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Christiana Thorpe, Had of the Sierra Leone Ational Electoral Commission NC) Joining from Freetow by ideo linkere ERSG Toyber g-Frandzen, the Registrar of the Political Parties Registration Commissin PPRC) the Inspector General of the Police, two representatives of national NG and a repres entative of the Sierra Leone Ministry of Foreign Hairs. Given the meeting's focus on elections, DRAElectoral sesistance Difficient we also inited to participate.

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The Chair noted that since his last visit to the field, much progress had been achieved, with the completion of the registration process thus reinforcing the commitment of society to holding elections. He recognized that the NEC has done an enormous amount of work, including in the areas of voters' education and outreach, and training on the rules and regulations of elections for all relevant partners. He also underlined the importance of holding elections in a calm and conducive environment, commending in this regard the signature by all parties and other actors involved in the process of the Declaration on the 2012 Elections. Finally he commended the All Political Parties Youth Association's advocacy for peaceful, free, and fair elections, and underlined the critical role of an independent, professional, and objective media.

In her briefing, **Dr. Thorpe** announced that after completing the matching process, 3. voters' ID cards were now ready for distribution, which amounted to 2.6 million on the provisional list. From 30 June to 30 July, the provisional lists are going to be exhibited throughout the country for verification, and final registration. A final registration will take place after exhibition of the lists in July. Looking back, she recalled how her country had moved from needing the presence of peacekeepers to maintain peace in 2002, to providing their own troops to peacekeeping operations around the world. At present, the NEC was involved in preparing the roughly 9,000 staff needed for the exhibition and verification process, which would result in the appropriate corrections being made to the voters' list and its finalization by September 2012. She called on the international community to send in international observers whose presence during the elections would send a sign of confidence to the people of Sierra Leone. With respect to the electoral laws, Dr. Thorpe briefed on the efforts made towards harmonizing the various different documents into a single electoral code, a draft of which had been given Presidential assent in May 2012. Work was ongoing to abridge that new text with a view to disseminating it widely among the population. In terms

of challenges, Dr. Thorpe highlighted the lack of the needed vehicles to transport the electoral
material to the 3,000 polling stations country-wide, as well as the concern for the overall
general atmosphere come election day.

messaging coming from some media outlets. The need to ensure that legal frameworks are in place and have been disseminated was highlighted by one participant. Several interventions stressed the role of the youth and the need to encourage their active participation in the elections, and to provide appropriate electoral education, while also ensuring the proper measures are taken at local level to mitigate possible-9T6p