Andrews denied Government's request for an additional five days to enable it search its detention centers in central Liberia to ascertain the whereabouts of the Dokies. Instead, Judge Andrews issued a Compulsory Writ of Habeas Corpus, compelling the Government to produce the living bodies of the Dokies in court on Friday, December 5, 1997, at 2: 00 pm. Judge Andrews further warned the Government not to "make mockery of democracy".

On December 4, 1997, President Taylor, following a trip to Nigeria, announced to the nation that the Dokies had been discovered dead.

The writ of Habeas Corpus was on Friday, December 5, 1997, quashed by Judge Joseph Andrews on grounds that the essence of the writ was lost in as much as the President had announced that

the Dokies were dead. The essence of a writ of habeas corpus is to compel the authorities to produce and charge or release people kept in detention beyond the legal stipulation of 48 hours. "The prime objective of these proceedings is therefore moot", the Judge ruled. The JPC, working along with the family of the Dokies, then proceeded to obtain the bodies of the Dokies to have them buried. This was subsequently granted by the government.

Meanwhile the Government on Tuesday December 9, 1997, announced the arrest of four persons in connection with the Dokie case.

Disclosing the arrest, the Minister of Justice, Mr. Peter Jallah named those arrested as, Messrs Isaac Whonnie, a local Aide-camp; Moses T. Jallah, an SSS personnel, and two civilians Mr. Richmond Saydee and Kennedy Fineboy.

Eventhough SSS Director, Benjamin Yeaten, has confessed ordering the arrest of the Dokies, he has only been granted temporary leave from job(not arrested)to assist with the investigation.

Government has announced that the case will be tried in Gbarnga, Bong County, the site where the crime was committed. The laws of Liberia provide that cases should be tried wherever crimes occurred, even though a change of venue may be requested by any of the parties.

KILLING OF MANAH ZAKAY AND WEAH SAYDEE:

On January 9, 1998, two persons, Manah Zakay and Weah Saydee were killed by police in the Borough of New Kru Town, Bushrod Island, Monrovia.

According to a pronouncement by police Director Joseph Tate, the two men were armed robbers and were killed in an exchange of gun fire with police. Manah Zakay was a former commander of the now dissolved ULIMO-J faction, the predominantly Krahn wing of ULIMO (the United Liberation Movement in Liberia For Democracy). While Weah Saydee was a former fighter of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia(NPFL).

Interviews with residents of the area suggest that Manah Zakay was taken from his home by police in the early morning hours of Friday, January 9, 1998 and Killed. Other sources say that a hammer was used to break Zakay's Skull.

Observation of the body suggests that Zakay's skull was broken and that he was only in his briefs(under pants). This has raised a number of suspicion and questions about the Police's explanation. President Taylor praised the Police for this act.

Manah Zakay was a commander of the now disbanded ULIMO-J which was a major rival of the NPFL (also disbanded) and headed then by president Charles G. Taylor.

Even though his death was greeted with joy by many who were victimized by him during the period of war, the circumstances of his death suggest witch-hunting against former enemies. While the jubilation emphasized the need for reconciliation.

FIRESTONE VIOLENCE:

Several workers of the Firestone Plantation Company were on Sunday, September 7, 1997, brutalized and injured when police backed by ECOMOG troops, violently crushed a workers demonstration.

The workers were demonstrating in demand of restoration of pay cuts, insurance benefits and reactivation of over 80% of their colleagues who had not been reactivated since the company resumed operation in 1992. The police and ECOMOG troops fired into the demonstrators, wounding several.

In response, the government, through Labor Minister, Tom Woewiyu, described the demonstrators as "former combatants" who were bent on causing disturbance.

The state-owned media institution, ELBC also removed from the air a radio program of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission which reported on the Firestone violence.

The workers were said to be demonstrating for the 37.5% paycuts that were instituted by Firestone upon directive from President Taylor while he (Taylor) ran a government in areas controlled by his NPFL faction.

THE HUMAN RIGHTS ACT

Following his pronouncement of August 2, that his Government would establish a National Human Rights Commission, President Taylor, on October 27, 1997, signed into law an Act of the legislature, creating a National Human Rights Commission of Liberia. This followed the submission of a bill by the Speaker of the Legislature.

The Act establishing the National Human Rights Commission falls short of minimum International standards regarding the establishment of such Commission.

Some of the major flaws of the Act are discussed thus:

1. The powers of the Commission are limited only to the

Following: Article III POWERS: " The Commission shall have the power to contract, to acquire, hold and dispose of property; to solicit funding both locally and externally and to use the said funds as may be necessary and appropriate to carry out the declared functions of this Act".

2. The functions of the Commission shall be limited "to investigate complaints..." (Article IV,i) Article IV,iii" to be authorized to conduct hearing and make findings of fact..." IV, IV states" To be authorized to take all such corrective measures...". These suggest that the commission is not independent, that it must be controlled by a superior body which must provide such authorization. Without this authorization the commission remains incapacitated.
3. The Act also requires that all decisions of the Commission must be reached on the basis of consensus. Commissioners are therefore required to express their agreement in writing, duly signed.

On the procedure adopted by the Government in drafting and approving the Act, the Human Rights and civic groups, led by the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, opted for consultations with the civil society- academics, religious and political leaders, human rights experts and activists to ensure professional input and guide against the undue influence or control of Government. The groups called on President Taylor not to sign the Act until there was public input. Letters stating this position were sent to the speaker and President pro-Tempore of the House of representatives and Senate respectively and President Taylor.

Eventhough the Ministry of Information announced that the President would open the Act to public scrutiny and input, the President surprisingly signed the Act without opening it to the public.

Following a protracted period, President Taylor appointed a five member Commission to run the affairs of the National Human Rights Commission. Those appointed to the Commission were: former acting Chief Justice, Justice Hall Badio as chairman, Rev. Walter Richards, Co- chairman. Other members included the Director of the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, Atty. Samuel Kofi Woods, II., former probate Court Judge, Judge Luvenia Ash-Thompson and a traditional leader, Paramount Chief, Jallah Lone.

Mr. Woods rejected his appointment on grounds that the Commission is limited by the law establishing it (referring to the Act) and on procedural grounds.

Since its constitution the Human Rights Commission has remained non functional. The Commission has no office, no new commissioner has been appointed to fill the vacancy created by Mr. Woods' rejection of his appointment. According to the Chairman of the Commission, Justice Hall Badio, his institution has not received any funds from Government to begin operation.

JUDICIARY:

An independent credible and impartial judiciary is critical to the maintenance of peace, respect for human rights, reconciliation and development. Political interference into and control of the judiciary, as well as the lack of adequate support have rendered the judiciary susceptible to corruption.

One of the greatest tasks facing the judiciary is its reconstitution throughout the Country. The war destroyed all the judicial institutions and activities. Re-establishing the Courts throughout the Country thus remains one of the greatest tasks of the government.

Judges and Court officials for several Counties have not yet being appointed, let alone the reconstitution of Courts. At the opening of the September 1997 term of Court, Chief Justice Cllr. Gloria Scott pointed out that the unavailability of logistics undermined her dream of re-opening court around the Country. She noted that the judiciary has been able to open Courts in only five Counties. There are thirteen (13) Counties in Liberia.

In the absence of these Courts, Judicial matters are handled either by the police or Administrative officials. This has often led to the flouting of justice and abuse of the rights of people.

The Judiciary has also suffered tremendous political influence over the period.

On December 10, 1997, barely a week following his ruling in the case Dokie et al (represented by the Justice and Peace Commission) vs. Government of Liberia, the judge of the Criminal Court C, Judge Joseph Andrews was relieved. Judge Andrews was appointed and duly inducted during the tenure of the Transitional Government about two years ago. Also Judge James Zota, jr. Who presided over criminal Court A & B was removed.

The constitution of Liberia recognizes such removal of Judges as an undue interference, with serious repercussions for the dispensation of justice. The Constitution thus guides against such, as contained in Chapter VII, Article 71..."They may be removed upon impeachment and conviction by the Legislature based on proved of misconduct, gross breach of duty, inability to perform the functions of their office or conviction in a Court of Law for treason, bribery or other infamous crimes".

Arbitrary removal of Judges could, for the fear of being removed lead the judges to succumb to political manipulations and thus erode the independence and credibility of the Judiciary.

Lack of logistics has often led to the stockpiling of cases on Court dockets, while suspects languish in jail on "further examination", a term coined by some judges to refer to the status of suspects/accused whose cases could not be concluded and are thus sent to prison until their cases can be re-called. Most times these cases are never called and the suspects/defendants are left to languish in jail for indefinite periods.

PRISON CONDITIONS:

Conditions at most prison facilities in Liberia still remain very deplorable and dehumanizing. Statistics also show that most of the people in the prisons are neither charged nor convicted of any crime. The deplorable condition of prison/detention facilities has also led to the death of some prisoners.

In the Gbarnga, Bong County prison, two persons, George Gayflor and Gayflor Forkule died from hunger and sickness due to the deplorable condition of the prison. George Gayflor died on Monday, November 10, 1997, while Gayflor Forkule died on Saturday, November 22, 1997. At the time of our visit to the Gbarnga prison, we also observed that several other inmates, including an 8 months pregnant lady named Ethel Saw, were emaciated and at the point of death.

In Tubmanburg, Bomi County, the make-shift building which served as the prison lacked doors, windows, beds, bedding and has a leaking roof.

In Buchanan, Grand Bassa County, the prison was over-crowded; like all the other prison facilities, food rations were also occasional.

At the Monrovia Central Prison, the largest penal facility in the country, over 90% of inmates are not convicted, i.e. they have either not been charged or tried or are awaiting further

examination. Except for women who are kept in separate cells, inmates of all ages and categories are kept together.

Prior to the intervention of the ICRC(International Committee of the Red Cross) many of the inmates slept on the bare floor as there were no beds or mattresses. The problem of a leaking roof was also corrected by the ICRC.

To help alleviate the deplorable health and sanitary condition of the Monrovia Central Prison and police detention centers, the Justice and Peace Commission on December 1, 1997, distributed disinfectants, laundry and toilet soaps and other toiletries, to the central prison and the headquarters of the Liberia National Police.

The JPC on December 15, 1997, also started a health program for inmates at the Monrovia Central prison. Under this program, a team of Nurses and Counselors visit the Central Prison twice a week to provide medication and Counseling to the inmates.

A total of 50 inmates were in December 1997, released from the Monrovia Central Prison and other police detention facilities through the instrumentality of the JPC.

The JPC plans to extend these services to the rural parts and have commenced the establishment of local Justice and Peace structures in communities around the Country.

THREATS AND WARNING AGAINST JOURNALIST/MEDIA INSTITUTIONS:

Since its inception the Taylor-led NPP Government and its functionaries have embarked upon a campaign of intimidation, threats, harassment and attacks against those media institutions they perceived as anti- Taylor or anti- Government.

In August of 1997, shortly after the inauguration of the NPP Government, an NPP sponsored newspaper, the Monrovia Guardian, labeled several media institutions in the Country as anti-Taylor. The paper noted that no sooner had the NPP Government taken seat, these anti-Taylor media institutions had undertaken a campaign to undermine the Government. The Paper charged these media institutions as being teleguided by opposition politicians.

The Guardian named those anti- Taylor media institutions as The News Newspaper, The National Newspaper, The Heritage Newspaper and Radio Monrovia 98.7 FM., Radio Veritas FM 97.8, The Daily News, Newspaper among others.

Identification of these institutions as "anti- Taylor" set the basis for targeting them.

Following the labelling of several media institutions as anti-Taylor, journalists from these media institutions were on September 21, 1997, barred from covering the first cabinet meeting of the government held at the Executive Mansion. Some of the journalists from these institutions who made their way into the Mansion were escorted downstairs by security men. No reasons were given by government for this action. Journalists denied the opportunity to cover the cabinet meeting came from institutions described as anti- Taylor by the NPP sponsored Guardian Newspaper

On September 24, 1997, the Managing Editor of the Inquirer Newspaper Mr. Philip Wesseh was arrested and detained for hours by the Director of Police, Joseph Tate.

Even though Director Tate said he ordered the arrest of Mr. Wesseh because Aloysius Kieh, an alleged armed robber killed by police, confessed selling stolen items to Mr. Wesseh, findings, including public statements made by the police Director reveal that Wesseh was arrested in connection with a publication carried in the Inquirer.

In its Monday, September 22, 1997, edition, the Inquirer charged the police of arbitrariness in the killing of Aloysius Kieh who the police claimed was a notorious armed robber. The Inquirer questioned the explanation provided by the police regarding how Kieh was shot and killed by police officers.

In accordance with its mandate to protect press freedom, the Justice and Peace Commission undertook a number of activities aimed at addressing the condition; holding that any person claiming any violation by any media institution must pursue recourse through the Courts as provided for by the law.

The Justice and Peace Commission undertook a number of actions including media advocacy and the provision of legal aid to restore Mr. Wesseh's rights within the confines of the law. Wesseh was released as a result of these actions six hours following his arrest.

Following the intervention by the JPC for the released of Mr. Wesseh, the Director of the Justice and Peace Commission, Mr. Samuel Kofi Woods, II. Was on September 26, 1997, cited to the police headquarters by police Director, Joseph Tate.

According to the letter of invitation, Director Woods was charged with CRIMINAL MALEVOLENCE.

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In response to this letter the JPC issued a statement advising Director Tate to pursue redress through the courts as provided for by law. The JPC statement informed Director Tate that Mr. Woods would not "report" as was being requested.

On October 16, 1997, two editors of the independent National Newspaper, Daniel V. Somah, Editor-in chief and S. Hassan Bility, Managing Editor, were arrested and detained for hours at the Justice Ministry upon the orders of police Director, Joe Tate. The journalists were later released.

On Wednesday, November 26, 1997, at about 9:00 pm, at the BMC compound, a group of six NPP Partisans led by Mr. coo-coo Dennis, a General in the defunct NPFL attempted kidnaping Mr. Al-Jerome Chede, a broadcast Journalist. Mr. Chede is the producer and presenter of the popular and critical radio magazine program "ISSUES IN THE PRESS" which is aired on Radio Monrovia.

A number of privately owned/independent media Institutions have been perceived as anti- government. Those perceived as anti-government media are The News Newspaper, The National Newspaper, The Heritage Newspaper, Star radio, Radio Veritas owned and operated by the Catholic Church, and Radio Monrovia. Also perceived as anti- government are The Justice and Peace Forum, a human rights and civic education radio program produce by the Justice and Peace Commission. The Press union of Liberia was accused of being supportive of attack on the President by these media institutions in the name of press freedom.

Country cartoon carried in the Saturday, December 6, 1997, edition of the NewsBeat Newspaper, shows the President surrounded by the "anti-Taylor" institutions. He is shown being mobbed with pens, pencils and micro phones of these Newspapers and radio stations. Inscribed under the cartoon is "PRESS FREEDOM IN LIBERIA- THE FREEDOM TO MOB THE PRESIDENT".

NewsBeat is a subsidiary of the Patriot Newspaper, and is owned and published by The Patriot Publishing Incorporated, the print arm of the Liberian Communications Network. This network is owned and financed by President Charles Taylor and serves as a propaganda arm of President Taylor/the government.

On December 11, 1997, personnel of the Special Security Service (SSS) stormed the offices of the Inquirer Newspaper and took away some members of the staff, including the lay-out editor, news editor and other senior reporters of the paper. They were taken to the Executive Mansion for a publication concerning the disappearance of one Henry Paye. In the paper the story quoted family sources as saying security took away Harry Paye and he had

not been seen.

In continuation of its clampdown and intimidation of the press, the Minister of Post and Telecommunications, Mr. Maxwell Kaba on Monday, December 7, 1997 issued an ultimatum to media institutions operating in the diplomatic enclave of Mamba point to halt operations and relocate. They were given up to December 20, 1997 to get themselves relocated or face closure.

The Minister made specific reference to Radio Veritas and Star Radio. Radio Veritas is owned by the Catholic Church while Star Radio is being operated by a Swiss NGO, Fondation Hirondelle, and is being funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). They both are operating in Mamba point and among the media institutions that have been labeled as "anti-government."

On Monday, December 22, 1997, two journalists from The News Newspaper, the Managing Editor and the News Editor were arrested and detained by police at the police headquarters in Monrovia. These journalists only crime was the publication of a story in the Monday, December 22, 1997, edition of the paper caption "Man, 34, dies in police cell", with the picture of the police Director under the caption. The Director of Police denied ordering the action of the police but warned the arrested journalists against using an "ugly" photograph of his in the paper.

ABDUCTION, POLICE INVOLVEMENT, COURT PROCEEDING AND THE JPC INVOLVEMENT IN THE ALEX REDD CASE

On Sunday, December 21, 1997, broadcast Journalist, Alex Redd was arrested by men believed to be members of state security in Phebe, near Bong County, while enroute to Monrovia. Journalist Redd went to Bong and Nimba to conduct investigations in the murder of the Dokies.

On Monday, December 22, 1997, the incident was reported to the Justice and Peace Commission by Benjamin Redd brother of Alex who was travelling along Alex when the incident occurred.

Efforts with the police authorities aimed at securing the release of Redd proved futile as the police Director and his deputies denied any knowledge of the incident.

In a bid to ascertain the facts and secure Mr. Redd's release, the JPC made several contacts with the police Director, and his deputies but to no avail.

Three days following his abduction, Mr Redd was on Tuesday, December 23, 1997, at about 1:30 am dropped off from a vehicle which then turned back and drove towards Paynesville, on the road leading to central Liberia where Gbarnga is located. Alex was discovered tired by ECOMOG soldiers at the check point in the area. The soldiers turned him over to the police at 2:00am who took him to the Swede-relief Hospital where he was treated for bruises.

According to Hospital sources, Alex was taken away by 4:00 am by police. Alex was kept at the police headquarter for what the police term "making conflicting statement" regarding his abduction.

As a means of ensuring that the rights of journalist Redd were restored, the JPC on December 25, 1997, issued a statement urging the police to send Redd to court. The JPC also promised legal representation for journalist Redd.

On December 26, 1997, the JPC filed a writ of Habeas Corpus at the Civil Law Court at the Temple of Justice against the officials of the Ministry of Justice, the Liberia National Police and the County Attorney for Montserrado County to produce the living body of Mr. Redd and to show just cause why his liberty should not be restored.

Proceedings into the writ of Habeas Corpus were held on December 26, 1997, at 2:00 pm. At the hearing, the Respondent, Ministry of Justice denied the allegation contained in the petition and produced in court a writ of arrest charging the petitioner with the crime "Criminal Attempt to Commit Treason." The writ charging journalist Redd was hurriedly issued minutes just before the Habeas Corpus hearing was called.

In her ruling, the Judge of the Civil Law Court, Judge C. Aimesa Reeves ruled that since the Respondent produced a charge thru a writ of arrest and verified by the Magisterial Court, the petition for Habeas Corpus was squashed and that the petitioner is ordered transferred to the Magisterial Court according to Law.

Appearing for the petitioner was a team of Justice and Peace lawyers which included Cllrs Weifueh Sayeh, Alexander B. Zoe and Tiawon Gongloe and Atty. Samuel K. Woods, II. The state was represented by Cllr. Theophilus C. Gould, Solicitor General.

As was decided by the Civil Law Court, the team of lawyers then proceeded to the Magisterial Court on December 26, 1997, but the case was reassigned for Monday, December 29, 1997 at 10: am.

According to the Law, the crime as charged, " Criminal attempt to commit treason is a second degree felony which is billable. But the Stipendiary Magistrate, Mr. Stephen B. Wah denied journalist Redd's Lawyers request for bill. Mr. Redd was therefore remanded to the Monrovia Central Prison until December 29,1997.

As early as 9:00 am on December 29,1997, the grounds of the Temple of Justice was jammed packed with other journalists and friends of Mr. Redd to witness the trial.

By 10:00 Am Monday morning Lawyers representing Journalist Redd had gathered at the Monrovia City Court, Temple of Justice for hearing but the case was delayed for over two hours because of the state's insensitivity to time. However, the prosecution came around 1:00 pm at which time the trial commenced.

On December 29,1997 the state (prosecution) made a dramatic U-turn when they filed a motion to amend the charge from "CRIMINAL ATTEMPT TO COMMIT TREASON" to "FALSE REPORTS TO LAW ENFORCEMENT OFFICIALS" which is a misdemeanor.

The motion for amendment by the prosecution left the defense council with little or no much argument but to pray the court to grant Mr. Redd a CASH BOND and have his rights restored until such time when the prosecution was ready for arguments into the case.

In his ruling, the Stipendiary Magistrate, Stephen Wah granted the defense request to have the accused released on BILL. A cash bond of six hundred dollars (600.00) was filed with the Monrovia City Court and journalist Redd was released on a Criminal Appearance Bond until such time when the case could be assigned.

Following the failed attempt by the Government to have the two stations relocated in last December, the Post and Telecommunications Minister, Mr. Maxwell Kaba, on January 7,1998, ordered the closure of Star radio.

Minister Kaba alleged that Star Radio operated on a frequency assigned to Radio Monrovia and was therefore operating illegally in the Country.

The independent Radio Monrovia was fined US \$5,000.00 for what the Minister termed "usurping the functions of the Ministry" by assigning its assigned FM 104 and SW 5.880 and 3.400 frequencies to Star radio.

This fine, according to the Minister was to be paid in 24 hours or appropriate actions would be taken against the station.

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**REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA)
MONTERRADO COUNTY)**

THIS MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING, ENTERED INTO THIS 17 DAY OF APRIL, A.D. 1998, BY AND BETWEEN THE CATHOLIC JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION, A HUMAN RIGHTS ADVOCACY ORGANIZATION, PARTY OF THE FIRST PART, AND THE PRESS UNION OF LIBERIA, PARTY OF THE SECOND PART HEREBY,

WITNESSETH

WHEREAS, the Catholic Justice and Peace Commission(JPC) is a Human rights Institution whose work and activities are primarily geared towards promoting and protecting human rights, justice, peace and democracy in the Liberian society;

WHEREAS, the Justice and Peace Commission has a Legal Aid Program comprising practicing lawyers and affiliate institutions whose mandate is to ensure justice before the law;

WHEREAS, the Justice and Peace Commission has an Information Component with the mandate of advocacy and education in human rights, justice, peace and democracy;

WHEREAS, the Press Union of Liberia(PUL) is an institution comprising individuals and institutions in the area of gathering and disseminating information and, committed to the promotion and the protection of human rights and democratic values;

WHEREAS, the PUL and its members have been experiencing harassment, intimidation, physical abuse, censorship and even threat of death;

WHEREAS, the Press Union of Liberia(PUL) desires that the Justice and Peace Commission, through its Legal Aid Program, represents the Union against wanton harassment and abuses as it carries out its obligation of serving as a watch dog for society;

WHEREAS, towards this end the Justice and Peace Commission(JPC) and the Press Union of Liberia(PUL) share in common the protection, promotion of respect for human rights and democracy;

WHEREAS, the Press Union of Liberia desires that the Justice and Peace Commission, through its Information Component undertakes advocacy on its behalf, both locally and internationally;

WHEREAS, the Press Union of Liberia hereby request the Justice and Peace Commission for protection under the laws of Liberia through advocacy and legal representation and the Commission hereby agrees to provide such Services;

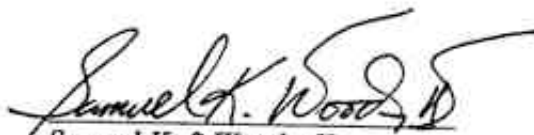
NOW THEREFORE, the Justice and Peace Commission(JPC) and the Press Union of Liberia(PUL) have reached the following:

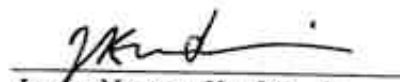
- 1. That effective this 8th day of JANUARY, A.D. 1996, the Justice and Peace Commission agrees to provide advocacy and legal services free of charge through its Legal Aid and Information Programs for the Press Union of Liberia whenever that Union or its individual or institutional member(s) need legal protection/representation through court action and or administrative forum.*
- 2. That all complaints of harassment, intimidation, arbitrary arrest and detention, seizure and closure, and any or all actions deemed unlawful against media personnel and institutions that need action under this MOU, shall be channeled through the Press Union of Liberia.*
- 3. That the Press Union of Liberia will promptly bring to the attention of the Justice and Peace Commission through its(JPC) Information component, all complaints as may be deemed necessary under this MOU including any incident of harassment, intimidation, physical abuse or threats of death, etc., made against the PUL and/or its individual/institutional members.*
- 4. That the services to be provided to the Union will only cover bonafide and duly accredited Press Union institutions or individuals; and in matters connected with their performance of their journalistic duties.*
- 5. That in no instance shall the Justice and Peace Commission, through its Legal Aid and/or Information programs, advocate unbehalf of or represent any individual member or institution of the Press Union when it is determined through legal and other conferences that the institutional or individual member of the Press Union is the wrongdoer in any given matter.*
- 6. That in the event of Count Five (5) above the JPC shall rather offer a candid opinion for compromise and amicable settlement of the matter short of court litigation.*
- 7. That the JPC, through its Information Component, shall issue public statement(s), in defense of the PUL and its members in order to curtail press censorship and all acts inimical to the promotion and protection of human rights and democratic values.*

8. That the PUL, in consideration of the services to be rendered by the JPC, agrees to responsibly discharge its duties in accordance with the Constitution of Liberia and other international provisions on press freedom, and that all publications/broadcasts shall be promotive of peace, reconciliation, justice and respect for human rights.
9. That the PUL shall also assist to publish or broadcast any and all pronouncements, press releases and or publications of the JPC and its affiliate components, provided however that all such releases, publications and pronouncements shall be in the interest of human rights and the protection of democratic principles.
10. That the term of this Agreement shall be for a period of one year with options for successive renewals. However, the intent to renew shall be reduced into writing one month before the expiration of this Memorandum of Understanding. Either party shall have the right to terminate this Agreement by giving the other two months prior written notice.
11. That it is mutually agreed and understood, this Memorandum of Understanding shall extend to and be binding upon both parties hereto, their successors in office and or assigns.
12. This Agreement shall come into force upon signing by the two parties and shall remain valid for a period of one calendar year.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF THE PARTIES HERETO HAVE CAUSED THEIR RESPECTIVE AUTHORIZED OFFICIALS TO SET THEIR HANDS AND AFFIX THEIR SIGNATURES ON THE DAY AND DATE FIRST ABOVE WRITTEN.

FOR THE JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION


Samuel Kofi Woods, II.
DIRECTOR


James Nyepan Verdier, Jr.
Legal Aid Officer

FOR THE PRESS UNION OF LIBERIA


G. Abraham Massaley
PRESIDENT


Suah Deddeh
Secretary-General

Bilag 3

**NATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER OF LIBERIA
PARTICIPATING ORGANIZATIONS**

1. **Fore-Runners of Children's Universal Rights For Survival, Growth and Development (FOCUS). James D. Torh, Executive Director.**
2. **The Movement For The Defence Of Human Rights (MODHAR) J. Jappah Nah, Executive Director.**
3. **Justice And Peace Commission (J.P.C.)
Mr. Samuel Kofi Woods, Executive Director.**
4. **The Liberia Civil And Human Rights Alliance Inc. (L.C.H.R.A.)
Mr. Alfred Quayjandii, Representative.**
5. **Asociation of Female Lawyers of Liberia. (AFELL)
Cllr. Elizabeth Boyenneh, President.**
6. **Human Rights Monitor/ Liberia Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. (HRM/UMC)
Mr. S. Glean Cooper, Director.**
7. **Liberia Democracy Watch (LDW)
Mr. Nathaniel Kwabo, Executive Director.**
8. **Civil Rights Association of Liberia Lawyers Inc. (CALL)
Cllr. Frederick A.B. Jayweh, Chairman.**

58 → STF1

Bilag 4



DL/247/97

PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
820 SECOND AVENUE NEW YORK, N. Y. 10017

36 A.1

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Liberia to the United Nations presents its compliments to all Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations and has the honor to inform them that the Government of Liberia has decided to change all Diplomatic, Official, Ordinary and Service Passports issued by it.

The new passports will be issued in three categories: Diplomatic - red; Official - black and Ordinary - dark blue. Enclosed herein is a poster reflecting a sample of each category as well as the security features of the passports.

The Permanent Mission of Liberia wishes to inform that the new passports will run concurrently with the old passports until December 31, 1997. Thereafter, the old passports will become invalid.

The Permanent Mission of Liberia requests that all Permanent and Observer Missions kindly communicate this new disposition to their respective governments.

The Permanent Mission of the Republic of Liberia to the United Nations avails itself of this opportunity to renew to all Permanent and Observer Missions to the United Nations the assurances of its highest consideration.

To all Permanent and Observer Missions
to the United Nations
New York, New York



Kopi til STF.1

8/9
on

J.nr. 36.A.1

Til Udenrigsministeriet

Att.: _____ i 1 ekspl.
uden følgeskrivelse.

FN-missionen, New York, den 29/8/97



⑥

Passport
Passeport

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA / REPUBLIQUE DU LIBERIA

Type / Type

Signature / Nom

REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Given name / Prénoms

Date of birth / Date de naissance

Sex / Sexe

Date of issue / Date de délivrance

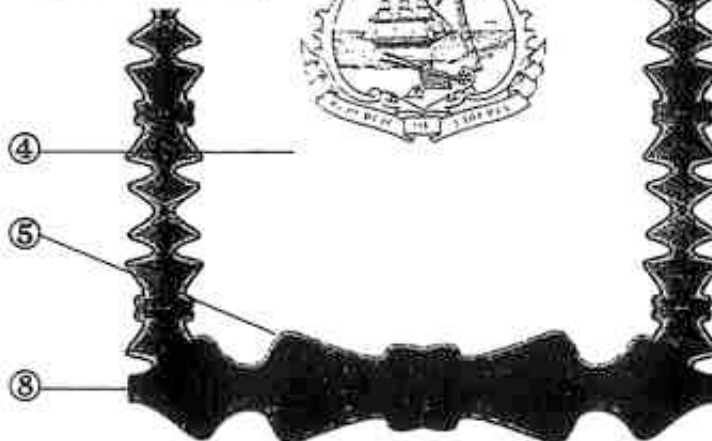
Date of expiry / Date d'expiration



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
PASSPORT
PASSEPORT



OR/0000000



This passport contains 32 pages
Ce passeport contient 32 pages



① **Watermark :**

The watermark, designed in the very substance of the paper, is a variation in the thickness of the paper. This variation results in the motifs that can be seen on your passports when they are held up to the light.

Its origin goes back to the 13th century in France. Ever since that period, the making and the preparation of watermarks have been specialities in which the French people excel. When holding the leaf of your passport up to the light, "Passeport, Passport, Passaporte, Pasaporte" are visible in transparence all over the paper.

② **The numismatic background :**

The artist creates a design using specialised security printing techniques. The global design is perfectly regular and difficult to counterfeit.

③ **Rainbow printing :**

Rainbow printing permits a precise mix of inks of several colours out of which results a rainbow effect. This juxtaposition of shades very close to one another, often pastel, makes their reproduction by modern techniques (scanner, colour photocopy) extremely difficult.

④ **Invisible and visible fluorescent inks reactive under ultra-violet light :**

They react under the effect of ultra-violet light and can, therefore, be easily authenticated.

The colours of the inks are chosen with care to avoid easy photographic selection which can occur if primary colours are used.

When using ultra-violet light : the emblem of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, the folio of page appear fluorescent yellow, the numbering becomes fluorescent green.

⑤ **The microline :**

This is a text printed in characters that can only read under strong magnification, and which to the naked eye, looks like one continuous straight line.

This microtext borders or underlines a title or a symbol. The reduction of the letters to a very small scale requires the mastering of the most sophisticated technology.

⑥ **Adhesive Foil :**

The security adhesive foil combines a number of features to prevent the would be forger to remove it. Because of its thinness, it is very unlikely that it may be removed.

On this foil is printed the emblem of the REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA in invisible fluorescent ink, also a visible fixed element "REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA" which will overlap the photography.

⑦ **Scrambled Image :**

Print in intaglio process, a representation of the Coat of Arms will reveal the letters LBR when a FCO decoder will be put on it.

⑧ **Latent Image :**

Intaglio printing allows the printing of very fine lines. By directing the lines in different directions, it is possible to create an optical effect that makes a text or image invisible to the naked eye, but visible at certain angles. The name LIBERIA appears visible only at certain angles.

Bilag 5



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MONROVIA, LIBERIA



Application For Liberian Passport

No.

1. Name
Last First Middle
2. Previous Name (if any)
3. Sex 4. Date of Birth
Month Day Year
5. Place of Birth
Town City County Country
6. Occupation to be used in Passport
7. Father
Name County of Origin (Living) (Deceased)
- a)
Nationality Natural Naturalized Date of Nat.
8. Mother
Name County of Origin (Living) (Deceased)
- a)
Nationality Natural Naturalized Date of Nat.
9. Next of Kin
Name Relationship
- a) PERSON TO CONTACT in case of accident or emergency
- b) Name Address
10. Proof of citizenship
a) Birth Certificate b) Court Affidavit
11. Permanent place of residence in Liberia
12. Civil Status: Married () Divorced () Separated () Single () Widower () Widow ()
13. Are you employed? Yes () No ()
a) If yes, give name and address of employer
- b) If not, what do you do for a living?
14. Have you obtained a Liberian Passport before? Yes () No ()
If yes, give Passport number and date of issuance:

Number

Date

16. Name(s) child/children accompanying you.

a) Name Sex Date of Birth

b) Name Sex Date of Birth

15. Give names, relationship and address of at least two persons who know you and can vouch for your character and citizenship.

17. How did you obtain Liberian Citizenship?

a) Natural Birth () b) Naturalized ()

If naturalized by court, attach copy of naturalization certificate. I hereby certify and declare that each of the above particulars stated by me is true to the best of my knowledge and ability and that I would be prosecuted if found guilty of any false information. Any misleading information will disqualify me from ever obtaining a Liberian travelling document.

Please note that processing of passport will take not less than one week after payment of fees. All applications should be done in advance, at least two weeks before travel plans.

Date form was filled in: _____

In presence of _____

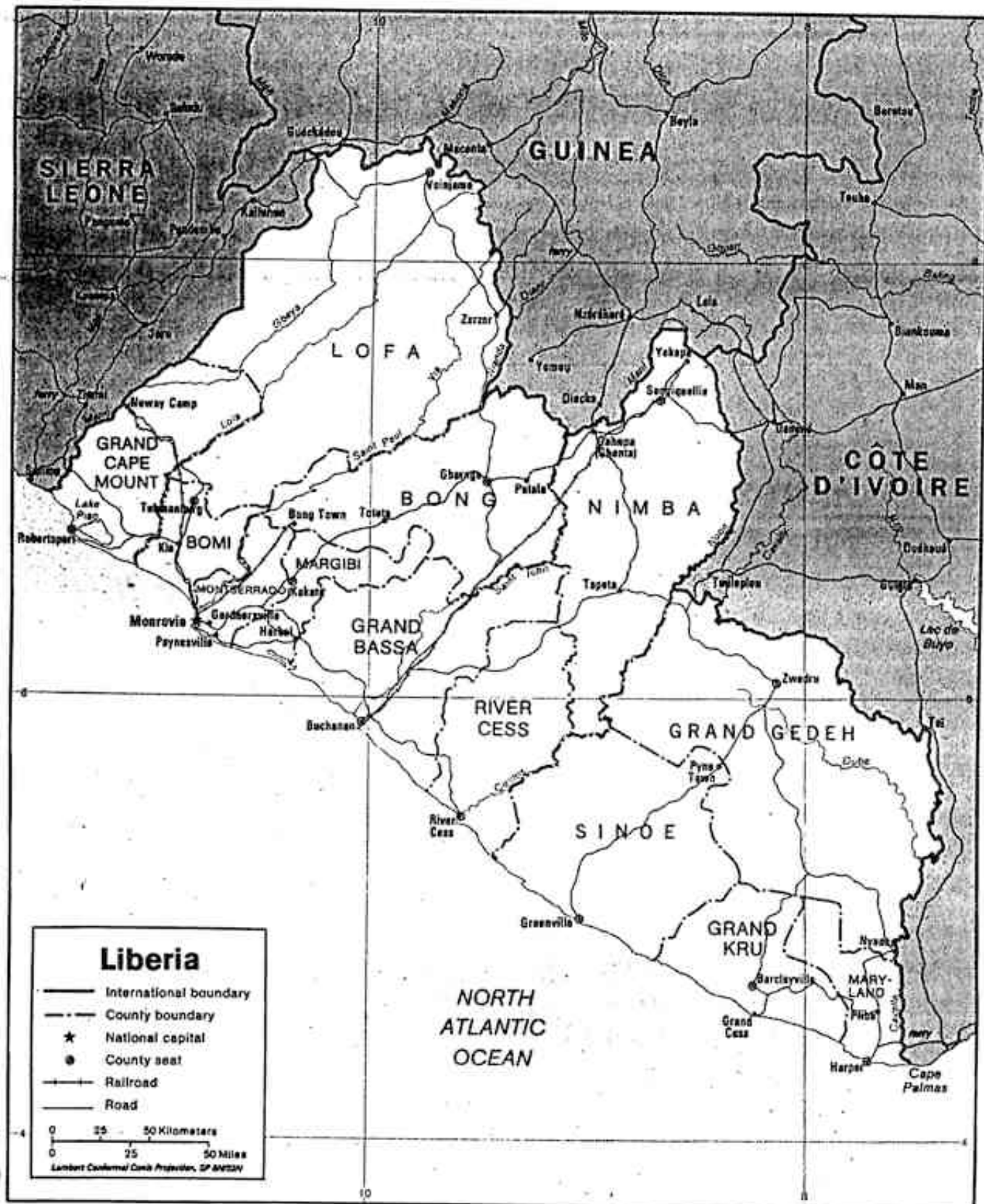
() Signature of Applicant

Below is Reserved for Passport Office Only

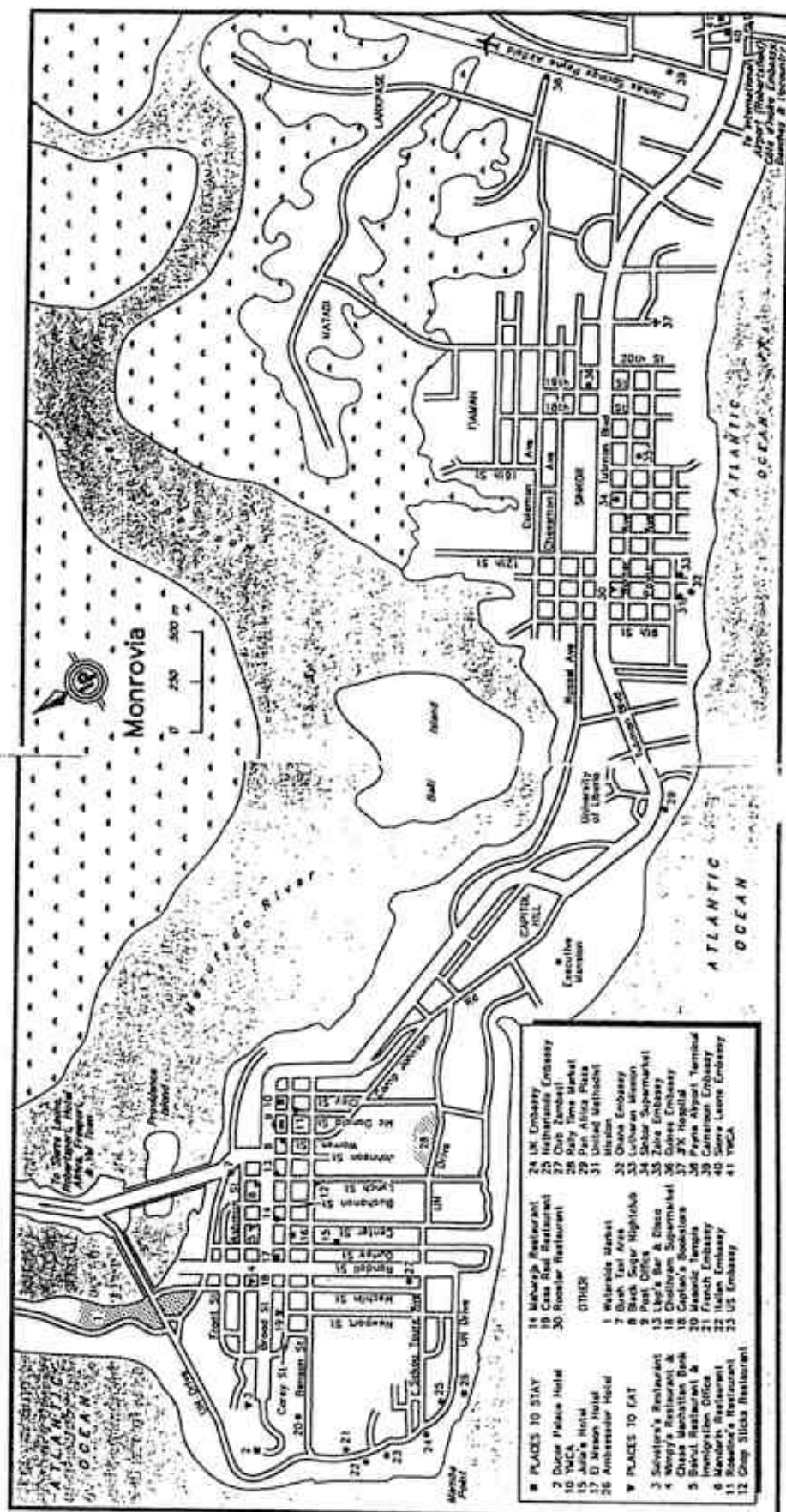
Color of eyes: _____ Weight: _____ Color of hair: _____
Mouth: _____ Beard: _____ Speech: _____
Height: _____ Complexion: _____ Place of birth: _____
Passport No: _____ Date of Expiry: _____
Date of Issuance: _____

Signature of Legal Counsel

Bilag 6



Bilag 7



UNITED NATIONS HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR REFUGEES
BO, MONROVIA LIBERIA

VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION STATISTICS

Analysis By Country of Asylum

<u>Cameroun</u>	<u>5</u>
<u>Cote d'Ivoire</u>	<u>10,295</u>
<u>Ghana</u>	<u>2,755</u>
<u>Guinea</u>	<u>34,847</u>
<u>Mali</u>	<u>20</u>
<u>Nigeria</u>	<u>364</u>
<u>Sierra Leone</u>	<u>92</u>
<u>Grand Total:</u>	<u>48,378</u>

RELOCATION OF 50,000 DISPLACED PEOPLE

PILOT PROGRAMME: FINAL REPORT



A smiling recipient holding her "Family Kit."

*FROM THE WORKING GROUP; i.e.
(LRRRC, FEDERATION-LNRCS; UNDP/UNOPS)*

08 JUNE 1998

Background of Internally Displaced People

The conflict in Liberia has resulted in the internal displacement of almost a million people. The post-conflict period heralds the need for, and the desire of, the displaced, to return to their homesteads. Among the category of people termed displaced, there are those living in shelters in urban areas whose presence in those locations known as "regular shelters" has been sanctioned by Government. There are also those known as "squatters" who occupy public and private property without the approval of the owner. At the community level, there are many who sought refuge with family and friends. In some instances whole communities sought shelter within another community.

Within all the above mentioned categories there are those who are considered vulnerable and require particular attention. They include the disabled, elderly, female headed households, pregnant and lactating women, children under five and unaccompanied minors. In terms of numbers, it was calculated through a verification exercise by WFP in October 1997, that there were 157,000 displaced persons residing in approved shelters, another 19,000 are living as squatters on private property, while it is believed there are up to 700,000 living in different communities from their pre-war homesteads throughout the country.

In October 1997, UNDP facilitated a workshop during which the LRRRC, the Commission responsible for the internally displaced and refugees came out with a Plan of Action for the relocation of the internally displaced. This plan was subsequently endorsed by Government at the level of the Cabinet. That plan of action includes five components;

- i. The relocation of IDPs is predicated on the recognition of the need to return to their communities and become productive;
- ii. food to be provided on the same basis as that which is planned for refugees: one month final ration at the destination point. This food to be provided by WFP;
- iii. transport to be provided to those considered vulnerable and living in remote areas where there is no means of public transportation;
- iv. an amount of resettlement packages and some temporary shelter will also be provided to those most in need;
- v. assistance will be provided at the community level through micro-projects to enable the community to prepare and support the returnees. Items supplied will include tools to facilitate the clearing of land and maintenance of roads such as shovels, cutlasses, axes among other items.

Immediately after endorsement of the Plan of Action, UNDP began to search for resources to activate the plan. The relocation of IDPs was appealed for through the Consolidated Appeal but with little response. In any event, UNDP through its executing agency UNOPs, felt that relocating the IDPs and facilitating their return home was key to any reintegration process. To this end funds were allocated (US\$ 314,000) to launch a pilot scheme to facilitate the return home of 10,000 families (50,000 people). Meanwhile efforts continued to seek resources to extend the programme if the pilot scheme proved effective.

Classification of Internally Displaced People

Internally Displaced People are those persons who have been forced to flee their homes due to conflict, internal strife, systematic violation of human rights or natural disasters but who remain within the borders of their own country.

In Liberia IDPs have been categorized into four groups:

- i. Those residing in regular shelters. A shelter is deemed regular when it has the approval of the LRRRC and receives assistance from the humanitarian community. They have a leadership structure which has been recognized by Government.
- ii. Those internally displaced residing in the community.
- iii. Squatters are referred to as those residing in public and private buildings without the approval of the owners and who do not benefit from any organized programme support from the Government and the Humanitarian Community.
- iv. Those refugees returning to their home areas are classified as displaced before reaching their final destination.

Government Policy towards IDPs

1. The Government actively promotes the relocation and resettlement of IDPs to facilitate reintegration into their communities of choice within the comprehensive reintegration programme.
2. The relocation of IDPs is predicated on the recognition of the pre-conflict ownership of land.
3. The choice of final destination, and the process of return and resettlement is voluntary.
4. Promotion and encouragement of rural resettlement within the Reintegration Programme is a given premise and therefore the policies and plans should be rural-based.
5. Within the concept of tail-end humanitarian delivery of the Reintegration Programme, the essential ingredients for the resettlement of IDPs are:
 - a. Basic survival
 - b. Minimum shelter
 - c. Community participation and local capacity building.
6. Support within the IDP Resettlement Plans will vary by IDP category and levels of vulnerability.
7. The Government promotes and supports the natural ongoing process of spontaneous resettlement and self-initiative.

Pilot Project

Despite the lack of resources, it was decided in April 1998 by UNDP, to launch a pilot initiative to promote the return of internally displaced people from the regular shelters in Monrovia to their home locations. Through the WFP verification exercise, it was established that more than eighty per cent of the displaced in the regular shelters came from Western Liberia. It was also deemed imperative that as many as possible should be assisted to return home prior to the rains and

in time to avail of the distribution of seeds and tools through the National Seeds and Tools Campaign.

With an initial contribution from UNDP through UNOPs of US\$314,000, plastic sheeting (1000 rolls) from USAID through CRS and logistical support from EU (two trucks), a pilot programme for the relocation of 50,000 people over a three month period was designed. With the Federation/Liberia National Red Cross as the implementing partner and LRRRC as the Government Agency responsible, the pilot scheme began on the 2 April 1998.

Project rationale

This programme was based on meeting the needs of the displaced, as expressed by themselves, and in line with the Plan of Action. These needs represented the impediment to their returning home. Top of the list, in terms of IDP concerns, was the need for shelter materials. The programme therefore provided a shelter package at the point of destination which included various items which could be used for construction and tarpaulin. In addition, communities receiving large groups of returnees were provided with community kits which included tools to assist the community in carrying out repairs and brushing land.

These packages constituted the pull factors. The cessation of food distribution in the shelters and the provision of food at the resettlement areas also aided the movement of people thus acting as the push factor.

Project Implementation

The programme was launched in the first week of April commencing with a training workshop for the LNCRS and LRRRC monitors who were subsequently posted at the fourteen distribution sites or as members of the verification teams. On the 2 April, the Verification Teams began their sensitization and registration activities within the shelters. The reaction of the displaced reflected an overwhelming desire to return home. Within the first month 6326 family heads were registered to return while 5110 had actually left, collected their packages and were resettling within their communities. A family head represents on average five people. People began demolishing their shelters within the camps while the construction of housing was observed within their communities

Family Shelter Kit

Tarpaulin	1 sheet
Cutlasses	2
Axe	1
Nails	5kg
Twine	1 Ball
Hammer	1

+ nd. Johnston J W & P

Community Kits (per population of 500)

Wheelbarrow	1	Shovels	10
Axes	6	Hoes	15
Pick Axes	6	Cutlasses	30
Hammers	5	Saws	2
Nails	7kg	Rakes	5
Whippers	20	Files	10
Buckets	10		

of origin. Community kits were provided to the various towns and villages in the area. By the end of the first week in June the target of relocating 10,000 families was reached. This three month programme was therefore completed within a nine week period. Eight shelters were covered and more than seventy-five per cent of the displaced living in those shelters have returned home. Among the displaced vulnerable persons were identified and required transportation. During the last days of phase 1, some one hundred people were transported home using the EU trucks.

Implementation strategy

1. Sensitization: Two verification teams comprising of personnel from LRRRC and the LNCRS sensitized the displaced communities within nine shelters. The population was appraised of the contents of the package and the mechanism for exchanging the waybill. They were also advised of the distribution points. Each displaced shelter was briefed on the type of rehabilitative activities ongoing in the communities and their need to become a part of those activities. The fact that assistance to the shelters was no longer forthcoming was reinforced. It was also explained, that they were expected to find their own means to travel, but that those considered unable to do so by virtue of ill health and age would be assisted.

2. Registration: Each head of family, on presentation of the WFP ration card, was issued a waybill. One copy of the way bill was retained by the verification team, one was sent to LRRRC for record keeping and one was given to the family head. The way bills were then signed and countersigned by both LNCRS and LRRRC. On receipt of the waybill the bearer was given fifteen days within which to claim his package.

Displaced Shelters covered during registration

Shelter	Population
Jones Town	6224
Lenduama	2853
Ricks	8975
Bailey Town	6646
Fumbah	5102
Perry Town	7595
Memme	6378
Kpeikor	3747

3. Distribution: Fourteen distribution sites were established within the Western Province (Lower Lofa, Bomi, Cape Mount and Monterrado). A team comprising of LRRRC and LNCRS monitors was present at each site. The shelter packages were prepositioned and issued on arrival of the displaced; the waybills stamped and reclaimed. The identification numbers on the WFP ration card were used on the waybills to further ensure that collecting more than one package was not possible. Each package comprised of two cutlasses, one plastic sheet, 5kg of nails, one axe and one hammer. Although WFP was not distributing on a daily basis at these centers, whenever a large group congregated, WFP obliged by delivering the final ration of food to the distribution site thus shortening the process for the IDP. Sites were selected in areas where it is known that large numbers of displaced are returning to.

4. Distribution of Community Kits: A total of 149 kits for community activities were secured under this phase of the programme. These kits contained a variety of items including cutlasses, hoes, files and are based on communities of 500 people. Together with the various superintendents and the town chiefs these kits are allocated to towns and villages throughout the four counties.

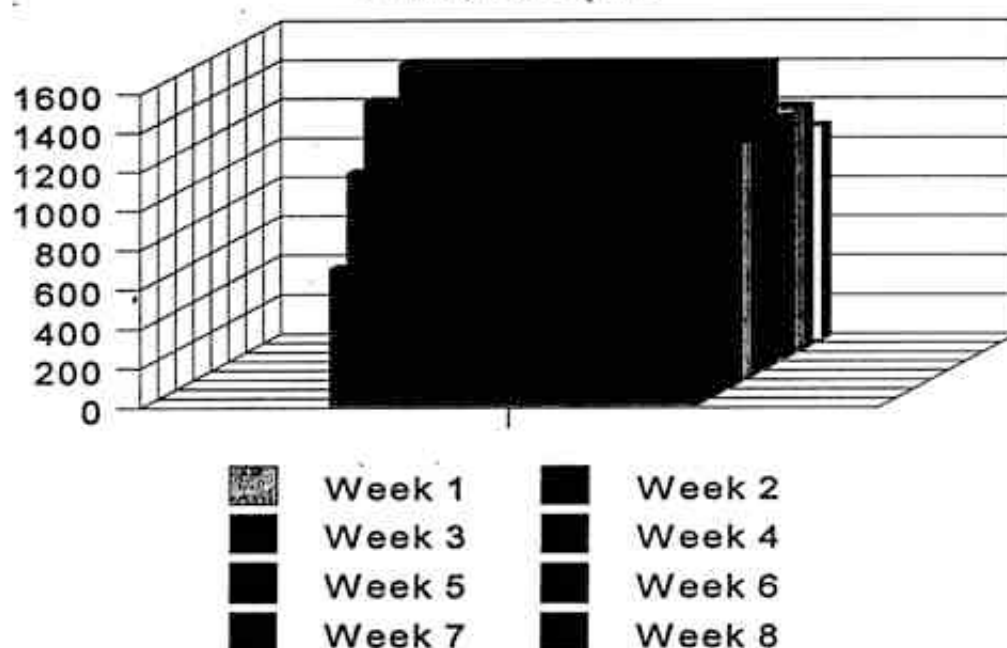
5. Field supervision and monitoring: LNCRS, LRRRC and UNOPS officers monitored the programme on a daily basis traveling between sites to ensure supplies were in stock, checking administrative procedures and assessing the impact of the programme. They reported directly to the working group.

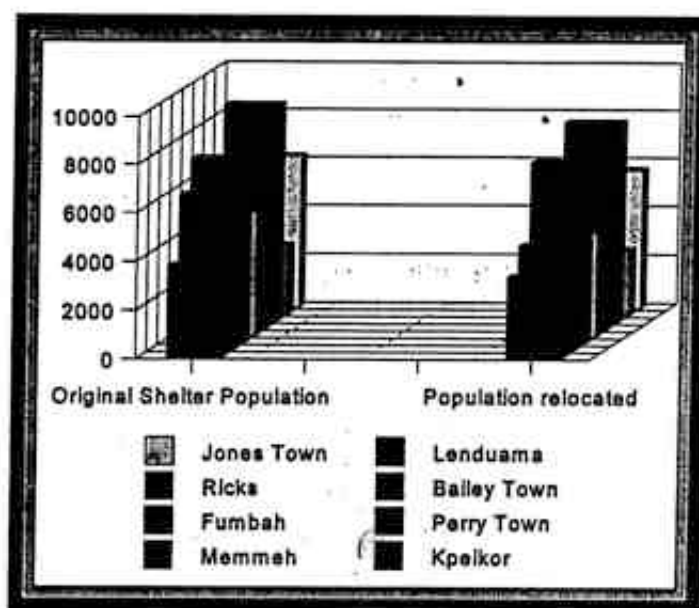
6. Linkages: the relocation is linked to the longer term development activities through collaboration with the UNOPS micro projects. The UNOPS programme operational center in Bomi is supporting those communities where IDPs are returning to.

7. Ongoing discussions are maintained with the newly formed food security forum in Monrovia, with WFP as the focal point, to monitor the coping mechanisms of returnees and ensure early detection and prevention of any nutritional problems.

Family Kits Distributed

Family size: five





Relocation of
IDPS from Shelters

Constraints

While Phase 1 was carried out smoothly some constraints have been noted:

General:

- The main complaint from the IDPs themselves is the lack of seed distribution in their home communities. They were not registered under the seeds and tools campaign.
- Repair of infrastructure and the provision of basic services such as schools and clinics is not in tandem with the arrival of the IDPs.

Specific:

- In practical terms, the programme lacked sufficient communications to deal with unexpected large numbers arriving at certain distribution sites which required increasing the stock in certain locations.
- Some IDPs within the shelters are from the Southeast and cannot return without transport assistance for which there is no provision. This group represents five per cent of the original 157,000 in the regular shelters.

Coordination

The programme was supervised by LRRRC, who also played an active role in its implementation. UNOPS/UNDP also monitored while Federation/Liberia National Red Cross were the implementing partners. All activities were planned and monitored through a working group which included the above mentioned parties and WFP, who complemented the programme with the

distribution of a final food ration at the destination point. The working group reports to a Task Force chaired by the Executive Director of the LRRRC and included, in addition to those agencies represented within the working group, the donors and members of the Seeds and Tools Committee.

Reporting and evaluation

Reports were produced by the implementing partners in collaboration with the LRRRC on a weekly basis. These statistics are maintained in a database. The reports have been circulated to all concerned agencies and donors.

Evaluation has been ongoing by all parties involved. In addition, an assessment by the food security monitoring group in June. In preparation for Phase II, which involves the relocation of an additional 6000 families, a meeting of all field personnel has been convened where lessons learnt and strategies to improve implementation will be discussed.

Financial Aspects

The total cost of this Pilot Scheme was US\$ 314,330. Each family package was US\$ 17.50 while the community kit cost US\$ 594 each. An amount not exceeding US\$ 6,000 each, was supplied to the implementing partner Federation-LNCRS and to LRRRC to facilitate supervision. With this money computer equipment was procured and other items to enhance the capacity of the organization. The project involved a total of 72 field workers who received remuneration ranging from US\$250 per month for the project coordinator to US\$ 2 per day for LNCRS volunteers. Of the total number of employees on the programme 18 were monitors from the LRRRC.

Less than twenty per cent of the programme cost was used for logistics, administration and personnel costs. All financial matters were managed by the Federation who were tasked with maintaining accounts, however, expenditures and the issuing of purchase orders was jointly overseen by the Federation and the LNRC. Any changes requiring amendments to the budget lines were carried out in consultation with all parties through the working group and sanctioned when appropriate by UNDP/UNOPS.

Bilag 10

JUSTICE AND PEACE COMMISSION



NATIONAL CATHOLIC SECRETARIAT
CATHOLIC CHURCH OF LIBERIA

"Every human being has a right to liberty, freedom and dignity. As God's children, we are made in the image and likeness of God and called to an eternal destiny."

"Love God above all things and your Neighbor as yourself."

3. HUMAN RIGHTS MONITORING, FACT-FINDING, DOCUMENTATION AND REPORTING

Under this program, the JPC is engaged in the monitoring, investigation, documentation and reporting of human rights abuses. By this, the JPC uncovers and brings to public view and knowledge the many abuses and violation of local and international laws and covenants as well as the rights and liberties of peoples. By continuously exposing these abuses the JPC seeks to attract concern and redress.

4. CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE-BUILDING

Under its conflict resolution and peace-building program, the JPC seeks to bring together the various segments of society by conducting conflict resolution training programs and workshops at the community, school, church, governmental and other levels of society and by promoting dialogue, tolerance and co-existence among conflicting segments of society.

HOW IS THE JPC FUNDED?

The JPC is funded by the Catholic Church of Liberia and other Catholic Church related institutions outside Liberia. The JPC also benefits from grants and assistance packages from non-Catholic institutions world-wide committed to promoting respect for human rights, democracy, justice and peace.

The JPC can be reached by the address below:

Mailing Address:

Justice and Peace Commission
National Catholic Secretariat

Ashmun Street
P.O. Box 10-3569
1000 Monrovia 10, Liberia
West Africa

Tel: (231) 227657/225930
Fax: (231) 226006/227838

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MONROVIA, LIBERIA, W.A.

rights and civic education in schools.

As part of its civil society strengthening, the JPC has established a program for the protection and promotion of press freedom.

Under this program, the JPC undertakes local and international advocacy and provides free legal services on behalf of journalists or media institutions which may be facing persecution or threat for, or in the discharge of their duties. Legal Services are provided by the Legal Aid Program.

Advocacy

The JPC has also designed a strong Advocacy for human rights, democracy, justice, peace and reconciliation. To create an overwhelming voice, The JPC has established collaboration with a number of other national institutions involved in Advocacy.

Through its Advocacy program, the JPC seeks to create and draw national and international attention and engender positive action on behalf of victims. This is made possible through the JPC's wide collaborative link.

2. LEGAL AID

Established under the doctrines of "option for the poor" and "Justice for all", the Legal Aid Program provides free legal services to poor or indigent people whose rights are trampled upon but, do not have the means to acquire legal redress either because it is expensive or because the victims are unaware of how to obtain legal redress. These legal services are also extended to civic and democratic institutions which, though may not be indigent, but suffer persecution as a result of their activities.

Legal assistance includes conferences and advise, out of court settlement, court action, etc.

Prison Program

The JPC's prison visitation and assistance activities also fall under the Legal Aid program. Under prison visitation and assistance, the JPC reviews the terms and duration of detention, the health and general physical condition of inmates and the overall condition of prison institutions and provides assistance where needed.

BRIEF HISTORY

The Catholic Justice and Peace Commission, hereinafter referred to as the JPC, was established in November, 1991, in response to a century long history of widespread human rights abuses and injustices accentuated by a brutal civil war which began in 1989.

MISSION STATEMENT

The JPC postulates the Christian Principles of love, justice and freedom, and addresses itself to issues regarding social, economic, political and religious justice as well as respect for human rights.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The JPC is guided by the following principles and beliefs:

All human beings, regardless of religion, creed, political beliefs and affiliation, economic or social status; whether they be men, women or children, disabled (physically or mentally); are children of God, made in his own image and likeness.

All human beings have basic inalienable fundamental rights, amongst which are:

- The right to life, liberty and security of person;
- The right to equal opportunity for personal growth, advancement and self-actualization of the mental and physical potentials;

STRUCTURE

The JPC is national in character. Its day-to-day affairs are administered and coordinated by a national office based at the National Catholic Secretariat in Monrovia.

There are three regional offices representing and located in the three jurisdictional Dioceses into which the Liberian Catholic Church is divided. These include the:

(A) Archdiocese of Monrovia:

Comprises the six (6) counties of Montserrado, Grand Bassa, Rivercess, Cape Mount, Bomi, Margibi and the Statutory Districts of Gbarma and Bopolu with headquarters in Monrovia.

(B) The Diocese of Gbarnga:

Comprises the three counties of Lofa, Nimba and Bong, with headquarters in Gbarnga, Bong County, and

(C) The Diocese of Cape Palmas:

Comprises the four counties of Grand Gedeh, Sinoe, Grand Kru and Maryland, with headquarters in Harper, Maryland County.

Within these regional offices are Community-based Parish Justice and Peace Committees which serve as structures for empowering grassroots people. Through these Committees the JPC provides basic education in human rights, justice and peace issues. These committees also serve as monitoring and advocacy outlets.

The broad policies and guiding principles of the JPC are determined by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Liberia which comprises Bishops of the three Dioceses.

The Board of Directors is also drawn from the three Dioceses. It reviews programs and monitors the operations of the JPC quarterly.

COMPONENTS

The JPC is sub-divided into several components which execute the programs and daily affairs of the Commission.

A. Administration

The Department of Administration supervises the overall programs and activities of the JPC.

B. Information and Education

This component is charged with designing and executing programs and activities aimed at information gathering and dissemination, Advocacy and Human Rights and Civic Education. It also coordinates the Human Rights Fact-Finding, Documentation and Reporting program.

C. Research

The Research Component coordinates all research activities and programs of the JPC. It also serves as the Documentation unit and projects office and takes care of office and staff administration.

D. Legal Aid

This is the legal assistance arm of the JPC. It coordinates all legal aid matters involving indigent peoples and civic institutions. It also handles the prison visitation and assistance activities of the JPC.

PROGRAMS AND ACTIVITIES

I. HUMAN RIGHTS, CIVIC EDUCATION, CIVIL SOCIETY BUILDING

The JPC has established a unique human rights and civic education program through which a network of human rights and civic education activities are carried out. These programs are designed to create a human rights conscious and strong civil society as well as to confront the long culture of silence and apathy and encourage peoples participation in public affairs. This includes:

A. Human Rights and Civic Education Radio Program: "The Justice and Peace Forum"

The Justice and Peace Forum is a network of human rights and civic education Radio Programs broadcast on the state-owned ELBC-FM and SW Stations, the Catholic Church owned Radio Veritas, and other commercial radio stations. It is broadcast in standard and local language and in the 16 languages of Liberia. The diversity in languages is very important because Liberia has an illiteracy rate of nearly 85%.

Newsletter/Briefing Paper

The JPC publishes a newsletter which is monthly and reports on human rights violations and the overall socio-economic, political life of the country and its people. This Newsletter also serves basically as a medium for human rights and civic education.

Civil Society Capacity Building Program

Under this program the JPC conducts education training workshops for its local committees and other civic groups - weak and emerging civil society institutions, such as media institutions, women and children advocacy groups, schools, churches, etc. as a way of strengthening them to assume their roles in society. A curriculum is being developed for human

Udlændingestyrelsen

Ryesgade 53
2100 København Ø

Telefon 35 36 66 00
Telefax 35 36 19 16

