

Ambassadorial-

Development for 2018-2023 (PAPD). He highlighted that notable progress continued to be made in the area of gender equality and empowerment and in reducing SGVB,

ability to participate in politics. In addition, she said, women could easily become victims of election related

young women and female political leaders, including Representatives and Senators, took part

politics. With regard to the 2023 elections, she underlined that it would be important to advocate with the various political parties to commit to the 30% quota as they determine their candidates for the Presidential and Legislative elections. She also stressed the importance of engaging communities with peace messages and creating an enabling environment for women to engage in politics, in particular in rural areas. In this regard, she said, modalities were being worked on with the World Bank to invest in the Liberia Women Empowerment Project (LWEP) with the

that significant funding gaps were hindering the full implementation and scale up of ongoing programs. The Anti-SGVB Roadmap had a funding gap of 4 million USD after the

existin

support in advocating for resource mobilization.

5. Mr. Niels Scott, United Nations Resident Coordinator in Liberia indicated that there was widespread agreement that women continue to be underrepresented in politics. With women

clear, he said, that female candidates faced more obstacles than their male counterparts. The introduction of the 30% quota on candidate listings could encourage more women to run, he said. He noted that after years of advocacy, the House of Representatives passed the Electoral Reform Bill and it was his understanding that the Senate Committees on Autonomous Agencies, Elections and Judiciary were expected to submit the Bill to the Senate plenary deliberations on 19 May. He noted that the House had voted to amend Section 4.5 of the 1986 election law which sets aside an exclusive 30% for women representation in every political party. Section e.5 (1d) of the Elections Law Amendment Act also calls for a political party or coalition to have at least one female contestant for every primary at a convention for each constituency. The punishment for defaulting political parties, he explained, was that their candidate listing would be rejected by the Election Commission and the affected party might be entitled to re-submit within the required period. This was, he said, a huge step on the way to achieving gender parity. However, the quota would not insulate women against prejudice, discrimination and acts of physical or psychological violence, he noted. Regarding SGVB, he said it was estimated that 38.2% of girls and women aged 15-49 had undergone female genital mutilation (FMG) the assistance of the EU-

through the proposed 30 % gender quota. They also underscored the need to support the full implementation of the Anti-SGBV Roadmap.

They expressed concerns at the persistent challenge of sexual and gender-based violence against women and girls in Liberia, including in relation to elections, female genital mutilation and the widespread problem of rape and encouraged the Government of Liberia in further advancing its efforts to eliminate all forms of violence against

Roadmap 2020-2022.

They welcomed the planned visit to Liberia and expressed support to the priority focus of discussions on gender equality and empowerment, particularly in the context of the elections of 2023.

8. Ms. Cecilia McGill, Chargé Mission of Liberia to the United Nations, noted that, as captured