

**LIBERIA'S ELECTIONS:
NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT**

Africa Report N°98 – 7 September 2005

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LIBERIA'S ELECTIONS: NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Everything indicates that Liberia's October 2005 presidential and legislative elections are likely to be transparent and fair. Many hope this will permit an exit strategy to be implemented that could see international actors leaving the country as soon as the end of 2006. The probable result of such a scenario would be that, in the words of one ex-combatant, "the UN will be coming back in 2007 or 2008". Liberia has been crumbling for at least 25 years. Elections are but a small, early step in a lengthy reconstruction process that will be sabotaged if Liberian elites refuse some form of intrusive economic governance mechanism, or if international partners pull out before a sustainable security environment is achieved. If the international community does have to return in several years, it will be to mop up yet another war that will cost far more than remaining seriously engaged over the next decade or more.

The UN, the U.S., the European Commission and the World Bank must stay the course, working in conjunction with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU) to rebuild Liberia's shattered institutions and infrastructure, and assuring Liberia's security first through maintenance of the UNMIL peacekeeping presence and eventually through the training and mentoring of new Liberian security forces. In a regional context in which UN peacekeeping forces are drawing down to zero in Sierra Leone, Guinea remains volatile, and violence in Côte d'Ivoire simmers just beneath the surface, anything less than full commitment to reintegration and reconstruction in Liberia will most likely contribute to a new, wider conflict.

Despite the fragility of the situation, there is much room for optimism in Liberia today. Preparations for elections are on track, though such areas as campaign finance will require continued and serious attention. Refugees and internally displaced persons (IDPs) are returning home, even if not under ideal circumstances. Life in both Monrovia and distant counties is taking on the rhythms, sounds and appearance of normality. Most importantly, issues of economic governance and high level corruption have become a central preoccupation of almost everyone in the country as a result of investigations conducted by ECOWAS and the European Commission. The intrusive

Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) that donors and diplomats have proposed is in the final stages of negotiation with the transitional government.

The discussions that have emerged out of this proposal are heartening. Liberians in Monrovia, the hinterland, and the diaspora are arguing its merits and demerits. Some are motivated by pure self-interest, but many are not. The liveliness of the debate, like the thoughtful planning going into the elections, augurs well for the future, provided the plan is not gutted on the disingenuous grounds of national sovereignty.

Beyond the three key elements necessary to move Liberia forward in the short to medium term -- clean elections, international involvement in revenue collection and economic governance generally, and the maintenance of security -- there are several important longer-term issues which will need to be addressed. They include citizenship (increasingly problematic across West Africa), reintegration of ex-combatants, decentralisation of government, transitional justice, judicial reform, and possibly also constitutional reform aimed at lessening executive power.

These issues should all be addressed as soon as possible after the elected government is inaugurated. An inclusive national conference might be a helpful way of determining the priorities among these and other issues and building public support for further change. The international presence, having assured credible elections and continuing to assure security and that monies due to the government arrive, will give space to the government to take on these other daunting tasks. The candidates for elected office, the Liberian people, and international partners should all begin to raise their sights toward these more ambitious goals at the same time that they continue to ensure the success of the three foundational elements of elections, economic governance and security. Liberia is quickly approaching the second stage of its recovery: a smooth, well-planned transition will be as important as the individual policies.

Liberia could surpass Sierra Leone in all major indicators within three to five years and within ten years stand (once

again) solidly ahead of other countries in the region such as Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, and Niger. The country is rich, its population is small, and Liberians overseas send large remittances home. If these elements are multiplied by donor assistance and good management of resources, Liberia should make quick progress. However, another, gloomier scenario is also possible, even with the basic security provided by UN peacekeepers and a good election. If the theft and impunity that have characterised the transitional government are not corrected, Liberia will likely follow in Sierra Leone's footsteps, languishing at the bottom of the Human Development Index, failing to create jobs for young men, and probably sliding back into war by the end of the decade.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To ensure successful conduct of the October 2005 elections:

1. The political parties should respect the Liberia Political Parties Code of Conduct's guarantees of an atmosphere conducive to free and fair voting, especially its provisions barring any form of electoral fraud, obstruction, intimidation, abuse, or harassment of rival parties, journalists, or election officials, or any use of public resources for party activities.
2. The National Electoral Commission (NEC) and United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) should continue to monitor parties' and candidates' campaign financing as well as their adherence to all Liberian laws governing elections.

To ensure more effective governance:

3. The National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) should:
 - (a) embrace and commence implementation of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP);
 - (b) continue to pursue aggressively the investigation and, when warranted, the arrest and prosecution of all NTGL and National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA) officials accused of stealing public funds; and
 - (c) follow through on its proposal to create an Anti-Corruption Commission with prosecutorial powers.
4. The political parties should commit in their election platforms to implementation of GEMAP.
5. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) should:

- (a) publish its audit of the NTGL; and
- (b) continue to support an economic governance plan with "teeth" like GEMAP.

6. The European Commission should publish its audits of the Central Bank, Roberts Field International Airport, Monrovia's Freeport, the Forestry Development Authority, the Bureau of Maritime Affairs and the National Petroleum Refining Company.

7. Donors should:

- (a) continue to push for a comprehensive economic governance program with real oversight functions along the lines of GEMAP and match success in this area with consequential, coordinated, long-term aid;
- (b) make capacity-building and mentoring an integral part of every aspect of the GEMAP plan so that Liberians assume full responsibility for all aspects of their governance at the earliest possible time;
- (c) "Liberianise" as many of the oversight responsibilities as possible by cultivating the press, civil society and religious leaders as allies, thus empowering them to institute a new civic culture, for example:
 - i. change the make-up of the GEMAP oversight committee to include a second civil society representative; and
 - ii. provide for both such representatives to be chosen by civil society entities rather than other members of the committee; and
- (d) begin phasing out direct funding for service delivery for international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) once economic governance oversight is in place, transfer those funds to government agencies, conditioned on commitment of budget funds to raise salaries to a liveable wage, and ensure that the recruitment process for government jobs is competitive and based on merit.

To ensure sustainable security:

8. The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) should:
 - (a) commit to a peacekeeping or peace stabilisation presence in Liberia for at least four years, with troop drawdown to

- begin, assuming continuing stability, no earlier than late 2006;
- (b) fast-track the return of all internally displaced persons to their home counties in conditions of safety and dignity so as to encourage their participation in the October 2005 elections; and
 - (c) address immediate rule of law issues, including by:
 - i. resolving -- with force if necessary -- the illegal occupation of Guthrie and Sinoe plantations; and
 - ii. monitoring the actions of the Liberian National Police, immigration officials and others at checkpoints and intersections and bringing officers suspected of corruption before an examining committee that can dismiss the guilty.
9. The European Commission should make available substantial funds for urgent programs to reintegrate ex-combatants.
10. The U.S. should continue to make available substantial funds for urgent programs to reintegrate ex-combatants.

To consolidate peace and stability over the longer term:

11. The post-October 2005 elected Government of Liberia should, inter alia:
- (a) make judicial reform a priority;
 - (b) integrate Mandingoes into the fabric of the government, and promote reconciliation and just mediation of both cultural and land-use/ownership disputes between Mandingoes and other groups, especially in Lofa and Nimba Counties;
 - (c) organise a series of consultative national conferences to establish a broad consensus on the reform agenda of the new government, which may include decentralisation, constitutional reform, and the issue of citizenship for people of non-African origins, including the Lebanese; and
 - (d) form a commission to address questions of constitutional reform, whose findings would accompany those of the national conference.

Dakar/Brussels, 7 September 2005

LIBERIA'S ELECTIONS: NECESSARY BUT NOT SUFFICIENT

I. INTRODUCTION

In August 2003, the series of battles for Monrovia that Liberians called World Wars I, II, and III had just ended, and a deal brokered by the U.S., the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and Nigeria sent a sanctimonious and unrepentant Charles Taylor off to Nigeria. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) then hammered out in Accra created a transitional government with businessman Gyude Bryant at its head and a two-year mandate. Simultaneously, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was setting up its operation with a mandate to restore security, assist the transitional government, and prepare for elections in October 2005.

On the surface, there have been several setbacks, most notably a premature start to the disarmament process that allowed spoilers to capitalise on UNMIL's lack of preparation and launch an uprising that led to nine deaths, as well as another explosion of violence in October-November 2004, also exacerbated by spoilers, that led to sixteen deaths and significant destruction of property. Overall, the progression from radical insecurity to reasonably good security for most people most of the time has been consistent and encouraging. Rule of law has not set down permanent roots in Liberia but there are promising flowers in many places.

In December 2004 Crisis Group argued that the reintroduction of security, subsequent return of refugees and the internally displaced (IDPs) to their homes, and preparation for elections were necessary but not sufficient steps to guarantee lasting peace. Many of the goals on the peacekeeping mission checklist addressed the symptoms of a disease that had eaten away at Liberia (like Sierra Leone) for decades. If the disease itself went untreated, it might well go into remission, especially in the presence of 15,000 peacekeepers,¹ but would likely re-emerge shortly after they left.²

Few Liberians had any illusions about the transitional government assembled in Accra. It was the product of an arrangement that was 99 per cent realpolitik and 1 per cent principle. The three warring factions got to carve up the national cake, each taking its piece in the form of ministerial positions and legislative seats -- in short, two more years of looting rights. This was a continuation of the predatory logic that had decimated the country, and it was difficult to see how it would reorganise itself according to a new set of rules. The erstwhile warlords and their proxies in the national transitional government (NTGL) could not be counted on to do it, and UNMIL insisted that its mandate was not sufficiently strong.

Somewhere along the way, the dynamic shifted, largely thanks to an active civil society, including a press that has proliferated and begun to professionalise; human rights, women's rights and environmental activists who came up for air after six years of Taylor repression; and others working with the UN and non-governmental organisations (NGOs). These actors were provoked into action by members of the transitional government who showed themselves to be monumentally corrupt, rapacious, and unconcerned by the plight of ordinary Liberians. By February 2005, the press and civil society organisations began to level accusations of financial malfeasance at individuals within the NTGL for granting contracts negotiated in secret and being unable to account for government funds.³ Speaker George Dweh and Deputy Speaker Eddington Varmah were suspended indefinitely on 14 March for alleged misappropriation of some \$90,000⁴ in allowances. During their hearing, the speaker's bodyguards rushed into the legislature, brandishing batons, tried to confiscate documents, and held several

¹ UNMIL is the second-largest peacekeeping force in the world. The United Nations Mission in Congo has 15,193 peacekeepers.

² Crisis Group Africa Report N°87, *Liberia and Sierra Leone: Rebuilding Failed States*, 8 December 2004.

³ In 2004, many civil society organisations, including the Centre for Democratic Empowerment, the Foundation for Human Rights and Democracy, the Foundation for International Dignity, Green Advocates and Liberian Democracy Watch, were already calling attention to such abuses as the purchase of \$35,000 Jeeps for every member of the Transitional Legislature, while there were few taxis and no buses for Monrovia's ordinary citizens, as well as the unorthodox and opaque manner in which the contract for several boatloads of iron ore had been negotiated with a Chinese firm by members of the transitional government. Ibid.

⁴ All figures quoted in dollars are in U.S. dollars unless specified otherwise.

lawmakers and journalists hostage for more than an hour before UNMIL came to the rescue.

By mid-year, an anti-corruption sweep unleashed by civil society, ECOWAS and the European Commission (EC) was closing in on an increasing number of officials, including head of Social Security Orishall Gould,⁵ Minister of Lands and Mines Jonathan Mason, and Director of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs J.D. Slinger. Each has been accused of malfeasance, from straightforward theft of several million dollars to the issuance of illegal contracts. In parallel, auditors from ECOWAS and the EC began working systematically through the books of the transitional government, the Central Bank, and five of Liberia's parastatal companies. The donor and diplomatic communities decided they had had enough and proposed the intrusive measures now known as the Liberian Governance and Economic Management Assistance Plan (GEMAP). Those measures, described in Section III below, have raised the possibility that an end to impunity and new accountability to the electorate may be introduced into the Liberian political equation.

Liberia has a newly-appointed Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) and a new U.S. ambassador. In several months it will have a new elected president and legislature. The two-year interim since Charles Taylor's forced departure has seen success in three vital areas: improved security; the setting of conditions for legitimate elections; and the raising of key issues of governance and impunity that were root causes of the disaster that was Liberia for two decades.

With this solid base and a fresh roster of key actors, Liberia is poised to begin tackling its enduring, structural problems. It must be emphasised that *Liberia* is poised, and *Liberia* must tackle them. International partnership might do one of four things in the country. First, it could help restore a fragile peace, begin to raise core problems, and then walk away, risking a new collapse. This is what happened in 1997, and the result was a quick resumption of the war. Secondly, it could pour in enough money to alleviate some of the immediate symptoms of the root problems that caused the wars but do little to address the problems themselves. This is the route donors have taken in Sierra Leone, and in the long term it is certainly a very debilitating approach. A third approach would involve a high level of intrusiveness, specifically intended not to repeat some of the mistakes of Sierra Leone; international partners would manage most of Liberia's finances and other affairs, but eventually disengage. This would risk creating little more than a hiatus between two periods of bad governance, exactly as the first scenario risks inserting a hiatus between two chapters of war.

The final and only desirable option would be for intrusive economic governance measures to be accompanied by the good faith participation of the newly-elected government, with civil society, a political opposition and the press all playing vital watchdog functions with respect to the activities not only of the elected officials, but also of the international actors in-country to help. Liberians will successfully take over the functions that non-Liberians temporarily fill only if their critical institutions blossom, which requires a good deal of serious exercise during the "capacity building" phase.

⁵ Gould was the chairman of George Weah's Congress for Democratic Change party, but was replaced after being charged.

II. THE ELECTIONS

A. THE PROCESS

The elections on 11 October will be for president and vice president, the 30 members of the Senate, and the 64 members of the House of Representatives. Each of Liberia's fifteen counties elects two senators; the House seats have been divided according to the number of registered voters in each county, with every county automatically receiving at least two (Grand Kru and River Cess Counties are the only ones with the minimum), and the numbers rising from there to six seats for Bong County, seven for Nimba County, and fourteen for Montserrado County, which includes Monrovia (see Appendix D).

Candidates were already talking in May 2005 about concentrating their campaigns on the "Monrovia-Ganta corridor", where just four counties -- Montserrado, Margibi, Bong and Nimba -- account for 908,072 voters (over 67 per cent of all those registered) and 31 representatives' seats (nearly half the total). Moreover, the country's two viable paved roads (Monrovia to Ganta, Monrovia to Buchanan) are almost entirely there.⁶

By contrast, the six counties of the southeast -- River Cess, Sinoe, Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Grand Kru and Maryland -- have only sixteen seats. While this is disproportionately large given that these counties have but 12 per cent of the registered voters, people there feel short changed. As the home of former President Samuel Doe (1980-1990) as well as the seat of the MODEL insurgency, the area is accustomed to having political influence, and the loss of legislative seats is a sensitive matter. A number of other communities, including Lofa County and ethnic Mandingoes, may also feel that they have not received their fair share of the political pie. This may not in fact be accurate -- southeastern communities that have lost seats may lose even more when districts are based on a national census. All this will require significant public discussion and civic education in the first years of the new government.

Demographics have changed considerably since the last census, with an important flow toward Monrovia. These changes appear to have been addressed for the most part successfully by the registration and redistricting exercise undertaken by the National Electoral Commission (NEC), but will need to be legitimised and adjusted in due course. The process leading toward elections began on 25 April 2005 with voter registration. According to the constitution, the division of legislative districts should

be based on a census. As none has been conducted since 1984, some commentators have challenged the legality of the coming elections. Given the exceptional circumstances and the desire not to lengthen the tenure of an unrepresentative transitional government, both UNMIL and the U.S. embassy pushed hard to stick to the two-year timetable, which effectively ruled out a new census.

Because the delineation of electoral districts was based on the number of registered voters, much depended on the quality of the registration process. By most accounts, it was good. Crisis Group heard only two types of criticism, one surrounding ethnic Mandingoes, the other IDPs. Some Mandingoes said they had been denied registration on the basis of their ethnicity; there were also claims that Mandingoes who were "really" Guinean came in busloads to register fraudulently. The status of this ethnic group, which has migrated southward over centuries into the area that is now Liberia, is treated at greater length below.⁷ The first type of complaint appears to have been addressed quickly by the National Electoral Commission as well as the NTGL and UNMIL. No one consulted by Crisis Group (including Mandingoes) felt the problem was on a large scale; one Mandingo leader, Alhaji Kromah, even recently stated that he felt anti-Mandingo sentiment in Liberia is a myth.⁸ Some 80 per cent of the circa 50,000 Liberian refugees in Guinea are Mandingo. They had the right to register in Liberia, though it seems that relatively few actually did.

The complaint regarding IDPs appears to be well-founded. This was partly a logistical problem, caused by the fact that IDP return and registration went on simultaneously, the result of lack of funds and poor planning. IDP return during April, May and June 2005 made little sense for a variety of reasons. First, it was too late for farmers to clear large areas to grow rice or manioc (cassava). Consequently, families will lack staple crops until September-October 2006, when the first rice crops planted in March and April of that year can be harvested. Secondly, the rains had already begun, and roads in many of the more remote areas were becoming impassable. Many IDPs came from Lofa County, whose roads are notoriously bad. By May, roads beyond Voinjama (heading toward Foya, Kolahun, Mosambolahun) were already unusable. A report by the UNMIL Human Rights Division described three families,

⁷ As Section V A notes, claims that Mandingoes are not "really" Liberian combine several different complaints by other Liberians. Some insist they are Guinean and thus do not deserve the same rights as "indigenous" Liberians; others object to them as the most visible representatives of the Muslim faith in the country; and many associate the ethnic group as a whole with several of the rebel groups that have fought in Liberia over the last fifteen years.

⁸ Crisis Group research does not support this claim. See more in Section V A below. C. Jablasone, "Alhaji Kromah Dismisses anti-Mandingo sentiments", *Daily Observer*, 20 July 2005.

⁶ Buchanan, the endpoint of one of these roads, is in Grand Bassa County.

stranded on the road between Kolahun and Voinjama district, as the taxi driver, after receiving the full amount for transport from Voinjama to Kolahun, forced them to leave his car due to the bad road conditions. Men decided to carry some of the packages by foot, and women and children remained on the road with the remaining packages. One woman and one girl were raped by men in the surrounding area where they were stranded.⁹

The level of risk caused the IDP unit at the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs to carry out two separate research missions.¹⁰ Both UNMIL personnel interviewed by Crisis Group and humanitarian workers with NGOs stated on many occasions that the integrated mission in Liberia has offered IDPs and others the "worst of both worlds", blurring the distinction between military and humanitarian personnel and, through lack of staff and planning, failing to provide normal services.¹¹

Confusion surrounding their returns may also have led to low registration levels among IDPs. In counties like Lofa, which produced many IDPs, this may have contributed to figures that did not accurately represent the population, with resulting distortions of electoral districts as a result. For this reason and others listed below, the elected Liberian government should make it a priority to arrange a national census by the middle of its six-year term.

Despite these shortcomings, the preparations for the elections have generally been competent and transparent. All those interviewed by Crisis Group agreed that the National Electoral Commission was working extremely hard and had maintained a high level of neutrality. UNMIL's electoral division was also widely praised by those Liberians and diplomats following its activities.

⁹ UN Humanitarian Coordination document, 21 June 2005.

¹⁰ See also "Liberia: UNMIL strategy needed for internally displaced unable to return home", Refugees International Policy Recommendation, 18 July 2005.

¹¹ The concept of the integrated mission, in which humanitarian and emergency aid coordination are folded into the peacekeeping mission, has been contentious. It is unclear if two of its stated goals, streamlining of administration and cutting costs, have been achieved, and the integration of the Liberian mission is seen by many as so unsuccessful that it is now used as the main argument against integration of missions elsewhere. Some have warned that blurring the lines between military and humanitarian work could jeopardise humanitarian personnel. Although this is generally a greater concern in settings like Afghanistan and Iraq, there have been both threats and attacks against humanitarians in Liberia over the past months. The International Rescue Committee's Ganta office, for instance, has been attacked four times by ex-combatants. While it cannot be said that such violence was the direct result of integrating the UNMIL mission, several humanitarian workers consulted by Crisis Group said there was at least an indirect link, especially when unmet promises or ambiguous information led to high levels of ex-combatant resentment.

Dedicated Liberian and international NGOs focusing on electoral issues have also worked hard, and seemingly successfully, to educate voters and parties. Finally, there has been no major election-related violence, an outcome no one had dared hope for as recently as six months ago.

B. THE PARTIES AND CANDIDATES

There are three categories of political party in Liberia today. First are the historically powerful and well-organised entities that have, or have had, a life and momentum of their own. These include the True Whig Party, which monopolised politics until 1980, the National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL) of former President Doe, the National Patriotic Party (NPP) of former President Taylor, and to some extent Chairman Gyude Bryant's Liberia Action Party (LAP). Each of these appears to be to a greater or lesser extent in a state of dissolution. Secondly, there are parties much of whose present significance comes from the charisma of their presidential candidate. Most agree that the three leading candidates at the moment are (in alphabetical order) Charles Brumskine, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, and George Weah.¹² Brumskine's Liberty Party (LP) and Johnson-Sirleaf's Unity Party (UP) fall into this category, though each has had an independent existence. George Weah's Congress for Democratic Change (CDC) is little more than a vehicle for his campaign but because his presidential prospects appear strong, it has attracted legislative candidates and is building party machinery. The last group, which includes the remaining seventeen registered parties, consists of those that are neither institutionally strong nor have a leader likely to draw much money and popular support.¹³

The strength and level of a party's organisation will show itself particularly in the legislative elections, which could become especially significant if the elected president does not have many supporters in the Senate and House of Representatives. By all accounts, the National Patriotic Party and the Liberian Action Party are the best-organised

¹² During interviews in May 2005 with four groups of ex-combatants in Nimba County, Crisis Group conducted a series of straw polls. There were 90 respondents, about three quarters male, ranging from approximately eighteen to 40 years of age. The results are unscientific but interesting because they give an indication of thinking outside Monrovia, where most commentary and analysis originates. Ex-combatants were able to identify seventeen individuals they thought were running for president. Only four received more than five votes: George Weah (47), Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (fourteen), Shad Tubman (nine), and Winston Tubman (seven).

¹³ See Appendix C below for a complete listing of Liberia's 30 parties, two alliances, and one coalition. The appendix also lists each party's presidential nominee, or in some cases its vice presidential nominee.

national groupings, with the Unity Party catching up fast. The NPP builds on the structure Taylor left behind in 2003. Its coherence appears to be disappearing,¹⁴ though it stands to win numerous seats. The LAP is Chairman Gyude Bryant's party, and many perceive him as having prepared the way for its success since early 2004. LAP candidate Varney Sherman has built on this base and has already visited all the counties, often several times. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's UP recently opened offices even in remote counties such as Maryland and River Gee.

One historically well-organised party whose influence has almost disappeared is the True Whig, which was the only legal party from its founding in 1877 until 1980. Closely linked to the Masonic order, it ruled Liberia for many decades, while Americo-Liberian control of politics was unchallenged. It has now joined the Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia (COTOL) supporting Varney Sherman. Another party that has lost much of its former influence (partly because of internal squabbles described below) is the NDPL, though it remains strong in the east, where it is often seen as representing the interests of former President Doe's Krahn ethnic group.¹⁵

The Liberian People's Party (LPP), founded by Dr Amos Sawyer and the backbone of progressive politics in the 1970s and 1980s, has lost considerable momentum in the run-up to the election. Sawyer now supports Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's UP, as do other progressive political stalwarts including Conmany Wesseh, Dusty Wolokollie, Francis Karpeh and Edward Spencer. The LPP has attempted to consolidate by joining with the United People's Party (UPP) in the Alliance for Peace and Democracy (APD), whose ticket includes the LPP's Togba Na Tipoteh for president and the UPP's Marcus Dahn for vice president.¹⁶

A number of international NGOs have been working with the National Electoral Commission and UNMIL's electoral division to promote education of both voters and parties. The U.S.-based National Democratic Institute (NDI) and the International Republican Institute (IRI) have sponsored debates on such topics as GEMAP, which will be important for the parties to embrace in their platforms. The IRI along with the NEC was also instrumental in working with the parties to put together the Liberian

Political Parties Code of Conduct, a key part of a process through which old habits and practices are being challenged. The voluntary code commits signatories among other things not to break up other parties' rallies; not to bear weapons; not to recruit anyone for intimidation or harassment; not to use public resources for party activities; not to engage in electoral fraud; and to accept the NEC-certified results. Eighteen parties signed this code on 14 April 2005. Seven others signed a memorandum of understanding with the IRI on 3 August for training and capacity building.

¹⁴ See discussion below on the NPP presidential candidate, Roland Massaquoi.

¹⁵ Aside from being Doe's ethnic group, the Krahn made up the majority of the ULIMO-J rebel group during Liberia's first war and the MODEL rebel group during the most recent war. They live on both sides of the Liberia-Côte d'Ivoire border and are called Wê in the latter.

¹⁶ Dahn was involved in a bitter struggle with Milton Teahjay for the top position within the UPP. After vacillating for several days, the leadership chose Dahn. See J. Daygbor, "Despite confusion UPP's still on course", *The Analyst*, 3 August 2005.

THE CANDIDATES

On 13 August, the NEC announced that it had cleared 22 presidential and vice presidential candidates, 206 candidates for the 30 senatorial seats, and 512 candidates for the 64 seats in the House of Representatives. The following is a brief description of prominent presidential candidates.¹⁷ Some are considered front runners, others are important regardless of the votes they receive.

Charles Walker Brumskine (Liberty Party)

After he completed his studies in Liberia, Brumskine (54) started his career at the Ministry of Labour (1978-1981) and taught law at the University of Liberia as an assistant professor (1983-1985). He then worked as a lawyer and senior partner of the Brumskine & Associates firm until he became a temporary senator during the Taylor regime, July 1997 to August 1999. He acted as a lawyer for Firestone Tires¹⁸ while in the Senate. He also served as legal adviser to the Liberia Agricultural Company, which was recently involved in controversial expulsions of local people from Grand Bassa County. He broke with Taylor in 1999 and resigned from the Senate and the NPP after the party's executive committee voted no-confidence in him. He went to the U.S. until January 2003, returning to challenge Taylor in the presidential elections slated for the end of that year. He resigned from the Liberian Unification Party in November 2004 and created his own United Democratic Party,¹⁹ which joined forces with the Liberty Party, under whose banner he is running. Brumskine's explanation of past ties with Taylor fail to satisfy some Liberians, and much commentary ensued from a *Washington Post* article that quoted him saying, "the thing is about my association with Taylor, generally, it's the best thing that happened to me".²⁰

Marcus Jones (Independent)

Jones (54), the best known independent candidate, earned his law degree in Liberia and has worked primarily as a lawyer and human rights advocate. He is the managing partner of Jones & Associates Legal Consultants and was vice president, then president of the National Bar Association and, under Doe, state prosecutor. On 13 August 2005, the NEC announced that Jones and four other independent candidates had been disqualified because they failed to collect 500 signatures apiece from registered voters in support of their candidacies.

Roland Massaquoi (National Patriotic Party)

Dr Massaquoi, the candidate of Charles Taylor's old party, is an agronomist by training and was agriculture minister, then minister of planning and economy in the ex-president's administration. His party opponent, Francis Galawolo, claimed Taylor telephoned the national convention to instruct party members to nominate Massaquoi.²¹

H. Varney Sherman (Liberian Action Party)

After studying law in Liberia, Sherman (53) completed his education with a Master of Law degree at Harvard in 1982 and became both a successful lawyer and an influential businessman. His law firm, Sherman & Sherman, represents the most powerful businesses in Liberia, including banks and rubber companies (he is Firestone's legal adviser), as well as the prosperous Lebanese merchant community. He was chairman of the Board of Directors of the Liberia Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC) until resigning in 2004. He entered politics by running unsuccessfully for the Senate from

¹⁷ Appendix C lists registered parties and their nominees. It does not include independent candidates.

¹⁸ Firestone was bought by the Japanese tire manufacturer Bridgestone in 1988. It says its 35,000-acre plantation in Harbel is the world's biggest. Although it is now Japanese-owned, almost all Liberians still consider it the icon of American economic presence in their country.

¹⁹ His running mate is Amelia Ward, a career economist who earned her masters degree in development economics from the University of Idaho and was a Taylor-era minister of planning and economic affairs. She was listed on the UN travel ban list but removed after thorough investigation.

²⁰ J. Ernst, "The man who would be president", *The Washington Post*, 5 June 2005.

²¹ See J. Wes, "NPP sets up committee to probe allegations", *Liberian Observer*, 3 May 2005; "Still in the shadow of the warlords: Liberia's election", *The Economist*, 4 June 2005; and "Liberia: Taylor still looms large as election countdown begins", IRIN, 30 June 2005.

Grand Cape Mount on the Liberian Action Party ticket in 1997. He is generally perceived as the confidante and candidate of the transitional government chairman, Gyude Bryant, whose business affairs he handled. Sherman's connections with foreign investors are a source of mistrust for many Liberians, who regard him as too close to the Lebanese community.²²

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf (Unity Party)

Johnson-Sirleaf (66) is Harvard-educated with a masters degree in public administration. An economist with Citibank and the World Bank before she entered politics in 1972 as a True Whig, she was secretary of state for finance and then minister of finance in the Tolbert administration. She was a founding member of Jackson Doe's LAP and refused a Senate seat for Montserrado County in 1985 after it was established that the elections were fraudulent. Imprisoned twice for speeches critical of Doe, she went into exile in Nairobi, where she headed the Citibank regional office. She joined the UN in 1992 as director of the Regional Bureau of UNDP until returning in 1997 to run as the Unity Party (UP) presidential candidate, finishing second to Taylor. She consults for the UN Economic Commission for Africa and has served on many international boards, including Crisis Group's, from which she recently stepped down. She has been chairperson of the Open Society Institute for West Africa (OSIWA) and recently of the Liberian Governance Reform Commission.²³ Although she became an implacable opponent, Sirleaf-Johnson was an early Taylor supporter. In July, ex-LURD heavyweight Aisha Keita Conneh expressed support for her candidacy, promising to bring many former combatants with her. In early August, she received the backing of former interim President Amos Sawyer and others calling themselves the "Liberia First Group".²⁴ Dr Joseph Boakai of Lofa County is her running mate.

Togba Na Tipoteh (Liberian People's Party)

Tipoteh (64) is an economist with international experience who spent most of his career in UN development agencies and later the IMF and World Bank. He studied in Liberia before completing his education in the U.S., where he obtained a doctorate in economics from Harvard. He was a budget adviser in the Tolbert administration and for fifteen months minister of planning and economic affairs under Doe before resigning and denouncing human rights abuses. He is the director general of SUSUKUU Inc., a Liberian development NGO founded in 1971. Tipoteh was also the Liberian People's Party presidential candidate in 1997 and is respected for remaining in Taylor's Liberia, unlike many of the other candidates. He was recently suspended as National Ports Authority chairman on allegations of impropriety in the awarding and signing of a contract with an Israeli firm. He reacted by accusing Chairman Bryant of the transitional government of protecting his own political and business interests and trying to discredit him in order to boost Sherman's chances. He has been replaced at the Ports Authority by a pair of NPP stalwarts.

Winston Tubman (National Democratic Party of Liberia)

Tubman belongs to the Americo-Liberian privileged elite and is the nephew of Liberia's longest-serving president, William Tubman, (1944-1971). A legal expert with degrees from the London School of Economics and Harvard, he has extensive UN experience, first with the Legal Office in 1973 and most recently as the secretary-general's representative and head of the UN Political Office for Somalia (2002-2005). He has held other senior positions in the organisation, including in Zagreb, Eastern Slovenia, and the Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission. A member of the bar, he founded his own law firm in 1968 and served as legal adviser to the ministry of planning and economic affairs under his uncle's administration before working in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs under Tolbert as Liberia's UN ambassador from 1979 to 1981. He was minister of justice under Doe and foreign minister under Sawyer. His decision in 1990 to join the ethnically-based (Krahn) National Democratic Party of Liberia was unpopular at the time, as is his re-identification with the former dictator's party, which was almost barred from the 2005 elections because of internal dissent. Apparently reflecting tension between "indigenous" and Americo-Liberian members, all five of his opponents lodged complaints with the NEC, claiming that Tubman "bought" the nomination.²⁵

²² As described below, many Liberians bitterly resent the Lebanese.

²³ The Governance Reform Commission is a Liberian governmental body formed by the Comprehensive Peace Agreement signed in Accra in 2003.

²⁴ This group, including Conmany Wesseh, mostly came over to the UP from the Liberian People's Party.

²⁵ See C. Jablasone, "NDPL crisis deepens", *The Liberian Observer*, 5 August 2005.

George Weah (Congress for Democratic Change)

George Weah ("Oppong"), is a retired star football player who became famous with some of Europe's most prestigious clubs.²⁶ He is a philanthropist who was seen to use his influence for good causes as a UNICEF goodwill ambassador from 1997 to May 2005.²⁷ Shortly after retiring from football, he returned to Liberia (he lives in Florida and Monrovia) to take part in the UN-led disarmament process, encouraging ex-child combatants to lay down their weapons. Earlier he rescued the Liberian national team from suspension by paying its \$5,000 annual dues to the world federation (FIFA) and personally financing its trip to the African Nations Cup. He selected Lofa County native J. Rudolph Johnson, a former foreign minister (1987-1990) and standard bearer of the Independent Democratic Party of Liberia (IDPL), as his running mate.

Weah has considerable grass roots support, especially among young people. His supporters claim he is creating a "political tsunami" but this also makes him the target of his more educated competitors and of the Liberian elite in general, who denigrate him as an illiterate incapable of being an effective political leader. He was recently embarrassed by the revelation that the university from which he claimed to have obtained a Bachelors of Arts in Sports Management - Parkwood University -- was involved in fraudulent selling of UK degrees. There have been attempts to keep him out of the race through technicalities. The party's registration was delayed when it was accused of fraud for listing some people not of voting age. Weah has also been criticised for holding French citizenship since Liberian law does not recognise a dual status. Although he says he has renounced his French ties, opponents claim he should reapply for Liberian citizenship.²⁸ Weah defends himself by asking what the highly-educated Liberian political elite has done for the people in the past fifteen years²⁹ and says his program to tackle education, health care services and social justice, employment, agriculture and food self-reliance is based on common sense.

²⁶ Monaco, Paris Saint Germain, AC Milan, Olympique de Marseille, Manchester City, and Chelsea. Weah was the first to be named European, African, and FIFA footballer of the year in the same year (1995).

²⁷ He had to step down recently as UN rules do not allow goodwill ambassadors to serve the organisation while engaged in politics.

²⁸ Such a process normally takes five years. On 13 August, 2005, the NEC ruled that the evidence submitted to disqualify Weah had been insufficient to prove the complaint and cleared his candidacy.

²⁹ See "They corrupted the nation with their education: George Weah counters critics", *National Chronicle*, 20 July 2005.

C. CAMPAIGN FINANCE

To the surprise of many, it may not be an advantage to be the candidate who distributes the most rice or cash. Indeed in Monrovia, but even more so in the interior, many registered voters told Crisis Group they were angry that some candidates were attempting to influence voters in this way. They specifically expressed bitterness at what they considered to be money stolen from the transitional government for illegal campaigning, as well as rice distributed by some candidates using trucks belonging to Lebanese businessmen.

It was said repeatedly that a person who would use such techniques during the campaign would continue to empty the national coffers if elected and would be beholden to the business interests that had helped. Liberians may well still enjoy free rice, but as one man said, "you see these people on the side of the road, cheering when the candidates go by? Of course, people will follow Paul Brown if he pays them. When Paul Brown's dollar is finished, they switch to Peter Brown".³⁰ In Harper, in the country's south east corner, Liberian NGO staff suggested distributing t-shirts with the legend, "give me my rights, not my rice".

While such anecdotal evidence is encouraging, election observers, NEC staff and UNMIL electoral and civil affairs personnel should still be vigilant in looking for vote-buying, and the NEC should have the capacity to process reports and act on them. Although leading presidential candidates may realise they have more to lose than to win by such techniques, it is likely that some candidates for the Senate and the House of Representatives may feel they can operate with less notice. A long-term election observer saw rice and pepper soup being served inside a registration site. The rice was said to have been provided by a Senate candidate, a former Supreme Court justice. In the observer's words, "this is no doubt a veiled campaign technique, but we are not sure whether it is technically illegal".³¹

D. THE TAYLOR FACTOR

One of the names that came up several times in interviews with Liberian politicians, members of civil society, and diplomats as allegedly participating in attempts to influence the elections financially was former President Charles Taylor's.³² The role, if any, that he is playing

continues to be a matter of speculation but several of those claiming he has tried to influence the elections come from within his own party. During its May convention, NPP insiders contend, Taylor made frequent phone calls from Nigeria insisting that his former minister, Dr Roland Massaquoi, be nominated for president rather than Francis Galawolo, the other main contender.³³

This came on the heels of claims that Taylor was involved in a 19 January 2005 armed attack against President Lansana Conté of Guinea, a television interview he gave that led the Nigerian authorities to rebuke him for having broken the terms of his stay, and visits by former associates like David Kortie, who publicly stated that he had met with Taylor in Calabar and alleged having received \$10,000 and a cell phone from him.³⁴ Diplomatic sources have said that Taylor was continuing to make phone calls to the highest levels of the NTGL as recently as July 2005.

The calls for Taylor's extradition to Freetown to be tried for war crimes and crimes against humanity that began with the UN Special Court for Sierra Leone have been echoed by the European Parliament, the U.S. Congress, and many human rights organisations in Africa and elsewhere. More importantly, in a joint communiqué published 28 July 2005, Chairman Gyude Bryant of Liberia, President Kabbah of Sierra Leone, and Prime Minister Diallo of Guinea, speaking for the Mano River Union, noted that:

While the Heads of State appreciate the decision of ECOWAS and the gesture of His Excellency President Obasanjo and other Heads of State in the African Union to grant temporary stay to Charles Taylor in Nigeria, they believe that some of his alleged activities may be in breach of his terms of stay in Nigeria....In light of the views exchanged, the Summit agreed to suggest to the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria that there may now be need for a review of the terms of the temporary stay granted to Charles Taylor or a referral by the Government of the Federal Republic of Nigeria of the matter to ECOWAS Heads of State for further consideration.³⁵

The three leaders asked Nigeria either to turn Taylor over for trial or tighten its controls over his activities. Their use of the terminology "temporary stay" rather than "asylum"

³⁰ Crisis Group interview, Ganta, 26 May 2005.

³¹ 16 May 2005 notes from weekly report, democracy resource officer.

³² Crisis Group interviews, Monrovia, Freetown, Dakar, May to August 2005.

³³ Crisis Group interview with diplomatic source, Monrovia, 29 May 2005. Galawolo himself made this claim. See also articles cited in fn. 21 above.

³⁴ "Kortie: If Taylor goes to court, so should Conte, others", *Liberian Observer*, 3 May 2005.

³⁵ "Communiqué of the Special Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Mano River Union -- 28th July 2005".

and the suggestion that the matter be brought before ECOWAS suggested increased pressure on Nigeria.

Because the initial safe haven offer was made to save many lives, and negotiators in West Africa or elsewhere may need to make similar good faith and credible offers in the future, if Taylor is to be turned over to a court it is vitally important to demonstrate that he has broken the terms of his agreement, which focus on his non-interference in Liberian and regional politics.³⁶ Such evidence as there is suggests that he has done so, but probably not at a really significant level. His NPP party increasingly appears impoverished and relatively weak. That said, Taylor himself appears committed to exercising as much influence as he can, and there is little reason to imagine that he will desist.

It is difficult to confirm accusations of Taylor's continued involvement in wider West African politics. The preponderance of the evidence suggests that such infractions have occurred but again are most likely of modest significance. Crisis Group's view is that shortly after inauguration, the new Liberian president should call for a meeting of ECOWAS heads of state to take a collective decision as to whether Taylor has breached the terms of his stay in Nigeria sufficiently significantly to justify terminating his asylum. The question at hand should then be Taylor's extradition to Sierra Leone, where he has been charged, and not to Liberia.³⁷

III. ENSURING EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE

A. ECONOMIC GOVERNANCE

1. The Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP)

No one exemplifies better than Taylor the links between economic malfeasance and the terrible violence that has plagued much of West Africa for fifteen years. Like a disease, the greed of the Liberian political class infected the country's semi-literate youth, who had been left to their own devices until Taylor and other warlords appeared on the scene. Some of those warlords, like Adolphus Dolo, better known during the conflict as "General Peanut Butter", are now running for office, along with Taylor's ex-wife Jewel and the former Taylor associate and ex-managing director of the Liberian Petroleum Refining Company (LPRC), Edwin Snowe.³⁸ These figures brought the get-rich-quick mentality from the government to the masses via bush war, where fighters were literally paid in looting and the permission to take women and girls as "bush wives" or sexual slaves. If Taylor goes before the Special Court, it would signal the end of an era in Liberian politics. Yet no one should imagine that a trial in Freetown would solve all Liberia's problems. The culture of impunity has permeated every level of society, and Liberians need many years' work to purge it.

The country has entered a delicate and potentially dangerous period. Donors and the political class are engaged in a game of brinkmanship the outcome of which will affect the lives of Liberians -- and possibly their neighbours -- for generations to come. Donors, in conjunction with ECOWAS, the AU and UNMIL and on the basis of investigations carried out in late 2004 and early 2005 by ECOWAS and the European Commission, concluded that theft and fraud within the transitional government were so great that they were sabotaging any possibility for durable peacebuilding. They are demanding deeply intrusive measures to ensure that funds go where they are intended to go.³⁹ Some Liberians have objected

³⁶ Of course it would then be for that court to determine his guilt or innocence of the criminal charges pending against him.

³⁷ As UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Louise Arbour said during her recent trip to West Africa, the Nigerian government's decision to place the onus on a newly-elected Liberian president to demand Taylor's extradition, and the further requirement suggested by President Obasanjo recently that he be relinquished only to a court in Liberia (and not Sierra Leone), place an unfair burden on a new head of state inheriting a fragile situation. See "Human rights chief supports arrest of Liberian ex-President Charles Taylor", UN News Centre, 15 July 2005; "Liberia: Government calls for a review of Taylor's exile deal", IRIN, 7 July 2005.

³⁸ Dolo is running for a Senate seat in Nimba County under Taylor's NPP banner; Jewel Howard Taylor is running for a Senate seat in Bong County, also on the NPP ticket, and Snowe is running as an independent candidate for the House of Representatives in Montserrado County. Howard Taylor and Snowe are both on the UN travel ban list. For more on their alleged activities funneling money to Charles Taylor in Nigeria, see D. Farah, "Following Taylor's money: A path of war and destruction", Coalition for International Justice, May 2005.

³⁹ Many elements in the GEMAP proposal are similar to measures proposed in Crisis Group Report, *Liberia and Sierra*

strongly, decrying the measures as an excessive and arrogant attempt to colonise a sovereign nation. While opinions differ on whether the intrusive measures constitute "trusteeship", the majority of Liberians Crisis Group talked with were willing -- some happily, others reluctantly -- to accept them.

During the ECOWAS investigation of the transitional government, several ministers reportedly fled Monrovia to evade questioning.⁴⁰ The EC audits, said to be several hundred pages each, were of the Central Bank of Liberia, Monrovia's Freeport, Roberts Field International Airport, the Forestry Development Authority, the Bureau of Maritime Affairs, and the Liberian Petroleum Refining Company. The records of each of these six institutions were so obscure and incomplete that the professional accountants said they were unable to render an opinion, a technical way of stating that massive amounts were unaccounted for. With only months left in its tenure, the NTGL is suddenly showing an interest in following up. The director of the Bureau of Maritime Affairs, J.D. Slanger, has been charged with stealing \$2.5 million, and Liberia's permanent representative to the International Maritime Organization, Mohammed Dukuly, who is still at large, has been charged with stealing \$1 million.⁴¹

Similar investigations are ongoing at the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation (NASSCORP), which is also said to be unable to account for large sums. A number of highly questionable deals have given the impression of widespread and systematic abuses. These include alleged misappropriation of funds in the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA), which resulted in the suspension of Speaker George Dweh and his deputy, as well as the matters mentioned above. Liberians have lost both trust and patience, and donors have in effect decided to suspend all aid until either GEMAP or a related document is signed, or a new government is inaugurated.

ECOWAS and the EC should publish their audits, and the NTGL and the successor government should pursue the

cases thoroughly. Part of the problem in going forward, however, as the EC audits indicated, is that there is nothing even resembling baseline data. If it is impossible to know how much should be coming to the state, it is very difficult to construct a reasonable budget. Presidential candidate John Morlu described a conversation he had in 2000 with the minister of finance:

[The minister] complained bitterly that he did not have a clue about the revenue intake from important revenue generating agencies such as the Bureau of Maritime [Affairs], [the] National Port Authority, the Forestry Development Authority, and Roberts [Field] International Airport, among others. The Finance Minister informed us that former President Charles Taylor had allocated revenues from these agencies without allowing them to show up on the books; an established [practice] in Liberia.... Commissioners and directors of those agencies refused to even discuss much less tell him the annual revenue of their agencies, limiting his ability to project government revenues.⁴²

As an example, a Bureau of Maritime Affairs (BMA) insider told Crisis Group that the parastatal's annual revenue during the Taylor years hovered around \$40 million. Of this, Taylor typically allowed the Bureau to book receipts of \$18 million to \$23 million and pocketed most of the rest himself. In 2004, the Taylor-free BMA claimed income of only \$11 million. Assuming constant income, this would indicate approximately \$29 million went missing.⁴³

As a commentator at a public debate on GEMAP stated, "This is not corruption. Corruption is when you have to pay a little to get your passport stamped or to get a document through a ministry more quickly. This is theft, and there are clear laws in Liberia for the prosecution of thieves".⁴⁴ As a result, donors came out with extremely strong language in the 11 May 2005 communiqué issued at the end of their Copenhagen conference. It asserted with uncharacteristic candour that Liberia's root problem was not lack of capacity, as the transitional government argued, but that many members of that institution had directed much of their cleverness and education to

Leone, op. cit. That report recommended the fencing off of revenues from customs, taxes, and parastatals such as those targeted by the GEMAP proposals. It also recommended oversight of expenditures and that the activities of the intrusive international mechanism themselves be subject to review by an oversight committee such as that proposed by GEMAP.

⁴⁰ "ECOWAS team's scare", *The New Broom*, 24 May 2005.

⁴¹ J. West, "J.D. Slanger's day in court: Bad week for fallen maritime official", *Liberian Observer*, 5 August 2005, quoting Information Minister C. William Allen; J. N. Sloh, "Slanger's dismissal opens Pandora box: Disgraced maritime boss fires back at Bryant, wants accountability for another \$1.8 million", *Sun*, 17 July 2005, at <http://www.saharavillage.com/news/New-politics-071705.htm>. Slanger is said to have accused Bryant of taking \$1.8 million from BMA accounts.

⁴² J. Morlu, "LEGAP is a trusteeship but it is good for Liberia", *The Perspective*, 18 July 2005. LEGAP was an earlier name for the proposal now known as GEMAP.

⁴³ Crisis Group interview with former BMA employee, Monrovia, 17 May. One analyst of Liberian politics confirmed that these figures appeared accurate, while a second thought they were too high. Crisis Group correspondence, 15-16 August 2005.

⁴⁴ Speaker at International Republican Institute/National Democratic Institute roundtable, "Liberia Economic Governance Action Plan (LEGAP): Issues and Options", *The Perspective*, 20 July 2005.

looting the state many of them had previously helped to destroy. "In short, the future of Liberia is at stake", the document argued, blaming "lack of NTGL political will to implement measures", and concluding that, "the absence of accountability to the Liberian people cannot be allowed to continue".⁴⁵ GEMAP was proposed as a radical intrusion into the affairs of the state, including to:

- ❑ secure Liberia's revenue base by inserting international experts with co-signature authority⁴⁶ in parastatals such as the Bureau of Maritime Affairs and the Liberian Petroleum Refining Company, and creating escrow accounts for their income;⁴⁷
- ❑ improve budgeting and management of expenditures through training, provision of integrated software, and insertion of international experts with co-signature authority;
- ❑ revise the procurement process by writing new laws, strengthening the Contract and Monopolies Commission, and implementing an electronic procurement system with open bidding and publication of results;
- ❑ take judicial review and anti-corruption measures, including training judges, establishing an independent Anti-Corruption Commission, providing technical support in fraud, corruption and economic crimes investigations, and introducing foreign judges to "support and advise" Liberian judges, especially in politically sensitive corruption cases;
- ❑ provide additional institutional support, including contracting an external auditor to work alongside the General Auditing Office; and
- ❑ build capacity, extending from training and mentoring to revision of civil service mandates and salary structures.

All these measures are envisioned as being overseen by an Economic Governance Steering Committee, which would include members of the Liberian government and

representatives of the members of the International Contact Group for the Mano River Basin (ICG-MRB).⁴⁸

2. Critiques

Many Liberians have voiced strong reservations and even total opposition to the GEMAP proposals. Some may be negative because they stand to lose if the possibilities for theft are curtailed. However, people with nothing to gain from blocking them have also been critical. Many live in the Liberian diaspora, especially in the U.S., including prominent figures such as former interim President Amos Sawyer. Some intellectuals argue that Liberia's sovereignty is under attack. Professor Sylulwa Somah stated that "[GEMAP] is colonisation". Somah, a resident of Greensboro, North Carolina, disapproved of "foreigners coming, taking over the financial resources of Liberia, and living larger with new cars and decent homes while my people still continue to suffer".⁴⁹

Those who feel the U.S. and other key donors have an agenda to colonise Liberia may in fact misinterpret donor motivations. While some expatriates may be confident they could run the country better than its inhabitants and wish to try, internationals are more likely to look for reasons to exit, much as happened after Taylor's 1997 election. Representatives of major donors have repeatedly told Crisis Group that their governments and organisations are prepared to cut Liberia off almost completely if at least most of the proposals in the GEMAP document are not accepted.⁵⁰ What is at stake is not only aid and reconstruction funds, but also the possible forgiveness of Liberia's approximately \$3 billion debt. Crisis Group believes that if the NTGL and the elected government that follow it accept intrusive measures and cooperate in good faith with international oversight for the benefit of the Liberian population, donors must come through with the significant funds and long-term commitment that are required to rebuild an electricity grid, a piped-water system, roads, education, healthcare, security forces and everything else Liberia needs to become a functional nation again.

Many critics call GEMAP into question by focusing on the visible chasm between privileged expatriate workers and ordinary Liberians. Businessman and long-standing Taylor associate Cyril Allen says it is "not in the interest of the country to target only professionals from other countries who will make mega salaries at the expense of the country". Such statements play on the widespread resentment of expatriates who drive around Monrovia in

⁴⁵ "Communiqué, Meeting of International Partners on Economic Governance. Follow-up to Liberia Results Focused Transition Framework Annual Technical Meeting", 11 May 2005.

⁴⁶ This authority, like a bank account with co-signatories, is meant to introduce checks and balances into the system by allowing the Liberian government and the international community representatives to exercise veto power over each other.

⁴⁷ This proposal has become stuck on the issue of an international chief administrator at the Central Bank, who would exercise general oversight functions and veto power. This has been fiercely resisted in the transitional government but is vital for donors because all government money is channelled through a central account in the Bank.

⁴⁸ The Contact Group includes the AU, ECOWAS, the UN, EU, World Bank, IMF, U.S., UK, Ghana and Nigeria.

⁴⁹ "'EGAP is colonisation' says Prof. Somah", *The Analyst*, 20 July 2005.

⁵⁰ Crisis Group interviews, Monrovia, May to July 2005.

Land Cruisers, one to a car, while Liberians scramble for the last place in spectacularly overcrowded minibuses and taxis, but they are disingenuous. Highly-educated UN and emergency aid specialists are not going to take massive pay cuts just to live "closer to the people" in Liberia or elsewhere. The argument that eliminating one expatriate salary, housing allowance, and vehicle could feed 500 Liberians or build five health centres is seductive but misleading. The expatriates are in Liberia to facilitate a situation in which Liberians will be able to feed and heal themselves over the long term. Their work should be judged by that criterion, not such a short-term cost/benefit analysis. That said, donors could probably do more to improve their image by instituting a carpool system than by any other measure.

Other criticisms touch on more serious questions. Capacity-building and mentoring must be key requirements of a plan that is to make a long-term impact. If GEMAP is not to be a stop-gap whose advances are reversed within months of its end, it must be "Liberianised" from the beginning.⁵¹ This does not necessarily mean that the members of the transitional government have to go along willingly, nor even that there is an intrinsic problem with non-Liberians advising on corruption cases or vetoing the shady deals of a government functionary. It does mean that wherever and whenever a critical mass of qualified Liberians exists to do the work, they should be used. Liberian journalists, academics, human rights advocates and religious figures have come to the forefront of the debate about GEMAP. Many are the same actors who brought transitional government malfeasance to light even before the international audits. The revised version of the GEMAP document has placed more emphasis on capacity building and has emphasised that where the term "international expert" is used, Liberians with the relevant expertise -- many of them now in the diaspora -- will be welcome members of the international team.

Outside interference in West African politics has often yielded unintended and even disastrous consequences.⁵² There is no reason to romanticise Liberian civil society,

which has both strengths and weaknesses, figures acting in good faith and charlatans. But it is best for the country's institutions to start integrating all these actors now and protect the space in which they can exercise their watchdog function.⁵³ It is important to ensure that the press is not muzzled as it has been in Sierra Leone. Civil society should be given a more prominent role on the GEMAP Economic Governance Steering Committee than the current proposal of a single individual to be chosen by unanimous vote of the other members.⁵⁴ At the least, the directors of legally recognised civil society organisations should choose their own representative or representatives.

Another complaint that must be addressed relates to donor coordination. The oversight function of the Governance Steering Committee must first be focused on eliminating large-scale theft and fraud but it should not stop there. Coordination and efficiency of donor programs are also important objectives. Although the Results-Focused Transition Framework (RFTF) is meant to guide emergency and development activities in Liberia, it is not clear that there is much coordination among major donors. Several complained that one or another gave information on decisions affecting the entire reconstruction process only after the fact. Another said, "it's not that one hand doesn't know what the other is doing. The thumb on one hand doesn't know what the pinky finger on the same hand is doing".⁵⁵ Although some donors saw the NTGL request for an audit of their funds as a ruse to divert attention from its own problems, there is no reason why such audits should not be a normal part of GEMAP, especially since that money will be vital to the economy for years. This point has also been addressed in the latest version of the GEMAP text.

⁵¹ As political scientist Byron Tarr noted at a public debate about GEMAP, there have been at least 24 international attempts at trusteeship, receivership, and imposed economic transparency in Liberia since 1871. All have been failures. According to Tarr, a principle reason has been lack of consultation and mentoring. Both characteristics threaten the present attempt. "Liberia Economic Governance Action Plan: Some historical antecedents", presented 20 July 2005.

⁵² Crisis Group Report, *Liberia and Sierra Leone*, op. cit. The British Department for International Development's (DfID) program to reinstate paramount chiefs in Sierra Leone in 2001 is an example. The institution of paramount chieftaincy (a colonial creation) was, according to many, a contributing cause to the war and might have been left to atrophy or die out quietly. By DfID's own estimation, the program was a major failure.

⁵³ Sierra Leone again stands as a counter-example of what one would hope for in terms of both process and outcome. In 2004, journalist Paul Kamara was arrested for writing an article describing a 37 year-old accusation of corruption against President Kabbah. He was tried under seditious libel laws held over from the days of British colonisation and sentenced to a four-year term. In May 2005, the editor of the *Fo Di People* newspaper, Harry Yansaneh, wrote an article critical of ruling party parliamentarian Fatmata Hassan. He was badly beaten by a group purportedly including two of her sons, and later died, probably of injuries to his kidneys sustained during the beating. See "Mr. Harry Yansaneh's assault and subsequent death", International Federation for Human Rights, 4 August 2005.

⁵⁴ The committee will be chaired by Liberia's president and include the ministers of finance and planning and economic affairs, the governor of the Central Bank of Liberia, the chairs of the Contracts and Monopolies Commission and the Governance Reform Commission, the attorney general and representatives of the UN, ECOWAS, AU, EU, EC, U.S., IMF and World Bank. Those members would choose one civil society representative.

⁵⁵ Crisis Group interview with humanitarian worker, Monrovia, 23 May 2005.

In the same vein, Liberians have called for a series of benchmarks that would be used to measure the success or failure of this international intrusion and would determine the exit strategy for the GEMAP. This is prudent and has also been incorporated into the latest version of the document. In light of such scandals as the UN Oil-for-Food Program in Iraq and the poor results of many development programs, Liberians have every right to demand accountability from those who claim to be helping them. This is a situation in which reciprocal distrust may be very productive.

If the international community achieves the intrusive oversight it has demanded, there will no longer be reason to maintain the system of parallel governance that has existed in Liberia since the early 1990s. In such a system, donors mistrustful of ministries they consider corrupt channel funds through international NGOs (INGOs). The short-term benefits are obvious, especially during a humanitarian emergency. Over the long term, however, the practice further erodes government capacity and cements the understanding of government officials, Liberian citizens, and expatriates alike that the civil service has no *raison d'être* but the enrichment of its functionaries. It also tends to drain the best, brightest and most service-oriented Liberians toward the NGO sector, which pays far better than government.⁵⁶

Once the GEMAP program is up and running, donors should begin to move more money into the ministries that are intended to provide health, education, water and sanitation services, while phasing out funding for the INGOs correspondingly. The INGOs could assist this transition by training their staff to utilise their skills in the public sector. The donors would have two crucial roles to play in this process: first, they would need to pump the money that would have gone to INGOs into the government. A key issue is that of civil service salaries. They are so small that budgetary support would be necessary to raise them to a living wage that would attract skilled Liberian employees of INGOs. Donors reluctant to subsidise salaries directly may want to condition their grants upon the government establishing adequate salaries, while their own funds would go to financing actual service delivery. Secondly, they would have to ensure that recruitment within the ministries was based on merit. Raising government salaries, eliminating INGO funding, and then allowing government hiring on nepotistic and patronage lines would be the worst possible outcome.

Lastly, it is important that donors resist the temptation to think of GEMAP as a model for other situations of state failure or underperforming economies. Part of the

hesitation on the part of some of Liberia's neighbours may be due to the fact that the level of enthusiasm behind GEMAP threatens to make it the next formula to be applied to poor countries across the board. Liberia is a profoundly failed state but of a particular kind: it is resource-rich, unlike Somalia or Haiti, and it has a small enough economy that sound management could credibly be expected to jump-start it, something that may be much more difficult for unruly behemoths like the Congo. Donors should be clear, especially in their discussions with ECOWAS, that they do not seek to apply a one-size-fits-all template.

3. Popular reactions

Ordinary Liberians are unimpressed with criticisms of GEMAP based on principles such as defence of national sovereignty. They want a government that provides services and deals with questions of impunity. They have good reason, as they have had to live with the consequences, meted out in rape, murder, theft of their few belongings and senseless pillage of health clinics and Monrovia's electrical grid. Though some in the capital dismiss popular support for GEMAP as an ignorant hope that "the white man" can do things better than Liberians, many have a sophisticated understanding of how economic criminality and civil war have been linked, and they insist on the need for extreme measures.

Many Liberians see the roots of their difficulties in successive governments that did not govern justly, in which theft and violence occurred with impunity provided the perpetrators were "Big Men". This led to the same crisis of legitimacy the Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission identified as the foundation of that country's war. If it is unaddressed in Liberia, it will virtually guarantee a return to armed conflict after the peacekeepers leave. This makes justice reform an important priority. No matter how good the laws and initiatives, there will be no serious change unless there is also enforcement. This requires that all parts of the justice mechanism -- professional police, transparent courts and functional prisons -- work. Many are sceptical about the police retraining that has been conducted; the other two areas remain untouched.

It is most likely because it understands the connection between impunity and conflict that ECOWAS proposed the section of the GEMAP document that calls for foreign judges to dispense justice in Liberia. This has been one of the parts of GEMAP that even Liberians who accept the rest of the proposal have least welcomed. However, several countries in West Africa, including Sierra Leone and Ghana, have used such judges to address problems within their judicial systems. This is an area where ECOWAS and its members have considerable experience. They should take the lead in

⁵⁶ This dynamic was described at length in Crisis Group Report, *Liberia and Sierra Leone*, op. cit.

proposing a package that will deliver what Liberia wants and needs while respecting sensitivities.⁵⁷

Liberia's development partners have indicated to Crisis Group their willingness to walk away if the country's leaders play the sovereignty card and resist intrusive measures. A Sierra Leone scenario, in which the international community (especially the British government) has pumped in money almost regardless of results might have been possible had the transitional government not been so blatantly profligate in its theft, but it now appears out of the question. Donors are right to take a firmer approach. With a modicum of cooperation, they should see Liberia's recovery through to the end, including reintegration of ex-combatants into communities and reconstruction of infrastructure. But Liberia's leaders need to relinquish a degree of sovereignty for a time in order to ensure continuing support. With this trade-off, all sides would be entitled to demand proof that donor money was working efficiently for Liberians.

B. REINSTATING THE RULE OF LAW

The initial target of programs intended to improve governance has to be the corrupt elements of Liberia's political elite, including those associated with the warlord factions who have governed the country for the past two years and the businessmen -- foreign and Liberian -- who have done deals with them over the years. The reasons they should be a first priority are twofold: first, this approach would help to staunch the haemorrhaging of money that is crippling the Liberian recovery, and secondly, it is necessary to hold the worst offenders at a distance if Liberia is to have a chance for new forms of leadership to emerge and move the country out of its present misery.

As noted above, however, neither the war nor Liberia's present problems with corruption and breaking the law with impunity exist only at the highest levels of government and business. Reinstating the rule of law in the short term will require a more robust approach to multiple forms of criminality even among the small fry, and there would be no better place to start than with the officials of the government's security forces, including the police, immigration and National Bureau of Investigations. Given miserably small salaries -- the average teacher or policeman is paid the equivalent of \$20 to \$30 each month -- and the bad example of their bosses, ordinary people throughout Liberian society have participated in corruption. The NTGL has begun the process of identifying alleged large-scale thieves and stripping them of their offices. It should follow up with

prosecutions. A small number of convictions with healthy prison terms could do much to signal that the NTGL and the elected government that follows it are serious about cracking down on criminal theft and fraud. The NTGL should also pass the proposed law forming an independent Anti-Corruption Commission with full prosecutorial powers, which could become an important tool for the new government.

Petty corruption manifests itself at the most ordinary level in Liberia. On a 26 May 2005 afternoon trip from Monrovia to Nimba County, a Crisis Group researcher travelling in an ordinary vehicle was stopped at Gbarnga and not allowed to continue until he had paid 50 Liberian dollars⁵⁸ to the immigration officials and twenty Liberian dollars to the National Security Agency officials. At Ganta, two hours later, he was forced to pay 40 Liberian dollars to immigration and ten Liberian dollars to the police. On the way back to Monrovia, the bribe demanded at the Gbarnga checkpoint was a beer. All this took place within 100 metres of an UNMIL checkpoint. As a Liberian accompanying Crisis Group's researcher said after the bribes were paid, "if this is how it works with UNMIL here, imagine what it will be like when they leave".

Since being denied a trusteeship mandate, UNMIL has systematically protested its inability to deal with questions of impunity, even while acknowledging that one of its goals is to reinstate the rule of law. According to one insider, UNMIL's most intrusive act, the takeover of Monrovia's Freeport, was done at the insistence of UN headquarters in New York.⁵⁹ Security Council Resolution 1509,⁶⁰ which includes the mandate to "assist the transitional government, in conjunction with ECOWAS and other international partners, in reestablishment of national authority throughout the country", and "to assist the transitional government in restoring proper administration of natural resources", more than covers activities of this kind.

UNMIL cannot get involved in resolving every domestic crisis or land tenure dispute but it should be vigilant and intrusive as regards such malfeasance by uniformed agents of the Liberian security forces. Crisis Group researchers have also been caught in hour-long traffic jams caused by Liberian National Police demanding

⁵⁷ Crisis Group will publish a report on judicial reform at a later date.

⁵⁸ At the time these bribes were paid, a Liberian dollar was worth slightly less than two U.S. cents. Most of the bribes were thus in the range of \$1 -- nothing for an expatriate, but significant in a country where half the population lives on less than 50 cents a day. It appeared that Liberians being shaken down at the same time as Crisis Group paid similar amounts.

⁵⁹ Crisis Group interview with diplomat, 21 July 2005.

⁶⁰ The resolution was approved unanimously by the Security Council on 19 September 2003.

bribes from every vehicle at Red Light Junction.⁶¹ UNMIL, which is responsible for training the new police, should have zero tolerance for such behaviour. Five civil affairs officers plying the roads in unmarked vehicles,⁶² taking the names of guilty parties so they could be brought before an examining committee, would solve this problem in several months. This is also a practice that could and should be adopted by the newly-elected government.

UNMIL has shifted responsibility to the transitional government for resolving such matters as the occupation of the Guthrie and Sinoe rubber plantations by ex-LURD and MODEL combatants respectively. Both groups have representatives in the transitional government, and there is no reason to expect that institution to act in a transparent manner. Just as UNMIL was responsible for disarmament and liberation of Monrovia's Freeport when it was held by ex-LURD, so it should be responsible for making other parts of the country safe when ex-combatants hold land, property, or people by force or the threat of force.

Resolving such issues also means the National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Rehabilitation (NCDDRR) of ex-combatants must be able to offer meaningful reintegration packages. The young men on these plantations, like those engaged in artisanal diamond mining in upper Nimba County or gold mining in the east⁶³ are often hard-core fighters. In the plantations, mines and motorcycle taxi associations,⁶⁴ they usually preserve the command and control structures of their units. Offering them new opportunities would not only draw them away from illegal activities but also help to

break down the networks that could facilitate fresh violence in Liberia or the region.⁶⁵

All these issues need to be addressed in an integrated manner. Reintegration of ex-combatants, the formation of new, professional police and army, and GEMAP must operate in tandem according to the same logic of reinstating rule of law: by discussion if possible, by force if necessary. The culture of impunity has been based on the understanding that the person with more power -- physical, political, or even spiritual -- can impose his or her will on the person with less power, who has no recourse to an impartial institution. This is one of the root causes of the wars in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. The NTGL, in conjunction with UNMIL, needs to demonstrate clear disincentives, such as imprisonment and sacking, for corruption and theft. These policies should eventually link up with medium-term projects such as judicial reform and transitional justice initiatives like the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

⁶¹ Red Light Junction is a major traffic bottleneck in a densely populated slum on the way out of Monrovia.

⁶² It would be important that they be unmarked vehicles without diplomatic or NGO plates. While stopped for fifteen to 25 minutes at various checkpoints, a Crisis Group researcher saw numerous UN and NGO vehicles pass unmolested, while ordinary Liberians were systematically harassed.

⁶³ Mining is said to be thriving in the villages of Gban and Bama. A Ganta resident described the three main economic activities in Nimba County as being diamond mining, rubber tapping, and making cane juice, a type of liquor distilled from the juice of sugar cane, for sale to Guinea. In all cases, profits were often multiplied by trips to Guinea to buy consumer goods cheaply and resell them in Liberia. Crisis Group interviews with Ganta resident, 17 and 26 May 2005.

⁶⁴ As in neighbouring Sierra Leone, many ex-combatants now drive small, Chinese motorcycles, using them to provide taxi service. Most come through Guinea, where they cost \$250 to \$300. By the time they reach Monrovia, they are worth \$500. Often, the motorcycles belong to a mid-level commander, who rents them out to fighters he commanded for a daily rate.

⁶⁵ One cannot be overly optimistic on this front, however. As a recent Human Rights Watch report demonstrates, ex-combatants disaggregate, then form new alliances with alarming ease, sometimes with their old commanders, sometimes with a new high bidder. "Youth, poverty and blood: The lethal legacy of West Africa's regional warriors", Human Rights Watch Short Report, Vol. 17, No. 5(A), 13 April 2005.

IV. ENSURING SUSTAINABLE SECURITY

A. SECURITY GUARANTEES AND SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

One of the key elements that will allow the newly-elected government to take on governance challenges and reassert the rule of law is the guarantee of security. Though there have been several instances of moderate violence, none have been able to spread across the country or last for more than a few days.⁶⁶ The current complement of 15,000 peacekeepers is an impressive and important deterrent to spoilers in a country of only three million inhabitants.

The consensus in Monrovia is that Liberia will need a large number of troops at least through 2006. In the immediate future, there are fears that violence could erupt in the months after the elections, especially in the period between elections and inauguration of the new government in January 2006, depending upon who is unhappy with the results. The government will face risks for at least the first year of its tenure, but assuming a transparent election, consequential attention to issues of governance, and hopefully some visible results of ongoing reintegration and development work, they will gradually diminish over time. The other factor that will change is that the first two battalions (2,000 men) of the new Liberian army will be trained over the course of 2006 and will start to come on line from late 2006 into 2007.

These will be green soldiers, and their numbers will be only a fraction of the 15,000 internationals presently keeping the peace. If peace holds through 2006, a gradual drawdown should begin the next year. However, Liberia will need security support for several more years. It is still unclear whether the U.S. or anyone else will agree to pay for the training of a second set of two battalions. The regional situation also shows signs that it may continue to be unstable for several years to come, with the most obvious threats of spill-over coming from Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. Diplomats and Liberian politicians consulted by Crisis Group uniformly said a peacekeeping presence of some sort would be required in the country for four to five years. The gradual drawdown in Sierra Leone, pegged to the achievement of specific security goals, could be a model for Liberia.

There is a necessary division of labour in the process of solidifying security. UNMIL has the main responsibility

for supporting disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and training the new police, and the U.S. (through its contractor, DynCorp) for training the new army. Because it may require the use of force, and Liberia does not yet have credible security entities, UNMIL should take responsibility for restoring order to lawless zones like Guthrie, Sinoe, and Sapo National Forest.

Crisis Group will address Liberian security sector reform in detail in a subsequent report but it is important to note the significance of effective vetting. This process for Liberian National Police recruits has generally been applauded but many of those interviewed by Crisis Group said the recruits have been immediately "contaminated" by the influence of corrupt officers.⁶⁷ The new army will not face the same problem, as no one is being retained from either Samuel Doe's Armed Forces of Liberia or the network of militias and death squads that were Charles Taylor's military apparatus. However, army recruits will be subjected to all the old pressures when they leave training, and like their police counterparts, they are products of a culture of impunity that has reigned for 25 years, well before many of them were born.

B. FROM BUYING PEACE TO GENUINE REINTEGRATION AND BEYOND

The DDR process can be broken down into three stages. The first is that of buying peace, the approach that underpinned the 2003 negotiations in Accra that led to the CPA and the initial payments to those demobilising in 2003 and 2004.⁶⁸ It should have ended on 31 October 2004, when disarmament and demobilisation phases of the program officially ended. The second stage is (or should be) that of community reintegration, which shifts the focus of disarmament from a numbers-focused "more is better" fantasy of mopping up all weapons (patently impossible in West Africa today) toward the more intangible but durable goal of "putting arms beyond use". It is part of rebuilding infrastructure and facilitating the process by which communities, and through them the national economy, come back to life, security is restored, and people (including ex-combatants) start new lives. The final stage is that of long-term economic growth and the

⁶⁷ Crisis Group interviews with NGO directors, diplomats, May-July 2005.

⁶⁸ There was unanimity among those interviewed by Crisis Group that UNMIL's decision to pay a cash demobilisation benefit to CAFFs (Children Associated with Fighting Forces) was disastrous and should not be repeated. Unscrupulous adults hoping to take all or part of the money (often the children's commanders) systematically reclaimed them before they had finished the psycho-social programs that had been developed to help them start new lives.

⁶⁶ The worst such instance was the disturbances of late October 2004, which quickly engulfed most of Monrovia and even several towns in the interior for a day, with tension and curfews continuing for several days more.

creation of jobs that will draw young men away from criminal and violent livelihoods.

In Liberia, the process should be solidly in the second (community reintegration) stage, and looking toward the third (job creation). Instead it appears to be stuck between the first and second stages. As GEMAP and elections push the political process out of the "buying peace" mode, it is not clear that DDR is keeping pace. This could have serious consequences because the DDR dynamic is entering a dangerous period in which ex-combatants who see little prospect of durable benefits play on their spoiler status to extract small, short-term benefits by holding the peacebuilding process hostage. They are repaid with the contempt of their interlocutors, who see them as irredeemable thugs.

Most Liberians do not want to continue fighting. As one ex-combatant told Crisis Group, "we don't want to go in the bush any more. I didn't get any benefit -- I'm starting to get grey hair, and I still have no house".⁶⁹ Another seemed dismayed when recalling what he had done as a fighter: "The thing that happened, I don't want to put my hand inside it again",⁷⁰ he said, translating directly into English a phrase common to several of the African languages spoken in Liberia, meaning he wanted nothing further to do with his past activities. Many called for education for both themselves and their children. This desire is especially strong among female ex-combatants and camp-followers.⁷¹

Many former fighters have reflected deeply on their experiences and are quite articulate. They are aware that their present predicament -- lack of money, education and housing -- is their fault and the fault of others like them who destroyed schools and killed teachers or sent them into exile. Yet even when they express their situation in startlingly clear terms -- "We are still arriving to poverty", or "Monrovia is not Liberia" -- they do not hesitate to use the threat of violence to get what they want. In interviews in Nimba County, many stated that if they were not enrolled in reintegration programs by October, they would disrupt the election.⁷² Ex-LURD combatants in Lofa Country have made the same threat.⁷³

To break out of the cycle of mutual contempt and mistrust, UNMIL, in conjunction with major partners including the U.S., EC and World Bank, must quickly ramp up funding and planning for reintegration. While it is true that much of the money earmarked for such programs was squandered through demobilisation payments to non-entitled non-combatants who swelled DDR numbers to almost three times what UNMIL had predicted, this is in the past, and reintegration activity is needed now. Much of the money that has come so far has been given by the U.S., whose Liberian Community Infrastructure Project (LCIP) has helped to keep many ex-combatants busy and consequently out of trouble. This program deserves continued support by the U.S. Congress, especially those parts focusing on specific agricultural skills. Swamp rice cultivation skills, for example, can form the basis of a dependable, if modest living. In the words of an ex-combatant involved in LCIP, "they should have more of these programs. Agriculture is not a dirty word".⁷⁴

The risks of leaving DDR half-finished have been noted by the ex-combatants themselves.⁷⁵ They began drawing parallels to 1997's faulty effort early on, when, they self-consciously noted, the result was resumed war. As Human Rights Watch has underlined, given their skills, outlook, and experiences, warfare is the economically rational choice for these "regional warriors", until they become too weary or disgusted with the lifestyle or they are given a viable alternative.⁷⁶

⁶⁹ Crisis Group interview with ex-combatants, Ganta, 27 May 2005.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ This is the term usually used to describe women who were not combatants but served the domestic and sexual demands of the fighters. They typically cooked, carried head loads of looted goods and weaponry, washed clothes and provided sexual services, or some combination thereof.

⁷² Crisis Group interviews with ex-combatants, Nimba County, 26-28 May 2005.

⁷³ J. Paye-Layleh, "Poll threat in Northern Liberia", BBC News, 3 May 2005.

⁷⁴ Crisis Group interview, Ganta, 27 May 2005.

⁷⁵ See Crisis Group Report, *Liberia and Sierra Leone*, op. cit.

⁷⁶ "Youth, poverty and blood", op. cit.

V. LINKING INITIAL GAINS TO A MEDIUM-TERM STRATEGY

In the remaining months of 2005, it is essential to follow through on the three foundational goals of security, elections and a governance package. However, it is equally important to begin thinking now about what comes next, what Liberia's priorities are if the first three elements are accomplished, and how to achieve such goals. The risks of poor planning and the consequent delays can be seen in the dangerous gap between disarmament and reintegration.

The question of what Liberia's medium-term goals are must be answered in the first instance by the newly-elected government. The section below is intended neither to touch upon every issue of importance nor to discuss them fully. It is in many respects a list of the issues likely to be addressed by further Crisis Group reports on Liberia. The comprehensive list of issues worthy of the elected government's attention over the next years should be formulated through a national conference or conferences that would give Liberians of all backgrounds the opportunity to make their concerns known.

A national conference was one of the key demands of many members of Liberian civil society after the transitional government was put in place. It did not take place before elections, which would have been desirable given that it might have achieved a consensus on what the new government ought to do. However, civil society should keep pushing for a national conference as soon as possible after the new government takes power. In the context of the application of GEMAP, there should be considerable pressure upon the new president to show goodwill by organising a national conference and putting its findings into practice. Among the subjects likely to be raised through such a process are questions about citizenship, judicial reform, transitional justice, decentralisation, and possible constitutional reform.

A. NATIVIST RHETORIC AND THE CRISIS OF CITIZENSHIP

Economic governance and ex-combatant reintegration must be addressed immediately, although implementation will extend beyond the October elections. Other fundamental issues may take even more time to resolve but they also require concerted discussion and effort in the coming years. One involves citizenship, identity and belonging, which has been dramatised in the election campaign by the controversy over whether George

Weah can run for president despite having once taken French citizenship.⁷⁷ As in Côte d'Ivoire, some Liberian politicians prefer to disqualify an opponent rather than face off on the basis of ideas.⁷⁸

1. Americo-Liberians

Much of the talk surrounding the former Americo-Liberian monopoly on power seemed to have died down around the time of Charles Taylor's departure. Doe, an ethnic Krahn, and Taylor, who claimed "indigenous" Liberian origins, proved that the capacity to be cruel, violent and rapacious was independent of origins. In discussions with Liberians about the elections early in 2005, Americo-Liberian identity appeared to be a non-issue, far outdistanced by Mandingo questions. The last months, however, have seen formation of an indigenous bloc organised by Roosevelt Quiah, the Alliance of Indigenous Liberians, a self-styled NGO which turned in June into the Liberian National Alliance (LNA).⁷⁹ Including the Independent Democratic Party (IDPL) and the Progressive People's Party (PPP), the LNA was registered on 19 July and offers Quiah as candidate with a platform based primarily on the adage that the presidency should belong to an indigenous Liberian. There has also been talk of a rift within the NDPL, whose candidate, Winston Tubman, is a member of a distinguished Americo-Liberian family. Some members, including former LURD stalwart and ex-transitional assembly head George Dweh, are said to oppose an Americo-Liberian as leader of Doe's old party.

Given that several leading candidates are Americo-Liberians, it is not clear whether this issue is a passing trend fomented by indigenous candidates trying to eliminate competitors or will be a major part of the election, in which case it may help Weah. He has strong support among youths but many older Liberians question his experience. Indigenous origins, however, may bring in votes, even from that sceptical constituency.

⁷⁷ After Weah and vice presidential candidate Marcus Dahn were accused of holding French and U.S. passports, respectively, a group called Progressive Action for Change in Liberia accused virtually all the other leading candidates of dual citizenship: Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Robert Kpoto, John Morlu and Varney Sherman (U.S.); Winston Tubman (Togolese); Togba Na Tipoteh (Ethiopian); and Alhaji Kromah and Sekou Conneh (Guinean). See J. Gray, "A group accuses several presidential candidates of dual citizenship", *The Perspective*, 11 August 2005.

⁷⁸ For more on this in Côte d'Ivoire, see Crisis Group Africa Report N°82, *Côte d'Ivoire: No Peace in Sight*, 12 July 2004.

⁷⁹ "Who becomes indigenous presidential candidate?", *The Informer*, 22 July 2005.

2. Lebanese

Liberia's 4,000 or so Lebanese inhabitants are barred from citizenship by a constitution that restricts this status to those of African ancestry. There is considerable antipathy toward the Lebanese, who are often described as making exorbitant profits in Liberia and sending them out of the country.⁸⁰ The following is typical:

Born here or not, Lebanese do not like Africans, and Liberians are not exempted. Lebanese are exploiters and crafty businessmen. They pretend to like us but...only to get what they want from us....To avoid enslaving Liberians, selling our land and swamps and handing over the joystick of the national economy, Lebanese in Liberia must not be granted citizenship.⁸¹

Lebanese businessmen have been accused of involvement in deals that benefited warlords like Charles Taylor and Sierra Leone's Foday Sankoh. Whatever the truth of those accusations, similar ones have been lodged against many Liberians, other West Africans and Europeans. Without question, the Lebanese community provided many goods and services in Liberia and Sierra Leone during wartime that few others were willing to risk offering, and they did so at premium prices. It is hardly surprising, however, that Lebanese -- many second or third generation in Liberia but all subject to expulsion at will -- have generally chosen to cooperate with whomever is in power and to hedge by sending some of their wealth abroad.

Tensions could be eased by granting citizenship to long-standing residents who are not of African origin. This should receive attention soon after the elections. Liberia needs investors in order to create jobs, and the Lebanese are one of the few communities that have stayed in the country through its troubles. Lebanese are leaving not only Sierra Leone in fairly large numbers because of the poor business climate but also Abidjan, where many feel they will soon be targeted now that most European businesses are folding. If Liberia makes itself attractive to Lebanese investors, it could quickly gain significant capital. Liberians might also wish to press their lawmakers to find ways to encourage more profits being kept in country, whether made by Lebanese, Liberians or multinationals such as the Japanese-owned Firestone Tires Company.

3. Mandingoes

The most contentious issue of identity and politics in Liberia today -- the status of Mandingoes -- could well

be exacerbated by the elections. As noted, there have been charges both that Mandingoes were barred from registering and that they were bussed in from Guinea to register illegally. Similar accusations may arise in October but more important are structural dynamics of the country's post-war demography.

While both ex-ULIMO-K leader El Haji Kromah and ex-LURD leader Sekou Damateh Conneh are running, there is general agreement that no Mandingo has much chance of being elected president.⁸² Conneh's separated wife and LURD liaison to Conakry, Aisha Keita, supports Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. Other Mandingoes are said to favour Weah, who briefly converted to Islam while playing football in Europe. Mandingoes also risk being marginalised in the legislature. As the only "indigenous" ethnic group not to have a majority in a county, they may win only a handful of seats. That would seriously reduce their representation since the mainly Mandingo LURD, as one of the three factions at the Accra Peace Talks, presently controls such lucrative ministries as finance, justice and labour, as well as Monrovia's Freeport.

This is a potential problem and should be dealt with in two ways. The new president should immediately reach out to the Mandingo community. Whether this is by naming Mandingoes to ministerial posts or some other way is not important but signals need to be given early and clearly that Mandingoes will not be frozen out of the political process. Secondly, reconciliation between Mandingo communities and their Loma, Bandi, Kpelle, Mano and Gio neighbours must be pursued. A 15 July 2005 ceremony of reconciliation in Voinjama, Lofa County was a step in this direction. Mandingo leaders apologised for destruction of Loma sacred sites by the ULIMO-K and LURD, and the Loma leaders apologised for destruction of Mandingo mosques.

The situation in Nimba County, where most Mandingoes are relatively recent arrivals (since the 1960s), is tense, and there too the state must impose itself to ensure equitable settlements of disputes, many of which trace to the ambiguous relationship between land ownership and use rights. Because land is always revocable by traditional landowning lineages in customary law, many Mano autochthones⁸³ feel they are within their rights to reclaim what was abandoned by Mandingo "strangers" during the war. Mandingoes in turn say that even if the

⁸⁰ See J. Paye-Layle, "Lebanese demand Liberia poll rights", BBC News, 22 July 2005.

⁸¹ A. Massaquoi, "Letter to the editor: Lebanese-Liberian? A consequential decision", *The Liberian Diaspora*, 22 July 2005.

⁸² ULIMO-K was one of the rebel groups in the first Liberian war (1989-1997), and LURD in the second (1999-2003). Both were predominantly Mandingo, but included members of many other ethnic groups.

⁸³ Autochthon is the term used by anthropologists and sociologists to describe those who claim "first-arrived" status in a community. In this part of West Africa, autochthony is often highly contested, constantly renegotiated, and the source of conflict.

land was borrowed, the houses still standing there often were built by them. Matters can get ugly, especially in majority Mano towns.⁸⁴ An expatriate described an incident of a driver in an NGO vehicle speaking in Maninkakan (Mandingo) with a man on the street who was attacked by youths, seemingly just for being Mandingo. A Mandingo from Nimba presently in Monrovia noted that anyone wearing a boubou (traditional Mandingo gown) in the county risks being beaten or "told to leave town by nightfall".⁸⁵

As Crisis Group recently reported,⁸⁶ many members and supporters of the ex-ULIMO-K and LURD militias have a strong sense of shared history and identity with other populations speaking Maninkakan across West Africa. Though known as Dyula in Côte d'Ivoire, Koniyanke and Manyia in the south eastern Forest Region of Guinea, and Mandingoes in Liberia, they are all from the same southern fringe of Maninkakan-speaking people, many of whom converted to Islam in the twentieth century. In all three of these settings they are an embattled minority, and particularly in Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire they have formed the core of relatively well-organised, well-armed insurgencies. If not fully integrated into post-war Liberia, they might well retreat into Guinea's Forest Region and attack Liberia once its peacekeepers leave.⁸⁷

B. JUDICIAL REFORM AND TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE

One of the most contentious issues in the proposed GEMAP document is the proposal to introduce foreign judges into Liberia as the country gets back on its feet, and judicial reform is ongoing. On the face of it, this would not seem to be so problematic: several other countries in the region, including Ghana and Sierra Leone, have adopted such an approach, and the results have generally been satisfactory. Moreover, it would be easier for Liberian judges if foreigners heard the most sensitive cases, as they would be somewhat insulated from some of the attendant political pressures both during and after such trials.

⁸⁴ One Mandingo specified that relations were more easily negotiated between Mandingoes and Dan (Gio) people, who are the majority in the eastern part of Nimba County. Crisis Group interview with NGO employee, Monrovia, 19 May 2005.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Crisis Group Africa Report N°94, *Stopping Guinea's Slide*, 14 June 2005.

⁸⁷ Recent reports from Guinea and Liberia indicate that Mandingo and at least nominally pro-Conté militia activity in Guinea's Forest Region and Conakry has surged since May 2005, while anti-Conté militia recruitment and training have dropped off.

The suggestion that Liberia needed judicial "help", however, was probably the most sensitive point in the entire proposal. As one diplomat put it, "Liberia is like the U.S.; it produces more lawyers than it needs. A lot of the elite are lawyers, and the majority of the political class is lawyers. When you say that Liberia needs foreign judges, you are incriminating the political class".⁸⁸ Nevertheless, both Liberia's West African neighbours and the U.S. government see judicial reform as requiring serious attention, and have committed money to it. American officials say that training the new police force, prison reform and judicial reform are three parts of a holistic approach to reforming the judicial system.

Crisis Group will produce a report in 2006 dedicated to the problems surrounding judicial reform but there are several issues of obvious concern. One is access to the justice system. There is little judicial infrastructure in Liberia's interior, and most justice is provided by customary law courts presided over by elders or local leaders. Since it is unlikely that the state system will be able to multiply the number of magistrates and judges in the immediate future, there will have to be an interim solution -- involving improving the capacity of local authorities to deliver rulings in accordance with national law -- that makes the customary system a working partner rather than a liability to the central justice system. Of particular concern here is the provision of equal justice for men and women, youths and elders. As analysed in prior Crisis Group reporting,⁸⁹ the perception by young men that the customary justice system was skewed against them was a major contributing factor to the war in Sierra Leone and probably Liberia as well.

Another sensitive area will be the prosecution of corruption cases. As noted above, the transitional government has already proposed to constitute an independent anti-corruption commission, and it should follow through on this. The commission should be given prosecutorial powers and be well insulated from outside interference. This would be a key area for collaboration with lawyers and judges from outside Liberia, as they would be able to absorb some of the political "heat" generated by such cases.

In July 2005, the NTGL passed a law creating a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which will have nine commissioners and a tenure of two years, renewable upon satisfactory performance, and be supported by a team of international advisers. There are no provisions for a tribunal like the Special Court for Sierra Leone. Indeed, there is little call within Liberia for the country's most notorious war criminal, Charles Taylor, to stand trial at

⁸⁸ Crisis Group interview, Monrovia, 19 August 2005.

⁸⁹ See Crisis Group Report, *Liberia and Sierra Leone*, op. cit.

home. What will happen with some of the other warlords remains to be seen: the newly-elected government will need to determine whether to proceed with just a TRC or a TRC supplemented by some sort of special prosecutorial mechanism.

C. DECENTRALISATION AND CONSTITUTIONAL REFORMS

Another area likely to require attention in the medium term is the lessening of executive power. The two most obvious places to address this issue are in the areas of decentralisation and possible constitutional reforms. At present, the president appoints both chiefs and district superintendents, who constitute the only forms of local governance. Each county has two senators and from two to fourteen representatives but they work at the level of the national government, and their power relative to that of the president is limited.

One means for addressing this imbalance that members of civil society and democracy activists propose is the establishment of regional local governments. In one possible scheme, the country would be divided into three areas: North-North West, Central, and South-South East.⁹⁰ Each would elect representatives to a regional legislative body, which would then supervise local governance structures. This arrangement could be further devolved to the county level over time.

A number of Liberians, including former interim President Amos Sawyer, have called for a review of the constitution even before elections. The position, strongly held by UNMIL and the U.S., that it was more important to push ahead with elections according to the original timetable, meant that such discussions have been deferred. The temptation for an elected president to hold on to those powers, described to Crisis Group by one presidential candidate as "imperial", will be strong, even if the intention is to push forward necessary reforms expeditiously. However, in the medium term, this issue should be addressed. It could usefully be part of both the consultations involved in a national conference and the work of a commission of jurists and members of civil society, which would propose detailed changes to the constitution that could be voted upon by referendum in due course.

VI. CONCLUSION

The most important elements for Liberia's recovery are in place but must be carried to completion: relative security; conditions for legitimate elections; and a serious discussion of the issues of economic and political governance that have crippled the country and contributed to its recent wars. Liberians and their international partners should also begin raising their sights to post-election challenges, where again three main areas will demand quick attention: implementing the economic governance program in a way that maximises possibilities for durable success; moving fully into a reintegration mode and leaving behind the mentality of "buying peace"; and beginning to address issues of citizenship, especially as regards the inclusion of Mandingoes, in a way that will help to solidify the fragile peace process.

Failure to progress on these fronts would undercut and potentially sabotage movement on some of the more complex issues including security sector and judicial reforms, transitional justice so as to come to terms with the violence and injustice of the last 25 years, and a national conference to consider constitutional changes like the balance between presidential and legislative power. Addressing all these areas in a comprehensive way will be crucial to ensuring that Liberia does not collapse again in a frenzy of violence and pillage. That remains a possibility, especially given the interethnic tensions, bad governance, and surfeit of restless ex-combatants that constitute acute problems in neighbouring countries. Getting it right over the next year in Liberia would help to move the entire Mano River Basin region in the right direction. Getting it wrong would probably seal the region's fate for years to come as the theatre of a nomadic war in which aimless and cruel young men roamed from one country to another, seeking the most lucrative sites to loot. The stakes are high.

Dakar/Brussels, 7 September 2005

⁹⁰ Crisis Group discussion with civil society activists, 20 August 2005.

APPENDIX A

MAP OF LIBERIA



APPENDIX B

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AU	African Union
APD	Alliance for Peace and Democracy
BMA	Bureau of Maritime Affairs
CAFF	Children Associated with Fighting Forces
CDC	Congress for Democratic Change
COTOL	Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
EC	European Commission
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FIFA	Fédération Internationale de Football Association, the ruling body of world football (soccer)
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program
ICG-MRB	International Contact Group for the Mano River Basin
IDP	Internally displaced persons
IDPL	Independent Democratic Party of Liberia
IRI	International Republican Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
INGO	International non-governmental organisation
LAP	Liberia Action Party
LCIP	Liberia Community Infrastructure Project
LEGAP	Liberian Economic Governance Plan
LNA	Liberia National Alliance
LPP	Liberian People's Party
LPRC	Liberian Petroleum Refining Company
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NASSCORP	National Social Security and Welfare Corporation
NCDDRR	National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilisation, Reintegration and Rehabilitation
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NDPL	National Democratic Party of Liberia
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
NTLA	National Transitional Legislative Assembly

OSIWA	Open Society Institute for West Africa
PPP	Progressive People's Party
RFTF	Results-Focused Transition Framework
SRSG	Special Representative of the Secretary General [of the United Nations]
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
ULIMO-K	United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (created by Alhaji Kromah, it resulted from the split of ULIMO in 1994 along ethnic lines and largely represented the Mandingo ethnic group)
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nation Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSG	United Nations Secretary General
UP	Unity Party
UPP	United People's Party
U.S.	United States

APPENDIX C

POLITICAL PARTIES, COALITIONS AND CANDIDATES

The following 30 political parties are registered with the National Electoral Commission. The first eighteen were signatories of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in August 2003. The listed individuals are the primary candidates of their respective parties in the presidential or vice presidential races.

1. True Whig Party (TWP), Varney Sherman (COTOL presidential candidate)
2. United People's Party (UPP), Togba Na Tippoteh (APD presidential candidate)⁹¹
3. Liberia People's Party (LPP), Togba Na Tippoteh (APD presidential candidate)
4. National Patriotic Party (NPP), Roland Massaquoi
5. Reformation Alliance Party (RAP), John S. Morlu (UDA candidate)
6. People's Democratic Party of Liberia (PDPL), Varney Sherman (COTOL presidential candidate)
7. Liberia Action Party (LAP), Varney Sherman (COTOL presidential candidate)
8. National Democratic Party of Liberia (NDPL), Winston Tubman
9. Unity Party (UP), Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
10. Liberia National Union (LINU), John S. Morlu (UDA candidate)
11. Liberian Unification Party (LUP), Varney Sherman (COTOL presidential candidate)
12. Free Democratic Party (FDP), David M. Farhat
13. All Liberia Coalition Party (ALCOP), Alhaji G.V. Kromah
14. Progressive People's Party (PPP) -- part of LNA
15. Labour Party of Liberia (LPL), Dr J. Woah-Tee
16. Liberia Equal Rights Party (LERP), Dr Joseph Korto
17. National Reformation Party (NRP), Bishop Alfred Reeves
18. New Deal Movement (NDM), Dr George Klay Kieh, Jr
19. Liberty Party (LP), Charles Brumskine
20. United Democratic Party (UDP), Charles Brumskine
21. National Party Liberia (NPL), Armah Z. Jallah
22. Liberia Education and Development Party (LEAD), John S. Morlu (UDA candidate)
23. Congress for Democratic Change (CDC), George Oppong Weah
24. Union of Liberian Democrats (ULD), Robert M. Kpoto
25. Reformed United Liberia Party (RULP), Shad Tubman
26. Freedom Alliance Party of Liberia (FAPL), Margaret J. Tor-Thompson
27. National Vision Party (NATVIPOL), George M. Kiadii
28. Liberia Destiny Party (LDP), Milton Nathaniel Barnes
29. Independent Democratic Party of Liberia (IDPL), J. Rudolph Johnson (now CDC vice presidential candidate)
30. Progressive Democratic Party (PRODEMP), Sekou Damateh Conneh

⁹¹ UPP nominee Marcus Dahn became the vice presidential nominee of the APD alliance.

Alliances and Coalitions

The Liberty Party and United Democratic Party alliance was registered on 27 May 2005.

The Alliance for Peace and Democracy (APD), composed of the United People's Party (UPP) and the Liberia People's Party (LPP), was registered on 4 July 2005.

The Liberia National Alliance (LNA), composed of the Independent Democratic Party (IDPL) and the Progressive People's Party (PPP), was registered on 19 July 2005.

The United Democratic Alliance (UDA), made up of the Liberia National Union (LINU), the Liberia Educational and Development Party (LEAD) and the Reformation Alliance Party (RAP), was registered on 28 July 2005.

The Coalition for the Transformation of Liberia (COTOL), composed of the Liberia Action Party (LAP), Liberia Unification Party (LUP), the True Whig Party (TWP) and the People's Democratic Party of Liberia (PDPL), was registered on 15 July 2005.

APPENDIX D

DISTRIBUTION OF ELECTORAL DISTRICTS BY COUNTY

<u>County</u>	<u>County Seat</u>	<u>Electoral Districts</u>	<u>Registered Voters</u>
Bomi	Tubmanburg	3	38,524
Bong	Gbarnga	6	46,342
Gbarpolu	Bopolu	3	22,505
Grand Bassa	Buchanan	4	100,601
Grand Cape Mount	Robertstown	3	37,328
Grand Gedeh	Zwedru	3	31,729
Grand Kru	Barclayville	2	18,784
Lofa	Voinjama	4	87,119
Margibi	Kakata	4	98,279
Maryland	Harper	3	39,004
Montserrado	Bensonville ⁹²	14	473,194
Nimba	Sanniquellie	7	190,262
River Cess	Cestos City	2	18,809
River Gee	Fishtown	3	22,000
Sinoe	Greenville	3	28,077
Total		64	1,352,557

⁹² Montserrado contains the capital city, Monrovia.

APPENDIX E

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