



**Annual Report  
(LiNCSA 2015)  
Liberia National Commission on Small Arms**

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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms expresses sincere thanks and appreciation to all who contributed to a successful 2015 at LiNCSA. Foremost, we acknowledge and thank Her Excellency, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for her consistent leadership, encouragement, and support in our fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons in Liberia, in the West African sub-region, Africa and the world as a whole. We also take the time to extend special thanks to the SRS, Ambassador Zarif, who is doing all he can to help LiNCSA meet its mandate and address SALW proliferation in the country. We acknowledge and express gratitude to the National Security Advisor, the Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of Defense, the Minister of Justice, Senator Zargo of Lofa County, and Representative Chambers of Maryland County for their cooperation and collaboration with the Commission in the implementation of its functions and mandate. There are countless others to thank for their support to

The following national and international organizations, and nations, provided impactful moral, financial, logistic and other support to the Commission during 2015: the ECOWAS Commission, UNMIL, European Union, ICRC, UNDP, Switzerland, UNREC, China, and LANS. Their support was made in varying areas of interests including Arms Collection, Anti Guns and Ebola Missions, seminars, training, workshops and conferences - both local and international. The United Nations Mission in Liberia has established a strong relationship with the Commission and we continue to collaborate on several SALW related activities. The European Union is funding the Arms Collection program in Grand Gedeh, Maryland and River Gee counties in addition to having provided the funds to purchase 2 arms marking machines currently in our possession and use. The International Committee of the Red Cross and Ministry of Defense have been remarkable in supporting LiNCSA in multiple areas, especially regarding technical and physical support in our efforts to drive passage of the critical Firearms and Ammunition Control Act.

Per our mandate LiNCSA, is required to partner with the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberia National Police, National Security Agency and other national security forces in stockpile management. We acknowledge the cooperation and support of the dedicated men and women of the AFL, LNP, NSA, EPS, BIN and all other security personnel who have worked along with LiNCSA in continuing to address the proliferation of illicit SALW in and across Liberia.

## CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As we come to the close of 2015, the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) looks at the year in retrospect. By any account, the year 2015 was a year of excitement among the Staff of LiNCSA occasioned by successes and challenges at various levels.

In March 2015, LiNCSA in collaboration with the Ghana National Commission on Small Arms, the United Nation Regional Center for Disarmament (based in Lome, Togo) and the United Nations Mission in Liberia conducted a successful 4-day Training of Trainers' workshop for the marking of Arms. State security institutions that benefitted from the training include: the AFL, LNP, and EPS. As a result of that training workshop, the AFL marked its own Arms, and assisted the National Security Agency in marking that institution arms in the spirit of inter-agency cooperation.

During the year under review, the Government of Liberia ratified the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) instrument thus qualifying Liberia as a State Party to the ATT. One of the most laudable achievements of LiNCSA was the acquisition of a national head office. The LiNCSA family is grateful to Her Excellency, President Sirleaf for making that spacious building available to the Commission.

Considerable efforts were made by the office of the President, Liberia's key partners, the Ministries of Defense, Justice, to ensure the passage of the draft Firearms and Ammunition Control Act into law. It is unfortunate that the Senate did not pass the draft Act before going on its agriculture break. The passage of that draft Act is very imminent upon the return of the lawmakers to the Capitol.

During the course of the year, LiNCSA participated in the launching and induction ceremony of the ECOWAS/EU Small Arms Project in Abuja, Nigeria (Oct. 27-29, 2015). The ECOWAS/EU Small Arms Pilot Project involves four West African Countries and two Sahel region countries. The aim of the Pilot Project is for participating countries to encourage targeted communities to voluntarily turn in illicit Small Arms in exchange for development project beneficial to the community involved. For Liberia, the "Guns for Development" pilot is being implemented in three Southeastern Counties: Grand Gedeh, River Gee, and Maryland.

During the period under review, LiNCSA participated in numerous international conferences and meetings on the curtailment of the proliferation of illicit Small Arms and Light Weapons. The Commission is playing a key role in the UNMIL Transition. LiNCSA is currently assuming some of the roles that UNMIL is performing, such as the inspection of arms and armories. LiNCSA also serves as a co-chair for the UNMIL Transition Finance Committee.

The Commission has some challenges as it enters the New Year. Some of those challenges are:

1. Budgetary allocation: Although the 2014/2015 budget of the Commission is USD\$450,000 an improvement over the previous one, however, there was no allocation for projects. The USD\$450,000 covers basic salary for the staff. The Second constraint has to do with logistics.

We have repeatedly said that LiNCSA has only one vehicle. It is impossible to do field work in rural Liberia when the Commission does not have the required logistics.

However, LiNCSA will continue to do what it possibly can with the available resources at its disposal. We thank the staff of the Commission for their dedication to duty in spite of the enormous challenges on hand. LiNCSA has to continuously strive along with national security institutions and our Partners to prevent the flow of illicit Small Arms within our borders and beyond. The negative impact of illicit Small Arms is a known factor to many Liberians. At the level of our continent, illicit Small Arms constitute our weapon of mass destruction. The eradication of such a menace from our country is the responsibility of all Liberians.

In closing, we wish to express our gratitude to the office of the President for the confidence she continues to repose in our leadership, and support to the Commission. We extend thanks and appreciation to the members of the Board. Similar thanks and appreciation go to our Partners: UNMIL, ECOWAS, MRU, UNDP, ICRC, and Civil Society.

We wish you all Merry X-Mas and A Happy New Year.

James M. Fromayan  
**Chairman**

### **MISSION AND MANDATE**

The Act creating the Commission states the general mandate of the Commission as consisting of 'formulating policies and ensuring the implementation of such policies and measures aimed at addressing the problem of proliferation and illicit manufacturing, use, distribution, possession and trafficking of small arms and light weapons; and coordinating and monitoring all private and public sector efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the proliferation and illicit trade in small arms and light weapons within and across the borders of Liberia'.

### **COMPOSITION**

The Commission has a membership comprising representatives of government agencies and civil society organizations (please see Commission's Act for the full listing of members). The President of Liberia also appoints three private individuals to the Commission with one of the individuals serving as chairperson and another as vice-chairperson. The day-to-day affairs of the Commission are administered by a Technical Secretariat headed by a Coordinator.

The composition of the present administration of the Commission is as follows:

1. Hon. James M. Fromayan, Chairperson
2. Hon. Benoni Knuckles, Commissioner
3. Hon. Dionysius Sebwe, Technical Advisor
4. Mr. A. Blamoh Sieh, Acting Coordinator

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In compliance with Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Act creating the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms, this Annual Report provides a detailed account of the activities and programs of the Commission covering the period, January thru December 2015. The report catalogues the achievements, milestones and challenges of the Commission against the background of a number of funding and operational challenges during the course of the year.

Consistent with Article 24 of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons, entitled “Institutional and Implementation Arrangements”, the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) was established in 2006 by the Government of Liberia and formally enacted in 2012 by the National Legislature with the mandate to ‘provide policy guidance, research and monitoring of national efforts to control the flow of arms and prevent, combat, and eradicate the proliferation of small arms and light weapons within and across the borders of Liberia’. Consistent with this mandate, the Commission has over the reporting period, January – December 2015, made significant strides in ensuring that the necessary policy and regulatory frameworks for the effective control of small arms and light weapons in the country are put in place. The Commission also undertook a number of initiatives during the period under review ranging from organizing and coordinating stakeholders consultations and engagement meetings, to awareness and sensitization campaigns on SALW and Ebola, facilitating specialized trainings in small arms stockpile management as well as local and international networking activities and launching of arms for development Southeast project.

## Achievements

During 2015, the Commission:

- completed a major Campaign Against Guns and Ebola into four counties - Lofa, Nimba, Bong, and Cape Mount - in collaboration with BIN and UNDP; the effort was two-dimensional - Assessment Mission and Promotional Campaign - stimulating positive behavior and attitude to prevent Gun violence and the spread of the Ebola virus
- completed Arms Marking Training for personnel of the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberia National Police, National Security Agency, Executive Protection Service, Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and LiNCSA
- facilitated deposition of the ratified Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) at the United Nations in April 2015 and Liberia became a State Party to the Treaty with full participation in the First Conference of State Parties in Mexico in August 2015
- Launched ECOWAS-EU Arms Collection Project (Arms for Development) in May 2015 - this Pilot project runs for three years in the South East - Grand Gedeh, Maryland and River Gee counties; if successful, the project will be rolled out throughout the country
- acquired new offices - LiNCSA Headquarters - on the Executive Mansion Grounds; many thanks to Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
- implemented marking of State owned arms - completed marking of AFL and NSA arms and ammunition; we are formalizing arrangements with LNP and EPS for marking of arms early 2016
- conducted extensive negotiations with major stakeholders on Passage of the draft Firearms and Ammunition Act of 2015 which is now before the National Legislature for enactment; ICRC, MoJ, MoD and the Media provided much needed support in these exercises; we expect enactment of this critical Act once members of the Legislature return to the Capitol in January 2016
- Established the Technical Committee on Arms (TCA), composed of two (2) representatives each from LiNCSA, AFL, LNP, EPS, NSA, BIN and additional National Security Agencies that are authorized and vetted to bear arms; the TCA provides technical support to LiNCSA in the implementation of SALW related activities throughout the country
- in anticipation of UNMIL's drawdown, LiNCSA is actively engaged with Security Sector stakeholders at all levels, taking ownership of selected tasks, responsibilities and functions from UNMIL - arms stockpile management, inspection of GOL armories and arms, arms marking;
- coordinated series of interagency meetings, trainings and consultations around small arms and light weapons control;

- successfully coordinated and Chaired the Security Council sanctioned Panel of Experts assessment mission to Liberia;
- raised the level of advocacy and awareness about small arms and light weapons through engagement meetings with policymakers, civil society and international partners as well as carrying out public awareness activities;
- hosted the SRSO and team at the new LiNCSA Headquarters during a productive working session where Chairman Fromayan briefed the SRSO on LiNCSA's mandate and corresponding activities and the SRSO expressed his outlook on LiNCSA's role in the society as well as encouraged LiNCSA to move ahead and be proactive in some areas of concern
- continuing joint Inspection missions with UNMIL and the AFL; with UNPOL and other state security agencies
- represented Liberia at various international conferences, trainings and workshops on small arms and light weapons control; a few of these meetings are listed below:

Mar 24 - 25	Expert Group on ATT Implementation - San Jose, Costa Rica
Apr 15 - 17	ECOWAS-EU Small Arms Project Induction and Inception - Abuja, Nigeria
May 5 - 6	ATT Regional Seminar - Dakar, Senegal
Jun 17 - 19	Review Meeting of National Commissions - Calabar, Nigeria
Jul 6 - 8	ATT Final Preparatory Meeting - Geneva, Switzerland
Aug 24 - 27	Arms Trade Treaty First Conference of State Parties - Cancun, Mexico
Oct 27 - 29	ECOWAS-EU Small Arms Project Steering Committee - Abuja, Nigeria
Nov 16 - 17	Safe and Secure Management of Conventional Ammunition- Geneva, Switzerland
Nov 24 - 25	Expert Group on ATT Implementation - Akosombo, Ghana
Nov 26	Meeting of ECOWAS Experts - Akosombo, Ghana

### Challenges/Constraints

In the midst of all our accomplishments over the year, LiNCSA continues to face considerable funding and operational constraints. We inherited mobility problems, limiting the Commission to Monrovia and surrounding areas. One vehicle cannot accommodate the requirement of controlling and overseeing SALW throughout the country and for addressing the illicit proliferation of illicit arms throughout the nation. The Commission's core operational budget approved by the Government of Liberia for FY 2015/2016 reached US \$450,000.00, less than 50 percent of the total amount requested. As a result, key professional positions in the Secretariat remained vacant, some major projects, including the conduct of a baseline survey on the extent of small arms prevalence and proliferation nationwide as well as the development of a 5-year national action plan remained undone. The importance of these projects cannot continue to be overlooked and must be included in the budget for the safety of our country and future work of the Commission. Considering new challenges arising from the UNMIL drawdown and the pending Presidential and General elections, the Commission continues to call upon authorities at MFDP and members of the National Legislature to provide more funding in FY 2016/2017 with the hope that the Government will this time make good its promise to the Commission. Guns and ammunition are a problem that cannot be overlooked this time around. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) must be domesticated and implemented. During the New Year, we must gather all of the stakeholders for planning, domestication and implementation of the Treaty. Once the Firearms Act is enacted, registration of civilian arms is mandated. This will require funding, sensitization and professional implementation throughout the country.

The Commission during the period under review has been faced with series of administrative and operational challenges. The following are major challenges that hampered the smooth operation of the Commission:

1. Lack of adequate budgetary support for core operations and projects from the government of Liberia.
2. Lack of necessary logistical support (vehicles, communication equipment, etc);
3. Undue delays in the drafting and review processes and passage of the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act due to administrative and legislative bottlenecks;
4. Inadequate technical capacity of the Commission especially in the area of database management;
5. Lack of support to decentralize the work of the Commission in the 15 political sub divisions of the country.

## CONCLUSION

The proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons remains a threat not only to the peace and stability of Liberia, but also to MRU basin countries and the entire West Africa sub-region. From all accounts and in the face of UNMIL transition, the Commission has a critical role in helping to keep the peace through its varied activities aimed at curbing the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons within and across the borders of Liberia. This requires urgent support for us to be able to efficiently and effectively halt the flow of illicit arms across the country.

The year 2015 has been a transitional year at LiNCSA. As a nation, Liberia is transitioning from the EVD dominance to recovery and development. Liberia is transitioning from security dominated by UNMIL to National Security provided by Liberians. Despite severe disruptions caused by the Ebola outbreak and amidst the serious financial and operational challenges that impeded the full realization of its planned programs, the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms during the period under review managed to live up to its statutory mandate to a considerable extent. Key among the milestone achievements made as a result of the Commission's activities in the roll-up of its annual work plan were: (1) Deposition of the ratified Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Ambassador Marjon Kamara; (2) Marking of State Weapons and Ammunition by two of the major agencies with two other agencies preparing to mark their weapons; (3) sensitization and awareness of the draft Firearms and Ammunition Control Act and its discussion with key stakeholders throughout the country; (4) Implementing the Arms for Development program in South Eastern Liberia; (5) Implementation of the Against Guns and Ebola Campaign in volatile and hard-hit counties.

Beginning a New Year brings renewed commitment and the will to continue the work of the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms within the framework of National governance. We look towards new horizons, a more peaceful society, where accountability and efficiency is reflected in the management of small arms and light weapons and ammunition within our borders and where the proliferation of illicit arms is no longer a threat to the Peace.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The Commission therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. That budgetary allocation to the Commission be augmented to fully cover the costs of staff salaries, logistics and operational costs;
2. That the Government provides funding for identified projects of the Commission including the baseline survey, registration of civilian arms, and development of a national action plan on small arms control;
3. That the Government designates a Coordinating Agency and provides adequate support for domestication and implementation of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT);
4. That the National Legislature in 2016 prioritizes the passage of the proposed Firearms and Ammunition Control Act which has already been submitted by the President and debated in session;
5. That the nationwide public awareness campaign proposed by the Commission be fully funded to achieve the following: educate the public about the work of the Commission; inform the public about the proposed guns control law that is currently before the parliament, and secure public support for the passage of the law; increase public awareness about the effects of illicit small arms and light weapons as well as the Ebola epidemic and secure public support for the prevention of both illicit Small Arms and Ebola.