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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) wishes to thank all those who contributed to its work and success during the year 2014. We extend profound thanks and appreciation to Her Excellency President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf for her leadership and support in the fight against the proliferation of small arms and light weapons not only in Liberia, but the West Africa sub-region as well. We would also like to thank the Ministry of Foreign Affairs family, most especially the Minister, Hon. Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, for the cooperation and collaboration with the Commission in the implementation of its functions and mandate. Our special thanks also to the former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs for International Cooperation & Economic Integration, now Principal Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hon. Elias Shoniyon, who has been a very important point person and anchor in the Ministry, providing hands-on support and supervision to the general work of the Commission.

We say a special thank you to the following international organizations: the ECOWAS Commission for its support towards a number of activities such as: trainings, workshops and conferences - both local and international; the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for its support to the work of the Commission especially towards capacity building trainings for personnel of the Military and national security forces in stockpile management; the Peoples Republic of China through its Embassy near Monrovia for providing office equipment and supplies; the Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) for their immense technical and financial support to the consultations on the draft Firearms and Ammunitions Law of 2014; the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) for being a reliable partner over the years. Also, our appreciation goes to the Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA), UNODA, UNMAS and all partner organizations for the technical support to the work of the Commission.

### CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year 2014 was a memorable one and a defining moment for the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LINCSA). It was the first full year that the Commission operated as a full-fledged legal entity with a chairperson appointed by the President of the Republic of Liberia. The then former chairperson, Hon. Conmany B. Wesseh, held the realm of the Commission from 2006 to 2013. Under his leadership, the Commission was established by an Act of the National Legislature in August 2012. Following my appointment as chairperson in September 2013, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf appointed a second commissioner in April, 2014 in person of Hon. Benoni Knuckles. We inherited a Commission with a bank account in the red. In the inventory listing of assets of the Commission, items such as digital camera among others were reported missing. A UNDP donated Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep was the only vehicle turned over. It remains the only vehicle that the Commission owns.

In order for the Commission to fully discharge its Constitutional mandate, the new chairperson felt that there was a need for a strengthened Secretariat that could compete with other National Small Arms Commissions in the sub-region. With the consent of Madam President, the process of recruiting additional members of the secretariat was done by the Civil Service Agency using the most transparent methods available. With a reinforced secretariat, the Commission began serious work with an Annual Work Plan and a Road Map in place, prepared by our newly recruited Program team.

During the period under review, the chairperson of the Commission honored an invitation from ECOWAS to attend a sub-regional Small Arms Commission meeting in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire. That meeting sought to prepare a constitution for all ECOWAS Small Arms Commission members. Additionally, the idea of networking and information sharing among National Commissions was underscored. The meeting also encouraged the establishment of bilateral relations among members. In May 2014, ECOWAS and the ICRC jointly sponsored a Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) held in Abuja, Nigeria where the Chairperson was a participant. Some of the issues discussed included an overview of the ATT, its scope, core obligations, and implementation status of the ratification worldwide. During this reporting period, the chairperson led a two-man delegation including the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization to attend the Fifth Biennial Meeting of States (16-20 June, 2014) to deliberate on the United Nations Program of Action (UNPoA). Following the United Nations meeting, the chairperson attended another ATT preparatory meeting in Berlin, Germany (July 2-3, 2014). The Berlin meeting was sponsored by the German Foreign Office and Safer World of the United Kingdom. Both sponsors extended the invitation to the chairperson and, Safer World provided air ticket as well as accommodation. Ratification of the ATT worldwide was foremost at the Berlin meeting. Subsequent follow-up meetings were scheduled for England (Sept. 2014) and Costa Rica, (Feb. 2015).

During the period under review, the Commission worked simultaneously on the Arms Trade Treaty instrument and the drafting of the Firearms Control Act with serious input from members of the Board such as: Justice, Defense, Foreign Affairs, LNP, BIN, NSA, LRC, LRA, Inter-Faith, Civil Society, and EPS. We also had valuable support from UNMIL, UNDP, ICRC, and AOA in our drive to finalize the Firearms Control Act. The Commission is proud to say that the ATT instrument has been ratified by both chambers of the National Legislature. Liberia is now on the verge of completing the ratification process. The other good news is that the President of Liberia has submitted the Firearms Control Act to the Legislature for passage into law. It is our hope that the Legislators will act on it in a timely manner upon their return from their agricultural break. The Commission is also blessed with the election of its former Chairperson as Senator of Riverge County.

The Commission has some challenges as it enters 2015. Key among those challenges are: 1. budgetary constraint, 2. Inadequate office space, and 3. Logistics. The budget approved by the Ministry of Finance for the Commission for FY 2014/2015 is USD 250,000 which is less than a quarter of the amount proposed by the Commission for core operational funding, less the cost of essential projects. The USD 250,000 can only pay personnel cost up to February, 2015. Additionally, the Commission has an office space that is grossly inadequate. As a result of this inadequacy, the Chairman, Commissioner Knuckles, and the Coordinator all sit together in one small office room. Despite efforts that we made to get a space at the former Planning Ministry, the Commission did not receive any affirmative response. In terms of logistics, the Commission has only one vehicle, a Toyota Land Cruiser Jeep which was donated by the UNDP. We continue to encourage the staff of the Commission not to despair in the face of these challenges. Our resolve to carry on the mandate of the Commission remains undaunted.

Finally, we wish to extend thanks and appreciation to all staff members of the Commission for staying the course in navigating turbulent weather. We trust that the same momentum will be sustained during the course of 2015. Our gratitude goes to members of the Board for always being there for the Commission. Similar thanks and appreciation to our partners: UNMIL, ECOWAS, UNDP, ICRC, and AOA for their level of support. To the office of the President and by extension the Government of Liberia, the Commission owes a depth of gratitude. We wish everyone and institutions a Happy New Year.

James M. Fromayan  
Chairman

## I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### 1.1 Introduction

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 2014. The report catalogues the achievements of the Commission against the background of a number of challenges (funding and operational), as well as a major national health emergency occasioned by the Ebola outbreak, and which disrupted normal work activities within and across all sectors 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 2014) 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.

### 1.2 Achievements

During the period under review, the Commission was able to:

- finalize the draft Firearms and Ammunition Act of 2014 which is now before the National Legislature for enactment;
- facilitate the ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) at the Legislature;
- liaise with UNMIL to review some of the transitional plans and the Commission’s expected roles and responsibilities as far as arms stockpile management is concerned;
- coordinate series of interagency meetings, trainings and consultations around small arms and light weapons control;
- consolidate cooperation with a number of local, regional and international partners;
- represent Liberia at various international conferences, trainings and workshops on small arms and light weapons control;

- successfully coordinated and co-chaired the Security Council sanctioned Panel of Experts assessment mission to Liberia which was a key factor in the adoption of Security Council Resolution 2188 extending the sanction regime in Liberia;
- raise 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; and
- strengthen the Commission's capacity through restructuring of the Technical Secretariat, recruitment of key professional staff and the development of an employees' handbook.

### **1.3 Challenges/Constraints**

These achievements were made amidst serious funding and operational constraints as well as the disruptions caused by the national health emergency during the period under review. In addition to inadequate office space and mobility problems, the Commission's core operational budget approved by the Government of Liberia for FY 2013/2014 stood at a little over US\$260,000.00, representing less than 20 percent of the total amount requested by the Commission for that period. Due to the lack of project funding also, some key projects earmarked for FY 2013/2014, 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 were not implemented. Appropriations made in the FY 2013/2014 budget for implementation of these projects were not honored. Because of the importance of these projects to the future work of the Commission, they have been carried over for implementation during FY 2014/2015 with the hope that the Government will this time make good its promise to the Commission.

### **1.4 Summary of 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 transition, the Commission no doubt has a very vital 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 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. 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 and development of a national action plan on small arms control;

3. That the Government provides adequate office space for the Commission especially in the wake of the expected role of the Commission under the UNMIL transitional plan regarding stockpile management, armory inventory, arms marking and tracing, and management of a central arms database;
4. That the National Legislature during its sitting in 2015 considers as high priority the passage of the new Firearms and Ammunition Control Act which has already been submitted by the President;
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 small arms and Ebola;

## 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.

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

1. Hon. James M. Fromayan, Chairperson
2. Hon. Benoni Knuckles, Commissioner
3. Mr. Jesse Mulbah, Coordinator

## IV. ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

The Commission during the period under review developed a one-year roadmap and annual work plan (AWP) to guide the implementation of its programs and activities. Among the priority programs earmarked in the AWP for 2014 are the following: Legal and Regulatory Frameworks for SALW Control, Baseline Survey on SALW, Public Education & Sensitization, Institutional Capacity Building, and Sub-regional Networking.

During the period under review, the Commission in collaboration with partners implemented the following programs/activities from January thru December 2014:

### 4.1 Restructuring & Recruitment

Under its restructuring plan, the Commission starting from late October 2013 commenced a restructuring process intended to improve internal coordination and beef up the professional capacity of the Technical Secretariat. Part of the process included revising the organogram of the Commission and filling up positions based on the revised organogram. Following a vetting exercise that was conducted by the Civil Service Agency, the chairman in July 2014 formally appointed the following successful applicants to the positions indicated:



- i. Mr. Jesse Mulbah, Coordinator
- ii. Mr. Hezekiah Myers, Director of Finance & Administration
- iii. Mr. A. Blamoh Sieh, Director of Programs

Due to limited funding, the appointment of two other successful applicants for the positions of Communications Officer and IT Officer were deferred pending the availability of funding. However, the chairman made other in-house appointments in line with the revised structure, including:

- i. Ms. Bennietta Jarbo, Director of Training, Research & Documentation
- ii. Ms. Vivian Dogbey, Monitoring & Evaluation Officer
- iii. Mr. Francis Flomo, Finance Officer
- iv. Ms. Angie Y. Sackie, Administrative Officer

## **4.2 Legal Framework**

### **4.2.1 The Liberia Firearms and Ammunition Control Act of 2014**

The Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) during the period undertook to finalize the updating of the Firearms and Ammunition Control Law. With support from the Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) and the ICRC, the Commission organized and led series of consultations around the draft Firearms & Ammunition Law of 2014 in collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Justice and the Law Reform Commission. The Law was later submitted to the National Legislature for enactment by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The Commission is continuing consultations with relevant stakeholders to ensure the speedy passage of the Firearms & Ammunition Control Law. When enacted, the law will address small arms and ammunitions control issues relating to transfer, brokerage, storage, sale, registration, possession, use and disposal.

### **4.2.2 Arms Trade Treaty (ATT)**

In support to an international regulatory instrument to control the global trade in conventional arms, the Government of Liberia has been committed to the entire Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) process at all levels by actively participating in technical and diplomatic meetings organized regionally and internationally on the subject. Liberia became the 68<sup>th</sup> country to sign the Treaty on 6 June, 2014.

Liberia further ratified the ATT in November 2014. The ratified document is presently with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for onward transmission to the United Nations for deposition. The Treaty entered into force in December 2014 after the 50th ratification.

## **4.3 Official handing over of two (2) Firearms Marking & Tracing Machines to the Government of Liberia**

In June 2003 the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms made an appeal to the Africa

Regional Center on Small Arms (RECSA) based in Nairobi, Kenya for two Couth 2000 Electronic Firearms Marking Machines and a training package. The machines arrived in Liberia in October 2013. The Commission officially turned over the two (2) electronic firearms marking machines to the Government of Liberia on 19 March, 2014 at a ceremony held at the National Police Training Academy in the City of Paynesville. The turning over ceremony was attended by several high level government officials, representatives of the United Nations including the UNMIL and the UNDP Country Office in Liberia; heads of missions including AU, EU and ECOWAS Ambassadors; as well as representatives of security sector agencies and civil society representatives. The Commission in collaboration with UNMIL has been consulting with national security agencies and the Military to begin preparations for the marking of arms held by their agents and various armories. As part of this effort, the UNMIL has concluded arrangements with the Commission to support the training of a team of experts from the Commission and the national security agencies who will be responsible to further train officers on the ground to do the marking. The training which will be an experience sharing exercise is expected to be hosted by the Ghana NatCom in February 2015.

#### **4.4 Training**

##### **4.4.1 Arms Marking & Tracing Training**

The Commission in collaboration with the Africa Regional Centre on Small Arms (RECSA) organized a 2-day in-country training workshop for security personnel on the usage of firearms marking machine. A total of 20 participants drawn from the Liberia National Police (LNP), Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN), Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), Executive Protective Service (EPS), and the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms participated in the training workshop.

##### **4.4.2 IATG Course in Stockpile Management**

The Commission in collaboration with the United Nations Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA), the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS), United Nations Regional Centre for Small Arms (UNREC), and United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) organized a three (3) day specialized training workshop in International Ammunition Technical Guidelines (IATG) Course in stockpile management for selected security officers. The training workshop was held at the Corina Hotel, Monrovia from 26 – 28 May, 2014.

More than 25 senior security officers responsible for planning, implementation and oversight of ammunition and explosives storage from the Armed Forces of Liberia, the Liberian National Police, the Executive Protection Service, Bureau of Immigration & Naturalization, National Security Agency, Drugs Enforcement Agency, the United Nations Mission in Liberia Police, UNPOL as well as selected officials from the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms, the Liberia Action Network on Small Arms (LANSA) and the National Fire Service benefited from the training.

#### **4.4.3 Small Arms Foundation Course at KAIPTC and others**

During the period under review, the Commission benefited from training workshops organized by the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Centre (KAIPTC), the ECOWAS Small Arms Unit, the German Development Cooperation (GTZ) and the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS).

The purpose of the workshops was to help strengthen the capacity of the West African Community to deal with the devastating consequences of the uncontrolled proliferation of Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW).

#### **4.5 Awareness Campaigns**

The Commission during the period under review conducted two separate awareness programs as follows:

##### **4.5.1 Awareness through billboards**

With support from the National Social Security and Welfare Corporation, the Commission during the period erected one billboard on small arms awareness in Paynesville City outside Monrovia. The other billboard was expected to be constructed in Unification Town, Margibi County. The billboards depicted the dangers of the proliferation, illegal possession and misuse of illicit small arms and light weapons and sensitized the public on the benefits of exposing illicit weapons.

##### **4.5.2 SALW-Ebola Awareness in border counties**

In the wake of the Ebola outbreak within the three MRU basin countries (Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia) and the implications for illicit small arms proliferation across borders, the Commission during the period submitted a proposal jointly with the BIN to the Liberia office of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) to raise awareness on small arms and Ebola prevention, targeting four border counties (including Bong, Nimba, Lofa and Grand Cape Mount Counties). The UNDP in December 2014 provided funding for a one-week assessment mission to the four targeted counties ahead of the actual launch of the awareness campaign. The assessment which was conducted between December 18 – 23, 2014 provided the Commission an opportunity to assess the existing situation along the borders, familiarize with the local terrain and establish working contacts with local community leaders and the border security apparatus. With the submission of a comprehensive report of the assessment mission to the UNDP, the Commission looks forward to rolling up the actual awareness in the targeted counties in accordance with the proposed plan of implementation.

#### **4.6 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:

#### **4.6.1 Meetings of ECOWAS NatComs**

The Commission during the period under review was on two separate occasions extended invitations by the ECOWAS Commission through its Small Arms Division to attend the National Commission on Small Arms (NATCOMs) meetings in compliance with the ECOWAS Commission guidelines for NATCOMs. The meetings were intended to exchange experiences, review the status of implementation of the ECOWAS Convention and to formalize a Network of ECOWAS NatComs. The first meeting which was held in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire in February 2014 sought to prepare a Constitution for the proposed Network of NatComs. The second meeting was held in Praia, Cape Verde in May 2014 to adopt the Constitution and formally launch the Network.

#### **4.6.2 ATT Seminars/Meetings**

In May 2014, ECOWAS and the ICRC jointly sponsored a Seminar on the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) held in Abuja, Nigeria where the Chairperson was a participant. Some of the issues discussed included an overview of the ATT, its scope, core obligations, and implementation status of the ratification worldwide. Also in July of the period, the Chairperson attended another ATT preparatory meeting in Berlin, Germany, sponsored by the German Foreign Office and Safer World of the United Kingdom.

#### **4.6.3 Biennial Meeting of States**

The Commission participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> Biennial Meeting of States organized by the United Nations to review the status of implementation of the United Nations Program of Action (UNPoA) on Small Arms and Light Weapons. The meeting was held in New York from 16 – 20 June 2014. The Commission was represented by a two-man delegation including the Chairman and the Commissioner of Immigration and Naturalization (BIN).

#### **4.7 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 and development as well as issues of support to the Commission.

##### **4.7.1 Quarterly meetings of the Commission**

In line with the Small Arms Commission Act, the Commission during the period under review held three regular quarterly meetings involving the membership of the Commission. The fourth quarterly meeting which was planned for December 2014 was not possible due to the upsurge in the Ebola outbreak. The meetings were held to periodically review the Commission's progress against set targets and address some of the challenges arising from the work of the Commission.

#### **4.7.2 Teleconference with the UN Panel of Experts on Liberia**

The Commission in September 2014 took the lead in organizing and coordinating two major teleconferences with the head and members of the United Nations Panel of Expert on Liberia ahead of the Panel's year-end Report for 2014 to the Security Council. The conferences which took place at the UNMIL Headquarters in Monrovia were attended by heads of relevant government ministries, agencies as well as heads of national security agencies and the military. The teleconferences were necessitated by the precautionary restrictions occasioned by the Ebola outbreak and which made the Panel's travel to Liberia inadvisable at the time. Following the meetings and based on the expert opinions of the Liberian officials, the United Nations Security Council in November 2014 adopted Resolution 2188 extending the sanction regime on Liberia including the arms embargo for another 9 months. The teleconferences were co-chaired by the Chairman of the Commission and the Minister of Justice.

#### **4.7.3 Meetings with partners**

The Commission also during the period under review organized and held series of consultations and engagement meetings with the following local and international partners at various levels: the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) through the SRSG, DSRSG, Security Advisor, UNPOL and UNMAS; the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Country Office through its Country Director, Deputy Country Director and Security Sector Advisor; the African Union through its Special Representative to the AU President; the Economic Community of West African States through its Ambassador accredited near Monrovia; the United States Government through its Ambassador in Monrovia; the European Commission through its head of Delegation in Monrovia; the Nigerian Government through its Ambassador accredited in Monrovia; the South African Government through its Ambassador in Monrovia; the Swedish Government through its Ambassador in Monrovia; the International Committee of the Red Cross through its Head of Delegation, Programs and Legal Officers; the regional office of Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) based in Monrovia; the leadership of the Liberia Action Network on Armed Violence (LANSA); the Liberian Media; and the National Legislature through the Speaker of the House of Representatives, the Senate Pro Tempore, and the respective committees on security and defense in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

## **V. FUNDING AND OTHER SUPPORT TO THE COMMISSION**

### **5.1 Government Support**

#### **5.1.1 Core Funding**

The Commission, by law, receives funding for its core operations through the national budgetary process. In FY 2013/2014 (July 2013 thru June 2014), the Commission submitted a budget proposal of US\$1,400,000 for goods and services (capital costs inclusive) and projects, out of which the Government approved an allocation of US\$267,000.00, representing less than

20 percent of the amount proposed by the Commission.

At the beginning of the current budget period, FY 2014/2015 (July 2014 thru June 2015), the Commission again submitted a budget proposal of US\$1.6M for recurrent and capital expenditure and projects. Out of this proposed amount, the Government approved US\$250,000.00, representing about 16 percent of the Commission's proposed budget. Given the updated structure of the Commission, this amount can only pay staff salaries up to seven months, meaning that staff of the Commission will not have their salaries paid beyond February 2015 if the current budget allocation is not augmented to address the gap. Moreover, No provision is made in the current budget for other office running costs (eg. stationery, fuel, communication, etc.) as well as for projects.

### **5.1.2 Office Accommodation**

The Commission is currently housed in a 2-room office space on the ground floor of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. A five-room office building renovated for the exclusive use of the Commission is yet to be turned over to Commission after it was taken over for temporary use by the Ministry of State. The current office at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is found to be grossly inadequate given the Commission's current size and line of work, needless to mention future growth considerations.

### **5.1.3 International Cooperation Assistance**

The Liberia National Commission during the period under review received financial, technical and logistical support from Governments and International Organizations, including: the Chinese Government that provided stationery supplies and office materials; the ECOWAS Commission assisted with travel and training; Action on Armed Violence (AOAV) Regional Office funded the series of consultations that led to the finalization of the draft Firearms and Ammunition Control Act; the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) provided some level of technical support to the Commission; UNMIL provided technical support including training, and the UNDP Liberia Office provided technical and financial assistance to the Commission.

## **VI. 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 25 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.

## VII. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The year 2014 has been a challenging year in Liberia's post conflict recovery and development efforts. The Ebola viral disease outbreak at the beginning of 2014, and, which presented a national health emergency that lasted the entire year, overwhelmed the entire nation and virtually paralyzed every sector. Coupled with the 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) ratification of the Arms Trade Treaty (ATT) by the National Legislature; (2) finalization of the draft Firearms and Ammunition Control Act and its submission to the National Legislature for enactment; and (3) adoption of Security Council Resolution 2188 extending the arms embargo on Liberia for another year which was mainly influenced by the level of advocacy undertaken and led by the Commission.

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 no doubt has a very vital 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 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. That budgetary allocation to the Commission be augmented to fully cover the costs of staff salaries, logistics and office running costs;
2. That the Government provides funding for identified projects of the Commission including the baseline survey and development of a national action plan on small arms control;

3. That the Government provide adequate office space for the Commission especially in the wake of the expected role of the Commission under the UNMIL transitional plan regarding stockpile management, armory inventory, arms marking and tracing, and management of a central arms database;
4. That the National Legislature during its sitting in 2015 considers as high priority the passage of the new Firearms and Ammunition Control Act which has already been submitted by the President;
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 their support for the passage of the law; increase public awareness on the effects of illicit small arms and light weapons as well as the Ebola epidemic and secure public support on prevention mechanisms for both small arms and Ebola;