



**The Seventh High-level meeting of Heads of UN Peace
Missions in West Africa
Abidjan, 12 May 2006**

1. The VII meeting of the Heads of the United Nations Peace Missions in West Africa was held in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 12 May 2006 under the Chairmanship of Ahmedou Ould-Abdallah, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for West Africa (UNOWA). The meeting was attended by Victor Angelo (UNIOSIL), Alan Doss (UNMIL), Joao Honwana (UNOGBIS) and Pierre Schori (ONUCI). The SRSGs paid a courtesy visit to President Laurent Gbagbo and Prime Minister Charles Konan Banny.
2. The Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (SRSGs) discussed the situation in the area stretching from The Gambia to Conakry Guinea and emphasized the necessity for a sub-regional approach in addressing it. In this respect, they encouraged UNOWA to convene a meeting on sub-regional confidence building.
3. The SRSGs welcomed the UN Security Council's support for the consolidation of peace in Liberia through the extension of UNMIL's mandate. They noted that while the Government of Liberia moves forward with difficult but necessary reforms UNMIL will remain the guarantor of national security. These reforms and the revival of the economy require the vigorous support of the international community.
4. The SRSGs acknowledged that the significant achievements made in Sierra Leone with the support of the UN and the international community, need to be further consolidated and sustained with greater focus on reforms, capacity building, promoting economic and social development and strengthening the democratization process. They underscored the important role that the UN continues to play in Sierra Leone through UNIOSIL, including in the facilitation of national elections in 2007. It was also emphasized that the experience of UNIOSIL would contribute to UN reforms, in terms of a more integrated presence of the UN system both in the field and at the level of the Peace building Commission.
5. The SRSG acknowledged UNOGBIS' efforts in consolidating peace in Guinea Bissau, especially with regards to promoting reconciliation and security sector reform. However, the country still presents a mixed picture of positive and negative developments: on the one hand the military operation in the north led to a humanitarian

crisis and heightened political tensions. On the other hand the approval of the Government's programme for 2006, and the extension of an IMF Staff Monitoring Programme (S.M.P.) for 2006 raised hope for a successful donor-round table conference by the end of the year.

6. The SRSGs welcomed the renewed commitment of the President and the Prime Minister of Côte d'Ivoire to implement the road map in a timely and effective manner. The SRSGs further called on all the Ivorian leaders to take all necessary measures to start without delay the effective implementation of DDR, identification and redeployment of State administration throughout the country. This will help create an enabling environment for the holding of credible elections, as provided by SC Resolution 1633.

7. The SRSGs expressed deep concerns about the persistent human rights violations and the resulting culture of impunity in the sub-region. In this connection, they stressed the imperative of building on the lessons learned from the transitional justice experiences in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

8. The SRSGs stressed the crucial importance of continuing to include youth employment on the peace building agenda for West Africa. In that respect, the SRSGs requested the United Nations Country Teams to put forward practical proposals during their meeting in Sierra Leone in June.

9. The SRSGs reaffirmed the need to pursue a gender perspective in all peace efforts in West Africa, in keeping with SC Resolution 1325.

10. The SRSGs acknowledged the seriousness of the malnutrition situation in the Sahel countries and the ongoing spread of avian flu virus. They noted that preparedness is critical to effectively respond to these threats.

11. The SRSGs expressed their support for the Secretary-General's reform measures aimed at improving the conditions of service of field staff.

12. They welcomed the role of ECOWAS in promoting peace and stability in the region and urges the international community to continue supporting its efforts.

13. The next SRSG meeting will take place in Bissau.

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