

20 March 2017



**Final Draft**

**SUSTAINING PEACE AND SECURING DEVELOPMENT  
LIBERIA PEACEBUILDING PLAN**

## **I. Introduction**

1. United Nations Security Council resolution 2333 (2016) requested the Secretary-General to prepare, within 90 days from the adoption of the resolution, a well-developed peacebuilding plan to direct the role of the United Nations system and other relevant partners, including multilateral and bilateral actors, in supporting Liberia's transition. In response to the Security Council's request, this peacebuilding plan has been developed jointly by the United Nations system in Liberia and the Government of Liberia in collaboration with national and international stakeholders. Success in sustaining peace depends on national stakeholders building a common vision of society, and peacebuilding is a shared responsibility of all Liberians supported by the international community.
2. This plan builds upon the long-standing engagement by the international community to support Liberia's post war recovery, and the current on-going donor assistance programmes in the country. It identifies key actions which need to take place before 30 March 2018 when the substantive mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) ends, and outlines the level of political engagement, which thereafter, will be required to ensure the sustainability of peace. The plan provides a framework for the continued role of the United Nations Country Team (UNCT) during and especially after the transition process.
3. The success of the peacebuilding plan will require improved integration and coherence of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes in the design and delivery of peacebuilding outcomes. In this context, United Nations system approaches to "Delivering as One" will work towards overcoming bureaucratic and administrative inefficiencies and promote partnership arrangements which fully align UN-supported projects and programmes and investments made by international donors with Government of Liberia priorities. This collective endeavour extends to ensuring ongoing analysis and assessment of the transition process in partnership with the World Bank Group, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other international partners.

## **II. Objective**

4. Peacebuilding in Liberia needs to maintain the momentum of the last 14 years, whilst recognizing the convergence of two transitions; first the election of a new government in October 2017 and second the end of UNMIL's mandate on 30 March 2018. This plan provides a well-developed framework for sustaining peace, formulated in accordance with Security Council resolution 2333 (2016), and "directs the role of the United Nations system and other relevant partners in supporting Liberia's transition", during the drawdown of UNMIL, and beyond, as provided for by the resolution.
5. The peacebuilding plan takes inspiration from Security Council resolution 2282 (2016), and promotes "an integrated, strategic, and coherent approach to peacebuilding, noting that security, development and human rights are closely interlinked and mutually

reinforcing”. The plan consolidates commitments across development, security, and human rights operations, and defines priority areas for mutual engagement in order to prevent relapse into conflict, continue reform efforts, promote reconciliation, strengthen the security environment and lay the foundations for conflict sensitive development.

6. Without prejudice to the Government of Liberia’s primary responsibility for the welfare of its population, the plan is an expression of the partnership between the Government, the United Nations system, bi-lateral and multilateral actors and all Liberian political and civil society stakeholders. In this context it recognizes the Peacebuilding Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body functioning to “bring sustained international attention to sustaining peace, and to provide political accompaniment and advocacy to countries affected by conflict, with their consent.”<sup>1</sup> The plan has been developed under Government leadership, and is in line with its efforts to design and implement solutions to the country’s peacebuilding challenges. In this regard, the peacebuilding plan establishes a basis for harmonising peacebuilding operations with long-term national plans and strategies, including through the *Agenda for Transformation*.

### III. Context

7. The country’s post-war recovery efforts are characterised by several major achievements, including the transfer of security responsibilities from UNMIL to the Government on 30 June 2016, and the conduct of peaceful presidential elections in 2005 and 2011, and legislative elections in 2011 and 2014. These successes have been accompanied by important national policy initiatives such as *Liberia Rising: Vision 2030*; the *Agenda for Transformation (2012-2017)*; the *Strategic Road Map for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (2013-2030)*; the start of a constitutional review process and draft legislation related to the justice and security sectors, land rights and administration, local governance, decentralization and civil service reform.
8. Liberia also enjoys a much improved sub-regional situation and does not currently face any threats from neighbouring countries. With peace and stability in Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea and Sierra Leone, it is likely that the regional situation will continue to be propitious for the continuation of peace in Liberia. As UNMIL continues to phase out, Liberia is taking advantage of this favourable regional situation to strengthen its place within the sub-regional organisations, including the Mano River Union (MRU) and the Economic Community Organisation of the West African States as well as the African Union. An example of such fruitful cooperation is the current successful discharge by Liberia of the functions of the Chair of the Authority of Heads of State and Government of Member States of ECOWAS. Other areas of sub-regional collaboration could involve further enhancement of the MRU’s cross-border strategy for security, while Liberia could look to ECOWAS for providing security guarantees should the situation so require, as recently demonstrated by decisive ECOWAS action in the Gambia.

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<sup>1</sup> Security Council resolution 2282 (2016)

9. Despite the many gains made in maintaining national peace and security, issues identified as root causes of Liberia's 14-year civil war remain unaddressed. Public institutional reforms are urgently required, with an emphasis on the effective delivery of national legislative agenda. In addition, recent assessments show that land disputes, corruption, boundary disputes and concession related tensions continue to be the main triggers of violence. The lives of many women are particularly insecure due to societal inequalities and sexual and gender-based violence, further weakening social cohesion in communities. Low commodity prices for primary exports and the outbreak of Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) limited economic growth, undermining high expectations around the speed of post-war recovery and the delivery of peace dividends.
10. These challenges are compounded by limited capacities in the security and rule of law sectors, slow progress in national reconciliation and limited progress in implementing critical Government reforms. Relations between the executive branch of Government and society have improved, but remain strained, in the absence of meaningful national reconciliation, and compounded by poor public confidence in justice and security institutions, whose presence remains limited outside of Monrovia. Sustaining peace in Liberia requires long-term investment in national institutions that are inclusive, accountable, and responsive, with a government that is committed to providing opportunities and services to all Liberians.

#### **IV. Guiding Principles**

11. The peacebuilding plan is guided by the following principles:
  - (a) Inclusive national ownership. The peacebuilding plan and its implementation modalities are rooted in extensive consultation with the Government of Liberia, political parties and civil society<sup>2</sup>;
  - (b) Strategic peacebuilding priorities. The peacebuilding plan establishes priorities in a number of critical transition areas, in particular the rule of law, human rights and the security sector, while laying the foundations for a longer-term approach;
  - (c) Establishment of a consensus-based approach to conflict sensitivity. The peacebuilding plan defines mutually agreed criteria for the prioritization and selection of commitments by the Government of Liberia and its international partners based on human rights principles;

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<sup>2</sup> In February 2017 two consultations were held with representatives of Liberia's political parties and one consultation was held with civil society leaders in Monrovia. Civil society was formally represented in the reference group formed to guide the process to draft the peacebuilding plan and which also included representatives of the Government of Liberia, the international community, World Bank and the United Nations system.

(d) Consolidation and reaffirmation of commitments. The plan does not replace existing strategies and plans, but rather consolidates and reaffirms mutual commitments identified by the Government of Liberia and international partners over the past years;

(e) Ensuring the transparent, timely and predictable use of aid. The plan rests on the commitment of the Government of Liberia and donors to ensure the transparent, timely and predictable use of aid to support these priorities through information-sharing and regular and frank policy dialogue;

(f) Strategic communications. UNMIL and the Government of Liberia will employ strategic communications as a vehicle for increasing public awareness and managing expectations with respect to the transition process. This effort should ensure that Liberians understand the commitments, roles and responsibilities of the Government, the United Nations system and international partners in implementing this peacebuilding plan. The mode of communication should be appropriate and, where necessary, utilize Liberian English or local languages.

## V. Structure of the Plan

12. The peacebuilding plan creates a timetable for Liberia's transition, defined by the election process in October 2017, the assumption of office by a new government in January 2018 and the closure of UNMIL in March 2018.

13. The peacebuilding plan establishes an agreed roadmap for immediate actions to be undertaken as part of a successful transition, whilst establishing directional guidance for achievement of a peaceful, just and inclusive society based on the rule of law and respect for human rights, and in line with the broader goal of achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030 through a diversified and decentralised economic model, based on the local market, sustainable agriculture, agro-industry and small and medium size enterprises.

14. The plan will have two phases:

**Phase I** will run from April 2017-March 2018, and presents what must be done in the next twelve months to ensure a successful transition. It refers to the actions required of the United Nations system in support of the Government of Liberia's commitment to embed durable national capacities critical for sustaining peace before UNMIL's departure.

**Phase II** will commence in April 2018 and will last for a period to be determined by the new government, in principle not longer than 2020 which coincides with

the envisioned mid-term review of the *Agenda for Transformation II*<sup>3</sup>. During this phase longer-term peacebuilding priorities will be integrated into development frameworks necessary to ensure ongoing support to national efforts to mitigate, prevent and manage risks of conflict. In support of this work, collaborative efforts will be undertaken to ensure the establishment of effective early warning capacities, as well as put in place a baseline of agreed risk and resilience analysis in support of conflict-sensitive development planning.

15. In the transition between the two phases, particular attention will be paid to the political and operational transition to be undertaken both by the Government of Liberia and the United Nations system during the immediate post-electoral period. During this time, dedicated assistance and engagement will be undertaken to ensure that the United Nations system and partners are responsive to priorities set by the new government.
16. Phase I actions have been agreed by the Government of Liberia, the United Nations system, and other participants involved in the formulation of the peacebuilding plan. Indicative priorities for phase II have been agreed, with a review of these priorities and United Nations system support to begin before the departure of UNMIL, led jointly by the newly-elected government, the United Nations, and international partners.
17. The two phases of the plan helps govern the sequence of United Nations interventions and milestones required to support the Government of Liberia in addressing the country's peace-building needs. The sequencing of actions has been determined by the application of the following criteria:
  - Will the activity have an immediate and visible impact on sustaining Liberia's peaceful transition and/or on addressing collectively identified risk and resilience factors?
  - Will the activity directly target the poorest and most vulnerable population groups and households and/or the most disenfranchised parts of the country?
  - Can the activity be realistically implemented in the planned time frame given existing implementation (national/international) capacities and available resources?
  - Does the activity establish essential systems and/or enable foundational reforms required to build national capacity?

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<sup>3</sup> Current planning for the *Agenda for Transformation II* is underway with final approval to be completed by the new Government in 2018, with a mid-term review scheduled for 2020. The current World Bank Country Partnership Framework 2018-2022, is also scheduled for a mid-term review in 2020.

**VI. United Nations Plan to Support National Peacebuilding Priorities and the Process of Transition through March 2018**

18. During phase I of the peacebuilding plan the United Nations system will support the Government of Liberia to establish the necessary conditions for a free and fair electoral process and a smooth democratic transition following the presidential elections in October 2017. Without prejudice to the range of ongoing programmes being supported by the United Nations system, phase I of the peacebuilding plan outlines critical actions required for a peaceful election process, national reconciliation, delivery of the Government's legislative programme and the de-concentration of public services. The United Nations system will build on the existing partnership with the Government of Liberia and implement peacebuilding priorities through the lens of the *Agenda for Transformation*, the *Statement of Mutual Commitments*, and other pertinent policy frameworks.
19. Preventing conflict will be central to the United Nations system's support to two parallel processes of transition. During the first transition the United Nations will focus on facilitating a peaceful and orderly transfer of political and administrative power from the current Government to a new administration, which will take office in January 2018. The second transition focuses on the departure of UNMIL and the engagement of the remaining United Nations entities with the new government, wherein the UNCT will assume, inter alia, conflict prevention responsibilities through projects, programmes and advocacy. This second transition will also manage the handover of UNMIL assets – both physical and intellectual – to the UNCT.

A. Peace Consolidation Priorities

*Promoting Inclusive and Peaceful Elections in 2017*

20. The Presidential and Legislative Elections which take place in October 2017 are an opportunity for Liberians to demonstrate their commitment to democracy and the consolidation of peace. Liberia is Africa's oldest republic, yet the 2017 elections will mark the first time in the country's history that a peaceful handover of political and administrative power from one democratically elected administration to another will take place in a process of competitive multiparty elections. It is inevitable that global attention will be drawn to this historic moment and the conduct of the elections will be synonymous with the political maturity of Liberians and the effectiveness of national and international efforts at post-conflict nation building.
21. The conduct of free, fair and transparent elections in 2017 depends largely on the stewardship role of the National Elections Commission which must carry out its duties in an impartial, competent, and transparent manner. The NEC should also ensure that political parties and candidates, running for office, comply with the electoral rules and regulations. This can be sustained by the conclusion of a Compact amongst political parties which commits them to an inclusive peaceful elections process, and their support to a well ordered political transition. The credibility of the election results will rest with

the level of citizen participation and inclusivity, ensuring youth, women and marginalized groups are fully involved in the national debate, and will require a robust civic voter education programme. All political aspirants and their respective political parties should publicly repudiate and condemn the heinous practice of ritual killings, which has marred earlier pre-election periods. The out-going government bears the responsibility for peace and security in connection with election activities, and ensuring that the police, courts and prisons are prepared and adequately resourced to respond to law enforcement and legal challenges related to the elections.

22. In this context the United Nations system will support the electoral process by concentrating efforts in the following areas:
- Formation of a high level crisis management forum designed to mitigate, prevent and manage potential election violence, and made up of senior representatives of the Government, the UN system, ECOWAS and other bilateral and multilateral actors;
  - Engage the Government of Liberia and national stakeholders through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) to ensure a free, fair, peaceful and transparent electoral process;
  - Support the Government of Liberia's efforts to ensure an inclusive electoral process in 2017, with special attention paid to the observance of human rights norms and standards, the full participation of women and youth in the planning and execution of the elections and the prevention of electoral violence;
  - Provide technical, operational and financial support to the National Elections Commission through the elections programme supported the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

*Peace, Security and Rule of Law*

23. While significant progress has been made in strengthening the rule of law in Liberia since conflict ended in 2003, real challenges remain in terms of access to justice, the effective and efficient administration of justice, ensuring equality before the law and accountability to the law. Factors to be addressed include an outdated legal framework, poor oversight, weak administrative procedures, and limited human and institutional capacity. The result is excessive delays and prolonged pre-trial detention, mistrials and limited progress in harmonizing the statutory and customary justice systems. Further developing the justice sector and improving public confidence in the rule of law is critical to sustaining peace and stability in Liberia. The Government recognises these challenges and has expressed its commitment to taking forward, as a priority for its final year in office, nationally validated recommendations to address systemic weaknesses in the criminal justice system. Efforts to harmonize the statutory and customary justice systems will continue, although this will be a process stretching beyond phase I of this plan. Further, effective election dispute resolution is recognized as a key component to a smooth electoral process.

24. Significant progress has also been made in professionalizing Liberia's security sector. The successful assumption of security responsibilities, in accordance with the deadline set by the United Nations Security Council, was a notable achievement. Priorities for the sector in phase I will be to ensure effective security for the free, fair, transparent and safe conduct of the 2017 elections, in line with international human rights standards, and the transition to a new government. Key components of elections security will be efforts to build trust with communities through an increased emphasis on community policing, efforts to increase operational effectiveness and countrywide deployments; and efforts to ensure that County Security Councils are operating effectively. A further priority will be implementation of the sector's legal and policy framework, including the operationalization of internal management and civilian oversight bodies. Strengthening border management remains a further key component of security and stability. Resourcing of the security sector is an ever-present challenge and a financial review will be undertaken to inform future budgetary allocations.
25. Liberians agree that national reconciliation is the vehicle for sustained conflict transformation and long-term stability. However, 14 years after the signing of the 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement there is limited progress towards addressing the root causes of Liberia's civil war. Many of the key recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), published in its Final Report of December 2009<sup>4</sup>, remain unrealized. Furthermore, the passage of key bills is critical to addressing the root causes of the fragmented State-society relations, but the slow pace of legislative reform hinders reconciliation. This peacebuilding plan seeks to re-energize national reconciliation in the final year of the current Government's tenure and establish the parameters for long-term national healing.
26. In line with resolutions 2171 (2014) and 2282 (2016), recognizing the primary responsibility of the Government of Liberia, the United Nations will remain available to ensure early warning and conflict prevention for the purpose of sustaining peace, including through the employment of joint delivery mechanisms, such as the United Nations – World Bank Group Partnership for Fragile and Conflict affected situations, the Joint Programme on Conflict Prevention and the Global Focal Point for Police, Justice, and Corrections. During phase I of the peacebuilding plan the United Nations will:
- Develop national capacity and understanding of protection of civilians, with a focus on the electoral period;
  - Advise the Liberia National Police and other law enforcement agencies on effective planning for nationwide operational effectiveness with respect to elections security;
  - Support the implementation of community based policing to build trust between Liberian citizens and law enforcement agencies;
  - Support the operationalization of County Security Councils as effective early warning and coordination mechanisms;
  - Facilitate bilateral cooperation with Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire on border security and stabilization, in collaboration with regional and international partners;

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<sup>4</sup> The TRC Final report is available online at <http://trcofliberia.org/reports/final-report>.

- Advise the Government of Liberia on the effective implementation of the National Security Strategy, the Police Act, the Liberia Immigration Services Act, and the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act;
- Advise the Government of Liberia on the implementation of nationally validated recommendations for justice sector reform;
- Support the Government of Liberia, in collaboration with the World Bank, in a public expenditure review of the security sector;
- Engage national stakeholders including political parties, civil society and the National Elections Commission to foster peace and reconciliation beyond the elections;
- Provide advice to the Government on the revision of the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation;
- Support a national conference on reconciliation and assist the roll out of county reconciliation dialogues.

### *Economic Transformation*

27. There is broad consensus<sup>5</sup> that poverty and social and economic inequalities were among the root causes of conflict in Liberia. The Government of Liberia, as a member of the G7+, recognizes that the country is among the world's most fragile and conflict affected states<sup>6</sup>. The legacy of war, the dependence on highly volatile primary commodities in the extractive sector, and its exposure to a number of exogenous climate, conflict, and disaster risks impose particular challenges on Liberia's efforts to achieve the SDGs by 2030 and the African Union's Agenda 2063<sup>7</sup>. Currently, the Government of Liberia is committed to costing a revised *Agenda for Transformation (AfT-II)*, which will define a roadmap to domesticate the SDGs and Agenda 2063.
28. Incremental progress in human development measures since 2003 have not been sufficient to reverse poverty, with Liberia's development remaining below the average for countries in sub-Saharan Africa. The country's economy has stagnated over the period 2014-2016, resulting in a decline in GDP per capita by an average of 2 percent per annum. This is largely a result of the continued slump in global commodity prices and a negligible recovery in private capital inflows in the post-Ebola era. The leading iron ore concession companies, which had been the key drivers of growth in recent years, have either scaled back their operations or closed down, resulting to decline in exports, job losses and a decline in government revenue.
29. In March 2017, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) reduced Liberia's 2016 economic growth estimate to -1.2% from its October 2016 estimate of -0.5%. The IMF anticipates that the Government of Liberia will face a significant budget shortfall, despite donor budget support of nearly US\$75 million for the financial year 2016-2017<sup>8</sup>. While the

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<sup>5</sup> See Truth and Reconciliation Commission (2009), the Agenda for Transformation (2012)

<sup>6</sup> Domesticating Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development & AU Agenda 2063 using the New Deal Principles: Draft Road Map for the Republic of Liberia, p.6

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.au.int/web/en/agenda2063>

<sup>8</sup> Findings from the International Monetary Fund Mission to Liberia, March 2017

IMF projects economic growth of 2.5-3% for the financial year 2017-2018, this is still below the pre-Ebola growth rate of 7%. Consequently, the fiscal outturn for 2016-2017 is estimated at US\$520million, representing a 6 percent decline, compared to the outturn for the fiscal year 2015-2016<sup>9</sup>. Continuing weak revenues and declining donor resources in the 2017-18 fiscal year could force the Government to reduce spending by an additional 15-20% of the current year budget. These factors have significant implications for domestic revenue mobilization, inflation and exchange rate stability during the phase I of the peacebuilding plan and the transition to a new administration, with the prospect that the Government will likely lack resources to meet its commitments.

30. From this perspective economic reform and development is critical for financing peacebuilding, and remains one of the long term objectives of this plan. In phase I the United Nations will help the Government accelerate critical structural reforms and pro-poor policies aimed at private sector led and shared economic growth. During this period the United Nations system will:
  - Support the establishment of an macroeconomic Research and Policy Unit in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning, including adequate technical and financial resources;
  - Strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to effectively track, align and harmonize aid coordination.

#### *Governance and Public Institutions*

31. Governance reform is central to building peace and promoting reconciliation in Liberia. The inadequacies and shortcomings of the governance framework historically served as a source of conflict and contributed to enduring divisions in society. Centralization of political, social and economic power in Monrovia is entrenched in the Liberian Constitution (1847 and 1986), and the failure of this arrangement to provide for self-governance and service delivery institutions at the local level contributed to igniting the political, social and ethnic tensions which ultimately led to social unrest, political violence and civil war.
32. Progress in implementing the governance reform agenda has been slow. The Local Government Bill and the Land Rights Bill are still pending before the legislature, and the Land Authority requires budgetary appropriations to become operational. The perception among many Liberians is that despite robust, inclusive and participatory dialogues, governance reform has been frustrated by a lack of political will. In this regard the role of civil society needs to be strengthened to ensure that it can become an effective agent for social change and ensure the accountability of government policies.
33. United Nations system support to governance and public institutions remains crucial for structural reform and consolidating the peacebuilding achievements of past years. Critically the United Nations' role will be to help national stakeholders to deliver on the

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<sup>9</sup> Figures from World Bank Mission in Liberia, March 2017

critical legislative package, accelerate the de-concentration of public services, help establish an effective land governance and administration system and help public institutions to restore the state's relationship of trust with citizens.

34. During phase I of the peacebuilding plan the United Nations will focus on the following areas:
- Advocate and support the passage of the Land Rights Bill and the Local Government Bill and help the Government establish the regulatory framework to implement the Liberia Land Authority Act.
  - Support decentralization efforts of the Government and strengthen local government capacities to manage equitable and inclusive service delivery in all 15 counties;
  - Advocate for the amendment of the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission Act of 2008;
  - Support inclusive governance and accountability for results by capacitating civil society (local NGOs and CBOs) to strengthen their watchdog and monitoring role.

#### *Cross Cutting Issues*

35. The Government of Liberia is committed to ensuring that peacebuilding priorities are based on human rights principles, and is focused on strengthening the national protection system. Major human rights concerns are the high levels of sexual and gender based violence, a lack of human rights protection in judicial proceedings, and conflict between certain traditional practices with human rights norms. Key priorities in this regard are the implementation of the National Human Rights Action Plan; reinforcing and sustaining Liberia's engagement with Treaty Bodies, Special Procedures and the Universal Periodic Review; domesticating international instruments into national law; and building the capacity of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights (INCHR). The Government of Liberia will also seek to support the establishment of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) in Liberia to provide essential ongoing technical support to national human rights institutions and ensure sustainable relationships with regional and international human rights bodies.
36. Capturing the opportunities offered by a youthful population<sup>10</sup> remains fundamental to national development and peacebuilding in Liberia. Today high youth unemployment, limited access to quality education and the dearth of sustainable livelihood opportunities leave thousands of young people excluded from the national life. Reforming the country's education system, so that young Liberians develop the skills to become productive citizens, needs to become a fundamental pillar of the sustaining peace agenda. Government leadership in youth development is currently focused on the passage and implementation of the National Youth Bill, and instituting regular channels of communication between young people and the authorities to encourage youth participation in promoting a peaceful electoral period.

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<sup>10</sup> Seventy-nine per cent of the population is under the age of 36 (Liberia Demographic and Health Survey 2013)

37. Broad and equal participation of women and men across political and socioeconomic spheres remains critical to consolidating peace. Liberia is party to several international instruments for gender and peacebuilding and the Government has adopted a national gender policy and national action plan for implementing United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Ensuring women fully participate in the 2017 election process as candidates, voters and administrators is critical to advancing gender parity, and help women have an equal voice in political decision-making and public policy formulation. The Government's commitment to apply gender sensitive budgeting in the preparation of the 2017/2018 budgets of Ministries, Agencies and Commissions is a positive step in this direction.
38. Liberia is vulnerable to the impacts of climate variability and change, which further exacerbate the country's socio-economic development challenges. Ecosystem fragility is exacerbated by human activity centred on the exploitation and competition for natural resources, which contributes to ongoing social tension and conflict. Accelerated economic recovery through the extraction of commodities carries inherent risks attached to social cohesion, human rights and environmental sustainability. Conflicts between foreign companies and local communities in concession areas underscore the fragile nature of peace consolidation in circumstances where the commercial interest in exploiting ecosystem assets and human security priorities intersect.
39. United Nations support to human rights, youth development, gender equity and environmental sustainability is integral to the human security approach taken by this peacebuilding plan. The approach allows the United Nations system to promote a constructive relationship between duty bearers and rights holders<sup>11</sup> during the transition process through ongoing efforts by national and international stakeholders to sustain peace. In this context the United Nations will prioritize its support in the following areas:
- Support human rights promotion, protection and monitoring activities in Liberia, with special attention to violations and abuses committed against children and women, through advising on and supporting the implementation and monitoring of the National Human Rights Action Plan and recommendations of the Universal Periodic Review;
  - Strengthen the capacity of the Independent National Commission on Human Rights to implement its mandate;
  - Advocate and support the passage of the Affirmative Action Bill for Equitable Participation and Representation;
  - Advocate and support the passage of the Domestic Violence Bill;
  - Support Government of Liberia efforts to combat sexual and gender-based violence, including combating impunity for perpetrators of such crimes;
  - Support the establishment of an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Liberia by 1 April 2018;

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<sup>11</sup> Duty bearers are those actors who have a particular obligation or responsibility to respect, promote and realize human rights and to abstain from human rights violations. Rights-holders are individuals or social groups that have particular entitlements in relation to specific duty-bearer.

- Support the Government's review of the National Youth Policy, promote the passage of the National Youth Bill and help implement youth related aspects of the national reconciliation roadmap;
- Support increased youth engagement and participation in governance and development processes at all levels, to enhance rule of law, peace building, and prevention of conflicts and violence, with special focus on making the 2017 elections peaceful and successful;
- Develop and conduct a comprehensive assessment of the youth situation in Liberia to inform joint youth policies and development interventions;
- Support vocational/technical training linked to SME development, and enhancing entrepreneurial skills and livelihood opportunities;
- Fully integrate a gender perspective into transition planning and put the gender perspective at the centre of United Nations planning and programme development for the prevention and resolution of conflicts and peacebuilding;
- The United Nations reaffirms its commitment to allocating a minimum of 15% per cent of all United Nations peacebuilding funds to gender equality and women's empowerment;
- Support the development capacities for sustainable natural resource management and utilization, including low land development and ensuring climate change adaptable agriculture.

#### B. Support to the Political and Administrative Transfer of Power following the 2017 Elections

40. The post electoral period will test the country's resilience in transferring political and administrative power, and the strength of the governance systems to continue providing basic services to the people of Liberia. The objective of United Nations support is to ensure a smooth transition of power, continuity of operations and functioning of the civil service and government ministries, departments and agencies to deliver services to the populace, including core government functions, and resumption of the sustainable development trajectory. The United Nations system shall support Liberia's transition through political dialogue and technical advice, engaging with the Government, political parties, civil society organizations and donors to ensure a seamless political and administrative transfer of power to the incoming president and government. Through the good offices of the SRSG the United Nations will support national stakeholders to design i) a transitional framework for the current Government which defines roles and responsibilities for the transition process ii) a structured time frame for managing the transition, including timelines for vacating official offices and accommodation iii) monitoring mechanisms to safeguard government assets through an inventory system and iv) a hand over system covering a broad range of Government offices to engender good record keeping and institutional memory.
41. The United Nations leadership in Liberia will engage closely with the incoming president after the elections to support the establishment of a transition team and facilitate engagement with the outgoing President and Government. This process will seek to i) implement the transition plan and prepare for the inauguration of the new President in

January 2018 and ii) prepare the ground for the review of the peacebuilding plan at the end of phase I.

### C. Managing the Withdrawal of UNMIL and Transition to the United Nations Country Team

42. A United Nations Integrated Transition Plan (ITP) will be developed before June 2017 to address the required changes in United Nations posture following the departure of UNMIL. The plan will i) outline specific and detailed actions by each United Nations entity for each priority area in the peacebuilding plan ii) describe how the role and approach (e.g. direct advisory services, institutional capacity building) of each United Nations entity will evolve during the transition process iii) describe the current and planned field presence in Liberia iv) assess the capacity gaps in the UNCT and v) provide scenarios for the transfer of UNMIL assets to United Nations agencies, funds and programmes.
43. The ITP will also assess the capacities of the United Nations in Liberia to continue a high level good offices function, following the departure of the SRSG. This element of the transition speaks to one of the key findings of the Report of the High Level Independent Panel on Peace Operations (2015), which was that political engagement is necessary in order to sustain peace. In Liberia United Nations integration will need to support substantive coordination of political advocacy and programme delivery to advance the structural reforms in laws and policy required to address the underlying causes of conflict and instability.
44. The UNCT capacity mapping exercise started in October 2016 and will continue to April 2017 and is being led by UNDP/UNLOCK; the outcome of the exercise will be a critical input into the ITP. The mapping process takes stock of country team capacities within the context of Security Council resolution 2333 (2016) and the overall objective to enable the UNCT to fully support peace and development after UNMIL's departure, and help national stakeholders sustain peace dividends.
45. Initial findings of the capacity mapping exercise in March 2017 indicate UNMIL's departure will result in a reduced United Nations technical capacity in the areas relevant for the implementation of the peacebuilding plan. The loss of UNMIL's substantive human rights expertise fully justifies the need for the establishment of a local field Office for the High Commissioner of Human Rights, while United Nations agencies, funds and programmes currently have a limited field presence across Liberia. UNMIL has a presence in only three<sup>12</sup> counties, while the field presence of the World Health Organization and the UN Population Fund is winding down as Ebola-related projects are closed. It is widely acknowledged that the presence of the country team in 15 counties will be essential for supporting the Government's decentralization efforts that are key to sustaining peace through continued provision of basic social services (including access to justice) to citizens outside Monrovia.

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<sup>12</sup> From 1 July 2017 UNMIL with a substantive field presence in two counties – Grand Gedeh county and Lofa county. In addition there will be a small communications hub in Bong county.

46. To remain relevant and deliver peacebuilding and development assistance to Liberia after UNMIL leaves, the UNCT will need to design a new business model for development assistance, which includes implementation support services to the Government of Liberia, good offices and political support. The UNCT needs to consider the provision of a joint operations platform to streamline administrative processes and practices in order to strengthen interoperability for more cost effective delivery of development results. This includes the co-location of agencies, funds and programmes in a United Nations House in Monrovia, and joint UNCT operations based on the comparative advantages of respective agencies to fill the gap that will be created by the withdrawal of UNMIL's operational and logistical support. This can include possible operational and business development partnership solutions for providing (or facilitating the provision of) logistics and transport services in a post-UNMIL environment, and brokering agreements on mission asset transfer (both material and human resources) to the UNCT.
47. The transition from a peacekeeping mission to the UNCT signifies a shift from predictable funding streams, through assessed funding, to project based funding of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes. It is anticipated this will result in a significant drop in development assistance to Liberia, including from both multilateral and bilateral donors, with the potential to negatively impact the peacebuilding gains in the country, particularly after the electoral period. The Peace Building Commission should work with the Security Council to identify a possible mechanism and timeframe for sustaining predictable funding to the UNCT for critical peacebuilding priorities following UNMIL's departure.

#### D. Communicating the Process of Change to the Government and People of Liberia

48. An integrated communication strategy targeting diverse audiences will be developed further by UNMIL and the UNCT to manage expectations among Liberian society and in Government circles during the transition period. Transition messages will be delivered to key stakeholders (Government, citizens at all levels, donors, and United Nations staff) using various communication outlets including UNMIL radio broadcasts, community caravans, press conferences, town hall meetings, social media, and other innovative communication avenues to ensure widest outreach. Messaging to partners and the population will principally focus on the continuity of a sustained United Nations presence in Liberia after UNMIL's withdrawal, while describing the role of the United Nations agencies, funds and programmes and the nature of their collaboration with government entities and civil society.
49. UNMIL radio will play a crucial role in providing trusted and factual information to the Liberian population during the whole transition period, but especially in the run up to and during the 2017 elections. This service will continue during the transfer of political and administrative power and during the period of UNMIL's withdrawal. The United Nations system in Liberia is exploring options for the sustainable transfer of UNMIL radio to an independent entity, which may involve the UNCT, ECOWAS and other partners.

## VII. Framework for Supporting Long-term Peacebuilding Priorities

50. Phase II of the plan frames the longer-term goals for peacebuilding in Liberia. It defines the United Nations strategic direction, based on the critical requirements of the immediate post electoral-phase and the needs for sustaining peace. A joint review of the phase II plan, involving the new Government, the United Nations system, political parties and civil society organisations in Liberia, and international partners will constitute an integral part of the transition process.
51. The formulation of phase II will coincide with the review and conclusion of the current Statement of Mutual Commitments. Negotiations between the UNCT and national stakeholders for the development of the new United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which becomes effective as of January 2019, will also commence at this time. Therefore it is recommended that phase II of the peacebuilding plan forms the cornerstone of the new UNDAF and provides direction for the renewal of other international cooperation frameworks and donor assistance agreements with the Government of Liberia. The opportunity also exists for the peacebuilding plan to become a framework for mutual accountability which defines the shared responsibilities of the Government of Liberia, national stakeholders and the international community for sustaining peace. In principle phase II may cover the period until 2020, coinciding with the envisioned mid-term review of the *Agenda for Transformation II*, thus establishing another critical review juncture for the sustaining peace mandate of the Government, the United Nations system and the international partners.
52. During phase II the UNCT will strengthen its unified communication, coordination and convening role. This will involve establishing a visible and well defined presence in the public media, ensuring that Liberians are fully aware of the role the United Nations will play in the ongoing efforts to sustain peace. Full implementation of recommendations from the UNCT mapping exercise will be critical to addressing gaps in United Nations system capabilities to support the Government of Liberia following the departure of UNMIL. A major part of this effort will be providing support to the newly elected Government of Liberia in undertaking national planning processes, including advising on harmonization of national plans with the SDGs, Africa 2063, and other international frameworks, including international human rights treaty obligations, while ensuring effective coordination with international partners. All efforts should adopt a whole-of-government approach, including the Executive, the Legislature and the Judiciary. In this overall planning context, the United Nations system, the Government of Liberia and partners, will explore the option of an expanded Recovery and Peacebuilding Assessment (RPBA), or a hybrid alternative, which would involve the European Union, United Nations, World Bank, ECOWAS and the African Union.
53. Preventing conflict will be the main goal of United Nations peace and security responsibilities following the withdrawal of UNMIL. A crucial element of the strategy will be to support the formulation and implementation of a national peace policy and relevant local peace consolidation mechanisms. The United Nations system will need to continue to monitor events in Liberia, and make available, upon request, its good offices

and technical assistance, including in negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement in support of efforts to sustain peace, including, inter alia, through the United Nations Office for the West Africa and the Sahel. Work with regional and sub-regional organizations will support effective early warning, and guided by resolution 2171 (2014), ensure that early warning of potential conflicts translates into early, concrete preventive action. Within the framework of the Global Focal Point arrangement, the United Nations will provide assistance to priority peacebuilding areas in the justice and security sectors through advisory and capacity building support, as outlined in the United Nations Justice and Security Joint Programme 2016-2019, including supporting the implementation of the National Security Strategy.

54. The protection of human rights is critical for sustaining peace and United Nations support to national institutions and national plans will be critical during this phase of the peacebuilding plan. If the decision is taken to establish an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Liberia, the United Nations system should agree upon a very specific portfolio of tasks focused on building national capacity, and setting out a well-defined exit strategy.
55. The UNCT will strengthen its collaboration with national stakeholders to support key governance-related peacebuilding priority areas. One of the most important of these will be the process of constitutional reform, which is required to strengthen national unity, promote human rights and gender equality, ensure participatory and accountable governance and consolidate stability through social and economic justice. This will include engagement with political parties, civil society and relevant government agencies, such as the Governance Commission, the National Elections Commission and the Land Authority, to ensure peace is consolidated and reconciliation is advanced beyond the elections. In this regard civil society will be a critical partner for the United Nations system for strengthening participatory approaches to government decision-making, involving citizens' voices in processes of change, and ensuring all Liberians feel their concerns are heard by central and local authorities. United Nations agencies, funds and programmes will work with competent government entities to ensure organizations representing youth and women are fully engaged in strategic peace building processes. This approach will be especially pertinent in advancing the constitutional reform process leading to a referendum, and strengthening local government capacities to manage equitable and inclusive service delivery in all 15 counties.
56. During phase II of the peacebuilding plan the United Nations system will work with national stakeholders to address persistent poverty. This requires long-term support to economic reform which can furnish local communities with sustainable livelihoods and development opportunities, and with particular attention paid to promoting women's economic empowerment and youth employment. United Nations organizations will support the Government of Liberia to develop and implement strategies for sustainable, inclusive, private-sector led economic growth, aimed at diversifying the economy and building up domestic sources of revenue; approaches which can defuse the socio-political tensions underlying potential conflict. In addition the United Nations system will support

efforts to combat corruption which continues to be a significant drain on Government resources and an impediment to private sector investment.

57. The United Nations system will support the national census in 2018 and participate in the Census Partnership Committee. Since the census will form the basis for the distribution of national resources and political constituencies the United Nations' role will involve ensuring the maintenance of international standards and providing advice to the National Population Census Technical Committee.
58. Through its programmes the UNCT will have a very specific responsibility to help the Government of Liberia build human capabilities within society. Critically, the United Nations system must adopt practices which will most effectively improve the human development prospects for all Liberians with particular focus on inclusive economic growth, high quality education, robust healthcare systems, infrastructure development, entrepreneurship and community livelihoods for women and youth. At the same time ongoing work to strengthen the voice and participation of women and youth in decision making must be intensified. Given the intimate relationship between human activity and the country's ecosystem, the United Nations and its partners must support efforts to strengthen capacities for sustainable natural resource management and climate change adaptation.

#### **VIII. Support to the Peacebuilding Plan from Multilateral and Bi-lateral Actors**

59. Multilateral and bi-lateral actors will support the implementation of the peacebuilding plan by aligning their efforts with Liberian priorities and supporting inclusive political processes based on open dialogue. During phase I of the plan this will involve continuing to advocate for critical reforms and provide support in line with pre-existing programmes and commitments. Core peacebuilding values such as inclusive politics, dialogue and reconciliation, equal participation of women and men, boys and girls, youth and people living with disabilities, and environmental sustainability will remain at the heart of cooperation agreements between the Government of Liberia and its international partners.
60. Multilateral and bi-lateral actors will review the efficiency and effectiveness of the financial instruments and arrangements aimed at sustaining peace. This may include leveraging pooled funding and blended finance among the United Nations, bilateral and international donors, multilateral financial institutions and the private sector in order to share risks and maximize the impact of peace and state building efforts. International partners will ensure transparency, accountability and appropriate monitoring of funds to mitigate corruption, while promoting an inclusive, integrated, strategic and coherent approach to peacebuilding.
61. Multilateral and bi-lateral actors will generate and sustain international attention on Liberia and advocate with all parties and candidates for the peaceful conduct of elections in 2017 and adherence to the Electoral Law. The African Union commits to providing some technical or logistical support to the election process and deploy an observer

mission. It will be crucial for international actors to engage with the UNCT's preparations to sustain peacebuilding needs after UNMIL's withdrawal, and participate in the review of phase I of the peacebuilding plan, as well as assist with the formulation of specific commitments for the plan's second phase. Multilateral and bi-lateral actors will fully participate in the Government's management arrangements for the peacebuilding plan, and be a part of the process to monitor progress in delivering results.

62. It is anticipated that ECOWAS will be a key partner for peace and security in Liberia following UNMIL's withdrawal. As the premier sub-regional body in West Africa, with a statutory mandate for peace and security and a wide ranging human security and human development agenda, ECOWAS' partnerships with the Government of Liberia, the UNCT and international actors will be significant. ECOWAS is a natural ally of the sustaining peace agenda, and possesses a response capacity to deter and prevent violent conflict.
63. In collaboration with the Government of Liberia, the United Nations system and international partners ECOWAS will support the peacebuilding plan through the following actions:
  - Deploy the ECOWAS Early Response Network (ECOWARN) in Liberia through the setting up of the National Centre for the Coordination of the Response Mechanism (NCCRM) in Monrovia during phase I of the plan;
  - Establish a short and long term elections observation mission to monitor the 2017 electoral process and deploy a fact finding team to Liberia to help with policy and strategic advice which contributes to the conduct of an inclusive and peaceful election;
  - Provide a capacity building programme for women and media representatives during the election period;
  - Engage Liberian civil society organizations on the essential elements of ECOWAS' regional conflict prevention framework;
  - Work with the Government of Liberia (Ministry of Internal Affairs, Peace Building Office and Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection) on domesticating international instruments on gender based violence and the promotion of girls and women education and empowerment;
  - Support the UN system in ensuring the sustainable transfer of UNMIL radio to an independent entity.
64. The World Bank Group will support the peacebuilding plan through the following actions:
  - Support the Government of Liberia in attaining more efficient and effective use of resources, including through a public expenditure review of the security sector;
  - Complete and share with the Government of Liberia and international partners a Joint Risk and Resilience Assessment, by May 2017;

- Give priority to conflict-sensitive and conflict-mitigating activities, such as labor-intensive public works, youth skills development and empowerment and community-driven development in ongoing development programmes, as appropriate;
- Explore the option of tripartite (EU, UN, WB) or expanded peacebuilding assessment (RPBA, or a hybrid alternative) as part of the planning process for phase II;
- Support the Government of Liberia in developing and implementing their public financial management strategy, so as to consolidate the gains made in revenue mobilization, resource allocation, expenditure management and accountability;
- Foster shared growth through a conducive business climate, improved connectivity, enhanced power supply and access to quality public services.

## **IX. Management Arrangements**

65. The peacebuilding plan will be monitored jointly by the Government of Liberia the United Nations system, the Peacebuilding Commission, bilateral and multilateral actors, regional organisations and representatives of Liberian civil society.
66. During phase I the implementation of the peacebuilding plan will be monitored by quarterly meetings of the Agenda for Transformation sector working groups once every two months. The results of the sector working groups' deliberations will be fed into meetings of the Liberia Development Alliance (LDA), through the approved Pillar Structure. The LDA, which is chaired by the President, will act as the higher level policy oversight body for the peacebuilding plan's implementation. The LDA will meet twice a year to review the peacebuilding plan and the Government of Liberia will provide the necessary secretariat and preparatory support for these meetings. The purpose of the formal meetings will be (a) to review progress in achieving the objectives and commitments of the peacebuilding plan and (b) to focus the attention of the international community on key peacebuilding issues requiring additional action. Specific sectoral issues will be discussed by sector working groups. On issues related to the transition of UNMIL, discussions should include specific engagement with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, as required to advance implementation.
67. The new Government of Liberia, the United Nations system, the Peacebuilding Commission, bilateral and multilateral actors, regional organisations and representatives of Liberian civil society will initiate the review of progress made during phase I of the plan before UNMIL's departure. The review will lead to an agreement of priority activities and financing required for phase II, and re-affirm the management arrangements for monitoring the plan's implementation. This process will encompass the final review of the Statement of Mutual Commitments and also explore options for underwriting phase II of the peacebuilding plan with a framework for mutual accountability. During phase II of the plan, it is expected that regular progress meetings will continue to be held and include the Peacebuilding Commission.
68. The instrument for monitoring results will use indicators for measuring progress towards restoring social cohesion and advancing reconciliation as two critical elements of conflict transformation and sustaining peace. It will be based on existing qualitative and

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quantitative methodologies used in Liberia for assessing risk and provide diagnostic and predictive qualities which will allow the Government and stakeholders to identify optimal entry points for peacebuilding policies and programmes. As a barometer of progress the instrument will monitor critical peacebuilding benchmarks over the course of the peacebuilding plan's implementation. Social cohesion will be measured by monitoring perceived corruption, trust in institutions, feeling represented by institutions, human security and life satisfaction. Progress in reconciliation will be assessed by monitoring indicators for negative stereotypes, intergroup anxiety, social distance, social threats and active discrimination.

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## X. Annexes

### Annex I: Liberia's Peacebuilding Priorities in Phase I

*The Government of Liberia commits to work with all national and international stakeholders to deliver the following results before January 2018.*

#### *Promoting Inclusive and Peaceful Elections in 2017*

- Ensure free, fair, transparent and safe conduct of the 2017 Presidential and Legislative Elections in accordance with the new Electoral Law;
- Conclude a compact among political parties for inclusive peaceful elections, post-election processes and political transition;
- Provide agreed budgetary appropriations and timely allotment for the 2017 electoral process in line with operational requirements;
- Encourage political parties to increase women's participation in elected institutions based upon the new Electoral Law;
- Ensure that the justice and security agencies are prepared and resourced with adequate and timely budgetary appropriations, and improve agencies' community level coordination.

#### *Peace, Security and Rule of Law*

- Provide timely budgetary appropriations to the Ministry of Justice and the Judiciary within the limit of the available resources, to deliver effective prosecutorial, public defense and adjudication services for elections-related crimes and disputes;
- Strengthen community engagement in the security sector through well-coordinated civil society partnerships and community policing mechanisms;
- Reinforce the role of the County and related District Security Councils and the county level early warning and early response network, and connect these mechanisms to the Liberia National Early Warning and Response Mechanism Coordinating Centre (NEWRMCC);
- Operationalize the Policy and Civilian Complaints Review Boards and initiate implementation of the National Security Strategy, the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act, the Police and the Liberia Immigration Services Acts;
- Continue the implementation of nationally validated recommendations addressing systemic weaknesses in the criminal justice sector;
- Revise the Strategic Roadmap for National Healing, Peacebuilding and Reconciliation (2013-2030), and produce Volume I of the project on national history symbols to foster national unity;
- Undertake 7 county reconciliation dialogues and convene a national conference on reconciliation.

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### *Governance and Public Institutions*

- Manage the political and administrative transition and ensure the protection of public assets;
- Pass the Local Government Bill by September 2017;
- Pass the Land Rights Bill by September 2017 and ensure the Land Authority is operational through budgetary appropriations;
- Create the Ministry of Local Government and Peacebuilding by June 2017 which will replace the Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- Complete the establishment of the county service centers in all 15 counties and appropriate in the 2017/18 fiscal budget their operations and recurrent costs;
- Implement the Government of Liberia-CSO policy framework and accord, with particular focus on holding a national summit involving the Government and the National Civil Society Council of Liberia;
- Develop and present to the legislature a Witness Protection and Whistle Blower Bill by July 2017.

### *Economic Reform and Development*

- Formulate a national planning framework to succeed the *Agenda for Transformation*, aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Agenda 2063;
- Establish a research and policy unit in the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning to improve macroeconomic policy management functions, including economic modeling and policy advisory services to enhance fiscal prudence, revenue and services;
- Strengthen the existing aid information management system to strengthen capacities for aid coordination and management.

### *Cross-cutting issues*

- Implement the National Human Rights Action Plan and promote the protection of human rights across all spheres of Government;
- Request the establishment of an Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights in Liberia;
- Pass the National Youth Bill by September 2017;
- Accelerate the implementation of projects and programmes, including the Youth Opportunity Project and the Technical and Vocational Training Programme designed to constructively engage young people in the 2017 electoral process;
- Ensure the meaningful participation of women throughout all phases of the 2017 electoral process, as candidates, voters and election administrators;
- Apply gender responsive budgeting in the preparation of the 2017/2018 budgets of Ministries, Agencies and Commissions, paying particular attention to marginalized girls and women;
- Expand the women's peace huts initiative to enhance inclusive community dialogue, mediation, and conflict resolution.

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- Complete the review of the National Action Plan for SCR1325 (2000) and initiate the implementation of the recommendations from the Committee of the Elimination of All Forms of Violence against Women (CEDAW).

Note: In order to facilitate the Government of Liberia's commitment to implementing actions under phase I of the peacebuilding plan, the Peacebuilding Office will work with the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning and other line ministries, agencies and commissions to detail the financial implications in preparation for the fiscal budget period 2017/18.

## **Annex II: Liberia's Peacebuilding Priorities in Phase II**

*It is envisaged the new government of Liberia will work with national and international stakeholders to mobilize political and financial support to advance peacebuilding in the following areas.*

### *Peace, Security and Rule of Law*

- Implement legislative and policy reforms relating to public safety and the private security sector;
- Modernize the legislative and policy framework of the justice and security sector with targeted reforms and the effective implementation of new laws and policies;
- Strengthen the coordination between the three branches of government and between justice and security institutions, as well as with integrity institutions, with the objective of ensuring policy coherence at the operational level and improving oversight and accountability;
- Undertake essential recruitment and training to further decentralize the presence of competent justice and security sector personnel across the country, with recruitment focusing on fulfilling established targets for women's employment in the sector;
- Implement recommendations of the Public Expenditure Review with the objective of ensuring appropriate resourcing and effective financial management of the justice and security sector;
- Draft and enact a national peace policy;
- Provide adequate and timely budgetary support to ensure the effective operations of key conflict prevention and peacebuilding institutions;
- Provide adequate and timely financial support to strengthen cross-border peace initiatives, including the MRU's cross-border strategy, involving local chiefs, traditional elders and communities on both sides of the borders between Cote D'Ivoire and Liberia, Guinea and Liberia and Sierra Leone and Liberia;  
Strengthen the role of traditional mechanisms for peace and conflict prevention, including the Palava Hut system, in the peacebuilding process.

*Governance and Public Institutions*

- Conclude the constitutional reform process and hold a referendum on the Liberian constitution by the end of December 2019;
- Accelerate the process of decentralization and ensure the full implementation of the Local Government Act;
- Strengthen national integrity institutions and judicial mechanisms to combat the culture and practices of corruption and impunity;
- Accelerate the process of land reform to ensure the implementation of an equitable and robust land governance and administration system.
- Amend the Liberia Anti-corruption Commission Act of 2008, granting full prosecutorial power to anti-corruption courts.

*Economic Reform and Development*

- Implement a comprehensive national development framework, ensuring the requisite political and financial assets exist to domesticate the Sustainable Development Goals 2030 and Agenda 2063;
- Review and implement a domestic resource mobilization strategy and expand the fiscal space, with an emphasis on diversifying the Liberian economy, private sector growth and leveraging the investment potential of Liberians in the diaspora;

*Cross-cutting issues*

- Accelerate the domestication of outstanding international human rights instruments into national laws and take concrete protective measures to ensure the full enjoyment of rights by all;
- Address transitional justice issues in Liberia in line with the recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report;
- Establish mechanisms for the implementation and independent monitoring of recommendations contained in Universal Periodic Review Reports (UPR);
- Ensure the Independent Commission on Human Rights is able to fully implement its mandate across the country;
- Develop and implement a coordinated and well-funded national youth employment programme which is able to provide decent work to all categories of young people, including university graduates and apprenticeship trainees;
- Introduce civic education and citizenship studies in the curriculum at primary and secondary school levels, and support extra curricula in-the-community efforts to employ dialogue as a means of solving problems;
- Create a nationwide network of socio-psychological counseling services which target vulnerable youth and help them with their moral, ethical, intellectual and mental health development;
- Enshrine gender affirmative action as a part of the process for constitutional reform;

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- Ensure all national policy and planning processes are gender responsive;
- Ensure effective and transparent conflict and climate sensitive management of natural resources;
- Integrate indigenous and effective coping strategies into national development policy and planning, ensuring that social and conflict perspectives are part of climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies and interventions.

**Annex III: Statement of Registered Political Parties in Liberia in Support of the Peacebuilding Plan for Liberia, adopted on 17 March 2017 at the Headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Liberia, Monrovia**

Whereas, Political Parties in Liberia participated in the consultations initiated by the United Nations system in Liberia to develop a peacebuilding plan pursuant to Security Council resolution 2333 (2016);

Whereas, the parties embraced the guiding principle of inclusive national ownership of the peacebuilding plan;

Whereas, the parties accepted that the priorities outlined in the peacebuilding plan are critical for sustaining peace in Liberia, and that peace consolidation remains a national responsibility of all branches of government and the broader society;

Now, thereof, the political parties resolve to support the peacebuilding plan for Liberia, and to work with the Government of Liberia, the United Nations System, regional organizations, bi- and multi-lateral partners, and civil society to actively pursue the national peacebuilding priorities outlined in Annex I and II.

**Annex IV: Statement of the National Civil Society Council of Liberia, 18 March 2017**

Whereas, the National Civil Society Council of Liberia is the apex body of civil society in Liberia which is elected by a cross section of peers from civil society organizations throughout the country;

Whereas, the National Civil Society Council of Liberia looks forward to fully participating at all levels in the implementation of the peacebuilding plan;

Whereas, civil society organizations need to monitor the election process, serve as civic voter educators and hold political parties accountable for the implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding between political parties and the National Elections Commission, and pursue advocacy activities to this end in support of our democracy;

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Whereas, civil society organizations are instrumental to consolidating peace, by providing expertise and experience to the whole process of national reconciliation to avoid returning to our violent past;

Whereas, civil society organizations need to be involved in the process of enacting key legislation of the Government required for addressing the root causes of conflict, including the pending legislation on land rights, local governance, anti-corruption, gender equity and domestic violence;

Whereas, community-based organizations should be fully involved in decentralization efforts and be partners in the setting up and operating the county service centres;

Whereas, civil society will be part of the mechanism to monitor the implementation of the peacebuilding plan, as reflected in the Management Arrangements;

Now, thereof, the National Civil Society Council of Liberia and its members resolve to support the peacebuilding plan and will continue to work assiduously towards consolidating peace, and reaffirms its commitment to hold accountable the Government of Liberia in the process of transition and the implementation of the peacebuilding plan.