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Security Council  
5036th Meeting\* (AM)

SECURITY COUNCIL EXTENDS UN MISSION IN LIBERIA UNTIL 19 SEPTEMBER 2005,  
UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTING RESOLUTION 1561 (2004)

The Security Council today extended the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for another year, until 19 September 2005, as it looked ahead to that country's elections, planned for no later than October 2005.

Through the unanimous adoption of resolution 1561 (2004), the Council called on all Liberian parties to demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process and to work together to ensure free, fair and transparent elections.

The Council called on the international community to respond to the continuing need for funds for the critically important rehabilitation and reintegration phase and to fulfil pledges made at the International Reconstruction Conference on 5 and 6 February 2004.

Also by the resolution, the Council requested the Secretary-General, through his Special Representative, to continue to report periodically to the Council on UNMIL's progress on the implementation of its mandate.

**Speaking after the vote, the United States representative said that it was his Government's policy to ensure that members of the United States armed forces serving in peace operations were protected from criminal prosecution or other assertions of jurisdiction by the International Criminal Court (ICC). Normally, it would seek express provisions in the resolution providing such protections for personnel not party to the Rome Statute, but such arrangements had been made bilaterally with the Liberian Government, absent those provisions in the mandate extension.**

The meeting was called to order at 10:40 a.m. and was adjourned at 10:45 a.m.

Council Resolution

The complete text of resolution 1561 (2004) reads, as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Recalling its previous resolutions and statements by its President on Liberia, including its resolutions 1509 (2003) of 19 September 2003 and 1497 (2003) of 1 August 2003, and the 27 August 2003

Statement by its President (S/PRST/2003/14) and other relevant resolutions and statements,

"Welcoming the Secretary-General's report of 10 September 2004 (S/2004/725) and its recommendations,

"Recognizing the critical role the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) continues to play in the Liberian peace process and welcoming the support and continued engagement of the African Union (AU) and its close coordination with ECOWAS and the United Nations,

"Noting the substantial progress made to date in the disarmament phase of the programme of disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants,

"Recalling that its resolutions 1521 (2003) and 1532 (2004) provide for measures against any individuals engaged in activities aimed at undermining peace and stability in Liberia and the subregion,

"1. Decides to extend the mandate of UNMIL until 19 September 2005;

"2. Calls on all Liberian parties to demonstrate their full commitment to the peace process and to work together to ensure that free, fair and transparent elections take place as planned no later than October 2005;

"3. Calls on the international community to respond to the continuing need for funds for the critically important rehabilitation and reintegration phase and to fulfil pledges made at the International Reconstruction Conference on 5 and 6 February 2004;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General through his Special Representative to continue to report periodically to the Council on UNMIL's progress on the implementation of its mandate;

"5. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter."

#### Secretary-General's Report

For the Security Council's consideration this morning of the situation in Liberia, it had before it the fourth progress report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission there (UNMIL), dated 10 September (document S/2004/725). With the Mission moving into a new phase of its operations and elections scheduled for October 2005, the Secretary-General recommends that UNMIL's mandate be extended for a period of 12 months until 19 September 2005.

The Secretary-General finds that UNMIL has continued to make progress in stabilizing Liberia and creating the necessary security conditions for the full implementation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but despite such significant achievements, many challenges still lie ahead. The Mission's new phase of operations will focus particularly on: rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants and community development; the restoration of State administration nationwide; the strengthening of the rule-of-law institutions and restructuring of the

security sector; promotion of the process of recovery and reconstruction; and the organization of free and fair elections in October 2005.

The report says that the deployment of UNMIL troops throughout the country is nearing completion, and significant strides have been made in disarming and demobilizing combatants. The consequent improvement in security has greatly facilitated the delivery of humanitarian assistance and progress towards the restoration of State authority. The Mission continues to support the rehabilitation of Liberia's legal and judicial institutions, as well as its corrections system. The programme for the restructuring and reform of the country's security sector has made good strides with the reopening of the Police Academy, the commencement of training for new police recruits and the enhancement of the activities of the Liberia National Police, both in Monrovia and in the country's interior.

Furthermore, the Secretary-General says he remains concerned about the problems that the National Transitional Government is encountering in functioning as a cohesive administration. Protracted disputes, including over claims by some ministers that individuals from their respective factions should be nominated to key government and parastatal positions, have hindered the effective functioning of the Transitional Government. The continuing divisions within Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), which have led to violent incidents between opposing elements in Monrovia and elsewhere, are also a destabilizing factor, which urgently needs to be resolved.

At this critical juncture, the parties concerned should put the national interest above personal interests and ensure that differences are resolved so that the restoration of stability in the country can proceed without delay, the report urges. All Liberian parties must work together in a spirit of cooperation and reconciliation to ensure the consolidation of much-needed peace in Liberia. The UNMIL will continue to work with the leaders of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in assisting the parties to overcome problems that threaten to hinder the peace process.

Also according to the report, the rehabilitation and reintegration phase of the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration programme is a vital core element in the process of ensuring durable peace in Liberia and in enhancing subregional security and stability. The ex-combatants constitute a highly volatile group of unemployed youth with little or no education or job skills, for whom the provision of training, education and work opportunities is urgently needed. As the completion of the disarmament and demobilization phases nears, there are some 70,000 ex-combatants seeking to benefit from the reintegration programme, which is currently experiencing a serious funding shortfall. The Secretary-General expresses his appreciation to donors that have already contributed, and he also urgently calls for further generous pledges from the international community to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Trust Fund for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration to ensure that the reintegration process, which is critical for the success of the peace process, is adequate, effective and completed in a timely manner.

The report also finds that the ongoing collaboration between UNMIL and ECOWAS has contributed significantly to the progress which has been achieved in the Liberian peace process. The Secretary-General welcomes the establishment of a high-level National Transitional Government of Liberia-United Nations-ECOWAS consultative mechanism, which will hold a special meeting in New York on 20 September. The mechanism should constitute a very useful forum for further development of a common strategy in support of the peace process. The peace process in Liberia would also benefit from enhancement of cooperation in the security, economic and development spheres through the revitalization of the Mano River Union. The Secretary-General trusts that the momentum generated by the summit of the three countries in May will be built upon in the coming months.

Also, the report finds that progress has been made by the National Elections Commission, in collaboration with UNMIL and other international partners, towards the organization of the presidential and legislative elections in October 2005. Much remains to be done, however, and the Secretary-General appeals to the international community to provide the necessary resources to ensure that the National Elections Commission can fulfil its mandate to conduct free and fair elections as scheduled.

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\* The 5034th and 5035th meetings were closed.