other war-affected and victims of sexual violence receive US$80. The EITI board renews Sierra Leone’s Candidate status, setting a new validation deadline of 9 December 2012.

**August** – SLPP selects the former head of the NPRC government, Julius Maada Bio, as its candidate for 2012 presidential elections. Bio, popular in parts of the south and east, is criticised by opposition figures for alleged past abuses and his involvement in the 1992 coup.

**September** – Bio is struck on the head with a rock during a visit to Bo, Sierra Leone’s second city. Several APC buildings are torched in retaliation and violence breaks out between rival SLPP and APC supporters. A temporary ban on political rallies is imposed. The UN Security Council renews the UNIPSIL mandate for a further year with specific instructions to provide assistance during 2012 elections.

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**Profiles**

**National**

**Liberia**

**Charles Taylor**

Charles Taylor was leader of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) rebel group that invaded Liberia in 1989, sparking years of civil war. Backed by Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire and Libya, he successfully deposed the government of Samuel Doe and in 1997 won the national elections that followed the Abuja peace process. Throughout his time as NPFL leader and President of Liberia (1997–2003), Taylor was strongly implicated in supporting Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels in Sierra Leone and other rebel groups operating in Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire. Taylor was indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone in 2003, which, combined with impending military defeat by LURD and MODEL rebel forces, convinced him to accept exile in Nigeria.

Taylor’s exile ended in 2006 under US pressure. He was arrested on return to Monrovia and handed over to the Special Court to face trial on multiple counts of war crimes. The trial was moved from Freetown to The Hague amid concerns that it might destabilise the tentative peace in Sierra Leone. Despite repeated delays and postponements, the prosecution and defence completed their cases in 2011. If Taylor is convicted, the UK has agreed to provide for his imprisonment.

**Congress for Democratic Change (CDC)**

Widely considered the most potent challenger to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and the Unity Party in the 2011 elections, CDC was formed by ex-footballer George Weah and had fared well in 2005 presidential elections, losing a second round ‘run-off’ vote. Weah and CDC received much support from ex-combatants and youths, who engaged in violent protests over the election results.

Experienced politician and former UN worker Winston Tubman was CDC presidential candidate in the 2011 election, with Weah running for vice-president. CDC withdrew from the second round of voting alleging electoral fraud. Following unrest, the CDC cancelled further protests and recognised the government.

**Ellen Johnson Sirleaf**

Since taking office in 2006, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has built an international reputation as a progressive reformer. A former World Bank and UN official, Sirleaf first stood for election in 1997 and was part of the transitional government from 2003–2006. She was appointed President in elections in 2005. In her first year Sirleaf enacted a series of reforms aimed at fighting corruption and improving financial accountability. She successfully lobbied the UN to lift sanctions and secured major debt relief from the World Bank. Sirleaf has faced criticisms domestically, most notably her slow implementation of recommendations made by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), which controversially recommended that she be barred from public office. Her decision to contest 2011 presidential elections broke her earlier promise to stand down after one term in office.

**Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)**

LURD fought in Liberia’s second civil war. It was a coalition of former armed groups, primarily fighters from the former United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO). LURD received strong backing from Guinea, greatly facilitated by the close relationship between Ayesha Conneh, wife of chairman Sekou Conneh, and Guinea’s President Conté. It was also allied with Sierra Leone’s Kamajor militia. Invading Liberia from bases in Guinea in 1999 and 2000, LURD controlled much of Liberia by 2003, eventually helping to force Taylor into exile. LURD was part of Liberia’s transitional government (2003–06), but its leadership became raked by internal disputes as its rank-and-file members were demobilised. Sekou Conneh publically backed the 2005 election results. Many former combatants, disillusioned with reintegration, remain vulnerable to recruitment into conflicts in neighbouring Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire.

**Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL)**

MODEL entered Liberia in 2003 from Côte d’Ivoire, occupying much of the south and contributing to Taylor’s removal. Composed primarily of ethnic Krahn and former ULIMO fighters, the group was backed by Côte d’Ivoire. Its leader, Thomas Nimely, became Foreign Minister in the transitional government.

**National Electoral Commission (NEC)**

The NEC has played a crucial role in steering Liberia’s post-conflict elections, including a national referendum and presidential elections in 2011. In 2009, USAID provided a five-year grant to the NEC of US$18.5 million to increase capacity and provide support for the 2011 elections. CDC accused NEC of bias towards the government as well as electoral fraud during the 2011 vote. Under pressure form CDC leader Winston Tubman, NEC Chair James Fromayan stepped down, replaced by Co-Chair Elizabeth Nelson. International observers from the Carter Center and ECOWAS commended NEC and judged both voting rounds
to be free, fair and transparent. In early 2012 the CDC accepted the results of the elections.

**National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)**

Charles Taylor’s NPFL invaded Liberia in 1989. Initially backed by Libya, Côte d’Ivoire and Burkina Faso, NPFL supported RUF in Sierra Leone from 1991, later trading arms for diamonds with the group. Following the end of the first civil war and Taylor gaining the presidency in 1997, many NPFL fighters were incorporated into the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) or joined regional insurgencies at Taylor’s behest.

**National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL)**

The NTGL was established in 2003 as part of Comprehensive Peace Agreement that officially ended the war, following the exile of Charles Taylor. Its chair, former businessman Charles Gyude Bryant, struggled to reign in various elements of the transitional government, which included former rebel groups and Taylor-loyalists. The administration was hampered by corruption and competition for lucrative positions, leading donors to impose the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Plan (GEMAP) in 2005, to counter misappropriation of development aid. Bryant handed power to the newly elected government headed by Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf in 2006. He was later arrested for embezzling state funds during the NTGL period, but was acquitted in 2009.

**National Union for Democratic Progress (NUDP)**

NUDP was formed by Prince Yormie Johnson as part of his bid for the 2011 presidential elections. Formerly leader of the rebel INPFL, a breakaway faction of NPFL, Johnson was responsible for the capture and execution of President Samuel Doe in 1990. In 2005 he was elected Senator for Nimba County. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommended he be barred from public office.

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)**

TRC was established by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf in 2006 to investigate human rights abuses committed between 1979 and 2003 and document the events of the civil wars. It called a number of prominent politicians before it, including Prince Johnson, Sekou Conneh, and Sirleaf, who apologised for having initially supported Charles Taylor’s movement. In 2009 its final report included Sirleaf among a list of prominent politicians it recommended be barred from public office for 30 years. Implementation of TRC recommendations has been limited. In 2011 the Supreme Court ruled that barring Sirleaf from public office would breach the right to due process.

**Unity Party (UP)**

The UP finished a distant second in 1997 elections won by Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Party. In 2005 UP candidate Ellen Johnson Sirleaf won the presidential elections, becoming the first elected female head of state in Africa. In parliamentary elections, UP only won 9 of 64 seats in the House of Representatives and 4 of 30 in the Senate. In 2009, the Liberia Action Party (LAP) and the Liberian Unification Party (LUP) merged with UP, bringing support from figures such as former senior INPFL rebel commander and senator for Nimba County, Adolphus Dolo.

**Sierra Leone**

**Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)**

AFRC comprised disaffected soldiers in the Sierra Leonean military. It staged a coup against Ahmad Tejan Kabbah’s civilian government in May 1997, in collaboration with rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) fighters. A more detailed profile is available in Accord 9 (2000): Paying the Price: the Sierra Leone peace process [www.c-r.org].

**Ahmad Tejan Kabbah**

Elected president on a Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP) ticket in 1996, former UN bureaucrat Ahmad Tejan Kabbah guided Sierra Leone’s first post-war government through the difficult process of national reconstruction. Kabbah’s 1996–2002 term was characterised by conflict and instability, including a coup in 1997 and a brutal AFRC/RUF attack on Freetown in January 1999. Kabbah’s administration was only able to secure peace and implement disarmament following the intervention of UK and UN forces in 2000. By January 2002, Kabbah was able to declare an end to the war, winning a landslide victory in elections in May. Support for Kabbah’s government waned as the slow pace of development exposed systemic problems of corruption and limited capacity. Popular disillusionment reflected the immense challenges faced, not least in managing public expectations of peace dividends. Kabbah stood down in 2007 having served a maximum two terms and was succeeded as president by Ernest Bai Koroma of the All People’s Congress (APC).

**All People’s Congress (APC)**

APC returned to government in 2007 after fifteen years in opposition. Having been removed from power via military coup in 1992, the party struggled to overcome its association with political abuses and economic mismanagement widely blamed for fomenting the war. After successive electoral defeats in 1996 and 2002, APC won the 2007 elections under the leadership of reformer Ernest Bai Koroma, securing the majority of support from its traditional heartlands in the northern Temne districts and the Western Area.

**Civilian Defence Forces (CDF)**

CDF local militia comprised primarily traditional Kamajor hunters from the eastern Mende districts, established to defend communities against RUF attacks. At their height they proved highly effective in reversing RUF gains and by the end of the civil war they had inflicted devastating losses on the rebel group. Following the end of conflict they largely disarmed and demobilised. Ex-CDF fighters were generally indistinguishable from the wider youth population.

**Ernest Bai Koroma**

Ernest Bai Koroma was the first APC president of the post-war era, defeating the SLPP’s Solomon Berewa in 2007 elections. A former businessman, Koroma promised reform, promising to tackle corruption and unemployment. Koroma has increased the Anti-Corruption Commission’s powers of prosecution and forced government ministers to declare their assets. He has overseen development of the nascent private sector, promoting investment in tourism and agriculture, and has managed resuscitation of the mining sector. His dealings with foreign mining firms have been criticised, mirroring pre-war concerns over corrupt practices in granting concessions. Affected communities have also protested at the environmental impact and limited local economic benefit of large-scale industrial mining. Despite continuing high unemployment, Koroma retains strong support, particularly among the northern Temne-dominated provinces.

**Foday Sankoh**

Foday Sankoh was founder and leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). He inspired cultish loyalty from many of his recruits,
particularly child soldiers who commonly referred to him as ‘Papa’ Sankoh. A Temne from northern Sierra Leone, Sankoh was a former army corporal and received insurgency training in Libya in the 1980s. Following RUF’s invasion of Sierra Leone in 1991, Sankoh largely remained in the bush. In 1996 he travelled to Abidjan for the signing of the Peace Accord. He was arrested for treason in Nigeria in March 1997, leaving control of RUF with his deputy, Sam ‘Mosquito’ Bockarie. He was eventually released and pardoned as part of the July 1999 Lomé Agreement, which appointed him as Vice-President of Sierra Leone and head of the mineral resources commission. In 2000, Sankoh was again arrested after his bodyguards killed protestors outside his residence in Freetown. In March 2002 the Special Court for Sierra Leone indicted Sankoh on 17 counts of crimes against humanity, and violations of the Geneva Conventions and international humanitarian law. Sankoh died in custody on 29 July 2003.

**Lomé Agreement**

The Lomé Agreement, signed between Foday Sankoh and President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on 7 July 1999, officially ended nine years of conflict in Sierra Leone – although it collapsed soon afterwards. A more detailed analysis of the agreement is available in Accord 9 (2000): *Paying the Price: the Sierra Leone peace process* (www.c-r.org).

**Revolutionary United Front/Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF/RUF(P))**

The rebel RUF invaded Sierra Leone from neighbouring Liberia in 1991, aiming to overthrow the APC government of Joseph Momoh. Through the ensuing decade of civil war, RUF was responsible for widespread atrocities and became notorious for its involvement in lucrative diamond mining. By the end of the war in 2002, RUF was a greatly weakened force, with many exhausted rank-and-file combatants seeking to disarm and demobilise for good. Prosecution of senior RUF leaders by the Special Court further contributed to the dissolution of the group and its command structures. With RUF largely dismantled, attempts to establish a viable RUF Party (RUF(P)) were unsuccessful: it failed to win a single seat in 2002 and did not contest the 2007 elections.

**Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP)**

SLPP is the main opposition party in Sierra Leone. It relies on support from Mende in southern and eastern provinces. The party was in government between 1976 and 2007 led by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. The loss of the 2007 elections was blamed on rampant corruption and the role of a break-away party, PMDC, in splitting the Mende vote. Infighting in 2011 delayed the process of choosing a new candidate to contest 2012 elections, but among those in contention are likely to be former head of the National Provisional Ruling Council, Julius Maade Bio.

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)**

TRC was established in July 2002 in accordance with the terms of the 1999 Lomé Peace Accord. Comprising seven commissioners – four Sierra Leoneans and three international members – the TRC compiled a history of the conflict and its abuses, holding public hearings around the country. It has been criticised for failing to engage with local communities. TRC had no powers to pass sentence or grant amnesty, but it made recommendations that the government was required to implement. In practice, implementation has been limited. The sluggish progress of a reparations programme, for instance, has reinforced perceptions that ex-combatants have been prioritised over victims in post-conflict assistance.

**Regional**

**Côte d’Ivoire**

Côte d’Ivoire was the launching point for Charles Taylor’s NPFL invasion of Liberia in 1989. Taylor was supported by President Houphouët-Boigny, who harboured a personal grudge against then Liberian President Samuel Doe. Taylor’s relationship with Côte D’Ivoire changed after his forces supported rebels fighting against President Laurent Gbagbo in 2000. In response, Gbagbo supported MODEL rebels in Liberia in 2003, enabling them to open a southern front in the war against Taylor’s regime. MODEL made swift territorial gains, hastening Taylor’s exile and the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Côte d’Ivoire has continued to suffer from political and military instability as Liberia and Sierra Leone emerge from conflict. Liberian ex-combatants have been recruited as mercenaries in Côte d’Ivoire.

**Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**

ECOWAS is an organisation of sixteen West African states initially established in 1975 to promote economic cooperation and integration. It has intervened militarily in both conflicts, led by Nigeria. In 1990 the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was deployed to Liberia and maintained a peacekeeping force in the country until 1998. The spread of war to Sierra Leone in 1991 was due in part to Charles Taylor’s anger at the use of Freetown as a base for ECOMOG operations. Subsequent ECOMOG deployment saw the peacekeeping force intervene to restore Sierra Leone’s civilian government in 1998. In 2003, the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) was deployed to Monrovia to police a ceasefire and facilitate deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission. ECOWAS military interventions were complemented in both countries by diplomatic involvement to try to broker peace agreements.

**Guinea**

Bordering both Liberia and Sierra Leone, Guinea has been heavily involved in civil wars affecting its neighbours. It supported rebel groups launching raids on Liberia from its territory, including ULIMO and LURD. In 2000, Guinea responded to a coordinated attack by Taylor’s forces and RUF by arming Sierra Leone’s Donso militia and supporting their advances with helicopter gunship raids on RUF bases. Guinea also increased support to LURD in the lead up to LURD’s siege of Monrovia in 2003, which was followed by the peace settlement in Accra and the exiling of Taylor.

**Nigeria**

Nigeria has been involved in the conflicts in Sierra Leone and Liberia primarily through its military and diplomatic leadership of ECOWAS. Its forces played a crucial role in safeguarding the civilian government in Sierra Leone in 1998. Nigeria’s increasingly costly mission to promote peace in that country became linked with efforts to remove or restrain Taylor in Liberia. Nigerian commanders serving with ECOMOG helped LURD link up with Sierra Leone’s Kamajor militia and, in 2003, Nigeria agreed to deploy peacekeepers to Monrovia to facilitate Taylor’s standing-down. Nigeria provided for Taylor’s exile and protection from prosecution by the Special Court on condition he stopped meddling in regional affairs. Abuja was initially reluctant to release Taylor to the Special Court in 2006, but did so under pressure from the US and at the formal request of Liberia.
International

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative – Liberia

The Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) is a coalition of governments, extractive companies and civil society groups intended to tackle corruption and increase transparency in the oil, gas, mining and other extractive sectors of resource-rich countries. Membership is based upon reaching a standard of transparency in all extractive interactions, particularly with regard to transactions between government and extractive firms. Liberia became an EITI candidate country in October 2006. In February 2009 Liberia produced its first EITI report, followed in July by the introduction of the Liberian EITI Act. Liberia was validated as EITI compliant on 14 October 2009. Liberia has received praise from the EITI board for going beyond the core areas of gas, oil and mining to include the timber and rubber trade.

Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative – Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone announced its intention to join EITI in 2006 and was accepted as a candidate country in 2008. The country’s first EITI report in March 2010 showed a number of discrepancies in transactions between 2006 and 2007. President Koroma announced a commitment to improve the monitoring and reporting mechanisms, and in July 2011 re-launched Sierra Leone’s EITI process (SLEITI). A new deadline to reach compliant status was set for December 2012.

European Union (EU)

The EU has provided extensive post-conflict support to Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone, efforts have focused on budgetary aid and development in agriculture, energy, governance, transport, and the environment. The EU has assisted in the rehabilitation of infrastructure, supporting the building of roads, schools and health facilities. It was the only donor to remain in Liberia throughout the conflict and provided support to the 2003 peace process and DDR, as well as the establishment of TRC. Budgetary support for Liberia has been targeted at improving delivery of basic social services, building roads and infrastructure and strengthening the capacity of public institutions.

Kimberley Process

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS) was established in 2003 to address the international trade in so-called ‘conflict diamonds’ – rough diamonds which provided a lucrative source of income for a number of armed groups in sub-Saharan Africa, particularly in Angola, Liberia and Sierra Leone. KPCS was sanctioned by the UN General Assembly in 2003, requiring all international traded rough diamonds to be certified. Liberia joined the scheme in 2007. Although KPCS has been credited with reducing the number of conflict diamonds in circulation, it has been criticised by a number of NGOs and civil society groups for not going far enough. Global Witness left the scheme in 2011, complaining that conflict diamonds were still being traded from Côte d’Ivoire, while both Venezuela and Zimbabwe were in breach of KPCS rules. In November 2011, a ban on diamond exports from Zimbabwe’s Marange field was lifted, despite allegations of military involvement in the mining operation.

Special Court for Sierra Leone

Since its creation in 2002, the Special Court has sentenced eight indictees to jail terms in Rwanda. At the time of writing, the trial of Charles Taylor at The Hague remains outstanding. The Special Court’s mandate has been to try those bearing greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the country after 30 November 1996. The first indictments, issued in March 2003, targeted former RUF, CDF and AFRC senior commanders. The Special Court unsealed its indictment against Charles Taylor in June 2003, but he accepted exile in Nigeria on the promise of protection from extradition. Also in 2003 Foday Sankoh died in custody in Freetown. Taylor was finally handed over in 2006.

UN Integrated Peacebuilding Support Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL)

The UN Integrated Office (UNIOSIL), which had taken over from the UN peacekeeping mission (UNAMSIL – see below) in December 2005, transferred to the Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) in August 2008. With around 70 staff, UNIPSIL provides political advice to promote peace and political consolidation, supporting national police and security forces and building the capacity democratic institutions.

UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)

UNAMSIL peacekeepers took over from ECOMOG in 1999, to monitor the delicate Lomé peace agreement and oversee disarmament and demobilisation. After the abduction of 500 peacekeepers by RUF in 2000, UNAMSIL was bolstered and, with assistance from British forces, was eventually able to deploy to rebel-held areas. After the completion of disarmament in early 2002, UNAMSIL remained in Sierra Leone to provide support and security to recovery efforts and national elections. The force gradually drew down, handing over primary control of security to the government in 2004 and eventually withdrawing in 2005.

UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)

UNMIL was established in October 2003 to take over responsibility from a 3,500-strong ECOWAS peacekeeping force. The mission was mandated to reach a force strength of 15,000 troops. Initial deployment saw Nigerian troops ‘rehat’ and the force lacked the strength and presence to control the various warring factions. This led to a postponement of the disarmament and demobilisation programme in December 2003 as ex-combatants clashed with UNMIL troops in protests over benefits. Disarmament and demobilisation was recommenced after the full force size was reached in 2004, UNMIL continued to play a vital role in the country’s security and plans to draw down the force in 2008 were met with concern by Liberia’s government. Liberia’s insecurity was underlined in February 2010 when UNMIL forces were deployed to Lofa County following violent religious clashes. With persistent land disputes and crime, concerns remain that a drawdown in UNMIL numbers will seriously destabilise the country.

UN Peacebuilding Commission (PBC)


United Kingdom

The UK is the former colonial power in Sierra Leone and was strongly involved in diplomatic efforts to end the Sierra Leone conflict. British military intervention in May 2000 brought RUF to the negotiating table and the UK has remained the lead donor in Sierra Leone, providing financial and technical assistance in reforming governance, restructuring and retraining the military and police, developing the justice sector and supporting the Anti-Corruption Commission. The Department for International Development has outlined plans to spend an average of US$108.4 million per year in Sierra Leone until 2015.
United States
The US has close historical ties with Liberia and has been the lead donor in the country’s post-war reconstruction efforts. Washington initially backed ECOWAS’s efforts rather take a lead role, but progressively became more directly engaged, exerting pressure on Taylor’s regime – including sanctions and the withdrawal of aid. It helped convince Taylor to stand down in 2003. US marines deployed briefly to Monrovia to support ECOMIL peacekeepers. Following Taylor’s exit, the US invested heavily in humanitarian assistance and took a lead role in reconstruction, particularly in reforming the armed forces.

In 2006, pressure from the US was at the heart of Nigeria’s decision to transfer Taylor back to Liberia and the Special Court.

World Bank
The World Bank has provided funding for a broad range of post-conflict rehabilitation programmes in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In December 2007 Sierra Leone met the conditions to receive debt relief nearing US$1.6 billion under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries and related initiatives. Liberia received US$4.6 billion debt relief under the same initiative in June 2010.

Key texts

3 October 1973, Mano River Union Treaty

Liberia

18 August 2003, Comprehensive Peace Agreement


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29 October 2010 Draft Statement on mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia (PBC/4/LBR/L.1)

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Sierra Leone

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22 October 1999, UNSCR 1270 establishing the United Nations Mission In Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (S/RES/1270)

2000, Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act

5 July 2000, UNSCR 1306 on the situation in Sierra Leone (S/RES/1306)

14 August 2000, UNSCR 1315 establishing the Special Court for Sierra Leone (S/RES/1315)

7 March 2001, UNSCR 1343 on the situation in Liberia (S/RES/1343)

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6 May 2003, UNSCR 1478 on the situation in Sierra Leone (S/RES/1478)

1 March 2004, Sierra Leone Local Government Act

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2009 Mines and Minerals Act