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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) wishes to thank all those who contributed to its work during the year 2018. We extend profound thanks and appreciation to His Excellency Ambassador Dr. George Manneh Weah for his leadership and commitment to the fight against the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons in and across the borders of Liberia. LiNCSA would also like to thank the Office of the National Security Advisor, the leadership of the Defense and Security Committees of both Houses of the National Legislature, the Liberia National Police, the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Ministry of Defense, the National Security Agency, the Liberia National Drugs Enforcement Agency, Liberia Immigration Services, Executive Protection Service and all other security institutions for the cooperation and collaboration in the implementation of its functions and mandate. The Commission also appreciates the continual collaboration and partnership with the Liberia Action Network on Small Arms, a local consortium of civil society organizations working in the area of arms control and related issues.

Special thanks also to the following international and regional organizations: the ECOWAS Commission for its support towards a number of activities such as: trainings, workshops and conferences - both local and international; the European Union for funding the ECOWAS/EU Small Arms project, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for their technical and financial support to consultations on the draft Arms Trade Treaty Act, the Geneva and Kampala Conventions Acts, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for being a reliable partner over the years. Also, appreciation goes to the Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat (ATT) in Geneva for funding the project to support the ATT implementation in Liberia.

The Commission is grateful to the British Government through its Embassy in Monrovia for the continual support to its work and most recently for funding a project to support Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) activities in Liberia.

Finally, the Commission extends thanks to all stakeholders from various government ministries and agencies, the civil society, community-based organizations, local County leaderships, Traditional leaders and border communities for their commitment to fight the illicit proliferation

of small arms and light weapons in Liberia.

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

As newly appointed Chairperson of the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA), we would like to begin our message by thanking H.E. Ambassador Dr. George Manneh Weah, President of the Republic of Liberia for the confidence reposed in us to steer the affairs of the Commission during this very critical time in our country's history. As we recount activities carried out during the year 2018 and also since the establishment of the Commission, we can't complete this message without acknowledging our predecessors, Commissioners and all the staff who worked so tirelessly to ensure that the Commission's mandate and functions were carried out over these years.

Particularly, we want to acknowledge the work and commitment of Senator Conmany B. Wesseh who was the founding Chairperson of the Commission and steered its affairs from 2006 to 2012. Under his leadership, the Act establishing the Commission was drafted and formally passed into law by the Legislature in 2012. During this time, we must note that several actions were taken including the ratification of the ECOWAS Convention in 2006 and the Arms Trade Treaty in 2012, the drafting of the Liberia Firearms & Ammunition Control Act as well as the training of a team of local experts in the control of small arms and light weapons among others which set the stage for effective small arms and light weapons control in Liberia.

Similar acknowledgement also goes to Hon. James M. Fromayan who steered the affairs of the Commission from 2013 to September, 2018 when his five years' tenure expired. During his tenure, the Liberia Firearms and Ammunition Control Act of 2015 was formally enacted into law as well as the marking and recording of 95% of state owned arms in line with international standards among other initiatives.

As we acknowledge the many accomplishments of the Commission, we are also prepared to improve on whatever shortcoming there was, we look forward to the future with immense optimism on this new task that we are delegated. We take over this task with our experience as a trained and highly skilled Military Management professional with broad understanding of

Military leadership as well as extensive knowledge in weapons management. We bring to the Commission new commitments and plans including to effect the decentralization plans in 15 counties in line with the Government decentralization policy and the Pro Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development specific reference to Pillar Three (Sustaining the Peace). Under our leadership, we commit to fully implementing the Firearms Act and its Regulations which includes: registration and recording of the traditional single barrel guns used for hunting across the country, licensing of arms brokers as well as establish armories inspection teams and a joint security Task Force to alert and arrest any arms misuse situations in the country.

Finally, we wish to extend thanks and appreciation to the two other Commissioners and to all the staff members of the Technical Secretariat for their commitment to serve “mama Liberia”. We are confident that the same momentum will be sustained during the course of 2019 and beyond with commitment and coordination through team work. Similar thanks and appreciation goes to the membership of the Commission and to our partners including the ATT Secretariat, EU, MRU, ECOWAS, UNDP, ICRC, and the British Government for the continual support to our work. We wish everyone a Happy New Year full with renewed commitments to fight the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons and sustain the hard earned peace in Liberia.

Marvin M. Sarkor
CHAIRMAN

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In compliance with Chapter 3, Section 1 of the Act creating the Commission, this Annual Report provides a detailed account of the activities and programs covering the period, January thru December 2018. The report catalogues the achievements of the Commission during said period as well as the challenges encountered in the full execution of its mandate. This report also highlights some of the key programs/activities the Commission intends to undertake during the course of the coming year 2019.

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) was established in 2006 by the Government of Liberia and formally enacted in 2012 by the Legislature with the general mandate to formulate policies and ensure the implementation of policies and measures to control the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons within and across the borders of Liberia. The Commission has over the reporting period made significant strides in ensuring that the necessary policies and regulatory frameworks for the effective control of small arms and light weapons are developed and implemented. Some of these regulatory frameworks include Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on inspection of firearms, the ECOWAS Exemption Procedures, marking, tracing and recording of firearms among others. Also during this period several projects were implemented by the Commission in Collaboration with its partners including (I) the British Government funded Project to support Physical Security & Stockpile Management (PSSM) Activities in Liberia, (II) support to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) implementation funded by the ATT Voluntary Trust Fund and the ECOWAS/EU Voluntary Arms Collection for Development Pilot Project to ensure that arms are properly managed as well as to control their misuse.

In furtherance of its mandate, the Commission continued to undertake 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 Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW), facilitating specialized trainings in small arms stockpile management as well as local and international networking activities. Also during this period, the Commission experienced a transition when the former Chairperson, Hon. James M. Fromayan tenure expired and Hon. Marvin M. Sarkor was appointed by the President as Chairperson.

II. 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’.

III. 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 who is hired by the Chairperson in consultation with the members of the Commission.

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

1. Hon. Marvin M. Sarkor, Chairperson
2. Madam Bennietta T. Jarbo, Vice Chairperson
3. Hon. Benoni Knuckles, Commissioner

IV. 2018 ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Consistent with its mandate, the Commission has over the reporting period (January – December 2018) 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 and implemented as well. To this end, the Commission during the period under review undertook a number of initiatives ranging from the coordination of stakeholders consultations and engagements on arms control; the organization of series of inter-agency workshops and trainings around arms physical security and stockpile management (PSSM); to the consolidation of cooperation with a number of local, regional and international partners on arms management issues; the gathering and processing of information regarding weapons and ammunition management; and the conduct of awareness and sensitization campaigns in the fight against the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons.

More specifically, the Commission during the period under review has implemented the following:

1. Support to PSSM Activities in Liberia

The Commission has recently completed the implementation of a British-funded project to support, “Physical Security and Stockpile Management (PSSM) Activities in Liberia.” The project aimed to contribute to the sustenance of Liberia’s security and stability by addressing looming arms control issues in the country through capacity building to enhance proper management of arms stockpile and raising public awareness on issues regarding arms trafficking and the illicit circulation of SALW. The activities implemented under the project included:

- The rehabilitation of a temporary arms mobile storage facility at the Liberia National Police (LNP) Headquarters which was officially turned over to the LNP.
- The assessment of five arms storage facilities including: two armories at the LNP and Liberia Immigration Service plus three temporary storage facilities at the National Port Authority, Roberts International Airport and James Spriggs Airfield.

- The development and validation of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for armories inspection.
- The conduct of awareness campaigns against the trafficking and circulation of illicit firearms in two border cities including Gbarnga, Bong County and Ganta, Nimba County.
- The training of 28 personnel of state security and related institutions comprising mainly managers of armories in Physical Security and Stockpile Management.

2. ECOWAS-EU Small Arms Project

This 3-year pilot project which started in 2015 and was expected to phase out at the end of 2018 has been extended for an additional six months to enable full completion of activities as well as the planning of a new phase of the project which will run for three more years beginning 2019. The project is funded by ECOWAS/EU and implemented by the UNDP in collaboration with LiNCSA and aims to strengthen community security through:

- Voluntary arms collection in exchange for development project;
- Raising awareness of the dangers associated with the proliferation of illicit small arms;
- Strengthening the operational capacity of relevant institutions, including National Small Arms Commission (NATCOMs), to effectively manage and prevent the illicit spread of small arms including training of community leaders and security sector practitioners.

The Project is being implemented in 7 ECOWAS countries including Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Nigeria, Benin and Mali. The Liberian component is implemented in six communities in Grand Gedeh, River Gee and Maryland Counties. The project has succeeded in raising awareness on the dangers associated with illicit SALW in the three counties; trained a number of security agency personnel in small arms management; built capacity of selected civil society actors in the three target counties; strengthened LiNCSA capacity through trainings and development of administrative SOPs as well as mobilized selected communities for arms collection exercises. In response to this, the B'hai Community in Grand Gedeh County voluntarily turned over more than 300 rounds of ammunition to the

project. As a result of handing over the catchment of ammunition, a community town hall was renovated by the project and turned over to the local leaders at an official ceremony.

3. Legal Framework/Regulations

i. Administrative Regulations to Firearms Act

The Commission has finalized and adopted the Administrative Regulations to the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act, which mainly provides the procedures for the registration of civilian arms specifically single barrel guns and the issuance of owners' licenses. The Commission looks forward to commencing the registration of civilian arms in the coming year once the necessary logistical arrangements are put in place.

ii. Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs)

Also, during the reporting period a number of SOPs for weapons and ammunition management were developed including: Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) on inspection of firearms, the ECOWAS Exemption Procedures, marking, tracing and recording of firearms among others.

iii. International Conventions

The Government of Liberia is a State Party to several International Humanitarian Law conventions and protocols including the Kampala and Geneva Conventions and its Additional Protocol. As signatory to these international instruments the Government is obligated to ensure the full implementation of said instruments. In accordance with such obligations, the Commission in collaboration with other relevant government ministries and agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), is leading the domestication process of the Arms Trade Treaty, Geneva Convention and its Additional Protocols, and the Kampala Convention. This initiative is being implemented under the framework of the Liberia International Humanitarian Law Committee (LIHLC) Secretariat which comprises of technical and senior level officials from various government ministries. The LIHLC is chaired by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and co-chaired by the Ministry of Justice and the Law Reform Commission while LiNCSA heads the Secretariat.

iv. The Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)

As a state party to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT), Liberia through LiNCSA is presently implementing a project to domesticate the ATT which was ratified by the Legislature in 2015. The project aims to domesticate the ATT and amend the Commission Act to broaden its scope and mandate beyond small arms and light weapons to include all conventional arms. The project is being funded by the ATT Secretariat based in Geneva through its Voluntary Trust Fund (VTF). The Project which is in its concluding stage (expected to end by January 2019) is being implemented in partnership with the Liberia Action Network on Small Arms (LANSA), a consortium of civil society organizations working on issues of small arms. Plans are underway to formally submit the said draft laws to the Office of the President for onward submission to the National Legislature for enactment.

4. Arms Marking

The marking of arms is mandated by the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons as one means of controlling the proliferation of illicit small arms and light weapons. The marking is intended to identify and trace state weapons in cases of theft or disappearances. With support from Government and donor partners under the UNMIL Transition Framework, the Commission was able to acquire two (2) arms marking machines which have made it possible for the Commission to jump-start the marking of state arms. To date, around 95% of state security arms have been marked and recorded.

5. Inspection of State Armories

The inspection of state armories to monitor compliance is one of the functions the Commission did inherit from UNMIL transition. After the final draw down of UNMIL, the Commission in collaboration with the Technical Committee on Arms (TCA) comprising of experts from relevant national security agencies fully took over the responsibilities to periodic inspect armories and temporary storage facilities. However, due to logistical constraints, the Commission has not been able to fully implement this activity as expected.

6. IT & Data Center

The Commission is operating an IT and Data Center equipped with logistic provided by the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) under the AU-EU Small Arms Project and the GOL/UNMIL Transition Project.

7. Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) Baseline Assessment

During the period under review, LiNCSA in partnership with UNIDIR and ECOWAS conducted a one-week national assessment of Weapons and Ammunition Management (WAM) in Monrovia involving heads and technical experts of state security and related agencies. The Assessment aimed to assist the Government of Liberia to establish a baseline of existing national weapons and ammunition management frameworks in line with international and regional commitments and standards.

The assessment consisted of a high-level consultative meeting to discuss a national roadmap to strengthen existing WAM framework and a technical consultative meeting to establish baselines on national WAM capacities.

A report from the assessment is currently being finalized with three key focus areas:

- i. An assessment of the Government's current capacities on WAM;
- ii. Areas for potential enhancement; and
- iii. Options as to how such enhancement could be carried out.

The outcome of that process will provide the basis for various interventions for effective arms and ammunition management in the country.

8. Gender Mainstreaming

In line with international best practice and the promotion of a gender friendly work environment, the Commission established a Gender Section to support and promote equity in arms control and related issues as well as to promote equal opportunities for all gender in security and other related institutions. During the period under review, the staff from the Commission Gender Section benefited from several trainings organized by the National Gender and Security Taskforce headed by the Ministry of Justice. During this period, a gender parity strategy for the Commission was also developed.

V. International meetings and workshops Attended

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms during the period under review received series of invitations to attend various levels of international meetings, conferences and workshops, including the following:

i. Meetings of ECOWAS NatComs

The Commission during the period under review was extended an invitation by the ECOWAS Commission through its Small Arms Division to attend the National Commission on Small Arms (NATCOMs) meeting in compliance with the ECOWAS Commission guidelines for NATCOMs. The meeting was intended to update stakeholders on developments at Regional and National levels relating to SALW policies, programs and opportunities. The meeting was held in Banjul, The Gambia.

ii. ATT Conference

The Commission was represented at the 4th Conference of State Party (CSP4) to the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) held in Tokyo, Japan.

iii. Regional Validation Workshop

The Commission was invited to participate in a Regional Validation Workshop of the field-based research report on illicit arms trafficking in Western Africa held in Abidjan in October, 2018. The purpose of the meeting was to validate the report on arms trafficking in West Africa which was produced by the Small Arms Survey with support from the German Federal Foreign Office in collaboration with the ECOWAS Commission.

iv. Specialized WAM Training

During the period under review, the Commission helped to enhance government's security sector reform by collaborating with the African Union (AU) facilitated the training of two Armorers selected from the Armed Forces of Liberia and the National Security Agency in Arms and Ammunition Management held in Nairobi, Kenya.

v. ECOWAS Meetings

The Commission was represented at the Workshop on Compliance with ECOWAS instruments in

the Management of Small Arms and Light Weapons funded by the British Foreign & Commonwealth Office and held in Conakry, Guinea. The Workshop created a platform of exchange between National Commissions on Small Arms and Light Weapons and the Mano River Union Secretariat and ECOWAS Small Arms Division as well as promoted shared understanding of priority locations in border areas.

vi. ECOWAS/EU Project Steering Committee Meetings

During the period under review, the Commission was extended two separate invitations to attend the 7th and 8th Steering Committee Meetings for the ECOWAS/EU Small Arms Project held in Kindia, Guinea in May, 2018 and in Bamako, Mali in December, 2018. These meetings were conducted to review the implementation of the ECOWAS –EU Small Arms project which is being implemented in Liberia, Niger, Nigeria, Mali, Guinea, Cote D’Ivoire, and Sierra Leone.

vii. International Humanitarian Law Meetings

The Commission was part of the delegation that represented Liberia at the 15th ECOWAS/ICRC Annual International Humanitarian Law (IHL) Review meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria in December 2018. The meeting was intended to review member states implementation status of IHL Conventions as well as set priorities for 2019. The Liberian delegation was sponsored by ICRC and ECOWAS.

VI. Local Meetings and Workshops

The Commission held a number of meetings with its members, Diplomatic Missions, civil society organizations and the UNDP Liberia to discuss issues of arms control.

VII. Quarterly Membership meetings

In line with the Small Arms Commission Act, the Commission during the period under review held quarterly membership meetings. The meetings were held to review the Commission’s progress against set targets and address some of the challenges arising from the work of the Commission.

VIII. FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORT

1.1 Government Support

The Commission, by law, receives funding for its core operations through the national budgetary process. During the year under review, the Commission received the total annual budgetary allotment of US\$ 559,410.94 (Five Hundred Fifty-Nine Thousand, Four Hundred Ten United States Dollars and Ninety-four Cents) from the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP) for salaries and operations.

Of this, the amount of US\$293,946.00 (Two Hundred Ninety-three Thousand, Nine Hundred Forty-six United States Dollars) was received in FY 2017/2018 (January – June) Budget and the amount of US\$ 265,464.94 (Two Hundred Sixty-Five Thousand, Four Hundred Sixty-Four United States Dollars and Ninety-four Cents) was received in FY 2018/2019 (July – December)

The Commission also used the total amount of US\$571,240.94 (Five Hundred Seventy-one Thousand, Two Hundred Forty United States Dollars and Ninety-four Cents). Of this amount, US\$512,570.00 (Five Hundred Twelve Thousand, Five Hundred Seventy United States Dollars) was used for Compensation of Employees and US\$ 59,170.94 (Fifty-Nine Thousand, One Hundred Seventy United States Dollars and Ninety-four Cents) was also used for Goods and Services for the reporting period.

1.2 International Cooperation Assistance

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms during the period under review received financial, technical and logistical support from foreign Governments and International Organizations. In financial terms the total cash received during the period under review was US\$88,200.42. The breakdown of this amount is as follows:

- the British Government funded the Project to support PSSM activities in Liberia in the amount of US\$50,000;
- The Arms Trade Treaty Secretariat provided US\$36,600.42 in 2018 as part of support towards the domestication of the ATT in Liberia.
- UNDP through medica Liberia provided US\$1,600.00 towards the Commission's gender mainstreaming programs.

Other support included:

- ECOWAS Commission assisted with travel and training;
- The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided technical support to the Commission.

IX. CHALLENGES / CONSTRAINTS

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. The Commission for the past fiscal period has struggled to survive on less than 50 percent of its proposed budget.
2. Lack of necessary logistical support (vehicles, communication equipment, etc);
3. Inadequate office space and office equipment;
4. Undue delays in the drafting and review processes and passage of the Firearms and Ammunition Control Act as well as ratification of the ATT due to administrative and legislative bottlenecks;
5. Inadequate technical capacity of the Commission especially in the area of database management;
6. Lack of support to decentralize the work of the Commission in the 15 political sub divisions of the country.

X. Plans for 2019

The Commission has earmarked the following plans in a bid to strengthen its arms regulatory, monitoring and coordinating roles in the coming year.

- i. Registration of Single Barrel Guns – The Commission looks forward to commencing the registration of civilian arms (single barrel hunting guns) in 2019. The plan is to begin with at least 8 of the 15 counties with focus on border counties where the uncontrolled flow of illicit arms is of serious concern presently.
- ii. Technical liaisons for small arms – As a means of keeping in constant touch with security agencies in the effective control of illicit SALW, the Commission plans to set up a technical liaison office where technical personnel from various state security agencies will be based.
- iii. Decentralization in 15 counties – In line with GOL decentralization policy and as a way of keeping the Commission on top of the arms situation in the country, the Commission plans to extend its presence beyond Monrovia into the rest of the 14 political subdivisions. The Plan is to assign a minimum of 4 technical staff in each county with capacity to surveil key border entry posts on a constant basis, implement major activities in the counties and to respond promptly to issues of armed violence and misuse/unethical use of arms.
- iv. Establishment of inspection teams – The Commission intends to strengthen its armories inspection role in the coming year by setting up inspection teams comprising representatives of the various state security agencies.
- v. Joint security-LiNCSA Task Force – The Commission also looks towards the setting up of a joint security-LiNCSA Task Force as an alert force for arresting any arms situations.

The Task Force will comprise of representatives from armed security agencies in the country.

XI. Conclusion and Recommendations

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's exit from the country, the Commission no doubt has a very vital role in helping to keep the peace and security of the country 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 that the Commission be given all of the support it needs to be able to play this very important role with the utmost efficiency and effectiveness. The Commission therefore makes the following recommendations:

1. In light of the planned decentralization of the Commission and the need to make the Commission robust in its arms regulatory role, that the current budgetary allocation to the Commission be augmented to fully cover the costs of staff salaries, logistics as well as costs for the Commission's core operations;
2. That the Government provides funding for the registration of civilian arms (single barrel hunting guns) to give effect to the full control of the trade, possession and use of civilian arms in the country;
3. That the government prioritizes and provides the necessary political support for the domestication of relevant international security related protocols, such as the Arms Trade Treaty, the Geneva Convention, etc. to enhance the work of the Commission.
4. That the Government provides the support needed to realize the Commission's planned programs for 2019 including support for: the registration of single barrel guns in at least 8 of the 15 counties; decentralization of the Commission in the 15 political sub-divisions;

setting up of the technical liaison office; the establishment and operation of inspection teams; and the setting up of a joint task for arms surveillance and monitoring.