



Security Council

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Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Office for West Africa

I. Introduction

1. In its letter dated 21 December 2007 (S/2007/754), the Security Council agreed to extend the mandate of the United Nations Office for West Africa (UNOWA) until 31 December 2010, and requested me to report on the implementation of the revised mandate of UNOWA every six months. The present report covers the period from 1 July to 31 December 2010. It focuses on national, cross-cutting and cross-border developments in West Africa and activities undertaken by UNOWA in preventative diplomacy, raising awareness on emerging threats and challenges, and on efforts aimed at promoting consultations and synergies at the subregional level and liaison with and assistance to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union in the promotion of peace and stability.

2. While progress made in addressing these issues is encouraging, it needs to be further consolidated to make a real impact on the lives of the people in the subregion. As I underlined in my last report on UNOWA (S/2010/324), West Africa remains vulnerable to a range of internal and external destabilizing factors. Internal challenges include those related to governance and the rule of law, transparency and accountability, flawed elections, continuing difficulties with concepts like power-sharing, security sector reform, gender equity, human rights and impunity. External factors of instability that continue to affect West Africa are more regional and cross-border in nature. They include terrorist activities and transnational organized crime, notably drug trafficking.

II. Country-specific political developments and UNOWA good offices

3. Some parts of West Africa continue to experience political instability related to the transition from military rule or civil tensions to more open democratic regimes and constitutional order. These include notably the situations in Guinea and Niger, and post-election tensions witnessed in Mauritania and Togo. These country-specific developments were the focus of much of the activities of the UNOWA good offices in the period under review.



A. Guinea

4. For the first time in the history of the country, Guinea organized a democratic multiparty presidential election on 27 June 2010. The conduct of the poll was peaceful and credible. Out of 24 candidates who contested the election, two leading candidates emerged: Mr. Cellou Dalein Diallo of the Union des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée (UFDG), and Mr. Alpha Condé of the Rassemblement du Peuple de Guinée (RPG), claiming 43.69 per cent and 18.25 per cent of votes, respectively. The run-off, initially scheduled to take place on 18 July 2010, was repeatedly postponed as a result of a lack of consensus among the major stakeholders, especially between the two leading candidates, on the timing and the modalities for conducting the second round on the one hand, and on technical and logistical constraints on the other. During the period of the election, a senior mediation adviser and the Deputy Director of the Electoral Assistance Division of the Department of Political Affairs were deployed in Guinea to provide United Nations support to regional mediation efforts in collaboration with the United Nations Resident Coordinator.

5. On 12 August, my Special Representative for West Africa met with Cellou Dalein Diallo in Dakar to exchange views on the impact of the postponement of the date for the run-off presidential poll. An ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations mission visited Guinea from 19 to 20 August 2010 and reviewed progress made towards holding the run-off, which was rescheduled for 19 September. The challenge of how to address the shortcomings observed during the first round, in order to avert potential difficulties during the run-off, was addressed by the joint mission.

6. On 3 September, the two candidates for the run-off, Cellou Dalein Diallo and Alpha Condé, signed a memorandum of understanding in Ouagadougou under the aegis of President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, the ECOWAS mediator for Guinea, in which they undertook to work for free, transparent and democratic elections, and to preserve social cohesion and national unity. From 2 to 3 September 2010, the International Contact Group for Guinea reviewed with national stakeholders progress made and outstanding challenges in the run-off preparatory process, including on the critical issue of cooperation between the Independent National Electoral Commission (CENI) and the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Political Affairs. On 4 September, an African Union/United Nations/ECOWAS delegation briefed President Blaise Compaoré in Ouagadougou on developments in Guinea and on the conclusions of the meeting of the International Contact Group for Guinea, stressing the crucial role that the ECOWAS Mediator could play in ensuring a credible and peaceful transition in Guinea.

7. On 17 September, an ECOWAS extraordinary summit held in Abuja on Guinea-Bissau, which my Special Representative attended, issued a communiqué on Guinea, calling for the setting, without further delay of a date for the run-off of the presidential election. The communiqué also called on the two candidates to abide by the memorandum of understanding that they had signed in Ouagadougou on 3 September under the auspices of the ECOWAS Mediator.

8. Following the exacerbation of tensions related to disagreements over the credibility and the leadership of CENI, UNOWA facilitated another ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations mission to Conakry from 18 to 20 September to help

Guineans keep the transition process on course. The delegation was able to secure a further commitment from the two candidates that they would show restraint and call for calm among their respective supporters, as well as a pledge to establish regular channels of communication with one another. Consistent with the advice of the ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations delegation, the interim President of Guinea, General Sékouba Konaté, insisted that both the candidates and the Electoral Commission agree on a date for the run-off. Subsequently, the joint delegation travelled to Ouagadougou, where they again provided an update to President Compaoré on 21 September and underscored the need for the Mediator to encourage General Konaté to exercise greater authority over the transition process. During that time, I spoke to a number of regional and foreign leaders, including President Goodluck Jonathan in his capacity as the Chair of ECOWAS, to help move the process forward. I also met with delegations from Guinea, Nigeria and France in New York on the margins of the General Assembly. I raised the issue of Guinea and the need to ensure the holding of credible, peaceful and timely elections.

9. Following these intensive consultations, on 2 October, General Konaté announced the establishment of a follow-up commission to support CENI in the organization of the long-awaited election. Although this decision was welcomed by all stakeholders, the electoral process continued to face challenges related to the calendar and the CENI leadership, escalating the potential for violence and insecurity.

10. On 5 October, General Konaté issued a decree fixing 24 October as the new date for the run-off. That date could not be met owing to a number of issues, including divergent views among the candidates on the CENI leadership. As the differences persisted, General Konaté appointed the adviser to CENI of the Organization of la Francophonie, retired General Siaka Toumani Sangaré of Mali, as the new Chair of CENI. The appointment was welcomed by the two candidates.

11. On 13 October my Special Representative travelled again to Conakry, where he discussed the potential for election-related violence with stakeholders in the Guinean capital, including with interim President Konaté and with Prime Minister Doré. His interlocutors confirmed the determination of the Government to maintain law and order during and after the election. They further called for additional support by the international community to strengthen the authority of the interim Government, including by urging the international community to threaten to impose targeted sanctions against spoilers. The two candidates assured my Special Representative of their commitment to peaceful elections, and their acceptance of the principle of an inclusive Government of national unity and the maintenance of open channels of dialogue and communication.

12. On 26 October, after consultations with all stakeholders, the new Chair of CENI proposed 31 October 2010 as the new date for the presidential run-off poll. Upon consideration, General Konaté issued a decree setting 7 November 2010 as the date for the run-off. Following that announcement, from 3 to 8 November, my Special Representative undertook a mission to Conakry to support the ongoing efforts to create a conducive environment for the run-off presidential election. Subsequently, the poll took place as scheduled on 7 November. During the ballot-counting process, Mr. Diallo's camp had already begun challenging the credibility of the process, alleging fraud in some constituencies. Although the election was held in a peaceful and orderly manner, tensions remained high over the release of the

provisional results by CENI, which were contested by Mr. Diallo. The release of the provisional results was followed by days of protests, mainly by supporters of Mr. Diallo, resulting in a number of deaths, injuries and the destruction of property, amid allegations of the excessive use of force by members of the armed forces. The World Health Organization confirmed that 10 people died and 302 others were injured in the violence. Calm returned to Guinea after the Government declared a state of emergency on 17 November.

13. From 11 to 16 November, my Special Representative returned to Conakry in order to help manage post-election tensions. He remained in constant touch with all stakeholders, especially the two candidates, and urged them to preserve peace, accept the election results and resort to legal means for their claims. My Special Representative, together with other members of the International Contact Group for Guinea, met Cellou Dalein Diallo to express concerns about Mr. Diallo's statement that he would not accept the provisional results until his claims were duly processed by CENI. During a subsequent meeting with the Chair of CENI, General Sangaré, the latter assured Mr. Diallo that all claims had already been examined and that the results correctly reflected the votes cast.

14. On 16 November, CENI announced the full provisional results as follows: candidate Alpha Condé won the election with 52.52 per cent of the votes cast as against 47.48 per cent for Cellou Dalein Diallo. UFDG, led by Mr. Diallo, rejected the results, and announced its decision to challenge the results at the Supreme Court. My Special Representative met the same day with the candidate and encouraged him to continue to preserve national cohesion and peace by appealing to his supporters to exercise restraint. He also renewed his earlier appeal to Mr. Diallo to resort to legal means in pursuing his objections to the provisional results announced on that occasion.

15. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General also met with interim President General Konaté in the presence of his military commanders. The main concern he raised at the meeting was the reported use of excessive force by the security forces during street protests. For his part, the interim President requested my Special Representative to assist in promoting dialogue between the two candidates to ensure that they would not renege on their previous commitment that whoever emerged as the winner in the second round would work towards the formation of a government of national unity. The Minister in Charge of Security assured my Special Representative that the police and defence forces had purportedly been instructed not to use excessive force. On 17 November, the interim authorities decreed a country-wide state of emergency to prevent further violence, until the publication of the final results, on 2 December. From 15 November until 2 December, my Personal Envoy, other United Nations senior officials and I worked, in collaboration with national, regional and international actors, in support of restoring calm and calling on all Guineans to accept the results of the election and to resolve any differences through legal means. On 3 December, the Supreme Court of Guinea declared Mr. Alpha Condé the winner of the presidential election. My Special Representative, who had arrived in Conakry before the proclamation of the final results by the Supreme Court, called President-elect Alpha Condé to congratulate him. He also met with Prime Minister Jean Marie Doré, alongside the African Union special envoy, and had in-depth discussions on actions to be taken in the next few days to maintain calm. They encouraged Prime Minister Doré to pay a visit to Cellou Dalein Diallo. At the invitation of Mr. Diallo, the African

Union/United Nations delegation attended a public gathering, during which Mr. Diallo declared that he accepted the Supreme Court ruling.

B. Niger

16. During the reporting period, progress was witnessed in the transition process in Niger. Following consultations among national stakeholders, including the ruling military-led Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy (CSRD), the Government, CENI and the Constitutional Court, a consensual electoral timetable for the transition was adopted on 17 September. On 1 October, Head of State, Lieutenant-General Salou Djibo signed a decree on the referendum on the new Constitution. The referendum took place peacefully on 31 October and a new Constitution was adopted with 90.19 per cent of votes and a voter turnout of 52.65 per cent. Presidential and parliamentary elections are scheduled for 31 January 2011, with a possible run-off on 12 March. It is envisaged that the final results of the presidential election will be released on 1 April, and the inauguration of the newly elected president will take place on 6 April.

17. Throughout the reporting period, my Special Representative, in close coordination with ECOWAS and the African Union, engaged with national stakeholders to ensure a smooth and effective return to constitutional order. On 12 June, a senior mediation adviser was deployed to Niger to provide United Nations support to regional mediation efforts. On 13 September, my Special Representative held discussions with national stakeholders and international partners in Niamey, including with the Head of State, Lieutenant-General Salou Djibo, the Prime Minister, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, to review the progress made in the political transition and in the humanitarian situation in the country. During the visit, my Special Representative acknowledged the improvement in the humanitarian situation as a result of the effective response by the international community and the cooperation extended to humanitarian agencies by the Government, which created a conducive environment for the delivery of humanitarian assistance to communities in need in Niger. He was also able to confirm the determination of the Head of State to remain focused on the transition and to fulfil his commitment to hand over power to an elected President as planned, in spite of dissension among junta members. Lieutenant-General Salou Djibo confirmed this message on the margins of the general debate of the General Assembly. United Nations support for the transition process was offered at the highest level.

18. In early October, Lieutenant-General Salou Djibo made significant moves to restructure CSRD, and to that end reshuffled key positions in the military and security apparatus. High-ranking security officials were arrested in the subsequent days amid allegations of plotting a coup against the interim President. On 21 October, the CSRD Spokesman, Colonel Goukoye Abdoukarim, confirmed the arrest of four senior army officers and CSRD members.

19. As a result of these worrying developments, my Special Representative and the President of the ECOWAS Commission undertook a joint mission to Niamey on 15 October to seek clarification from the Head of State and to reiterate the support of the international community for the regime's transition programme. Although Lieutenant-General Djibo acknowledged that there was disagreement among junta

members on the principle and duration of the transition, he assured the delegation that such disagreements would not affect the transition. He indicated that preventive measures had been taken to ensure security and stability, noting that further appropriate decisions would be made depending on the outcome of ongoing investigations. He also called upon the international community to provide timely financial support to the electoral process to avert delay in the electoral schedule.

20. In spite of the progress in the transition process, it is important to remain vigilant, especially given the restiveness in the military and as the transition process enters its most delicate phase of legislative and presidential elections.

C. Togo

21. UNOWA continued to be engaged with developments in Togo, where the situation in the country was dominated during the reporting period by two trends: rapprochement between the Government and the main opposition party, the Union des Forces pour le Changement (UFC), as manifested by the inclusion of UFC members in an enlarged Government formed in May 2010. That move was expected to strengthen the prospects for national reconciliation and peace. On the other hand, an internal leadership struggle within UFC intensified, following the formation of the new Government, which remains a source of concern.

22. UFC President Gilchrist Olympio opted for his party joining the new Government in order to foster national reconciliation, while UFC Secretary-General and former presidential candidate Jean-Pierre Fabre continued to mobilize segments of the party and the population against the Government. For a few months thereafter both men claimed leadership of UFC, with each separately convening the party's congress. Jean-Pierre Fabre finally broke away from UFC to form a new political party, Alliance Nationale pour le Changement (ANC).

23. Throughout the period under review, opposition parties under the umbrella coalition Front Républicain pour l'Alternance et le Changement (FRAC) continued to protest against the re-election of President Faure Gnassingbé.

24. Meanwhile, the activities of the Truth, Justice and Reconciliation Commission, established by the Ouagadougou Global Political Agreement of 2006 to probe into political violence perpetrated in Togo between 1958 and 2005, also resumed, after having been suspended because of the presidential election.

D. Mauritania

25. The political situation in Mauritania also received the attention of UNOWA, as efforts continued by national stakeholders to achieve a consensus on the conditions and the modalities for national dialogue and reconciliation. In June and July 2010, a series of meetings between President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz and opposition figures raised expectations for a productive dialogue. However, concrete outcomes from that initiative are yet to materialize.

26. During a national address on 4 August to mark his first year in office, the President asserted that his administration had been successful in addressing both issues of good governance and the prevailing socio-economic challenges. He further

stated that there was no political crisis in the country that would justify a dialogue with the opposition, even though he was not opposed to such a dialogue in principle.

27. On 6 August, the Coordination of Democratic Opposition (COD) accused the Government of Mauritania of undermining the Dakar Framework Agreement signed on 4 June 2009 by the three main political groups in Mauritania. Opposition leaders accused President Ould Abdel Aziz of reneging on his previous commitments to national political dialogue.

28. Against that backdrop and in order to encourage national dialogue, my Special Representative travelled to Nouakchott again on 1 September, to meet with national stakeholders, including President Ould Abdel Aziz, the Speaker of the National Assembly, Messaoud Ould Boulkheir, and the opposition. In addition to the national dialogue process, they also discussed insecurity and terrorism in the Sahel, and the prospects for regional cooperation on these issues.

29. These discussions confirmed that there remains lingering residual mistrust between the Government and the opposition, and that there was still no consensus on the terms of reference envisaged for national dialogue. The opposition continues to insist on the need to fully implement the Dakar Agreement, while the Government wants no reference to that agreement. It is worth noting that the opposition party, headed by Ahmed Ould Daddah of Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques (RFD), announced on 12 September its decision to recognize the validity of the outcome of the August 2009 presidential election and the tenure of Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz as the President of Mauritania.

III. Developments, trends and UNOWA activities in cross-border and cross-cutting issues

30. During the reporting period, UNOWA, in coordination with United Nations entities in West Africa and the wider international community, continued to support West African Governments, peoples and subregional organizations in their efforts to address main cross-border and cross-cutting challenges affecting the subregion.

A. Economic, social and humanitarian issues

31. In the socio-economic and humanitarian spheres, the second half of 2010 was challenging for West African countries. The humanitarian situation in the region was characterized by persistent food crises in the Sahel, floods and outbreaks of diseases, especially cholera and meningitis. Persistent and complex economic and social challenges also continued to impact negatively on West Africa, including low progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goals in a number of countries. Trends in the realm of the Millennium Development Goals remained unchanged, reflecting extreme poverty, high levels of unemployment, notably among the youth, and a widening gap between the rich and the poor. These developments carried with them a high potential for civil unrest and violence, especially in a subregion where inflationary rates remain high, and the dividends of economic growth are yet to be fairly shared among the diverse segments of the population of the subregion.

32. The food crisis in West Africa affects millions of people and remains a pressing issue. Niger was the most affected, with a global acute malnutrition rate of

16.7 per cent; 47 per cent of the population experienced food insecurity and malnutrition. The flooding in 2010 in the subregion is also believed to be the worst in decades. The floods exacerbated an already precarious food security and nutritional situation in the most vulnerable parts of the subregion. Since June, floods have affected 1.7 million people and caused 335 deaths across the subregion. Benin has suffered the most, with an estimated 680,000 people being affected, including over 150,000 people temporarily displaced. The cholera outbreak that began in June in the subregion was also devastating in its impact. Over 40,000 cases and over 1,600 deaths were reported. In addition, from January to the end of September 2010, eight West African countries in the meningitis belt reported a total of 17,252 suspected cases of meningitis with over 1,700 deaths.

33. The response of the international community to this grave situation was most encouraging and multifaceted. It involved Governments, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. As at 12 November 2010, the consolidated appeals process for West Africa had raised \$323 million, with an additional \$50 million from the Central Emergency Response Fund, covering priority projects in nine West African countries, for a total of about 48 per cent of the required \$774 million. These contributions enabled aid actors to implement food, agriculture, farming, water and income-generating projects. In Niger, the massive humanitarian intervention succeeded in averting the worst effects of a food and nutrition crisis that would otherwise have put over 1 million people in serious jeopardy. Considering the profound food and nutrition crisis in Niger, the country will issue its own consolidated appeals process next year, while the West African consolidated appeals process will continue to cover the rest of the humanitarian needs in the subregion.

34. From a preventive standpoint, the regional office of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, in partnership with the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, will actively engage with national disaster management agencies and ECOWAS to strengthen the response preparedness of Member States and maximize the use of regional resources and expertise during disasters. Overall, prospects for agricultural production in most West African countries look good, largely as a result of an impressive 2010-2011 rainy season. According to Comité permanent inter-États de lutte contre la sécheresse, the 2010 harvest is likely to be one of the best in recent years. Some areas, however, may experience only average production levels, especially where rain deficits have been recorded. Similarly, countries that have suffered or are still suffering from flooding and extended rains are likely to experience poor harvests.

35. From 14 to 16 October, the Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, Valérie Amos, undertook a visit to Niger, where she met representatives of the Government, the humanitarian community and donors. During her visit, she underscored the need to learn the appropriate lessons from the continuing humanitarian crises in the subregion and, in particular to build and strengthen the capacities of countries in the Sahel to prevent them from relapsing into recurrent humanitarian catastrophes and conflict.

B. Human rights and gender issues

36. During the period under review, West African countries showed keen interest to undertake specific measures to implement the provisions contained in Security Council resolutions related to women and peace and security, in particular Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). The Gambia, Senegal and Nigeria commenced the process of developing national action plans on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), while Benin, Ghana, Mali, Mauritania and Togo are on course to follow suit. The protection and promotion of human rights during electoral processes continued to be a major challenge. There is an inadequate application of a human rights-based approach in a number of key areas, such as elections, development programmes, security sector reform, combating and mitigating the negative impact of trafficking in persons and drugs, and climate change.

37. UNOWA continued to monitor the human rights situation in the subregion with emphasis on countries involved in electoral processes. There was a determined effort to mainstream human rights and gender issues in policies of the countries with which the mission engaged. UNOWA and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) completed a joint study on the trafficking in persons in West Africa, which resulted in the development of guidelines to promote the adoption of domestic legislation in compliance with international and regional human rights norms and standards. UNOWA also documented best practices and lessons learned in the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

38. At another level, UNOWA continued to work closely with ECOWAS in support of the activities of the latter's Working Group on Women, Peace and Security in West Africa. UNOWA also convened a regional forum on the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) in Dakar, from 15 to 17 September, in close collaboration with the African Union, ECOWAS, the Mano River Union, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women (now part of UN Women), OHCHR, the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and the United Nations Children's Fund. On 17 September, the Forum adopted a five-year ECOWAS plan of action (2010-2015) for the effective implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) and the Dakar Declaration, in which all West African States renewed their commitment to the implementation of these resolutions. The Forum was attended by 146 participants, including the Vice-President of the Republic of the Gambia and a significant number of West African ministers in charge of gender and women's empowerment, representatives of the African Union, United Nations entities and civil society organizations. My Special Representative also attended the Global Open Day on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), held in New York on 21 October, where he presented the outcome of the Dakar regional forum.

39. In the context of climate change, especially as it related to the displacement of populations, land and water disputes, the destruction of life and property, UNOWA initiated a study on various dimensions of climate change, especially on its impact on peace and security in West Africa. That study, which is expected to be completed in early 2011, will facilitate the formulation of policy recommendations for

advocacy and preventive diplomacy on the threats to peace and security in West Africa linked to climate change.

40. From 19 to 21 October, UNOWA participated in the fifth biannual meeting of heads of human rights field presences in West Africa, organized by OHCHR in Monrovia. The meeting reviewed the road map adopted during the fourth biannual meeting in Niamey, focusing in particular on activities organized jointly by UNOWA and OHCHR in the area of human rights and gender. It further proposed joint activities for the first semester of 2011, including the convening of a regional conference on impunity, peace and security in West Africa. From 7 to 12 November, UNOWA also jointly organized four seminars on the role of women in governance; the situation of human rights in West Africa; the rights of ethnic minorities and indigenous populations; and socio-economic and cultural rights, in Banjul, with the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights and OHCHR, as part of a series of events marking the thirtieth anniversary of the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights.

C. Drug trafficking and cross-border organized crime

41. According to latest figures available from the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), as well as statistics issued by international police organizations (INTERPOL and Europol), the quantities of illicit drugs seized in Europe coming from or through West Africa continued to decline during the reporting period.

42. As highlighted in my previous reports, this seems to be the result of the enhanced sophistication of drug cartels' modus operandi, rather than an actual decline in drug trafficking. During the reporting period, massive quantities of illicit drugs were seized on West African soil, including the largest single cocaine seizure in the region on land (2.14 tons), in the Gambia in June 2010, and the 0.45 ton of cocaine seized at the Lagos seaport, in Nigeria in July. Though these seizures were insufficient to draw reliable analysis of the patterns and trends, they revealed nevertheless that drug cartels continued to target West African States, where illegal activities are facilitated by fragile institutions and weak governance structures. While it is believed that drug trafficking is still mainly organized by Latin American crime syndicates and individuals, it has been observed that West African nationals are increasingly becoming involved in the trafficking enterprise, with strong connections to other criminal activities such as money-laundering.

43. The emergence of the manufacturing of amphetamine-type stimulants and their trafficking from and through West Africa is a recent and increasingly important trend that indicates that the infrastructure established by transnational cocaine and heroin traffickers is readily adaptable. Further to the discovery, in July 2009 in Guinea, of chemicals and large-scale equipment used in the illicit manufacture of ecstasy, the United States indicted members of an international cocaine trafficking ring for, inter alia, attempting to establish large-scale crystal methamphetamine-manufacturing laboratories in Liberia. Furthermore, 3 tons of chemical precursors for the production of ecstasy destined for Benin and Guinea (Conakry) were seized in Côte d'Ivoire in June 2010.

44. Recent UNODC rapid situation assessments on illicit drugs reveal that consumption is on the rise in West Africa. This is a worrying side effect of the use

of some West African States as drug-trafficking transit routes. This negative impact on individual health and on society as a whole is aggravated by the low quality of resources left in the subregion as payment or induction. The trafficking in fake or counterfeit medicines poses another significant challenge and a serious public health threat. In addition to poor border controls, the absence of adequate counter-narcotic legal frameworks facilitates trafficking.

45. The security situation in the Sahel belt is another major concern. The abduction of seven foreigners in northern Niger in mid-September, for which a group linked to Al-Qaida in the Islamic Maghreb subsequently claimed responsibility, prompted a reinforcement of regional cooperation initiatives against terrorism and organized crime. That cooperation was evident during the meeting of the military chiefs of Algeria, Mali, Mauritania and Niger in Tamanrasset, Algeria, on 26 September, and in the subsequent decision, of 29 September, by the same countries, to establish in Algeria, a joint intelligence centre. In spite of these initiatives, however, West African Sahelian States continue to lack adequate means to address terrorist and criminal threats, in order to guarantee a safe environment for their populations from these criminal groups and cartels.

46. As part of the ongoing efforts to enhance the role of the United Nations in combating insecurity in the Sahel, my Special Representative attended the international conference entitled "Towards a Security and Development Partnership in the Sahel". The conference was organized by Observatoire Sahélo-Saharien de Géopolitique et de Stratégie, with the support of the European Union, and held on 25 and 26 November in Brussels. On the margins of that meeting, he had productive exchanges with representatives of governmental and non-governmental institutions on ways of strengthening the supportive role of UNOWA in addressing the challenge of insecurity in the Sahel.

47. UNOWA also increased its efforts to support the implementation of the ECOWAS regional action plan to address the growing threat of illicit drug trafficking, organized crime and drug abuse in West Africa. At an ECOWAS/UNOWA meeting on mutual cooperation held on 14 October in Abuja, my Special Representative and the President of the ECOWAS Commission agreed to further mobilize the West African leadership on the importance of addressing drug trafficking and strengthening their cooperation, especially in supporting the implementation of the regional action plan and the West African Coast Initiative.

48. On 17 November, my Special Representative undertook a visit to Vienna for discussions with the new Executive Director of UNODC, Yury Fedotov, to strengthen the UNOWA partnership and to reinforce coordination of international support to the ECOWAS regional action plan and the West African Coast Initiative. My Special Representative and the Executive Director agreed to co-chair the launch of the UNODC Regional Programme for West Africa for 2010-2014, planned for 16 December in New York.

49. Significant progress was also made in the implementation of the West African Coast Initiative in the four pilot countries: Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. In Sierra Leone, the memorandum of understanding setting up the Transnational and Organized Crime Unit was signed by the Government on 23 September, paving the way for the operationalization of this inter-agency national capacity. In Guinea-Bissau, the matter is being discussed by relevant Government departments. In Côte d'Ivoire, the Government indicated that it would

move ahead with establishing the Transnational and Organized Crime Unit. A three-tier steering and coordination mechanism has been finalized and is expected to be approved soon by all partners.

50. At a more technical level, UNOWA provided support to the ECOWAS experts meeting in Banjul, from 28 to 30 September. UNOWA was also represented at two training sessions aimed at promoting the ECOWAS regional action plan, and, in September, at the regional training centre on counter-narcotics in Grand-Bassam, Côte d'Ivoire. The mission also assisted UNODC through political interventions in specific country cases, such as in Guinea, to facilitate access to a technical international team for handling the chemical precursor stockpile discovered in 2009.

D. Security sector reform

51. UNOWA continued to provide ECOWAS with political and technical support in the latter's efforts to strengthen the regional political framework and plan of action on security sector governance. The draft policy document of that framework is being finalized by the ECOWAS institutions, before its presentation to ECOWAS member States. UNOWA also contributed to the process of the African Union's draft continental security sector reform policy framework, which was developed during a joint African Union/United Nations meeting held on 20 and 21 October in Accra at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre. Additionally, UNOWA support facilitated the building of synergies between the African Union and ECOWAS, on processes related to the regional action plan and the security sector governance. In order to operationalize the regional forum of security sector reform experts and practitioners, which was formed on 18 February in support of ECOWAS security sector reform efforts, UNOWA started developing a virtual platform of resources, with technical assistance from the Office of Information and Communications Technology of the Secretariat and the Security Sector Reform Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations.

52. As part of its security sector reform advocacy policy, UNOWA contributed to the organization of the international colloquium held on the theme "Defence and Security Forces at the Heart of Human Security", in Dakar from 8 to 11 November, initiated by the Senegalese Defence Chief of Staff and sponsored by the President of Senegal. The meeting concluded that education and training remain the most essential tools for preparing defence and security forces as actors for human security. Partnerships are thus being discussed with the peacekeeping school in Bamako and with the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre in Accra in relation to this proposal.

53. Together with the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces, UNOWA co-organized from 22 to 24 June in Senegal a meeting of subregional experts on the reinforcement of the gender dimension in West African national security sectors. The meeting helped to identify concrete measures and best practices existing in several countries and resulted in networking arrangements between West African gender and security sector reform experts with the Women for Peace and Security Network and the ECOWAS Gender Development Centre. These networks provided substantive inputs into the tenth anniversary commemoration in West Africa of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), marked by the Dakar Declaration of 17 September 2010, which stressed the need for West African States

to include a gender dimension in security sector reform processes. Partnerships on gender and security sector reform were also strengthened between the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces and INSTRAW. More specifically, UNOWA cooperated with both organizations during the case study on gender and security sector reform in Sierra Leone and the assessment conducted in Mauritania.

54. In Guinea, despite a break in the implementation of the recommendations contained in the May 2010 joint ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations security sector assessment report, owing to the focus on the elections, the report continued to be acknowledged by international partners and national stakeholders as a broad basis for launching a comprehensive security sector reform process in the country. UNOWA is in the process of coordinating a follow-up mission to Guinea in December, with the Security Sector Reform Unit of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the UNDP Bureau for Crisis Prevention and Recovery, to reinforce the work of the United Nations country team in this area and to reiterate the central role of ECOWAS in supporting security sector reform in Guinea, with the engagement of international and bilateral partners.

E. Elections and stability

55. Elections continued to be a major priority for action across West Africa, as demonstrated by the sustained efforts to create conditions propitious for the holding of peaceful and credible polls in Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. The focus on election-related challenges will remain high as a large number of electoral processes are scheduled to take place across the subregion in the next two years.

56. During the period under review, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea organized presidential elections, while Niger held a referendum on its new Constitution. More than 20 presidential and legislative elections are scheduled to take place in West Africa in 2011 and 2012, in addition to local elections and referendums. While this electoral trend is a reflection of the hopes and aspirations of the peoples of the subregion in the democratic project in West Africa, contemporary experience also shows that the credibility of the processes can be undermined by election-related violence and sometimes by the lack of transparency and accountability.

57. In my previous reports, I underlined the paradoxical situation in West Africa, where elections are increasingly emerging as the route to both peace and violence. While I am encouraged that when elections are well prepared and carried out in fair, transparent and peaceful conditions, they can contribute to the strengthening of democracy and peace in a given country. I am aware that the reverse could also be the case. When elections are held in conditions that violate democratic norms, they often fuel violence and exacerbate political tension and instability. Unfortunately, flawed electoral processes have become a recurrent concern across West Africa for sometime now.

IV. Inter-institutional cooperation

58. My Special Representative convened the twenty-ninth high-level meeting of the heads of the United Nations peace missions in West Africa, held in Dakar on 29 September 2010. The Heads of Mission in Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone welcomed the decision by the Security Council to extend the mandate of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) for another year with the requisite military and police personnel levels. They also expressed satisfaction with the inclusion of Liberia on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission, for which the Government has prioritized security sector reform, the rule of law and national reconciliation. They reiterated their support for the efforts of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) in facilitating the electoral process in Côte d'Ivoire, and expressed their support for the work that the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) is doing in promoting political dialogue and national reconciliation, as well as UNIPSIL support for the preparations for the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone. The Heads of Mission also took note of developments in Guinea-Bissau since the military-political crisis of 1 April 2010. They underscored the need to enhance security of State institutions, promote genuine dialogue and tackle impunity, drug trafficking and transnational organized crime.

59. From 25 to 27 June 2010, UNOWA participated in the twentieth inter-mission Force Commanders' Conference, which was held in Monrovia. Discussions focused on cross-border issues, including regional security and political stability, and the protection of civilians. Other challenges to peace and security considered by the Force Commanders, included mob violence increasingly observed in a number of West African countries, the reintegration of ex-combatants, unemployed volatile groups (essentially the youth), land disputes, organized crime, and contested electoral processes. A major outcome of the conference was the decision by UNOCI and UNMIL to launch joint patrolling of shared border areas of Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. The issue of Liberian refugees in Côte d'Ivoire was also discussed. The focus was on the fact that some of the refugees are ex-combatants, who could pose a threat to peace and stability in the subregion. The Missions and the Force Commanders decided to remain vigilant to prevent any deterioration of the situation along the borders of mission areas.

60. On 7 September, UNOWA convened a meeting of United Nations regional directors in Dakar, during which my Special Representative updated them on the consultations held in New York on the occasion of the presentation of the report of the Secretary-General on West Africa. That meeting also discussed the efforts made by the United Nations system to address the various problems facing the Sahel and resulted in a shared commitment by several United Nations agencies to contribute to the tenth anniversary celebrations of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000).

V. Cooperation with regional and subregional partners

61. During the period under review, UNOWA continued to give priority to cooperation with regional organizations as reflected in the increase in joint missions with ECOWAS and the African Union and initiatives on peacebuilding and conflict prevention, as well as its active participation in regional policymaking meetings. In this context, UNOWA and ECOWAS held on 14 October a high-level consultative

meeting in Abuja to exchange views on a number of areas of common concern, ranging from specific crisis situations in West Africa to transborder and cross-cutting issues. The meeting reviewed the situation in Guinea, Niger, Guinea-Bissau and Côte d'Ivoire, and discussed thematic issues, including human security, drug trafficking and organized crime, human rights and gender. ECOWAS and UNOWA agreed to hold biannual consultative meetings in order to review cooperation, coordinate activities and chart the way forward.

VI. Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission

62. At its twenty-sixth session held in Abuja on 23 and 24 September, the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission reviewed the progress in the demarcation work. The demarcation process between the two countries started with the onsite installation of 388 boundary pillars constructed with the support of Trust Fund resources. The parties, however, have expressed concern over the cost of the pillar emplacement work coordinated by the United Nations Office for Project Services. The United Nations is preparing an updated estimate of the total cost of the demarcation to be reviewed at the twenty-seventh session of the Mixed Commission scheduled to be held in Yaoundé on 27 and 28 January 2011. This re-evaluation is critical to the plan for the mobilization of the resources required to complete the demarcation exercise. The Mixed Commission also adopted recommendations for the formulation of a "resource clause" on off-shore petroleum fields straddling the maritime boundary, paving the way for cross-boundary cooperation on oil and gas.

63. Regarding the situation in the Bakassi peninsula, the thirteenth and fourteenth meetings of the Follow-up Committee were held in Geneva on 5 and 6 July and 28 and 29 October, respectively. Both meetings took place in a constructive atmosphere of cooperation. The parties considered and endorsed the reports of the visits to the peninsula undertaken by the joint Observers Group from 5 to 7 April and 18 to 20 October. At both meetings, the Committee underscored the atmosphere of peace prevailing in the peninsula among the communities, as well as between the inhabitants and the security and defence forces in their respective areas.

64. As part of the efforts to promote and contribute to confidence-building measures among the affected populations in the Bakassi peninsula and the Lake Chad area, my Special Representative convened a meeting in Dakar with the United Nations Resident Coordinators in Cameroon and Nigeria, on 6 November, which resulted in organizing a meeting between the two United Nations country teams, scheduled to be held in Abuja on 7 December.

VII. Observations and recommendations

65. I welcome the progress made in the last three years in the prevention and the resolution of violent conflict in West Africa. The peacebuilding processes in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau recorded tangible progress while prospects for political stability improved in Guinea, Mauritania and Niger. Togo elected a new president peacefully in March 2010. Mauritania returned to constitutional order after successful presidential elections held in June 2009. In Niger, the transition towards the peaceful restoration of constitutional order remains on course. I commend the people of Guinea, the national authorities, political leaders and their supporters for

the conduct of its first truly multiparty presidential election in June and November 2010, after years of political instability and several cycles of electoral violence. I express my deep gratitude to all those who worked tirelessly for a peaceful transition in Guinea, including Guinea's leaders, President Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, in his capacity as the ECOWAS Mediator for Guinea, representatives of the African Union and ECOWAS, and Guinea's other international partners. I also pay tribute to my Special Representative for being available to accompany Guinea and the region through this process that led him to make over 13 trips to Guinea in 2010.

66. The significant gains achieved in securing peace and stability in West Africa remain fragile, however, and need to be strengthened. Unconstitutional changes of government have threatened to reverse important democratic gains. I am also concerned that election-related violence has been a persistent challenge in several West African countries. Insufficient democratic control over the armed forces, poor discipline within defence and security institutions and tense civil-military relations are destabilizing factors across the region. Efforts also need to be intensified in the fight against impunity. In this context, the implementation of the recommendations of the International Commission of Inquiry established following the September 2009 incidents in Guinea remains among the high priorities.

67. I recognize the considerable achievements made by the subregional organizations such as ECOWAS and the Mano River Union in implementing institutional reforms and in strengthening their normative frameworks and capacity for conflict prevention and management. The transformation of the ECOWAS Executive Secretariat into a Commission and its focus on peace and security issues are testimony to this new trend. I am particularly impressed with the significant progress of ECOWAS in the implementation of its Protocol relating to the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security (1999), its Protocol on Democracy and Governance (2001) and its Conflict Prevention Framework (2008). With the support of UNOWA, ECOWAS has established a Standby Force and has developed an early warning capacity through its early warning system (ECOWARN).

68. Over the past three years, UNOWA endeavoured to accompany subregional efforts in support of peace and stability. I am encouraged by the strengthened cooperation and partnership with regional organizations, especially ECOWAS and the African Union, and the wider international community. This cooperation, together with greater coherence and complementarity among United Nations entities in West Africa, has allowed for a more effective and coordinated response to threats to peace and security in the region.

69. The prevalence of political instability in various parts of West Africa since the renewal of the mandate of UNOWA in 2007 has resulted in increased demands for my Special Representative's good offices and for United Nations support for the enhancement of regional capacities for mediation. I wish to note that alongside ECOWAS and the African Union, my Special Representative engaged in numerous preventive diplomacy initiatives in response to situations of unconstitutional changes of government and election-related instability in particular. I wish to express my gratitude to those donors that provided us with extrabudgetary resources to deploy dedicated mediation experts to provide day-to-day political support for the

transition processes and the work of the United Nations country teams in Guinea and Niger.

70. I am pleased that UNOWA guidance has been increasingly requested for political and technical facilitation of security sector reform-related processes. This was the case in Guinea, where an ECOWAS/African Union/United Nations assessment of the security sector was successfully conducted in 2010. The United Nations will continue to put great emphasis on preventing election-related violence by assessing the role of the army and other security institutions in electoral processes. With the recent launch of a long-term cooperation arrangement with ECOWAS, regional women's groups and international entities, UNOWA will work closely on promoting gender mainstreaming into West African national security sector programmes.

71. I encourage Member States and regional organizations to ensure effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions pertaining to women and peace and security. The commemoration of the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) and the adoption of the Dakar Declaration of 17 September 2010 stressed, *inter alia*, the need for West African States to include a gender dimension in security sector reform processes.

72. I acknowledge the progress made in the implementation of the 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice and the 2006 Greentree Agreement, including progress in the demarcation of the land boundary between Cameroon and Nigeria. I urge the parties to maintain the political momentum for the implementation of the border agreement, especially in securing agreement on all areas of the land boundary between the two countries and the physical demarcation of the boundary in application of the 2002 ruling of the International Court of Justice.

73. I am concerned that the structural and institutional weaknesses continue to hamper the ability of States to ensure respect for the rule of law, boost economic growth, address deeply rooted inequalities, fight corruption, reduce youth unemployment, deliver public goods and services and ensure adequate distribution of political power. Food insecurity, especially in Niger and the broader Sahel region, remains a major humanitarian concern in the subregion, with implications for long-term stability. Further progress is also needed in improving human rights records in a number of countries and in ensuring that commitments made to mainstream gender in conflict prevention and management processes are implemented as a priority.

74. Despite the important steps in recent years to combat terrorist activities and transnational organized crime, including drug trafficking and human trafficking, the established regional mechanisms are still in the early stages and have yet to produce concrete outcomes. More focus should be placed on enhancing national capacities to collect, analyse and exchange information related to illicit activities and transnational organized crime on a regular basis. The international community also needs to step up its support for regional endeavours on combating the threats to peace and stability as a result of the illicit trafficking in drugs and cross-border crimes.

75. I welcome the measures being taken by ECOWAS member States in implementing the political declaration and regional action plan to combat drug trafficking and organized crime, with the support of UNOWA, UNODC, INTERPOL and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations of the Secretariat. I encourage

these stakeholders to continue the implementation of the West African Coast Initiative in the four pilot countries, namely, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia and Sierra Leone. UNOWA, in close collaboration with other partners, will continue to play its advocacy and coordinating role at regional and respective national levels. In order to promote a more comprehensive international response to drug trafficking, I urge close cooperation among the countries of origin in Latin America and countries of destination in Europe in order to support West African efforts. This should be done in consultation with UNODC.

76. The increasingly large number of requests from ECOWAS and its member States, members of the Security Council and United Nations partners, for UNOWA engagement and support for preventive diplomacy and for addressing the cross-cutting root causes of conflict demonstrates the added value of the Office in contributing to regional conflict prevention and peace efforts. It also underscores the dividends derived from a regional approach to conflict prevention in Africa. At the same time, however, it also constitutes a major challenge for UNOWA, given its limited resources. The support from extrabudgetary funding and the use of consultants have helped in meeting some of these demands, especially in the areas of security sector reform and mediation. I therefore recommend that the mandate of the Office be renewed for a further period of three years, from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2013, subject to reporting every six months on the fulfilment by UNOWA of its revised mandate.

77. To ensure that UNOWA strikes a balance between the expectations from the region and the international community, and the resources available to the Office, I recommend that in its renewed mandate the Office should focus on four strategic directions:

(i) Preventive diplomacy: efforts pertaining to violence and crisis prevention will be strengthened. My Special Representative will continue to carry out good offices on my behalf in the subregion. In this context, we hope to enhance national and subregional capacities for mediation, conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission will also continue to offer my good offices to facilitate the full implementation of the International Court of Justice ruling of 10 October 2002 on the land and maritime boundary dispute between Cameroon and Nigeria;

(ii) Addressing cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and security: UNOWA will work with other partners to enhance subregional capacities to address cross-border and cross-cutting threats to peace and stability, especially regional initiatives in the Sahel area. In this context, UNOWA will facilitate the adoption of a regional security sector reform framework and tackle the interdependence between security sector reform and the fight against organized crime and drug trafficking and election-related instability;

(iii) Promotion of good governance and gender: UNOWA will build on its current work with regional organizations and other United Nations agencies in working to improve electoral processes, address issues of impunity, and promote respect for the rule of law and human rights. In line with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), UNOWA will work closely with various groups to ensure the incorporation of women in peace and security issues, including on security sector reform issues. It will do so by building upon the established collaboration between

UNOWA and West African member States and women's groups on issues related to resolution 1325 (2000);

(iv) Partnership with regional organizations: UNOWA will continue to mobilize the international community in favour of peace and security in West Africa through enhanced partnership with regional and subregional organizations, especially at the working level. In this regard, priority will be given to support ECOWAS in the establishment of its mediation division.

78. At the last presentation of my report to the Security Council, on 13 July 2010, the members of the Council requested that an independent study on UNOWA be brought to their attention. That study shall be submitted to the members of the Security Council.

79. In conclusion, I would like to reiterate my appreciation to West African States, ECOWAS, the African Union and the Mano River Union for their continued cooperation with UNOWA. I also extend my gratitude to the United Nations entities in West Africa, civil society organizations and other partners for their continued collaboration with UNOWA in the implementation of its mandate. I wish to thank my Special Representative, Said Djinnit, as well as the staff of UNOWA and the Cameroon-Nigeria Mixed Commission for their valuable contribution to peace and stability in the subregion.
