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**SIERRA LEONE:**  
**DANGER AND OPPORTUNITY IN A REGIONAL CONFLICT**

**Report to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs  
The Honourable John Manley, P.C., M.P.**

**David Pratt, M.P.  
Nepean-Carleton  
Special Envoy to Sierra Leone**

**July 27, 2001**

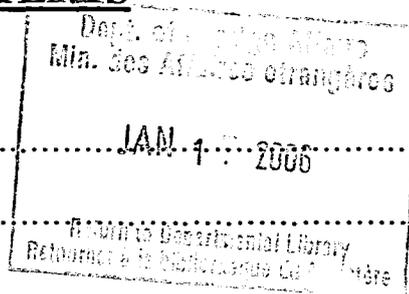
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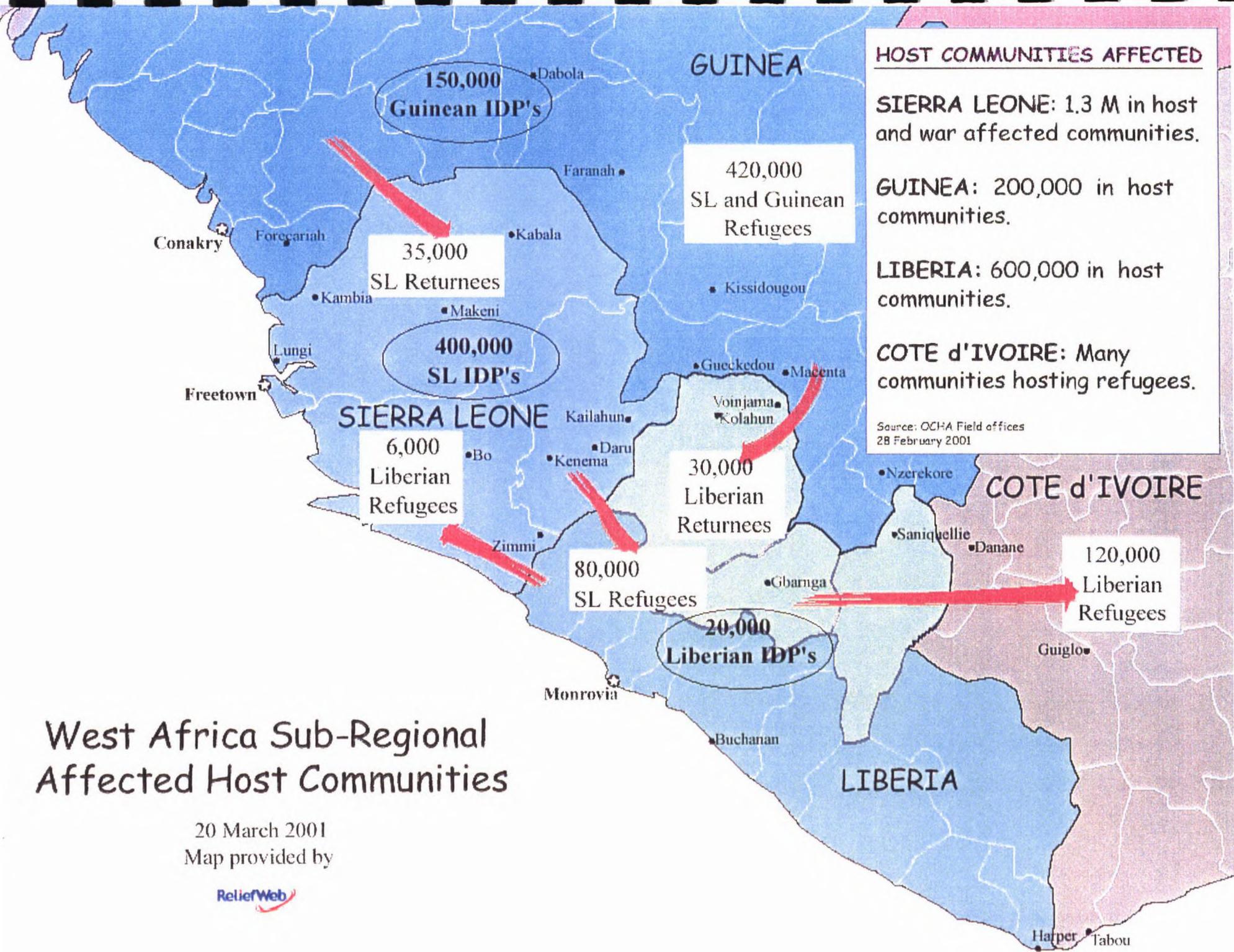
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**HOST COMMUNITIES AFFECTED**

**SIERRA LEONE:** 1.3 M in host and war affected communities.

**GUINEA:** 200,000 in host communities.

**LIBERIA:** 600,000 in host communities.

**COTE d'IVOIRE:** Many communities hosting refugees.

Source: OCHA Field offices  
28 February 2001

# West Africa Sub-Regional Affected Host Communities

20 March 2001  
Map provided by



## GLOSSARY

ACC	- Anti Corruption Commission
AFRC	- Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Sierra Leone)
APC	- All People's Congress (Sierra Leone)
ATU	- Anti-Terrorist Unit (Liberia)
CDF	- Civil Defence Forces
CIDA	- Canadian International Development Agency
CPTF	- Commonwealth Police Task Force
DDR	- Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
ECOWAS	- Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	- Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
EO	- Executive Outcomes
FDA	- Forestry Development Authority (Liberia)
GOSL	- Government of Sierra Leone
GAF	- Guinean Armed Forces
HDI	- Human Development Index (UN)
IDP	- Internally Displaced People
IMATT	- International Military Advisory and Training Team
IMF	- International Monetary Fund
ISU	- Internal Security Unit
LURD	- Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MOD	- Ministry of Defence (Sierra Leone)
NCDDR	- National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NCRRR	- National Committee for Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation
NGO	- Non-Governmental Organization
NOW	- Nepean Outreach to the World
NPFL	- National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC	- National Provisional Ruling Council
OCHA	- Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
ODA	- Official Development Assistance
OTC	- Oriental Timber Company (Liberia)
RTC	- Royal Timber Company (Liberia)
RUF	- Revolutionary United Front
SLA	- Sierra Leone Army
SLP	- Sierra Leone Police
SLPP	- Sierra Leone People's Party
SLST	- Sierra Leone Selection Trust
SRSG	- Special Representative of the Secretary General (UN)
TRC	- Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Sierra Leone)
ULIMO	- United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia
UNAMSIL	- United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	- United Nations Development Program

## FOREWORD

For five years, Sierra Leone has occupied the unenviable position of last place on the United Nations Human Development Index (HDI). It is tremendously difficult for those of us who live comfortable lives in western countries to appreciate living conditions at the bottom of the HDI scale. Life expectancy in Sierra Leone is 38.3 years, the adult literacy rate is 32 per cent and the GDP per capita is US\$448. Whether it is infant mortality, access to clean water, sanitation, nutrition or health services, daily life in Sierra Leone for the great mass of the people is a miserable struggle to survive. When the English philosopher Thomas Hobbes observed in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that life in the 'state of nature' was 'nasty, brutish and short,' probably no more an apt phrase exists to describe the lives of Sierra Leoneans today.

The causes of Sierra Leone's lamentable situation span decades and are touched upon in various sections of this report. For the last ten years, however, it has been an on-again, off-again rebel war that has seen Sierra Leone's more than four million people plummet to an abysmal level on the HDI. The United Nations with all its complicated calculations and indices can tell us a lot about the countries we live in. What they can't measure with the HDI in Sierra Leone, however, is the intense fear that comes from living in a society where the rule of law has disintegrated, the frustration of not having an education, the hopelessness spawned by a collapsed economy and the anger that comes from having your future stolen from you. And then there are those that the war has touched very personally - the amputees, the victims of rape and sexual slavery, the traumatized child soldiers and those who grieve for family members killed or missing. That is the reality of what Sierra Leone has become.

Is Sierra Leone hopeless? I would say 'no.' It wasn't that long ago that Sierra Leone was regarded as having one of the brightest futures in sub-Saharan Africa. What took years to go wrong, however, will take years to put right. Recent events in the country have spurred optimism that has not been felt for some time. And, if the international community is prepared to shoulder its responsibilities (because Sierra Leone did not become what it is entirely by itself) and take a long-term view, then the country could become one of the bulwarks of prosperity and stability in West Africa. But it will take patience, commitment and, most importantly, resources.

Sierra Leone is very much a test case for the involvement of the international community and the United Nations in Africa. If success in Sierra Leone remains elusive, what hope can there be in places like the Congo, Angola and the Sudan? And if conflict on the continent can't be brought under control, what is the prospect of working with Africans to resolve other pressing health, development, environmental or governance issues?

Canada has consistently been a supporter of the United Nations and multilateralism. One could argue that now more than ever the problems Africa faces require a collective, collaborative and co-operative approach from the international community bolstered by the resources and a determination to succeed. In addition, I would submit that those very fortunate countries at the top of the HDI bear a special responsibility and should take a special interest in those countries at the bottom of the scale. For Sierra Leone that means trying to restore hope, peace and development to a country whose suffering has seemed without end.

The Prime Minister and other G-8 leaders have confirmed that Africa, its current challenges and future development, will be high on the agenda of next year's G-8 meetings in Kananaskis, Alberta. Perhaps there is no better barometer for the developed world's commitment on Africa than its collective response to the vexing problems of Sierra Leone.

This report was written for the Honourable John Manley, Minister of Foreign Affairs for Canada and has observations and recommendations with a distinctly Canadian flavour. Nevertheless, I hope others interested in Sierra Leone and the issues of the sub-region who read it find it a helpful and constructive contribution to the debate. I wish also to remind the reader that this report does not constitute Canada's foreign policy on Sierra Leone. As a private Member of Parliament, I have been given free reign to express my views. I have done so. It is my hope that this report will be received in the spirit in which it was intended; that is, with a view to constructive policy formulation to advance the cause of peace and stability, economic development and good governance in Sierra Leone.

**David Pratt, M.P.**  
**July 27, 2001**

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This report was very much a collaborative effort. I am much indebted to two people who made very substantial contributions. Louis-Robert Daigle, the Deputy Director of the Central and West African Division of the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade accompanied me at every step of the way. An 'old Africa hand,' his experience was critical in ensuring our many meetings were productive and that the information produced was carefully analysed. Mr. Ian Smillie, a development consultant, writer and researcher whose experience in Sierra Leone dates back to 1967, applied his considerable skills with great energy and commitment. His encyclopedic knowledge of Sierra Leone, his understanding of development issues and his expertise on the diamond trade in the region proved absolutely indispensable.

This mission entailed considerable travel and at every stop on our busy itinerary, we were accompanied and supported by our excellent embassy and/or high commission staff. Generous thanks are due to Elizabeth Baldwin-Jones in London, John Gosal at the UN in New York, Denis Briand in Guinea and Sierra Leone, Marcel Cloutier in Liberia and Cote d'Ivoire, Ian Ferguson in Nigeria, Isabelle Roy in Paris and Peter Bakewell in Washington. While in Sierra Leone, our mission received support from Lt. Col. Bergstram and the Canadian members of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) as well as CAUSE Canada. Luc Duchesne from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) was also helpful in pre and post mission consultations. I am deeply indebted to a number of people in Liberia who provided very sensitive and valuable information and who probably put themselves at risk by doing so. The maps in this report are courtesy of the Reliefweb.

Finally, I wish to express my sincere thanks to the Honourable John Manley, P.C., M.P., Minister of Foreign Affairs, for asking me to continue with my efforts on Sierra Leone. He was quick to recognize both the depth of the human tragedy and the strategic importance of Sierra Leone, not just for the stability of the West African sub-region, but also for the future of UN involvement in Africa. At the beginning, he promised me his full support. He delivered on that support in a way that made my task easier.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The security situation in Sierra Leone has frequently and dramatically changed over the past ten years. It has widened to engulf other countries in the region causing widespread destruction and death or displacement for hundreds of thousands of people. The past year has been no exception. In May 2000, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked and kidnapped several hundred UN peacekeepers. It subsequently mounted attacks on the Forecariah and Forest Region of Guinea causing great physical damage and displacing of tens of thousands of civilians.

Efforts to negotiate with the RUF culminated in new peace agreements that were signed in May 2001. Disarmament and demobilization began soon thereafter. Three major questions arise from the current security situation: first, *why has the RUF sought a peace agreement now?* Secondly, *is their desire for peace genuine?* And third, *is it likely that the peace will hold?* This report attempts to answer these questions and concludes that, while there is reason for optimism, there are also many reasons to proceed with extreme caution. The ultimate test will be the diamond areas of Kono and Tongo Field. Until both the RUF and the Civil Defence Force (CDF) cede full control of these areas to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and full control of diamond mining to the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL), it would be premature to believe that peace has been achieved.

Much of the future security of the region depends on the role that Liberian President Charles Taylor assumes for himself in the months ahead. If he believes that it is no longer in his interest to support the RUF, and if he acts accordingly, the conflict could well be at an end. There are worrying signs, however. Government-sponsored human rights abuse in Liberia is escalating. There is also growing evidence some of the recent 'fighting' in northern Liberia has been instigated by Taylor's forces. There are reliable reports that Liberian troops have fired their weapons near villages – simulating firefights - to cause panic forcing residents to flee. The result is more refugees and more internally displaced people (IDPs).

Taylor's strategy appears to be intended to generate sympathy for Liberia. By casting Liberia as the victim of aggression by dissident groups operating out of Guinea and Sierra Leone, he demonstrates that he has external enemies and therefore needs to have the arms embargo lifted. His purposes are served by creating instability on his borders as this draws attention away from his own internal weaknesses. It also places added pressure - in the form of Liberian refugees - on neighbouring Guinea. Taylor's behavior in other areas remains a source of concern. He continues to import weapons and support the RUF spending an estimated one third of the country's known income on military efforts which he finances with what the IMF calls 'off-budget' income. This is derived to a great extent from massive logging operations of Liberian tropical hardwood that threaten to eliminate the largest and best stands of timber within a decade.

This report describes the role of and changes among military actors in Sierra Leone. Canada currently contributes to the UK-led IMATT. This initiative aims at rebuilding the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the Ministry of Defence (MOD) to eliminate corruption, improve efficiency and to ensure appropriate civilian control. UNAMSIL has been through a protracted period of difficulties that appeared to be nearing an end at the time of writing. The arrival of Pakistani

troops in August and September is expected to bring the force up to about 16,000 allowing it to push deployment forward.

If current peace arrangements hold, urgent attention must be given to security arrangements in the diamond areas of Kono and Tongo Field. For the most part, diamonds have fuelled the war and, if the key areas of diamond concentration are not brought under control, the security of the entire country will be at risk. In the short run, the provision of security can and should be handled by UNAMSIL, but there is a pressing need to begin comprehensive planning for the longer term.

The national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) process that has now restarted is an absolutely essential beginning on the road to stability and normality. Its importance cannot be overestimated. If ex-combatants do not receive the minimal support they have been promised through the DDR, the likelihood of renewed fighting is high and a collapse of the peace process could be viewed as inevitable.

A peace agreement in Sierra Leone is not enough to solve what has become a dangerous regional security problem. Fighting could continue to simmer and flare and could easily spill over into other neighbouring countries such as Côte d'Ivoire. Inattention to the regional dimensions could send the wrong signals about international tolerance for acts of terror and violence to those in and beyond the region. And if the peace process breaks down, more drastic action will be required. The war in Sierra Leone has lasted almost twice as long as the Second World War. It has taken tens of thousands more lives than the war in Kosovo. It has created more refugees and internally displaced people than almost any other conflict in the world. The current set of agreements represent probably the last best hope of a negotiated settlement. If these agreements fail, the international community and more especially Western industrialized countries - including Canada - will have to face the prospect of dealing with a wider conflagration with grave humanitarian and security implications.

The general humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone is somber and is likely to get worse before it gets better. Officially, the humanitarian community is dealing with a caseload of over 400,000 IDPs, representing only a small proportion of the total. Estimates of IDPs living on their own or with host families run as high as two million, almost half the population. With the onset of the rainy season and the possible return of more than 100,000 refugees from Guinea, the situation is likely to become much worse through 2001. In fact, the refugee situation in Guinea remains equally troubling. Côte d'Ivoire has also been affected. In mid-June 2001, some 2,000 new Liberian refugees arrived at Danane near the Liberian border forcing a revision of emergency contingency plans in that part of the region. In the short and medium term, all humanitarian agencies in the region - and their budgets - are likely to be severely tested.

The roots of Sierra Leone's tragedy lie in poor governance and all of its attendant ills: a disappearing formal economy; joblessness, especially among young people; debilitating poverty; poor education; and a weak health infrastructure. These circumstances provided the combatants for the conflict, and once it had been ignited, diamonds provided the funds to sustain it. Huge resources have been provided by the international community in support of UNAMSIL - probably in the order of about US\$3 million a day at current levels. In addition, large

investments are being made in emergency assistance for refugees and the displaced. The Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) will also require funding. Most of this spending necessarily deals with symptoms rather than causes of the problem. It is essential that when the conflict ends adequate resources be available to address the root cause of the problem. Ongoing financial support for good governance and long-term economic development are absolutely vital if the enormous investment in peacekeeping and emergency assistance is to bear fruit. If, after the emergency abates, Sierra Leone becomes a neglected donor backwater once again, the chances of a return to violence will be high.

The forthcoming elections needs special attention as does the objectives and requirements of the Special Court, the TRC, the Anti Corruption Commission (ACC) and the Commonwealth Police Task Force (CPTF). Sierra Leonean civil society will also play a critical role in the post war reconciliation, capacity building and development.

Sierra Leone has a tremendous need for long-term, meaningful development assistance and this report makes the case for a greater Canadian commitment. It suggests bringing Canada's developmental efforts in Sierra Leone into line with other Canadian aid programs in the region. It concludes with comments and recommendations on regional matters that will require attention before the security of any one country can be assured.

## INTRODUCTION

This report follows an earlier one, *Sierra Leone: The Forgotten Crisis*, produced in April 1999 for the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy, then Minister of Foreign Affairs. That report was written before the Lomé Agreement that was signed later in the year, before the arrival in Sierra Leone of UN peacekeepers and before the collapse of the Lomé Agreement and a return to war. Much has changed in Sierra Leone since then, but the history of the conflict has not.

The years immediately before and after Sierra Leone's independence in 1961 were marked by optimism and high expectations. Political cleavages and a mismanaged election in 1967, however, set the stage for the country's first military takeover. Civilian rule was reestablished in 1968 under the populist trade unionist, Siaka Stevens. But the Stevens' years were marked by a systematic destruction of the formal state apparatus and by the growth of a large informal economy, much of it based on illicit trade in the country's high-value diamond resources. One-party rule, combined with the systematic destruction of the judiciary, the public service, the police and the military, paved the way for a downward spiral in the economy. After 1985, attempts at reform and revival by Stevens' successor, Joseph Momoh, were largely ineffective. During the Momoh years there was a dramatic growth in the number of unemployed and disaffected youth. They drifted from the countryside either to Freetown and other urban centres or to the diamond fields of Kono. In either case, they became socialized into a climate of violence, drugs and crime.

The RUF drew its first recruits from groups of alienated youth that initiated attacks from Liberia with support from then Liberian rebel leader Charles Taylor in 1991. Ostensibly aimed at ending corruption in government, the RUF has never gained a significant political or ethnic following. A humanitarian crisis quickly resulted from its tactics involving brutal attacks on unarmed civilians and children.

A military takeover by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) in 1992 saw various attempts to deal with the RUF threat militarily. The creation of a CDF, made up of traditional hunting societies ('kamajors' or 'kamajohs'), was effective in protecting areas of the south and some of the east from the RUF. An Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervention force known as the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) defended government positions, but was unable to defeat the RUF. A brief intervention by Executive Outcomes, a private military force, did push the RUF back from Freetown in 1995 and temporarily cleared the diamond areas, but the war continued.

In 1996, Sierra Leone held its first democratic elections in almost three decades and returned to civilian rule. The government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah negotiated a peace agreement with the RUF that year in Abidjan, but the agreement failed soon afterwards. RUF attacks continued and their brutality escalated. A military coup in 1997 ousted the Kabbah government, and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) invited the RUF to join it in governing the country. Several months of chaos, murder and barbarity ensued. The AFRC was finally forced out of power in 1998 by ECOMOG and the Kabbah government was reinstated. The RUF was far from finished, however. Together with elements of the AFRC, they temporarily invaded

Freetown again in January 1999 in a display of arson, murder and violence that claimed the lives of over 5,000 people and left thousands more homeless.

Persuaded in part by its military weakness and in part by the blandishments of western governments, the GOSL once again went to the bargaining table with the RUF. It concluded an agreement that provided all combatants full amnesty. It also gave RUF leader Foday Sankoh the rank of Vice President and leadership of a government commission that controlled the country's mineral wealth including diamonds. A UN peacekeeping force, UNAMSIL, was mandated to take over peacekeeping duties from ECOMOG.

In May 2000, however, the RUF attacked UNAMSIL forces, taking more than 500 soldiers hostage. A subsequent public demonstration outside Sankoh's Freetown house led to the deaths of 17 civilians, the arrest of Sankoh and the resumption of war. The intervention of British troops helped to demonstrate international resolve to keep the RUF from power and a November 2000 cease-fire paved the way for peace talks during the first half of 2001. With Nigerian assistance, new agreements were reached in May between the government, the RUF, the CDF and UNAMSIL to end the fighting.

A more detailed account of these historical events can be found in Annex 1. The following sections of this report deal with security, humanitarian and development assistance, political and governance and other regional issues confronting Sierra Leone and its neighbours. The next section on security retraces and analyzes some of the recent events described above in more detail.

## THE SECURITY SITUATION

### Background

The security situation in Sierra Leone has changed frequently and dramatically over the past ten years and the fourteen months between May 2000 and June 2001 have been no exception. Following the collapse of the peace process in May 2000, fighting resumed between the RUF and various Sierra Leonean forces – notably the remains of the AFRC/SLA and different CDF groups. RUF attacks on the Forecariah area of Guinea and that country's Forest Region in September 2000 and afterwards created great damage and significant human dislocation among Sierra Leonean and Guinean refugees and IDPs. The attacks on Forecariah may have been a diversionary effort to draw Guinean attention away from the subsequent and more devastating attacks on Guékédou, Macenta and Kissidougou. These attacks were more strategic and inflicted systematic damage on government infrastructure including police stations, communications systems, government offices and hospitals.

There were undoubtedly several reasons for the attacks. The RUF, possibly acting at the behest of Charles Taylor, may have sought to deal a blow to its own enemies and those of Taylor. It is likely that Sierra Leonean CDF fighters (Kono-speaking 'Donsos' rather than Mende-speaking Kamajors) had been staying in or near some of the refugee camps in the 'Parrot's Beak' area of Guinea (known in Guinea as the 'Languette'). The RUF attacks may have aimed to create chaos among the refugees and to neutralize these CDF forces. Attacks further east on Macenta were likely aimed at the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) forces that had settled there after the Liberian civil war. Continued unrest in Liberia's Lofa Country may have had a cross-border element to it and the RUF attack on Macenta may have sought to neutralize ULIMO and other Liberian dissident forces.\* There is speculation that, if the RUF attacks had been successful, an eventual aim was to reach the alluvial diamond fields north of Macenta and to reenact the scenario choreographed by the RUF in Sierra Leone.

However, the Guinean Armed Forces (GAF) repelled the attacks and was reportedly operating at various times with both ULIMO and CDF fighters. It is believed that serious damage was inflicted on the RUF forces some of which may have occurred when GAF troops followed the RUF in hot pursuit raids into Sierra Leone. Clashes between GAF troops and ULIMO are also said to have occurred in Guinea and there was a cross-border shelling incident on May 18, 2001.

In early May 2001, the RUF began a dialogue with the GOSL and UNAMSIL that resulted in high-level meetings at Abuja in Nigeria. Two communiqués were signed in Sierra Leone in mid-

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\* There have been several serious outbreaks of fighting in Liberia since the 1997 elections. According to Human Rights Watch, "there were two outbreaks of violence in Monrovia in 1998 in which state security forces battled with faction leader Roosevelt Johnson's officially disbanded ULIMO-J ("J" for Johnson) and his predominantly ethnic Krahn supporters. In April and August 1999, Liberian rebels operating from neighboring Guinea carried out attacks in Lofa County, northern Liberia. Although unconfirmed, the rebel attacks may have been led by former ULIMO-K (K for Alhaji Kromah) faction fighters - largely ethnic Mandingos. The fighting resulted in civilian deaths and displacement, forcing thousands of Liberians and Sierra Leonean refugees to flee. In July 2000, another invasion was launched by a group calling itself Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) from the Guinean border into Liberia resulting in fighting and displacement yet again in Lofa County." *Human Rights Watch World Report 2000, 2001*

May. The first communiqué, between the GOSL, the RUF and UNAMSIL (Annex 2), agreed to a resumption of the DDR process with simultaneous disarmament of the RUF and the CDF on an unspecified timetable throughout the country. It was agreed that concurrently UNAMSIL would deploy throughout the country and would undertake 'cordon and search' operations after the disarmament had been completed. This was intended to seize any un-surrendered weapons. A monitoring mechanism was also agreed upon. The RUF requested the release of its members currently detained by the GOSL and the government reaffirmed its commitment to consider the request.

The second agreement (Annex 3) was signed on behalf of the CDF by Chief Hinga Norman and for the RUF by Omrie Golley, Chairman of the Political and Peace Council,\* and by UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) Oluyemi Adeniji. It undertook to "ensure the cessation of all hostilities" between the RUF and the CDF, and to allow "the unimpeded movement of persons, goods and services throughout the country."

Disarmament began immediately with almost 2500 RUF and CDF fighters handing in their weapons in the Kambia-Port Loko area within a matter of hours (see below). In the days and weeks following the agreements, however, fighting between the RUF and the CDF continued in areas that were important to the RUF's access to Liberia.

Three major questions arise from the current security situation: first, *why has the RUF sought a peace agreement now?* Secondly, *is their desire for peace genuine?* And third, *is it likely that the peace will hold?*

#### *Why has the RUF sought a peace agreement now?*

The official RUF position is that the time has come for peace. They contend the war can't be won without great loss on both sides. By transforming itself into a political movement, the RUF says it can explain itself to Sierra Leoneans. The notion now being expressed by many RUF leaders is that it will be better able to influence events by ballots rather than bullets. The realities of the situation suggest that the RUF may have other reasons for suing for peace.

Other explanations include the possibility that:

- the RUF was seriously weakened in the Guinea operation and may have simply lost the will to fight; \*\*
- with the consolidation of UNAMSIL and the willingness of the UK to take robust military action as required, it had become obvious to the RUF that they could never again reach Freetown. Consequently, they faced the prospect of little more than a protracted guerrilla operation that they could well lose;

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\* Omrie Golley was a spokesman for the RUF until fired by Foday Sankoh early in 2000. He has returned to Sierra Leone and has helped the RUF articulate a political position. While regarded as "helpful" by some, many suspect Golley's motives and it remains to be seen whether this RUF political agenda will have any attraction for the average Sierra Leonean voter.

\*\* RUF Spokesman Gibril Massaquoi was quoted in the Concord Times (May 28) as acknowledging the death of senior RUF Col. Komba Gbudema in a battle with Donsos.

- the RUF's supply of weapons through Liberia may have been reduced by: 1) the recent arrest by Italian police of Leonid Minin,\* an Israeli businessman of Ukrainian origin - Minin has been charged by Italian prosecutors with shipping hundreds of tons of weapons into West Africa; 2) new UN sanctions; and 3) the fact that fighting inside Liberia may have consumed significant available resources;
- sanctions on 'Liberian' diamonds have compromised the RUF 'money machine;' and
- with the onset of the rainy season and the upcoming election, the RUF may feel that its interests are better served with a wait-and-see hiatus from its past strategy.

*Is the RUF desire for peace genuine?*

Early signs, including the rapid disarming and demobilization of fighters in the Kambia area, the handing over of children and the ability of UNAMSIL to deploy in hitherto off-limits areas seem to reflect a positive attitude by the RUF. It is important to note, however, that some humanitarian and relief agencies have indicated that the number of children released by the RUF thus far is still well below the numbers that are believed to be still in captivity. Another major reason for concern is the continuing sporadic fighting between RUF and CDF forces in and around Kono District. Even if this represents CDF aggression, as the RUF maintains, the RUF's apparent desire to retain full control of the main Kono-Liberia road is a negative factor.

Other reasons for great caution include the following:

- the RUF have signed previous agreements at moments when a period of regrouping and consolidation was to their benefit. In this, they have followed the example of Charles Taylor, who signed and broke thirteen peace agreements on his way to power in Liberia. With the arrival of the rainy season, a military defeat in Guinea, and a possible shortage of arms, the current agreement could be little more than a temporary holding pattern for the purposes of consolidation;
- the RUF may not be unified in its desire for peace. There is very likely more than one faction and more than one view about how to manage the current situation;
- Charles Taylor, preoccupied with his own military problems, may have drawn RUF fighters temporarily into Liberia. If this is the case, they could well reappear at a more opportune time; and
- even if some of RUF's supply lines have been squeezed, nevertheless, illicit weapons continued to arrive in Liberia during and after the March-May 2001 UN Security Council discussions about Liberian sanctions and weapons continued to flow from Liberia to the RUF in Sierra Leone.

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\* See Annex 4 for more information on Leonid Minin and how arms were shipped into Liberia.

The litmus test for the RUF's intentions will be the diamond areas of Kono and Tongo Field. Until the RUF cedes full control of the diamond areas to UNAMSIL, and full control of diamond mining to the GOSL, it would be foolhardy to believe that peace has been achieved.

*Is it likely that the peace will hold?*

Even if the RUF is bargaining in good faith, peace may be compromised by other factors such as:

- if the GOSL and the international community cannot deliver on DDR commitments adequately and in a timely fashion, the potential for anger, disillusionment and clashes will be very real;
- the issue of clarity surrounding the operations of the Special Court and the TRC especially the question of who may be indicted by the former. The RUF believe that both will involve at least some of its leadership and leaders from the CDF, the AFRC and the SLA. If this is not the case, trouble could ensue; and
- the very real possibility that the peace process could be disrupted as and when former RUF leader Foday Sankoh resurfaces and gains access to the media. Omrie Golley, Chairman of the Political and Peace Process, has apparently won the confidence of the main RUF leadership. Before the tumultuous events of May 2000, Sankoh ejected Golley from the RUF. Since Sankoh's incarceration, his wife has denounced Golley and the agreements that have been made.

## **The Role of Other Players in the Security Situation**

### *Liberia*

Much of the future security of the region depends on Charles Taylor's role in the months ahead. If he believes that it is no longer in his interest to support the RUF, and if he acts accordingly, the conflict in Sierra Leone could well be at an end. Taylor is capable, however, of retreating and returning to fight another day. On the question of RUF leadership, there is speculation that Taylor would prefer to have Sam Bockarie lead the RUF. Bockarie, who has run afoul of certain elements in the RUF in Sierra Leone, has the ability to raise a fighting force quickly and with adequate logistics and personnel could inflict further damage and destruction. The tested RUF methodology - terror, abduction and the recruitment of disaffected youth - has proven successful more than once. Without vigilance and an ability to deal with any resumption of hostilities vigorously and quickly, Sierra Leone and the peace process will continue to remain at risk.

A more complex dynamic lies in Taylor's calculations about what he requires for his own survival. He won the 1997 elections in Liberia, but he did not win the peace and there is no doubt that he has enemies based in Guinea. Taylor has publicly blamed the fighting that has erupted from time to time in Lofa County and other border areas on Liberian dissidents based in Guinea and CDF factions operating out of Sierra Leone. In fact, both he and his Foreign Minister Monie Captan have been trying actively to paint a picture of Liberia as a helpless victim unable to defend itself because of a UN arms embargo.

There is, however, mounting evidence that Taylor's forces are responsible for some of the recent 'fighting' in northern Liberia. There are reliable reports from within the country, confirmed by outside intelligence sources, that Armed Forces of Liberia personnel have fired their weapons near villages – simulating firefights - to cause panic forcing residents to flee across borders. Claiming Liberia is a victim of Guinean and Sierra Leonean aggression, Taylor's purposes are undoubtedly served by having refugees cross into Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire and Sierra Leone. Creating instability on his borders and a crisis atmosphere throughout the country allows Taylor to draw attention away from his own internal weaknesses. He has also used it as a pretext to crack down on political freedoms and human rights.

Reports from major human rights organizations have documented continuing and growing human rights abuse and evidence of torture, killing and rape by the Anti-Terrorist Unit (ATU) and other Liberian police and security forces. Opposition leaders have been forced to flee the country and the independent media has been suppressed. Development is virtually non-existent, unemployment runs at more than 80 per cent and people survive only at the most basic levels of subsistence. Information about the Liberian condition is so poor that for many years there have been no entries for Liberia in the World Bank's *World Development Report* or the UNDP's *Human Development Report*.

Liberia is obviously an exceedingly poor country; the entire revenues of the government do not exceed \$100 million annually. Much of this is derived from the Liberian shipping registry, as the internal economy produces insignificant tax revenues. Taylor requires additional funding, however, both for internal security purposes and for his international ventures. The December 2000 UN Expert Panel Report on Sierra Leone documented RUF diamond traffic through Liberia. Although vigorously denied by Taylor, the smuggling of Sierra Leone diamonds through Monrovia is well documented and dates back to the 1950s. Only the players and their spending patterns have changed.

If the UN sanctions and the peace agreements in Sierra Leone have indeed been successful in reducing or ending Taylor's access to Sierra Leone's diamonds, other sources of revenue will be required to continue military operations inside Liberia and, should he feel the need, across its borders. Timber represents the next best source of hard currency for Liberia after diamonds. Liberian rubber plantations, which at one time served as a mainstay of the domestic economy, have not been maintained and provide little in the way of foreign exchange earnings. During the early 1990s, Taylor financed much of his rebellion through timber exports and these have continued since his election as President. The Liberian Strategic Commodities Act, passed in 2000, grants the President the sole power to execute, negotiate and conclude all commercial contracts, foreign or domestic, on the country's entire natural resource base. The Act covers an enormous array of items ranging from minerals and precious stones to agricultural products such as rice, coffee and rubber as well as timber. It even includes "unique and rare sculpture, Arts and Artifacts, Handiwork and Hand Crafts of historical, cultural, social, spiritual and economic value to the Republic of Liberia."

For Taylor, timber has most definitely become a "strategic commodity." Many observers refer to the Liberian timber industry as the President's "pepper bush," a West African phrase denoting exclusive ownership. Taylor keeps close tabs on the industry and others interfere at their peril. It

is regulated by the Forestry Development Authority (FDA), whose Managing Director, Robert Taylor, is the President's brother.

The primary timber exporter over the past three years has been the Oriental Timber Company (OTC), operating under several subsidiary names and aliases including the Liberian-Malaysian Timber Company and the Liberian Forest Development Corporation. A second company, Royal Timber Company (RTC), also operates under a variety of names. OTC's President, Monrovia hotelier Gus Kouwenhoven, has been implicated in a variety of arms import deals facilitated by tight military supervision over the Port of Buchanan when ships arrive 'empty' to begin loading logs. The forestry industry itself has been fraught with human rights abuse and serious environmental mismanagement. Kouwenhoven is a member of the FDA.

In order to feed the Taylor war chest, Liberia is being deforested at an alarming rate. Clear cutting is employed and new roads have been built or upgraded to accommodate a vast fleet of trucks and work crews that operate seven days a week. Liberia has the largest remaining proportion of the Upper Guinean Ecosystem containing as much as 42 per cent of the extant forest with many species of plants, timber, mammals and birds that are nearly extinct elsewhere. These are likely to disappear in Liberia as well - perhaps within as little as ten years - if deforestation continues at the current rate.

There is good reason to be very concerned about rising Liberian timber exports. Estimates for the year 2000 provided by reliable sources indicate that over 600,000m<sup>3</sup> of logs were shipped from Liberia. The main importers were China at almost 300,000m<sup>3</sup>, France at over 160,000m<sup>3</sup> and Italy at approximately 70,000 m<sup>3</sup>. During the first half of 2001, more than 400,000m<sup>3</sup> of logs were exported from only two ports, Buchanan and Harper. In 1999, the FDA reported that 37% of Liberia's official timber exports went to France. During the first six months of 2000, over 55,000m<sup>3</sup> (said by the FDA to be worth \$7.4 million) of timber was recorded as going to France. These figures significantly underestimate the real value as one Bordeaux-based company, F. Jammes S.A., imported more than this volume in one species alone. In addition to the FDA reports of direct Liberian exports to France, other Liberian timber makes its way to France via the Côte d'Ivoire port of San Pedro.

Although some Liberian timber is exported to Indonesia for plywood production, a considerable volume also goes to China. Official reports of exports to China during the first half of 2000 totaled about \$13 million, but it is estimated that these figures have been under-reported by a factor of at least two or three. Overall export figures are also significantly under-reported. The FDA claimed OTC exports of \$17.5 million between January and June 2000 at least three times less than its exports for the same period in 2001.

Early in 2001, France and China objected to the inclusion of timber sanctions in the omnibus Security Council resolution on Liberia. It was argued that this would hurt ordinary Liberians. In fact, an estimated 600 Asians have been granted Liberian work permits and according to the IMF much of the timber revenue never enters the formal Liberian economy. The International Monetary Fund (IMF) reports also indicate that expenditure by the Office of the President consumed 28 per cent of total government outlays in the first half of 2000 much of it for security purposes. The IMF also repeated earlier concerns about 'off-budget expenditure.' In a September

2000 report, it stated: "The use of tax offsets and credits to new forestry concessions has recently become an important means of off-budget expenditure... As this practice raises concerns of management and transparency, it should be ended and the revenue allocated through existing budget procedures and accounts."

The argument has been made that timber sanctions would hurt ordinary Liberians. Since most of the revenue from timber exports never enters the formal economy, the only direct injury to 'ordinary Liberians' would be the loss of jobs in the timber industry. These could number as many as 10,000, but they are low-paying, temporary jobs. This short-term employment must be offset against the longer-term loss of jobs and environmental damage that will result from rapacious deforestation. Also to be considered is the damage to lives and livelihoods wrought by Taylor's government on his own people and others through the weapons bought with the proceeds of timber sales.

It would appear that France and China have chosen to protect their tropical timber supplies by blocking Liberian timber sanctions. This is permitting companies like OTC and RTC to continue their human rights and environmental abuses as well as the importation of arms. Indirectly, they are providing support to Taylor's regional mischief making and his abuses of the economy, state and people of Liberia. Regardless of the positions of France and China on sanctions, an objective fact remains obvious: as long as Liberian timber exports are under-reported and as long as the revenue from timber exports is used for purposes falling outside the formal budget of Liberia, the potential for Liberian-financed insecurity in the region will continue unabated.

### *The Sierra Leone Army*

By 1998, most of the SLA had become little more than an armed mob with a reputation for mayhem, corruption and overthrowing governments. Wisely, the GOSL had decided to demobilize the majority of the army and start afresh with British assistance. Since 1999, the UK has undertaken a series of induction and training programs under what is now called the IMATT. It is expected that basic training will be provided to about 12,500 soldiers by the end of September (including air and maritime wings) with more specialized training in logistics, communications, command and control and other techniques to a smaller number. Some officer training is being provided in Ghana and the UK.

While the UK has borne the greatest burden in both costs and personnel, Canada has provided ten trainers to the IMATT Program and Australia two. The US has three military trainers outside the IMATT operation. The Canadian trainers speak highly of the program and their British and Sierra Leonean counterparts speak highly of them. Because the Canadians work at all levels of the program, IMATT has provided them with broad exposure to a significant military reconstruction program, to a tropical military operation and to the challenges of a complex military emergency. In short, it has been a good learning experience for the Canadian military as well as the intended beneficiaries.\*

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\* *Saturday Night* published a major cover story on Canada's contribution to the IMATT on June 16, 2001. The article is available online at [www.saturdaynight.ca](http://www.saturdaynight.ca)

The IMATT is more than military training, however. It deals directly with virtually every aspect of the emerging issue of African security sector reform. It involves a complete reconstruction of the MOD and the military apparatus. This means building a culture of loyalty, service and respect for human rights within the armed forces, but it also means a complete departmental overhaul to ensure appropriate civilian oversight and probity. Senior Sierra Leone MOD officials and officers have been removed for corruption. And policies - hitherto nonexistent - on procurement, career paths, pay and benefits, the removal of 'ghost soldiers' from the payroll and things as basic as the payment of salaries, have had to be put in place. It is generally agreed that this process of restructuring and reform will be a three to five year undertaking.

### *The Civil Defence Force*

Under the May 2001 agreements, the CDF agreed to the DDR process. Time will tell if it is unified in its command and in its desire for peace. Whatever happens in the short run, it is imperative that the CDF be brought under full government control. Under the wrong leadership the CDF could, in time, become a problem as significant as the RUF. Given its traditional role and history and given possible uncertainty on Sierra Leone's borders, there may well be a role for a reserve force or 'territorial army' to be called up in cases of national emergency. Elements of the CDF could be drawn into such a force, but it would be essential that it operate under strict government control with a clear and limited mandate and that it be appropriately trained in discipline, human rights and the laws of armed conflict.

### *UNAMSIL*

UNAMSIL has been through a protracted period of difficulties that appeared to be ending at the time of writing. The May 2000 kidnapping incident and the departure of the Indian and Jordanian troops were both humiliating and debilitating. The arrival of Pakistani troops in August and September of 2001 is expected to bring the force up to about 16,000 allowing it to push its deployment forward. If the political situation proceeds according to plan, it is anticipated that the Pakistanis will deploy in Sector Three, mainly in Kono District. Sector Three is the only one of four that is currently multinational in character.\*

UNAMSIL was widely criticized for its military failings and intra-force squabbles in 2000 and it has been the subject of repeated charges of corruption coming from individuals in positions of responsibility both inside and outside the force. This latter point should be of concern at the highest levels of the UN and action should be taken to ensure that irregularities are addressed. UNAMSIL cannot afford to be compromised in its important work by bad practices, mal-administration or false charges.

That said, external critics should remember that UNAMSIL is what one senior UN official called "the first completely Third World UN peacekeeping force." The point is not so much which countries have supplied troops, but which countries have not. The general lack of interest by industrialized countries in providing UNAMSIL with highly trained front-line troops does not play well against criticism from the sidelines.

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\* Sector One, mainly the Kambia area, is covered by Nigeria; Sector Two, mainly the central-north, is covered by Kenya, and Sector Four, mainly the Northern Province, is covered by Bangladesh.

## Control of the Diamond Areas

If the current peace arrangements hold, urgent attention must be given to the security of the diamond areas of Kono and Tongo Field. Diamonds have provided the fuel and much of the motivation for ten years of war. If the key areas of diamond concentration are not brought under control, the security of the entire country will be at risk. In the short run, the provision of security can and should probably be handled by UNAMSIL, but there is an urgent need to begin comprehensive planning for the longer term.

Neither the army nor the police have historically controlled Sierra Leone's diamond areas. Giving the SLA or the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) responsibility for security in the diamond areas now would be an invitation to return to the days of rampant corruption, national decline and war. This is not a reflection on the new SLA or the police. Rather, it is a comment on the nature of the diamond industry at large and reflects common practice in other countries. The mining companies themselves handled diamond area security until about 1985, albeit with growing difficulty.

In recent years, government policy has continued to require mining firms to provide their own security, but smaller and less reputable firms were attracted to Sierra Leone as the security conditions began to deteriorate. Their approach to security was often dubious, if not reckless and abusive of human rights. Only a very large mining company would be able to provide and afford the kind of professional security force required today. Given the current investment climate and the likelihood of ongoing and binding arrangements with a variety of smaller firms, such a company and such an option may not be available.

One alternative would be to maintain an international peacekeeping force for a protracted period of time until other options become available. Technical assistance would be required from the international diamond industry in order to develop systems appropriate to the nature of the business and the peculiarities of alluvial as well as kimberlite mining. In addition, peacekeepers would have to be rotated out of the area on a more frequent basis than current UN practice in order to avoid the temptations that have infected previous security operations.

Another possibility would be the creation of a private security force to be paid for collectively by investors in the diamond mining industry and managed jointly by the industry and the GOSL, with participation from civil society and other oversight bodies. A variation on this theme would be the creation of a force whose cost would be amortized across the entire mining sector. Although security needs in rutile mining are not as great as they are in the diamond sector, nothing at all can be mined if the country is at war. Although its direct security needs are not large, the rutile sector, therefore, has as great an interest in national security as any other.

Likewise, the GOSL and all those involved in the current humanitarian and peacekeeping efforts have an interest in the long-term security and control of the diamond areas. Given recent history and current circumstances, this is not a matter that can be left to chance, nor is it one that can be allowed to slip out of control once peace has been achieved.

The matter will become urgent as soon as UNAMSIL deploys into Kono District and Tongo Field. It will become even more urgent as the rainy season ends in October and illicit diggers begin to test whatever system is in place. There is a real possibility that the RUF peace offer may be based on an idea that UNAMSIL will not, in fact, become engaged on the diamond issue. It could be that the RUF believes that UNAMSIL will simply act as a police force in the diamond areas to make diamond mining safe for successor RUF organizations. The resolution of these problems will be an important prerequisite to a sustainable peace and to attracting responsible investors.

### **Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration**

The World Bank manages a Multi Donor Trust Fund for DDR that supports the government's National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR). The fund was established in 1998 and originally planned to screen and discharge 33,000 ex-combatants providing them with an orientation program, a 'safety net allowance' and reintegration support. The services were aimed at ex-combatants from the RUF, the CDF, the forces of the AFRC and former soldiers of the SLA. Revised estimates at the end of March 2001 placed the total at 45,000.

In April 2000, three camps were operating and two more were under construction. With the events of May 2000, however, the process effectively came to a halt and only one camp remained in operation at Port Loko. By the end of March 2001, the DDR process claimed 28,189 participants: 5000 from the RUF, over 9000 from the CDF and 8400 AFRC/ex-SLA. An estimated 2,500 child combatants had been processed as well. Reinsertion benefits totalling US\$3.2 million had been paid and 11,369 people received vocational education and/or micro-credit loans.

With the agreements of May 2001, there was a sudden upsurge in the numbers of people making themselves available for DDR. By the end of May, over 3,000 combatants (CDF: 2,260; RUF: 1,088) presented themselves for demobilization in the Kambia and Port Loko areas and the single remaining DDR camp at Port Loko, which had a capacity to handle only 1000 people, was overwhelmed. Among other things, the camp had a completely inadequate water supply. Serious problems were averted only when US Ambassador Joe Melrose dispatched water trucks from Freetown. By July 3, UNAMSIL was reporting that over 6,000 combatants had handed over their weapons to United Nations peacekeepers. That number included 2,081 combatants from the RUF, 4,280 from the CDF and 134 from the AFRC/ex-SLA.

If the agreements work as proposed, significant additional numbers of ex-combatants may appear in the weeks and months ahead. While the current DDR program appears to be evolving, previous efforts which have sought to equip ex-combatants, who had been fighting in the bush for years, for a new life, were minimal. In the past, DDR has amounted to little more than a "weapons for cash" program. Because of the stop-start nature of the war, many individuals have been recycled through the process at least once. Management has been problematic. Nevertheless, the DDR process is an absolutely essential start on the road to stability and normality and its importance cannot be underestimated. If ex-combatants do not receive the minimal support they have been promised, the chance of renewed fighting is high and a collapse

of the peace process could very well occur. The involvement of civil society is important to ensure that the "R" in the DDR is strongly emphasized as is a willingness to experiment so that "best practices" can be replicated elsewhere.

### **Regional Security Issues**

The much-predicted spillover of Sierra Leone's security problems into Guinea finally occurred in 2000 and continued into 2001. It was intimately connected with the on-going security problems that have plagued Liberia since the late 1980s. Weapons have from time to time been supplied to Liberian factions through Côte d'Ivoire and possibly Guinea, and two United Nations Security Council Expert Panels in 2000 implicated the Government of Burkina Faso in breaking the Security Council arms embargo on Liberia. Gambia, Guinea and Liberia, and possibly Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and other countries have been implicated in the issue of Sierra Leone's 'conflict diamonds'.

ECOWAS is often discussed as a body that can solve such problems and the creation of ECOMOG was a step in this direction. As the largest country in the region, one with wider political and economic interests than most, Nigeria has played a critical role in both ECOWAS and ECOMOG. Indeed, Nigeria has demonstrated its commitment to West African security with the significant expenditure of both blood and treasure. While it has some successes, ECOWAS has not been able to address directly and effectively issues of international aggression, gunrunning and sanctions busting. This has seriously diminished its credibility in the eyes of many within the West African sub-region and beyond. Interestingly, Charles Taylor has stated that he sees a larger role for ECOWAS in the peacemaking process arguing that outsiders simply do not understand the dynamics of West African politics and security. It is very evident from his public comments that Taylor feels much more comfortable playing in the smaller arena of ECOWAS politics rather than having the UN, the US, the UK and other members of the international community breathing down his neck.

A peace agreement in Sierra Leone is probably not enough to solve what has become a dangerous regional security problem that could continue to simmer and flare and which could spill over into other neighbouring countries such as Côte d'Ivoire. Inattention to the regional dimensions of the problem could send the wrong signals about the international community's tolerance for acts of terror and violence to others within and beyond the region.

### **Conclusions on Security**

There are signs that the RUF may be sincere in its desire for peace, but the test of its sincerity will be the full and early deployment of UNAMSIL into the diamond areas of Kono and Tongo Field. This must be followed by the extension of the authority of the GOSL and the resumption of public services throughout the country. There are many hurdles on the road to full disarmament including the need for all factions in the RUF and the CDF to act in good faith. The role of the international community is vital. Timely support for the DDR process must be provided. On-going support for humanitarian assistance and reconstruction is essential. And clearly, external actors in the region must play a constructive and responsible role to facilitate a return to peace.

If the peace process breaks down, however, more drastic action will be required. The war in Sierra Leone has lasted almost twice as long as the Second World War. It has taken tens of thousands more lives than the war in Kosovo. It has created more refugees and internally displaced people than almost any place else in the world. The UNAMSIL operation alone costs more in two months than all bilateral development assistance to Sierra Leone in any year during the 1990s. The current set of agreements represent probably the last best hope of a negotiated settlement. If these agreements fail, the international community and more specifically Western industrialized countries - including Canada - will have to face the prospect of dealing with a wider conflagration with grave humanitarian and security implications.

## **HUMANITARIAN AND DEVELOPMENT ISSUES**

### **The Humanitarian Situation**

The general humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone is serious and likely to get worse before it gets better. Officially, the humanitarian community is dealing with a caseload of over 400,000 IDPs, but this represents only a small proportion of the total. Estimates of IDPs living on their own or with host families run as high as two million, almost half the population. The National Committee for Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) uses 1.2 million as its planning figure. The caseload for humanitarian agencies has risen since the fighting in Guinea. As of September 2000, an estimated 57,000 Sierra Leonean refugees have returned to the country, although not to their areas of origin. The actual numbers may be much higher.

The organized camps and host communities in which IDPs live are crowded and unsanitary. Morbidity and mortality rates are high, shelter and all other forms of infrastructure are abysmal, food rations are inadequate and many people are now in their tenth year of exile from their homes. A letter (Annex 5) from the Chairman of Nyandema Displaced Camp in Kenema, home to 14,608 people, hints at the horror of people's daily lives as they struggle to survive. UN agencies and NGOs work with the most rudimentary of budgets to provide food, shelter, emergency health services, child protection, tracing assistance and other services.

People desperately want to go home, and as new areas are declared 'safe,' this will begin to present new problems. Once an area is declared safe, it is intended that IDPs will be resettled and their food allowance will stop. The NCRRR and its partner agencies will provide people with transportation and a package of basic household goods including tools, seeds and agricultural equipment.

While the plans make sense, timing, experience to date and numbers conspire against optimism. The suddenness of the current peace process suggests that there will be vast numbers of people on the move over the coming months. The NCRRR had reached only 77 out of 149 chiefdoms at the end of May by which time the planting season had been effectively missed for those who had been displaced. In the immediate future, therefore, the demand for food assistance will remain high regardless of whether people return home or not. If they do, shelter will be one of the most serious problems with an estimated 80 per cent of housing damaged or destroyed in rebel-controlled areas. The Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) estimates

that out of 439,000 farming households nationwide, 331,200 are vulnerable and require emergency agricultural assistance.

One of the biggest short-term requirements will be assistance for the building or rebuilding of health infrastructure. Health services are poor or non-existent in large parts of the country and even hospitals in major towns outside rebel-held areas are very seriously under-equipped. They are largely unable to handle the demands placed on them by the local case-load not to mention the IDP population.

Progress in the peace process may give the impression that the humanitarian situation is easing. With the onset of the rainy season and the possible return of more than 100,000 refugees from Guinea, however, the situation is likely to become much worse through 2001. In fact, the refugee situation in Guinea remains precarious. Côte d'Ivoire has also been affected. In mid-June 2001, some 2,000 new Liberian refugees arrived at Danane near the Liberian border forcing a revision of emergency contingency plans in that part of the region. In the short and medium term, all humanitarian agencies in the region - and their budgets - are likely to be severely tested.

### Development Issues

The roots of Sierra Leone's tragedy lie in poor governance and all of its attendant ills: a disappearing formal economy; joblessness, especially among young people; debilitating poverty; poor education; and a weak health infrastructure. As some selected statistics from the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) HDI shows, Sierra Leone compares very poorly with many of its West African neighbours.

Fig. 1. Selected Regional Development Statistics

Country	Life Expectancy at Birth	Adult Literacy	GDP Per Capita (US\$)	% of population without access to			Position on the UNDP Human Development Index, 2001
				Health Services	Safe Water	Sanitation	
Burkina Faso	46.1	23	965	30	58	63	159
Côte d'Ivoire	47.8	45.7	1,654	40	58	61	144
Guinea	47.1	35.0	1,934	55	54	69	150
Mali	51.2	39.8	753	80	34	94	153
Niger	44.8	15.3	753	70	39	81	161
<b>Sierra Leone</b>	<b>38.3</b>	<b>32.0</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>162*</b>

Notes: Figures are for 1999, taken from UNDP, *Human Development Report 2001*.

The international community has a significant investment in UNAMSIL. It is estimated to be approximately US\$3 million a day. In addition, large expenditures are being made in emergency assistance for refugees and the displaced as well as in the Special Court and the TRC. Most of

\* Sierra Leone ranks last on the United Nations HDI.

this spending necessarily deals with symptoms rather than causes of the problem. It is essential when the conflict ends that adequate resources be available to address the root causes of Sierra Leone's difficulties. Support for good governance and long-term economic development are absolutely essential if the enormous investment in peacekeeping and emergency assistance is to bear fruit. If, after the emergency abates, Sierra Leone becomes a neglected donor backwater once again, the chances of a return to violence will be high.

Sierra Leone has consistently received less development assistance in real terms and on a per capita basis than almost any other country in the region (see Fig. 2, below). Similarly, Sierra Leone has never been a country of concentration for Canadian assistance although connections through the Commonwealth, multilateral institutions and - as noted below - a variety of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) over the years have created a very positive attitude towards Canada in Sierra Leone. There have also been many constructive connections between Canadian and Sierra Leonean academic institutions including the University of Alberta.

These relationships and Canada's heightened support for UN operations and emergency assistance in recent years lay the basis for what could become a stronger commitment to Sierra Leone's long-term development. There are several additional arguments for continuing to build a stronger Canadian development presence:

- the objective needs in Sierra Leone are great. As the country listed in the UN Human Development Index as having the worst quality of life on earth, Sierra Leone should be more than eligible for long-term Canadian development assistance;
- important lessons have been learned in Sierra Leone about past mistakes. There is a better chance today that they will not be repeated than at any time in the past three decades. Many of these lessons have applications elsewhere in Africa;
- because Sierra Leone is so low on the HDI, the payoff on successful development investments will be higher there than in almost any other country in Africa;
- Sierra Leone is the epicentre of a regional problem with manifestations and connections in Guinea, Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso and beyond. With the exception of Liberia, Canada has embassies and bilateral development programs in all of these countries. Sierra Leone is an essential component of a regional approach to sustainable peace and long-term development;
- Canadian mining companies hold important prospecting and mining leases in Sierra Leone's diamond industry and are likely to return when peace prevails. There are other significant opportunities for Canadian investment in Sierra Leone's mining sector;
- Canada, like other diamond producing countries, has a stake in helping to end the 'conflict diamond' phenomenon that has plagued Sierra Leone for almost a decade. Without long-term sustainable employment opportunities that provide an alternative to diamond theft, Sierra Leone's diamond problems will continue and with them the threat they pose to the entire diamond industry;

- a modest bilateral commitment to Sierra Leone would demonstrate Canada's support for the democratic processes and improved governance that are now being put in place. Canada would, in effect, share some of the burden that is currently being borne almost exclusively by the UK, the US and a handful of multilateral agencies. Canadian perspectives would balance others and would demonstrate to Sierra Leoneans that their future is important to more than two or three donor countries.

Fig. 2. Selected Regional Aid Statistics

Country	Total ODA (US\$ million)		ODA Per Capita (US \$)		Net Canadian ODA (C\$ million) 1998-9
	1992	1998	1992	1998	
Burkina Faso	433.8	397.5	45.7	37.0	20.20
Côte d'Ivoire	756.6	798.3	58.9	55.1	106.36
Guinea	448.4	359.2	73.3	50.7	22.63
Mali	431.8	349.3	48.2	33.0	34.60
Niger	365.1	291.4	44.2	28.7	13.10
Sierra Leone	133.4	106.3	30.6	21.9	7.23

Note: Figures on total Official Development Assistance (ODA), ODA per capita and HDI are taken from UNDP, *Human Development Report 2000*. Canadian ODA statistics are from CIDA, 'Statistical Report on ODA, Fiscal Year 1998-9'. CIDA figures include estimates of multilateral assistance.

While Sierra Leone's development needs are both significant and complex, some obvious priorities might include:

- interventions which target young people and which aim to create long-term sustainable livelihoods;
- interventions in the fields of health and education. Reconstruction of the country's health infrastructure will be a major priority for ordinary Sierra Leoneans. Getting children back to school will be equally important. Making up for the missing decade might be addressed by assisting the Ministry of Education's Non Formal Primary Education Program;
- targeted support for improved capacities among local civil society organizations would be another obvious priority.

### *Civil Society*

Civil society in Sierra Leone is broad, many organizations are young and their capacities in many areas of focus are limited. However, civil society showed its formidable strength twice in the past five years. In 1996, civil society organizations, spearheaded by many formal and informal women's organizations, forced the military government to hold public constitutional discussions

which resulted in the election of the first democratic government since the 1960s. When UNAMSIL was in a state of disarray in May 2000, tens of thousands of civilians organized by a number of civil society organizations led a march on Foday Sankoh's house. During the demonstration, guards opened fire killing 17 protesters. The incident led to Sankoh's arrest. It was later discovered that the RUF had concealed weapons throughout Freetown and was planning a coup within days of the events at Sankoh's house. In essence, civil society had unsuspectingly apprehended a coup that would have had very different outcomes for Sierra Leone than those that are now possible.

### *The Canadian Connection*

Canada has supported Sierra Leonean civil society in the pursuit of humanitarian relief, development and good governance objectives. Cause Canada, a Canadian-based relief and development agency, has been active in Sierra Leone since 1989. Focusing on IDP and refugee assistance, the organization has also been involved in projects related to primary health care, immunization, sanitation, potable water, shelter, children affected by war and amputees. Over the last several years, it has received funding from CIDA in excess of \$2 million and has managed the Canada Fund that has assisted a wide range of Sierra Leonean NGO initiatives.

A CIDA-funded initiative through Partnership Africa Canada and the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone has supported more than a dozen small enterprise projects in the Bo area. CIDA's Peacebuilding Fund is supporting the Just Mining Campaign which is a public education and policy development effort being undertaken by several organizations working towards creating greater transparency, probity and developmentally sound investments in the country's mining industry. With support from CIDA, the Canadian Catholic Organization for Development and Peace has been directly supporting several Sierra Leonean NGOs in their humanitarian and development efforts. CIDA is providing a printing press, access to low-cost newsprint and computer equipment and training to a dozen newspapers and publications. CIDA has also provided assistance to the Sierra Leone Web ([www.sierra-leone.org](http://www.sierra-leone.org)) one of the most consistent and objective sources of news for Sierra Leoneans and outsiders on the crisis in Sierra Leone over the past few years.

Many small organizations have been created by Canadians and Canadians of Sierra Leonean descent to assist communities in trouble. These include Nepean Outreach to the World (NOW) and Canadian Friends of Sierra Leone. In addition, Canadian support reaches Sierra Leonean organizations indirectly through the Canadian branches of international NGOs such as CARE, Oxfam and World Vision. Continuing this kind of support, especially where it builds local institutional capacities, will be an important part of improved governance in Sierra Leone.

## POLITICAL AND GOVERNANCE ISSUES

Sierra Leone's crisis is widely acknowledged to be the result of bad governance and poverty, the latter at least in part a product of the former. Between 1968 and 1996, most state institutions, including the multi-party democracy, the judiciary, the formal economy, the armed forces, the police and the independent media, were systematically undermined, compromised or corrupted. The election of a civilian government in 1996, the first in almost three decades, was not without significant violence including many rebel threats against voters wishing to exercise their right to cast a ballot. Sierra Leonean democracy was seriously tested by a 1997 coup, the 1999 invasion of Freetown and an expanding war in the north and east. Still, there remains very strong popular support for the democratic process among average Sierra Leoneans.

### Elections

The mandate of President Tejan Kabbah's government ended early in 2001, but it was widely accepted that free and fair elections could not be held while half of the country remained in rebel hands. The situation was complicated by the fact that the ruling Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) finds its main strength in the south. If the rebel-controlled north and east were unable to vote, the election would undoubtedly be tilted in favour of the SLPP and would be regarded as unfair.

The Constitution of Sierra Leone provides for a six-month extension of a government's mandate under special circumstances with parliamentary approval. Such an extension was granted early in 2001 extending the life of the government until September. The accelerated peace process suggests that large parts of the country may soon be open and that broad-based elections are becoming a more viable proposition. It is very unlikely, however, that these can be held before September, regardless of what happens. A major problem is that the electoral rolls are based on the 1985 census which, given its age and the dislocation that has occurred, provides a poor basis on which to prepare voter lists.

A second issue has to do with whether the proportional representation system used in 1996 should give way to a constituency-based system. Proportional representation made sense when large parts of the country were under rebel control. However, the constituency system anchors members of parliament within a specific geographic area, something many observers believe would promote both more responsiveness to constituents and accountability on the part of elected representatives. There seems to be a general consensus emerging in favour of a return to the constituency system, although a decision had not been made at the time of writing. A final issue relates to the proposed budget for the elections. The elections will need considerable support from the donor community.

The most likely date for elections even with substantial progress on disarmament and demobilization is February 2002. There is a widespread feeling among civil society and some of the political opposition that they should be postponed even further in order to allow more preparation time. There have been calls for a 'government of national unity' - an interim arrangement that might make an extended delay more palatable. This is unlikely to happen, partly because any suggestion that the RUF be brought into government again is unacceptable. In

any case, the GOSL has drawn several members of the opposition into the cabinet and delays beyond the first months of 2002 may compromise its standing in the international community.

### **Special Court**

In August 2000, the UN Security Council mandated the creation of an independent special court “to prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for the commission of crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law as well as crimes under relevant Sierra Leonean law committed within the territory of Sierra Leone.”

The court will cover the period from November 30, 1996, the date of the Abidjan Peace Agreement, forward. The amnesty contained in the Lomé Peace Agreement of July 1997 will apply to violations of Sierra Leonean law, but not to violations of international law. There will be three judges in the trial chamber. The GOSL will appoint one judge and the Secretary-General of the United Nations the other two. The Secretary General will appoint three of the five judges in the appeal chamber and the prosecutor.

The establishment of the court has been delayed by funding problems. Many in the donor community regarded the proposed budget of US\$114 million over three years as unrealistic. More recently, the budget was reduced to US\$56.8 million over three years. A thorny problem in due course will be the threshold decided for prosecutions. Senior government officials including the President have said that they expect perhaps 20 to 30 indictments at most – “the drivers of the train, rather than the passengers.” Whatever the threshold, those guilty or suspected of lesser crimes and misdemeanors will be expected to appear before the TRC.

### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission**

The concept of a TRC was an outcome of the Lomé Peace Agreement and remains one of the few provisions of that agreement still being actively pursued. It is being developed under the auspices of the SRSG and the UN Human Rights Commission. Legislation has been enacted in Sierra Leone and advertisements have been placed for nominees to the Commission. Four of these will be local and three will be international.

The Government places a high priority on the TRC and would like to see it become operational as soon as possible as an instrument of reconciliation and a confidence-building mechanism among various factions in the conflict.

### **Anti-Corruption Commission**

In January 2000, an Anti-Corruption Act was passed establishing an Anti-Corruption Commission as a fully constituted law enforcement agency. Subject to parliamentary approval, the President appoints both the Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner. The current Commissioner is a senior civil servant and the Deputy Commissioner is British. The Act and the Commission are based on successful counterpart operations in Hong Kong and Botswana. The Commission aims to educate and sensitize the public on issues of corruption through the schools and with media campaigns that have already begun. The Commission also filters and investigates

allegations and it is working on the development of preventive measures such as new tendering procedures in high-budget government departments such as education and health.

To date, the ACC has carried out 13 investigations on 51 cases including two high profile cases (a judge and a government minister) that have gone to court. The costs of the expatriate involvement are currently supported by the UK and local costs are met by the GOSL. Additional support will be required when the ACC begins to operate at full potential.

### **The Sierra Leone Police**

Like the army, the SLP was seriously compromised over the years by corruption and mismanagement. In more recent times, its ranks were depleted by murderous RUF/AFRC attacks on police posts throughout the country that systematically destroyed the police infrastructure, records and communications. The current challenge is a growing crime wave that is likely to increase with the demobilization of combatants.

The CPTF has been working to restructure and rebuild the SLP since 1998. The program has received good political support from the highest levels of government. One of the first tasks has been to root out corruption and several major enquiries were coming to a conclusion at the time of writing. A number of senior officers have been removed or retired and a major effort has gone into training and a complete revision of rules, regulations and procedures. National standards and guidelines on discipline, rank and structure, and programs in areas such as spousal and child abuse, are being instituted. Equipment, including radios, motorcycles, Land Rovers, trucks, weapons and uniforms have been provided.

Without the establishment of a humane law and order system, all the other investments in peace will be compromised. Like the army, rebuilding the police is seen as a three to five year project. The UK is currently funding initiatives in this area with a budget of £13 million. However, this does not include buildings, police stations, holding cells or processing centres, all of which are either in bad condition or nonexistent. As well, there are no separate facilities for young offenders. Particular mention should be made of the holding cells in the main Freetown Police Station. Because of crowding and poor sanitation, those detained have had and are having their basic human rights violated.

Drugs have become a serious problem in Sierra Leone. In 2000, Canada provided a retired specialist to the Commonwealth program for the development of a national drug strategy. Implementation of this project appears to have stalled for budgetary reasons at the Canadian end. However, it is vital the project be re-started and completed. The program also needs lower ranking international serving officers to provide nuts and bolts training. Assistance with criminal investigations and forensic science is also required.

## REGIONAL ISSUES AND GENERAL ISSUES

This report has touched frequently on the regional nature of the problems in West Africa. Several of the recommendations have a regional dimension to them, although there are additional areas where Canada can play a role. One has to do with humanitarian problems in Guinea and Liberia. Another has to do with the regional nature of the 'conflict diamond' issue and Canada's unique position as an important newcomer to the ranks of diamond producing countries. A third area relates to the destabilizing role of Liberia. The UN Panel of Experts, mandated by the Security Council Sanctions Committee on Liberia, continues its work on the relationship between weapons and the exploitation of natural resources including diamonds and timber. However, only the recommendations regarding Liberia in its December 2000 report\* have been acted upon so far.

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\* The Panel of Experts, at that time, was mandated by the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee on Sierra Leone.

## Recommendations:

### Security

- 1 Security remains the number one priority in Sierra Leone. In the short and medium term, outsiders can provide it. But in the long run, the GOSL must be able to maintain law and order - and provide justice - with its own resources. Given the deterioration of the past 40 years, this cannot be done quickly. Where assistance in the security sector is concerned, it is important within Sierra Leone and beyond that there be visible international support. Canada should assist by:
  - continuing to provide UNAMSIL matériel, political and financial support; and,
  - continuing to support the IMATT at current or higher levels including the provision of civilian and military specialists.
- 2 Canada provided financial assistance to the DDR process in 1999. At this critical point in the conflict, Canada should re-commit to providing generous support for the DDR program. Emphasis should be placed on devoting urgent attention to the problems of timing, management and money. The involvement of civil society is important as is a willingness to experiment so that "best practices" can be replicated elsewhere.
- 3 Canada should work with others to ensure that the Special Court has the continuing resources and the political support to carry out fully its investigations of those who bear the greatest responsibility for the crimes committed in Sierra Leone including those at the very top of the chain of command. The Statute of the Special Court allows any person to be prosecuted who bears the "greatest responsibility" including leaders who have prolonged the conflict and threatened the implementation of the peace process such as Liberian President Charles Taylor.
- 4 Canada should continue to work within the UN to press the Security Council to give the Special Court limited Chapter VII powers. It is absolutely essential to allow the Court to make a binding request to another country for the surrender of an accused. If the Security Council does not provide this power, the international community is inviting those who fear being indicted by the Court to simply flee into neighbouring countries.
- 5 Canada and Sierra Leone are important actors in the 'Kimberley Process' aimed at developing an international certification system for rough diamonds. Canada should continue to encourage the early development of a certification system to prevent Canadian traffic in conflict diamonds and begin the process of developing national legislation.
- 6 Canada should encourage a discussion on the issue of diamond area security in Sierra Leone at the meetings of the Kimberley Process that will be held during the second half of 2001 and at the UN. The objective should be the development of a long-term security policy for consideration by the GOSL, the UN, the diamond industry at large and interested donor agencies.

## Humanitarian/Development

- 7 Canada should continue to provide short-term humanitarian assistance and should carefully monitor the funding available to multilateral agencies and NGOs providing essential support to IDPs and refugees. As the most vulnerable populations, providing for their sustenance and their eventual return home is essential. Shortfalls in meeting appeals will have a very real and direct impact on the survival and well being of thousands of women, men and children.
- 8 Canada should consider providing concentrated support to at least one regional medical facility outside Freetown as part of Sierra Leone's national reconstruction effort. Both the Bo Hospital and Kenema hospitals, as examples, are seriously under-equipped and an injection of assistance to facilities such as these would enable local medical practitioners to provide significantly improved curative and preventive health care in areas where the needs of both the local populations and IDP's are very significant.
- 9 Canada should substantially increase its commitment to Sierra Leone and make a longer-term bilateral development commitment more in line with other Canadian aid programs in the region. Canada should establish an aid office in Freetown similar to those established in Nepal, Malawi, Sudan and Mozambique in recent years. This could be a pilot effort for an initial period of three to five years to assist with current Canadian humanitarian, governance and development initiatives and to create and manage a limited portfolio of bilateral development assistance projects.
- 10 Canada should establish a special fund similar to those developed by CIDA in the Philippines, Mozambique and Indonesia. It could be established with generous matching criteria in an effort to encourage Canadian civil society organizations, NGOs and the private sector to become more involved in Sierra Leone. The modalities would have to be developed by CIDA in consultation with a range of potential partner organizations. However, such a fund might contain \$2 million for an initial period of two years to be replenished based upon the effectiveness of previous projects. It could be divided into three categories:
  - a category for 18-24 months dealing with humanitarian and reconstruction assistance;
  - a category for longer-term development initiatives with a focus on local capacity building, investments in the geographic areas most devastated by the war and a sector focus on children (child rights, former child combatants, amputees), health, education and good governance; and,
  - a category aimed at encouraging exploratory visits by responsible Canadian businesses that can assist in the development or redevelopment of key sectors of the economy. The mining sector is an obvious possibility, but fisheries and offshore oil exploration are others.\*

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\* It should be noted that the GOSL is currently discussing offshore oil exploration. In our meeting, President Kabbah specifically asked for Canadian assistance in exploring options that would be most developmentally beneficial to Sierra Leone. Canada should consider responding to this request as soon as possible. Assistance could include information on comparative models, negotiating positions, royalty structures, environmental regulations and

## **Governance/Political**

- 11 Canada should provide financial support for the upcoming national elections in Sierra Leone to ensure that they are free, fair and well managed.
- 12 Canada should respond positively to requests for assistance to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
- 13 Canada should be prepared to entertain requests for support from the Anti-Corruption Commission. The development of working relations with Canadian law enforcement agencies would be helpful and there may be mutually beneficial links to be made on issues related to the illicit diamond trade. Support for improved capacity within the judicial system should also be considered positively.
- 14 Canada should renew and enhance its support to the Commonwealth Police Task Force. Specifically, there is a need to complete work that was begun on the National Drug Strategy. However, there is also a need for officers to conduct basic training and assistance with criminal investigations and forensic science. Should resources allow, consideration should be given to having senior Sierra Leonean officers considered for officer training in Canada.

## **Regional/General Issues**

- 15 Canada should actively pursue among Security Council members the question of Liberian timber exports as a matter of great urgency with a view to having the Council revisit the proposal to implement an embargo on timber exports from Liberia.
- 16 Canada should raise the issue of Liberia's 'off-budget' income and expenditure at the highest levels of the World Bank and the IMF with a view to achieving much greater transparency on the country's imports and exports and an end to government-led economic malpractice.
- 17 Canada should declare that any country that violates UN sanctions should be made immediately ineligible for Canadian bilateral assistance. In this context, Canada should review its development assistance program in Burkina Faso and encourage ECOWAS countries to address regional sanction busting in a more forthright manner.
- 18 Canada should urge the United Nations to conduct an internal investigation and audit related to the administration of UN funds and the management of the UNAMSIL operation.
- 19 Once peace has been clearly established, Canada should call for and support an international 'lessons learned' exercise on Sierra Leone that could be applied to conflict prevention in other parts of the world, particularly Africa. This could take the form of an

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long-term policy development.

International Commission of Inquiry that would investigate the causes of the conflict, the role of resources, the trade in small arms, the impact on civilians, various peace efforts as well as the response of the international community.

- 20 Canada should support humanitarian efforts in Guinea and, if possible, assist in reconstruction efforts in the Guékédou Prefecture.
- 21 Canada should assist the efforts of international humanitarian agencies working in Liberia.
- 22 Canada should support the Chairman of the UN Security Council Sierra Leone Sanctions Committee in working on recommendations in the December 2000 Report of the Panel of Experts that go beyond Liberia; namely:
  - the need for improved regional facilities for surveillance and security of the airways; and,
  - the need for a ban on diamond exports from the Gambia, a non-diamondiferous country.
- 23 Canada should post a Canadian Forces attaché to the Canadian mission in Nigeria to help monitor security issues within the region.
- 24 Canada should help sponsor an international conference for parliamentarians on conflict in the West African sub-region. The purpose of the conference would be to raise the profile of the Sierra Leonean conflict among potential donor countries (Canada, the United States, the European Union, Japan, Australia) and familiarize elected representatives with the current security, humanitarian and political situation. GOSL representatives, NGO's and UN officials could also be invited to discuss particular issues such as the trade in small arms, child soldiers, human rights, governance and the connection between resources and conflict. In March 2000, Parliamentarians for Global Action held a similar conference that was quite successful on the conflict in the Great Lakes Region in Lusaka, Zambia.

## ANNEXES

1. Historical Background to the Sierra Leone Crisis
2. Text of the May 15, 2001 GOSL-RUF Agreement
3. Text of the May 15, 2001 RUF-CDF Agreement
4. Leonid Minin, Aircraft and Arms in West Africa
5. Letter from Chairman of Nyandema IDP Camp in Kenema
6. List of Meetings
7. Bibliography

## ANNEX 1

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND TO THE SIERRA LEONE CONFLICT

#### Introduction

The Republic of Sierra Leone covers an area of 72,000 square kilometres. Roughly the size of New Brunswick, it has a population of about 4.2 million people.

#### Sierra Leone before Independence

Sierra Leone has two major language groups – the Mende and the “Mel,” although there are as many as seven or eight sub sets of these languages. With the exception of the Limba and the Sherbro, most of today’s ethnic groups entered the country after 1400 as the result of disturbances elsewhere in the region. The first European visitors were the Portuguese who gave the country its name – “Lion Mountain” – after the shape of the mountains on the Freetown peninsula.

In 1787, 356 “Black Poor” and 100 whites left Britain to establish a colony in Sierra Leone, although few survived their first two years. In 1792, 1,200 freed slaves, many of them refugees from the American War of Independence, arrived from Halifax and established a permanent settlement they called “Freetown.” Today their descendants are still sometimes referred to as “Nova Scotians.” The settlers became known as Creoles over time developing their own language based on English, “Krio.” The Sierra Leone Company, which managed the colony in its first years, was dissolved in 1808 and Sierra Leone became a Crown Colony. It was thus the first modern political state in sub-Saharan Africa.

British colonial authorities were slow to extend their political influence into the interior and it was not until 1896 that a protectorate was declared over the territory that encompasses modern day Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone boasted the first university in sub-Saharan Africa – Fourah Bay College, founded in 1827 – but health and education services were left largely to missionaries. Between 1895 and 1908, a narrow gauge railway was built between Freetown and eastern parts of the country. During World War II, roads were constructed to the provinces. In 1939, the government operated only three of the country’s twelve secondary schools.

In the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, palm kernels became the chief export crop. Diamonds, discovered in the eastern Kono District in 1930, had become the largest export earner by 1938. In 1933, an iron mine was opened at Marampa in Port Loko District earning almost 30% of the colony’s export revenue by 1938. These two commodities, iron and diamonds, were instrumental in bringing Sierra Leoneans outside of Freetown into the modern cash economy. Between 1951 and 1961, power gradually devolved from British officials to elected Sierra Leoneans who took responsibility for some ministries in 1953 and for all but external affairs and defence in 1958. A medical doctor, Sir Milton Margai, became Chief Minister in 1954, Premier in 1958, and upon independence in 1961, Prime Minister.

## **The Post Independence Years: 1961-8**

The years immediately before and after independence were marked by optimism and high expectations. Roads were built, clinics and hospitals opened, and everywhere new schools were springing up. Primary school enrolment tripled between 1948 and 1958, and in the Northern Province, the number of children in primary school rose from 3,291 in 1948 to 24,034 in 1963.

Milton Margai was the first leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) formed in 1951. A close early colleague was Siaka Stevens, who had been General Secretary of the Mineworkers Union at Marampa in the 1940s and was later Minister for Mines and Labour. Shortly before independence, Stevens broke with Margai and formed a new party, the All Peoples Congress (APC). Milton Margai died only three years after independence and was succeeded by his brother, Albert. Within two years, beset by charges of corruption and mismanagement, Albert Margai was beginning to talk about creating a one-party state.

The general elections of 1967 were pivotal. Although he had by then disavowed the idea of a one-party state, Albert Margai introduced proposals for a new republican constitution and was widely mistrusted. He charged that an army coup was in the making, and this served as grounds for a purge of the officer corps, creating factions within the military. Registration and balloting in the March 1967 general election were badly mismanaged and there were widespread rumours of vote rigging and corruption. Unofficial results gave the APC 32 seats, the SLPP 28 and independents six. Four of the independents said they would support an APC government. The Governor General, therefore, asked Siaka Stevens to form a new government.

On the same day, however, Army commander David Lansana declared martial law and arrested both the Governor General and Stevens on the constitutional grounds that all election results had not been tallied. Three days later, when it became apparent that his intention was to restore Margai, junior officers arrested him and established a military government known as the National Reformation Council (NRC). A year later, non-commissioned officers overthrew the NRC and invited Siaka Stevens then in exile in Guinea to return and form a government.

## **The Stevens Years: 1968-85**

Until 1968, politics in Sierra Leone were marked by two cleavages. The first, which had largely played itself out by the late 1950s, was between the Freetown Creoles, who had dominated economic and political life in the colony's first 150 years, and people in the much more populous and less developed protectorate. The second political cleavage was between the northern part of the country and the more developed south, which was largely Mende-speaking. The SLPP had been strongly supported by the Mende, one of the reasons that Stevens – a Limba from the north – had formed his own party, appealing to anti-Mende sentiment and to social discontent among a growing number of unemployed urban youth.

Within two months of assuming office, Stevens purged the army of its senior Mende officers, placing northerners in charge. He also closed the railway on economic grounds although many believed this was an effort to cut off parts of the country that had voted against the APC. Following an abortive coup attempt in 1971, Stevens established an Internal Security Unit (ISU). This was a brutal, personally managed paramilitary force made up of young men recruited largely from the slums of Freetown. The 1973 general elections were marked by violence and vote rigging, but the elections of 1977 were much worse with armed ISU gangs disrupting the

process throughout the country and violently suppressing student demonstrations. A year later, a referendum on the establishment of a one-party state passed with 97% of the voters expressing their support.

The Stevens years were marked by a systematic subversion of the formal state apparatus and by the growth of a large informal economy much of it based on illicit diamond trade. In 1933, the Sierra Leone Selection Trust Ltd. (SLST) had been given an exclusive 99-year prospecting and mining lease over the entire country. In 1955, the tax rate rose to 60% and SLST relinquished its rights to all but 450 square miles of territory. Because the Kono deposits are alluvial, heavy equipment – although more efficient than individual digging – is unnecessary. During the 1930s and 1940s, SLST was largely able to control the mining areas, but a diamond rush in the 1950s brought an influx of illicit diggers known as “san san boys” into the area. Between 1953 and 1957, the number of illicit diggers grew from 5,000 to as many as 70,000. Despite an SLST paramilitary force with helicopter support, violence and criminal anarchy became the dominant characteristic of the district with a vast network of smugglers channelling diamonds to Liberia where taxes for buyers were lower and profits higher.

By the late 1970s, the SLST had been disbanded and the diamond trade nationalized. Over the years, Siaka Stevens allied himself with a group of powerful Lebanese merchants who controlled some of the official diamond trade, much of the unofficial trade and the trade in virtually all other essential imports and exports. In the ensuing years, diamonds continued to attract the attention of young Sierra Leonean diggers, government officials, rebel forces and their Liberian backers and a range of companies that ignored or sought to overcome the danger associated with the trade. In the mid 1980s, the country was descending into insolvency. Growing foreign debt, rampant inflation, currency devaluation, budget deficits, corruption and declining exports led to chronic fuel, power and food shortages. Youth unemployment grew along with student radicalism at Fourah Bay University. In 1985, a year marked by violent labour and student unrest, Stevens – then over 80 – retired. He handed over power to Joseph Momoh, former head of the army.

### **The Momoh Years: 1985-92**

Joseph Momoh came to power on a wave of popular enthusiasm. It was hoped that he might be able to revive the collapsing state and revitalize the economy with his “Constructive Nationalism.” Corruption and indiscipline continued, however, with high inflation, repeated devaluations, blackouts and shortages of food and fuel. Official diamond exports fell from two million carats in 1970 to 48,000 in 1988 – a result of mismanagement and corruption rather than declining mineral resources.

During the Momoh years, there were two trends largely unnoticed at the time that would have important ramifications later. One was the continued and dramatic growth in the number of unemployed and disaffected youth. They drifted from the countryside in one of two directions: either to Freetown and other urban centres or to the diamond fields of Kono. In either case, they became socialized into a climate of violence, drugs and crime. The other trend was a growth in student militants. During the second half of the 1980s, many university students had become radicalised in part by the violence of the government’s suppression of their demonstrations and in part by exposure to new ideas, including the thoughts of Col. Qaddafi, as expressed in

*The Green Book.*

Initially, Libyan sponsorship of Sierra Leonean student groups and student trips to Libya was open, but following the violent expulsion of 41 university students with alleged Libyan links in 1985, *The Green Book* and its author took on more symbolic importance and the tangible connection went underground. Between 1987 and 1988, between twenty-five and fifty Sierra Leoneans were taken to Libya for training in the "art of revolution." (Gberie) Among the students was a functional illiterate who had become part of a "revolutionary cell" in Kono. Foday Sankoh was a grey-haired former army corporal and photographer who had been jailed for seven years for alleged implication in the 1971 coup plot against Siaka Stevens. Ironically, only three of those trained in Libya showed up later in the RUF and the only survivor after a year or so was Foday Sankoh. (Gberie)

In the late 1980s, events were taking place in Liberia that would soon have a profound effect on Sierra Leone. At the end of 1989, Charles Taylor launched an attack on Samuel Doe's government with a small band of men. Several of them, including Taylor himself, had Libyan training and connections. Taylor also received support from the Ivory Coast and Burkina Faso in part through political, family and personal relationships that some have described as "like the dynastic marriages and alliance of European princes of old." (Ellis) Burkinabe support for Taylor was later extended to Foday Sankoh and the RUF.

Operating initially out of the Ivory Coast, Taylor's rebellion quickly took on ethnic overtones and within a year had become a major humanitarian disaster. In 1990, the ECOWAS put together an intervention force made up of troops from Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Guinea, Ghana and the Gambia. Known as ECOMOG, it thwarted Taylor's drive to an early military victory. Momoh had earlier been refused support to Taylor and was briefly arrested in Freetown using a Burkinabe passport. That, and the fact that ECOMOG used Freetown as a staging ground for operations in Liberia, led Taylor to speak frequently during 1990 and 1991 of plans to attack Sierra Leone.

By 1991, the Momoh regime was in serious difficulty. Beset by a crumbling economy, growing popular agitation and factional turmoil within the government, Momoh announced a return to multi-party politics and general elections were planned for 1992. Before the elections could be held, however, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked. With the assistance of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), Foday Sankoh and a small band of men crossed from Liberia into Sierra Leone's Eastern Province in March 1991 with the express aim of ending the APC's 24 year grip on power. Raids on several border towns over the next few days demonstrated the weakness of the Sierra Leone military and within a month most of Kailahun District was under rebel control.

A humanitarian crisis quickly resulted from the RUF's tactics that involved brutal attacks on unarmed civilians and children. Attempting to copy the ethnic incitement that had served Charles Taylor well in Liberia, the RUF at first targeted Fula and Madingo traders murdering more than 100 in its first two months of operations. It also targeted Lebanese traders beheading five in Bo District. The atrocities never sparked an ethnic divide, but they created alarm among the civilian population and caused rapid and widespread displacement. Panicked, President Momoh quickly

doubled the size of the army from 3,000 men to almost 6,000, drawing most of his new recruits from vagrants in Freetown – the “rural...unemployed, a fair number of hooligans, drug addicts and thieves” – as his foreign minister at the time later put it.

Further confusion was added to the mix by the formation in Sierra Leone of the ULIMO, a coalition of anti-Taylor Liberians who, with GOSL support, initially fought both the RUF and Taylor’s NPFL. Because of corruption and mismanagement, Sierra Leone’s front line troops were badly underpaid and demoralized. In April 1992, a group from the eastern front travelled to Freetown to protest their situation. Within a day, the mutiny became a coup and Joseph Momoh fled to Guinea. A military junta, the NPRC, was formed with a 29-year-old army paymaster, Capt. Valentine Strasser, as Chairman.

### **The NPRC Regime: 1992-6**

Initially, the NPRC was enormously popular especially among Sierra Leone’s youth. The leadership itself was young and many had grown up in the slums of Freetown. Young people in Freetown embarked on a voluntary cleanup and beautification campaign and a new “youth volunteer” force was recruited to prosecute the war. Many of the newcomers were not volunteers, however, and one estimate places the number of child soldiers under the age of 15 at more than a thousand by 1993. Soon the NPRC came to resemble the regime it had ousted.

During 1992 and 1993 the fortunes of the RUF fluctuated. On occasion, they overran the diamond areas were pushed back and retook the area again. Civilians accused by the government of collaboration were arrested and some were executed. But the penalty for not collaborating with the RUF was as severe or worse. The RUF had two major calling cards: dead civilians and hundreds, possibly thousands, of living civilians with their hands, feet, ears or genitals crudely amputated. The latter served as living and constant warnings to anyone in their path and rumours of an impending RUF attack became enough to clear entire towns and villages.

Any force with access to the diamond areas also had access to diamonds and it is likely that all parties on occasion took advantage of whatever was available. It gradually became unclear who was responsible for a particular ambush or for starting a rumour that cleared the way for a looting spree. In some cases, attacks were carried out by soldiers and blamed on the RUF. Soldiers by day and rebels by night, they became known as “sobels.” The RUF added to the sobel story by carrying out raids in stolen army uniforms.

Towards the end of 1992, a new force, the “kamajors, entered the picture.” *Kamajor* (or ‘*kamajoh*’) is a Mende word that means hunter. In traditional Mende society, the hunter was a guardian of society and part of a mystical, “invincible” warrior cult. Joined by a number of educated individuals and retired military personnel, the Kamajors – also known as the CDF – soon became a force to contend with, fighting back not only against the RUF, but against the excesses of the NPRC government. By 1995, however, the military situation had become desperate with hit and run raids throughout the country giving the RUF an appearance of great strength. Early in the year, the SIEROMCO bauxite mine and the Sierra Rutile titanium mines, the country’s last remaining economic assets, were overrun by the RUF with the alleged assistance of soldiers commanded by Major Johnny Paul Koroma.

Until about 1995, it was unclear what the RUF stood for, who Foday Sankoh was and what he wanted. Although he had given the occasional BBC radiotelephone interview, it was not until the 1995 appearance of the RUF's *Footpaths to Democracy: Toward a New Sierra Leone*, that any consistent ideals or purpose were enunciated. *Footpaths* was allegedly drafted by an employee of the British NGO, International Alert and, according to Sierra Leonean writer Ibrahim Abdullah, it contains words and phrases lifted directly from Mao Zedong, Amilcar Cabral and Frantz Fanon. (Abdullah)

While it is true that the RUF is made up of disaffected youth, a very high proportion of them were already alienated and dangerous before the RUF opportunity arose. Only a tiny fraction of Sierra Leonean youth joined the RUF of their own volition. The main RUF recruits have been drawn from the ranks of *san san* boys and from the same Freetown slums where Siaka Stevens recruited his brutal ISU and where Joseph Momoh found the material to double his army. Others were children who were kidnapped, drugged and forced to commit atrocities. The "radical intellectual" roots of the RUF were extinguished in its first year of operation and its brutal attacks on civilians stand in contradiction to its ostensible aim of creating a "revolutionary egalitarian system." (Bangura, Abdullah, Adbullah & Muana)

By early 1995, the RUF was only miles from Freetown as much a result of the army's incompetence as of RUF prowess. The RUF was estimated by some to have an overall strength of three to four thousand with a hard core of only five to six hundred soldiers. (Douglas) Part of the NPRC problem was its calculation that at least 20% of its own troops were disloyal. In May 1995, the NPRC turned to Executive Outcomes (EO), a South African security firm that had successfully repelled UNITA rebels on behalf of the Angolan government. Anthony Buckingham, a Director of Branch Energy and Heritage Gas and Oil, introduced the NPRC to EO. Buckingham also negotiated the contract with EO and allegedly made advance payments to EO in return for government concessions related to Sierra Rutile and the diamond areas.

The first EO contingent arrived in Sierra Leone in May 1995. Within ten days of their operational start-up, they had pushed the RUF back from Freetown and within a month had cleared the diamond areas. Part of their success was due to their own combat skills, although they never totalled more than 200 men in all. They brought with them excellent air support, first-rate communications equipment and good trainers working with a small group of Sierra Leonean soldiers and later with Kamajors, who were by then 2,000 - 3,000 strong. By early 1996, the RUF had been seriously damaged. They had been removed from the diamond areas that had helped to finance their military efforts.

Strasser's NPRC government, under strong pressure from both the public and donor agencies to return Sierra Leone to civilian rule, announced that elections would be held in February 1996. In January, however, Brig. Julius Maada Bio, Strasser's deputy, removed him from office. Thought to be an attempt to prolong the military government, public pressure to hold elections mounted. Hard-pressed by continuing EO attacks, the RUF announced a cease-fire and sought unconditional peace talks with Bio's government. These began in Abidjan only a few days before the elections were held. After two rounds of voting, the SLPP formed a government with Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, a former UNDP official, sworn in as president.

## November 1996 to Lomé

The peace talks in Abidjan went on for almost nine months during which RUF attacks resumed, only to be repulsed with devastating effect by EO and Kamajor forces. When Foday Sankoh and the GOSL signed a peace agreement at the end of November 1996, it looked as though the RUF was a spent force. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that President Kabbah agreed to the expulsion of Executive Outcomes within five weeks of signing the agreement (although LifeGuard, an EO offshoot remained behind to protect the diamond areas). It is also not surprising, in view of subsequent events, that Foday Sankoh refused to sanction a 720-member UN peacekeeping force.

The RUF gained most from the peace agreement. It was given an on-going political role and legitimacy and was absolved of responsibility for its past activities. More importantly, it gained militarily in the sense that the government was left exposed with little reliable security beyond the Kamajors and a new contingent of Nigerian troops sent to bolster the ECOMOG force. RUF attacks continued in part because of disagreement in the leadership over the peace agreement. Meanwhile, in Freetown, a number of army officers were arrested in a suspected coup plot.

In May 1997, a group of soldiers attacked the central jail releasing the coup plotters and an estimated 600 criminals. President Kabbah fled and Major Johnny Paul Koroma, freed in the prison break, became head of the AFRC. The AFRC invited the RUF to join them declaring the war to be over. The period of joint AFRC-RUF rule was characterized by a complete breakdown of law and order, and by a collapse of the formal economy. Rape and looting became the order of the day and schools, banks, commercial services and government offices ceased to function. As Amnesty International said, "*The rule of law completely collapsed and violence engulfed the country,*" with Kabbah allies, students and journalists targeted for torture, rape and murder.

During this period, exiled President Kabbah made contact with a British security firm, Sandline International, which had connections with Executive Outcomes, Branch Energy and Diamond Works, a company traded on the Vancouver Stock Market. The apparent aim was to obtain Sandline assistance in ousting the AFRC and liberating the diamond areas. A Vancouver-based Indian national, Rakesh Saxena reportedly provided the financing. In February 1998, 28 tons of small arms arrived in Sierra Leone as a part of this deal and was impounded by ECOMOG as a contravention of a UN arms embargo. Later that month, ECOMOG forced the AFRC/RUF out of Freetown in a fierce battle that took the lives of many civilians. By then, estimates of the number of dead in the rebel war ranged upward from 50,000. At different times in the previous six years, estimates of the number displaced people were as high as 2.5 million – more than half of the entire population.

Restored to office, President Kabbah took steps to begin demobilizing the entire army. Courts martial were held and 24 convicted military personnel were executed. Between August and November 1998, several civilian trials were held. A total of 47 individuals were convicted of treason and other charges associated with the AFRC/RUF administration and sentenced to death. Foday Sankoh, who had been arrested in Nigeria and returned to Sierra Leone, was also tried, found guilty and sentenced to death. During this period, the AFRC/RUF forces conducted a violent rampage throughout the country. They were chased from one place to another by

ECOMOG forces without registering any great successes. In a November 1998 report, Amnesty International said, *"Since their removal from power, the AFRC and RUF have wreaked a campaign of terror against unarmed civilians and human rights abuses have reached unprecedented levels. Several thousand civilians have been brutally killed and mutilated. Hundreds of others have been abducted from their villages and forced to join their attackers."* The RUF referred to this period as "Operation No Living Thing."

With Foday Sankoh and other AFRC/RUF defendants appealing their convictions, the RUF again appeared at the gates to Freetown in January 1999, catching both the government and ECOMOG off guard. Using women and children as human shields, some RUF and AFRC fighters were able to bypass ECOMOG troops and join comrades who had already infiltrated the city. In the fighting that ensued, an estimated five thousand people died including cabinet ministers, journalists and lawyers who were specifically targeted. Before the rebels were ejected from Freetown, large parts of the city were burned and 3,000 children were abducted as they retreated. While many of the convicted AFRC/RUF collaborators were freed, Foday Sankoh remained in government custody. RUF commander Sam Bockarie, a former *san san boy*, said at the end of January: *"No government can succeed in this country if it doesn't include Foday Sankoh."* Unless the RUF was given a share of power, he said, *"No government can rule. We'll make the country ungovernable."* (Sierra Leone News)

Up to this point and afterwards, the RUF had defied all definitions and typologies of guerrilla movements. Abdullah and Muana argue that the RUF is neither a separatist uprising rooted in a specific demand, as in the case of Eritrea, nor a reformist movement with a radical agenda superior to the regime it sought to overthrow. Neither does it possess the kind of leadership that would be necessary to designate it as warlord insurgency. The RUF is a peculiar guerrilla movement without any significant national following or ethnic support. Perhaps because of its social base and its lack of an "emancipation" programme to garner support from social groups, it has remained a bandit organization solely driven by survivalists' needs of its predominantly uneducated and alienated battle front and battle group commanders. Neither the peasantry, the natural ally of most revolutionary movements, nor the students, amongst whose ranks the RUF-to-be originated lent any support to the organization during the ten years of fighting.

### **Lomé to May 2001**

In February 1999, Nigeria returned to civilian rule with the election of retired General Olusegun Obasanjo who had campaigned on a promise to take Nigeria's troops out of Sierra Leone. With its back to the wall militarily, the Government of Sierra Leone agreed to peace talks with the RUF. Foday Sankoh was allowed to go to Lomé to meet with his commanders and to begin negotiations. A cease-fire was agreed and with the assistance of US envoy Jesse Jackson and others, a new peace agreement was signed on July 7. The Lomé Peace Agreement gave a blanket amnesty to all combatants including RUF leaders who had already been tried and found guilty. In addition, the RUF was given four cabinet posts and Foday Sankoh was made the Chairman of a Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources including diamonds. The RUF was to become a political party and was expected to contest the forthcoming national elections to be held in 2001.

Although the UN Security Council called the agreement “a significant achievement for all concerned and a historic turning point for Sierra Leone and its people,” many had doubts. The blanket amnesty was condemned by major human rights organizations and the UN’s Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, expressed grave reservations. On an earlier visit to Sierra Leone, she had called for a truth and reconciliation commission and in a final caveat to the Lomé Agreement, UN Special Envoy Francis Okelo noted that the UN did not acknowledge application of the amnesty to war crimes, crimes against humanity and acts of genocide.

As part of the agreement, a neutral peacekeeping force was to be fielded and in October, the Security Council established a 6,000-member UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. Through the latter half of the year, RUF cease-fire violations continued. Perhaps some were the result of a breakdown between Foday Sankoh and his chief military leader, Sam Bockarie, who eventually fled to Liberia after a firefight in which several RUF soldiers were killed.

By December, UNAMSIL troops from India, Kenya, Jordan, Zambia and Bangladesh had begun to arrive and in February, the Security Council agreed to increase their number to 11,000. The RUF refused to cede any of the territory it held and prevented UNAMSIL from gaining access to the diamond areas. The disarmament process moved at a snail’s pace and there were international reports of new weapons shipments to Liberia via Burkina Faso. In May, in the same week that the final ECOMOG contingents left Sierra Leone, the RUF surrounded, disarmed and abducted approximately 500 UNAMSIL troops killing several in the process. In Freetown, a public demonstration outside a Foday Sankoh’s house resulted in the death of 17 people. Sankoh was subsequently arrested and with UNAMSIL in disarray, a small British force was dispatched to Freetown to bolster confidence.

With the intervention of Liberian President Charles Taylor, the UNAMSIL troops were released in June and the UN began a series of new initiatives. A ban was placed on the export of all Sierra Leone diamonds until an acceptable certification process could be established (this was done in October). The Security Council appointed a Panel of Experts to look into the connection between the illicit diamond trade and the RUF’s access to weapons and a resolution was passed creating a Special Court to try those “who bear the greatest responsibility” for crimes committed during the war. A rump faction of the AFRC known as the “West Side Boys” kidnapped a number of British soldiers holding them for ransom. A dramatic British rescue operation not only released the prisoners, it put an end to the West Side Boys and demonstrated British resolve to stay in Sierra Leone as a backup force to both UNAMSIL and the new Sierra Leone Army, which Britain now began to recruit, train and equip in earnest.

A dispute between UNAMSIL’s Indian Commanding Officer and Nigerian officers at this time led to a phased withdrawal of the Indian and Jordanian contingents from UNAMSIL replaced the following year by troops from Pakistan and Nepal. In September 2000, the RUF began precipitous and unprovoked attacks against Guinean villages in the Forecariah region creating havoc among Sierra Leone refugees in the area. This may have been a diversionary tactic. Not long afterwards, in January 2001, fighting in the Kono district of Sierra Leone and Lofa County in Liberia spilled over into the ‘forest region’ of Guinea. Armed attacks on Macenta and Guékédou, already home to tens of thousands of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees, caused great panic and destruction and led to the further displacement of thousands.

While the damage in Guinea was considerable, the GAF may well have dealt the invaders a serious blow. The RUF/Liberian endeavour suffered a further setback with the tabling of the UN Expert Panel Report on Sierra Leone in December 2000. It provided details of RUF traffic in diamonds through Liberia and on the illegal shipment of arms to Liberia for onward transmission to the RUF in Sierra Leone. It recommended targetted sanctions on Liberia and, despite vociferous Liberian denials of any support for the RUF, some of these sanctions came into force on May 7, 2001. Among them, a tougher ban on weapons shipments to Liberia, a global ban on trade in so-called Liberian diamonds and an international travel ban applied to the Liberian cabinet, senior officials and their families. The UN Panel was reappointed in March for a further six months.

Despite their incursions into Guinea, the RUF had been observing a cease-fire in Sierra Leone since November 2000. This set the stage for a series of discussions in Abuja between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. Omrie Golley, a lawyer who had previously acted as the RUF spokesman in Abidjan and Lomé and who had been fired by Sankoh, returned to the scene and represented the RUF in these talks. On May 15, 2001, an agreement to "the cessation of all hostilities" was signed between Chief Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defence on behalf of the CDF and by Omrie Golley, Chairman of the Political and Peace Council on behalf of the RUF.

A communiqué issued the same day by UNAMSIL and the RUF agreed on an immediate recommencement of the DDR program, the simultaneous disarmament of the CDF and the RUF, the release by the RUF of women and children and a process of monitoring, sensitisation and reconciliation. It was agreed that UNAMSIL would ensure observance of the undertakings "throughout the country." No conditions were placed on the SLA, UNAMSIL or British forces operating in Sierra Leone. The RUF expressed its intention to contest the forthcoming elections. For its part, the GOSL agreed "to consider" a request that RUF detainees be released "as a confidence-building measure."

## ANNEX 2

### **MEETING OF THE JOINT COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION Government of Sierra Leone - RUF – UNAMSIL**

**15 May 2001**

1. In furtherance of the agreement reached in Abuja on 2 May 2001, a meeting of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) comprising UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF was held at UNAMSIL Headquarters in Freetown on 15 May 2001.

2. The meeting was chaired by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Mr. Oluyemi Adeniji. The delegation of the Government of Sierra Leone was headed by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice, Mr. Solomon Berewa. The Chairman of the Political and Peace Council, Mr Omrie Golley, led the RUF delegation. Representatives of the CDF attended as part of the Government delegation. A full list of the delegations is attached as Annex 1.

3. In view of the urgency of addressing the continuing fighting between the CDF and the RUF in the Eastern Province, the leaders of the CDF and the RUF issued a joint communiqué undertaking to ensure the immediate cessation of all hostilities and instructing their combatants forthwith to desist from any hostile activity. UNAMSIL was requested to ensure the observance of this undertaking as well as the unimpeded movement of persons, goods and services throughout the country.

4. The meeting examined the key issues relating to the DDR programme, including timetable and modalities for disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants, responsibilities of the parties, monitoring mechanisms, sensitisation of combatants and communities.

#### Disarmament:

5. The two parties agreed on the following:

- a. the immediate recommencement of the DDR programme with a fixed timetable;
- b. implement the simultaneous disarmament of CDF and RUF combatants;
- c. to release to UNAMSIL all child combatants and abductees, particularly young women and children, starting on 25 May 2001;
- d. that the CDF and the RUF shall disclose the number of combatants and weapons by location to UNAMSIL. Global figures and types of weapons in the possession of RUF and CDF were communicated to the meeting by them;
- e. criteria established by the NCDDR for the eligibility of ex-combatants into the DDR programme;

- f. to consider, as a matter of urgency, the establishment of DDR camps in Lunsar, Makeni, Kamakwie, Masingbi, Koidu, Kailahun, Alikalia, Pujehun and Bonthe, in addition to the existing facilities in Port Loko, Bo, Moyamba, Kenema and Daru;
- g. an encampment period of maximum four weeks for combatants during which they will undergo orientation and counselling programmes;
- h. the principle of a cordon and search after the established period for disarmament;
- i. include the RUF and the CDF in the planning and implementation of the entire DDR programme.

6. In connection with disarmament in Kambia and Port Loko districts, the two parties agreed on the following:

- a. disarmament process for both RUF and CDF in Kambia district to begin on 18 May 2001 and to be completed not later than 28 May 2001;
- b. disarmament in Port Loko will also start during this period;
- c. Port Loko DDR camp will be used as a common facility for demobilisation of RUF and CDF ex-combatants disarmed in Kambia district;
- d. NCDDR will immediately begin the preparation of a DDR camp in Lunsar;
- e. the RUF provisionally estimates 1000 combatants in Kambia; the precise figure will be confirmed by Friday 18 May 2001. The CDF estimates 350 combatants in the Kambia district plus 735 in Port Loko district.

7. By the end of May 2001, recommendations will be made by the joint Technical Committee on the next locations by district for the country-wide implementation of the DDR.

#### Reintegration

8. In addition to the existing integration programme of NCDDR, the two parties:

- a. proposed the establishment of a Trust Fund, with the assistance of the international community, to support the reintegration of ex-combatants. The modalities for the Fund will be worked out by the two parties and interested partners through a working group;
- b. agreed to open access to all identifiable Government positions, including SLA and SLP, on the basis of existing criteria for recruitment shared during the meeting;
- c. agreed that special attention be accorded to dependants of ex-combatants.

#### Monitoring mechanisms

9. The two parties agreed to:

- a. use the Ad-hoc DDR Committee, comprising the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF, UNAMSIL and the CCP to monitor the overall implementation of the DDR programme;

- b. use the existing NCDDR structure, with the participation of the RUF and the CDF, to review technical issues relating to the DDR programme;
- c. include RUF and CDF representatives in NCDDR regional structures to monitor implementation of the programme in the various regions.

#### Sensitization

10. The two parties agreed:

- a. to form joint sensitization teams to visit various parts of the country to educate the combatants about the present decisions;
- b. to arrange visits of joint teams to witness disarmament processes, starting in Kambia and Port Loko districts on 18 May 2001;
- c. to promote country-wide community reconciliation processes.

#### Other matters

11. The RUF requested the release of its members currently detained by the Government as a confidence-building measure. It also enquired about the alleged deaths of some of them under custody. The Government assured the meeting that no RUF detainee had died in custody and reaffirmed its commitment to consider the release of detainees especially in the light of progress being made in the peace process.

12. In connection with the RUF's request for Government assistance in the provision of public buildings in Freetown and in the provinces for party offices, the Government invited the RUF to identify such premises and to bring the information to Government's attention.

Freetown, 15 May 2001.

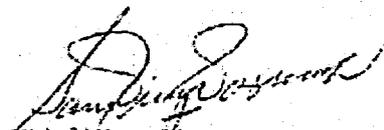
## ANNEX 3

### Communiqué

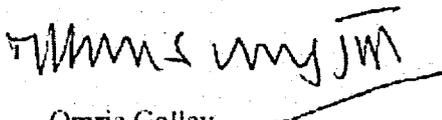
issued by  
the Civil Defense Force (CDF)  
and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

We, the leadership of the CDF and the RUF, meeting in Freetown today 15 May 2001, in furtherance of the agreement reached in Abuja on 2 May 2001, solemnly undertake to ensure the cessation of all hostilities and, to that effect, hereby instruct all our combatants to desist from any hostile activity. UNAMSIL will immediately ensure the observance of this undertaking as well as the unimpeded movement of persons, goods and services throughout the country.

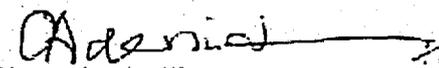
For the CDF

  
Chief Hinga Norman  
National Coordinator  
Deputy Minister of Defense

For the RUF

  
Omrie Golley  
Chairman of the Political  
and Peace Council

Witnessed by UNAMSIL

  
Oluyemi Adeniji  
Special Representative of the Secretary-General

Done in Freetown, 15 May 2001

## ANNEX 4

### Leonid Minin, Arms and Aircraft in West Africa

At the same time I made my initial trip to Sierra Leone as Special Envoy, there was information coming from very reliable official sources about a major shipment of arms into Liberia. My first report made note of this: "Both Liberia and Burkina Faso have denied any involvement in the trafficking of small arms, but solid evidence exists that firmly implicates both nations. In late March 1999, there was an air shipment (in a Ukrainian chartered aircraft) of over 68 tons of small arms that was recently delivered to Sam Bockarie in south eastern Sierra Leone. This shipment was flown to Ouagadougou, where the aircraft sat for several days on the presidential tarmac, as the Ukrainian crew refused to fly to Monrovia, saying their job was to simply deliver the arms to Burkina Faso. This shipment was transferred to another aircraft and flown to Monrovia, where it was subsequently delivered to Bockarie in Sierra Leone."\*

In December 2000, the Panel of Experts on Sierra Leone Diamonds and Arms set up by a Committee of the UN Security Council produced a superb report that documented in great detail the diamond trade in West Africa, the connection between diamonds and the RUF as well as arms shipments from Burkina Faso and Niger to Liberia in late 1998 and early 1999. This report resulted in the recent UN embargo on Liberian diamond exports as well as the travel ban on senior Liberian officials. However, since the Panel of Experts report and the imposition of the sanctions on Liberia, there has been a significant development in the arms trade in West Africa.

In late June 2001, Leonid Minin, an Israeli citizen of Ukrainian origin, was arrested in Milan, Italy on charges of international arms trafficking. Minin, 54, is alleged to be a member of the Russian mafia and was apprehended after a long investigation. If convicted, he faces a sentence of up to 12 years. According to Italian newspaper reports, Minin was initially arrested last September on drug charges. At that time, Milan Police said he had in his possession 20 grams of cocaine, approximately \$700,000 in diamonds and was in the company of two prostitutes. British newspaper reports said he operated under at least 30 aliases, speaks six languages and was earning between \$250-300 million per year from his various interests.

The UN Expert Panel report (see excerpt of that report below) linked Minin very directly to the 68 tons of weapons that were shipped from Burkina Faso to Liberia in March of 1999 as well as an earlier shipment of arms from Niger. The Italian police said he was also involved in a further shipment of 113 tons of weapons into the region that took place in July 2000. It is estimated that Minin shipped 10,500 AK-47's, five million rounds of ammunition and thousands of anti-tank grenades. Many of these weapons were shipped aboard a Cayman Islands registered aircraft (VP-CLM) BAC 1-11.

Recently, I obtained photographs from Africa that were taken of the BAC 1-11 owned by Minin when the plane was in Burkina Faso in late March 1999 being loaded with weapons. The Expert Panel Report on Diamonds and Arms has been dismissed and disparaged by both President Charles Taylor and his Foreign Minister Monie Captan. However, these photographs in addition to an extensive eye-witness account provided to me offer further corroboration (if any were

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\* Sierra Leone: The Forgotten Crisis, Report to the Minister of Foreign Affairs from the Special Envoy, p.25

needed) of the incontrovertible evidence offered by the Expert Panel in their report. Taylor, his coterie of officials and his business partners, have been directly involved in violating UN arms embargoes in support of the RUF. This has cost the lives of thousands throughout West Africa. The photographs, which were part of the evidence provided to the Security Council (but which were not released publicly), show the BAC 1-11 on the tarmac at Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso in March of 1999 as well as the interior of the plane with weapons on and under the seating. One of the more peculiar aspects of one of the photos is the Seattle Supersonics basketball team insignia painted on the tail of the plane.

How did a plane used to shuttle professional basketball players around the U.S. end up transporting weapons around West Africa? To understand how this aircraft got involved in the lethal trade in small arms in Africa, it was necessary to track the ownership path that starts in Seattle, Washington in the late spring of 1998. During my inquiries with regard to the BAC 1-11, some information about Leonid Minin and his business dealings began to emerge which provides a fleeting glimpse into the world of an arms trader. It is important to note that, in my view, the vast majority of the companies that became involved with Minin's transactions had no idea who he was or what he was involved in.

In early 1998, the BAC 1-11 was owned and operated by the company that owned the Seattle Supersonics, the Ackerley Group. As the basketball season ended, it became clear that the team was going to need a new plane. The BAC 1-11 was a 1966 model that had been well maintained over the years, but which was now too noisy for American skies. As an older Stage II aircraft, the BAC 1-11 did not meet U.S. noise regulations and no hush kit had ever been installed. It was also proving harder and harder to get parts for the plane. By all accounts, the plane had served the basketball team well. When configured for regular passenger seating, the aircraft could accommodate approximately 85-100 people. As an "executive jet" for the Supersonics, however, it was configured for 27 passengers with 16 "somewhat larger than economy class seats." The plane also had a conference room in its mid-section as well as a "forward executive cabin" with four "club seats." While this model of BAC 1-11 would normally have a 1,400-mile range, this particular aircraft was equipped with larger tanks that extended its range to approximately 2,400 nautical miles.

In the late spring of 1998, the Ackerley Group sold the plane to Capital Aircraft Sales in Springfield, Illinois on a trade-in for a Boeing 727. The plane was then moved to Cleveland where a company called Air Services, capable of doing support for the BAC 1-11, conducted routine maintenance. Leonid Minin entered the picture at this point. He was evidently looking for a spacious "executive jet" with a longer-range capability. Working through a broker called Cortran International Inc in Orlando, Florida, the BAC 1-11 seemed to meet his needs. A technical team hired by Minin, which included a flight and ground engineer from the UK, travelled to Cleveland to Air Services to inspect the plane and gave Minin the go ahead to purchase. The price was US\$1.7 million, but \$300,000 worth of new instrumentation was installed bringing the cost up to US\$2 million.

On December 1, 1998, Capital Aircraft Sales sold the plane to Cortran. It was immediately resold to a shell company Minin set up called Aeroleasing based in the Cayman Islands. Through a management company, Minin paid \$20,000 up front for the Cayman Islands registry (VP-CLM). At this time, the Cayman Island Civil Aviation Authority was unaware of Minin's

involvement. Cayman Island records show that Aeroleasing's parent company was based in Zug, Switzerland (Metallstrasse 2, CH 6304). LIMAD, an oil company owned by Minin and registered in Monaco, shared the same address as Aeroleasing. This was one of Minin's smaller offices staffed by two or three employees. He also had a small operation in Budapest, 15-20 staff in an office in Italy, another 15 or so in Monaco as well as larger offices in Moscow, Kiev and Odessa.

It appears as though one of the principal reasons Minin acquired the BAC 1-11 related to his lumber interests in Liberia. He had become involved in a company called Exotic Tropical Timber Enterprise (ETTE) at the urging of two partners: Vadim Semov, a Russian, who travels on a U.S. passport and a Spaniard named Fernando Robleda, both residents of Ibiza, Spain. Minin was brought in to provide additional financial support ending up with one-third of the company. Semov and Robleda owned the remaining two-thirds. Among the three, Robleda had the closest ties with Taylor. According to a source, it appears Minin and his partners bought the plane with the intention of giving it as a gift to Charles Taylor possibly in exchange for timber rights in Liberia.

From the period of December 20, 1998 to the third week of June 1999, the aircraft was put at the disposal of the Liberian Government. So anxious were the Liberians to obtain the use of the aircraft that there was no time to repaint it and remove the Seattle Supersonics insignia. The BAC 1-11 left Cleveland in mid-December, refueled in Keflavik, Iceland and proceeded to Odessa to pick up Minin. From there, it was on to Liberia. The plane quickly went into service shuttling arms and Liberian officials including Taylor around West Africa. The first arms shipment occurred during the week before Christmas, 1998. The aircraft took off from Niamey, Niger on the evening of December 23 and landed in Monrovia on December 24. The cargo was off-loaded under the watchful eye of Taylor's Special Security Service (SSS), a strongly armed executive protective service. That same day, the plane took off for Ibiza, Spain. There is speculation from a source close to the situation that the Niger weapons were "very possibly" used in the devastating attack on Freetown in first week of January 1999.

While in Africa, Minin stayed initially at Gus Kouwenhoven's Hotel Africa outside Monrovia. Later, he lived in his own compound near the hotel. When travelling in Liberia, Minin was almost always escorted by a three-man security detail. Some of Minin's bad habits began to catch up with him. He routinely engaged the services of local prostitutes and his consumption of cocaine increased substantially. One individual, who said he saw Minin periodically during this time, was shocked at his decline. Another said that Minin had become incoherent or stupid from his drug use. During the period of December 1998 to June 1999, Minin was a passenger on a few flights from Europe to Liberia and back. These flights were performed as normal VIP transports and no other goods other than personal luggage were carried. Minin was apparently never on board any of these flights inside Africa.

This entire period the aircraft was based in Monrovia and all orders and flight requests were received directly from Talal N'Dine, a very close associate of Charles Taylor. N'Dine also provided funds to pay all fuel costs and other flight expenses such as landing fees. The Liberians had full operational control of the aircraft during this period. All flights inside Africa were conducted with Liberian call signs. The Liberians also provided the necessary flight clearances.

President Taylor, his Liberian entourage and other Liberian officials were flown wherever they wanted to go. Taylor flew on the plane at least twice to Nigeria – one of the trips was for the inauguration of President Olusegun Obasanjo. He went at least once to Togo for the Lome Peace negotiations and twice to Burkina Faso. The plane also carried a Liberian delegation to South Africa for the inauguration of the new South African President Thabo Mbeki.

The arms deal that saw the BAC 1-11 fly seven trips between March 16 and March 30 between Burkina Faso and Monrovia was possibly put together in the month or so preceding these flights. A member of the Russian mafia was flown back and forth between Kiev and Monrovia along with some government officials from the Ukraine. During the flights to Burkina Faso, several high-ranking Liberian officials organized and supervised the weapons shipments. Moussa Cisse, Chief of Presidential Protocol, Joachim Touah, Assistant Director of the Special Security Service and Benjamin Yeaten, also of the SSS were extensively involved. All three men are named in the list of Liberian officials subject to the travel ban imposed by the UN. The details of these flights are described in the Expert Panel report. Because the BAC 1-11 was never intended for cargo, care had to be taken to ensure that the proper weight distribution was achieved within the aircraft, that it was not nose heavy or tail heavy and most importantly that it was not overloaded. There were approximately ten tons of weapons on each flight.

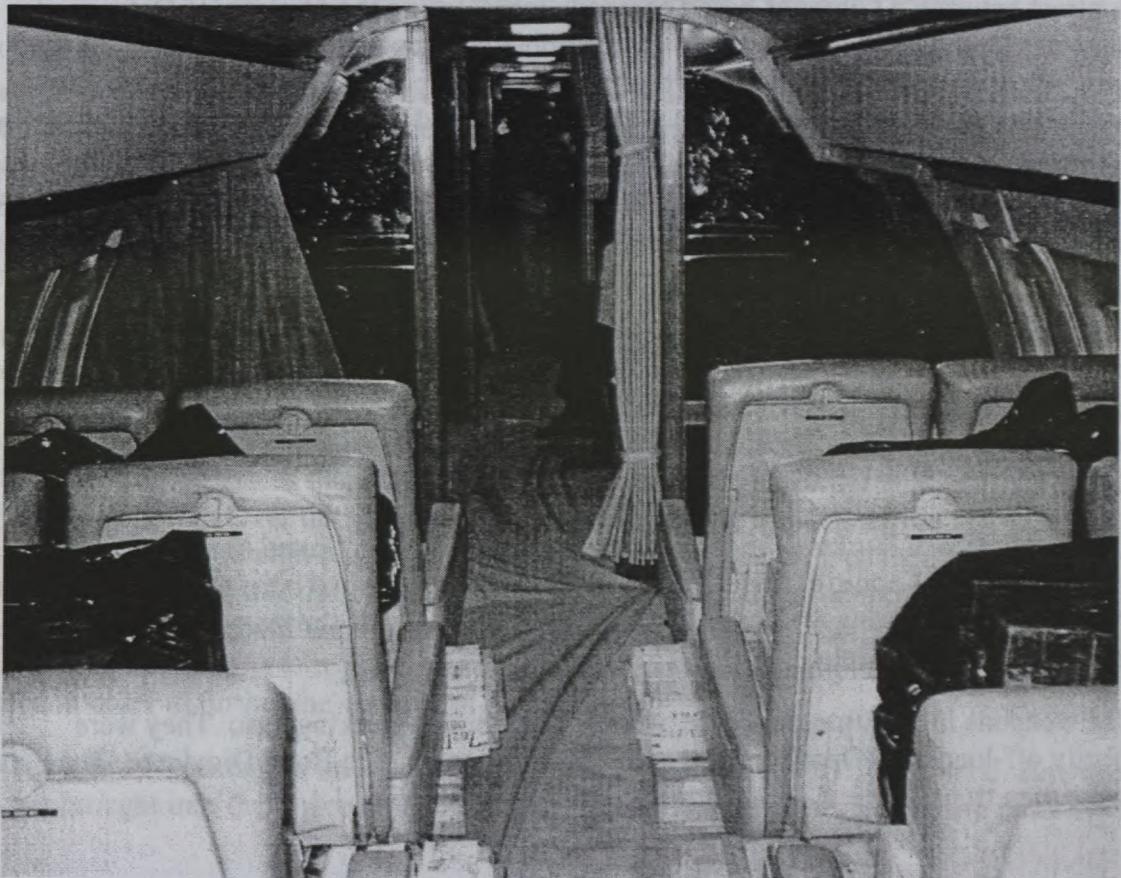
In late April, early May of 1999, the BAC 1-11 was flown to an aviation service company in Bournemouth, England. Here, the plane underwent a major maintenance check and was finally repainted. The Seattle Supersonics livery was replaced with the national colours of Liberia (dark blue and red with a white star on the tail of the aircraft). Emmanuel Shaw, a former Liberian Finance Minister in the Government of Samuel Doe, supervised the re-painting of the plane and some minor alterations to the interior. (Shaw owns aircraft hangars at Robertsfield outside Monrovia and is closely connected with Kouwenhoven. He has also served as “an economic advisor” to Taylor.) The plane went back into service on May 25. It was about this time that the timber business began to unravel and relations between Minin, his business partners and the Taylor Government began to sour. Exotic Timber apparently purchased some logging/cutting equipment from a Canadian company. The equipment was ill-suited for harvesting tropical hardwood. Mack trucks, also purchased from Canada, were used as off road vehicles to transport lumber. The vehicles, never designed for that purpose, broke down with great frequency. Another problem arose when Exotic Timber shipped some wood to Portugal. The buyers were unhappy with the shipment and refused to accept delivery.

It was at this point that Fernando Robleda pulled out. Soon after, Minin also decided to quit Liberia. He complained that his Liberian timber venture had cost him US\$10-12 million and began to blame those around him. His assets in the timber business were later sold to a Spanish businessman, Jesus Fernandez Prada for \$1.5 million. The next asset to be dealt with was the BAC 1-11. Even though the Liberians had supervised the re-painting of the aircraft and had requested that Liberian crews be trained, sources say Minin came to the conclusion that Taylor’s people either did not really want to buy or could not afford the BAC 1-11. In late June 1999, the aircraft was scheduled for routine maintenance back in Bournemouth, England. It never returned to Africa. Minin put the plane up for sale. A source close to the situation observed that it was his view that the Liberians “squeezed Minin for as much as they could.”

Within a few months, law enforcement officials began to catch up with Minin. A memo from the Royal Cayman Islands Police dated September 14 to the Cayman Islands Civil Aviation Authority stated that the owner of the company Aeroleasing, an Eastern European named Leonid Minin, was suspected of cocaine trafficking and that the aircraft, the BAC 1-11 (VP-CLM) had been involved in an arms embargo violation. The memo added: "you may wish to consider this in terms of the continued registry of this aircraft." Since the Minin experience, Civil Aviation authorities in the Cayman Islands have tightened up their procedures.

Once back in England, the bills on the BAC 1-11 for both storage and maintenance began to mount. It was not long before Minin owed the company about \$500,000. The plane's age and its non-compliance with noise regulations made it a hard sell. Nevertheless, the aircraft was re-purchased on October 18, 2000 by Cortran for \$1 million. On November 9, the plane was sold again to a company called Aravco based in Georgetown, Cayman Islands and subsequently transferred to its parent company, Aravco UK, where it is once again up for sale. It can be viewed on the web at [www.aravco.com](http://www.aravco.com). The asking price is \$3.5 million (with a hush kit installed). The aircraft is still listed by its Cayman Island registry letters VP-CLM and still has its Liberian colours with the exception of the white star on the tail. That has been removed.





**EXCERPTS FROM THE PANEL OF EXPERTS REPORT ON  
SIERRA LEONE DIAMONDS AND ARMS  
DECEMBER, 2000**

**B. Weapons Flights into Liberia**

202. Virtually all of the weapons shipped into RUF territory are transshipped through at least two other countries between their point of origin and RUF territory in Sierra Leone. In virtually all cases, the last transit point before shipment into Sierra Leone is Liberia. The weapons reach Liberia in a variety of ways - occasionally by sea but most frequently by air. The Panel went to considerable lengths to document some of these shipments in order to demonstrate how the supply chain works.

*Case Study: Burkina Faso Delivery of Ukrainian Weapons*

203. A shipment of 68 tons of weapons arrived at Ouagadougou on 13 March 1999. It included 715 boxes of weapons and cartridges, and 408 boxes of cartridge powder. The inventory also included anti-tank weapons, surface-to-air missiles, and rocket propelled grenades and their launchers.

204. This shipment has now been well documented. Documentation provided in April and June 1999 by the Ukraine government to UN Sanctions Committees shows that the weapons were part of a contract between a Gibraltar-based company representing the Ministry of Defence of Burkina Faso, and the Ukrainian state-owned company Ukrspetsexport. An aircraft of the British company Air Foyle, acting as an agent for the Ukrainian air carrier Antonov Design Bureau, shipped the cargo, under a contract with the Gibraltar-based company, Chartered Engineering and Technical Services. A Ukrainian licence for sale of the weaponry was granted after Ukrspetsexport had received an end-user certificate from the Ministry of Defence of Burkina Faso.

205. The end-user certificate was dated 10 February 1999. The document authorized the Gibraltar-based company to purchase the weapons for sole use of the Ministry of Defence of Burkina Faso. The document also certified that Burkina Faso would be the final destination of the cargo and the end-user of the weaponry. The document is signed by Lieutenant-Colonel Gilbert Diendéré, head of the Presidential Guard of Burkina Faso. During a visit by a Panel Member to Ukraine, this sequence of events was reconfirmed.

206. The authorities of Burkina Faso, in correspondence with the United Nations Sanctions Committee on Sierra Leone, denied allegations that the weapons had been re-exported to a third country, Liberia, and during a visit to Burkina Faso the Panel was shown weapons that were purportedly in that shipment.

207. The weapons in question, however, were not retained in Burkina Faso. They were temporarily off-loaded in Ouagadougou and some were trucked to Bobo Dioulasso. The bulk of them were then trans-shipped within a matter of days to Liberia.

208. Most were flown aboard a BAC-111 owned by an Israeli businessman of Ukrainian origin, Leonid Minin. The aircraft bore the Cayman registration VP-CLM and was operated by a company named LIMAD, registered in Monaco. Minin was, and may remain, a business partner and confidant of Liberian President Charles Taylor. He is identified in the police records of several countries and has a history of involvement in criminal activities ranging from east European organised crime, trafficking in stolen works of art, illegal possession of fire arms, arms trafficking and money laundering. Minin uses several aliases. He has been refused entry into many countries, including Ukraine, and travels with many different passports. Minin offered the aircraft mentioned above for sale to Charles Taylor as a Presidential jet, and for a period between 1998 and 1999, it was used for this purpose. It was also used to transport arms.

209. Regarding the shipment in question, the aircraft flew from Ibiza in Spain to Robertsfield in Liberia on 8 March 1999. On March 15, two days after the arrival of the Ukrainian weapons in Ouagadougou, the plane flew from Monrovia to Ouagadougou. On March 16 the plane was loaded with weapons and flew back to Liberia. On the 17th, it returned to Ouagadougou. After a flight to Abidjan in the Ivory Coast, the plane flew again from Ouagadougou to Liberia with weapons on the 19th. On the 25th the plane flew again from Liberia to Ouagadougou and returned on the same day with weapons. On the 27th the plane flew again to Ouagadougou and from there to Bobo Dioulasso for the weapons that had been trucked there. The aircraft made three flights over the next three days between Bobo Dioulasso and Liberia. On 31 March the plane flew back to Spain. Because the plane had a VIP configuration, it had only limited cargo capacity, which is why so many flights were necessary.

210. A second plane, an Antonov operated by a Liberian company named Weasua, is reported by eye-witnesses to have flown part of the cargo to Liberia from Bobo Dioulasso.

211. Minin's BAC-111 was used for an earlier shipment of weapons and related equipment from Niamey Airport in Niger to Monrovia. This occurred in December 1998, shortly after Minin purchased the plane and started to operate it in the region. On 22 December 1998, the BAC-111 made two trips from Niamey to Monrovia. On the second trip, it took a consignment of weapons, probably from existing stocks of the armed forces of Niger. The weapons were off-loaded into vehicles of the Liberian military. A few days after these events, the RUF-rebels started a major offensive that eventually resulted in the destructive January 1999 raid on Freetown.

### **C. The Inner Circle of the Taylor Regime**

212. President Charles Taylor is actively involved in fuelling the violence in Sierra Leone. He and a small coterie of officials and private businessmen around him are in control of a covert sanctions-busting apparatus that includes international criminal activity and the arming of the RUF in Sierra Leone. Over the years - before President Taylor's inauguration and after - this group has contracted foreign businessmen for the financing, sourcing or facilitating of these covert operations. The sanctions-busting is fed by the smuggling of diamonds and the extraction of natural resources in both Liberia and areas under rebel control in Sierra Leone. In addition, the sovereign right of Liberia to register planes and ships, and to issue diplomatic passports, is being misused in order to further the operations of this group.

213. The role of Liberia as a transshipment platform for arms to the RUF is crucial. However, arms are brought into the region from elsewhere. Many businessmen close to the inner-circle of

the Liberian presidency operate on an international scale, sourcing their weaponry in Eastern Europe. The Panel focused on a limited number of individuals, but there are many more examples of the significant presence of criminal organisations in the region.

214. A key individual is a wealthy Lebanese businessman named Talal El-Ndine. El-Ndine is the inner-circle's paymaster. Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone alongside the RUF, and those bringing diamonds out of Sierra Leone are paid by him personally. Arms shippers and brokers negotiate their payments in his office in Old Road, Monrovia. El-Ndine also brings foreign businessmen and investors to Liberia, individuals who are willing to cooperate with the regime in legitimate business activities as well as in weapons and illicit diamonds. The pilots and crew of the aircraft used for clandestine shipments into or out of Liberia are also paid by El-Ndine. They are mostly of Russian or Ukrainian nationality and they invariably stay at the Hotel Africa in Monrovia.

215. The manager of this hotel is a Dutch national named Gus Van Kouwenhoven. Van Kouwenhoven started his hotel and a gambling business in Liberia in the 1980s. He is also a member of President Taylor's inner circle, through his contacts with Taylor's economic advisor, Emmanuel Shaw. Shaw, a former Liberian finance minister, owns a number of facilities at Robertsfield, including all the hangars. Van Kouwenhoven is responsible for the logistical aspects of many of the arms deals. Through his interests in a Malaysian timber project in Liberia, he organises the transfer of weaponry from Monrovia into Sierra Leone. Roads built and maintained for timber extraction are also conveniently used for weapons movement within Liberia, and for the onward shipment of weapons to Sierra Leone.

216. Simon Rosenblum, an Israeli businessman based in Abidjan, has logging and road construction interests in Liberia. He too, is very close to the Liberian President and carries a Liberian diplomatic passport. His trucks have been used to carry weapons from Robertsfield to the border with Sierra Leone.

217. Minin and Van Kouwenhoven are linked to Liberia's timber industry, which provides a large amount of unrecorded extra-budgetary income to President Taylor for unspecified purposes. Three companies are involved: Exotic and Tropical Timber Enterprise (ETTE), Forum Liberia and the Indonesian-owned Oriental Timber Company.

## ANNEX 5

Letter from Chairman of Nyandeyama IDP Camp in Kenema

From: Nyandeyama Regional Chairman  
Nyandeyama Camp  
Kenema

To: Mr. David Pratt (Canadian Special Envoy to Sierra Leone) to Kenema

Date: 24<sup>th</sup>, May, 2001

Dear Sir,

A letter of thanks for appreciation, suggestions, request for more assistance and plead for our immediate repatriation to our various home.

We the IDP (Internally Displaced Persons) of the Nyandeyama Camp warmly welcome you Mr. David Pratt (Canadian Special Envoy to Sierra Leone) to Kenema and entourage.

Furthermore, we are very thankful to His Excellency and Government for seeking our welfare both at internal and external levels.

Equally, our gratitude goes (sic) to UNAMSIL contingent but also to the late General Maxwell Khobe and his ECOMOG fighters whose successful military operations had saved our nation. Our appreciation also goes to the British Government for training our new army and the provision of logistics for them all.

We are also thankful to the following NGOs for their relentless efforts made for whatever undertaken against their names:

1. ICRC – Plastics sheets and non food items.
2. CRS – Four our monthly ration bulgur, veg oil, lentils.
3. MERLIN – Malaria control programme (Mosquito nets)
4. OXFAM – Notable for water and daily sanitation.
5. AFRICARE – Medicare management
6. CARITAS – Rice seeds.

and the entire International Community.

Above all, Alhaji Mohamed Benson Suwu should be given worthy praise for being our landlord and host who has freely allowed us to live and use a vast portion of his land for agricultural activities.

Another personality worth praising is the Honourable Residence Minister of the East, Sahr Randolph Fillie Faboe. We have all the confident to thank him for a job well done.

Our suggestions to restore peace and stability in our beloved country Sierra Leone are as follows:

Since we have 14,608 Internally Displaced Persons at Nyandeyama Displaced Camp there are teachers, student teachers, pupils, farmers and all works of life together with youths.

1. The Government has made a vast difference between the War Affected Youths and adults to that of Ex-Combatants in terms of encouragement. Example: We have about 45 eastern polytechnic students in this camp, and about 60 ex-combatants in this same camp in the eastern polytechnic, vocational institutes and computer school.

Through NCDDR the government pays an allowance of *Le* 60,000 (sixty thousand leones) as lunch and transport for ex-combatants. Where as the 40 war affected youths and adults in the eastern polytechnic are not on study leave or government grants-in-aid. They fetch firewood together with their families to pay their college fees and other charges. This has obliged most youths to collaborate either RUF or CDF in order to gain this same benefits. Government should have treated all displaced students equally with ex-combatants.

2. Some people among us are skilled workers, like carpenters, masonry, blacksmithing, weaving, traders who have lost their kits, equipments and capital which needs replacement.
3. No job facilities for the civil populace, especially the youths, government should provide more facilities to them to engage themselves economically meaningful activities.
4. Medical facilities are very very poor with us here. Doctors consultation fees is *Le* 5000 (five thousands leones). Surgery fees exceeds from *Le* 150, 000 (one hundred and fifty thousand leones) referral cases only.

These exorbitant fees cost the IDPs to go into rebel held areas to get money to pay for their relatives (patients) at this high cost than to stay in the camp here to see their relatives die. Free surgery for IDPs in camps is a way forward by ICRC doctors.

5. The Micro-Credit loan scheme should be extended more to IDPs in camps. They have no easy access to income generating activities. They rather fetch firewood on the reserved forest, many IDPs have been ill due to this firewood fetching.

The American Refugee Council made a registration of IDPs for micro credit loan but ever since we have not heard from them. Women's groups.

6. Plastic sheetings are all worn out, when it rains except we stand under the rain until the rain cease. We have appealed to government for assistance but no response.
7. We are not clothed by government, no used clothing supplies, no used shoes, cotton lappas for our women who are laughed at when they do sell the firewood in the township.
8. Non food items. We have no non food items supplies like cooking sets, blankets, mats, buckets for our domestic use.

If the above suggestions are carefully looked into and considered for the IDPs, there must be a way forward for the restoration of peace and stability in Sierra Leone ie. the IDPs will not venture into rebel held areas to get income.

Once more, I say thank you for the visit and you are welcome to Nyandeyama Displaced Camp.

Submitted By:  
Regional Chairman  
Nyandeyama Displaced Camp  
Kenema

From: Nyandeyama Regional Chairman,  
Nyandeyama Camp,  
Kenema.

To : Mr. David Pratt (Canadian Special Envoy for Sierra Leone) to Kenema.

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4. OXFAM - Notable for Water and Daily Sanitation.
5. AFRICARE - Medicare, Management
6. CARITAS - RICE SEEDS IVS.

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Above all, Alhaji Mohamed Benson Suwu should be given worthy praise for being our Landlord and host who has freely allowed us to live and use a vast portion of his land for agricultural activities.

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2. Some people among us are skilled workers, like Carpenters, Masonry, Blacksmithing, Weaving, traders who have lost their kits, equipments and Capital which needs replacement.
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Once more, I say thank you for the visit and you are welcome to Nyandeyama Displaced Camp.

Submitted By,

Regional Chairman.  
Nyandeyama Displaced Camp,  
Kenema.

## **ANNEX 6**

### **Meetings and Consultations\***

**United Kingdom**  
**April 18-20, 2001**

#### **Government**

Mark Lyall Grant, Director, Africa, Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Lillian Wong, Head Africa Research Desk, Foreign and Commonwealth Office  
Colonel R.M. Chisnall, Directorate of Overseas Military Activity, Ministry of Defence  
Stephen Pollard, Head of the Overseas Secretariat, Ministry of Defence  
Alex Cruttwell, Overseas Secretariat, Ministry of Defence  
David Scott, Department for International Development

#### **NGOs**

David Nyheim and Fatou M'boge – FEWER- Forum on Early Warning and Early Response  
Bronwyn Mamby - Human Rights Watch  
Gilonne Droigny and Agnes Eboo - International Alert,  
Alex Yearsley, Global Witness

#### **Commonwealth Secretariat**

Secretary General, the Right Honourable Don McKinnon  
Winston Cox, Deputy Secretary General for Development Cooperation

**New York (UN)**  
**May 8 – 9, 2001**

#### **Diplomatic**

Ambassador Paul Heinbecker, Canadian Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Ibrahim Kamara – Sierra Leone Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Arthur Mbanefo – Nigeria Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Anwarul Chowdhury – Bangladesh Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Kishore Mahbubani – Singapore Permanent Representative  
Ambassador Francois Fall – Guinea Permanent Representative  
Andrew Hillman, Political Advisor, U.S. Permanent Mission

#### **UN**

Assistant Secretary General Michael Sheehan – Department of Peace Keeping Operations  
Carolyn McAskie – Deputy Emergency Relief Coordinator - OCHA  
Assistant Secretary General Ibrahima Fall – Department of Political Affairs (DPA)

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\* This list is a selection of the major meetings and consultations. For a variety of reasons, not all meetings were included.

## **Guinea**

**May 20 – 21, 2001**

### **Government**

General Lansana Conté – President of the Republic of Guinea

Moussa Solano, Minister of Territory Administration (Interior) and Security

Alia Camara, General Secretary – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation

### **UN**

David Kapya, Representative, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

Jean Bosco Rushatsi, Senior Program Officer, UNHCR

### **Informal Consultations with:**

Ambassador Pius Fischer, Germany

Ambassador Timberlake Foster, United States

Stefan Frowein, Chief of the European Commission Delegation

Gemmo Lodesani, Representative of PAM in Guinea

Dr. ElHadj Sheku Bah Saccoh – Ambassador to Republic of Sierra Leone

Michel Kamano – President, Social Economic Council

Thierno Habib Diallo – Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Political Advisor

Mrs. Sally Miller, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies

## **Sierra Leone**

**May 22 – 26, 2001**

### **Government**

His Excellency Tejan Kabbah, President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Dr. Ahmed Ramadam Dumbuya, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Trade

Sam Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defence

Honourable Dr. Kadi Sesay, Minister of Development and Economic Planning

Honourable Solomon Berewah, Minister of Justice and Attorney General

Honourable Shirley Gbujama, Minister of Social Welfare General and Children's Affairs

Mr. J.D. Rogers, Deputy Minister of Development

Dr. Francis Kai-Kai, Executive Secretary, National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration

### **Diplomatic**

His Excellency Allan Jones, British High Commissioner

His Excellency Joseph H. Melrose, United States Ambassador

### **UN**

His Excellency Oluyemi Adeniji – Special Representative of the Secretary-General of the UN

General Daniel Opananda - UNAMSIL High Command

Joanna Van Gerpen, Unicef Representative

## **NGOs**

Prince Cotay – Cause Canada

Doreen Walker – Cause Canada

Frances Fortune – Search for Common Ground

Zainab Bangura – Campaign for Good Governance

Alimamy Koroma – Council of Churches

Abu Brima – Network Movement for Justice and Development

John Caulker – Forum for Conscience

Nana Pratt – Women's Forum

Joe Rahall – National Forum for Human Rights

## **RUF**

Omrie Golley, RUF Spokesman

## **Liberia\***

May 27-29, 2001

### **Government**

His Excellency Charles Taylor, President of Liberia

Monie Captan, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Other Ministers and Senior Government Officials

Representatives of Civil Society, the Donor and Diplomatic Communities

## **Nigeria**

May 30-31, 2001

### **Government**

The Honourable Dubem Onyia, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs

Ambassador George, Minister of Foreign Affairs- Africa Director

Rep. Chimaobi Nwakanma, KSC – Nigerian House of Representatives

Rep. Adamu M. Bulkachuwa, Chairman – Nigerian Committee on Foreign Affairs

### **Diplomatic**

His Excellency Howard F. Jeter, US Ambassador to Nigeria

## **ECOWAS**

General Cheick Oumar Diarra, Deputy Executive Secretary, Political Affairs, Defence and Security

Roger Laloupo, Director of Legal Affairs – Economic Community of West African States

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\* Given the sensitivity of some of the information provided by interlocutors in Liberia, prudence dictates that the names of individuals and organizations not be identified.

**Washington**  
**June 21 – 22, 2001**

**Government**

Mark Bellamy, Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Africa – US State Department  
Timothy G. Ryan, Sierra Leone Desk Officer, Office of West African Affairs – US State Department  
Theresa Whelan, Office of African Affairs with the Assistant Secretary of Defence, The Pentagon  
Lt.Col. T. Tidler, Regional Director for West Africa, Department of Defence, The Pentagon  
Catherine Byrne, Director, African Affairs, National Security Council  
The Central Intelligence Agency

**Capitol Hill**

**Informal consultations with:**

Malik M. Chaka, Professional Staff Member, Subcommittee on Africa, Committee on International Relations, House of Representatives  
Pearl-Alice Marsh, Ph.D., Professional Staff Member, House International Relations Committee  
Heather D. Flynn, Professional Staff Member, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate

**NGO**

Janet Fleischman, Washington Director, Africa Division – Human Rights Watch

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