

UNITED NATIONS



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*UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE
(UNAMSIL)*

PRESS RELEASE

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**SECURITY COUNCIL BACKS SIERRA LEONE'S PEACE EFFORTS AND
EXTENDS UNAMSIL'S MANDATE**

Freetown – In support of the Government of Sierra Leone's efforts to continue building on the peace process, the United Nations Security Council yesterday extended the mandate of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for another six months.

The Council's action follows on the heels of recent proposals by Secretary-General Kofi Annan to eventually downsize the operation as the first step towards a gradual handover of security and other responsibilities to the country's Government.

In yesterday's unanimously adopted resolution, the Council urged UNAMSIL, guided by an evaluation of the current circumstances and the Government's capacity to take responsibility for security, to complete the first two phases of the Secretary-General's plan, including a reduction of 4,500 UN peacekeepers, within eight months.

The Council also emphasized that the development of the administrative capacities of the Government of Sierra Leone, particularly an effective and sustainable police force, army, penal system and independent judiciary, was essential to long-term peace and development. It urged the Government, with the assistance of donors and UNAMSIL, to accelerate the consolidation of civil authority and public services throughout the country, and to strengthen its operational effectiveness in the security sector.

Meanwhile, amid concerns over ongoing fighting in neighbouring Liberia and regional instability, the Council encouraged the Presidents of the Mano River Union – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone – to continue dialogue and to implement their commitments to building regional peace and security. The resolution also encouraged the renewed efforts of the Economic Community of West African States and Morocco towards a settlement of the crisis in the region.

As for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which will deal with war crimes committed during the country's decade-long civil war, the Council welcomed the start of the tribunal's operations, and encouraged donors to contribute generously to the court's Trust Fund and to disburse existing pledges rapidly. UNAMSIL was also urged to negotiate rapidly a memorandum of understanding with the Special Court in order to promptly provide all necessary administrative and related support.

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**SECURITY COUNCIL EXTENDS MANDATE OF UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA
LEONE**

FOR SIX MONTHS, BEGINNING 30 SEPTEMBER

Resolution 1436 (2002) Adopted Unanimously

The Security Council this evening decided to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for six months starting 30 September.

By the unanimous adoption of resolution 1436 (2002), the Council also urged UNAMSIL to complete the first two phases of the Secretary General's proposals for adjustments to the size, composition and deployment of the Mission, as the security situation improved and the capacity of the national security sector increased. Those proposals include the reduction of 4,500 troops within eight months.

By other terms of the resolution, the Council welcomed the National Recovery Strategy of the Sierra Leone and called on the international community to support it. It emphasized that an effective police force, army, penal system and judiciary were essential for long-term peace and development and urged the consolidation of civil authority and public services throughout the country. Towards those goals, it supported the deployment of up to 170 civilian police in UNAMSIL, to be recruited as necessary on the recommendation of the steering committee.

By further terms, the Council expressed concern at the continuing financial shortfall for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in the multi-donor Trust Fund. It urged the Government of Sierra Leone to actively seek additional resources for reintegration activities.

Through the resolution, the Council also urged UNAMSIL to negotiate support arrangements for the Special Court of Sierra Leone and encouraged UNAMSIL to continue to support the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons.

This afternoon's meeting, which began at 7:20 p.m., was adjourned at 7:25 p.m.

Resolution

The text of resolution 1436 (2002) reads as follows:

"The Security Council,

"Recalling its previous resolutions and the statements of its President concerning the situation in Sierra Leone,

"Affirming the commitment of all States to respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Sierra Leone,

"Welcoming the peaceful elections held in Sierra Leone in May 2002 and commending the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) for the support it provided,

"Expressing its concern at the continuing fragile security situation in the Mano River region, particularly the conflict in Liberia, and at the substantial number of refugees and the humanitarian consequences for the civilian, refugee and internally displaced populations in the region, and emphasising the importance of cooperation among the countries of the Mano River Union,

"Reiterating the importance of the effective consolidation of State authority throughout Sierra Leone, the extension of effective State control over and regulation of the diamond fields, the reintegration of ex-combatants, voluntary and unhindered return of refugees and internally displaced persons, and full respect for human rights and the rule of law, paying special attention to the protection of women and children, and stressing continued United Nations support to the Government of Sierra Leone in fulfilling these objectives,

"Welcoming the launch of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and emphasising their importance in taking effective action on impunity and accountability and in promoting reconciliation,

"Welcoming the progress made in developing the capacity of the Sierra Leone Police and armed forces, but recognising the need for further strengthening to enable them to maintain security and stability independently,

"Emphasizing the importance of the continuing support of UNAMSIL to the Government of Sierra Leone in the consolidation of peace and stability,

"Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 5 September 2002 (S/2002/987), particularly its proposals for adjustments to the strength of UNAMSIL, and stressing the need for UNAMSIL to maintain an appropriate level of military capability and mobility while these adjustments are made,

"1. *Decides* that the mandate of UNAMSIL shall be extended for a period of six months from 30 September 2002;

"2. *Expresses* its appreciation to those Member States providing troops, civilian police personnel and support elements to UNAMSIL and those who have made commitments to do so;

"3. *Takes note* of the Secretary-General's proposals for adjustments to the size, composition and deployment of UNAMSIL, as outlined in paragraphs 26 to 36 and 58 of his report of 5 September 2002 (S/2002/987), and notes the improvements in the security situation in Sierra Leone;

"4. *Urges* UNAMSIL, guided by an evaluation of the security situation and the capacity of the Sierra Leonean security sector to take responsibility for internal and external security, to complete phases 1 and 2 of the Secretary-General's plan, including a reduction of 4,500 troops within eight months, taking into account the necessary arrangements that need to be completed, and requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council at the end of each phase, and at regular intervals, on the progress made by UNAMSIL in implementing the adjustments and in the planning of subsequent phases, and to make any necessary recommendations;

"5. *Expresses* concern at the continuing financial shortfall in the multi-donor Trust Fund for the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programme, and urges the Government of Sierra Leone to seek actively the urgently needed additional resources for reintegration;

"6. *Welcomes* the National Recovery Strategy of the Government of Sierra Leone and calls on States, international organisations and non-governmental organizations to assist in the wide range of recovery efforts and to pledge additional financial support in the context of the forthcoming Consultative Group meeting;

"7. *Emphasizes* that the development of the administrative capacities of the Government of Sierra Leone, particularly an effective and sustainable police force, army, penal system and independent judiciary, is essential to long-term peace and development, and therefore urges the Government of Sierra Leone, with the assistance of donors and of UNAMSIL, in accordance with its mandate, to accelerate the consolidation of civil authority and public services throughout the country, and to strengthen the operational effectiveness of the security sector;

"8. *Notes* the efforts made by the Government of Sierra Leone towards effective control of the diamond mining areas, expresses concern about the continuing volatility there and urges the Government of Sierra Leone to set out and implement urgently a policy to regulate and control diamond mining activities;

"9. *Emphasizes* the importance of a co-ordinated approach to strengthening the Sierra Leone Police, based on a detailed analysis of its training and development needs, led by a steering committee chaired by the Sierra Leone Police, notes the Secretary-General's recommendations on enhancing the role of the United Nations civilian police to support this process, supports the deployment of up to 170 civilian police in UNAMSIL, to be recruited as necessary on the recommendation of the steering committee, and requests the Secretary-General to update the Council in his next report on the deployment of

United Nations civilian police in the light of the steering committee's decisions;

"10. *Reiterates* its strong support for the Special Court for Sierra Leone, welcomes the start of the Court's operations, encourages donors to contribute generously to the Trust Fund for the Special Court and to disburse existing pledges rapidly, and urges UNAMSIL to negotiate rapidly a memorandum of understanding with the Special Court in order to provide all necessary administrative and related support promptly, as requested in paragraph 9 of resolution 1400 (2002), including on the identification and securing of crime scenes;

"11. *Welcomes* progress made in establishing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, and urges donors urgently to commit funds to its revised budget;

"12. *Encourages* the Presidents of the Mano River Union to continue dialogue and to implement their commitments to building regional peace and security, and encourages the renewed efforts of the Economic Community of West African States and Morocco towards a settlement of the crisis in the Mano River Union region;

"13. *Welcomes* the Secretary General's commitment to finding a solution to the conflict in Liberia, so as to build peace in the sub-region, including through the establishment of a contact group, demands that the armed forces of Liberia and any armed groups refrain from illegal incursions into the territory of Sierra Leone, calls upon all States to comply fully with all relevant resolutions of the Council, including the embargo on all deliveries of weapons and military equipment to Liberia, and encourages the Sierra Leonean armed forces, together with UNAMSIL, to maintain intensive patrolling of the border with Liberia;

"14. *Encourages* the Government of Sierra Leone to pay special attention to the needs of women and children affected by the war, as outlined in paragraphs 47 to 48 of the report of the Secretary-General of 5 September 2002 (S/2002/987);

"15. *Welcomes* the steps taken by UNAMSIL to prevent sexual abuse and exploitation of women and children and encourages UNAMSIL to continue to enforce the policy of zero tolerance for any such acts perpetrated by any one employed by UNAMSIL, while calling on States concerned to take the necessary measures to bring to justice their own nationals responsible for such crimes;

"16. *Encourages* the continued support of UNAMSIL, within its capabilities and areas of deployment, for the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons, and urges all stakeholders to continue to cooperate to this end to fulfil their commitments under the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement of 10 November 2000 (S/2000/1091);

"17. *Welcomes* the Secretary-General's intention to keep the security, political, humanitarian and human rights situation in Sierra Leone under close review and to report to the Council, after due consultations with troop-contributing countries and the Government of Sierra Leone, with any additional recommendations;

"18. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter."

Background

As the Security Council met this afternoon to consider the situation in Sierra Leone, it had before it the Secretary-General's Fifteenth Report on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (document S/2002/987), in which he recommends that the Security Council extend the Mission for a period of six months and approve proposals for the adjustment and drawdown of the Mission.

According to the report, the security situation in Sierra Leone has remained generally stable since the elections of 14 May, with the exception of raids on border villages by armed elements from Liberia and occasional clashes in diamond-rich areas. However, the 24,000 ex-combatants who are still awaiting reintegration opportunities are becoming increasingly restless, and the large numbers of unemployed youths, mainly in urban centres, present another long-term problem. Security remains a concern in the diamond-producing areas. The conflict in Liberia still constitutes the most serious threat to stability in Sierra Leone. The presence of former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) field commander Sam Bockarie and his followers in Liberia could pose the risk of a vicious cycle of violence, not only in Sierra Leone, but also in the wider Mano River Union subregion.

Notwithstanding those challenges, the successful completion of the disarmament process last January and the continuing stability since the May elections have created new circumstances that make it possible to consider adjustments to the size and composition of UNAMSIL, the Secretary-General notes in his report. In order to avoid creating a security vacuum, progress in building up the capacity of the country's police and army will constitute a key security benchmark. Completing reintegration of former combatants and restoring effective Government control over diamond mining, as well as progress towards the resolution of the conflict in Liberia, are also important benchmarks for the Mission's drawdown.

In paragraphs 26-36, the Secretary-General offers detailed proposals for adjustments in the military, civilian police and other civilian components of UNAMSIL in consultation and coordination with the Government. The proposed plan for downsizing the military component is based on a series of possible security scenarios, varying from a worst-case scenario by which withdrawal could be completed by December 2004. A broad, phased drawdown concept remains valid for all scenarios and would result in troop reductions to about 5,000 by late 2004. In the final phase, a presence of some 2,000 military personnel is envisaged. The civilian police component, in partnership with the Commonwealth team, would contribute proactively to strengthening the capacity of the Sierra Leone police, and would require an increase from 60 to 185 personnel. Adjustments to the civilian components would take into account new tasks that may be entrusted to the Mission, such as support for the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

As Sierra Leone today is one of the poorest countries in the world, the report notes that the United Nations country team, working together with UNAMSIL, has developed a plan for supporting the national recovery strategy, focusing on coordination for recovery, facilitating the reintegration of returning populations, encouraging community reconciliation and promoting the protection of human rights. The

funding needs for those efforts will be presented at a donors' meeting planned for November. The humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons and refugees will remain a major challenge in the peace-building process, and the influx of Liberian refugees remains a source of concern.

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