

At the same time the agencies urgently needed to distribute the supplies before they were looted from warehouses by soldiers. Other problems included limited relief supplies and fuel brought on by the economic embargo implemented by ECOWAS.

Such difficulties have limited the activities of the remaining relief agencies to the provision of medical assistance, distribution of remaining food supplies, and the pre-positioning of food stocks in neighbouring countries to assist in reaching rural areas when the security situation improves. The ICRC, for example, flew in a medical team to assist in the hospitals in Freetown and have directed their efforts towards sustaining a minimal level of surgical care. They have continued to support local clinics in outlying districts as well as distributing food to vulnerable groups. The WFP also started food distribution in conjunction with the ICRC, national NGOs and community groups.

These assistance efforts have continued in cooperation with the government in exile. It has set up the Economic, Finance and Humanitarian Committee in Guinea to meet with the relief agencies and UN concerning the embargo and assistance activities. The committee has discussed the relief strategy with the aid community in order to ensure that assistance initiatives continue in spite of the economic blockade as well as ensuring that these relief efforts do not work to the political advantage of the AFRC.

#### Physical Security:

With regard to the issues of demobilization and disarmament, the Abidjan Accord called for the downsizing and restructuring of the Armed Forces (RSLMF), the withdrawal of foreign forces, and the demobilization of the RUF and incorporation into the RSLMF. National initiatives to meet these tasks included the deployment of local police forces at the district level to provide security for demobilized troops, but their effectiveness was severely hampered by manpower and logistical constraints. The Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration Committee was set up to oversee the process, and working in conjunction with NGOs four reception centres were set up for RUF soldiers. The four NGO's working in the centres included Africare, CRS and two local agencies. Once in the reception areas training schemes and resettlement packages were intended to help the soldiers reintegrate.

The demobilization process was to have been overseen by a series of international and national observers. The Neutral Monitoring Group, consisting of representatives from the international community was to have monitored the implementation of the Accord as well as the demobilisation and disarmament of the combatants. A Joint Monitoring Group, consisting of representatives of the government as well as the RUF was to have ensured compliance with the cease-fire. These provisions were effectively still born due to the fact that the RUF failed to nominate any representatives to work in either the JMG or the DDRRC, and did not comply with the security provisions of the Abidjan Agreement.

#### *Post-Coup:*

Following the May coup all efforts at demobilization and disarmament ceased. The RUF have joined with the AFRC and together are opposed to the ECOMOG force which has been deployed in Sierra Leone in an effort to assist in the return of the Kabbah government. The situation is further complicated by the existence of the kamajors in the south and the