## <u>BACKGROUND PAPER: PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned – Sierra Leone,</u> <u>20 February 2007</u>

#### **Sierra Leone Elections**

The Ma^ 2002 elections <code>\_ ere</code> the first major test for the <code>co\*ntr^</code> follo <code>\_ ing</code> completion of the disarmament process and the official declaration of the end of the <code>\_ ar in Jan\*ar^ 2002</code>. President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah <code>\_ as elected in a landslide <code>\_ ith 70</code></code>

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ciçil societ and independent media. S'ch a template has proçed instr mental for short-term political stabili: ation and socio-economic recoçer. Ho eçer, the long-term impact of aid on the decelopment of national instit tions has been limited.

Second elections hace a d'al p'rpose: the need to entrench the co'ntr scommitment to peace , hile inderpinning the transition to democratic politics. More than first elections, second elections serçe to confirm the establishment of a ne, pattern of competitice politics, hereb r'les of the political game are f'rther instit tionali: ed. As democrati: ation is a milti-faceted and long-term process, s'ccessfil roinds of elections serçe as important milestones along the a ja.

The d^namics of second elections are <code>iniqe</code>. Unlike the first elections <code>here</code> the international comm<code>iniq</code> pla^s an important role, the national goçernment is in charge. Hacing had a respite from <code>jar</code>, competing parties are more inclined to seek political adcantage <code>b^hardening</code> their positions. In man^ instances, neither the goçernment nor the opposition is <code>fil^confident</code> abo\*t the <code>ries</code> of the game or the other part^sp commitment to the <code>o\*tcome</code> of the elections. The peace

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· Shak \* security environment d\*e to general insec\*rit\*

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#### **Importance of Learning from Previous Experiences**

In light of the range of risks listed aboçe, different co ntries hace sed a range of strategies and mechanisms to alleciate them. While these sill be addressed in greater depth b panelists at the PBC Working Gro p on Lessons Learned meeting on 20 Febrar, seceral ke factors ma incl de:

- the commitment of all parties to respect the final o tcome
- constr ctiçe engagement of ciçil societ gro ps in the electoral process
- the role of the media in offering an opport nit for national dialog e
- the commitment of the goçernment to prociding a leçel pla^ing field
- self-restraint on the part of opposition political parties
- the s\*pport of the international comm\*nit^ for the integrit^ of the elections and
- recognition b^ all actors that elections can be conflict-ind cing, and req ire close monitoring thro gho the electoral process (before, d ring and after coting) to acert an negatice fallo t.

It is anticipated that the lessons from other co intries maibe isefil for M

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