

Economic Community of West African States six-month peace plan for Sierra Leone (23 October 1997-22 April 1998)

Schedule of implementation

PREAMBLE

Pursuant to the mandate of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to implement proposals for the resolution of the Sierra Leone crisis contained in the final communiqué issued at Conakry on 26 June 1997, a six-point peace plan has been devised for the early return of constitutional governance to Sierra Leone. These are:

1. Cessation of hostilities throughout Sierra Leone

- (a) With immediate effect;
- (b) Establish monitoring and verification mechanism.

Note. Process to be undertaken by the ECOWAS Military Observer Group (ECOMOG), and United Nations military observers. The participation of United Nations military observers requires the agreement of the United Nations Security Council.

2. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants: 1-31 December 1997

Note. ECOWAS Committee of Five ministerial assessment visit (20 November 1997).

3. Commencement of humanitarian assistance: 14 November 1997

Note. ECOMOG to monitor the process.

4. Return of refugees and displaced persons

Commencement date: 1 December 1997

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)-assisted repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons.

5. Restoration of the constitutional Government and broadening of the power base:

Takes effect from 22 April 1998

6. Immunities and guarantees:

Takes effect from 22 April 1998

ELABORATION OF THE ECOWAS PEACE PLAN

1. Cessation of hostilities

It is considered that cessation of hostilities should come into force immediately. However, this will have to be accompanied by a monitoring and verification regime. Leaders of the various combatant units will be expected to disseminate information concerning these measures and ensure compliance with them. These measures will be supervised by ECOMOG, assisted by a United Nations military observer group. The verification process will continue right up to the termination of the peace plan, that is, until 22 April 1998.

2. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants

It is considered that a minimum of 30 days would be required to conduct effective disarmament and demobilization of combatants. This should take place from 1 to 31 December 1997. Given the nationwide dislocation of infrastructures and administration, a simple and uncomplicated procedure is envisaged. Combatants will be directed to report to designated centres in order to be engaged in the disarmament process. ECOMOG will supervise the entire process of disarmament and demobilization. Where necessary, incentives may have to be provided to encourage the voluntary participation of combatants in all this process.

3. Humanitarian assistance

Considering that sanctions/embargoes will be strictly enforced throughout the period of the implementation of the Sierra Leone peace plan, the flows of humanitarian assistance beginning on 14 November 1997 will continue to be monitored by ECOMOG and United Nations military observers. To this effect a mechanism will be established by ECOMOG to facilitate the flows of humanitarian assistance. All this will be worked out within the context of a Security Council resolution.

4. Return of refugees and displaced persons

Recognizing that refugees, particularly those in neighbouring countries, may wish to return voluntarily following the cessation of hostilities, UNHCR assistance should begin from 1 December 1997.

5. Restoration of constitutional Government and broadening of the power base

The restoration of constitutional order to Sierra Leone is at the heart of the ECOWAS peace plan. Consequently, it is considered necessary that the Government of Tejan Kabbah should be enabled to exercise effective control once he is restored to office on 22 April 1998. Nevertheless, it is recognized that for an enduring peace to be restored which will enjoy the support of the majority of Sierra Leoneans and the confidence of the subregion, efforts should be made to ensure that an all-inclusive Government is evolved. In this regard, the goodwill and assistance of the international community, both financial and material, would be necessary.

The interest of the various parties in Sierra Leone should be suitably accommodated. Accordingly, it is recommended that the new Cabinet should be a cabinet of inclusion.

Furthermore, in order to accommodate the aspirations of their supporters, board and senior civil service appointments are to reflect broad national character.

All the above power-sharing formulae should come into effect on 22 April 1998.

It is recognized that Corporal Fodey Sankoh as a leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) could continue to play an active role and participate in the peace process. In the spirit of the Abidjan Accord and in the context of this agreement, Corporal Sankoh is expected to return to his country to make his contribution to the peace process.

6. Reintegration of combatants

All those who disarm as a result of the implementation of the peace process should be provided with either job training to fit them for alternative employment or given scholarships and grants for further education. Access to education at all levels should be made available to all demobilized persons. Ex-combatants should be provided with assistance to facilitate their reintegration into their communities. We strongly appeal to the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity (OAU), ECOWAS and indeed the international community to render appropriate assistance to achieve this objective.

7. Donor appeals for emergency humanitarian assistance for reconstruction and rehabilitation

The United Nations and OAU, in cooperation with ECOWAS, are requested to launch these appeals as soon as hostilities cease.

8. Immunities and guarantees

It is considered essential that unconditional immunities and guarantees from prosecution be extended to all involved in the events of 25 May 1997 with effect from 22 April 1998.

DONE AT CONAKRY, THIS 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER 1997

For the ECOWAS Committee of Five
on Sierra Leone:

(Signed) Tom IKIMI
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Federal Republic of Nigeria

(Signed) Lamine KAMARA
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Guinea

For the delegation representing Major Johnny Paul Koromah
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) regime in
Sierra Leone:

(Signed) Abdul Karim SESAY
Secretary-General, AFRC

(Signed) Alimamy Pallo BANGURA
Secretary of State for
Foreign Affairs

Witnesses

For the United Nations:

(Signed) Ibrahima FALL
Assistant Secretary-General

For the Organization of African Unity:

(Signed) Adwoa COLEMAN
OAU Representative
