

5. The situation in Sierra Leone

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held nine meetings and adopted two resolutions and three presidential statements in connection with the situation in Sierra Leone. It received four briefings by the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and four by the Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission. The President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone also briefed the Council on the final stages of the work of the Court.

At its meetings, the Council discussed the preparations for the presidential, parliamentary and local elections of 17 November 2012. The Council also discussed the political and security situation as well as the peacebuilding support activities in Sierra Leone. The mandate of UNIPSIL⁸⁹ was extended twice, for one year each time, the final extension being until 31 March 2014.⁹⁰

In May 2012, the Security Council visited Sierra Leone among other countries during its mission to West Africa.⁹¹

Presidential, parliamentary and local elections

On 22 March 2012, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNIPSIL briefed the Council on the developments in the country and stressed that, in order to consolidate the “exceptional successes” that Sierra Leone had had since its civil war, it was crucial that the international community and the Security Council continued their support and vigilance, focusing in particular on the presidential, parliamentary and local council elections to be held on 17 November 2012. On the preparation for the elections, he emphasized the importance of dialogue between the Government and opposition parties and encouraged senior politicians to meet and openly discuss controversial issues and strive to create an

atmosphere in which the elections were fair and the citizens were able to freely make their own choices without fear of retribution. He also underlined the need to implement the joint communiqué signed by the two main political parties on 2 April 2009, which included the establishment of an independent police complaints commission and support by all political parties of the country’s electoral management bodies. Commending the work of the All Political Parties Youth Association and the All Political Parties Women’s Association, he emphasized the role of cross-party initiatives in preventing violence from arising and raising awareness for a stronger role of women in politics.⁹²

Drawing on the findings of his visit to Sierra Leone in January 2012, the Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission focused in his briefing on the upcoming elections, regional challenges to peacebuilding, and the transition process in the country. He acknowledged that the technical and financial preparations for the elections were on schedule, but underlined that there was a need to foster more open dialogue with political parties and the national electoral institutions. He encouraged political leaders to demonstrate their commitment to free, fair and peaceful political competition and urged political parties to implement the joint communiqué of 2009. He added that the creation of an enabling and favourable political environment should be the immediate priority of UNIPSIL. He said that the Security Council had recently focused on transnational threats to peace and security but that more was needed. He also said that the United Nations Office for West Africa played a vital role in these issues and warranted continued strong support from the Council.⁹³

The representative of Sierra Leone highlighted his Government’s commitment to the consolidation of peace and its intention to engage with all stakeholders with a view to enhancing political dialogue and collective commitment to peaceful, free, fair, transparent and credible elections. He stressed the Government’s commitment to democratic governance and the maintenance of the independence of the democratic institutions such as the National Electoral Commission, the Political Parties Registration

⁸⁹ For more information on UNIPSIL, see part X, sect. II, “Political and peacebuilding missions”.

⁹⁰ Resolutions 2065 (2012) and 2097 (2013).

⁹¹ For more information on the Security Council mission to West Africa, see part I, sect. 34, “Security Council mission”.

⁹² S/PV.6739, pp. 2-5.

⁹³ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

Commission and the Independent Media Commission. He noted that the National Electoral Commission was playing a leading role in the biometric voter registration process and the review and reform of the electoral laws.⁹⁴

On 11 April 2012, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which it reaffirmed its support for continuing efforts to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone and called upon all political parties to engage constructively in an honest and open dialogue and intensify their efforts to foster an environment conducive to the holding of peaceful, transparent, free and fair elections. The Council called on the leadership of the political parties to take cross-party confidence-building measures, promote political participation and non-violence among their members and ensure full adherence to due process of law and to the recommendations of the joint communiqué of 2 April 2009.⁹⁵

On 11 September 2012, in his briefing, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General said that the main focus of the work of UNIPSIL was the preparations for the elections of 17 November 2012. He reported that major electoral arrangements, particularly the biometric voter registration exercise, had been successfully concluded and other activities such as the procurement of sensitive materials were still ongoing. He added that all 10 registered political parties, as well as other major stakeholders, had signed a declaration on 18 May 2012, committing themselves to free, fair and peaceful elections, and there had been no incidents of political violence since then. While welcoming the positive developments in the country, he cautioned that continued attention should be given to promoting constructive dialogue and mutual trust among the main political actors; ensuring confidence in the security sector; improving communication and dialogue between the National Electoral Commission and the political parties; and managing the role of the media.⁹⁶

The Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission in his briefing noted that the necessary logistical and financial arrangements for the elections were in place, but said that the greatest challenge was political. He reported that the

Commission intended to travel to Sierra Leone in October 2012 to assess the situation and that, while there, it would stress the need to maintain an open and inclusive political dialogue and to abide by the commitments set out in the joint communiqué of 2009 and the political declaration of May 2012. He noted that the post-election period would require increased focus on several outstanding peacebuilding concerns, particularly youth unemployment, fighting corruption and transnational crime.⁹⁷

The representative of Sierra Leone stressed that the Government would continue to demonstrate strong leadership in dealing with political violence, and that perpetrators would be brought to justice. He urged the Security Council and the United Nations, more broadly, to maintain their full support for the ongoing electoral process, as the 2012 elections were the crucial test for consolidating peace, security and democracy in Sierra Leone. He also urged the United Nations and international partners to continue to support the Special Court for Sierra Leone.⁹⁸

On 12 September 2012, the Council unanimously adopted resolution [2065 \(2012\)](#), in which it welcomed the preparations for the presidential, parliamentary and local elections on 17 November 2012 and underlined their importance as a “key benchmark” for consolidation of peace in Sierra Leone. The Council requested UNIPSIL to continue to provide assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone and its electoral, democratic and security institutions in the preparation and conduct of the elections. The Council further requested UNIPSIL to provide assistance to conflict-prevention and mitigation efforts, including through supporting inclusive dialogue among political parties, the Government and all relevant stakeholders.

On 30 November 2012, the Council issued a presidential statement, in which it commended Sierra Leone for the conduct and successful conclusion of presidential, parliamentary, district and local elections. The Council called upon all political parties and candidates to accept the results of the elections and to work with the Government in a constructive manner, through national dialogue and reconciliation. The Council underscored the significance of the elections and the wide acceptance of the results as a key benchmark of consolidating peace in Sierra Leone. It

⁹⁴ Ibid., pp. 6-8.

⁹⁵ [S/PRST/2012/11](#).

⁹⁶ [S/PV.6829](#), pp. 2-4.

⁹⁷ Ibid., pp. 4-5.

⁹⁸ Ibid., pp. 5-8.

further recalled its request for the Secretary-General to deploy an inter-agency technical assessment mission to consider detailed proposals and a recommended timeline for the transition, drawdown and exit of UNIPSIL by 15 February 2013.⁹⁹

Special Court for Sierra Leone

On 9 October 2012, the President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone briefed the Council on the activities and achievements of the Court. She made reference to an independent nationwide survey conducted in Sierra Leone and Liberia which had found that 91 per cent of people in Sierra Leone and 78 per cent in Liberia believed that the Special Court had contributed to bringing peace to their countries. She said that credit for that was owed to the Council and its steadfast commitment to the work of the Court. She stated that the Court was the first United Nations-sponsored tribunal to carry out its work in the territory where serious violations of international humanitarian law had been committed. She also emphasized the innovative jurisprudence of the Court, which was the first to recognize forced marriage as a crime against humanity and sexual violence as a form of terrorism and the first to develop jurisprudence on the recruitment and use of child soldiers. She said that the Court would soon complete its final case against Charles Taylor and would then transition to residual status and close its doors; it would be the first international criminal tribunal to do so. She stressed the significance of the Residual Special Court for Sierra Leone and that the support of the Council would be essential.¹⁰⁰

The Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, in her briefing, said that despite the challenges the Court had faced during its decade of operation, especially indictment, staffing and witness protection issues, it had played a key role in prosecuting war criminals. She emphasized that the security of witnesses remained a significant challenge and it was critical to ensure that the Residual Special Court had sufficient financial resources to protect witnesses and those that might be put at risk by their testimony.¹⁰¹

The representative of Sierra Leone said the Court had successfully delivered on its goals, had made

significant contributions to gender justice and had laid the foundation for designating acts of forced marriage, sexual violence and the recruitment and use of child soldiers during conflict as punishable crimes under international law. Underlining the importance of the completion of the Court's mandate and its residual task, she called on the international community to continue its support and to ensure adequate resources.¹⁰²

Speakers expressed their appreciation for the work of the Special Court and its contribution to international criminal justice, the rule of law and maintaining peace and security in Sierra Leone as well as in the region.¹⁰³ They looked forward to the completion of the work of the Court and to its transition to the Residual Special Court, and called on the international community for continued financial support.¹⁰⁴

At the same meeting the Council issued a presidential statement in which it reiterated its strong support for the Special Court and commended the progress achieved. The Council recognized the need to address residual matters after its closure and urged the international community to continue to support the Court as it moved into its final stage of work.¹⁰⁵

Transition of UNIPSIL

On 13 March 2013, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the developments in the country and said that, in view of the progress made in Sierra Leone and by UNIPSIL in the implementation of its mandate, it was appropriate to begin a reconfiguration of UNIPSIL and to gradually transfer responsibilities to the United Nations country team and the Government. Meanwhile, noted that UNIPSIL would continue to perform three key residual tasks, namely, conflict prevention and mediation support for the constitutional review process; support for security sector reform; and support for the strengthening of human rights institutions. Emphasizing the importance of technical and financial resources for ensuring a smooth transition, he called on

⁹⁹ S/PRST/2012/25.

¹⁰⁰ S/PV.6844, pp. 2-4.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., pp. 4-6.

¹⁰² Ibid., pp. 6-7.

¹⁰³ Ibid., p. 9 (Germany); p. 10 (Pakistan, Togo); p. 12 (Russian Federation, Colombia); and p. 16 (Guatemala).

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., p. 9 (United Kingdom); p. 11 (Togo); and p. 15 (United States).

¹⁰⁵ S/PRST/2012/21.

the Peacebuilding Commission and international partners to continue their support.¹⁰⁶

The Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission reported that during its visit to Sierra Leone in February 2013 the Commission had found that, while many activities of UNIPSIL could be transferred to other actors, continued dialogue and political cooperation were still needed in some areas. He noted that many stakeholders had stressed the importance of the assistance of UNIPSIL to the constitutional review process and the security sector. He said that the Commission would be turning its attention to supporting the transition process, including by advocating for any necessary resources required to fill the gaps created by the mission's drawdown.¹⁰⁷

The representative of Sierra Leone confirmed his Government's readiness to cooperate with the United Nations, the Peacebuilding Commission and development partners in implementing a smooth and seamless transition process from UNIPSIL to the "normal United Nations Resident Coordinator system". He urged that the transition process be carefully managed, due consideration being given to the short-term and long-term impact on the gains made so far in Sierra Leone. He affirmed that his Government did not desire to be on the agenda of the Council indefinitely but that it saw the need for the Council to be guided in its decisions by the prevailing circumstances in Sierra Leone.¹⁰⁸

On 26 March 2013, the Council adopted resolution [2097 \(2013\)](#), by which it extended the mandate of UNIPSIL for a final period of one year, until 31 March 2014. The Council, *inter alia*, encouraged UNIPSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and bilateral and multilateral partners to form a transition steering group to determine the international community's support to Sierra Leone for the transfer of residual functions after the withdrawal of UNIPSIL. The representative of Sierra Leone, speaking after the vote, expressed his country's appreciation and assured

the Council of his Government's commitment towards the full implementation of the resolution.¹⁰⁹

On 18 September 2013, the Executive Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the developments in implementing a transition and exit plan aimed at the mission's full drawdown by 31 March 2014. He noted that UNIPSIL was making good progress and was firmly set to complete the process as scheduled. He added that the United Nations country team had advanced its work in finalizing a United Nations Development Assistance Framework for the period 2015-2020. He reported that Sierra Leone had embarked on major undertakings such as the launching of the country's development agenda, the Agenda for Prosperity, as well as on a constitutional review exercise.¹¹⁰

The Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission in his briefing focused on the transition of UNIPSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone's Agenda for Prosperity, and the future of the Commission's engagement. Underlining the significance of the challenges that Sierra Leone was facing during the post-conflict peacebuilding process, he stated that the drawdown of UNIPSIL should be seen as a transformation of the international support, rather than its culmination. Regarding the scaling-down of the role of the Peacebuilding Commission he said that the transition strategy was being developed and the Council would be consulted early in 2014.¹¹¹

The representative of Sierra Leone stated that his Government supported the drawdown of UNIPSIL. He added that the review of the engagement of the Peacebuilding Commission was an indication of the improved security environment in the country. Turning to the implementation of the Agenda for Prosperity, he urged the international community to continue to support the development process of the country, including by promoting foreign investment and supporting the country's education and key governance institutions.¹¹²

¹⁰⁶ [S/PV.6933](#), pp. 2-4.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹⁰⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 5-8.

¹⁰⁹ [S/PV.6942](#), p. 2.

¹¹⁰ [S/PV.7034](#), pp. 2-4.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 5-7.

Meetings: the situation in Sierra Leone

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against- abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6739 22 March 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) (S/2012/160)		Sierra Leone (Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)	Executive Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNIPSIL, Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All invitees	
S/PV.6748 11 April 2012	Report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2012/160)					S/PRST/2012/11
S/PV.6829 11 September 2012	Ninth report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2012/679)		Sierra Leone	Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All invitees	
S/PV.6831 12 September 2012	Ninth report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2012/679)	Draft resolution submitted by United Kingdom (S/2012/698)	Sierra Leone		Sierra Leone	Resolution 2065 (2012) 15-0-0
S/PV.6844 9 October 2012			Sierra Leone (Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)	President of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, Prosecutor of the Special Court for Sierra Leone	All Council members, ^a all invitees	S/PRST/2012/21
S/PV.6876 30 November 2012			Sierra Leone		Sierra Leone	S/PRST/2012/25

<i>Meeting record and date</i>	<i>Sub-item</i>	<i>Other documents</i>	<i>Rule 37 invitations</i>	<i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i>	<i>Speakers</i>	<i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i>
S/PV.6933 13 March 2013	Tenth report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2013/118)		Sierra Leone (Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)	Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All invitees	
S/PV.6942 26 March 2013	Tenth report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2013/118)	Draft resolution submitted by Australia, Luxembourg, Morocco, Rwanda, Togo, United Kingdom (S/2013/181)	Sierra Leone		Sierra Leone	Resolution 2097 (2013) 15-0-0
S/PV.7034 18 September 2013	Eleventh report of the Secretary-General on UNIPSIL (S/2013/547)		Sierra Leone (Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation)	Executive Representative of the Secretary-General, Chair of the Sierra Leone configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission	All invitees	

^a India was represented by the Minister of State for External Affairs.

6. The situation in the Great Lakes region

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held one meeting and adopted one presidential statement in connection with the situation in the Great Lakes region. On 24 February 2013, in Addis Ababa, 11 countries¹¹³ of the region signed the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. On 28 March 2013, by resolution [2098 \(2013\)](#), the Council welcomed the Framework and stressed its importance for the long-term stability of the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.¹¹⁴

Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework

On 25 July 2013, the Secretary-General, the President of the World Bank, the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for the Great Lakes Region, and the Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union briefed the Council on the implementation of the Peace, Security and Cooperation Framework for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Region. The Secretary-General stated that the Framework provided a clear road map for leaders to work together and define a common agenda for lasting peace and prosperity in the region. Expressing his deep concern about hostilities between the Mouvement du 23 mars and the Congolese armed forces, he called on all parties to achieve progress on the political track by returning to the Kampala talks. He also appealed to the Framework signatories to work constructively with each other and with the Special Envoy to develop benchmarks for their commitments; and called on the international community to use all the tools at its disposal, from international criminal prosecution and sanctions regimes to development assistance. In the

context of the prospects for durable peace in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he mentioned the Intervention Brigade under the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) as an important tool, but as only one part of a comprehensive approach that embraced security and development.¹¹⁵

The President of the World Bank, speaking via videoconference from Washington D.C., informed the Council about his recent trip with the Secretary-General to the Great Lakes region. He stressed the strong link between development and peace, and the commitment of the United Nations and the World Bank group to collaborate and bring tangible benefits to the people of the Great Lakes region in pursuance of peace, stability and development. He announced that the World Bank group would provide an additional \$1 billion for cross-border development issues, in particular for hydroelectric power projects, transport linkages and border management, and agriculture and rural livelihoods targeted at refugees and internally displaced persons.¹¹⁶

The Special Envoy of the Secretary-General drew the attention of the Council to the high number of cases of killings, rape, sexual assault and the displacement of people in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, and stressed that zero tolerance of gender-based violence needed to be implemented as a fundamental value of the Framework. She also reported that the first meeting of the regional oversight mechanism for the Framework was held in Addis Ababa on 26 May, and welcomed the progress made by the technical support committee of the mechanism in the development of benchmarks and indicators of progress for the implementation of the Framework.¹¹⁷

The Commissioner for Peace and Security of the African Union commended the quality of the working relationship that the Special Envoy had established with the Special Representative of the African Union for the Great Lakes Region. He expressed the view of the African Union that the dynamic set in motion by

¹¹³ Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Congo, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, South Africa, South Sudan, Uganda, United Republic of Tanzania and Zambia. The following four intergovernmental organizations act as guarantors for the Framework: African Union, International Conference on the Great Lakes Region, Southern African Development Community and United Nations.

¹¹⁴ For more information on the situation in the eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, see part I, sect. 7, “The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo”.

¹¹⁵ [S/PV.7011](#), p. 5.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 6-7.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 8-9.