United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Mr Surya Deva

Country visit to Honduras

11-21 November 2024

PRELIMINARY OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Tegucigalpa, 21 November 2024

Preliminary observations and recommendations of the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the right to development, Mr Surya Deva, at the end of his visit to Honduras

Tegucigalpa ***(21 November 2024)*** *– At the end of his visit to Honduras, Mr Surya Deva delivered the following statement:*

I am grateful to the Government of Honduras for inviting me to conduct an official visit as the Special Rapporteur on the right to development, and for their support and cooperation before and during the visit. This invitation shows the Government's openness and desire to show leadership in implementing the right to development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

During my visit from 11 to 21 November, I visited Tegucigalpa, Choluteca, La Paz, La Esperanza, Marcala, Siguatepeque, San Pedro Sula, El Progreso and Agua Blanca Sur. Unfortunately, due to the weather conditions related to the tropical storm Sara, I could not travel to La Ceiba, Tocoa and Roatàn, as originally foreseen. During the visit, I had the pleasure to meet with the representatives of the national Government, the Comisionado Nacional de los Derechos Humanos (CONADEH), the United Nations Country Team, the Consejo Hondureño de la Empresa Privada (COHEP), the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cortés, the Asociación Coordinadora de Mujeres Campesinas de La Paz (COMUCAP), civil society organisations (CSOs) and the Lenca Indigenous Councils.

I am grateful for the support of the United Nations Country Team, especially OHCHR's country office, in Honduras for their vital support throughout the visit.

Context and objectives of the visit

As elaborated in my vision report to the UN Human Rights Council (A/HRC/54/27), the right to development has three elements (the ability of human beings to participate in, contribute and to enjoy the right to development) and four facets (economic, social, cultural and political development). In addition, one can derive four overarching principles of the right to development from the relevant normative instruments: self-determination, intersectionality, intergenerational equity and fair distribution.

Honduras has ratified all nine core international human rights treaties and several regional human rights treaties. It has also ratified the ILO's Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Convention (ILO Convention 169), which is highly relevant in the context of the country because it emphasizes Indigenous Peoples' rights to land and self-determination. Honduras has participated in the Universal Periodic Review process, most recently undergoing the review in 2020. In addition, the country submitted its 3rd Voluntary National Review to show progress in implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in July 2024. Honduras is a country of origin, entry and transit for migrants.

The country has faced a turbulent socio-political trajectory after the 2009 coup d'état, which disrupted democratic governance, exacerbated institutional fragility and undermined the protection of human rights as well as civic space. As Honduras seeks transition toward a vibrant democracy and an alternative to the extractive model of development, the Government has taken some steps in this direction, e.g., abolishing employment and economic zones (ZEDES), suspending new extractive exploitation licenses, banning open-pit mining, reviving agriculture,

providing free meals at schools, offering solidarity scholarships to low-income students and controlling violent crimes.

Against this backdrop, the key objectives of my visit were to gain a first-hand understanding of the realisation of the right to development in Honduras and to identify ongoing challenges, so as to offer practical recommendations to the Government, businesses and other stakeholders in working together to achieve inclusive, sustainable and harmonious development.

Progress in implementing the SDGs

Honduras has shown a strong commitment to implementing the SDGs. Honduras has prioritised 13 of the 17 SDGs, aligning them with its "Plan Bicentenario 2022-2026". I am encouraged that the Government has introduced a multidimensional poverty index to better measure poverty beyond income, considering factors such as health, education and living conditions. This index is a key tool for understanding vulnerabilities and employing targeting interventions. To achieve poverty alleviation (SDG 1), the country has expanded social protection programs, such as the Bono Red Solidaria, which supports vulnerable households.

Significant strides have also been made in quality education (SDG 4), with increased investments in building rural schools and providing school meals. To promote good health and well-being (SDG 3), Honduras has strengthened healthcare access through community health programs and partnerships aimed at combating diseases like malaria and dengue. Environmental sustainability (SDGs 13 and 15) is being addressed through reforestation projects, improved waste management and renewable energy initiatives. The country is also working to reduce inequalities (SDG 10) by empowering Indigenous communities and women through microfinance and training programs.

However, multiple challenges persist in achieving the goal of leaving no one behind. Chronic malnutrition impacts one in four children, driven by food insecurity and climate change-related impacts. Poverty levels in the country remain very high according to official figures (over 64%). Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans, comprising about 10% of the population, experience persistent exclusion and extreme levels of poverty. I am concerned that these communities remain disproportionately affected by discrimination, land dispossession, limited access to basic services and criminalisation for defending their rights.

Moreover, access to potable water remains a significant barrier to achieving the SDGs in the country. From the testimonies I received in several rural communities, over 45% of the population lacks stable access to safe drinking water, with rural and Indigenous communities disproportionately affected. Climate change further aggravates the situation, with recurrent droughts and erratic rainfall affecting water availability.

As noted below, patriarchal social and religious norms are undermining the goal to achieve gender equality (SDG 5). During the visit, I also received information concerning corruption and systemic impunity operating as major obstacles to achieving SDG 16. Lack of transparency and weak governance mechanisms erode trust in access to such institutions. This situation has a particularly detrimental impact on marginalised vulnerable groups who depend on effective justice mechanism to safeguard their rights.

To overcome current challenges in achieving the SDGs as well as to implement the Pact for the Future, I have proposed a model of "planet-centred participatory development". This model

promotes a vision of holistic development of all people within planetary boundaries and requires effective participation of people in all development-related decision making.

Building on its recent initiatives, the Government of Honduras should invest more in quality education at all levels, including to nurture talent for diverse sectors of economy. The Government should take multiple measures to expand its fiscal space and mobilise adequate resources in a way that does not exacerbate the existing debt burden, e.g., introduce progressive taxation, seek grants from development partners, and negotiate debt swaps for climate action or to meet the SDG targets. It will also be critical to build consensus around the proposed tax justice law, which has several crucial elements such as progressive taxation, limits on tax exemptions, elimination of banking secrecy for tax purposes and exchange of information with other jurisdictions.

Lack of accurate and disaggregated data to assess progress towards all SDG targets is a major barrier that the Government should try to overcome. It should also take steps to strengthen the capacity of access to justice and accountability institutions and restore peoples' trust in such institutions, a key component of SDG 16 and the rule of law. In addition to courts, CONADEH should play a vital role in resolving social conflicts as well as recommending legal reforms to the Government.

Right to development of Indigenous Peoples

Indigenous Peoples face unique challenges in realising their right to development because colonisation has resulted in usurpation of their territories as well as the disruption of their way of life and culture. Moreover, the extractive model of economic development rarely respects their rights to self-determination and free, prior and informed consent (FPIC). During the country visit to Honduras, I saw first-hand these concerns at play.

Honduras is home to a rich diversity of Indigenous Peoples, including the Lenca, Miskito, Garífuna, Tolupan and Pech. During this visit, I had an opportunity to meet the representatives of the Lenca communities in Choluteca, La Paz, La Esperanza and Siguatepeque. These communities contribute significantly to the country's cultural and ecological heritage. However, I learned that the Lenca and other Indigenous Peoples face systemic marginalisation, discrimination and violations of their human rights, particularly in relation to their land rights. Indigenous Councils and communities face serious challenges in exercising their right to self-determination in relation to their territories and the model of economic development.

In La Paz and La Esperanza, which is home to many Lenca communities, the fight for land rights has been particularly fierce. Hydroelectric dam projects executed without following the FPIC process have resulted in forced displacement, loss of livelihood, cultural erosion and violent confrontations. In Choluteca, I heard testimonies of villagers heavily affected by pollution from mining activities contaminating water sources, thus endangering both human health and fishing. Similar concerns were shared from other regions such as in La Paz where extractive industries operate with minimal oversight and accountability.

While engaging with different Indigenous Councils in Honduras, it was mentioned that the councils are excluded from decision-making processes related to land use, approval of development projects and natural resource management. Concerns repeatedly raised in the meetings that I had attended related to the lack of land deeds and criminalisation of steps taken to defend one's territory.

In addition, Indigenous representatives who I met stressed that they also face systemic social and economic marginalisation. For example, the poverty rate is disproportionately high among Indigenous Peoples (about 80%). According to the different testimonies during the meetings, Indigenous communities have very limited access to education, healthcare, water, electricity and employment opportunities. I am concerned that discrimination and cultural stigmatisation hinder their ability to access basic services and fully participate in public life.

I would recommend the Government to develop – with active, free and meaningful participation of Indigenous communities – a national strategy to realise the four facets of the right to development (economic, social, cultural and political development) of Indigenous Peoples. The Government should restore the land rights of Indigenous Peoples, institutionalise a meaningful role of Indigenous councils in decision-making, eliminate discrimination, stop criminalisation of legitimate peaceful activities and follow the FPIC process before approving any development project over Indigenous territories. It should also mobiles resources – including through grants from development partners and public-private partnerships – to ensure that Indigenous Peoples have access to water, education, health, electricity, roads and the Internet. Moreover, vocational training and microcredits should be offered to Indigenous Peoples to promote entrepreneurship and enable economic independence.

Gender dimensions

During country visits and in implementing my mandate generally, I apply an intersectional gender lens to assess the impact of laws, social norms, policies, programmes and projects on the right to development of girls and women.

The Government has taken several measures in recent years to promote gender equality. In 2022, the Government replaced the National Institute for Women elevated with the Ministry of Women's Affairs, thus elevating its status to that of a ministry. The Government also repealed Decision No. 2744-2009, which prohibited access to the emergency contraceptive pill. Moreover, the Government established a committee on gender-sensitive budgeting. I also learned that the Minister for Women's Affairs is part of all cabinets to mainstream gender across all decision making. The Government adopted the National Plan to Combat Violence against Women and Girls 2023–2033.

Despite these measures, gender inequality persists in various forms. While women comprise more than 51% of the population in Honduras, only 27.3% of seats in the National Congress are currently held by women. The proportion of women in senior and middle management positions is also less than 30%. On a positive note, 8 of 15 justices (including the President) of the Supreme Court of Justice are women.

Although the homicide rate in 2023 has come down as compared to 2022, 380 violent deaths of women were reported in 2023 – an increase of 24.2% compared to 2022. I also learned from CSOs that women continue to experience domestic violence and face discrimination as well as sexual harassment in both public and private spheres in Honduras. Due to patriarchal values, power imbalances and lack of trust in remedial mechanisms, many women do not report cases of sexual harassment or domestic violence. Women engaged in paid domestic work often work for long hours, do not receive minimum wage, lack social security and face violence. In addition to gender pay gap, I also came to know that women in the garment sector receive different salary depending on whether the clothes are sold locally or exported abroad.

I learned that teenage pregnancies are not uncommon in Honduras. Moreover, girls and women also spend a significant part of their time on unpaid care and domestic work. Many girls are unable to continue education after grade six due to distant location of schools, financial constraints and limited access to electricity and the Internet. As illustrated by the testimony of a young woman in Siguatepeque, Indigenous girls and women face additional challenges in accessing education. I also learned from CSOs that health centres often lack resources to provide all health services, which impacts women's right to sexual and reproductive health. Moreover, an absolute ban on abortion undermines the autonomy and human rights of women, including in rape-related forced pregnancies. The Government should, at the minimum, amend the law to permit abortions in certain circumstances, e.g., sexual violence leading to pregnancy and risk to the mother's life.

Several CSOs, Indigenous Peoples and community leaders told me that women environmental human rights defenders in Honduras continue to experience gender stigmatization and additional risks of intimidation and violence, including to defend their land or the environment generally. The 2016 killing of Berta Cáceres is one of the most emblematic cases of powerful economic actors targeting women environmental defenders. It is a matter of concern that the Supreme Court of Justice has not yet confirmed the conviction of the eight individuals responsible for her murder and that the intellectual authors of the murder have still not been held accountable.

The Government of Honduras should take multiple measures – in short, medium and long terms – to achieve substantive general equality. It should ratify the ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment and revise the Labour Code to strengthen protection for paid domestic workers. To encourage women entrepreneurship, a certain percentage of public procurement contracts could, for example, be awarded to "women only" businesses. Scholarships, including in partnership with companies, should be offered to girls and women to facilitate access to secondary and tertiary education. The Government should also conduct more gender equality awareness campaigns and training for officials. Moreover, it should take steps to end impunity for gender-based violence, e.g., establish special courts with gender-responsive judges, and provide more support to the victims of domestic violence.

The Government should offer support to scale up the women-led business model of COMUCAP. During a visit to its office in Marcala, I learned about an inspiring story of how over one hundred women victims of domestic violence came together to start an organic coffee business 30 years ago. COMUCAP not only generates employment and export revenue but also provides support to the women victims of domestic violence.

Land rights, privatisation and social conflicts

During the country visit, it became clear to me that the unequal distribution, or the insecurity regarding tenure, of land is one of the root causes of social conflicts and inequality in Honduras. In the communities of El Progresso and Agua Blanca Sur, I heard several testimonies of villagers expressing serious concerns regarding usurpation of land, forced evictions and criminalisation – resulting in a violation of a range of human rights, including the right to development.

I was repeatedly told by communities from different parts of the country that one of the most glaring challenges in land allocation processes in Honduras is the systemic disregard of the

right to FPIC. This right was frequently sidelined in favour of rapid privatisation and incentivisation of foreign investment. For instance, hundreds of licenses for mining, hydropower, tourism and agribusiness have been granted without any meaningful consultation with the affected communities. The lack of consultation has triggered social conflicts between companies and local communities, with the State agencies often seen as siding with the former.

Moreover, I learned from CSOs, farmers and Indigenous communities that governance mechanisms responsible for adjudicating land rights often lacked transparency. Allegations of corruption were also shared. The absence of access to adequate legal recourse for affected communities compounded the problem, fostering a cycle of dispossession and impunity.

The extensive privatization of public lands, particularly in regions with high tourism potential, agricultural productivity or natural resource wealth, seems to be another problem. This trend has disproportionately affected coastal areas, including beaches, where private enterprises have seized lands historically used by local communities for subsistence. For instance, projects along the Gulf of Fonseca have displaced communities and restricted access to fishing waters, undermining their economic and cultural rights. Similarly, in the agricultural sector, large-scale agribusiness ventures often claimed land that small-scale farmers and Indigenous Peoples depend on for livelihood. The rapid expansion of monoculture plantations, such as African palm and sugarcane, has not only displaced communities but also degraded ecosystems. Such outcomes are often facilitated by Government policies that prioritise investment over equitable land distribution or sustainable development.

Several community representatives highlighted how extractive projects in Honduras have become synonymous with environmental degradation, land dispossession, social unrest and attacks against environmental defenders. Environmental impact assessments and community consultations are conducted as a tick-box exercise, leaving affected communities powerless to resist encroachments on their territories and denying their right to self-determination. I am particularly concerned about the forced evictions of Indigenous Peoples, Afro-Hondurans and peasants carried out without a human rights-based approach, directly affecting their right to development as well as access to education, health, employment and food. The region of Choluteca is a case in point, where extractive and renewable energy projects have disrupted traditional ways of life. Communities in this area have reported forced evictions, pollution of water sources and destruction of critical ecosystems – all consequences of poorly regulated extractive activities. The local population has frequently mobilized to resist these projects, but their efforts are met with criminalisation, stigmatisation and violence.

The killing of Juan López, an environmental defender, in Tocoa once again illustrates why the Government must resolve, as a matter of priority, the root causes of land-related social conflicts. Addressing the land rights crisis in Honduras would require a multifaceted approach grounded in human rights principles. The Government should conduct a comprehensive review of the existing regulatory framework concerning land governance in the country. To be in line with international human rights norms, the revised regime should have in-built substantive and procedural safeguards against forced evictions of the occupants of lands. In addition, the regime should ensure access to information, effective participation and compliance with FPIC. Greater attention should be paid to the prevention of social conflicts through early warning systems, including through CONADEH. Finally, perpetrators of violence against land rights defenders must be held accountable to restore trust in the governance system.

Environmental pollution and climate change

Another challenge related to land governance concerns the process of environmental impact assessment in Honduras. During the visit, I learned that environmental impact assessment for development projects is conducted by third-party entities, often private consultants or firms with vested interests in the projects they evaluate. I am concerned that such practice may undermine the objectivity and credibility of the assessments as such entities may prioritize the interests of the project's proponents over the environmental and community considerations.

In this regard, I recommend the Government not to adopt a hands-off approach to environmental impact assessment for development projects. Rather, it should develop a national regime to maintain oversight over such processes and move towards a holistic "social impact assessment" encompassing risks to human rights (including the rights to Indigenous Peoples), the environment and climate change in meaningful consultation with all relevant stakeholders. This will require a reform of the existing regulatory architecture comprising the Secretariat of Natural Resources and Environment, the Secretariat of Energy, the National Institute of Forest Conservation and Development, Protected Areas and Wildlife and the Honduran Institute of Geology and Mines.

While Honduras has an impressive level of forest cover, I also noticed a significant level of plastic pollution while traveling across the country. The Government and the private sector should work together and take urgent steps to target the full life cycle of plastic, including its production, design and disposal. They should also raise awareness among public about plastic use and recycling.

Honduras is one of the most climate vulnerable countries in the region with tropical storms, hurricanes, floods, landslides and droughts affecting agriculture, human rights, fisheries, ecosystems and the overall economy. Moreover, rising sea levels pose a significant threat to coastal regions, including areas around the Gulf of Fonseca. Through discussion with community representatives in Choluteca I learned that coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion and increased flooding are resulting in the loss of homes, livelihoods and cultural heritage, forcing communities to relocate without adequate support. Such forced displacements are disproportionately affecting marginalised groups such as Afro-descendant and Indigenous communities. On the other hand, smallholder farmers in La Paz explained that they are affected by droughts, severely impacting agricultural production, water availability and food security. They also expressed concerns that prolonged dry spells reduce crop yields and increase dependency on imported food and exacerbate their poverty situation as well as inequalities.

Honduras has pledged to reducing the greenhouse gas emissions and increase resilience to climate impacts through different measures such as reforestation and renewable energy development in its 2021 Nationally Determined Contributions. I encourage the Government to allocate sufficient resources to implement these commitments. To enhance climate resilience, the Government should also invest in climate adaptation actions such as coastal protection, sustainable water management and climate-resilient agriculture. After listening to the testimonies of affected communities, it became clear to me the Government of Honduras would need to develop a scheme to provide comprehensive assistance to climate vulnerable communities. It is also critical that solutions to climate change are co-created with effective participation of communities, including Indigenous Peoples, to ensure that mitigation and adaption measures (e.g., renewable energy projects; sea walls) do not result in further violations of human rights.

Active, free and meaningful participation

Active, free and meaningful participation in decision making concerning development policies, programmes and projects is a core element of the right to development enshrined in the 1986 UN Declaration on the Right to Development. Despite some steps taken by the Government to enhance participation (e.g., open town halls and popular consultations), systemic barriers hinder effective participation of people in decision making. Throughout the visit, I heard that youth, women, Indigenous Peoples, rural communities, persons with disability and Afro-Hondurans are frequently unable to participate in development-related decision making. I learned that attempts to enhance digital participation are constrained by low levels of digital literacy in rural or marginalised communities as well as by limited access to Internet. Moreover, I am concerned that structural inequalities, discrimination, patriarchal values, corruption, lack of trust in governance institutions, criminalisation of community leaders and attacks against environmental human rights defenders undermine the Government's efforts to ensure participatory governance.

I call on the Government to combat impunity for attacks against environmental human rights defenders. It should collaborate with CONADEH, businesses, CSOs and Indigenous Councils to co-create solutions to multiple challenges faced by the country. This will require that bottom-up consultations are conducted at early stages of any development, hydropower or extractive project. The recognition of Indigenous Councils and effective implementation of the right to FPIC in line with the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the ILO Convention 169 will also go a long way in facilitating the participation of Indigenous communities in decisions affecting them.

The Government should reform the legal framework to enhance transparency and reduce corruption. Moreover, as access to accurate information is vital for participation, the Government must ratify the Escazú Agreement as soon as possible. It should also expand the scope of the transparency law to include private companies and consider enacting a law mandating large companies to disclosure ESG (environmental, social, and governance) data.

Incentives for businesses and foreign investors

As I highlighted in my 2023 report to the UN General Assembly (A/78/160), businesses are critical to realising the right to development and the SDGs. To encourage businesses to achieve these objectives and to attract foreign investment, governments often offer a range of incentives such as provide tax exemptions, grant land concessions, establish special economic zones and negotiate bilateral investment agreements. It is, however, important that these incentives contribute to inclusive and sustainable development and are only offered to companies practising responsible business conduct in line with international standards.

During the visit I learned that the previous Governments granted blanket tax exemptions to companies, established ZEDES, issued mining licenses without meaningful consultation with communities, and conferred rights on foreign investors under investment agreements in a way that has undermined the protection of human rights – including of Indigenous Peoples – and the environment. Consequently, Honduras is experiencing social conflicts, especially in relation to the usurpation of the ancestral land of Indigenous Peoples. It is also unable to raise adequate revenue to fulfil its human rights obligations. Moreover, Honduras is facing at least

15 arbitration claims from foreign investors (including by Honduras Próspera) demanding billions of dollars for cancellation of extractive/energy projects or ZEDES.

The abrupt suspension of work by Delta Cortés, impacting the livelihood of about 1,500 workers, is another case illustrative of the problems with the current model of development. While the company benefitted from the Government's tax exemption, it did not respect the workers' rights and the Government failed to protect their rights. Moreover, the police used excessive force (including tear gas and water cannons) against the workers protesting peacefully.

The Government should therefore develop, in meaningful consultation with all stakeholders, a national policy on investment governance. Attracting foreign investment should merely be seen a means to achieve the end of achieving inclusive and sustainable development. From this perspective, only companies which generate sustained decent jobs, respect human rights (including of affected communities), do not pollute the environment and contribute to the SDGs should receive incentives. The Government should also modernise its bilateral investment agreements and seek international technical assistance to find creative ways to counter irresponsible arbitration claims of foreign investors. In addition, it should develop a national action plan on business and human rights to implement the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights (UNGPs) and require companies to conduct human rights due diligence. A special attention should be given to nurture the role of small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs) in the country's economy.

During the visit, I had an opportunity to meet representatives of COHEP and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Cortés to discuss the role of business in realising the right to development and the SDGs. It was pleasing to note that COHEP is aware of international standards such the UNGPs and has been encouraging its member to operate in line with these standards, including by offering online courses and sharing good practices through regular bulletins. COHEP has also engaged with the National Commission for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development Goals. I learned from the President of the Cortés Chamber of Commerce and Industry various social responsibility measures taken by them, including to promote inclusive employment and to mitigate climate change. The Chamber also provides assistance to companies, especially SMEs, in accessing finance.

It seems however that the commitment to respect human rights at the business association level has not yet translated into concrete actions on the part of individual companies in Honduras, because CSOs and Indigenous communities raised serious concerns about various development projects. I will recommend all business organisations and companies operating in Honduras to take seriously their human rights responsibilities, respect Indigenous Peoples' right to FPIC and collaborate with the Government and CSOs to leave no one behind – neither people nor biodiversity.

Concluding remarks

Let me conclude by thanking the Government of Honduras for facilitating a smooth country visit with a high level of constructive engagement with various authorities. After meeting the representatives of the Government and other stakeholders, it became clear to me that Honduras faces a range of internal and external challenges – poverty, inequality, gender-based violence, discrimination against Indigenous Peoples and Afro-Hondurans, law and order problems, land-related conflicts, lax environmental frameworks and oversight, climate change, high national

debt and arbitration claims by foreign investors. At the same time, I saw a ray of hope because the Government is conscious of these challenges, has made a public commitment to depart from the erstwhile model of extractive and exclusionary development and has created a space for CSOs to voice their concerns.

In my view, Honduras should embrace the model of "planet-centred participatory development" and develop a "2040 Roadmap" towards inclusive, sustainable and harmonious development. Key stakeholders – the Government, business and civil society – should come together to build consensus for such a Roadmap. The UN Country Team in Honduras should play a role in facilitating the development of this Roadmap that could guide the present as well as future Governments in taking concrete actions in short, medium and long terms. In sharing some preliminary observations and recommendations today, I have suggested some elements of the proposed Roadmap. I will prepare a detailed report of the visit for presentation at the 60th session of the UN Human Rights Council in September 2025. I look forward to having a constructive engagement with the Government, UN agencies, businesses and CSOs in the coming months and beyond.