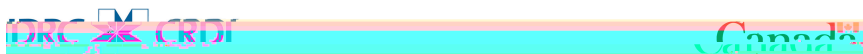Creating an International Network of Democracy Builders
Volume 2

Liberia: Assessing the Conditions for Liberal Democracy in a Postconflict State

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Executive Summary

Liberia (from the Latin for *free)* is Africa's oldest republic, founded in 1847. But the path to liberty for Liberians has been onerous, with some waxing and much waning of political freedoms, periodic flirtations with democracy and considerable horrors under Liberian warlord rule and civil war. A UN-sanctioned intervention in 2003 saw the end of Liberia's civil war, and the international community continues, since 2003, with efforts in rebuilding the infrastructure and socio-political support.

Post-conflict reconstruction efforts unites international, governmental and non-governmental agencies in conflict-prevention, peace-building, economic development, human security and development, good governance promotion and democratic development programs, all of which overlap. Success or failure in one field will often impact others, but equally possible is the misinterpretation of where successes have actually occurred; in Liberia, significant success in conflict-prevention and disarmament is coterminus with the presence of the UN peacekeeping force deployed at the end of the horrific civil war in 2003, there is promise in the country's single, albeit very hopeful, election and a dramatic reduction in open violence, but can we assume that the country is ripe for democracy? If so, upon what criteria?

order to determine the presence or lack of liberal-democratic conditions.[1] The model is a tool by which the field worker, political analyst or aid donor is assisted in the determination of where to best focus resources. In applying the Perlin framework to an analysis of post-2003 Liberia, this paper demonstrates the model's utility; the framework is of particular value in cases of competing prognoses, which can muddy prospects for international consensus on the

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Acronyms

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
ACS	American Colonization Society
DDRR	Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration
EC	European Community
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitory Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
FDD	Forces for the Defense of Democracy
GEMAP	Governance and Economic Management Program
IECOM	Independent Elections Commission
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NTGL	National Transitional Government of Liberia
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SMC	Standing Mediation Committee
UN	United Nations
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
U.S.	United States

Introduction

The Republic of Liberia, an independent state since 1847, was founded on great promise.

between gangs and armies,[6] violence that destabilized Liberia's neighbor states,[7] and the displacement of almost one third of Liberia's entire population.[8]

Incredibly, despite the horrors faced by Liberians and the complete collapse of their state, the "Election Watch" of the *Journal of Democracy* reported in its January 2006 issue that Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf had won a presidential runoff in November, 2005,[9] which, according to international observers was a free and fair election, with one analyst proclaiming that it was "without doubt …by far the freest and fairest election that Liberia has ever seen."[10] Liberia's civil wars are partly a function of the country's origins,[11] and so Liberia's democratic development has been motivated in part as well by reaction to the vicious wars that have plagued its citizens. Liberia's history, particularly since the end of the Second World War, is rife with impediments to political freedom, but does nonetheless exhibit a number of the essential elements necessary for any successful transition to democracy.

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[6] Sawyer. Amos. (2005). *Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia.* London: Lynne Reinner Publishing. p 129.

[7] International Crisis Group [Hereafter ICG]. (30 April 2003). "Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm." *ICG Africa Report No. 62*. pp 1-55.

[8] Stears, Brooke K. and Gompert, David C. (June 2007). "Making Liberia Safe Through Comprehensive Security-Sector Reform." *Policy Insight* (Pardee RAND Graduate School. Vol. 1. No. 3. p 1.

[9] "Election Watch: Election Results – September-December 2005 (2006). "*Journal of Democracy*. Volume17. No. 1. pp 178-179.

[10] Harris, David. (2006). "Liberia 2005: an unusual African post-conflict election." *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Volume 44. No. 3. p 378.

[11] Morgan, E. Philip. (January 2006). "Liberia and the Fate of Interim Government in the Regional Vortex of West Africa." *Strategic Insights*. Volume V. Issue 1 p 2.

Liberia's Beginnings

Although founded not as an independent nation, but as quasi-colony of the American Colonization Society (ACS,) Americo-Liberians fairly immediately chose to declare sovereignty to protect themselves from British or French intrusion,[12] although with no guarantee of protection or any colonial relationship with the US. The new nation was now composed of Americo-Liberian settlers and seventeen ethnic groups.[13] For most of its history since, Liberia has been dominated politically and exploited economically by an Americo-Liberian elite.[14] This oligarchic rule created resentment in and division among indigenous Liberians; stratification separated ethnic groups and economic classes. According to Jeremy Levitt, the autocratic and oligarchic political system established by the ACS in 1822 "permanently shaped the sociopolitical order responsible for the institutionalization of ethno-political conflict" between Americo-Liberian settlers and indigenous Liberian groups from 1822 through 1980.[15]

In 1980, a military coup ended the reign of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy, and led to vicious civil wars from which democracy has only begun to emerge since 2005. The fall of Americo-Liberian dominance is defined in large measure by the two final Americo-Liberian presidents, William Vacanarat Shadrach Tubman, who ruled from 1944 until his death in 1971, and William Richard Tolbert, Jr., who ruled until he was overthrown and later executed by non-commissioned officers in 1980.

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[12] Sawyer. *Beyond Plunder.* p 13.

[13] Howe, Herbert M. (2001). *Ambiguous Order: Military Forces in African States*. London: Lynne Reinner Publishers. p 131.

[14] Ibid p 132.

[15] Levitt. The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia. p 257.

for indigenous Liberians fostered high expectations among Liberians for their future; Amos Sawyer claims the Tubman changes "energized the quest by ordinary people for greater democratization and more meaningful participation in the political decision-making process."[21] These expectations subsequently fell on the shoulders of Vice-President turned President William Tolbert.

Tolbert further increased access to education, disabled some of the Americo-Liberian patronage system, and promoted indigenous Africans, including future president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf,[22] but, threatened by challenges to their status, Americo-Liberians withdrew their support, and Tolbert was unable to build a political base as stable as Tubman's had been.[23] The decline in commodity prices in the late 1970's,[24] missed opportunities to increase democratic political participation,[25] and a poor relationship with the AFL conspired to bring Tolbert's presidency – and life – to a violent end.

What occurred in Liberia under Tolbert's reign illustrates the theory of relative deprivation. Ted Robert Gurr notes that relative deprivation occurs as the result of a perceived discrepancy between a population's value expectations and their value capabilities.[26] Value expectations are the desired conditions of a population, and value capabilities are the positions believed by the population to be attainable.[27] Liberia suffered "progressive deprivation" – the state of a population's value expectations rising without correlative

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[21] Sawyer. *Beyond Plunder.* p 16.

[22] Adebajo, Adekeye. (2002). *Liberia's Civil War: Nigeria. ECOMOG. and Regional Security in West Africa.* London: Lynne Reinner Publishers. p 24, Harris. "From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president." p 432, and Gompert et al. *Making Liberia Safer: Transformation of the National Security Sector.* p 5.

[23] Sawyer, Amos. (2004). "Violent conflicts and governance challenges in West Africa: the case of the Mano river basin area." *Journal of Modern African Studies*. Vol. 32. No. 3. pp 434-444.

[24] Harris. "From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president." p 432.

[25] Sawyer. *Beyond Plunder.* p 17.

[26] Gurr, Ted Robert. (1970). *Why Men Rebel.* Princeton: Princeton University Press. p 24.

[27] Ibid pp 25-7.

increase in their value capability.[28]   Tubman and Tolbert's reigns saw Liberia gain economically and in socioeconomic infrastructure (health care, education, political opportunity) and consequently, fuelled by the experience of expansion, Liberians continued

became newly re-stratified, not through an Americo-Liberia oligarchy but nonetheless at the hands of a minority.

ballot counters, Doe won with a 50.9% share of the vote. David Harris, an expert on Liberian elections, expects that Doe's total was closer to only one quarter of all votes.[46]

Yet another coup attempt followed close on the heels of the clearly fraudulent election; the attempt failed, and Doe ordered a counter-action against the Liberian country home to members of the coup-plotter's ethnicity. In November, 1985, approximately three thousand members of the *Gio* and *Mano* groups were massacred.[47] These murders were not forgotten by the people of Nimba County, and their anger at Doe would help swell the ranks of another – and final – coup against Doe in 1989.

Liberia's First Civil War

In the last days of 1989, a guerrilla force of 168 men entered Liberia, meaning to end Doe's rule and to seize his power for their leader, Charles Taylor. In earlier days, Doe had hired Taylor as one of many young technocrats brought in to manage the country.

Europe and in the Middle East, and largely ignored the brewing conflict in Liberia; lack of

individual minority group to take up arms against collectivities of other groups.[58] By this logic, Liberia and its 17 ethnic groups should have been relatively safe from widespread civil war, as no particular group should find it in their interest to fight against the combined

decimated what was left of Liberia's economy. A hideous degree of death, refugee flows and internal displacement has resulted in unspeakable suffering for the Liberian people.

Intervention & the Second Abuja Accords

Only months into the conflict, in May 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) bringing all Liberian factions together to negotiate. Although these negotiations were largely unsuccessful, the SMC established the ECOWAS Monitory Group (ECOMOG), a large conventional military force designed to ensure peace in Liberia while the rebel groups settled differences and prepared Liberia for elections.[64] Unfortunately, the ultimate goal of neither the ECOMOG leaders or the Liberian rebels were elections.

ECOMOG was largely a Nigerian creation, an opportunity for Abuja to play out its leadership aspirations in Western Africa. The Nigerian leadership had a positive relationship with Doe, and was angered both by opposition to Doe and the NPFL hostage-taking of Nigerians.[65] ECOMOG had had minor successes during the war, including a major offensive action that forced Taylor to sign a ceasefire in 1992. It is reported, however, that the ceasefire forced by ECOMOG allowed all sides to re-equip their forces, and the ceasefire was broken by the NPFL artillery bombardment of Monrovia in October, 1992.[66] ECOMOG's employment of some factions for both intelligence and battle led to criticisms that its deployment served to unnecessarily prolong the war.[67]

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[64] Howe. *Ambiguous Order.* p 136-9.

[65] Adebajo. Liberia's Civil War. p 48.

[66] Howe. *Ambiguous Order.* p 139-143.

[67] Ibid pp 142, 86.

road was cleared for the Abuja II peace agreement which ended open conflict and set an election date of 30 May 1997.[74]

The Abuja II Accords established a temporary Council of State consisting of Liberian warlords but, unlike the failed Abuja I Accords, which had sought government positions for warlords, ECOWAS had the teeth to ensure a more successful transition;[75] preceding the elections, ECOWAS could sanction and even exclude factions who resumed violence. As Adebajo notes, ECOWAS was "ready to take punitive measures against spoilers," believing that the time for peace had come in Liberia.[76]

Making good their promise, the US provided financial and logistical aid to the Nigerian forces responsible for disarmament in Liberia.[77] Figures defining the success of the disarmament and demobilization efforts that followed Abuja II are disputed, and their occurred a significant discrepancy between the number of fighters disarmed and the number of soldiers fully demobilized. It is estimated that between 25% and 45% of Liberian fighters were not demobilized.[78] Certainly, some success was made by this international effort, but the significant number of arms in Liberia, and the difficulty of re-integrating child soldiers and adults into a society without an economy, has left a sizeable number of fighters scattered throughout Liberia.

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[74]Adebajo. Building Peace in West Africa. p 60.

[75] Ibid.

[76] Adebajo. Building Peace in West Africa. p 62.

[77] Adebajo. *Liberia's Civil War*. p 20, and ICG. (3 November 2003). "Liberia: Security Challenges." *ICG Africa Report No. 71*. p 13.

[78] Sawyer. *Beyond Plunder.* p 40, and Adebajo. *Liberia's Civil War*. pp 63-4.

The 1997 Election

Despite sporadic fighting and consequent postponements, Liberia held a country-wide election in July 1997, using proportional representation to elect a president and legislators.[79] The Abuja II Accords had mandated both the election and the creation of an Independent Elections Commission (IECOM) designed to include a broad range of political interests in the management of the elections.[80] Charles Taylor, running as a member of the National

advantages over his opponents[84] and exhibited his desperation for the presidency.[85] Such desperation was understood by Liberians to warn of a desire for power so deep that Taylor's loss could only be avenged by returning the country to civil war.[86] As Lyons writes, Liberian voters "were intimidated not by thugs at the polling stations but by the trauma of the last seven years of war."[87]

Taylor's threats of a return to war pressed Liberians to a high turn out on election day.[88] His implicit ultimatum resulted in support from self-interested voters; multi-ethnic, pan-Liberian support also brought votes for him in every county.[89] At the time of the election, political parties were little more than militias, with Taylor's the strongest. Lyons writes that the since politics were "highly militarized at the time of the vote," the ballot was only an "electoral ratification of the militarized institutions of civil war." Liberians "made a calculated choice" when voting, not for the figure who would serve their political interest, but to "appease the powerful ex-milita leader."[90] "The voting," writes Harris, "was a reasoned ploy by the electorate to maximize the possibility of improved living conditions."[91]

Denied resources and independence from ECOWAS, IECOM was largely ineffective. Important registration details and deadlines were not publicly released, and legal issues inflected many campaigns.[92] Opposition parties were unable to unite against Taylor, a requisite for victory since all but one opposition group was ethnically based. With each ethnic

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[84] Ibid p 438.

[85] Ibid p 446.

[86] Lyons. "Post-Conflict Elections and the Process of Demilitarizing Politics." p 39.

[87] Ibid.

[88] Harris. "From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president." p 450.

[89] Ibid p 432.

[90] Lyons. "Post-Conflict Elections and the Process of Demilitarizing Politics." p 36.

[91] Harris. "From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president." p 431.

[92] Lyons. "Post-Conflict Elections and the Process of Demilitarizing Politics." pp 50-1.

group responsible for such a low percentage of the Liberian population, parties had to appeal across ethnic boundaries. The only two candidates to attract multi-ethnic support were Taylor and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, whose Unity Party placed second.[93] Taylor's massive majority deterred opposition candidates from launching appeals against the results, and his easy victory was presented essentially as a *fait accompli*.[94] The elections, mandated as a tool to end the war, provided only a "thin veneer" of democracy and produced an essentially *un*democratic result.[95]

Charles Taylor's Exploitative Rule

Taylor ruled Liberia as a personal fiefdom, using "intimidation, patronage and corruption" to entrench his position as national leader.[99] Daniel Hoffman characterizes Taylor's rule as having a heavy "reliance on transregional and transnational commercial interests, the abandonment of bureaucratized authority, and the collapse of distinction between the private interest of the ruler and the collective interest of the state."[100] Taylor's networks of commercial and economic interests brought him huge personal profits from natural resources, a sizeable fraction of which he used to establish an informal patronage network across Liberia which bought the support of Americo-Liberians and indigenous Liberians alike.[101] The network appealed to the self-interest of many potential opponents, and the spoils paid out by Taylor ensured that no broad or effective base of peaceful opposition could develop.[102]

Taylor's greed for riches brought greater misery upon his own citizens as well as upon Liberia's neighbor states. His rule caused the International Crisis Group to identify Liberia as the "eye of the regional storm" that would sweep through West Africa during his reign.[103] Throughout his presidency, and even during the initial fighting in the 1990's, Taylor exported violence to Sierra Leone and Guinea. The vicious Revolutionary United Front (RUF,) notorious for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone, was largely bankrolled and trained by Taylor in his bid for control of diamond mines.[104] The destabilization of Sierra Leone was also vengeance for Taylor, who angrily vowed that Sierra Leone would "taste the bitterness of war" in return for allowing ECOMOG forces to establish a rear base there in the 1990s.[105]

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[99] ICG. "Liberia: The Key to Ending Regional Instability." p 13.

[100] Hoffman. "Despot deposed: Charles Taylor and the challenge of state reconstruction Liberia." p 311.

[101] ICG. "Liberia: The Key to Ending Regional Instability." p 21.

[102] Hoffman. "Despot deposed: Charles Taylor and the challenge of state reconstruction Liberia.". p 311.

[103] ICG. (30 April 2003). "Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm." *ICG Africa Report No. 62*. pp 1-55.

[104] Ndumbe, J. Anyu and Babalola Cole. (2005). "The Illicit Diamond Trade. Civil Conflicts. and Terrorism in Africa." *Mediterranean Quarterly*. Vol. 60., No. 2. p 60.

[105] ICG. "Liberia: The Key to Ending Regional Instability." pp 1-2.

When, in 2000, British intervention in Sierra Leone turned the tide against the RUF, thousands of armed and battle-hardened rebels spilled back into Liberia.[106] Taylor's use of

national cake" and providing for "two more years of looting rights."[118] Despite these criticisms, the Accra Accord provided for a two-year period in which to improve security, to re-establish a semblance of state order and to convince the Liberian population that a national

Corruption, long a problem throughout Liberian political history, was initially rampant in the NTGL. In the first year of NTGL oversight, ECOWAS and EC investigations found theft and fraud on such a scale that any possibility of building a durable peace was threatened.[123] In 2004, a major anti-corruption sweep took place, spurred on by pressure from Liberian civil society groups, ECOWAS, and the European Community.[124] In September, 2005, the NTGL agreed to participate in a Governance and Economic Management Program (GEMAP) designed to "build a system of economic governance that promotes accountability, responsibility and transparency in fiscal management so that Liberia's resources will be used in the interests of the people of Liberia."[125] Although criticized by some as neo-colonization, GEMAP provides international expertise, new procurement laws including open bidding, an external auditor and revised civil service mandates and salary structures.[126] Perhaps of greatest importance, the GEMAP insulates the democratically elected President of Liberia from political pressure for firing or prosecuting

The 2005 Election

After two years of relative peace, 74.8% of Liberians took to the polls in 2005 to elect 30 Senators, 64 Representatives, and a President.

Congress for Democratic Change.[132] At the end of the first round, the popular Weah led the vote, but the small difference between his total and Johnson-Sirleaf's required a run-off election. Although the top six vote-getters after Weah and Johnson-Sirleaf turned their support to Weah, the electorate weighed the decision themselves and chose Johnson-Sirleaf. Despite some minor stone-throwing at the US embassy and claims by Weah of irregularities, he eventually ceded victory to Sirleaf-Johnson. In an essential comparison to the 1997 elections, Harris notes that, unlike Taylor, the "fear of what might happen after a Weah defeat did not induce enough to vote him in."[133] Liberians, protected by an international peacekeeping force and an international commitment to reconstruction, voted for the leader they felt best able to lead their state in peace.

Conflict-Prevention in Liberia

Upon her victory, Johnson-Sirleaf acknowledged the importance of an effective opposition and promised to respect a strong opposition in her stated commitment to true democracy in Liberia.[134] Johnson-Sirleaf herself had not experienced much ho 1 :eble -16 ( ) -637 (trat ent) -54 ( ) -2

Since 2003, UN forces have continued to fulfill their mandate of ensuring peace in Liberia, although the international community's primary concern is with Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) programs.[137] In addition to the DDRR programs for militia members, millions of aid dollars were spent on demobilization of the Armed Forces of Liberia. These programs have seen major success by destroying tonnes of weapons and by ensuring income as well as the potential for productive futures for demobilized soldiers.[138] In a literal adoption of the ancient proverb, weapons have been bent and shaped into hoes, hammers, nail removers, rakes, spade shovels and cocoa harvesting hooks.[139]

Security sector reform has been the object of close attention in Liberia, with careful planning and selection processes ensuring a small but effective military, police force and port authority. After contracting firms to establish a military recruitment process based on the professional American military, Liberia hopes to field a lean and efficient fighting force that may serve as a model for the continent. A small force with limited responsibility will be easily managed by civilian control. With continued success in its development, there is hope that Liberia, once the instigator of region-wide conflicts, will be an anchor of prosperity and political stability in West Africa.[140] Wisely, the UN is expecting to remove troops only as Liberian personnel are ready to secure their own country. The pace of troop removal highlights the necessity of a coherent, robust and full commitment by the international community to Liberia's successful promotion of democracy.

Equally close attention has been paid to economic and human development in Liberia, where needs are obvious. Two years after the war, 80% of Liberia's population was illiterate and living below the poverty line. Unemployment rate exceeded 70%. 35% of Liberians were

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[137] Elavanalthoduka, Matthew. (2005). "From the Editor." *UNMIL Focus*. Volume 2. p 3.

[138] Washington, J. Wesley. (2005). "Demobilization of AFL Begins." *UNMIL Focus.* Volume 4. p 25.

[139] A.C. (2005). "Former Weapons Become Construction Tools." *UNMIL Focus.* Volume 4. p 26.

[140] ICG. "Update Briefing – Liberia: Staying Focused." pp 1-5.

malnourished, 62% not fully vaccinated, only 25% could access safe drinking water and only 36% had access to sanitation facilities.[141] Immediate work was undertaken by international donors to support the building of roads. The EU has designated Liberia a priority country, and continues to allocate funds for basic infrastructure and social services. [142] USAID, too, is focused on organizing and training labourers to re-build Liberia's war-shattered infrastructure. Ultimately, major donors to Liberia are motivated by what the European Union identifies as "conflict prevention rationale."

Certainly, a political system riddled with corruption and a history of presidents ready to use violence for political gains led to Liberia's state failure and its horrendous war. Still, there is no guarantee that a peaceful Liberia will develop successful democracy without careful nurturing. Although Johnson-Sirleaf appealed to Nigeria to release Taylor, he now awaits trial imprisoned at The Hague. "Taylor's legacy", one observer writes, "is a country still perilously close to the abyss of lawlessness – lawlessness that domestic enemies of democratic Liberia could be quick to exploit."[143] The major focus of international donors is on prevention of any return to conflict through disarmament and security force training to thwart lawlessness. Such prevention is a necessary and yet far from sufficient condition for democracy.

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[141] USAID. "Democracy and Governance in Liberia." http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/ democracy_and_governance/regions/afr/liberia.html. Retrieved August 2007.

[142] European Commission. "EU Relations with Liberia. " http://ec.europa.eu/development/geographical/ regionscountries/countries/country_profile.cfm? cid=lr&lng=en&CFID=1370036&CFTOKEN=60620097&jsessionid=2430ba3771e0656f1658. Retrieved March 2008.

[143] Gompert et al. Making Liberia Safer: Transformation of the National Security Sector. p 9.

The Conditions for Democracy

Liberia provides an excellent study of how conflict prevention and reconstruction programs can have positive, negative or neutral effects on the conditions necessary for democracy.

One model by which the conditions essential for democracy can be assessed is The Perlin Model,[144]

of the conditions to achieve and sustain liberal democracy have been met in Liberia, and others clearly not. The impact of donor money and a large peacekeeping force will also colour conditions somewhat inaccurately. The political engagement of citizens, at the very least in election participation, seems assured. The current set of state elites and the general mood of the citizenry support liberal and democratic values, and a general agreement on the legitimacy of the government seems to exist. Laws and policies to protect market transactions and preserve competition exist theoretically, and the GEMAP program is continuing to ensure legitimate use of government funds.

Unfortunately, several other conditions for democratic development might not survive a withdrawal of peacekeepers and a reduction in international aid. Political engagement of citizens, particularly the distribution of information on public affairs, has been spread by UNMIL and other agencies. Civil society organizations, though rooted in Liberian tradition, are deeply reliant on international funds. The limits of the state authority, both in hard terms (such as the use of force) and in soft terms (such as accountability and spending) are reinforced by a large number of external troops and significant integration of international experts within the governance structure. A cohesive political community, seemingly built on a desire for peace, is protected and ensured by the bulwark of 15,000 peacekeepers.

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Appendix I: Perlin's Theory of Change Model

1. Propositions About the Nature of Liberal Democracy

Operating Principle A:

LIBERAL-CONSTITUTIONALISM

Element A1:   Constitutional Government

a) Constitution establishing clear rules for the exercise of authority is relatively settled with amending procedures that do not permit arbitrary changes by incumbent elites.

b) Constitution is based on the principle of limited government with well-defined & effective limits on the general scope of government authority.

c) Constitution establishes independence of the judiciary.

d) Elites in other governmental institutions accept the judiciary's right to interpret & safeguard the constitution.

Element A2: A Framework of Entrenched & Enforceable Rights

a) Constitutional entrenchment of rights.

b) Enumeration of rights includes the protection of the basic freedoms (conscience, associations, speech,) political rights (to vote & seek office,) & legal rights (due process protections for persons suspected or accused of crimes.)

c) Substantive rights to protect & promote equality (e.g. for women, minorities, persons with disabilities.)

d) Mechanisms for giving effect to entrenched rights, including human rights codes & procedures for enforcing them, as well as government policies to give effect to rights through such mechanisms as support to affirmative action.

Element A3: The rule of law incorporating the principles of the supremacy of the law, equality before the law, & the impartial & fair administration of the law

a) Constitution clearly establishes the supremacy of the law & the principle that all persons, regardless of their role or status in society, are subject to the law.

b) All persons are assured of equal protection from the law.

c) All persons are entitled to equal treatment in the administration of the law.

d) Investigative & prosecutorial functions of law enforcement are exercised impartially & fairly.

e) Impartial & fair adjudication of the law occurs through an independent judiciary.

f) Exercise of due process in criminal proceedings recognizes the right of persons accused of a crime to protection against arbitrary acts & the means to provide an adequate defense.

g) Agents of state security are insulated from arbitrary use by elites in other governmental institutions.

h) There exist mechanisms of independent review & appeal for protecting citizens against abuses by law enforcement agencies & personnel.

Element A4: Democratic control of internal & external security institutions

a) There exist clearly defined & enforceable legal protections against the political use of military, intelligence, & law enforcement agencies & personnel.

b) There exist clearly defined lines of accountability of military, intelligence services, & law enforcement agencies to democratic institutions.

c) There exist clearly defined limits on authority of all agencies of law enforcement.

d) Independent mechanisms exist for reviewing & controlling the activities of intelligence agencies.

e) State security agents understand & act in a manner consistent with their responsibilities under a regime of entrenched rights.

Operating Principle B:

POPULAR SOVEREIGNTY EXPRESSED THROUGH INSTITUTIONS & PROCESSES OF REfin (EFT}9.ctiimc6ctiorcement.

e) Members of the legislature are effectively connected to citizens.

Administrative structures, procedures, & practices within governing institutions provide for governance that is effective, responsive & accountable to citizens.

a) Competent, professional public service.

b) Appointments & promotions within administrative organs of government are based on the merit principle.

c) Policy-making procedures within the executive incorporating consultative mechanisms are designed to ensure representation of public opinion.

d) There is transparency & impartiality in administration of public spending.

e) There are institutions & processes to protect citizens from arbitrary actions by the executive (for example, freedom of information & privacy laws administered by officers accountable to legislature.)

f) There are processes to provide citizens with the means to appeal administrative decisions.

g) There are effective conflict of interest & other "anti-corruption" laws.

Element B2:Political elites chosen through, regular, free & fair elections

a) Universal franchise exists.

b) Formal rules & institutions exist to ensure independence of administration of elections.

c) Mechanisms are in place to ensure equality & fairness in system of voter registration.

d) Protections for secret ballot exist.

e) There exist mechanisms for ensuring equality & fairness in tabulation & reporting of election results.

f) Regulation of party & electoral campaign finance operates to ensure reasonable fairness in competition & to establish confidence in the integrity of the system.

Element B3: A genuinely competitive system of party politics effectively representing a broad spectrum of societal interests & contributing to accommodation of diverse interests.

a) There is an absence of barriers to forming parties & competing.

b) Internal party processes provide for open access to, & fairness in, nomination of candidates for office & selection of leaders.

b) Systems of Internal party governance are transparent & encourage citizen participation.

c) Election campaigns provide sufficient information to facilitate informed choice.

d) Regulation of party & electoral campaign finance ensures reasonable fairness in competition & establishes confidence in the integrity of the system.

e) Electoral system produces outcomes that fairly represent the distribution of party support.

f) There is an acceptance by all participants of the integrity & legitimacy of processes of party politics.

Element B4: A system of political communication that ensures a free flow of information about public affairs.

a) News media are politically independent whether state or privately owned.

b) The media accept that they have a responsibility to contribute to the public interest in a democracy.

c) In this regard, the media work constructively to inform citizens about public affairs in a free & impartial way.

d) Democratic values are embedded in the professional norms of journalism.

e) There are high standards of professional competence among journalists.

f) The legitimacy of independent media's role is accepted by political actors.

g). There are effective legal protections for independent journalism.

h) The media are free of political manipulation.

i) All significant political interests are accorded access to the media & can freely express their views.

Element B5: A system of group politics that ensures the representation of citizen interests based on the principles of pluralist theory.

a) There is an absence of barriers to interest group formation.

b) Government policy-makers & administrators recognize the legitimacy of advocacy.

2. Conditions Necessary to Achieve & Sustain Liberal Democracy

The information below distinguishes between conditions that are widely agreed to be an essential & integral part of a stable, self-sustaining, functioning democracy & those that facilitate the realization & sustainability of a functioning democracy. The importance of these "facilitating" conditions is more contentious.

Widely Agreed Condition 1: Political engagement of citizens

a) Citizens participate in politics (minimum requirement is that those who are eligible will vote.)

b) Citizens are interested in, attentive to, & informed about public affairs.

Widely Agreed Condition 2: Democratic Political Culture

a) State elites & citizens are committed to liberal values:

- Individual autonomy
- The "freedoms"
- Equality before the law
- Political equality
- Equality of opportunity
- Justice

b) State elites & citizen are committed to democratic values:

- Decisions through discussion & debate
- Tolerance of dissenting opinion
- Acceptance of necessity to make decisions through accommodation & compromise

c) State elites & personnel know & respect the limits on their authority, understand their duties under a liberal-democratic constitution, & are committed to the legitimacy of the system.

d) Citizens are committed to the legitimacy of the system: they accept decisions with which they disagree because they recognize the legitimacy of the processes by which the decisions have been made.

Widely Agreed Condition 3: Civil Society

a) There exists a substantial network of active, autonomous, organized groups pursuing a multiplicity of diverse individual interests outside the sphere of state authority4669 159.1335ide th 79 outside thate0 -1Tm /F -11 Gacti202 Tm /F1.10 (polvolum965a1 0 7T.

Facilitating Condition 1: Open, non-polarized, system of social stratification

a) Large middle class.

b) Social mobility based on achievement.

c) Government policies promote equality of opportunity.

d) Government policies provide some measure of social justice: for example, equal access to adequate health services & social support for disadvantaged members of society.

Facilitating Condition 2: A functioning market economy regulated to prevent disproportionate aggregations of power & ensure fairness in economic relations

a) There are state policies & laws to establish the conditions necessary to ensure the integrity of market transactions, to preserve competition, & to maintain the stability of the monetary system.

b) There is state regulation to protect collective bargaining rights for labour.

c) There is state regulation of workplace conditions.

d) There is state regulation to protect consumer interest.

Facilitating Condition 3: An internally cohesive political community

a) In societies where there are significant ethno-cultural &/or linguistic cleavages there are effective state policies to promote tolerance & protect cultural minorities.

b) In culturally diverse societies government policies effectively promote commitment to shared values that underpin social cohesion.

c) In societies where there are distinctive regional sub-communities, based on a strong sense of regional identity & interests, state structures are designed & function effectively to give representation to & accommodate regional sub-community differences through:

• Adoption of the federal principle or devolution of significant powers on regional governments, &;

• National institutions that incorporate the principle of regional representation; informal practices to ensure that the principle of regional representation is observed in the national government.

Appendix II: Liberia through the Perlin Model Lens

Conditions Necessary to Achieve and Sustain Liberal Democracy

Essential Conditions

Essential Condition 1: Political engagement of citizens

With over 75% of registered voters casting ballots in the 2005 election, clearly citizens are eager to participate in politics, at least through voting. There is a strong feeling among the electorate indicated by a recent survey (See Appendix) that the election was a worthwhile process. There continues to be enthusiasm for participation in future

that would belie commitment to these values. Likely the best indicator that citizens are committed to the legitimacy of the system is the acceptance of Johnson-Sirleaf as President, despite the fact that she did not garner the greatest number of votes in the first round of elections.

Essential Condition 3: Civil society

Liberia maintained a vibrant civil society prior to Charles Taylor's co-option of, and violence against, citizen organizations. The Accra Agreement elevated Liberian civil society to an unprecedented position in Liberian government, granting civil society groups formal positions in the transitional government. This decision has severely confused civil society's role in Liberia. Rather than serving as an advisor to the government, some Liberians have interpreted different civil society groups as having political ambitions grander than simple advocacy or advice.

The current legal regime allows for the formation of civil society groups, and it is expected that widespread citizen participation, as seen in the middle of the twentieth century, will return. Of great concern, however, is that most NGOs are entirely dependent on donor support. It is essential to democracy in Liberia that its citizens develop a domestic, sustainable civil society. Obviously, there is international donor interest in supporting intitiatives in Liberia, but these must be carefully planned so civil society will survive the departure of international aid money.

Facilitating Conditions

Facilitating Condition 1: Open, non-polarized system of social stratification

As noted above, Liberia suffered from a significantly polarized social system for much of its existence – whether under the Americo-Liberian oligarchy or the later Presidents who supported their own kin. The civil war, too, saw different elements of society pitted against each other.

Government policies currently exist to promote equality of opportunity; in particular, the security forces are now structured to thwart any condensation of power within a single ethnic group.

A large middle class does not currently exist in Liberia becaue of massive unemployment. Further, social mobility is reduced not by clan loyalty but by too few jobs to make mobility relevant. Although access to health and social services is theoretically equal, the capacity for such services is only beginning to be rebuilt with massive infusions of money from international donors.

Facilitating Condition 2: A functioning market economy regulated to prevent disproportionate aggregations of power and ensure fairness in economic relations

The major anti-corruption plan, GEMAP, has been designed to establish conditions necessary for market transactions and to preserve competition at various levels of government spending. Fully-trained customs and port officers have been deployed to aid in ensuring fair competition at ports and borders.

Natural resources such as timber and diamonds, once a key source of wealth for corrupt politicians and militias, are being regulated. Liberia has agreed to abide by international standards on natural resources, including participating in the Kimberley Process on diamonds. This regulation of natural resources has been designed specifically to ensure that wealth– and power – from the illegal sale of these resources are not again disproportionately gained by a few elite.

Although rules exist to govern a market economy, state regulations to protect collective bargaining rights for labour and workplav17 (gaining) 91 7 (a hn)

Appendix III

THE POWER OF THE DIASPORA:
A TEACHING CASE
ON
ELLEN JOHNSON-SIRLEAF'S 2005 PRESIDENTIAL
VICTORY IN LIBERIA

By Valerie Ashford

January 2009

Contents

Introduction

Twice imprisoned, held without access to family or lawyers, death threats from high-ranking government officials, a sentence of ten years' hard labour… and she'd never committed a crime.

This is home. It's Liberia, where:

Sirleaf's contemplation of a presidential victory, as well as the hope of others who wished to

families, and often resoundingly impact their new communities, and in Johnson-Sirleaf's case, the global community.

Over the course of her 12-year exile, she distinguished herself as an economist for a number of international financial institutions, including the World Bank, and was also director of the Regional Bureau for Africa of the United Nations Development Programme. In short, Johnson-Sirleaf had more power and prestige than many, in a context of physical, professional, and political security. And yet…

Johnson-Sirleaf did run, and won. In the context of understanding the power of Diaspora, the intriguing questions include:

> Why did she choose to run?
>
> How is it possible that she won?
>
> What does Johnson-Sirleaf's victory tell us about Diasporas, about citizenship, and democracy?

A cursory understanding of the country and its history is essential to these questions.

Liberia, Past and Present

Liberia has been plagued by paradox from its natal moment. Often described in vaguely magical terms as a country "founded by freed slaves…initially imagined as a haven for 'free people of colour'"[151] the invention of Liberia was instead a "response to the paroxysm of racism in the post-emancipation era in the United States."[152] It was a far more pragmatic project, undertaken by the American Colonization Society:

> Slave-owners saw repatriation as a means of removing unwelcome examples of independent, self-supporting free blacks from the view of their slaves. Some white abolitionists were nevertheless uncomfortable with the prospect of actually living in a multiracial society. Evangelical Christians envisioned a divine plan to 'redeem' African heathens through the example of black missionaries and Christian

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[151] Moran (2006) *Liberia* p 2

[152] Mgbeoji (2003) Collective insecurity: the Liberian crisis, unilateralism, and the global order p 2

communities. American merchants… welcomed a secure landing place on the African

Sayle and Sua,[157] the experience of such development quickly exceeded the nation's capacity to deliver, (a case of 'the theory of relative deprivation') and under President Tolbert's heavy-handed rule, indigenous Liberians and their in-country allies eventually resorted to violence in their quest for greater democracy and economic fairness. Tolbert was killed in a coup orchestrated by the indigenous warlord Samuel Doe, which saw "some of the worst human rights atrocities in Africa during the 1980s"[158] and created fertile grounds for Charles Taylor's supersession, which became an even greater catastrophe for the country. In 1990, the Economic Community of West African States established a military monitory group (ECOMOG), which, although it largely failed to bring peace to Liberia, did bring the country (with US aid) to the point where an election could be held. Sayle and Sua[159]

Lady,'[160] was created.[161]

When Taylor declared victory, Johnson-Sirleaf was the only one of the contending candidates to file a protest for the records, but the UP did not pursue this.[162]

> At the polls, Johnson-Sirleaf stated that ECOMOG soldiers had voted or told people how to vote (IRIN-WA, 21 July 1997), and the donation of US$1million to IECOM [the Independent Electoral Commission] by the Taylor-friendly government of Taiwan was seen by some as indicative of IECOM bias. Allegations were made that counts of zero were registered for both Boley and George Toe Washington at the very polling stations in which they had cast their own votes (Daily Observer, 28 July 1997), and the UP claimed that party representatives had been under duress to sign the tally sheets at the polling stations (The Inquirer, 23 July 1997).[163]

It is telling that Johnson-Sirleaf and her party went on record with their protests, given that she had been already been imprisoned once, by Doe, for announcing her intention to run against him. And again, she was charged with treason in 1997 by Taylor's government, and went into exile. She returned in 2003 after aftersF 248 Tm-9 goj ETda1e, after afremntin36 af(in)-49 7 (( )2

(NTOC) to implement its provisions and lay the groundwork for a return to democracy. In February 2005, the National Elections Commission announced that October 11, 2005, would be the date for the election, and that if a run-off was necessary, this would be held on November 5, 2005. The House of Representatives of the new legislature would have 64 seats (each of Liberia's 15 counties has at least two seats with the remaining 34 apportioned by population), while the senate was to have 30 seats, two for each County, with both representatives and senators directly elected. The Presidency would be decided by a majority of the popular vote. If no one succeeded in obtaining over 50% of the votes on the first ballot, a run-off would be held between the two leading candidates.

The Carter Centre of the National Democracy Institute, which observed the two

ballot, Weah finished first with 28.3% of the vote, with Johnson-Sirleaf coming second with

was jeopardized by claims from Weah and his supporters that Johnson-Sirleaf could have only overtaken Weah's lead through fraud. Incidents of violence raised the specter that Liberia could descend back into chaos, but after the National Electoral Commission rejected the allegations of fraud, Weah abandoned his case in late December. As a result, Johnson-Sirleaf was inaugurated as President of Liberia on January 16, 2006.

David Harris cautions, however, that Liberia's election should not necessarily be seen as a typical post-conflict election, and that it's utility as an example for democratizations elsewhere is limited in the absence of similar circumstances. In particular, Harris notes that

Degrees of Statehood, Democracy and Citizenship

Statehood

The idea of statehood in Africa begins with Liberia, the continent's oldest 'nation.'[169] Mgbeoji argues that Liberia's initial pretensions to statehood were flawed in part by being fully premised on pigmentation; the lighter one's skin (through US miscegenation), the greater one's rights to access, participation, and 'civilizing' leadership in the state:

> It is no surprise that, having been fed on a diet of racism and notions of racial superiority on the basis of skin pigmentation, the state of Liberia was founded upon and sustained on the supposed superiority of the light-skinned Americo-Liberian (the elite) over the darker-skinned natives.[170]

The notion of statehood, if including such definitional criteria as above, is obviously problematic. A further difficulty with configuring Liberia as a state lies in the fact that, excepting the initial settlers, who constituted less than 5% of Liberia's population, the region was and has largely remained a geography inhabited by various distinct ethnicities, among whom alliances and feuds would have always developed and evolved or devolved, but at no

The challenge of democratization in a context where the structures and principles of the philosophy are themselves foreign and where 'national' history is a myth, is Herculean. If the state itself has grown from a "precolonial African nation mutilated into an ahistorical unit run by self-indulgent elites, [creating] a time bomb waiting to explode"[172] and "cartographically and culturally disoriented," then the very legitimacy of governance is a vexing issue, even the possibility of a democratic one. But by the time of Liberia's 2005 election, it was especially critical that leadership at least break with the country's long tradition in which:

> Direct and uncritical successors of the colonialist contraptions insisted on absolute loyalty to a fictitious nation-state. As Hansen Laments, "though they were African themselves, the leaders ignored African identities, territories, and boundaries in favour of a European defined one."

Democracy

The problem with defining democracy lies in the complexity of the term's referents. Postmodernist thinker Jacques Derrida argues that we can never define any term with any finality, in part because what defines a term are other terms whose definitions depend on yet more terms, and so on. 'Democracy' might be the best example of this, given how many interpretable variables go into any effort to pin down its meaning. Elections alone do not constitute democracy, however; Perlin rightly notes "citizen participation in voting is but a minimum requirement to consider an electorate politically engaged."[173] The 1997 election in Liberia was no indication of democracy, despite the applause of observers. The incumbent Taylor's commercial empire had "its own currency, TV, radio, newspaper, international airport and deepwater port…A US official estimated that Taylor may have had access to US $75 million per year."[174] These resources infinitely outstripped those available to any other

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[172] Ibid 26, 31

[173] Sayle and Sua (2008) Creating an International Network of Democracy Builders, Vol. 2, p 45

[174] Harris (1999) 'From 'warlord' to 'democratic' president: how Charles Taylor won the 1997 Liberian elections' *! "#$%&' () *+$&,$– &. #()$/,(01*)$23' . 0#4*, 37, 3 p 434

candidates. Further, Lyons notes "many Liberians believed that if Taylor lost the election the country would return to war."[175] These are clearly not ideal democratic conditions.

would choose to run as president, if framed by questions of ambition or psychology, is one only she could answer.[178] She does offer a brief response to this question in an interview:

> I want to change the country. We have a small country with ample resources and a

she herself alternately points to or away from it, depending on rhetorical purpose. Consider the media excerpts below:

> "Ellen is our man!" was the refrain that rang through the streets of Monrovia during Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's campaign to be Africa's first elected woman president. Despite the slogan, many of Johnson Sirleaf's supporters attribute her victory to the fact that she is not a man. Liberians often blame men for destroying the country and many see Johnson Sirleaf as the woman who will set things right. Johnson Sirleaf herself has vowed to bring "motherly sensitivity and emotion to the presidency.[182]

and

> Stella Tamale, dean of law at Makerere University in Uganda, is equally pleased: "No one can tell us any more that Africa is not ready for a woman president," she says.
> "But Ellen's not a woman," another colleague objects. "She's… Well, she is a woman, but …"
> The gender of someone already in their late 60s is not usually in doubt – except, apparently, in the case of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, the newly elected president of Liberia.[183]

and

> I have read numerous commentaries on Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf's victory in the Liberian Presidential elections. Many have dubbed her "A Woman of Substance." Others call her the "Iron Lady". Yet others portray her as the one beacon of hope in "the worst place to be a woman on earth." A campaign slogan in Monrovia is reported to have read: "Ellen, She's Our Man"; another urged people to "Vote for the Old Ma"– a sign of deference and respect for the elder status and consequent wisdom Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf is assumed to have garnered over the years. Having won the most votes in Liberia's run-off election for President, Ms. Sirleaf-Johnson stands on the threshold of becoming the first woman head of state in Africa. She has turned the tide of male-dominated control over the commanding heights of African politics, opening up the possibility that the 21st Century is the century of the African woman in politics.[184]

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[182] Retrieved on 12/30/08 from http://www.huntalternatives.org/pages/399_ellen_johnson_sirleaf.cfm

[183] Retrieved on 12/30/08 from http://www.howardwfrench.com/archives/2005/11/15/
ellen_johnsonsirleaf_less_of_the_iron_lady/

[184] Okome, Mojúbàolú Olúfúnké (2005) 'Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson (sic): A Tribute' *JENDA: A Journal of Culture and African Women Studies* Issue 7

The calculated strategy of fostering an image in which one is a 'man,' but not a man, and a woman, but not a 'woman,' is hundreds of years old. It is a trope first known to be employed by Queen Elizabeth I, who claimed "I have the heart of a man, not a woman, and I am not afraid of anything" in a speech to her army at Tilbury in 1588.[185] In the same speech, she argued

> I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king-and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn . . . that . . . any should dare to invade the borders of my realm . . . I myself will be your general.

A great deal of attention was paid, during the Johnson-Sirleaf campaign and since, to the fact that Johnson-Sirleaf is a woman. This should be construed as a bit archaic, given that little

30 African countries, Van Cranenberg[187] points to the democracy-withering effects of highly centralized governments in Africa, referring to these as 'Big Men Rule.' (Sayle and Sua note that Liberia's constitutional office is "head of an extremely centralized government structure."[188]) Johnson-Sirleaf had already lost one presidential election in her lifetime, to voters who quite reasonably chose their own safety and security in choosing Taylor, knowing that his defeat would no doubt mean continued bloodshed. Playing the gender card in 2005, she quite shrewdly worked the broader threat of masculinity itself as a reason to vote for her.

ultimately seen as a troublesome prospect that could threaten Liberia's elites.[191] But this chapter in the country's history refers more to migrants than an actual Diaspora, although Sawyer defines Garveyites as a Diaspora.

There remains much debate over what exactly defines a Diaspora, but if theories of postmodernism have anything to teach us, it is that the whole is not more, but *different* than the sum of its parts; thus the more global citizen, including members of a Diaspora, are often reluctant to define themselves as mere amalgams of two or more identities, as, for instance, an *Americo-Liberian* or an *Indo-Canadian.* Instead, Diaspora are often defined or self-defined as beyond the binary. Walsh suggests that Diasporas generally are "repositioning themselves in relation to postcolonial and neocolonial regimes and in relation to a nation-state-dominated global order" and argues that this positioning creates collective potential to ally politically in with a home country from abroad.[192] However defined, there is little doubt that they wield extraordinary clout.

estimated at $300 billion or more. This makes the global Diaspora a major emerging alternative funding source for Third World development.[198]

While this indicates the importance of Diaspora generally, it is especially important in Liberia, given its infrastructural damage after 14 years of civil war and outright plundering by Taylor:

> The Diaspora is a major source of investment funding, expertise and an important confidence building measure. Financial flows from the global African Diaspora contribute on the average of 5-10% GDP of many African countries and in a few cases over 20%. For example, shares of GDP from remittances for Guinea-Bissau, Eritrea, and Liberia are 48%, 38%, and 26%, respectively. This factor is significant especially for a country such as Liberia. Remittances accounting for 26% of Liberia's annual GDP of $574.5 million and a growth rate of 7.9% translate into an inward capital flow of about $149 (ce)ng( ) 6 (sla9) -15 ( ) -f [mber%,Th.9%ry acs(manf) -34 (7ch)143 (in)

remittances[201] have significant impact on those at home, according to Levitt, who states that although social remittances are often "unsystematic and unintentional,"[202] they nonetheless typically "engender demands for a different type of politics."[203]

Global Networks and Participation

However powerful or powerless Diasporas exisited beforethe Internet, the advent of global communications platforms has created a potent tool by which Diasporas influence their home countries. The Liberian Diaspora's US-based online forum, *The Perspective*, provides a rich source of material for understanding the commitment and capacity of Diasporas to both see themselves as citizens of an adopted land and yet always Liberian enough to want influence an outcome halfway across the world from them. It also enables families, communities, and districts within the country to understand the role democracy plays in the lives of expatriates and exiles.

The Perspective is an online magazine that provides an active bilateral forum for Liberians and the Liberian Diaspora to publicly debate political, socio-cultural and economic issues together. It has been active since 1998, and draws material from Liberian intellectuals as well as the general Liberian or Liberian Diasporic public. The Perspective was founded by the Liberian Democratic Future (LDF) which is:

> A group of Liberians from different ethnic backgrounds, genders, religious beliefs and political persuasions who are dedicated to pluralistic, democratic Liberia. The Liberian Democratic Future has great passion for democracy, peace with justice and equal opportunity for all Liberians, which are not only necessary but in deed critically imperative if we are to transcend the wounds and deep division of our civil conflict.

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[201] "…the ideas, behaviours, identities and social capital" that flow between populations at home and abroad. Levitt (1998) 'Social Remittances: Migration Driven Local-level Forms of Cultural Diffusion' *5)3#() *6&)*$ – 07(*6&)$8#90#:* Vol. 32, No. 4 p 927

[202] Ibid p 936, 942

[203] Ibid p 942

In recognition of this national need, LDF has decided to launch a medium of dialogue - The Perspective.[204]

There is no data available on its or other Liberian online forum readership, but the variety of contributors and themes, along with these sites' relative longevity online, suggests that they are extremely popular. Networks include *AllAfrica, liberianonline.com westafricadirectory.com unitedliberia.com, liberiabroadcastingsystem.com, www.analystliberia.com,* and many more.

Conntributors to The Perspective include Dr. Chinua Akukwe,[205] a member of the US Liberian Diaspora, who argues that

Liberians in the Diaspora should become strategic partners in Government's individual and private sector initiative to accelerate development. As one of the most distinguished African immigrants in the West in the last two decades, the president knows a thing or two about the strengths of her compatriots in the Diaspora. Creating opportunities for Liberians in the Diaspora to complete individual projects, safeguard personal investments in the country, create private sector generating jobs and bring major corporations to Liberia to set up factories and service delivery facilities should be an important focus of the new government. The key is to create conducive environments for Liberians in the Diaspora to maximize their potential in the urgent task of nation building.[206]

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[204] Retrieved on 12/31/08 from http://www.theperspective.org/editorial.html

[205] "An expert on HIV/AIDSS strategies, policies and programs, with special focus on Africa; global health; maternal and child health; and, international development partnerships. He is a Fellow of the American College of Epidemiology; a Fellow of the United Kingdom Royal Society of Medicine, London; a Fellow of the United States National Academy of Public Administration, Washington, DC; a Member of the New York Academy of Sciences; a former Vice Chairman of the Executive Committee and Governing Board of the National Council for International Health (NCIH) now known as the Global Health Council, Washington, DC; a former Senior Visiting Fellow at the National Medical Association, Washington, DC; a former Senior Visiting Fellow at the American Council for Voluntary International Action (InterAction), Washington, DC; a former member of the International Human Rights Committee of the American Public Health Association; a former member of the editorial board of the American Journal of Public Health, where he served for five years; and, a former member of the board of directors of the Christian Connections for International Health, an international ecumenical organization. Dr. Akukwe is presently a member of the Board of Directors of the Constituency for Africa, Washington, DC. He is also a member of the Board of Directors of the Association of Physicians and Scientists of African Descent (ASPAD), Silver Spring, Maryland, USA." Retrieved on 01/01/09 from http://www.worldpress.org/freelancers/index.cfm/hurl/page=freelancerDetails/id=41

[206] Retrieved on 01/01/09 from http://www.theperspective.org/articles/0119200602.html

These arguments indicate the growing recognition of the importance of the Diaspora now, but even before her election, Johnson-Sirleaf made it clear that she was thoroughly aware of their role. She was asked in an interview "What role do you see the Liberian Diaspora playing in the election?" and answered:

> They're playing an important role already, even pre-election. Liberians abroad provide significant resources to the country – huge amounts to take care of their family and friends. In these elections, they are much more involved than they have been in other elections. They are enthusiastic, they are aggressive, they are participatory with the candidates or party of their choice, they are having rallies, they are supporting with ideas, with money.[207]

One of the biggest current debates among Liberians at home and abroad has to do with the matter of dual citizenship. In the same interview as above, Johnson-Sirleaf said that:

> To all of our disappointment, they [the Liberian Diaspora] have not been allowed to vote, simply because the Election Commission didn't feel they had the capacity to manage a vote externally. But many went home to register, and many will try to go home to vote. Many of them that cannot vote are working in support of candidates. I know that I'm enjoying support from Liberians in this country and in other countries to ensure that we win.

Arguments rage back and forth on the matter of dual citizenship in The Perspective in particular, and are of an intensity that bespeaks the passion exiles and expatriates of Liberia retain for the country of origin. But most persuasive on the matter of why Liberia needs to emend its constitution in favour of dual citizenship is the fact that a free flow of skilled, professional, academic, legal and medical expertise through the country, its infrastructure can

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[207] Retrieved on 01/02/09 from http://allafrica.com/stories/200508100001.html

and fairly elected president of Liberia. More intriguing than this is the possibility that Liberia's president was chosen in part because she was *of* a Diaspora, and in part by virtue of the strength of Diasporic influence on the election.

Additional Reading

The Evolution of Deadly Conflict in Liberia: From 'Paternaltarianism' to State Collapse, and: Beyond Plunder: Toward Democratic Governance in Liberia (review)
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Human Rights Quarterly Volume: 21, Issue: 2, May 01, 1999, Cain, Kenneth L.

Pushing for Press Freedom in Liberia Journal of Democracy Volume: 11, Issue: 2, April 01, 2000, Deddeh, Suah S.

The Price of Liberty: African Americans and the Making of Liberia (review) African Studies Review Volume: 50, Issue: 2, September 25, 2007, Dunn, Chandra.

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Appendix IV: Liberia Opinion Survey - The 2005 Elections & Repatriation

Research Partners: Sua Foundation, Inc. Primary Investigator
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Summary

In 2005, the people of Liberia went to the polls after fourteen years of bitter civil war. Vicious fighting had left 200,000 dead, countless others forced from their homes and seeking refuge in neighboring and distant countries, and a national infrastructure in ruins.

in curriculums for students of democratic development in Africa and elsewhere. Of particular importance, the survey demonstrates the will of a population to partake in an election set amidst post-conflict reconstruction. Liberia's recent history has much to teach us about the development of democracy in a nation re-assembling itself after a major exodus and the

Findings & Analyses

The Respondents (Questions 1 – 3)

The first three questions of the survey provide a broad outline of the survey groups' experience with elections and their personal situations. The survey asked how many times each respondent had voted in a Liberian presidential election. Over 97% of respondents had voted in at least one election, with 26% having voted in one election, 20% having voted in three elections, and the majority having voted in two elections. These results are consistent with reports that voter turnout was high in the recent election. Such turnout is attributed to voter enthusiasm and improved security in the country, provided by a 14,000 strong UN

considered a member of the economic and political elite. Even persons of indigenous ancestry who were fortunate enough to travel to America for brief periods used their travel experience to elevate their status and compete for political appointments.

The respect for Diaspora experience has shifted during the war. Only 2% of respondents believe that expatriates should be appointed to government positions because they traveled abroad. 62% of Liberians believe that returnees to Liberia should be appointed to government positions, but only if properly qualified. A significant minority of 32% argues that returning

real political power. Furthermore, complaints about the NEC combined with an expectation of improvement suggest that Liberians believe their governing institutions are responsible and accountable, if not immediately effective.

The Future of Democracy in Liberia (Questions 19 – 20)

Liberia Opinion Survey: 2005 Elections & Repatriation - Data

Question 1: "How many times have you voted in a Liberian Presidential Election?"

A	None	10	2.36%
B	One Election	112	26.48%
C	Two Elections	215	50.83%
D	Three Elections	86	20.33%
Total		423	100.00%

Question 2: Did you vote as:

A	Single	246	58.71%
B	Married	153	36.52%
C	Divorced	12	2.86%
D	Did Not Vote	8	1.91%
Total		419	100.00%

Question 3: "How many persons are in your household including yourself?"

A	One Person	11	2.61%
B	Two Persons	22	5.23%
C	Three Persons	38	9.03%
D	More Than Three Person	350	83.14%
Total		421	100.00%

Question 4: "Where did you travel during the Liberian Civil War?"

A	America	9	2.12%
B	Europe	5	1.18%
C	Other African Nation	162	38.21%
D	Remained in Liberia	248	58.49%
Total		424	100.00%

Question 5: "What do you think was the main reason Liberians traveled to Europe or America during the Civil War?"

A	Freedom and Democracy	252	62.07%
B	Money	32	7.88%
C	Education	66	16.26%
D	I Do Not Know	56	13.79%
Total		406	100.00%

Question 6: "What do you think happened to those Liberian who traveled to America or Europe during the Civil War?"

A	Learned the Good Things	252	61.31%
B	Learned the Bad Things	24	5.84%
C	Nothing Happened	48	11.68%
D	I Do Not Know	87	21.17%

C	No, they stayed abroad too long	11	2.63%
D	No, there are qualified Liberians who never left	135	32.30%
Total		418	100.00%

Question 8: "What differences between America and Europe do you think may have influenced your vote?"

A	America is our traditional ally	352	75.21%
B	Europe is more diverse and inclusive	19	4.06%
C	America is the only super power	67	14.32%
D	Europeans are more reliable	30	6.41%
Total		468	100.00%

Question 9: "Before returning to Liberia to contest the elections, Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf lived in the US and George Weah lived in Europe, two different Diaspora communities. Did the geographic difference influence your vote?"

A	Yes	97	22.99%
B	No	283	67.06%
C	I Do Not Know	16	3.79%
D	No opinion	26	6.16%
Total		422	100.00%

Question 10: "Do you agree that the National Elections Commissions made the best preparations for the elections?"

A	Yes	323	73.24%
B	No	86	19.50%
C	I do not know	14	3.17%
D	No opinion	18	4.08%
Total		441	100.00%

Question 11: "Are there changes you wish the National Elections Commissions could make to improve the next election cycle?"

A	Yes	325	78.13%
B	No	55	13.22%
C	I Do Not Know	15	

B	No, voting was too time consuming	19	4.56%
C	No, feared persecution for voting	6	1.44%
D	No, not registered to vote	33	7.91%
Total		417	100.00%

Question 15: "If you voted in the second round of the presidential elections, who was your choice for president?"

A	Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf	325	76.47%
B	George Weah	56	13.18%
C	Don't remember	2	