SPECIAL COURT FOR SIERRA LEONE
OFFICE OF THE PROSECUTOR
Freetown – Sierra Leone

Before: Justice Teresa Doherty, Presiding
Justice Richard Lussick
Justice Julia Sebutinde

Interim Registrar: Mr. Lovemore G. Munlo

Date filed: 1 November 2005

THE PROSECUTOR **Against** **Alex Tamba Brima**
Brima Bazzy Kamara
Santigie Borbor Kanu

Case No. SCSL-2004-16-T

PROSECUTION NOTICE PURSUANT TO RULE *92bis* TO ADMIT INFORMATION INTO EVIDENCE

Office of the Prosecutor:
Luc Côté
James C. Johnson
Jim Hodes
Wambui Ngunya

Defence Counsel for Alex Tamba Brima
Kojo Graham
Glenna Thompson

Defence Counsel for Brima Bazzy Kamara
Andrew Daniels
Mohamed Pa-Momo Fofanah

Defence Counsel for Santigie Borbor Kanu
Geert-Jan Alexander Knoops
Carry Knoops
Abibola E. Manly-Spain

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The Prosecution files this Notice pursuant to Rule 92*bis* of the Rules of Procedure and Evidence ("Rules") of its intention to submit information as evidence, following the Trial Chamber's Decision on the Prosecution Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence of 25 October 2005 ("Judicial Notice Decision").[1]
2. This Notice is designed to meet the requirements of Rule 92*bis*(C), according to which a party wishing to submit information as evidence shall give 10 days notice to the opposing party. Objections by the Defence, if any, must be submitted within 5 days.

II. PROCEDURAL HISTORY

3. On 2 April 2004, the Prosecution filed its Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence[2] ("Judicial Notice Motion") which included many of the materials sought to be introduced in this pleading.
4. On 6 June 2005, pursuant to an Order of this Trial Chamber dated 27 May 2005,[3] the Prosecution filed its Consequential Submissions on the Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence. In those submissions, ("Consequential Submissions"), the Prosecution requested that the information contained in certain documents be admitted into evidence pursuant to Rules 89(B) and (C) and 92*bis*.[4]
5. In its Judicial Notice Decision, the Trial Chamber took judicial notice of several facts, reconfiguring some, and denying others. In relation to the material sought to be admitted under Rules 89(B) and (C) and 92*bis*, the Trial Chamber found that "the information contained in the said documents is, at present, not in an admissible

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[1] *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-423, Decision on the Prosecution Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, ("Judicial Notice Decision"), 25 October 2005.
[2] *Prosecutor v Briam, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-2004-16-PT-51, Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 2 April 2004.
[3] *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-285, Scheduling Order on Judicial Notice Motion, 27 May 2005.
[4] *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-299, Consequential Submissions on the Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence Filed on 2 April 2004, 6 June 2005 ("Consequential Submissions").

form".[5] While this part of the Judicial Notice Motion and Consequential Submissions was denied, the Trial Chamber decided that the material could be considered for admission under Rule 92*bis* once the procedure prescribed in the Judicial Notice Decision and in Rule 92*bis*(C) had been complied with.

6. The prescribed procedure for future moving parties, based on the Separate Opinion of Justice Robertson in the Appeals Chamber's Decision on Joint Request of Second and Third Accused for Leave to Appeal against Decision on Prosecution Motion for Judicial Notice in the *Fofana* et al. case,[6] was as follows: "Any party, whether prosecution or defence, that seeks to introduce a lengthy document must indicate in the margin the passages they claim to be relevant [...].[7]

III. DISCUSSION

7. The modification of the traditional preference for oral testimony by allowing flexibility in the admission of documentary evidence, and the establishment of the principle of "extensive admissibility of evidence" are recent trends in international criminal law.[8] The foundation for these principles is the competence of professional judges to receive evidence and subsequently to evaluate it in the light of all the other evidence.[9]
8. The basic principle applicable to any form of evidence is stipulated in Rule 89(C), which provides that any relevant evidence is admissible. According to international jurisprudence, in deciding what constitutes "relevant" evidence, wide discretion is granted to the Trial Chamber. The Chamber is free to consider the reliability of the

[5] Judicial Notice Decision, para. 74.
[6] *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-2004-14-398, Fofana-Decision on Appeal Against "Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence", 16 May 2005, ("Appeals Chamber Judicial Notice Decision").
[7] Judicial Notice Decision, para. 75.
[8] First trend manifested, for example, in ICTY's adoption of Rule 89(F) in December 2000. Regarding second trend see *Prosecutor v Blaškić*, IT-95-14, Trial Judgement, 3 March 2000, para. 34.
[9] *Prosecutor v. Delalić et al.*, IT-96-21-T, Decision on the Motion of the Prosecutor for the Admissibility of Evidence, 19 January 1998, ("*Čelebići* Evidence Decision"), para. 20; *Blaškić* , Trial Judgement, 3 March 2000, para. 35.

evidence, its probative value, prejudicial impact, or any other reasonably related factor.[10]

9. Extra precaution is taken to ensure that the admission of documentary evidence does not adversely affect the right of the accused to a fair trial, by tending to admit only such documentary evidence that pertains to the background of the crime, as opposed to evidence directly implicating the accused in the perpetration of a crime.[11] Examples of such 'background' evidence include evidence demonstrating the occurrence of crimes in a certain location, or in the context of an armed conflict, or in a widespread or systematic manner, or evidence proving the command structure.[12] As noted by a Trial Chamber of the ICTY, the "[t]he threshold standard for the admission of evidence...should not be set excessively high, as often documents are sought to be admitted into evidence, not as ultimate proof of guilt or innocence, but to provide a context and complete the picture presented by the evidence gathered."[13]

10. Rule 92*bis* of the Rules provides that :

> (A) A Chamber may admit as evidence, in whole or in part, information in lieu of oral testimony.
> (B) The information submitted may be received in evidence if, in the view of the Trial Chamber, it is relevant to the purpose for which it is submitted and if its reliability is susceptible of confirmation
> (C) A party wishing to submit information as evidence shall give 10 days notice to the opposing party. Objections, if any, must be submitted within 5 days.

11. The purpose of Rule 92*bis*, like that of Rule 92*bis* of the ICTY and ICTR Rules, is to facilitate a fair, efficient and expeditious trial.[14] The Appeals Chamber of the Special Court has noted that Rule 92*bis* was amended specifically to accommodate the

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[10] See for example *Prosecutor v. Bagosora et al.*, ICTR-98-41-T, Decision on Admissibility of Proposed Testimony of Witness DBY, 18 September 2003, para. 18: "Relevance, probative value and even prejudice are all relational concepts. The content of the putative facts must be defined and then evaluated in relation to their possible value as proof of the existence of a crime as described in the indictment. The nature of this evaluation explains the discretion conferred on the Trial Chamber by Rule 89(C)."

[11] *Prosecutor v Natelitic*, ICTY-98-34, Decision on the Prosecutor's Motion to Take Depositions for Use at Trial (Rule 71), 10 November 2000, ("Natelitic Decision")

[12] Natelitic Decision, para. 17. See also R. May and M. Wierda, *International Criminal Evidence* (NY, 2002), p. 346.

[13] *Čelebići* Evidence Decision, 19 January 1998, para. 20.

[14] See ICTR Press Release ICTR/INFO-9-13-22.EN dated 8 July 2002, p.3 : "NewRule 92 bis is an important judicial reform measure. It has the potential to further speed up proceedings before the ICTR by significantly reducing as much as possible the consideration of time consuming evidence inside the courtroom. A similar rule already exists in the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the ICTY."

operations and peculiarities of the Special Court envisioned to exist for a short period of time, which constitutes a more flexible and broad alternative mode of presentation of evidence than the regime existing in the *ad hoc* tribunals. According to the Appeals Chamber:

> The judges of this Court, at one of their plenary meetings, recognised a need to amend ICTR Rule 92bis in order to simplify this provision for a court operating in what was hoped would be a short time-span in the country where the crimes had been committed....[15]

12. The Appeals Chamber went on to explain:

> The effect of the SCSL Rule is to permit the reception of "information"- assertions of fact (but not opinion) made in materials or electronic communications - if such facts are relevant and their reliability is "susceptible of confirmation". This phraseology was chosen to make clear that proof of reliability is not a condition of admission: all that is required is that the information should be capable of corroboration in due course.[16]

13. The assessment of the weight and reliability of the information admitted under Rule 92*bis* is to be made by the Trial Chamber at the end of the trial in light of all the evidence presented.[17] In its Decision pursuant to Rules 92*bis* and 89(C) in the *Norman* et al. case of 14 July 2005, ("*Norman* et al. Rule 92bis Decision") this Trial Chamber cited the findings of the Appeals Chamber and considered that "proof of reliability is not a condition for admitting 'information' under Rule 92*bis* and that a requirement under this Rule of such information being capable of corroboration in due course leaves open the possibility for the Chamber to determine the reliability issue at the end of the trial in the light of all the evidence presented in the case and decide whether the information is indeed corroborated by other evidence presented at trial, and what weight, if any, should the Chamber attach to it".[18] The Trial Chamber summed up by stating that what is required of the Chamber is to determine whether the documents are relevant and possess sufficient indicia of reliability and that their

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[15] Appeals Chamber Judicial Notice Decision, para. 26; Separate Opinion of Justice Robertson, paras. 13 and 14.

[16] *Id.*, para. 26.

[17] Appeals Chamber Judicial Notice Decision, para. 27. See also Separate Opinion of Justice Robertson, para. 14.

[18] *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-04-14-T-447, Decision on Prosecution's Request to Admit into Evidence Certain Documents Pursuant to Rules 92bis and 89(C), 14 July 2005, ("*Norman* et al. Rule 92*bis* Decision"), p.4.

admission would not prejudice unfairly the Defence.[19]

14. In its Judicial Notice Decision, this Trial Chamber recognized that documentary evidence may be admissible if the facts therein are relevant, reliable and susceptible of confirmation[20]. The Trial Chamber also stated in no uncertain terms that it would not wade through a mountain of materials in an effort to determine what is relevant as opposed to what are irrelevancies, opinions or legal findings.[21] The procedure this Trial Chamber has directed consists of clearly indicating on each document the passages the moving party wishes the Chamber to consider on the question of relevance.

15. The evidence the Prosecution seeks to admit pursuant to Rule *92bis* is primarily background evidence of the matters alleged in the Indictment as opposed to evidence directly implicating any of the Accused persons in the perpetration of a crime.[22] Examples of such 'background' evidence include evidence demonstrating the occurrence of crimes in a certain location, or the widespread or systematic nature of the alleged crime. Notably, in the *Norman* et al. Rule 92bis Decision,[23] Trial Chamber I observed that international tribunals admit documentary evidence in various forms, including when it relates to crime bases or a widespread or systematic attack on a civilian population.

IV. OVERVIEW OF MATERIALS TENDERED

16. The Prosecution requests that the Trial Chamber admit into evidence under Rules 89 (B) and (C) and 92*bis* the materials tendered with this Notice and attached as **Annex 2**. All but two of the materials have been culled from the general materials list that was previously filed as part of the Prosecution's Judicial Notice Motion. The Prosecution is also tendering a Communiqué and a video clip, that were Exhibits 57 and 144 respectively of the Prosecution's proposed exhibit list filed on 26 April

[19] Ibid.
[20] Judicial Notice Decision, para. 69.
[21] Para 71
[22] Natelitic Decision, paras. 17-20.
[23] *Norman* et al. Rule 92*bis* Decision, p.4.

2004.[24]

17. The Prosecution has made every effort to save the Court from wading through a mountain of material[25] or a mass of undigested paperwork[26]. The Prosecution has limited the previously submitted materials to a few materials in full but mostly to sections of materials with directions to what it submits are the relevant and reliable portions susceptible of confirmation and corroboration. This means that although it is necessary to file entire reports in some instances to provide the appropriate context, the Prosecution is not seeking the admission into evidence of all the material submitted in **Annex 2**. The Prosecution has included in **Annex 1** a table describing each of the documents including reference to the relevant portions sought to be admitted. **Annex 1** describes the type of document, lists the corresponding document number in Annex B of the Judicial Notice Motion, provides a brief description of the document, sets out the relevance of the document or section thereof, and states which portion of the document the Prosecution seeks to have admitted into evidence ("reference page"). The Prosecution has also made notations in the margins of the materials to highlight the relevant passages as prescribed by this Trial Chamber.[27]
18. Trial Chamber I has delivered two decisions on judicial notice wherein a large number of materials were judicially noticed with regard to existence and authenticity, while a smaller but significant number of materials were judicially noticed with regard to existence, authenticity and content.[28] In view of the fact that many of the materials sought to be admitted in the current Notice are the same as those tendered before Trial Chamber I, the Prosecution submits that these judicial notice decisions may be of some guidance and assistance to the Court, and therefore lists in a column of **Annex 1** the relevant materials and the corresponding outcome of the proceedings before Trial Chamber I in the *Sesay* et al. case.

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[24] *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-2004-16-PT-57, Materials Filed Pursuant to Order to the Prosecution to File Disclosure Materials and other Materials in Preparation for the Commencement of Trial of 1 April 2004, 26 April 2004.
[25] See Judicial Notice Decision, para 71.
[26] See Appeals Chamber Judicial Notice Decision, Separate Opinion of Justice Robertson, para. 30.
[27] See Annex 2.
[28] *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-04-14-PT-117, Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 2 June 2004; *Prosecutor v Sesay, Kallon, Gbao*, SCSL-04-15-PT-174, Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 24 June 2004.

V. CONCLUSION

19. The Prosecution hereby gives notice of its intention to tender for admission into evidence, pursuant to Rules 89(B) and (C) and 92*bis*, the attached materials or portions thereof that are relevant, reliable and susceptible of corroboration and confirmation and which will aid this Trial Chamber in making a fair determination of the matters before it, and respectfully requests that this Trial Chamber admit said materials accordingly.

Filed in Freetown,
1 November 2005

For the Prosecution,

Luc Côté
Chief of Prosecutions

James C. Johnson
Senior Trial Attorney

Index of Authorities

1. *Prosecutor v. Bagosora et al.*, ICTR-98-41-T, Decision on Admissibility of Proposed Testimony of Witness DBY, 18 September 2003, Para. 18. Available at: http://196.45.185.38/ENGLISH/cases/Bagosora/decisions/180903.htm

2. *Prosecutor v Blaškić*, IT-95-14, Trial Judgement, 3 March 2000, Paras. 34, 35. Available at: http://www.un.org/icty/blaskic/appeal/judgement/bla-aj040729e.pdf.

3. *Prosecutor v Briam, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-2004-16-PT-51, Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 2 April 2004, Paras. 13, 14, and 26.

4. *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-2004-16-PT-57, Materials Filed Pursuant to Order to the Prosecution to File Disclosure Materials and other Materials in Preparation for the Commencement of Trial of 1 April 2004, 26 April 2004.

5. *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-285, Scheduling Order on Judicial Notice Motion, 27 May 2005.

6. *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-299, Consequential Submissions on the Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence Filed on 2 April 2004, 6 June 2005.

7. *Prosecutor v Brima, Kamara, Kanu*, SCSL-04-16-T-423, Decision on the Prosecution Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 25 October 2005, Paras 69, 71, 74, and 75.

8. *Prosecutor v. Delalić et al.*, IT-96-21-T, Decision on the Motion of the Prosecutor for the Admissibility of Evidence, 19 January 1998, Para. 20. Available at: http://www.un.org/icty/celebici/trialc2/decision-e/80119EV21.htm

9. *Prosecutor v Natelitic*, ICTY-98-34, Decision on the Prosecutor's Motion to Take Depositions for Use at Trial (Rule 71), 10 November 2000. Available at: http://www.un.org/icty/naletilic/trialc/decision-e/001110.htm.

10. *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-2004-14-398, Fofana-Decision on Appeal Against "Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence", 16 May 2005.

11. *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-2004-14-398, Fofana-Decision on Appeal Against "Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence" – Separate Decision of Justice Robertson, 16 May 2005, Paras. 13 and 14.

12. *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-04-14-PT-117, Decision on

Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 2 June 2004

13. *Prosecutor v Norman, Fofana, Kondewa*, SCSL-04-14-T-447, Decision on Prosecution's Request to Admit into Evidence Certain Documents Pursuant to Rules 92bis and 89(C), 14 July 2005.

14. *Prosecutor v Sesay, Kallon, Gbao*, SCSL-04-15-PT-174, Decision on Prosecution's Motion for Judicial Notice and Admission of Evidence, 24 June 2004.

15. ICTR Press Release ICTR/INFO-9-13-22.EN dated 8 July 2002, p.3 http://www.ictr.org/ENGLISH/pressbrief/2002/brief9-13-22.htm

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answer but in practice it rarely arises since there is usually much corroborative evidence of such matters. Thus, it may be appropriate for a Trial Chamber to admit transcripts from related cases without recalling the witnesses to testify.[58]

10.59 Documentary evidence may therefore be introduced on topics such as (a) "crime-base" evidence; (b) whether there was a widespread and systematic attack on a civilian population; (c) issues of command structure (leaving aside, however, whether a particular accused exercised the role of a commander); and (d) whether crimes occurred in the context of an international armed conflict. The admission of evidence in such forms gives rise to "the likelihood that [trials] can in fact be expedited significantly by dispensing with live testimony in peripheral aspects of the trial."[59] The fairness of the trials would not be affected since their focus would be on the hearing of witness testimony specifically on the guilt of particular accused (and these witnesses would be subject to cross-examination).

7 INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL EVIDENCE IN CONTEXT

10.60 *Other international courts.* In conclusion, it may be noted that the practice of international criminal courts in allowing the parties to present the evidence, and allowing the court flexibility in admitting it, is consistent with the practice of other international courts and tribunals. Thus, Article 48 of the Statute of the International Court of Justice states that the Court "shall make all arrangements connected with the taking of evidence." The ICJ follows a liberal evidentiary regime and there is no hierarchy between different forms of evidence. However, the preponderance of the evidence relied on by the Court has been documentary. Most of the evidence produced forms part of the often voluminous written pleadings. The Statute and the Rules do, however, provide for oral testimony of witnesses and experts, and both have been employed before the Court.

10.61 The explanation for this flexible approach to admissibility of evidence is the Court's ability to ascertain the weight and relevance of particular evidence. The bench is composed of highly qualified and experienced international judges who do not require protection from

because, in order to be convicted of a crime against humanity, the accused must have knowledge that there is an attack on the civilian population and that his or her act is part of the attack." *Id.* at ¶ 12.

58. *Id.*

59. Patricia Wald, *To Establish Incredible Facts by Credible Evidence*, 42 HARV. INT'L L.J. 535 at 548 (2001).

potentially unreliable evidence. The Court has nonetheless, on a few occasions, refused to admit hearsay evidence on the ground that it constituted "allegations falling short of conclusive evidence."[60]

10.62 Other international tribunals have also followed this trend.[61] However, all such tribunals must be distinguished from international criminal trials as such proceedings do not raise issues of the rights of the accused.

10.63 *Domestic courts.* On the other hand, domestic courts must apply their own rules of evidence in trying international cases. However, two trends are interesting to note: one is a trend toward relaxing technical rules of evidence in common law jurisdictions, and the other is a trend toward adopting adversarial rules in civil law jurisdictions (examples of both of these trends have been mentioned above).

10.64 It is also worth noting that certain domestic courts have relaxed strict and technical rules of evidence in trials for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during World War II, as a result of the difficulties posed by such trials. An example is the Israeli Nazi and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law (1950), which states at s. 15 that "[I]n an action for an offence under this Law, the court may deviate from the rules of evidence if it is satisfied that this will promote the ascertainment of the truth and the just handling of the case." (This law also provides that the court should place on records the reasons for its decision to deviate from ordinary rules of evidence.[62]) A similar approach, *i.e.*, that of relaxing rules of evidence in respect of war crimes trials, was taken by the Canadian Supreme Court in *Finta*.[63]

10.65 *A look into the future.* It is clear that the trend towards the liberal admission of evidence is likely to be followed in the future. The "internationalized" tribunals of Sierra Leone and East Timor already seem to be following that trend.[64] For instance, the Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone provides in Article 14 (1) that the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the ICTR will *apply mutatis mutandis* to its proceedings;

60. *Corfu Channel (United Kingdom v. Albania)*, Judgment on Merits, 1949 ICJ Rep., at 4.

61. For an analysis of how such tribunals have treated evidence, *see* DURWARD SANDIFER, EVIDENCE BEFORE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNALS (University Press of Virginia 1974).

62. Section 15 (b) of the Nazis and Nazi Collaborators (Punishment) Law, 1950.

63. *See* Ch. VIII (*Equality of Arms*).

64. The internationalized courts have been established to try war crimes and crimes against humanity. They are established under domestic law but have international judges on their benches.

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ANNEX 1

ANNEX 1

AFRC: Admission of Documents Pursuant to Rule 92(bis)

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
UN Document	1	Security Council Resolution 1132 (8 October 1997) Concerning Sierra Leone and the AFRC.	Background material Post-AFRC coup.	Entire document	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	2	Security Council Resolution 1181 (13 July 1998) Concerning Sierra Leone and the ongoing conflict.	Background material Post-ECOMOG intervention.	Entire document	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	4	Security Council Resolution 1270 (22 October 1999) concerning Sierra Leone.	Background material on child combatants.	Page 4, paragraph 18.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	7	Security Council Resolution 1306 (5 July 2000) concerning diamond trade.	Background material on diamond trade.	Entire document	Existence and authenticity.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
UN Document	11	Fourth Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Sierra Leone, 18 March 1998 (S/1998/249)	Background material on AFRC involvement in attacks and AFRC existence in outlying areas; destruction of infrastructure and housing.	Pages 2, 5, 6-7, paragraphs 6, 20 and 28.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	12	Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Sierra Leone, 9 June 1998 (S/1998/486)	Background material on attacks, looting and property damage; attacks on civilian populations; impact of amputees on healthcare facilities.	Pages 5, 7, and 8, paragraphs 27, 35, 36, and 44.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	13	Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), First Progress Report, 12 August 1998 (S/1998/750)	Continued attacks in Koidu and kabala; specific reports concerning attacks, abductions, amputations, looting and destruction of property.	Pages 3- 4, 7- 9, paragraphs 10, 12-14 and 31-38.	Existence and authenticity.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
UN Document	14	Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Second Progress Report, 16 October 1998 (S/1998/960)	Specific reports of continuing attacks; continuing attacks on civilian populations including mutilations, amputations, killings, burning and looting.	Pages 3, 5-6, paragraphs 9-10 and 21-23.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	15	Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Third Progress Report, 16 December 1998 (S/1998/1176)	Background material on command and control; ongoing attacks against civilian populations.	Pages 4-5, 8, 14, Paragraphs 15-16, 18, 23, 36-39 and 71.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	16	Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Fifth Report, 4 March 1999 (S/1999/237)	Background material on Freetown invasion; attacks committed against civilian population in Freetown.	Pages 1, 5, paragraphs 2, 21-27.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	17	Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Sixth Report, 4 June 1999 (S/1999/645)	Background material on continued attacks against civilian populations.	Pages 5, 7-8, paragraphs 19-20, and 28-33.	Existence and authenticity.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
UN Document	18	UN Officer for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 5 June 1997	Specific report of AFRC and RUF joint leadership.	Page 2, paragraph 5.	Existence and authenticity.
UN Document	19	UN Officer for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 14 July 1997	Background material on continued cooperation in fighting between AFRC and RUF.	Page1-2, paragraphs 1-5.	Existence and authenticity.
UN document	26	Human Rights Assessment Mission to Freetown 25 January and 1 to 4 February 1999, Findings and Recommendations	General and specific anecdotal reports concerning attacks against the civilian population in Freetown.	Pages 3-9.	Existence and authenticity.
UN document	29	Report on Atrocities Committed Against the Sierra Leone Population, UNHCR Conakry Branch Officer, 28 January 1999.	Specific reports on attacks against civilian populations.	Victim reports Cases #02, #04, #05, #06, #07, #15, #16, #18, #19, and #33.	Existence and authenticity.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
NGO Report	31	Human Rights Watch, "Sowing Terror, Atrocities against civilians in Sierra Leone", Vol. 10, No.3 (A) July 1998.	Background material on systematic and widespread attacks on civilians.	Pages 4, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.	
NGO Report	32	Human Rights Watch, "We'll kill you if you cry, Sexual Violence in the Sierra Leone Conflict" Vol.15, No. 1 (A), January 2003.	Background material on sexual violence.	Pages 3, 11, 12, 25, 26, 27, 35, 36, 42, 43.	
NGO Report	34	Amnesty International, "Sierra Leone 1998 –a year of atrocities against civilians".	General Background material on widespread and systematic attacks.	Pages 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26.	
NGO Report	35	Amnesty International, "Sierra Leone: Childhood – a casualty of conflict", AI Index: AFR 51/69/00, 31 August 2000,	Background material on child soldiers.	Pages 3, 7-8, 22.	
NGO Report	38	Amnesty International Annual Report 2000, "AI Report 2000: Sierra Leone".	General background on widespread and systematic attacks.	Pages 2 and 3.	

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
NGO Report	45	No Peace without Justice, Sierra Leone Conflict Mapping Program, 9 March 2004 and Letter from No Peace without Justice certifying the report.	General background on the conflict in Sierra Leone.	No Peace without Justice: pp. 1-3 Conflict Mapping Program: pp. 7-11 Overview of the conflict: pp. 31-39, 49-51 Bombali: 125-129 / 132-144 Koinadigu: 163, 170-180 Port Loko: 185-188 / 195-208 Tonkolili: 218-219 / 233-242 Kailahun: 251-253 / 276-281 Kenema: 288-290/ 317-325 Kono: 330-332/ 350-375 Bo: 381-383/ 406-408 Bonthe: 412-415/ 442,444-445 Moyamba: 450-453/ 471,473, 476, 478 Pujehun: 482-484/ 505, 513 Western Area: 514-517 / 526, 527, 529-531, 533, 540-544	

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
NGO Report	46	War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone, Report by Physicians for Human Rights, published 2002. ISBN: 1-879707-37-3.	General background material on sexual violence	Pages: 2-3, 19, 29, 34, 46-48, 52, 56-57, and 75-76.	
Public document	52	Statement on the historic return to Freetown, Sierra Leone, of the Leaders of the Alliance of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, 3 October 1999. (Freetown, Sunday. October 3, 1999).	Joint criminal enterprise.	Entire document.	
Personal statement	53	Personal Statement by Lt. JP Koroma on 1 October 1999.	Joint criminal enterprise.	Entire document.	
Public document	54	Revolutionary United Front's Apology to the Nation, delivered on SLBS, 18 June 1997.	Background material on joint criminal enterprise.	Entire document.	

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
Peace Agreement	55	The Lomé Peace Accord, the Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), 7 July 1999.	Background material.	Entire document.	Existence, authenticity and contents.
Peace Agreement	56	The Abidjan Peace Accord, the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), 30 November 1996.	Background material.	Entire document.	Existence, authenticity and contents.
Peace Agreement	57	The Conakry Accord: ECOWAS Six-month Peace Plan for Sierra Leone, 23 October 1997 – 22 April 1998, 23 October 1997.	Background material.	Entire document.	Existence, authenticity and contents.
Treaty	58	Ceasefire Agreement Between Government and the Revolutionary United Front, 18 May 1999.	Background material.	Entire document.	Existence, authenticity and contents.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
Governmental report	60	United States Department of State, "Sierra Leone Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1997", Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, January 30, 1998.	Background material.	Pages 1-11, 13-16, and 18.	
UN document	70	First Report on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) 6 December 1999 (S/1999/1223)	Background material on AFRC forces in later 1999.	Paragraphs 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 20-22, 25-26, and 33-35.	Existence and authenticity.
NGO Report	76	Women Waging Peace and the Policy Commission, "From Combat to Community: Women and Girls of Sierra Leone", Dyan Mazurana and Khristopher Carlson, January 2004.	Background material on women/girl abductees and combatants.	Pages 2, 6, 12, 14 and 16.	Existence and authenticity.
Sierra Leone official document	77	Minutes dated 23 January 1998 of meeting of AFRC Supreme Council held on 9 December, 1997	Background material on involvement of both AFRC and RUF members in Supreme Council.	Entire document.	Existence and authenticity.

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
Sierra Leone Official document	78	Government Notice 272 (P.N. No.3 of 1997), Sierra Leone (SL) Gazette No.69	Background material on AFRC.	Entire document.	
Sierra Leone Official documents	79	Decrees 1, 5, and 7 of 1997. Dec 1 – SL Gazette No.41; Dec 5 – SL Gazette No.49; Dec 6 – SL Gazette No.63; Dec.7 – SL Gazette No.66	Background material on AFRC.	Entire document.	
Sierra Leone Official document	81	Record of Deaths 1-19 January 1999, Births and Deaths Registry, Freetown, Sierra Leone.	Background material.	Entire document.	
Radio broadcast	82	SLBS Radio Broadcast, 25 May 1997, 18:42 GMT	Background material.	Entire document.	
Radio broadcast	83	SLBS Radio Broadcast, 25 May 1997, 19:30 GMT	Background material.	Entire document.	
Radio broadcast	85	SLBS Radio Broadcast, 29 May 15:26 GMT. [Proclamation issued by the Administration of Sierra Leone Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Proclamation 1997, in Freetown on 28 May 1997]	Background material.	Pages 1 and 2.	

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
Radio broadcast	86	SLBS Radio Broadcast, 30 May 19:22 GMT. ["Special Message" by the Revolutionary United Front Spokesman Lieutenant David Collins]	Background material.	Page 1.	
Transcript of address.	88	Address by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, Head of State and Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Freetown, 1 June 1997	Background material on AFRC.	Pages 1-3.	
Press Release	89	AFRC Press Release, 3 January 1998	Background material on AFRC.	Entire document.	

Document Type	No. in Annex B, Judicial Notice Motion	Name/Description of Document	Relevance	Reference Page	Outcome from RUF Judicial Notice Decision
Communiqué	**Exhibit No.57 from the original Prosecution Proposed Exhibit List, filed on 26 April 2004**	Joint Communiqué, Meeting between the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Sierra Leone and the Delegation of the Revolutionary United Front, Abidjan, 19-21 February 1999. *(two copies included of the same document: one with signatures and the other more legible without signatures)*	Background material.	Entire document.	
Video	**Exhibit No.144 from the original Prosecution Proposed Exhibit List, filed on 26 April 2004**	Unedited video footage, 6 January 1999.	Context and overview material of Freetown invasion.		

ANNEX 2

1. Security Council Resolution 1132 (8 October 1997) S/RES/1132

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UNITED NATIONS

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Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/RES/1132 (1997)
8 October 1997

RESOLUTION 1132 (1997)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3822nd meeting, on 8 October 1997

The Security Council,

Recalling the statements of its President of 27 May 1997 (S/PRST/1997/29), 11 July 1997 (S/PRST/1997/36) and 6 August 1997 (S/PRST/1997/42) condemning the military coup in Sierra Leone,

Taking note of the decision of the thirty-third summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) held in Harare, Zimbabwe, from 2 to 4 June 1997 concerning the situation in Sierra Leone,

Taking note also of the Communique issued at the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) on Sierra Leone, held in Conakry, Guinea on 26 June 1997 (S/1997/499), the Declaration of the ECOWAS Committee of Four Foreign Ministers on Sierra Leone (the ECOWAS Committee) of 30 July 1997 (S/1997/646), and the final Communique of the summit of ECOWAS held at Abuja on 28 and 29 August 1997 and the Decision on sanctions against the military junta in Sierra Leone issued at the summit (S/1997/695, Annexes I and II),

Taking note also of the Secretary-General's letter of 7 October 1997 (S/1997/776),

Expressing its full support and appreciation for the mediation efforts of the ECOWAS Committee,

Reaffirming its view that the Abidjan Agreement (S/1996/1034) continues to serve as a viable framework for peace, stability and reconciliation in Sierra Leone,

Deploring the fact that the military junta has not taken steps to allow the restoration of the democratically-elected Government and a return to constitutional order,

Gravely concerned at the continued violence and loss of life in Sierra Leone following the military coup of 25 May 1997, the deteriorating humanitarian conditions in that country, and the consequences for neighbouring countries,

Determining that the situation in Sierra Leone constitutes a threat to international peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

1. Demands that the military junta take immediate steps to relinquish power in Sierra Leone and make way for the restoration of the democratically-elected Government and a return to constitutional order;

2. Reiterates its call upon the junta to end all acts of violence and to cease all interference with the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the people of Sierra Leone;

3. Expresses its strong support for the efforts of the ECOWAS Committee to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone and encourages it to continue to work for the peaceful restoration of the constitutional order, including through the resumption of negotiations;

4. Encourages the Secretary-General, through his Special Envoy, in cooperation with the ECOWAS Committee, to assist the search for a peaceful resolution of the crisis and, to that end, to work for a resumption of discussions with all parties to the crisis;

5. Decides that all States shall prevent the entry into or transit through their territories of members of the military junta and adult members of their families, as designated in accordance with paragraph 10 (f) below, provided that the entry into or transit through a particular State of any such person may be authorized by the Committee established by paragraph 10 below for verified humanitarian purposes or purposes consistent with paragraph 1 above, and provided that nothing in this paragraph shall oblige a State to refuse entry into its territory to its own nationals;

6. Decides that all States shall prevent the sale or supply to Sierra Leone, by their nationals or from their territories, or using their flag vessels or aircraft, of petroleum and petroleum products and arms and related matériel of all types, including weapons and ammunition, military vehicles and equipment, paramilitary equipment and spare parts for the aforementioned, whether or not originating in their territory;

7. Decides that the Committee established by paragraph 10 below may authorize, on a case-by-case basis under a no-objection procedure:

(a) applications by the democratically-elected Government of Sierra Leone for the importation into Sierra Leone of petroleum or petroleum products; and

(b) applications by any other government or by United Nations Agencies for the importation of petroleum or petroleum products into Sierra Leone

for verified humanitarian purposes, or for the needs of the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG),

subject to acceptable arrangements for effective monitoring of delivery;

8. Acting also under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, authorizes ECOWAS, cooperating with the democratically-elected Government of Sierra Leone, to ensure strict implementation of the provisions of this resolution relating to the supply of petroleum and petroleum products, and arms and related matériel of all types, including, where necessary and in conformity with applicable international standards, by halting inward maritime shipping in order to inspect and verify their cargoes and destinations, and calls upon all States to cooperate with ECOWAS in this regard;

9. Requests ECOWAS to report every 30 days to the Committee established under paragraph 10 below on all activities undertaken pursuant to paragraph 8 above;

10. Decides to establish, in accordance with rule 28 of its provisional rules of procedure, a Committee of the Security Council consisting of all the members of the Council, to undertake the following tasks and to report on its work to the Council with its observations and recommendations:

(a) to seek from all States further information regarding the action taken by them with a view to implementing effectively the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

(b) to consider information brought to its attention by States concerning violations of the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 above and to recommend appropriate measures in response thereto;

(c) to make periodic reports to the Security Council on information submitted to it regarding alleged violations of the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 above, identifying where possible persons or entities, including vessels, reported to be engaged in such violations;

(d) to promulgate such guidelines as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

(e) to consider and decide expeditiously requests for the approval of imports of petroleum and petroleum products in accordance with paragraph 7 above;

(f) to designate expeditiously members of the military junta and adult members of their families whose entry or transit is to be prevented in accordance with paragraph 5 above;

(g) to examine the reports submitted pursuant to paragraphs 9 above and 13 below;

(h) to establish liaison with the ECOWAS Committee on the implementation of the measures imposed by paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

11. Calls upon all States and all international and regional organizations to act strictly in conformity with this resolution, notwithstanding the existence of any rights granted or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or of any contract entered into or any licence or permit granted prior to the entry into force of the provisions set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to provide all necessary assistance to the Committee established by paragraph 10 above and to make the necessary arrangements in the Secretariat for this purpose;

13. Requests States to report to the Secretary-General within 30 days of the date of adoption of this resolution on the steps they have taken to give effect to the provisions set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above;

14. Requests all those concerned, including ECOWAS, the United Nations and other international humanitarian agencies, to establish appropriate arrangements for the provision of humanitarian assistance and to endeavour to ensure that such assistance responds to local needs and is safely delivered to, and used by, its intended recipients;

15. Urges all States, international organizations and financial institutions to assist States in the region to address the economic and social consequences of the influx of refugees from Sierra Leone;

16. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an initial report to the Council within 15 days of the adoption of this resolution on compliance with paragraph 1 above, and thereafter every 60 days after the date of adoption of this resolution on its implementation and on the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone;

17. Decides, if the measures set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above have not been terminated in accordance with paragraph 19 below, to conduct, 180 days after the adoption of this resolution and on the basis of the most recent report of the Secretary-General, a thorough review of the application of these measures and of any steps taken by the military junta to comply with paragraph 1 above;

18. Urges all States to provide technical and logistical support to assist ECOWAS to carry out its responsibilities in the implementation of this resolution;

19. Expresses its intention to terminate the measures set out in paragraphs 5 and 6 above when the demand in paragraph 1 above has been complied with;

20. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

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2. Security Council Resolution 1181 (13 July 1998) S/RES/1181

UNITED NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/RES/1181 (1998)
13 July 1998

RESOLUTION 1181 (1998)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 3902nd meeting, on 13 July 1998

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous relevant resolutions and the statements of its President,

Welcoming the continued efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to restore peaceful and secure conditions in the country, to re-establish effective administration and the democratic process and to embark on the task of national reconciliation, reconstruction and rehabilitation,

Recognizing the important contribution of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in support of these objectives,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 9 June 1998 (S/1998/486 and Add.1),

Noting the objectives set by ECOWAS for its Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) as described in paragraph 17 of the report of Secretary-General,

Gravely concerned at the loss of life and immense suffering undergone by the people of Sierra Leone, including refugees and displaced persons, as a result of the continuing rebel attacks, and in particular at the plight of children affected by the conflict,

1. Condemns the continued resistance of remnants of the ousted junta and members of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to the authority of the legitimate government and the violence they are perpetrating against the civilian population of Sierra Leone, and demands that they lay down their arms immediately;

2. Emphasizes the need to promote national reconciliation in Sierra Leone, encourages all parties in the country to work together towards this objective, and welcomes the assistance of the Secretary-General and his Special Envoy in that regard;

3. Welcomes the proposal in the report of the Secretary-General of 9 June 1998 on the establishment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL);

4. Notes that the Government of Sierra Leone has adopted a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan agreed with the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the United Nations Development Programme and other donors;

5. Commends the positive role of ECOWAS and ECOMOG in their efforts to restore peace, security and stability throughout the country at the request of the Government of Sierra Leone, and notes the role of ECOMOG in assisting the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan adopted by the Government of Sierra Leone, including the provision of security and responsibility for arms collection and destruction;

6. Decides to establish UNOMSIL for an initial period of six months until 13 January 1999, and further decides that it shall include up to 70 military observers as well as a small medical unit, with the necessary equipment and civilian support staff, with the following mandate:

(a) To monitor the military and security situation in the country as a whole, as security conditions permit, and to provide the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with regular information thereon in particular with a view to determining when conditions are sufficiently secure to allow subsequent deployments of military observers beyond the first phase described in paragraph 7 below;

(b) To monitor the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants concentrated in secure areas of the country, including monitoring of the role of ECOMOG in the provision of security and in the collection and destruction of arms in those secure areas;

(c) To assist in monitoring respect for international humanitarian law, including at disarmament and demobilization sites, where security conditions permit;

(d) To monitor the voluntary disarmament and demobilization of members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), as security conditions permit;

7. Decides further that the elements of UNOMSIL referred to in paragraph 6 above shall be deployed as outlined in the Secretary-General's report, with approximately 40 military observers deployed in the first phase to ECOMOG-secured areas, and that subsequent deployments shall take place as soon as security conditions permit, and subject to progress on the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan and the availability of the necessary equipment and resources;

8. Decides further that UNOMSIL shall be led by the Special Envoy of the Secretary-General, who will be designated Special Representative for Sierra Leone, that UNOMSIL shall subsume the office of the Special Envoy and its civilian staff, and that the augmented civilian staff, as recommended by the

Secretary-General in paragraphs 74 and 75 of his report, shall perform, inter alia, the following tasks:

(a) To advise, in coordination with other international efforts, the Government of Sierra Leone and local police officials on police practice, training, re-equipment and recruitment, in particular on the need to respect internationally accepted standards of policing in democratic societies, to advise on the planning of the reform and restructuring of the Sierra Leone police force, and to monitor progress in that regard;

(b) To report on violations of international humanitarian law and human rights in Sierra Leone, and, in consultation with the relevant United Nations agencies, to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in its efforts to address the country's human rights needs;

9. Welcomes the commitment of ECOMOG to ensure the security of United Nations personnel, and in this regard welcomes also the intention of the Secretary-General to establish security arrangements for United Nations personnel with the Chairman of ECOWAS and to conclude a status of mission agreement with Government of Sierra Leone;

10. Decides that the elements of UNOMSIL referred to in paragraph 6 above shall be deployed when the Secretary-General informs the Council that security arrangements and the status of mission agreement have been concluded, and further decides to keep the deployment of UNOMSIL under review in the light of the prevailing security conditions;

11. Stresses the need for full cooperation and close coordination between UNOMSIL and ECOMOG in their respective operational activities;

12. Demands that all factions and forces in Sierra Leone strictly respect the status of UNOMSIL personnel, as well as organizations and agencies delivering humanitarian assistance throughout Sierra Leone, and that they respect human rights and abide by applicable rules of international humanitarian law;

13. Expresses its serious concern at the reports of cross-border arms flows and support to the rebels in Sierra Leone, welcomes the intention of the Secretary-General, as indicated in his report, to pursue with all parties concerned steps to eliminate these activities, and in that regard reaffirms the obligation of all States to comply strictly with the terms of the embargo on the sale or supply of arms and related matériel to Sierra Leone imposed by resolution 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998, and to bring all instances of violations of the arms embargo before the Committee established by resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997;

14. Welcomes the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to coordinate an effective national response to the needs of children affected by armed conflict, and the recommendation of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict that Sierra Leone be made one of the pilot projects for a more concerted and effective response to the needs of children in the context of post-conflict peace-building;

15. Further welcomes the decision of the Secretary-General to convene a high-level conference to mobilize assistance for peacekeeping activities, emergency and humanitarian needs and reconstruction and rehabilitation in Sierra Leone;

16. Reiterates its urgent appeal to States to make contributions to the Trust Fund which has been established to support peacekeeping and related activities in Sierra Leone, to provide technical and logistical support to assist ECOMOG to carry out its peacekeeping role, and to help facilitate other ECOWAS member States to provide additional troops to strengthen the deployment of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone;

17. Urges all States and international organizations to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to Sierra Leone, in response to the consolidated inter-agency appeal launched on 24 June 1998;

18. Encourages all States and international organizations to assist and participate in the longer term tasks of reconstruction and economic and social recovery and development in Sierra Leone;

19. Requests the Secretary-General to submit an initial report to the Council within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution and every 60 days thereafter on the deployment of UNOMSIL and on the progress of UNOMSIL in carrying out its mandate, and also to inform the Council on plans for the later phases of the deployment of UNOMSIL when security conditions permit these to be implemented;

20. Decides to remain seized of the matter.

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4. Security Council Resolution 1270 (22 October 1999) S/RES/1270, page 4, paragraph 18.

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UNITED NATIONS

S

Security Council

Distr.
GENERAL

S/RES/1270 (1999)
22 October 1999

RESOLUTION 1270 (1999)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4054th meeting
on 22 October 1999

The Security Council,

Recalling its resolutions 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998, 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998, 1231 (1999) of 11 March 1999 and 1260 (1999) of 20 August 1999 and other relevant resolutions and the statement of its President of 15 May 1999 (S/PRST/1999/13),

Recalling also the report of the Secretary-General of 8 September 1999 (S/1999/957) and its resolution 1265 (1999) of 17 September 1999 on the protection of civilians in armed conflict,

Affirming the commitment of all States to respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Sierra Leone,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 23 September 1999 (S/1999/1003),

Determining that the situation in Sierra Leone continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

1. Welcomes the important steps taken by the Government of Sierra Leone, the leadership of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF), the Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) towards implementation of the Peace Agreement (S/1999/777) since its signing in Lomé on 7 July 1999, and recognizes the important role of the Joint Implementation Committee established by the Peace Agreement under the chairmanship of the President of Togo;

2. Calls upon the parties to fulfil all their commitments under the Peace Agreement to facilitate the restoration of peace, stability, national reconciliation and development in Sierra Leone;

3. Takes note of the preparations made for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, including child soldiers, by the Government of Sierra Leone through the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, and urges all concerned to make every effort to ensure that all designated centres begin to function as soon as possible;

4. Calls upon the RUF, the Civil Defence Forces, former Sierra Leone Armed Forces/Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and all other armed groups in Sierra Leone to begin immediately to disband and give up their arms in accordance with the provisions of the Peace Agreement, and to participate fully in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme;

5. Welcomes the return to Freetown of the leaders of the RUF and AFRC, and calls upon them to engage fully and responsibly in the implementation of the Peace Agreement and to direct the participation of all rebel groups in the disarmament and demobilization process without delay;

6. Deplores the recent taking of hostages, including UNOMSIL and ECOMOG personnel, by rebel groups and calls upon those responsible to put an end to such practices immediately and to address their concerns about the terms of the Peace Agreement peacefully through dialogue with the parties concerned;

7. Reiterates its appreciation for the indispensable role which ECOMOG forces continue to play in the maintenance of security and stability in and the protection of the people of Sierra Leone, and approves the new mandate for ECOMOG (S/1999/1073, annex) adopted by ECOWAS on 25 August 1999;

8. Decides to establish the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) with immediate effect for an initial period of six months and with the following mandate:

(a) To cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and the other parties to the Peace Agreement in the implementation of the Agreement;

(b) To assist the Government of Sierra Leone in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan;

(c) To that end, to establish a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra Leone, including at disarmament/reception centres and demobilization centres;

(d) To ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel;

(e) To monitor adherence to the ceasefire in accordance with the ceasefire agreement of 18 May 1999 (S/1999/585, annex) through the structures provided for therein;

(f) To encourage the parties to create confidence-building mechanisms and support their functioning;

(g) To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance;

(h) To support the operations of United Nations civilian officials, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and his staff, human rights officers and civil affairs officers;

(i) To provide support, as requested, to the elections, which are to be held in accordance with the present constitution of Sierra Leone;

9. Decides also that the military component of UNAMSIL shall comprise a maximum of 6,000 military personnel, including 260 military observers, subject to periodic review in the light of conditions on the ground and the progress made in the peace process, in particular in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, and takes note of paragraph 43 of the report of the Secretary-General of 23 September 1999;

10. Decides further that UNAMSIL will take over the substantive civilian and military components and functions of UNOMSIL as well as its assets, and to that end decides that the mandate of UNOMSIL shall terminate immediately on the establishment of UNAMSIL;

11. Commends the readiness of ECOMOG to continue to provide security for the areas where it is currently located, in particular around Freetown and Lungi, to provide protection for the Government of Sierra Leone, to conduct other operations in accordance with their mandate to ensure the implementation of the Peace Agreement, and to initiate and proceed with disarmament and demobilization in conjunction and full coordination with UNAMSIL;

12. Stresses the need for close cooperation and coordination between ECOMOG and UNAMSIL in carrying out their respective tasks, and welcomes the intended establishment of joint operations centres at headquarters and, if necessary, also at subordinate levels in the field;

13. Reiterates the importance of the safety, security and freedom of movement of United Nations and associated personnel, notes that the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF have agreed in the Peace Agreement to provide guarantees in this regard, and calls upon all parties in Sierra Leone to respect fully the status of United Nations and associated personnel;

14. Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, decides that in the discharge of its mandate UNAMSIL may take the necessary action to ensure the security and freedom of movement of its personnel and, within its capabilities and areas of deployment, to afford protection to civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, taking into account the responsibilities of the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG;

15. Underlines the importance of including in UNAMSIL personnel with appropriate training in international humanitarian, human rights and refugee law, including child and gender-related provisions, negotiation and communication skills, cultural awareness and civilian-military coordination;

16. Requests the Government of Sierra Leone to conclude a status-of-forces agreement with the Secretary-General within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution, and recalls that pending the conclusion of such an agreement

the model status-of-forces agreement dated 9 October 1990 (A/45/594) should apply provisionally;

17. Stresses the urgent need to promote peace and national reconciliation and to foster accountability and respect for human rights in Sierra Leone, underlines in this context the key role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the Human Rights Commission and the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace established under the Peace Agreement, and urges the Government of Sierra Leone to ensure the prompt establishment and effective functioning of these bodies with the full participation of all parties and drawing on the relevant experience and support of Member States, specialized bodies, other multilateral organizations and civil society;

18. Emphasizes that the plight of children is among the most pressing challenges facing Sierra Leone, welcomes the continued commitment of the Government of Sierra Leone to work with the United Nations Children's Fund, the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict and other international agencies to give particular attention to the long-term rehabilitation of child combatants in Sierra Leone, and reiterates its encouragement of those involved to address the special needs of all children affected by the conflict;

19. Urges all parties concerned to ensure that refugees and internally displaced persons are protected and are enabled to return voluntarily and in safety to their homes, and encourages States and international organizations to provide urgent assistance to that end;

20. Stresses the urgent need for substantial additional resources to finance the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and calls upon all States, international and other organizations to contribute generously to the multidonor trust fund established by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development for this purpose;

21. Stresses also the continued need for urgent and substantial humanitarian assistance to the people of Sierra Leone, as well as for sustained and generous assistance for the longer term tasks of peace-building, reconstruction, economic and social recovery and development in Sierra Leone, and urges all States and international and other organizations to provide such assistance as a priority;

22. Calls upon all parties to ensure safe and unhindered access of humanitarian assistance to those in need in Sierra Leone, to guarantee the safety and security of humanitarian personnel and to respect strictly the relevant provisions of international humanitarian and human rights law;

23. Urges the Government of Sierra Leone to expedite the formation of professional and accountable national police and armed forces, including through their restructuring and training, without which it will not be possible to achieve long-term stability, national reconciliation and the reconstruction of the country, and underlines the importance of support and assistance from the international community in this regard;

24. Welcomes the continued work by the United Nations on the development of the Strategic Framework for Sierra Leone aimed at enhancing effective collaboration and coordination within the United Nations system and between the United Nations and its national and international partners in Sierra Leone;

25. Notes the intention of the Secretary-General to keep the situation in Sierra Leone under close review and to revert to the Council with additional proposals if required;

26. Requests the Secretary-General to report to the Council every 45 days to provide updates on the status of the peace process, on security conditions on the ground and on the continued level of deployment of ECOMOG personnel, so that troop levels and the tasks to be performed can be evaluated as outlined in paragraphs 49 and 50 of the report of the Secretary-General of 23 September 1999;

27. Decides to remain actively seized of the matter.

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7. Security Council Resolution 1306 (5 July 2000) S/RES/1306.

United Nations S/RES/1306 (2000)

Security Council

Distr.: General
5 July 2000

Resolution 1306 (2000)

Adopted by the Security Council at its 4168th meeting, on 5 July 2000

The Security Council,

Recalling its previous resolutions and the statements of its President concerning the situation in Sierra Leone, and in particular its resolutions 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997, 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998 and 1299 (2000) of 19 May 2000,

Affirming the commitment of all States to respect the sovereignty, political independence and territorial integrity of Sierra Leone,

Having considered the report of the Secretary-General of 19 May 2000 (S/2000/455), and in particular its paragraph 94,

Determining that the situation in Sierra Leone continues to constitute a threat to international peace and security in the region,

Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations,

A

Expressing its concern at the role played by the illicit trade in diamonds in fuelling the conflict in Sierra Leone, and at reports that such diamonds transit neighbouring countries, including the territory of Liberia,

Welcoming ongoing efforts by interested States, the International Diamond Manufacturers Association, the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, the Diamond High Council, other representatives of the diamond industry and non-governmental experts to improve the transparency of the international diamond trade, and encouraging further action in this regard,

Emphasizing that the legitimate diamond trade is of great economic importance for many States, and can make a positive contribution to prosperity and stability and to the reconstruction of countries emerging from conflict, and *emphasizing further* that nothing in this resolution is intended to undermine the legitimate diamond trade or to diminish confidence in the integrity of the legitimate diamond industry,

Welcoming the decision taken by the member States of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) at their Abuja summit on 28-29 May 2000 to undertake a regional inquiry into the illegal trade in diamonds,

Taking note of the letter of 29 June 2000 to its President from the Permanent Representative of Sierra Leone to the United Nations and of its enclosure (S/2000/641),

1. *Decides* that all States shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone to their territory;

2. *Requests* the Government of Sierra Leone to ensure, as a matter of urgency, that an effective Certificate of Origin regime for trade in diamonds is in operation in Sierra Leone;

3. *Also requests* States, relevant international organizations and other bodies in a position to do so to offer assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone to facilitate the full operation of an effective Certificate of Origin regime for Sierra Leone rough diamonds;

4. *Further requests* the Government of Sierra Leone to notify the Committee established by resolution 1132 (1997) ("the Committee") of the details of such a Certificate of Origin regime when it is fully in operation;

5. *Decides* that rough diamonds controlled by the Government of Sierra Leone through the Certificate of Origin regime shall be exempt from the measures imposed in paragraph 1 above when the Committee has reported to the Council, taking into account expert advice obtained at the request of the Committee through the Secretary-General, that an effective regime is fully in operation;

6. *Decides* that the measures referred to in paragraph 1 above are established for an initial period of 18 months, and *affirms* that, at the end of this period, it will review the situation in Sierra Leone, including the extent of the Government's authority over the diamond-producing areas, in order to decide whether to extend these measures for a further period and, if necessary, to modify them or adopt further measures;

7. *Further decides* that the Committee shall also undertake the following tasks:

(a) To seek from all States further information regarding the action taken by them with a view to implementing effectively the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above;

(b) To consider information brought to its attention concerning violations of the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above, identifying where possible persons or entities, including vessels, reported to be engaged in such violations;

(c) To make periodic reports to the Security Council on information submitted to it regarding alleged violations of the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above, identifying where possible persons or entities, including vessels, reported to be engaged in such violations;

(d) To promulgate such guidelines as may be necessary to facilitate the implementation of the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above;

(e) To continue its cooperation with other relevant sanctions committees in particular that established pursuant to resolution 985 (1995) of 13 April 1995 concerning Liberia and that established pursuant to resolution 864 (1993) of 15 September 1993 concerning the situation in Angola;

8. *Requests* all States to report to the Committee established by resolution 1132 (1997), within 30 days of the adoption of this resolution, on the actions they have taken to implement the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above;

9. *Calls upon* all States, in particular those through which rough diamonds from Sierra Leone are known to transit, and all relevant international and regional organizations to act strictly in accordance with the provisions of this resolution notwithstanding the existence of any rights or obligations conferred or imposed by any international agreement or any contract entered into or any licence or permit granted prior to the date of adoption of this resolution;

10. *Encourages* the International Diamond Manufacturers Association, the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, the Diamond High Council and all other representatives of the diamond industry to work with the Government of Sierra Leone and the Committee to develop methods and working practices to facilitate the effective implementation of this resolution;

11. *Invites* States, international organizations, members of the diamond industry and other relevant entities in a position to do so to offer assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone to contribute to the further development of a well-structured and well-regulated diamond industry that provides for the identification of the provenance of rough diamonds;

12. *Requests* the Committee to hold an exploratory hearing in New York no later than 31 July 2000 to assess the role of diamonds in the Sierra Leone conflict and the link between trade in Sierra Leone diamonds and trade in arms and related *materiél* in violation of resolution 1171 (1998), involving representatives of interested States and regional organizations, the diamond industry and other relevant experts, *requests* the Secretary-General to provide the necessary resources, and *further requests* the Committee to report on the hearing to the Council;

13. *Welcomes* the commitments made by certain members of the diamond industry not to trade in diamonds originating from conflict zones, including in Sierra Leone, *urges* all other companies and individuals involved in trading in rough diamonds to make similar declarations in respect of Sierra Leone diamonds, and *underlines* the importance of relevant financial institutions encouraging such companies to do so;

14. *Stresses* the need for the extension of government authority to the diamond-producing areas for a durable solution to the problem of illegal exploitation of diamonds in Sierra Leone;

15. *Decides* to conduct a first review on the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above no later than 15 September 2000, and further such reviews every six months after the date of adoption of the resolution, and to consider at those times what further measures may be necessary;

16. *Urges* all States, relevant United Nations bodies and, as appropriate, other organizations and interested parties to report to the Committee information on possible violations of the measures imposed by paragraph 1 above;

B

Stressing the need to ensure effective implementation of the measures concerning arms and related materiel imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998),

Stressing the obligation of all Member States, including those neighbouring Sierra Leone, to comply fully with the measures imposed by the Council,

Recalling the ECOWAS Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons in West Africa adopted in Abuja on 31 October 1998 (S/1998/1194, annex),

17. *Reminds* States of their obligation to implement fully the measures imposed by resolution 1171 (1998), and *calls upon* them, where they have not already done so, to enforce, strengthen or enact, as appropriate, legislation making it a criminal offence under domestic law for their nationals or other persons operating on their territory to act in violation of the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of that resolution, and to report to the Committee not later than 31 July 2000 on the implementation of those measures;

18. *Urges* all States, relevant United Nations bodies and, as appropriate, other organizations and interested parties to report to the Committee information on possible violations of the measures imposed by the Council;

19. *Requests* the Secretary-General, in consultation with the Committee, to establish a panel of experts, for an initial period of four months, consisting of no more than five members:

(a) To collect information on possible violations of the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998) and the link between trade in diamonds and trade in arms and related materiel including through visits to Sierra Leone and other States as appropriate, and making contact with those they consider appropriate, including diplomatic missions;

(b) To consider the adequacy, for the purpose of detecting flights of aircraft suspected of carrying arms and related materiel across national borders in violation of the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998), of air traffic control systems in the region;

(c) To participate, if possible, in the hearing referred to in paragraph 12 above;

(d) To report to the Council through the Committee with observations and recommendations on strengthening the implementation of the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998), and of those imposed by paragraph 1 above, no later than 31 October 2000;

and *further requests* the Secretary-General to provide the necessary resources;

20. *Expresses* its readiness, on the basis, *inter alia*, of the report produced pursuant to paragraph 19 (d) above, to consider appropriate action in relation to States that it determines to have violated the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998) and paragraph 1 above;

21. *Urges* all States to cooperate with the panel in the discharge of its mandate, and *underlines*, in this regard, the importance of the cooperation and technical expertise of the Secretariat and other parts of the United Nations system;

22. *Requests* the Committee to strengthen existing contacts with regional organizations, in particular ECOWAS and the Organization of African Unity, and relevant international organizations, including INTERPOL, with a view to identifying ways to improve effective implementation of the measures imposed by paragraph 2 of resolution 1171 (1998);

23. *Requests* the Committee to make information it considers relevant publicly available through appropriate media, including through the improved use of information technology;

24. *Requests* the Secretary-General to publicize the provisions of this resolution and the obligations imposed by it;

25. *Decides* to remain actively seized of the matter.

11. Fourth Secretary General Report on the Situation in Sierra Leone, 18 March 1998 (S/1998/249), pages 2, 5, 6-7, paragraphs 6, 20 and 28.

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FOURTH REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to the presidential statement issued by the Security Council on 26 February 1998 (S/PRST/1998/5), by which the Council requested me to submit detailed proposals concerning the role of the United Nations and its future presence in Sierra Leone. It covers the developments in Sierra Leone since the issuance of my third report on 5 February 1998 (S/1998/103).

II. IMPLEMENTATION OF SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 1132 (1997)

Action taken by the Economic Community of West African States and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group

2. On 5 February 1998, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Committee of Five on Sierra Leone came to New York to brief the members of the Security Council and myself on the situation in Sierra Leone. The Chairman of the Committee of Five, the Foreign Minister of Nigeria, Chief Tom Ikimi, said an impasse had been reached in the implementation of the Conakry Agreement. He pointed out that the junta had raised three issues which, in its view, stood in the way of the implementation of the Agreement, namely, the release of Corporal Foday Sankoh, the proposed exemption of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces from the disarmament process and the composition of the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) which consisted primarily of Nigerian troops.

3. Minister Ikimi noted that because of this impasse, ECOMOG had been unable to deploy in Sierra Leone to carry out the disarmament and demobilization of the Sierra Leonean combatants, and it had therefore not been possible to deploy United Nations military observers alongside ECOMOG.

4. Minister Ikimi requested my support in launching a high-level effort to support ECOWAS through the establishment of a group of friends of Sierra Leone, and expressed the view that the Security Council should endorse the 22 April 1998 deadline for the restoration of constitutional authority and the full implementation of the Conakry Agreement of 23 October 1997.

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5. I reaffirmed to the Committee of Five the desire of the United Nations for close cooperation between the United Nations and ECOWAS, and stated that ECOMOG needed to develop a concept of operations on the basis of which the United Nations could finalize its own deployment plan. ECOMOG should also compile a statement of its own logistical requirements in order to attract the necessary support from potential donors.

6. On the same day, responding to an attack by junta forces on their position at Lungi, ECOMOG launched a military attack on the junta, which culminated approximately one week later in the collapse of the junta and its expulsion by force from Freetown after heavy fighting. The fall of the city on 13 February, which was accompanied by widespread looting and some reprisal killings, led to the flight or capture of many soldiers and leaders of the junta. ECOWAS has assured me that the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has been allowed to visit prisoners detained by ECOMOG in Freetown. However, some of the former leaders of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), including its Chairman, Johnny Paul Koroma, are believed to be still at large. Acting in concert with the local Kamajors and other traditional hunter militia (known as the Civil Defence Unit), ECOMOG has subsequently taken control of the towns of Bo, Kenema and Zimmi in the south of the country, and Lunsar, Makeni and Kabala in the north. ECOMOG has also reported the capture of Daru, which would mean that the remnants of the junta have now been dislodged from every major town except for Kailahun. Following scattered fighting in the latter part of February, the country now appears to be quiet. A number of foreign aid workers and missionaries taken hostage by armed elements in February were later released unharmed. However, press reports in mid-March indicated that Revolutionary United Front (RUF) members in Kono had murdered civilians and taken 200 hostages, reportedly including foreign nationals.

7. On 18 February, accompanied by the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Mr. Lansana Kouyaté, Minister Ikimi visited Sierra Leone to assess the situation on the ground. They interviewed some former junta soldiers now detained by ECOMOG and visited the State House complex and the Parliament buildings. Many of the government buildings were found to have been looted and were in poor condition, and a number of unexploded bombs were scattered about. However, the ECOWAS team, which was enthusiastically greeted by crowds, found that in many respects life had returned to normal in the capital. As noted below, my Special Envoy also visited Freetown on the same day.

8. From 25 to 27 February 1998, the Committee of Five met in the margins of the meeting of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) Council of Ministers held in Addis Ababa to review the situation in Sierra Leone. The Committee issued a communiqué, which was subsequently circulated as document S/1998/170.

9. On 4 March 1998, the members of the Committee of Five returned to New York and met again with members of the Security Council and with me. Chief Ikimi briefed me on his visit to Freetown on 18 February and his subsequent meeting with President Tejan Kabbah in Conakry. Following this meeting, it was announced that President Kabbah would return to his country on 10 March 1998.

10. ECOMOG has also prepared a detailed list of logistical requirements for its operations in Sierra Leone. During the visit to New York of the Committee of

Five, Chief Ikimi requested the assistance of the United Nations and the international community in ensuring that these requirements could be met. That request was reaffirmed by the Chairman of ECOWAS, General Sani Abacha, in his statement at the ceremony held to mark the return of President Kabbah to Freetown on 10 March.

Action taken by the United Nations

11. On 18 February 1998, a few days after ECOMOG had established control over most of the city of Freetown, my Special Envoy, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, led a security and humanitarian assessment mission to the capital and to Lungi comprising United Nations and non-governmental organization officials. The mission determined the most immediate needs of the population. Mr. Okelo handed over a quantity of medicines donated by the World Health Organization (WHO) to local hospitals and began preparations for the re-establishment of a United Nations presence in Freetown. A few days later, the World Food Programme (WFP) delivered 857 metric tons of food to Freetown by ship.

12. Early in February, pursuant to a request by members of the Security Council for a technical assessment of the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone since the coup d'état of 25 May 1997, an inter-agency mission travelled to the subregion. Its report is contained in document S/1998/155. Further information on the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone can be found in section III of the present report.

13. Pursuant to the statement issued by the President of the Security Council on 26 February, I have initiated the necessary action to establish a Trust Fund for Sierra Leone. Contributions would help finance logistical assistance to ECOMOG, rehabilitation assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone and activities, including disarmament, demobilization and human rights.

14. On 7 March 1998, my Special Envoy reopened the United Nations office in Freetown, which had been closed shortly after the 25 May 1997 coup d'état and was temporarily relocated in Conakry, Guinea. The office is now being strengthened to comprise civilian political and humanitarian officers, a military adviser and, in due course, human rights and civilian police advisers and public information personnel. The function of the office is to liaise with the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOWAS, ECOMOG and the United Nations and its agencies, as well as non-governmental organizations, and to act as the overall authority for all United Nations activities in the country. My proposals for deploying military liaison personnel as part of the United Nations presence on the ground can be found in section IV of the present report. My Special Envoy will also temporarily retain a small office in Conakry, but he expects to be fully established in Freetown by the end of March, thus paving the way for the return of all United Nations agencies to Sierra Leone.

Action taken by the Government of Sierra Leone

15. On 13 February 1998, President Kabbah called a meeting in Conakry of potential donors, including the European Union, Germany, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United Nations, to discuss his Government's priorities; the nature of the assistance the international

community could provide; and the urgent provision of humanitarian assistance. The President announced that he had created a task force to prepare the ground for the resumption of work by his Government, to assess damage to the infrastructure and to prepare for the resumption of education. President Kabbah identified the immediate priorities of his Government as the provision of humanitarian supplies and petroleum products, the reactivation of international aid programmes and the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants. Three other areas that required special attention have been identified as the training and restructuring of the police force, the creation of job opportunities for young people and the construction of low-cost housing. President Kabbah also indicated that he intended to streamline his administration and appoint technical experts to cabinet positions.

16. Following the removal by ECOMOG of the military junta from power, President Kabbah issued a statement announcing his intention to submit proposals to Parliament concerning the rebuilding of his country. The President also spoke out against the reprisal killings, which, in some cases, had accompanied the seizure of control from the junta.

17. On 10 March 1998, accompanied by General Sani Abacha, Chairman of ECOWAS and Head of State of Nigeria, as well as the Heads of State of Guinea, Mali and Niger, President Lansana Conteh, President Alpha Oumar Konare and President Ibrahim Bare Mainassara, and the Vice-President of Gambia, President Tejan Kabbah returned to Freetown to resume his office as Head of State of Sierra Leone. He was greeted by large and enthusiastic crowds. Mr. Ibrahima Fall, Assistant Secretary-General for Political Affairs, delivered on my behalf a message of congratulations to the President stating that his return represented the accomplishment of a major objective not only of the people of Sierra Leone, but also of ECOWAS, OAU, the United Nations and the entire international community. I expressed my deep regret at the violence, loss of life and property and immense suffering undergone by the people of Sierra Leone since the coup d'état and extended my condolences to the families of those who lost their lives in opposing it. Furthermore, I informed the President that the United Nations looked forward to working closely with him in helping his Government to reassert its authority and strengthen its capacity throughout the country.

18. In a statement made at the ceremony marking his return to Sierra Leone, President Kabbah declared his intention to embark on the process of national reconciliation and reconstruction of the country, to form a broad-based Government and to appoint a policy advisory committee. In his first meeting with my Special Envoy after his return, President Kabbah stressed the need for an early deployment of United Nations military personnel, the urgent provision of humanitarian assistance and the prompt establishment of the Trust Fund for Sierra Leone.

Military and security situation in Sierra Leone

19. Freetown is now fully under the control of ECOMOG and is increasingly secure. Some unexploded ordnance and landmines have been found, but these are not a threat to security. The peninsula on which the capital stands has also been secured. With the capture of almost every other major town in the country,

and through its deployment further into the countryside in the north, south and east, ECOMOG has established itself successfully across most of the country.

20. Nevertheless, the fact that many of the senior junta leaders, including the former Chairman of the AFRC, Johnny Paul Koroma, have not thus far been apprehended, as well as the continuing violence inflicted on civilians during their retreat from ECOMOG forces by RUF and other armed elements, indicate that the security situation in Sierra Leone is still a source of concern. Though ECOMOG has begun to collect weapons in Freetown, a major disarmament, demobilization and reintegration exercise will be needed to ensure security.

21. ECOMOG has also developed a concept of operations for its deployment throughout Sierra Leone that sets out the preliminary planning for the disarmament and demobilization of Sierra Leonean combatants. In summary, the tasks ECOMOG has set for itself include:

(a) Deployment throughout Sierra Leone;

(b) Manning of selected entry points by land, sea or air in order to ensure that no arms, ammunition or war matériel are brought into the country;

(c) Disarmament of ex-combatants at designated sites;

(d) Establishment of road blocks to check the movement of arms and ammunition and to assist in extending protection to refugees and internally displaced persons;

(e) Conducting patrols to create an atmosphere conducive to freedom of movement and the restoration of established authority;

(f) Providing security for key individuals, United Nations personnel, including military personnel, and non-governmental organizations.

22. The plan calls for the deployment of 15,000 troops in four sectors: western, northern, southern and eastern. The western sector, comprising Freetown and the airports of Lungi and Hastings, is further subdivided, and would support the deployment of seven battalions, an air force detachment and an artillery brigade. This appears to be an ample level of force for the protection of the capital and its airport.

23. In the northern sector, ECOMOG would deploy a brigade headquartered at Makeni, with battalions located at Port Loko, Magburaka and Kabala. In the south, ECOMOG will locate its brigade headquarters at Bo and deploy battalions at Moyamba, Pujehun and Kenema. Naval assets would also be required. The eastern sector is described as strategic in view of its mineral resources, the presence of heavy RUF and Kamajor concentration, and the border with Liberia. ECOMOG therefore considers that operations in the east could prove difficult and risky and demand a robust approach, alertness and deployment in strength. Battalions would be located at Yengema, Zimmi and Kailahun.

24. ECOMOG would also establish a disarmament committee which would be charged, inter alia, with selecting disarmament sites; setting standards and guidelines

for disarmament; conducting the disarmament, coordination of resources and cooperation with other organizations; classifying and transporting recovered weapons and ammunition; disseminating information about the process and providing security for all participants. A ceasefire violations committee and a humanitarian services committee would also be created.

25. My Special Envoy and his staff are actively discussing with the Government and with ECOMOG the further elaboration and implementation of its concept of operations, which provides a suitable basis for the possible subsequent deployment of United Nations military personnel, subject to the authorization of the Security Council. I will revert to the Council with further recommendations on such deployment following a further assessment by my Special Envoy.

Other action taken pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997)

26. Since my previous report, a number of States have written to me, in compliance with paragraph 13 of resolution 1132 (1997), concerning the steps they have taken to give effect to the provisions contained in paragraphs 5 and 6 of the resolution relating to the sanctions imposed by the Council on Sierra Leone. The latest list of those States can be found in a separate report to the Security Council contained in document S/1998/112.

27. In a letter dated 9 March 1998 addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/1998/215), the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations conveyed a request from his Government for the convening of an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the lifting of the sanctions imposed on the importation of petroleum and petroleum products into the country in paragraph 6 of resolution 1132 (1997). On 16 March, the Council adopted resolution 1156 (1998) terminating, with immediate effect, the prohibitions on the sale or supply to Sierra Leone of petroleum and petroleum products referred to in resolution 1132 (1997).

III. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

28. A number of United Nations humanitarian assessment missions have now been undertaken to Freetown, Kambia, Bo, Kenema and Makeni. These missions determined that the current humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone remains serious. The primary health care system has been devastated by lack of supplies, looting and the exodus of medical personnel at all levels. Widespread neglect of water and sanitation facilities has increased the exposure of hundreds of thousands to disease. The normal distribution of food to vulnerable groups has been disrupted, affecting children in particular. Many children have also suffered exposure to acts of violence by being sent into battle as combatants. The public education system has collapsed; all schools have been closed since the coup d'état last May. The combination of fighting and looting has led to extensive damage to housing and infrastructure in the provincial towns. The number of internally displaced people has increased, and the welfare of some 14,000 Liberian refugees remains a matter of concern, as many fled from their camps during the recent fighting. The majority of Sierra Leoneans who took refuge in Conakry during the fighting in Freetown have returned. However, some 24,000 Sierra Leoneans have arrived in Liberia since mid-February and the

influx continues, albeit at a reduced rate. A further influx of 3,000 refugees from the Kailahun area, still not under ECOMOG control, has been registered by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at its camp in Kissidougou, Guinea.

29. United Nations agencies prepared a consolidated inter-agency flash appeal, which was launched on 3 March 1998. Through this appeal, I am seeking financial contributions from Member States in the amount of $11.2 million to meet priority humanitarian needs in Sierra Leone over the next three months. Priority needs include support to agriculture through the provision of seeds and tools, the re-establishment of basic health and education services, the resumption of food aid distributions and the provision of assistance and protection to the most vulnerable groups affected by the current conflict. The flash appeal complements the 90-day programme of the Government of Sierra Leone, which serves as a framework for action following the restoration of democratic civilian rule in the country.

30. The full deployment of ECOMOG and the restoration of the legitimate Government is expected to provide increased opportunities for the humanitarian community to accelerate its activities in response to the humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone, and will also encourage the return to their homes of internally displaced persons. It is hoped that the international community will contribute generously to the humanitarian programme outlined in the flash appeal, in order to provide the crucial assistance needed to sustain lives and to promote stability in Sierra Leone.

31. Medium-term tasks, such as the assisted repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees and reintegration of ex-combatants, are not covered in the flash appeal. However, United Nations agencies are already re-establishing their offices in Freetown and are eager to restart their social and economic development programmes, important components of which must be the re-building of the capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone to deliver services, stimulate economic recovery and promote national reconciliation and reconstruction.

Commencement of the repatriation of refugees

32. At the request of President Kabbah, and with the help of a donation of $120,000 from the Government of Japan, UNHCR has begun to prepare for the repatriation from Conakry of up to 5,000 Sierra Leonean refugees, including 200 civil servants who fled Freetown after the May coup d'état and who will be engaged in the administration of the country.

33. ECOMOG control of major towns in southern Sierra Leone is also likely to encourage the early repatriation by road of Sierra Leonean refugees from Liberia. It is further expected that the removal of the junta could lead to the repatriation of the 400,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in the West African subregion.

34. Of the total caseload of Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone, some 2,800 have thus far been re-registered with UNHCR, about half of them requesting repatriation. UNHCR has begun making arrangements for them to be repatriated by sea.

United Nations Development Programme mission to Sierra Leone

35. A multi-unit mission to Sierra Leone dispatched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) has proposed four projects for immediate implementation following their approval by the Government. These are:

(a) A start-up project for the demobilization of various categories of combatants;

(b) Support for national institutions to enable a rapid return to normal functioning;

(c) Resettlement with emphasis on quick-impact micro-projects, reconciliation and youth development;

(d) Awareness-raising in order to help the country come to terms with the problems it faces and to promote national reconciliation and peace-building.

36. The mission is also assisting the Government to prepare a document for a donors' consultation proposed to be held in Brussels on 31 March 1998. UNDP plans to close its Coordination Office in Conakry by the end of March if the security situation continues to stabilize, and to return the staff of its Country Office to Freetown.

IV. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

37. The developments that have taken place in Sierra Leone since the submission of my last report should be seen as positive in the context of the wider situation in which they transpired. The removal of the junta by the action of ECOMOG has opened the way for the re-establishment not just of the legitimate Government, but also of civil order, the democratic process and the beginnings of economic and social development. The return of President Kabbah to Freetown on 10 March therefore presents the people of Sierra Leone and the international community with a challenge and an opportunity which must be grasped with a sense of urgency. We must not let slip the chance to restore Sierra Leone to the ranks of democratic nations and to help strengthen the stability of the subregion.

38. I commend the consistent diplomacy of ECOWAS and, in particular, its Committee of Five on Sierra Leone, and the contribution made by ECOMOG officers and men to the removal of the military junta. I call on ECOWAS and ECOMOG to continue their efforts to bring peace to Sierra Leone in accordance with the relevant provisions of resolution 1132 (1997) and of the Charter of the United Nations. Sierra Leoneans committed to the democratic system also played their part in maintaining a stubborn resistance to the illegal regime. These included not only the members of the Civil Defence Forces, but also countless unarmed civilians who persistently withheld their cooperation from the regime and denied it legitimacy. I salute the courage of the Sierra Leonean people and honour the memory of those who died opposing the junta.

39. I also congratulate President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah on his resumption of his responsibilities as Head of State of Sierra Leone following his return. The United Nations should give his Government every possible assistance in its efforts to promote national reconciliation among his people and to strengthen the authority and capacity of his Government.

40. As I stated in my message to the annual summit meeting of the Organization of African Unity at Harare, and in the special message which was delivered by my Special Envoy, Mr. Ibrahima Fall, on the occasion of President Kabbah's return, Africa can no longer tolerate or accept as faits accomplis coups d'état against elected Governments or the illegal seizure of power by military cliques.

Strengthening the office of the Special Envoy

41. In order to take full and prompt advantage of the changed situation, I wish to propose a comprehensive set of measures to assist the Government and people of Sierra Leone in both their immediate and longer-term needs. As a first step, I intend to strengthen the office of my Special Envoy in Freetown. In order to contribute to the restoration of respect for the rule of law, civil order and human rights in Sierra Leone, I have consulted with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights concerning the possible deployment of human rights observers. In the meantime, a human rights officer will be attached to the office of my Special Envoy at an early date.

42. I am also considering attaching to the office two civilian police officials to advise the Government on police training and procedures in a democratic society. An additional political officer and a military adviser would assist my Special Envoy in his consultations with ECOMOG on the development of planning for disarmament and demobilization, while a humanitarian officer would facilitate the coordination of activities of the United Nations and non-governmental organizations in Sierra Leone and advise my Special Envoy on all issues involving non-governmental organizations. The office will also require a public information programme to disseminate information among the population about its activities, in particular in connection with the disarmament and demobilization of ex-combatants and their reintegration into society.

Deployment of military liaison personnel

43. I also recommend the deployment to Sierra Leone of up to 10 United Nations military liaison officers, whose functions would be as follows:

(a) To liaise closely with ECOMOG and to report on the military situation in the country;

(b) To ascertain the state of and to assist in the finalization of planning by ECOMOG for future tasks such as the identification of the former combatant elements to be disarmed and the design of a disarmament plan.

44. Should the Security Council decide to authorize the deployment of these military liaison officers, as well as the military and civilian police advisers, as indicated in my third report (S/1998/103, para. 35), the costs relating

thereto should be considered an expense of the Organization to be borne by Member States in accordance with Article 17, paragraph 2, of the Charter of the United Nations and the assessments to be levied on Member States should be credited to the special account to be established for Sierra Leone. The related cost estimates will be issued shortly as an addendum to the present report.

45. The military liaison team would complement the role of the military advisers who will, under the authority of my Special Envoy, continue to assist the Government of Sierra Leone to resolve issues related to the disarmament process. The military advisers will also be instrumental in assisting the Government of Sierra Leone in the development of planning for bilateral programmes to restructure and rebuild appropriate security forces for Sierra Leone in the future. In view of the importance of such retraining, I appeal to potential donors to show generosity in providing bilateral assistance.

46. The presence of United Nations military liaison officers, perhaps later supplemented by human rights observers, could also assist in the process of national reconciliation in Sierra Leone. Their close cooperation with ECOMOG in the countryside and their impartial reporting to my Special Envoy would reassure former combatants that they can surrender their weapons in safety.

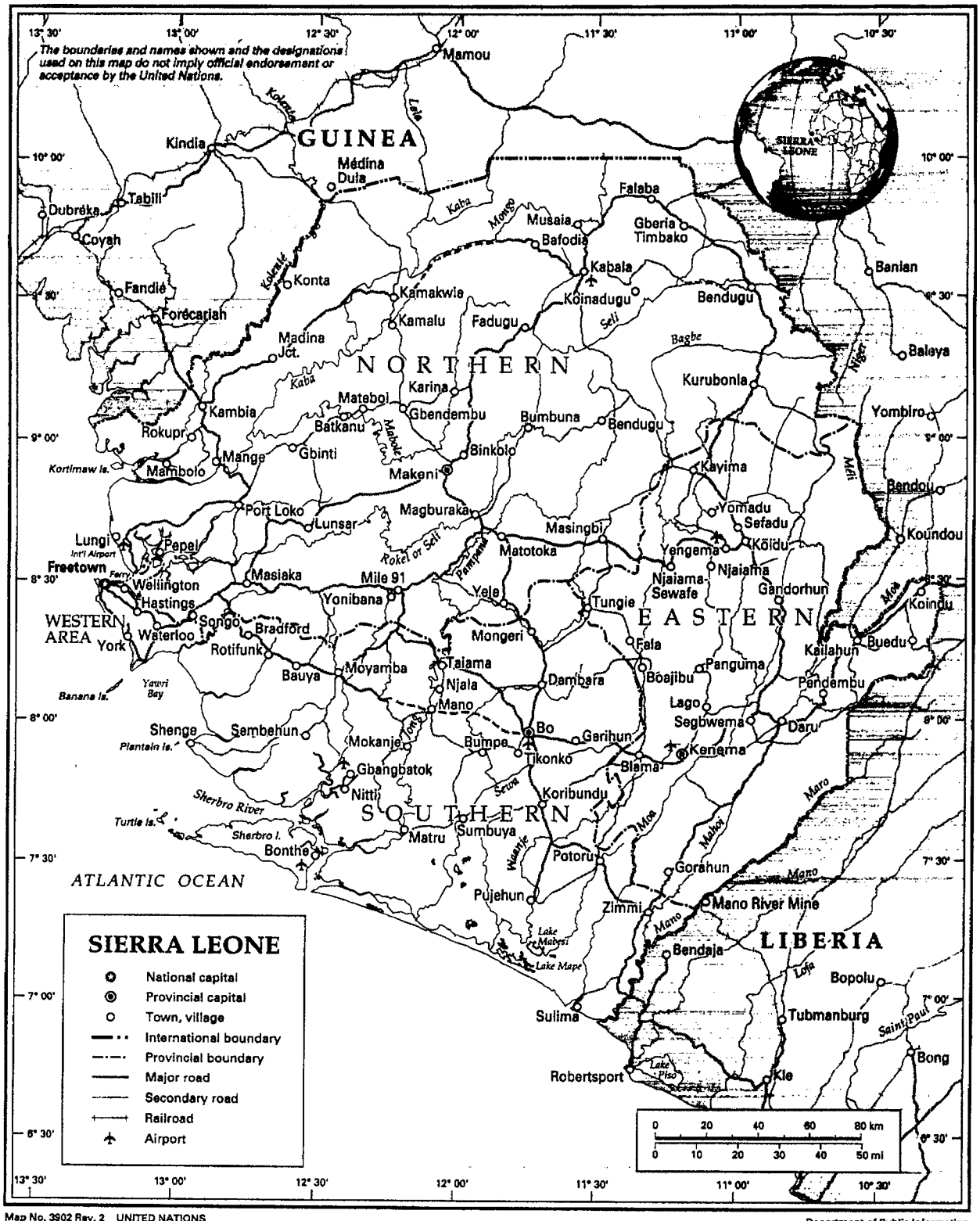
Provision of humanitarian assistance

47. The provision of humanitarian assistance must also proceed expeditiously. The plight of Sierra Leoneans deprived of food, medical care and shelter by the recent fighting and the abuses of junta rule is acute, and it must be addressed as a matter of urgency with all the resources available to the aid agencies. While I remain deeply concerned about the humanitarian situation in many parts of the country, I am encouraged by news that humanitarian needs are beginning to be addressed. Food aid and emergency medical supplies have entered the country through the port of Freetown and have been delivered to some provinces by plane, helicopter and overland in a prompt and coordinated manner.

Contributions to the Trust Fund

48. I call on Member States to display generosity in contributing to the Trust Fund for Sierra Leone which, with the encouragement of the Security Council, I have established. My appreciation goes to the Government of the United Kingdom, which has already announced its readiness to contribute £2 million, and has been actively assisting in the provision of aid to Sierra Leoneans. I also urge all Member States to provide generous assistance to ECOMOG to enable it to meet its logistical requirements and to fulfil its mandate in Sierra Leone.

49. The events that have taken place in Sierra Leone over the past year carry a warning that similar crises may arise and challenge the international community to consider how it should respond to them. Democracy in Sierra Leone may have deep roots, but it is a fragile plant and must be nurtured. The international community must maintain its vigilance and support, not least in the prompt provision of emergency bilateral and multilateral aid. Assistance for the laudable efforts of ECOWAS and the logistical requirements of ECOMOG as it continues its deployment through the countryside will also be required. I trust that such support will be forthcoming.



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12. Fifth Report of the Secretary General on the Situation in Sierra Leone, 9 June 1998 (S/1998/486), pages 5, 7, 8, paragraphs 27, 35, 36, and 44.

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FIFTH REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE SITUATION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 5 of its resolution 1162 (1998) of 17 April 1998, the Security Council authorized the deployment, with immediate effect, of up to 10 United Nations military liaison and security advisory personnel in accordance with paragraph 44 of my report of 18 March 1998 (S/1998/249) to Sierra Leone for a period of up to 90 days, to work under the authority of my Special Envoy, to coordinate closely with the Government of Sierra Leone and with ECOMOG, the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), to report on the military situation in the country, to ascertain the state of and to assist in the finalization of planning by the Government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG for future tasks, such as the identification of the former combatant elements to be disarmed and the design of a disarmament plan, as well as to perform other related security tasks as identified in other paragraphs of my above-mentioned report.

2. By paragraph 10 of that resolution, the Council requested me to report periodically, including on the activities of those military liaison and security advisory personnel and on the work of the office of my Special Envoy in Sierra Leone, within the reporting time-frame set out in paragraph 16 of resolution 1132 (1998) of 8 October 1997. The present report is submitted in accordance with that time-frame, by which the Security Council requested the submission of a report every 60 days.

II. DEVELOPMENTS SINCE MY LAST REPORT

Action taken by the Government of Sierra Leone

3. Following its restoration on 10 March 1998, the Government of Sierra Leone has acted to consolidate its authority throughout the country as far as possible. On 16 March, President Kabbah, acting with the support of Parliament, proclaimed a state of emergency empowering him to take measures to ensure security and stability. These measures included the right to detain suspects and restrict their movements, the imposition of a curfew and the right to

requisition property. The Government also announced the expulsion of 22 persons and the deprivation of 10 others of Sierra Leonean citizenship for collaborating with the junta and for economic crimes and immigration irregularities.

4. On 20 March 1998, President Kabbah announced that his new streamlined Cabinet would comprise persons of known competence and integrity. The members of the Cabinet, which consists of 15 Ministers, 11 Deputy Ministers and 5 Ministers of State, have all been confirmed by Parliament, as have the President's nominees for the post of Chief Justice and many positions in parastatal bodies. The President has also appointed a Policy Advisory Committee to guide the Government on crucial issues of national interest and to monitor the functioning of the public institutions.

5. The Government has also taken steps to establish a National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement and Rehabilitation, responsible for stimulating and coordinating related donor, Government and non-governmental activities. In accordance with its terms of reference, the National Commission would, in close collaboration with domestic and international funding agencies, draw up a two-year national rehabilitation, resettlement and reconstruction plan involving, inter alia, the repatriation and resettlement of internally displaced persons and refugees.

6. On 27 March 1998, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, Mr. Stan Mudenge, led a five-person Commonwealth delegation on a visit to Freetown in order to explore ways in which the Commonwealth could assist Sierra Leone in the task of national reconstruction and peace-building. At the conclusion of the visit, the participants announced that they would urge all member Governments of the Commonwealth to assist Sierra Leone bilaterally in every practicable way in its efforts to achieve national reconstruction and reconciliation, and to contribute to the Trust Fund to support peacekeeping and related activities in Sierra Leone.

7. On 21 April 1998, a three-man team of British police experts visited Sierra Leone to advise the Government on the restructuring of the police force and the improvement of its equipment. The team also discussed the recruitment and role of police advisers and relations between the police and armed forces, among other matters. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has also provided the Government with communications equipment for the police.

8. From 4 to 8 May 1998, the Government received a multi-donor joint mission by the World Bank, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the United Kingdom Department for International Development and the European Union (EU) to discuss a range of development-related matters. The joint mission also discussed the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, as described in more detail in section V below.

9. As described in section III below, on 6 May 1998, the Government instituted, in Freetown, the trials of a number of persons accused of plotting, participating in or collaborating with the coup d'état and the illegal junta.

10. On 22 May 1998, President Kabbah, in a comprehensive policy statement delivered at the State opening of the second session of Parliament, outlined major national policies his Government intends to pursue. These include: establishing guidelines for development activities, a framework for the creation of a new army and the restructuring and retraining of the police force; improving relations with neighbouring countries; reviving the national economy; strengthening key sectors of activity; and promoting civic education to sensitize Sierra Leoneans to the true meaning of peace and democracy. The President has also called for national reconciliation.

11. From 30 to 31 May 1998, the Minister of Internal Affairs, Mr. Charles Margai, and the Deputy Defence Minister, Chief Hinga Norman, visited Makeni and Kenema and called on all remnants of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council/Revolutionary United Front (AFRC/RUF) forces to surrender within two weeks, promising them that they would be protected and treated fairly in accordance with the law.

12. On 4 June 1998, at a summit meeting of the leaders of the three Mano River Union countries, President Conteh and President Kabbah of Sierra Leone met at Conakry to discuss mutual cooperation in the subregion and relations between Liberia and Sierra Leone. Liberia was represented by the Vice-President, Mr. Enoch Dogolea.

Action taken by the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States

13. Following the expulsion of the illegal military junta from the capital, Freetown, in mid-February and the restoration of the democratically elected Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in the capital, ECOMOG moved swiftly to secure the area around Freetown, as well as the northern and southern provinces of the country, especially the towns of Makeni, Kambia and Kabala in the north and Bo and Kenema in the south. ECOMOG forces also advanced eastwards towards the Kono and Kailahun districts, where the forces of the former junta were concentrated.

14. Though ECOMOG has continued to make progress, it is severely overextended and its advance has been beset by logistical constraints, as well as by fierce resistance from elements of the AFRC and the RUF, the partners in the former junta. In mid-May, however, ECOMOG seized Koindu and Buedu on the eastern border of Sierra Leone with Guinea.

15. As ECOMOG troops approached, armed former junta elements attacked the local civilian population, killing, raping and mutilating hundreds of them, causing tens of thousands of Sierra Leoneans to flee into Liberia and Guinea in the last few weeks and tens of thousands more to flee into the interior of Sierra Leone. Hundreds of patients have been admitted to hospitals suffering from amputation of limbs and ears and severe lacerations. Humanitarian organizations fear that the actual number of victims may be much larger (see sect. III below).

16. ECOMOG is being supported by units of the Sierra Leonean Civil Defence Force (CDF), which is composed of irregular community-based fighters who fought the junta before the restoration of the legitimate Government. The Civil

Defence Force includes Kamajors, who are regionally based rural militia mainly from the south and parts of the east, as well as Tamaboros from the Koinadugu district, Donsos from the Kono district and Kapras, who are mainly from the Tonkolili district in the north. Though many CDF members are hunters who use traditional weapons, others are primarily farmers or students who joined the armed struggle against the junta. They are armed with a wide variety of weapons and often lack formal training and discipline. Though technically under ECOMOG control, their command and control structures are loose and informal.

17. On 4 and 5 May 1998 at Accra, my Special Envoy attended the seventeenth meeting of ECOWAS Chiefs of Staff convened to discuss the situation in Sierra Leone. At the meeting, the Nigerian Chief of Defence Staff, Major-General A. A. Abubakar, outlined ECOMOG's objectives in Sierra Leone as follows: the attainment of peace, the training of a new Sierra Leonean army, and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Sierra Leonean combatants into society, accompanied by humanitarian assistance. The achievement of these objectives would be followed by the withdrawal of ECOMOG.

18. ECOMOG has deployed three brigades and an independent battalion, altogether comprising approximately 12,000 men, in Sierra Leone and has appealed for a further 6,000 to enable it to carry out its functions more effectively. A number of participants expressed willingness, in principle, to contribute forces to ECOMOG's operations in Sierra Leone. However, the countries concerned stressed that they were not in a position to do so without substantial financial and logistical assistance.

Action taken by the United Nations

19. Beginning on 4 May 1998, pursuant to resolution 1162 (1998), eight military liaison personnel were deployed in Freetown under the authority of my Special Envoy. The military officers, who are led by a Brigadier-General from India, are from Kenya (two), the Russian Federation (two), the United Kingdom (one) and Zambia (two). Two police advisers, one from Namibia and one from Kenya, as well as an adviser on planning for disarmament and demobilization, are expected to be deployed shortly. Some vehicles and communications equipment have also been deployed to Sierra Leone for the use of the officers.

20. The liaison officers have begun to travel through parts of the country to assess the situation with a view to finalizing plans for their deployment and for the disarmament of former combatants. The ECOMOG Force Commander, Brigadier-General Maxwell Khobe, has welcomed their arrival and promised his full cooperation.

21. The office of my Special Envoy has also been strengthened by the addition of a political affairs officer and a human rights adviser. In addition, I have taken steps to strengthen the human rights element of the office of my Special Envoy and have approached a number of Governments on an urgent basis to request them to make available suitably qualified trial monitors.

22. From 26 to 29 May 1998, my Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara A. Otunnu, visited Sierra Leone to assess the plight of children affected by the conflict. During his visit, Mr. Otunnu met with

President Kabbah, Ministers and Parliamentarians, as well as with the Force Commander of ECOMOG, the National Coordinator of CDF and representatives of United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations. He visited Daru, Segbwema and Kenema, accompanied by the Minister for Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Mrs. Shirley Gbujama, my Special Envoy, the United Nations Resident Coordinator and the representative of UNICEF.

23. In discussions with the Government, ECOMOG and CDF, important commitments were made to my Special Representative in relation to the rights, protection and welfare of children. It was agreed that a joint task force for the demobilization of child combatants, comprising the Government, ECOMOG, CDF, the United Nations and international humanitarian agencies, would be constituted. The Government agreed not to recruit children under 18 years of age into a new national army. The Civil Defence Force committed to stop recruiting and initiating children under 18 and to begin the process of demobilization of child combatants within their ranks. Along with ECOMOG, CDF also undertook that children captured in or fleeing from areas held by junta elements would receive special protection. President Kabbah directed that a coordination group consisting of relevant Ministries, United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations, be established to coordinate an effective national response to the needs of children affected by armed conflict. Following their discussion with Mr. Otunnu, an all-party group of Parliamentarians constituted a caucus to serve as parliamentary advocates for the rights, protection and welfare of children affected by armed conflict in Sierra Leone.

24. At the conclusion of his visit, Mr. Otunnu proposed that the international community make Sierra Leone one of the pilot projects for a more concerted and effective response in the context of post-conflict peace-building.

Military and security situation in Sierra Leone

25. The security situation in Freetown continues to be favourable, with a strong but discreet ECOMOG presence and widespread deployment of the Sierra Leonean police. Schools, banks and markets are functioning normally, some international air links to the airport at Lungi have been restored and food and fuel products are widely available. Nevertheless, ECOMOG has continued to recover weapons in house-to-house searches conducted on the basis of information received about the presence in Freetown of former junta members and common criminals.

26. Despite ECOMOG's initial success in driving the elements of the junta rebels back towards the east of the country, several groups of rebels appear to have broken out of the Kailahun district and have moved northwards and westwards in an apparent attempt to re-establish some of their former bush camps in the north. They have been attacking towns and villages, terrorizing local communities and extorting food from them. The situation in the north is now considered unsatisfactory and food convoys have to be guarded by armed escort.

27. Moreover, in the course of their retreat towards the eastern part of the country, former junta elements inflicted extensive damage and engaged in indiscriminate looting and property destruction. In particular, hospitals in most communities lack beds, drugs and equipment.

28. The United States has contributed $3.9 million to ECOMOG over a four-month period through the logistics services company Pacific Architects and Engineers, which provided services to ECOMOG in Liberia. Some vehicles have already been made available. It is anticipated that this assistance will result in further gains by ECOMOG against the former junta forces. However, this contribution is not expected to assist in the deployment of additional ECOMOG forces, for which further contributions, whether bilaterally or through the Trust Fund to support peacekeeping and related activities in Sierra Leone, will be needed.

29. There are reports that many of the fighters supporting the former junta in the east are in fact Liberian nationals. The Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States believes it has identified some of the dead combatants as Liberians after clashes with junta elements and has reportedly captured more than 100 Liberian fighters in the vicinity of Kailahun and in Kono district.

30. On 5 May 1998, President Taylor wrote to me deprecating the "disturbing allegation" that the Government of Liberia was involved in the conflict in Sierra Leone and stressing his commitment to the maintenance of peace in the region. President Taylor informed me that he had proposed to the Chairman of ECOWAS that ECOMOG "cordon off" the border between the two countries, and said he would welcome the concurrence of the United Nations with his suggestion that United Nations monitors be deployed in the border area.

31. On 7 May 1998, the Liberian Government issued a policy statement reaffirming that it would not permit its territory to be used to destabilize any neighbouring country and stating that President Taylor had approved the deployment of an ECOMOG observer unit at the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone in Lofa County, Liberia.

32. The Government of Sierra Leone has welcomed the issuance of the policy statement and has disclosed that a Liberian delegation visiting Freetown to attend the funeral of the late spouse of the President, Mrs. Patricia Kabbah, had met with President Kabbah and discussed the improvement of relations between the two countries.

33. In some parts of the country, misconduct by some members of CDF, arising from their indiscipline and lack of training, has given rise to complaints from civilians.

III. HUMAN RIGHTS

34. Since early May 1998, a human rights adviser has been attached to the office of my Special Envoy. His main tasks have included the observation of the treason trials and, in close consultation with the Special Envoy and the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, examining modalities to increase the capacity of the office to monitor the human rights situation in Sierra Leone and to assist the Government in meeting its international human rights obligations in a sustainable manner. In carrying out its human rights functions, the office will work closely with all relevant elements of civil society, including national and international non-governmental organizations. Both the

Attorney-General and the Chief Justice of Sierra Leone have offered their full cooperation to my Special Envoy and his staff in the exercise of his human rights functions.

35. The main focus of human rights concerns since my last report has been the attacks on civilians by armed, uniformed groups, which are consistently reported to be members of the rebel forces. They have systematically mutilated or severed the limbs of non-combatants around the towns of Koidu and Kabala, in a zone that stretches as far west as Masiaka, south of Port Loko. The scale of the attacks can be estimated from the accounts of victims who have been admitted to hospital. For instance, in the period from 6 April to 21 May 1998, 225 people were admitted to Connaught Hospital in Freetown with war wounds. All but one were reported to be civilians. Of these, a quarter were amputees and half were victims of deep lacerations. The patients report that for every one person who reached the hospital, some five other victims of attacks are either dead or missing. In the same period, there have been some 500 admissions of war-wounded persons to other hospitals in Sierra Leone.

36. Of those victims who have received treatment, most are male, ranging in age from 8 to 60 years. The youngest amputee admitted to hospital is, however, a six-year-old girl, one of whose arms was completely severed. Victims also report that babies have been taken from their mothers' arms and burned alive. There are numerous reports of rape, including one of the multiple rape of a 12-year-old girl. Doctors at one hospital state that lacerations inflicted on one 60-year-old woman are the result of a failed attempt to behead her.

37. The office of my Special Envoy continues to receive information about human rights abuses perpetrated by forces loyal to the junta in the period before the restoration of the Government. From all parts of the country there are reports of extrajudicial killings, rape, arbitrary detention, including for purposes of sexual abuse, torture of children (especially of child-combatants), forced labour and the looting and destruction of residential and commercial premises and property. It will remain important to document these actions with a view to tackling issues of impunity and as an element in the process of promoting reconciliation and healing of society.

38. Information has also been received regarding widespread acts of extrajudicial revenge killings perpetrated against alleged junta collaborators following the restoration of the Government. In just one town, Kenema, there are reports of some 50 revenge killings. Some of those killed were children, with at least one case occurring in Freetown. There are reportedly still many people in hiding for fear of being subjected to revenge attacks. Reportedly some 100 of those hiding in the Freetown area are children. The Government has given assurances that revenge attacks will be investigated and prosecuted.

39. Reports indicate that elements of the Kamajors are responsible for violation of the human rights and rights under humanitarian law of both combatants and non-combatants. This militia force continues to include large numbers of male children. Concerns have been expressed to the Government on these matters and it has indicated that it is taking action to correct the situation (see paras. 22-24 above).

40. My Special Envoy continues to monitor the implementation of the state of emergency declared by the President on 10 March 1998, under which, inter alia, persons may be detained indefinitely without being charged or tried. There are more than 1,000 such detainees held at Pademba Road Prison in Freetown. The Government has established a screening committee to expedite the process of releasing detainees and bringing others to trial.

41. The Government is prosecuting 59 persons in the regular courts for charges, variously, of treason, murder and arson. Another trial of some 20 people is scheduled to start in the coming weeks, as are a number of courts martial. The civilian trials have, so far, proceeded in conformity with normal criminal procedure. Matters of concern are brought to the attention of the Government. The office of my Special Envoy will continue to observe the trials and will seek to augment its capacity in this regard.

42. On 27 May 1998, a delegation of Amnesty International, which had been studying the situation in Sierra Leone, met with my Special Envoy. The purpose of the Amnesty mission was to examine incidents that had occurred during the period of junta rule, as well as the extent of atrocities currently being committed by the remnants of the junta. Amnesty International is also reviewing the detention and trial in Freetown of persons accused of participating in or collaborating with the junta.

IV. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

43. The humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone is fluid. In the western area and the southern and eastern provinces (with the exception of Kailahun district), aid agencies have begun to reactivate programmes as they have benefited from improved security and access. In northern and north-eastern Sierra Leone, however, the situation has continued to deteriorate as a result of the activity of the former junta forces described above.

44. The humanitarian consequences of the wave of atrocities are very severe. Government hospitals in Makeni, Magburaka and Kabala and health clinics throughout the north have been overwhelmed by the influx of civilians suffering from amputations and maimings and are hampered by staff shortages and logistical constraints.

45. There has already been an outbreak of measles in two camps in the north and there is a severe risk of further outbreaks of epidemics such as cholera with the imminent onset of the rainy season. Furthermore, the non-governmental organization Action contre la Faim, which operates therapeutic feeding centres in Makeni and Magburaka, has reported a large influx of malnourished children under the age of five. Admissions have doubled during the past week. Malnutrition levels are increasing, and there are indications that the 10 per cent global acute malnutrition threshold, at which an emergency response is required, is being breached. If the security situation in the north continues to deteriorate, there is a serious risk that the harvest will be looted by armed elements, thus further undermining the food security of the rural population.

46. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has reported that refugees from Sierra Leone are continuing to flow into Faranah, Kissidougou and Guéckédou prefectures in eastern Guinea at a rate of 300 people per day. Many new arrivals, particularly children, suffer from malnutrition. UNHCR has documented the recent cases of at least 82 victims of rebel atrocities, including 28 who were mutilated. The refugees come mainly from the districts of Kailahun, Kono and Kenema. The influx is taking place despite reported attempts by the remnants of the junta to prevent people from leaving those areas. At the same time, about 40,000 internally displaced persons have flooded into the towns of Masingbi, Makeni, Kabala and Magburaka. Over the past three months, some 237,000 Sierra Leoneans have poured into Guinea and Liberia, bringing the total number of Sierra Leonean refugees in the two neighbouring countries to 530,000 people since the start of the conflict in 1991.

47. On 2 June 1998, UNHCR issued an urgent appeal for $7.3 million to help refugees who have fled from the rebel forces. The amount is designed to cover relief assistance to new arrivals in Guinea and Liberia until the end of the year. This followed a visit to Freetown from 2 to 3 June 1998 by the Assistant High Commissioner for Refugees, Mr. Soren Jessen-Petersen.

48. The humanitarian response to the crisis in the north has been severely constrained by the difficulty of access owing to security risks. Road travel from Freetown to Makeni and Koidu is restricted, since agencies are reluctant to travel by road for fear of attacks. Furthermore, many aid agency staff were threatened by AFRC/RUF elements during the period of the ECOMOG intervention and no relief agency has deployed international staff permanently up-country since then.

49. Nevertheless, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the non-governmental organization Médecins sans Frontières have sent medicines, bedding and plastic sheeting to the north. The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Médecins sans Frontières have offered to coordinate the joint distribution of medical supplies to hospitals in Makeni, Magburaka and Kabala. UNICEF has delivered supplies to Kenema and supported efforts by the local authorities to immunize more than 400 children against measles, and the World Food Programme (WFP) is providing assistance to health institutions.

50. From 5 to 6 May 1998, the Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit also co-sponsored a workshop for community leaders in the Bo district concerning the code of conduct that governs the activities of relief workers. The workshop was planned in response to incidents of the commandeering of vehicles by Kamajors and ECOMOG in the area. Non-governmental organizations have since reported that the Kamajors have facilitated the safe passage of relief supplies and it is now intended to conduct similar workshops in other parts of the country, including Kenema.

51. An inter-agency mission led by the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator on 19 May 1998 to Daru and Segbwema found the situation in the south-east of the country, which had been inaccessible for some months for security reasons, more favourable than expected in some respects. However, large numbers of

unaccompanied children were identified who are in need of family-tracing services, feeding and health care.

52. Mr. Sergio Vieira de Mello, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, will visit Sierra Leone from 10 to 12 June 1998 in order to observe at first hand the ongoing humanitarian programmes and the current difficulties faced by the humanitarian community.

V. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

53. Both the Abidjan Agreement of 30 November 1996 between the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF and the Conakry Agreement of 23 October 1997 between ECOWAS and AFRC contain provisions for the disarmament and demobilization of Sierra Leonean fighters and their reintegration into society. In his statement at the State opening of Parliament, President Kabbah called on all remnants of the AFRC/RUF to surrender, offering them assurances that they would be treated humanely in accordance with the Geneva Convention and its additional Protocols. The President also indicated that elements of the Conakry Agreement and the Abidjan Agreement would be taken into consideration in the implementation of the disarmament and demobilization programme. The prompt implementation of such a programme is regarded as essential to the stability of Sierra Leone and of the subregion in general.

54. Following the removal of the junta by force by ECOMOG in February and the subsequent ECOMOG action throughout the rest of the country, the Abidjan Agreement and the Conakry Agreement are considered to have been effectively superseded. However, in the parts of the country that have now been brought under Government control, some aspects of those instruments that govern the disarmament and demobilization of former Sierra Leonean fighters might still be applicable. These include the following categories: members of the former Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF), including members of AFRC, the country's former army, which has now effectively been dissolved; members of RUF; members of CDF; and child soldiers.

55. Both ECOMOG and the Government have developed plans for the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants and for their reintegration into society. Pursuant to the recommendations of the joint mission described in paragraph 8 above, the Government has adopted a comprehensive framework for the disarmament, demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration of ex-combatants and their families. The plan envisages the establishment of a Sierra Leone veterans assistance board to be chaired by President Kabbah, which would, in close cooperation with ECOMOG, the United Nations and donors, supervise the disarmament and demobilization of an estimated 32,000 former combatants in three phases, provisionally over the next 19 months. A small executive secretariat will be charged with the implementation of the policies of the Board in close coordination with ECOMOG and the United Nations.

56. The demobilization process will begin with a rigorous registration process to ensure that eligible ex-combatants receive identification documents. The first priority is the demobilization of some 5,000 to 7,000 former members of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces already disarmed by ECOMOG and

assembled in camps around Freetown, i.e., at Wilberforce Barracks, Benguema Training Centre and Lungi. ECOMOG has recently reported that the numbers of men at each camp have fallen, apparently because some of the men have been provisionally released. Units of CDF in parts of the country deemed secure by the Government and local authorities will also be demobilized in phase I and will undergo a similar and registration exercise. Some CDF units have already returned to their communities of origin in preparation for the disarmament process, though many CDF fighters have also recently been moved up to the Daru area, apparently to join the offensive against the former junta forces at Kailahun. On 25 March 1998, President Kabbah formally requested the international community to provide food for the maintenance of the 7,000 ex-combatants for a two-month period.

57. Preliminary estimates indicate that there are some 1,000 disabled soldiers, 500 female ex-combatants and about 2,500 children. Under the plan, all adult ex-combatants will receive the same reinsertion assistance, the level and nature of which will be determined by the Sierra Leone Veterans Assistance Board, in consultation with donors. The reinsertion assistance will be provided in instalments in order to provide a transitional safety net to ex-combatant families, to encourage them to remain in their areas of resettlement and to monitor their reintegration progress. Furthermore, the Government intends to provide a community-based social and economic reintegration assistance to assist ex-combatants to return to sustainable and productive lives in their communities. Particularly vulnerable groups of ex-combatants, such as child soldiers and the disabled, will receive specialized assistance.

58. The Government intends to proceed with the disarmament, demobilization, reinsertion and reintegration process as far as possible, notwithstanding continuing fighting in some parts of the country. The rapid demobilization of the encamped RSLMF will reduce the security and cost burden borne by the Government and ECOMOG in maintaining the camps. Insofar as adequate reinsertion and reintegration assistance and effective monitoring systems are put in place as planned, the Government is confident that this process will contribute to national reconciliation and reconstruction.

59. Though the plan envisages specific phases, provisionally scheduled to culminate in January 2000, these depend in part on the willingness of those who are still resisting ECOMOG's advance and terrorizing civilians in the north to surrender. It is not clear at this time whether these men, who appear to include the most violent and ruthless supporters of the former junta, intend to surrender or, if so, under what circumstances this might take place.

60. Another important aspect of the plan that remains to be clarified concerns the source of the funding. The plan is not accompanied by a cost estimate, but an earlier Government assessment of the likely costs arrived at a figure of some $14 million. Since that estimate was arrived at in respect of a more modest operation, the likely cost of the current exercise is likely to exceed it. No commitment has yet been made by donors for the funding of the exercise. However, the Government believes it has made some progress in identifying sufficient funds to continue to feed the surrendered soldiers for the next two months or so.

61. On 5 June 1998, my Special Envoy convened a meeting of United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and donor representatives to discuss the coordination of international support and contributions to the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the 7,000 ex-combatants.

62. On 12 June 1998, the World Bank, which participated in the multi-donor joint mission mentioned in paragraph 8 above, will send two consultants to Sierra Leone to discuss with all participants the further refinement of the plan, including practical arrangements to make it operationally effective. These arrangements are expected to include the provision of strong technical assistance to the executive secretariat of the Sierra Leone Veterans Assistance Board.

VI. PROPOSED ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE UNITED NATIONS

63. In the complex and volatile situation currently prevailing in Sierra Leone, the priority task is to promote stability and security by disarming and demobilizing as many former combatants as possible, as soon as possible. The plan adopted by the Government on the advice of the multi-donor joint mission provides a useful basis to accomplish this goal, though much remains to be done in terms of identifying sources of funding and determining the precise roles to be played by the international community. In general terms, I would envisage that, under the overall authority of the Government, my Special Envoy would ensure that the various donors continued to coordinate their activities closely. Within that framework the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), working through the United Nations Office for Project Services, and in close cooperation with donors and implementing partners, would carry out the arrangements put in place for disarmament and demobilization prior to the May 1997 coup.

64. In this context, I intend to convene a high-level conference in the near future in order to mobilize assistance for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, and for the reconstruction, rehabilitation of Sierra Leone. The conference would also address the need to provide logistical and other support to ECOMOG in order to improve its capacity to carry out its peacekeeping role, as well as for emergency and humanitarian needs.

65. Moreover, I believe the United Nations could render immediate assistance to Sierra Leone by deploying a limited number of unarmed military observers to assist in tasks of pressing importance. Such a deployment at this stage could lend much-needed impetus to a fragile but vital process, which deserves the support of the international community. It could also assist my Special Envoy to avert further bloodshed among civilians and combatants alike - both ECOMOG and Sierra Leonean - by helping to encourage the surrender of former junta elements in the event that this appeared to be possible. Finally, a more visible United Nations presence could serve to bolster the confidence of the Government and people of Sierra Leone in the commitment to their cause of the international community and encourage more substantial donor support for disarmament, demobilization and longer-term rehabilitation and development.

66. I have therefore developed a concept of operations for a United Nations peacekeeping observer mission, initially for a six-month period, whose immediate objectives would be the following:

(a) To monitor the military and security situation in the country as a whole with a view to assisting the Government and ECOMOG in the subsequent implementation of disarmament and demobilization phases as outlined in the Government's plan;

(b) To monitor the demobilization of former combatants already disarmed by ECOMOG and concentrated in secure areas of the country. This would involve collaboration with ECOMOG in its activities, including the provision of security and arms collection and destruction;

(c) To assist in monitoring respect for international humanitarian law at disarmament and demobilization sites;

(d) To monitor the voluntary disarmament and demobilization of members of CDF in their home regions and to monitor progress in the creation of a new national army;

(e) To observe, as security conditions permit, the situation in the north and east of the country, with a view to assisting in the disarmament and demobilization of surrendering former junta forces;

(f) To continue to provide my Special Envoy for Sierra Leone with regular information concerning the military and security situation in the country as a whole.

67. The mission would be known as the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and would be led by my Special Envoy, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, who would be designated Special Representative for Sierra Leone. The Chief Military Observer would be Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi (India), who is currently the team leader of the small military liaison cell deployed to Sierra Leone pursuant to resolution 1162 (1998). UNOMSIL would subsume the office of my Special Envoy and its staff and the related cost estimates will be issued shortly as an addendum to the present report.

68. The activities described above would require up to 70 officers, as well as a medical unit of up to 15 persons, with the necessary equipment and civilian administrative support staff.

69. In view of the volatile security situation outside the capital, the deployment would take place in phases, with the first group of approximately 40 military observers being deployed, starting during the month of July 1998, to Freetown, Hastings and Lungi. The timing of subsequent deployments would then depend on the security situation, the progress of implementation of the Government's disarmament and demobilization plan and the availability of the necessary logistical equipment and resources. In this connection, I would call on the Government of Sierra Leone to be prepared to make available to the mission such premises and services as they can. At this stage, I would provisionally anticipate that the second phase of deployment would then take place in August-September, with the final phase beginning in October.

70. The observers would be deployed at each of the three camps where former Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces are now being detained, i.e.,

Wilberforce Barracks, Benguema Training Centre and Lungi; at the three ECOMOG Brigade headquarters at Hastings, Makeni and Bo; and at a headquarters location to support the Chief Military Observer. During the next phases, subject to the considerations identified above, observers could be deployed outside the immediate area of Freetown, including to the home regions of CDF members returning to undertake voluntary disarmament and demobilization as and when they considered their home communities sufficiently secure.

71. The mission would be provided with adequate air support in order to ensure mobility and security, as well as casualty and medical evacuations. A boat would also be required to facilitate travel and communications between Lungi and Freetown.

72. Should the Security Council agree to these measures, I will establish security arrangements for United Nations personnel with the Chairman of ECOWAS and conclude a status of mission agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone.

73. The deployment described above would require a commensurate expansion in the size of the office of the Special Representative, including information and political officers, as well as the necessary administrative and support staff.

74. I would also propose to increase to four the number of human rights officers attached to the office of my Special Envoy. These officers, under the direction of the Special Representative, and in close cooperation with the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, would have a monitoring role and the task of addressing the country's long-term human rights institution building needs.

75. An increase in the number of civilian police advisers from two to five would also be required. These officers would advise the Government and local police officials on police practice, training and recruitment, in particular on the need to respect internationally accepted standards of policing in democratic societies. They would also monitor the progress of the restructuring of the Sierra Leonean police force.

76. At this point, it is difficult to assess whether an expansion of the mission might be needed six months from now and, if so, what form it might take. My recommendations on this matter will depend on ECOMOG's progress in restoring security throughout the country. If the presence of United Nations personnel in areas of continuing insecurity is considered desirable in order to reduce bloodshed by encouraging armed elements to surrender, or if areas of Sierra Leone now secure come under threat from hostile elements, thought must be given to ensuring the security of United Nations personnel. Although ECOMOG is a capable force and has indicated it would guarantee the security of the observers, it is also a potential target of attacks by the remnants of the junta. Unarmed military observers under its protection might not be regarded as neutral by hostile armed elements and their safety might therefore be jeopardized.

77. For those reasons, I could envisage the possibility, at a future stage, of recommending the deployment of a highly mobile unit of armed United Nations troops, operating in close cooperation with ECOMOG but independent of it, to

protect observers in locations where their security might be at risk, but where their neutral presence may be helpful in encouraging armed elements to surrender. However, I do not believe that the time is ripe to make such a recommendation to the Council at this stage.

78. The deployment of ECOMOG troops at the border with Liberia could help lay to rest allegations of the influx of arms or the provision of armed assistance to the junta by foreign forces. I commend the Government of Liberia for its policy statement reaffirming that it will not permit its territory to be used to destabilize any neighbouring country. Verification that this was the case would, in my view, improve the security climate throughout the entire subregion and improve mutual confidence among its member countries. I hope there will be further discussions between the Heads of State of the subregion on these matters.

79. I therefore intend to pursue with President Taylor his proposal for the deployment of a small contingent of United Nations military observers at the border with Sierra Leone, in order to assist in verifying that Liberian territory is not being used to destabilize Sierra Leone and that foreign forces are not assisting the remnants of the former junta there. I will also discuss the matter with President Kabbah and with the Chairman of ECOWAS and revert to the Council in due course.

VII. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

80. Since my last report, the situation in Sierra Leone has in some respects improved considerably. Since its restoration on 10 March 1998, the Government has moved rapidly to reassert its authority throughout much of the country. President Kabbah has nominated a compact Cabinet of acknowledged experts in their fields, all of whom have been confirmed by Parliament, as well as a Chief Justice.

81. However, in the eastern part of Sierra Leone and parts of the north, the remnants of the former junta continue to resist ECOMOG forces and attack Sierra Leonean civilians. I join with the Council in deploring the continued resistance to the legitimate Government, in calling on the supporters of the junta to lay down their arms, and in condemning the mutilations, rapes, looting and other atrocities carried out by junta elements against the civilian population. I also align myself with the commendation expressed for ECOWAS and ECOMOG in the presidential statement adopted on 20 May 1998 (S/PRST/1998/13) for the important role they are playing to restore peace and security in Sierra Leone, and support the call for Member States to provide technical and logistical support to assist ECOMOG to continue to enhance its ability to carry out its peacekeeping role and contribute to bringing an end to the atrocities being committed against the people of Sierra Leone. In this context, I welcome the logistical assistance provided by the United States. I am also grateful for the contribution made by the United Kingdom, and invite other Member States to make contributions to the Trust Fund to support peacekeeping and related activities in Sierra Leone.

82. It is clear that there are a significant number of victims of rebel atrocities who remain in the bush or who are otherwise unable to receive medical attention. I applaud the efforts of United Nations humanitarian personnel, ECOMOG and the non-governmental organizations in locating and aiding victims. However, more must be done as a matter of urgency, including the provision of additional medical and surgical capacity, including hospital beds. In the longer term, the agencies and the non-governmental organizations concerned will need to offer support in the form of prosthesis services for all amputees and psycho-social treatment of traumatized victims and their families. In this context, I welcome the intention of ICRC to dispatch a surgical team to Sierra Leone to augment local medical facilities.

83. I call on the Government of Sierra Leone to continue to show the necessary resolve to adhere to international human rights standards and its own distinguished legal traditions in ensuring that those accused of the gravest crimes against the State and its people receive fair trials. I am aware that the Government has held to this course so far in the face of strongly voiced public contempt for the accused.

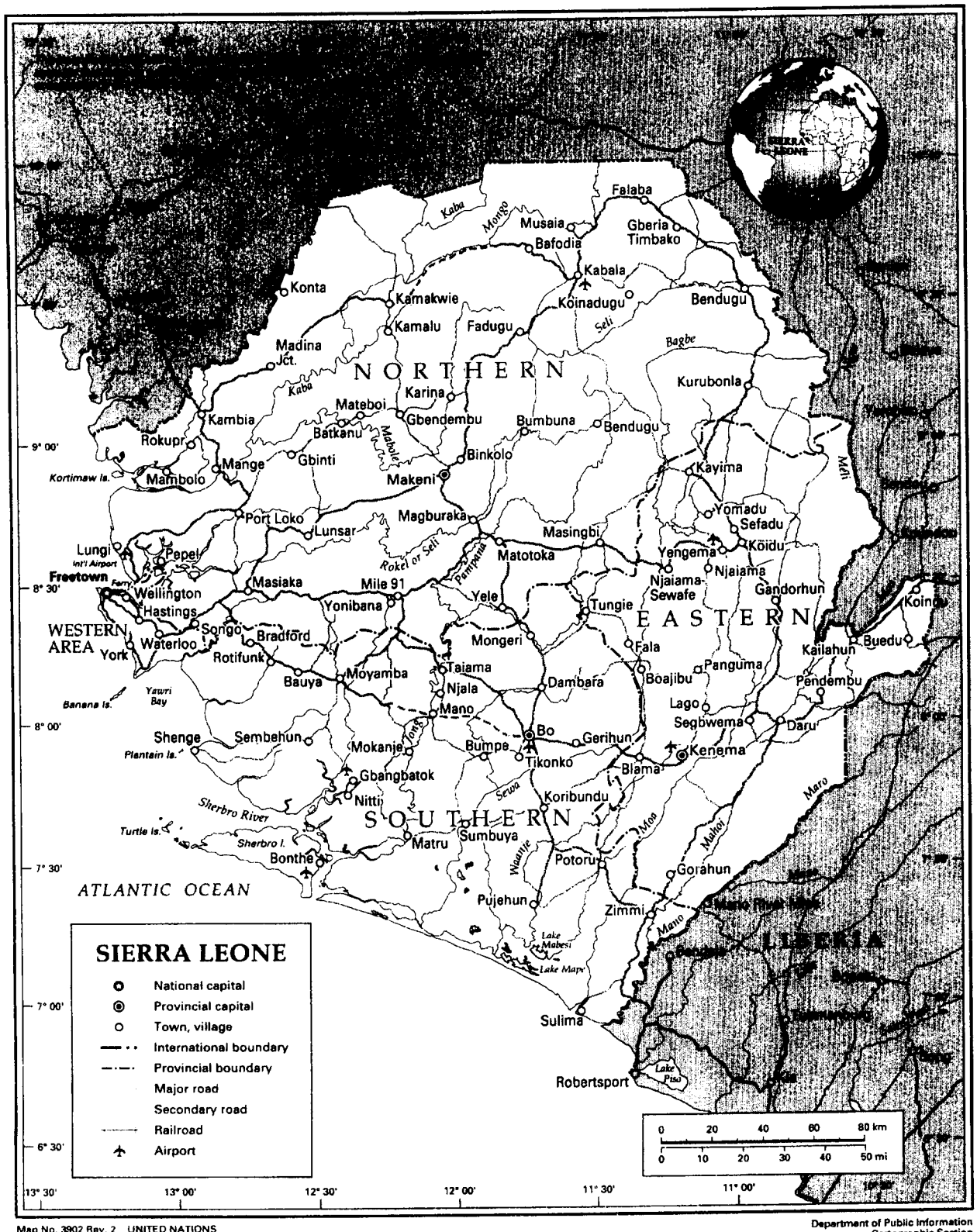
84. I express my appreciation to those Member States and others who have contributed to the flash appeal for humanitarian assistance and for various humanitarian projects.

85. I recommend that the Security Council establish an observer mission in Sierra Leone, to be known as the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), with the mandate and concept of operations described in paragraphs 66 to 71 above and with the necessary augmentation of civilian and civilian police staff as set out in paragraphs 73 to 75 above.

86. During the six-month period of the mandate, I would keep the situation closely under review and would make further recommendations to the Council concerning a possible extension or expansion of the mission as the circumstances permitted.

87. I support the recommendation of my Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict that Sierra Leone be made one of the pilot projects for a more concerted and effective response in the context of post-conflict peace-building.

88. Finally, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Envoy and to all United Nations staff in Sierra Leone for their efforts over the past several weeks.



Map No. 3902 Rev. 2 UNITED NATIONS
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13. Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), First Progress Report, 12 August 1998 (S/1998/750). Pages 3- 4, 7- 9, paragraphs 10, 12-14 and 31-38.

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FIRST PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 19 of its resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998, the Security Council requested me to submit an initial report within 30 days of the adoption of the resolution and every 60 days thereafter on the deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and its progress in carrying out its mandate, and also to inform the Council on plans for the later phases of the deployment of UNOMSIL when security conditions permit these to be implemented. The present report, which is submitted pursuant to that request, describes developments since my fifth report on the situation in Sierra Leone (S/1998/486) dated 9 June 1998.

2. The present report is also submitted in accordance with paragraph 10 of resolution 1162 (1998) of 17 April 1998 and paragraph 8 of resolution 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998.

II. SITUATION IN SIERRA LEONE

Activities of the Government of Sierra Leone

3. Since my last report, the Government of Sierra Leone has continued to strengthen its authority and improve its organization and functioning, including through the adoption, following a wide-ranging parliamentary debate, of a budget for the remainder of 1998. On 7 August, President Kabbah visited the provincial towns of Bo, Kenema and Makenie. Some 45 of the 52 paramount chiefs have returned to their districts in the south of the country.

4. Significant improvements have occurred in relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. On 22 and 23 June, a Liberian delegation led by Senator Kekura Kpoto visited Freetown to deliver a special message from President Taylor to President Kabbah concerning ways to promote peace between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, the Mano River Union countries. The delegation also denied allegations that the Liberian Government was supporting the remnants of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and expressed concern that some Liberian dissidents were reported to be

planning to use Sierra Leone as a base from which to attack Liberia. At the conclusion of the meeting, President Kabbah issued a statement reaffirming his commitment to subregional peace and security and calling for strict adherence to the existing non-aggression pact and good neighbourliness treaty contained in the Mano River Union Agreement.

5. On 1 July 1998, during my visit to Abuja, together with the President of Nigeria, General Abdulsalam Abubakar, I jointly convened a meeting between President Taylor and President Kabbah, the Heads of State of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The two Heads of State reached agreement at that meeting on a number of confidence-building measures to improve relations between their countries. The Presidents, inter alia, strongly condemned the continued rebel activities in Sierra Leone, as well as the horrendous atrocities committed there, and agreed to exchange official visits. The communiqué issued at the end of the meeting was circulated as document S/1998/629.

6. On 20 July 1998, President Kabbah paid a one-day visit to Monrovia at the written invitation of President Taylor to attend the Liberian National Reconciliation Conference. The meeting of the two Presidents was held in the presence of the Reverend Jesse Jackson, Special Envoy of the President of the United States of America to Africa. In a joint communiqué issued after the meeting, President Taylor and President Kabbah again condemned all atrocities and violations of human rights committed by combatants in Sierra Leone against civilians, as well as the continued rebel activities in that country. They reaffirmed their commitment to non-aggression against the territorial integrity of each other's country and pledged to continue their cooperation towards peace and security in the subregion. Both leaders renewed their call to the United Nations and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to deploy observer units on the Liberia/Sierra Leone border and agreed to coordinate border security activities. President Taylor accepted an invitation from President Kabbah to visit Sierra Leone at a date to be announced.

7. In a later development, the Government of Sierra Leone has denied any involvement in an alleged plot to overthrow the Government of Liberia, which has been widely reported in Monrovia.

8. On 25 July 1998, the Nigerian Government released the leader of RUF, Corporal Foday Sankoh, to Sierra Leonean custody in Freetown. The Government of Sierra Leone has now detained Corporal Sankoh and issued a public statement calling on his supporters, who are still fighting, to surrender to ECOMOG, to my Special Representative or to any religious organization by 8 August 1998. The Government statement called for an end to fighting and urged Sierra Leoneans to turn their attention and energies to the elimination of poverty, disease and illiteracy. In a television appearance with the Sierra Leonean Minister of Information, Corporal Sankoh appealed to the remnants of RUF to halt atrocities against the people of Sierra Leone and to surrender to United Nations observers or to the Military Observer Group of ECOWAS (ECOMOG). A subsequent Government statement issued on 3 August reiterated the 8 August deadline for the amnesty. There has been no significant response to the Government's call.

9. Following the visit to Sierra Leone of my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara A. Otunnu, in May, the Government has

accorded special attention, and has welcomed efforts by United Nations agencies, to promoting the welfare, rights and protection of children and to addressing challenges posed by the "youth crisis" and the high growth rate of the population. In July, Vice-President Albert Joe Demby publicized the 1998 edition of the UNICEF report, The Progress of Nations, while the Minister of Finance, Development and Economic Planning, Mr. James Jonah, delivered a radio address on World Population Day, in which he highlighted the Government's intention to rehabilitate and reconstruct all war-affected areas, increase the rate of economic growth faster than population growth and reduce poverty.

Activities of the Military Observer Group of the Economic Community of West African States and the military and security situation in Sierra Leone

10. Since the end of June, the military and security situation in Sierra Leone has improved somewhat as reports of atrocities committed by elements of the former junta have markedly declined. Despite the onset of the rainy season, ECOMOG, has maintained its pressure on Kailahun district, the remaining stronghold of the former junta in the eastern part of the country. At the same time, ECOMOG positions in Koidu, also in eastern Sierra Leone, have repeatedly come under mortar attack during the last few weeks and the situation in the north-east remains volatile and unpredictable, as was shown by the rebels' capture and brief occupation of Kabala.

11. Security in Freetown has generally been good. However, on 19 July 1998, a gun battle lasting approximately one hour broke out in Freetown between ECOMOG and a band of 15 men described as robbers. The men were all captured the same day without bloodshed.

12. In the countryside, elements of the former junta are concentrated around Kailahun and Koidu in relatively large numbers, while smaller groups have been operating in northern and central Sierra Leone. Sometimes these groups have harassed ECOMOG units and the civilian population, perpetrating atrocities and destroying property, but on a much smaller scale than was the case in June. Attacks by ECOMOG, including air strikes, are thought to have inflicted significant casualties on the rebels and broken them up into smaller groups, curtailing their activities. Reported shortages of food and ammunition among the rebels have increased the risk that they could attack ECOMOG convoys and isolated settlements in order to resupply themselves. The southern part of the country and the area around Freetown in the west have been calm, except for the incident described above.

13. On 27 July 1998, apparently after seizing weapons and ammunition in an attack on ECOMOG units at Bendugu in north-eastern Sierra Leone, junta supporters attacked ECOMOG troops in the town of Kabala. The attack, which was preceded by a feigned offer to surrender, was well-coordinated and launched from three sides. The rebels succeeded in taking the town and temporarily driving out the ECOMOG defenders. At about the same time, the rebels attacked a civilian bus about 10 kilometres south of Kabala, killing seven passengers.

14. By 31 July, ECOMOG troops moved back in force into Kabala as rebel forces withdrew. The rebels caused extensive property damage, including the destruction of some 200 houses, plundered the town and extorted money from the

civilian population, whom they threatened to use as human shields in the event of a counter-attack. No mutilations have been reported.

15. During the past few weeks, ECOMOG has inducted fresh troops into the Kenema sector in south-eastern Sierra Leone, with a view to reinforcing its presence near Kailahun. The deployment of an additional brigade, comprising three battalions, has enabled ECOMOG to mount more aggressive patrols, at times in conjunction with the Sierra Leonean Civil Defence Force. ECOMOG has also reinducted former Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSMLF) personnel, amounting to approximately three battalions, or 2,500 men, alongside its own troops to assist with the protection of supply lines and, in some cases, in combat duties. The provision of logistical assistance to ECOMOG, thanks to the bilateral contribution of the United States of America, has helped to improve operational capacity. ECOMOG has also been withdrawing exhausted troops with a view to rotating them. Nonetheless, ECOMOG, with an estimated 10,000 troops in theatre, is still overstretched and in need of significant additional logistical support, in order to contain the rebels and restore and maintain order in the eastern and northern parts of the country.

16. While the Civil Defence Force is nominally under the command and control of ECOMOG, reports continue to be received of unruly or criminal behaviour on the part of some members of the Force outside their own home districts. Strains that developed between ECOMOG and the Civil Defence Force in some places appear to have been successfully resolved or contained through the intervention of senior commanders. Some members of the Force have also been accused of human rights violations and criminal acts, including looting, confiscation of vehicles and civil disturbances, although allegations of summary killings and the torture of prisoners have dropped sharply since the end of May, apparently as a result of intervention by the Government and ECOMOG. The Civil Defence Force has made a commitment to end its practice of recruiting and initiating child soldiers, who comprise a high proportion of their ranks and who have been sent into combat.

III. ACTIVITIES OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Deployment of UNOMSIL

17. Pursuant to the creation of UNOMSIL by the Security Council by resolution 1181 (1998), I wrote to the President of the Council on 16 July 1998 to inform him of the countries that were contributing observers to the mission (see S/1998/673 and S/1998/674) and of the appointment of Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi (India) as Chief Military Observer. In accordance with paragraph 9 of resolution 1181 (1998), I took advantage of the presence of President Kabbah at the special conference on Sierra Leone, held at Headquarters on 30 July 1998, to propose to him the terms of a status of mission agreement. As I informed the President of the Security Council in my letter of 3 August 1998 (S/1998/714), the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Sierra Leone, Mr. Sama Banya, at once replied indicating his Government's acceptance. As I also mentioned in my 3 August letter, on the basis of the Government of Sierra Leone's programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, issued to participants at the special conference, I have

written to the Chairman of ECOWAS proposing arrangements by which ECOMOG would be responsible for the security of United Nations personnel in Sierra Leone.

18. In accordance with resolution 1181 (1998), the eight military liaison personnel already deployed in Sierra Leone since May 1998 pursuant to resolution 1162 (1998) have now been redesignated United Nations military observers. The additional 32 officers who are in the process of being deployed, including those in the first phase, are from China, Egypt, India, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and Zambia. As of 10 August 1998, a total of 26 officers have been deployed in Sierra Leone, with more to come over the next few days (see annex). The medical unit is expected to arrive in the country by 20 August.

19. As indicated in my report of 9 June and as outlined in the Government plan mentioned in paragraph 17 above, one of the priority tasks of the military observers, in accordance with the mandate set out in resolution 1181 (1998), is to monitor the demobilization of former combatants already disarmed by ECOMOG and concentrated in secure areas of the country, primarily at Lungi. In addition, in order to continue to monitor and report on the military and security situation, two observers are already deployed at Bo and two at Makeni, with the headquarters of ECOMOG brigades based there.

20. The Chief Military Observer and his staff will continue to be based at Freetown and an observer team will cover the area around the capital, including Hastings. The largest deployment outside Freetown will be at Lungi, with smaller teams deployed to the ECOMOG brigade headquarters at Bo, Kenema and Makeni, as the security situation permits and as the Government makes progress in the implementation of its disarmament and demobilization plan. Further deployments are planned in due course to cover locations in the north, south and centre of the country, co-deployed with ECOMOG units, including in Sumbuya, Sulima, Zimmi, Joru and Kabala. Eventually, as order is restored to the parts of the country where fighting has been taking place and subsequent phases of deployment take place, it is envisaged that United Nations observers would also be co-deployed with ECOMOG units at Kailahun and Koidu.

21. As I informed the Council in my report of 9 June (S/1998/486, paras. 78-79), I have pursued with President Taylor the possibility of an eventual co-deployment of United Nations military observers with ECOMOG troops at the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone. This proposal was reiterated in the communiqués following the meetings between President Taylor and President Kabbah at Abuja on 1 July 1998 and at Monrovia on 20 July 1998. My Special Representative will, at the appropriate time, dispatch a small team of observers from Freetown to examine the feasibility of such a deployment and I will revert to the Council accordingly.

22. In accordance with resolution 1162 (1998), a civilian police adviser, Deputy Commissioner Maritz du Toit (Namibia), was deployed in Sierra Leone in July. Following the adoption of resolution 1181 (1998), four more advisers will be deployed as soon as possible. Their role will be to assist in restoring the confidence of the Government and people of Sierra Leone in the police force, which incurred widespread public contempt for its role in supporting the junta,

and to advise the Government on training and re-equipment needs. The United Nations civilian police will work closely with a team of police advisers deployed at the request of the Government from Commonwealth countries.

23. Since his arrival, Deputy Commissioner du Toit has established close relations with the Government and with his counterparts and has paid extensive visits to Sierra Leonean police stations within and outside the capital. He has also met with the Commonwealth police advisers to discuss cooperation between the Commonwealth and the United Nations in the conduct of their respective mandates.

Special Conference on Sierra Leone

24. As outlined in my report of 9 June 1998 (S/1998/486, para. 64), on 30 July 1998 I convened a high-level conference at Headquarters to mobilize assistance for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan, for the provision of logistical support to ECOMOG, for immediate humanitarian needs and for the reconstruction and rehabilitation of Sierra Leone. The conference was preceded by an organizational meeting on 24 June.

25. President Kabbah, accompanied by the Minister of Finance, Development and Economic Planning, Mr. James Jonah, and the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sama Banya, made a statement before the Conference, setting forth his plans for national reconciliation and rehabilitation, including improvements in internal security and the Government's plan for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of Sierra Leonean former combatants. Representatives of some 55 countries, including the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the Gambia, Guinea and Liberia, the Minister of State for Foreign Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of China, the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ghana, the Assistant Secretary of State for Africa and the Assistant Secretary for Population, Refugees and Migration of the United States of America attended the Conference. Other participants included the Secretary-General of the Organization of African Unity and the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth, as well as the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS. United Nations specialized agencies and the relevant departments also sent representatives. The ECOMOG Force Commander, General Timothy Shelpidi, addressed the Conference on ECOMOG's needs.

26. Participants agreed on the need to establish an international contact group to mobilize and coordinate further support for Sierra Leone. I am presently reporting in greater detail on the conference, directly to the President of the Security Council, in a letter to be circulated as a document of the Council.

IV. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

27. In a letter dated 11 August 1998 (S/1998/741), the Government of Sierra Leone conveyed to the President of the Security Council the programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants adopted by the Government of Sierra Leone. The programme describes in detail the institutional structures established by the Government to carry out its provisions, the financial management arrangements, the implementation schedule

and the roles of UNOMSIL and ECOMOG in the reinsertion and reintegration of former combatants. The disarmament process will be carried out by ECOMOG, with the monitoring of UNOMSIL, in accordance with its mandate as set out in resolution 1181 (1998).

28. The essentials of the Government's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan were described in my report of 9 June (S/1998/486, paras. 53-62). The objective of the exercise is to consolidate the security of the State through the disarming, demobilization and reintegration into society of an estimated total of 33,000 former combatants (8,000 RSLMF and RUF and 25,000 CDF) in three phases between July 1998 and June 2001, at an estimated cost of $33.6 million, of which $17.3 million would be required for phase one. It is anticipated that the first phase would comprise the demobilization of the disarmed former RSLMF and RUF personnel now in detention and an estimated 5,000 CDF combatants. Particular emphasis will be devoted to the psychosocial reintegration of former child combatants from all sides.

29. The programme will be implemented under the guidance of the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, under the chairmanship of President Kabbah and comprising representatives of the Government, ECOMOG, donors and my Special Representative on behalf of the United Nations community. The Committee will operate, in collaboration with other Government departments, donors and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), through an Executive secretariat responsible for overall programme planning and implementation, as well as the transparent and accountable administration of the programme and the monitoring and evaluation of its progress.

30. Following the formal adoption by the Government of the programme, the National Committee has commenced work and the members of the Executive secretariat, which will be assisted by a technical adviser, have been nominated. On 16 July 1998, a team representing the Committee, including the Ministers of the Interior and Information, the National Security Adviser and my Special Representative, visited the camp site at Lungi where more than 4,000 disarmed former members of RSLMF are currently detained by ECOMOG, awaiting demobilization and reintegration. The object of the visit was to explain the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process to the disarmed men and to the local community. Similar visits to other locations are planned for the future.

31. RSLMF has effectively been disbanded and is in a state of disgrace as a result of its participation in the illegal military coup of May 1997 and the subsequent junta rule. Though consideration is being given to reconstituting the Sierra Leone armed forces, it is considered unlikely that many of the ex-RSLMF personnel will be accepted for membership in it. The men detained at Lungi appeared to be well-treated, disciplined and receptive to the prospect of demobilization and rehabilitation. They were also aware of the intense hostility felt towards them by the general public and none have attempted to escape. Recently, some of the former RSLMF personnel have been reinducted into the ECOMOG force to assist in military operations.

32. One aspect of the reintegration process that has given cause for concern is the hostile attitude of the general public to former RSLMF personnel.

Resentment at the atrocities inflicted by the junta and its supporters is so widespread as to pose a threat to the physical safety of anyone associated with the junta. As I have reported earlier, a number of revenge killings have been reported throughout the country since the recapture of Freetown in February. My Special Representative will assist the Government in carrying out a vigorous sensitization and education campaign to increase public acceptance of former army personnel undergoing reintegration, an effort that could also be supported by donor contributions.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

Abuses committed during and since the junta period

33. The human rights adviser working with my Special Representative for Sierra Leone has continued to compile accounts of atrocities committed both during and after the period of junta rule. Though some of these have yet to be rigorously examined, there is strong evidence of the systematic and widespread perpetration of multiple forms of human rights abuse against the civilian population, including rape. In recent weeks, elements of the former junta have continued to shell population centres such as Koidu and Daru and have used civilians as human shields in their military operations. There have been numerous instances of arbitrary execution, including of women and children, followed in some cases by mutilation of the bodies.

34. Though incidents of mutilation appear to have greatly declined since the end of June, it is feared that for each of the 600 or so persons attacked since March 1998 who survived and sought medical attention, at least 4 others are either dead or unaccounted for. The victims of these attacks are still making their way in small numbers to medical centres.

35. A survey of 9 of Sierra Leone's 150 chiefdoms indicates that some 700 civilian war-related deaths have occurred since February, including 200 in one village, Yifin, in late April. About 1,600 people have suffered war-related injuries in these chiefdoms since February, of whom 30 per cent are children. In Koidu, a reliable source has stated that 663 bodies were buried following the fighting in the area in mid-June. A significant percentage of the dead were women and children. At the same time, the killing of some 44 of the 144 paramount chiefs during that period indicates a deliberate attempt to target them.

36. The rebels are estimated to hold several thousand civilian captives, including women and children. They are used as porters, human shields and for forced sexual activity. Abductions continue to be reported in the north. It is believed that many RUF/AFRC fighters were themselves abducted as children and subjected to brutal initiation ceremonies.

37. Rebel forces tend to destroy property and homes in the villages they attack. Though no precise figures are available, there are indications of extensive damage to the housing stock in all areas that they have ravaged. The study of the 9 chiefdoms referred to above found that 1,619 homes had been destroyed. A survey of 3 other chiefdoms identified 600 destroyed houses and,

on 12 July alone, in a village near Masingbi, some 40 houses were destroyed. As noted above, the rebels also destroyed property in Kabala at the end of July.

38. The rebel campaign of terror and their military activities have resulted in the displacement of at least 350,000 people since February. Some 250,000 of these are now in Guinea and Liberia and the remainder are internally displaced in Sierra Leone. The persistence of the rebellion not only prevents their return, but also causes grave humanitarian problems for a significant element of the displaced population, as described in more detail below.

Treason trials and the administration of justice

39. The State is prosecuting 58 persons in the regular courts on a range of charges including treason, murder and arson, and two further trials are scheduled to begin soon. All defendants, if found guilty, face the possibility of the death penalty. The trials are proceeding against a background of widespread public anger and a desire for quick justice.

40. The court martial of 38 soldiers has begun before a judicial panel comprising Sierra Leonean army officers and presided over by a Judge Advocate who is an ECOMOG officer. Early concerns regarding procedure were speedily rectified by the Government after they had been raised by UNOMSIL, which continues to monitor both the courts martial and the proceedings in the regular courts. UNOMSIL is also continuing to persuade the Government to establish a channel for judicial appeals from court martial findings.

41. The Government concedes that the judicial system in Sierra Leone is entirely inadequate. Outside Freetown, the courts are not functioning at all and the traditional court system has collapsed. Sustained support will be needed to restore the judicial system in keeping with Sierra Leone's distinguished legal traditions.

42. There are six functioning prisons in Sierra Leone, but prisoners are also held in an unverifiable number of other facilities, including military camps. Most detainees in civilian facilities are being held pursuant to the emergency powers legislation introduced by the Government shortly after its restoration in March 1998. Conditions in many facilities are overcrowded and unsanitary and the food and medical care are inadequate. About 2,000 prisoners are being held in Freetown.

43. Reliable reports are being regularly received of poor discipline within the Civil Defence Force. In various locations throughout the country they have been accused of harassing the local population and engaging in extortion. It has also been reported that the initiation of new members, including children between the ages of 15 and 17, occurred near Magburaka during the third week of July. ECOMOG has established a complaints procedure to investigate any allegations of harassment of the local population by ECOMOG troops.

44. UNOMSIL has commenced a human rights technical cooperation needs assessment and has already identified widespread requirements, many of which should be addressed as a matter of urgency. These include the need for human rights education for government officials, traditional leaders, police officers,

teachers of civic education, lawyers, journalists and NGO personnel. It is also necessary to provide technical support to the Government and the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights to facilitate the application of human rights principles to State policy and practice. United Nations military observers will also receive training in aspects of international humanitarian law relevant to their duties.

VI. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

45. The humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone continues to give cause for concern, especially in the light of the poor response to the Inter-Agency Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance to Sierra Leone. To date, only 5 per cent of the $20.5 million requested has been received. Humanitarian organizations in Sierra Leone continue to face fundamental questions on the modalities for the delivery of relief assistance in an environment characterized by unpredictable hostilities and systematic human rights abuses. The effort to balance the rights of civilians in need of assistance with the requisite level of operational security has required the constant review and modification of the United Nations and NGO codes of conduct and protocols for humanitarian agencies operating in Sierra Leone, in order to reflect the current situation.

46. Despite the ongoing debate, humanitarian assistance continues to have a significant impact on the dire health and nutritional status of hundreds of thousands of war-affected Sierra Leoneans. The most significant humanitarian activities since my last report include efforts to address the serious humanitarian crisis at Masingbi in north central Sierra Leone, the influx of spontaneous returnees from Liberia and the repatriation by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) of Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees. The United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit in Freetown now estimates that the number of internally displaced persons since the ECOMOG intervention in February 1998 has grown to more than 166,000. The recent clashes between rebel forces and ECOMOG around Kabala have provoked further displacements.

47. A rapid nutritional assessment carried out in Masingbi by the NGO, Action Contre la Faim, for children under the age of five revealed a global malnutrition rate of 39 per cent. Owing to insecurity in the Masingbi area during July, humanitarian organizations were forced to suspend operations and withdraw to Makeni. However, the United States NGO, CARE, succeeded in distributing assistance to more than 16,000 beneficiaries. Internally displaced persons continue to flow into Masingbi at a rate estimated at between 50 and 100 persons a day.

48. In collaboration with the Ministry of Health, the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is supporting the health care delivery system in Masingbi as well as in western Kono district, where they are providing drugs and basic medical equipment. The latest data on morbidity from Masingbi and Kono district have shown that the measles outbreak that was prevalent in the area is now under control as a result of the vaccination campaign carried out by the Ministry of Health and UNICEF.

49. Masingbi remains a critical focus for humanitarian intervention in terms of shelter for the current rainy season and coordination of other sectoral activities. The NGO, Concern Worldwide, has recently agreed to support shelter activities, while UNICEF and Action Contre la Faim will collaborate on water and sanitation matters. Food distributions by CARE and health activities by UNICEF, NGOs and the Government have had a significant impact in contributing to reducing the death rate in Masingbi and its environs from 899 deaths during June to 29 in July.

50. A joint Government, UNHCR and the World Food Programme (WFP) mission to Pujehun district in southern Sierra Leone has confirmed that there has been an influx of returnees from Liberia, who are thought to be crossing the border at the rate of some 90 per day. The most urgent needs of the returnees are food, health and shelter, which are to some extent being met by WFP and by NGOs.

51. UNHCR has continued to repatriate Sierra Leonean refugees to Freetown. A total of some 7,500 Sierra Leoneans, mainly from Guinea and Gambia, have been assisted in returning home. Furthermore, it is planned to bring 3,000 Sierra Leoneans home by air from Guinea during the month of August. UNHCR has also repatriated some 440 Liberian refugees from Sierra Leone.

52. A United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit database has been established to detail the condition of more than 166,000 internally displaced persons, the number of people displaced since the ECOMOG intervention in February 1998. However, this figure represents only a portion of the total number of internally displaced persons in the country. UNHCR estimates that, during the same period, more than 250,000 Sierra Leoneans have sought refuge in neighbouring countries.

53. A mission to Kabala, undertaken only days before the 27 July attack, estimated that some 18,000 civilians were residing in the town, including a large number of internally displaced persons from Kono district. As a result of the hostilities, unconfirmed reports indicate that the majority of the civilians were displaced to villages to the north and north-west of Kabala. It has been reported that large numbers of civilians were abducted from Kabala, as has been the practice of the RUF in the past. Furthermore, all reports indicate that all relief goods, medical supplies and logistics for humanitarian efforts were looted or destroyed during the brief occupation. Now that the situation has calmed, the humanitarian community is assessing the damage and making efforts to meet the needs.

VII. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

54. The decision by the Security Council to create UNOMSIL and to expand its functions has been warmly welcomed by the Government and people of Sierra Leone, and the early signing of the status of mission agreement between the Government and UNOMSIL has also been of great assistance in providing a firm basis for our activities there. The adoption by the Government of Sierra Leone of a comprehensive programme for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, containing clearly defined roles for ECOMOG and the United Nations, has set the tone for UNOMSIL's future efforts.

55. The deployment of the first phase of UNOMSIL's 70 military observers and their equipment is also well under way. I am grateful to the troop-contributing countries for the dispatch with which they have acted in making these personnel available.

56. In my report of 9 June (para. 69), I identified three criteria which would govern subsequent deployments of military observers: the security situation, the progress of implementation of the Government's disarmament and demobilization plan and the availability of the necessary logistical equipment and resources. As I indicated then, I am keeping all three criteria under very close review and will keep the Council informed of all relevant developments while preparing for the next phase of the deployment. I am heartened by the progress made by ECOMOG in improving the security situation in the countryside, especially in eastern Sierra Leone, and renew my call to donors to contribute to ECOMOG's logistical requirements.

57. In this context, I am gratified by the success of the special conference on Sierra Leone, held at Headquarters on 30 July 1998, and look forward to working closely with the international contact group to be established to coordinate further support for Sierra Leone. In the meantime, I reiterate my call to donors to contribute to the Inter-Agency Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance to Sierra Leone in order to assist Sierra Leoneans in meeting their most basic and urgent needs.

58. The sharp reduction in human rights violations perpetrated by elements of the former junta since the end of June is to be welcomed, but I remain deeply concerned about the plight of innocent civilians in the country, who may still be suffering from the depredations of the rebel forces or at risk from future attacks. In parallel with the efforts being made by ECOMOG to restore law and order throughout the countryside, I continue to believe that every effort should be made to end the threat posed by the rebels.

59. For this reason, I believe that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan adopted by the Government, and to be implemented with the assistance of ECOMOG and UNOMSIL, represents the best hope in the immediate future for consolidating the stability of the country and bolstering the authority of the Government throughout the territory of Sierra Leone. I therefore reiterate the plea I made on 30 July at the special conference for the donor community to lend every possible assistance to the Government in carrying out its plan. I welcome the commitment of the Government and the Civil Defence Force not to recruit children under the age of 18 as soldiers or to send them into combat, and urge them to implement their undertaking to demobilize any children currently under arms as soon as possible.

60. The development of technical capacity by the Government in the field of human rights deserves support. The results of a technical cooperation needs assessment performed by the office of my Special Representative reveal training needs. I encourage donors to assist the Government in meeting these needs.

61. Pursuant to resolution 1181 (1998), I will continue to keep the situation in Sierra Leone under close review and report to the Council on developments there and on the progress made by UNOMSIL

62. I would like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, to the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier Subhash C. Joshi, and to the civilian and military personnel of UNOMSIL for the efforts they are continuing to make to deploy the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone in accordance with the mandate provided by the Security Council.

ANNEX

The United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

Contributions as at 10 August 1998

Country	Currently in position
China	3
Egypt	-
India	5
Kenya	2
Kyrgyzstan	-
New Zealand	2
Pakistan	5
Russia	5
United Kingdom	2
Zambia	2
	26*

* In addition to the Chief Military Observer, India.



Map No. 4065 UNITED NATIONS
August 1998

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14. Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Second Progress Report, 16 October 1998 (S/1998/960).
Pages 3, 5-6, paragraphs 9-10 and 21-23.

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SECOND PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 19 of its resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998, the Security Council requested me to submit an initial report within 30 days of the adoption of the resolution and every 60 days thereafter on the deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and its progress in carrying out its mandate, and also to inform the Council on plans for the later phases of the deployment of UNOMSIL when security conditions permit these to be implemented. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and describes developments since my first progress report on UNOMSIL (S/1998/750), of 12 August 1998.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

2. The Government and Parliament of Sierra Leone have continued to take steps to extend their authority and to reform and strengthen national institutions, with a view to increasing efficiency and eliminating corruption and duplication, as well as enhancing security and stability.

3. On 2 September 1998, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah outlined plans for the creation of a new national security system, based on the reconstitution of national armed forces, the reform of the police force and the integration of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). Under this policy, the new armed forces would comprise a total of 5,000 troops under effective civilian management and constitutional control.

4. Another prominent issue is the handling of the trial of the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Corporal Foday Sankoh. After Corporal Sankoh had been brought back from Nigeria and placed in Government custody, RUF announced on 17 August 1998 a terror campaign against civilians, CDF and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) if the Government failed to release Corporal Sankoh within seven days, suggesting that peace negotiations could resume only thereafter. However, the Government has made it clear that Corporal Sankoh will stand trial and that there will be no resumption of negotiations or peace talks in view of the failure of RUF and the

junta in the past to comply with the provisions of the Abidjan and Conakry peace agreements.

5. Vice-President Albert Joe Demby and the Deputy Minister for Defence and CDF Coordinator, Chief Hinga Norman, have temporarily relocated their offices to Kenema in the eastern province in order to organize and direct the large-scale mobilization of the Civil Defence Forces for the operations aimed at clearing the remaining rebel-controlled areas. The Vice-President has reaffirmed the Government's determination to pursue the military option against the elements of the former junta. His statement has been reinforced by a call from Chief Norman to all CDF members to report for combat duty.

Relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia

6. In my report of 12 August, I mentioned the improvements that had occurred in the relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. Since then, relations between the two countries, after a period of improvement following the meeting of President Kabbah and President Taylor in Abuja in July, have recently experienced complications arising in part from the continuing armed conflict in the east of Sierra Leone.

7. On 13 October 1998, President Kabbah informed me of alleged preparations by Liberia for the dispatch of fighters for an incursion into Sierra Leone. The allegations were vigorously denied by President Taylor. United Nations military observers also detected no evidence of an armed incursion from Liberia. On 16 October the two Presidents were reported to have spoken by telephone, and to have described the matter as "a misunderstanding that has been clarified". The two leaders were reported to have agreed to be in regular telephone contact in order to work towards strengthening relations. I welcome this constructive approach.

Follow-up to the Special Conference on Sierra Leone

8. Following the Special Conference on Sierra Leone held at United Nations Headquarters on 30 July 1998, the Government of Sierra Leone has established a 10-member working group charged with following up on the commitments and pledges made at the Special Conference. The Working Group met for the first time on 28 August 1998 and discussed possible steps for approaching donor countries and funding agencies that had agreed to support the reconstruction of Sierra Leone. As called for by the Special Conference, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has taken the initiative of convening an international contact group on Sierra Leone in London early in November. The Working Group will meet again beforehand, probably in late October, to assess the progress made.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY SITUATION

Rebel activities

9. Since my last report, the security situation in Sierra Leone has experienced considerable fluctuations. A relatively quiet phase in July was

followed by some volatility in late August and September, marked by a considerable increase in rebel attacks. These were accompanied by a resurgence of atrocities of the nature and scale last observed during the period from April to June, including the complete destruction of villages, and the torture, mutilation and execution of large numbers of civilians. These disturbing developments are reflected in more detail below.

10. The rebel build-up has been most significant in the north and brought the area of rebel activity closer to the centre of the country. Activity around the Koinadugu area has also intensified, as well as around Kambia and Kabala. The current concentration of rebels in the north-west indicates that they may be preparing for a major strike against Makeni or Port Loko. Such operations would sever ECOMOG's main supply route between Guinea, Freetown and Makeni and provide the rebels with a foothold close to the capital city. On 8 October, the rebels attacked Mange, between Port Loko and Kambia on the road between Lungi and the Guinean border, but were driven off. The situation in Freetown itself has remained safe and stable, and the whole of the southern province has remained free of rebel activity.

Civil Defence Forces/ECOMOG offensive into Kailahun district

11. On 1 October 1998 the Civil Defence Forces, with strong ECOMOG support, launched an offensive to capture one of the rebels' main strongholds in Kailahun district and thus disrupt their operations elsewhere in the country. The effects of the offensive are starting to be reflected in a reduction of the intensity of rebel activities in the north. Reports of the dispersal of the rebel stronghold at Koinadugu have also been received. Continued logistics support to ECOMOG is needed from the international community in order to ensure the effectiveness of those operations.

12. Several countries in the region have already pledged to contribute some of the additional 6,000 ECOMOG troops required to assist ECOMOG troops already in the country, whose number has been estimated at 10,000 to 12,000. The Governments of Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Guinea, Mali and the Niger have indicated their readiness to provide contingents, stating that they could be deployed if the international community is prepared to bear the costs of transporting them to Sierra Leone. My Special Representative, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, has initiated discussions on this matter, and the Chief Military Observer of UNOMSIL has been meeting with contingent commanders from the countries involved concerning their deployment and related expenses for in-country maintenance and other needs.

Deployment of the Mission

13. At the end of August 1998, UNOMSIL completed the first phase of the deployment of its military component, consisting of 40 military observers, the Chief Military Observer and a medical team of 15 personnel. In addition to mission headquarters in Freetown, UNOMSIL has deployed military observers to five team sites, namely, the three provincial capitals Bo, Kenema and Makeni, the main demobilization site at Lungi, and Hastings airport (see map). The observers have been well received by the communities and have established good relations with the local authorities as well as with ECOMOG and CDF personnel.

Though there have been occasional restrictions on their movement for security reasons, the observers have not so far experienced any disruption in their operations or threats to their personal safety.

14. Over and above their tasks of closely monitoring developments in the military situation, the military observers play an important role in the monitoring of international humanitarian law and promote humanitarian assistance through the investigation of incidents. They also provide security advice to humanitarian personnel and liaise between them and ECOMOG, CDF and the local authorities. They have been frequently called upon to intervene with ECOMOG and CDF on behalf of other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

15. Pursuant to paragraph 9 of resolution 1181 (1998), I wrote on 3 August 1998 to General Abdulsalámi A. Abubakar, Head of State of Nigeria, to propose that, in conformity with the disarmament and demobilization programme adopted by the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOMOG forces assume responsibility for the security of United Nations personnel in Sierra Leone. On 28 September 1998 General Abubakar replied, stating that ECOWAS was perfectly amenable to the proposals set out in my letter, which therefore constituted the terms of an agreement between our two organizations. General Abubakar confirmed in his letter that the ECOMOG mandate in Sierra Leone included the protection of all United Nations personnel and all staff of humanitarian and aid agencies.

IV. DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

16. As described in my report of 12 August, the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme targets an estimated total of 33,000 ex-combatants, most of whom are members of the Civil Defence Forces, and is scheduled to be completed in three phases by June 2001. The first phase covers the demobilization of former Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) and RUF personnel who were captured and disarmed by ECOMOG and later encamped at Lungi. Their screening and registration commenced on 2 September. UNOMSIL deployed additional military observers to the Lungi team site to assist in several aspects of the registration, including the initial assessment of the candidates. While these activities go beyond the monitoring role of UNOMSIL, the additional effort was required to ascertain the identity and eligibility of the ex-combatants since UNOMSIL was not present during the initial disarmament by ECOMOG. The exercise was completed on 25 September with a total of 2,145 persons screened and registered. The full demobilization of those ex-combatants is scheduled to be completed in December 1998.

17. While the registration and screening process was implemented fairly smoothly, the pace of the programme lags behind the original goals since it is now being implemented against the background of a continued war effort. Since most of the ex-RSLMF soldiers, amounting to four battalions, who had been encamped at Lungi have been reinducted by ECOMOG, the number of individuals to be demobilized during the first phase of the programme has been considerably reduced. It is expected, however, that these soldiers, who are currently fighting alongside ECOMOG, will eventually undergo the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process. In addition, though 5,000 members of

the Civil Defence Forces were expected to be demobilized during the first phase, there is no indication to date that any CDF units have started the process, although in some areas registration exercises have been initiated.

18. As I mentioned in my last report, there is still concern about the hostile attitude of the general public towards former RSLMF personnel, which could potentially derail the reintegration process. Given the continued volatility of the overall security situation, it is important to ensure that former soldiers are not cast out of society because they may, as a group, turn into a destabilizing factor in the long run. A sensitization campaign under the auspices of the Ministry of Information, Communications, Tourism and Culture is now under way to increase public acceptance of ex-combatants. Successful reintegration will also depend on the benefits extended to those communities to which ex-combatants return in order to avoid the perception of a preferential treatment for the former soldiers.

19. A major challenge also remains concerning the start of the pre-discharge orientation programme which is to follow the screening and registration process. An initial programme of pre-discharge activities will be established at Lungi by the Executive Secretariat of the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. These will include workshops for community sensitization, attitudinal education for ex-combatants, and general information on reinsertion and reintegration.

20. Regarding the future of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the Executive Secretariat of the National Committee has already indicated its intention to open a disarmament and demobilization centre in the interior in preparation for the next phase of the programme. A team composed of National Committee staff, UNOMSIL and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), in collaboration with ECOMOG, is currently undertaking reconnaissance visits to identify suitable sites for the exercise.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

Human rights abuses

21. Since my last report there has been a resurgence of human rights abuses committed by the rebel forces. During the month of September, UNOMSIL received an escalating number of reports of mutilations, amputations, summary executions, abductions and house burnings. For instance, in just a single week, 20 villages were attacked and destroyed in four small chiefdoms in the north-west of the country. The attacks were preceded by the destruction of the principal local population centre, Kamalu, on 6 September. Forty people, including children, died in that attack. Photographic evidence suggests that a number of the dead had first been subjected to forms of extreme torture and sexual abuse; others appear to have been burned alive. It is reported that no less than 50 people were abducted. The rising incidence of mutilations and amputations is also illustrated by the admission to hospital of 14 amputees following just one attack on Kokuna on 27 September. From a number of locations UNOMSIL has received reliable reports of other forms of atrocities, including the detention

of elderly or incapacitated men in huts which were then set on fire and the carving of slogans, such as "AFRC", into the flesh of victims.

22. It remains difficult to estimate the exact number of rebel attacks and the casualties inflicted, not least because of the inaccessibility of many of the targeted locations and the high number of victims who never reach medical assistance. There is also very little reliable information regarding the plight of the captives of the rebels and of villagers living in areas under their control. However, interviews with former captives and escapees from those regions report such abuses as multiple rape of women, summary executions and slave labour. In the coming months, the four members of the UNOMSIL human rights unit, in cooperation with the military observers deployed in the provinces, will try in a systematic manner to compile and assess information regarding the human rights situation within the areas under rebel control.

23. There is also continued concern about the ongoing armed deployment of under-age boys and, in some locations, their continued initiation into the Civil Defence Forces. The renewed attention drawn to these matters by the Executive Director of UNICEF, Ms. Carol Bellamy, during a visit to Sierra Leone on 1 and 2 October, has greatly assisted efforts to end the recruitment and deployment of child soldiers by CDF units.

24. The discipline of many CDF units has improved significantly. Nevertheless, there are reports of interference by some CDF elements with the delivery of humanitarian supplies and acts of harassment against the civilian population. Reports of the prevalence of child prostitution in some heavily militarized areas of the countryside have, moreover, been substantiated. Together with UNICEF, the UNOMSIL human rights unit is seeking to assist the Government and ECOMOG in addressing this problem. Some reports have also suggested that certain ECOMOG personnel do not consistently ensure full respect for provisions of international humanitarian law, such as those regarding the protection of non-combatants in combat situations and the proper treatment of combatants during surrender or capture. UNOMSIL is encouraging the ECOMOG leadership to raise awareness among all troops to ensure full respect for all relevant aspects of international humanitarian law. The mission's human rights unit stands ready to assist ECOMOG with technical advice if needed.

Treason trials

25. The State is currently prosecuting, for treason and related charges, some 40 people in two civilian trials. A court martial was concluded on 12 October, and further trials are scheduled to commence in the coming weeks. A separate civilian trial of RUF leader Foday Sankoh commenced on 24 September 1998. Given the highly-charged atmosphere surrounding the trial, the Attorney-General has requested the assistance of the UNOMSIL human rights adviser on several occasions to ensure that Corporal Sankoh's rights are respected. However, the Government's failure so far to persuade a Sierra Leonean lawyer to represent Corporal Sankoh is a cause for concern. All the accused face the possible imposition of the death penalty. Already, 16 civilians and 34 of the defendants in the court martial have been sentenced to death. Under Sierra Leonean law, only the civilians have the right to appeal their sentences to the Sierra Leone Court of Appeal and, ultimately, to the Supreme Court. If the sentences are

upheld throughout the appeals process, there is still the possibility of a pardon should the Head of State decide to exercise the prerogative of mercy under national law. A further avenue of consideration of the sentences is available by virtue of Sierra Leone's ratification of the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, whereby individuals may petition the United Nations Human Rights Committee.

26. So far, UNOMSIL and observers from the International Bar Association have found that the civilian group trials are being conducted in a manner which appears to comply with international procedural standards. It is also apparent that the Government is largely committed to conducting transparent and fair trials. It remains a matter of concern that those tried by court martial are deprived of their right to judicial review of the judgements and sentences. UNOMSIL is also concerned as to whether the manner in which a number of defendants were repatriated to Sierra Leone from neighbouring countries was in accordance with applicable international standards. The concerns of UNOMSIL continue to be conveyed to the Government in a timely and forthright manner. On 15 October 1998 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights wrote to President Kabbah, asking him to intervene in the process to show mercy.

Training initiatives

27. The UNOMSIL human rights unit also plays an important role in improving coordination and exchange among the different public and private institutions involved in human rights work in Sierra Leone. Moreover, special attention is given to the provision of technical assistance to help the Government meet its reporting obligations under the international human rights treaties, commencing with those arising under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. UNOMSIL also seeks to facilitate national efforts to re-establish a functioning judicial system in provincial areas.

28. In line with the institution-building aspects of the UNOMSIL human rights mandate, the Mission has started several training initiatives in close collaboration with the Government and with national and international human rights non-governmental organizations and the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights. In September, UNOMSIL has successfully undertaken the training of the National Commission's human rights monitoring committees, and it has facilitated the first inter-non-governmental organization human rights training workshop. The Mission's human rights unit is also facilitating preparations for a major human rights monitoring and training programme to be implemented in November and provides a human rights module as part of the ongoing programme of retraining the police force.

29. These activities aim to strengthen local capacity to monitor, report on and promote human rights in the country, by both Government representatives and members of civil society. It is particularly important that training initiatives should be continued and consolidated.

VI. CIVILIAN POLICE

30. In accordance with resolution 1181 (1998), UNOMSIL has to date deployed a total of three civilian police advisers, and two additional officers are under recruitment. In carrying out their mandate, the civilian police advisers work closely with the UNOMSIL human rights unit and the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force for Sierra Leone, which is advising and assisting the Government in police training.

31. In order to assess the current situation, the UNOMSIL advisers have undertaken visits to different police regional headquarters, divisional headquarters, departments, courts, police stations and posts, assisted in determining work methods, logistical and training needs, and identified a number of problem areas. In addition, they met with President Kabbah, the Chief Justice, various Members of Parliament, ambassadors, the commanders of ECOMOG and the Civil Defence Forces and various non-governmental organizations to discuss their activities in assisting the Sierra Leone police force. UNOMSIL has distributed to all concerned a report containing preliminary findings and recommendations.

32. The reform of the police force in Sierra Leone poses great challenges. As a result of the wanton destruction caused by the rebel war, many police stations in the country have been severely damaged or destroyed, and equipment vandalized. Parts of the country are without police presence, since many officers were killed or abandoned their posts during and after the conflict. Moreover, little or no training has been available for years, which has affected not only the skill level and capacity for policing but also the quality of leadership and strategic planning. Notwithstanding the rapid expansion of the force over the last few years, the police suffer from inadequate logistical support, lack of equipment, unattractive salaries and poor conditions of service. No vehicles or other means of transport are available to ensure the effective mobilization of officers to prevent and investigate crimes. This situation is exacerbated by the breakdown of the general law enforcement system. Outside Freetown, the courts are hardly operational except for the magistrates courts in Bo, Kenema and Makeni, and detention facilities are in poor condition.

33. The Government has outlined the principles and priorities which will guide the reform process, including specific steps based on the recommendations made by the UNOMSIL civilian police advisers and the Commonwealth Task Force. Moreover, a police mission statement has been announced, emphasizing the need to balance respect for human rights with law enforcement and to take account of local concerns through community consultation by the police force. Implementation of the reform process began in August, and a three-year draft plan, for the period 1999-2001, is currently under discussion. Strong emphasis is being placed on the development of police training initiatives, some of which are already being implemented.

34. While the progress made to date is impressive, resource constraints present serious obstacles to the effective and fast implementation of the reform. The Governments of Germany and the United Kingdom have already provided funds and equipment in support of these efforts, but further donor assistance will be required.

VII. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

Humanitarian crisis

35. A humanitarian crisis of serious proportions is developing in isolated areas of Sierra Leone, particularly the north-east. Since the incursion of former junta elements into Kabala at the end of July 1998, humanitarian agencies have been unable to assess needs there because of unpredictable security. The countryside between Kabala and Koidu, up to the border with Guinea, is also out of reach owing to insecurity and inadequate roads and airstrips. Similar conditions apply, inter alia, to the area east of Kambia in the north-west and in the Kailahun district.

36. Continuing insecurity has resulted in increased displacement of populations. During the reporting period, some 14,000 Sierra Leoneans were displaced from south Kenema district into Kenema Town. At the same time, the number of needy beneficiaries in Masingbi has swollen from 16,000 to more than 35,000. The United Nations Humanitarian Coordination Unit/Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs estimates that up to 250,000 persons have been displaced in the fighting that followed the ECOMOG intervention in February 1998, an increase of about 70,000 persons since my last report. It is feared that a considerable number of internally displaced persons remain unrecorded.

37. The number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea is now 357,000, of which an estimated 217,700 have arrived since February 1998. Most of these fled to the Guéckédou area, but some 7,700 have recently arrived in Forécariah following a rebel attack on 28 September at Kukuna near the border with Guinea. There are also 90,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in Liberia, including 40,000 new arrivals. Another 10,000 Sierra Leoneans have taken refuge in other countries in the region, mainly in Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia and Senegal, for a total of 457,000 Sierra Leonean refugees in the subregion. So as to determine more accurately the number of refugees in Liberia, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) will carry out a registration exercise in November 1998.

38. In response to the newly emerging internally displaced person situation in both the eastern and northern parts of the country, UNICEF, in collaboration with non-governmental organizations, is providing high-energy biscuits to counter malnutrition and providing support to malnourished children referred to therapeutic feeding centres and supplementary feeding programmes.

Activities of United Nations organizations and non-governmental organizations

39. The World Food Programme (WFP) continues to provide humanitarian food assistance to vulnerable groups, farmers and institutions in accessible areas of the country. During August and September, WFP distributed over 4,641 tons of assorted food commodities, of which over 76 per cent benefited community farmers in their efforts to grow more food and become self-sufficient. Over 22 per cent of the quantity distributed during the reporting period went to support vulnerable groups escaping from the war as well as therapeutic and supplementary feeding programmes. WFP targeted an estimated 62,000 vulnerable persons, over

70,000 farmers, 12,600 nutritionally vulnerable persons and 6,823 refugees in food-for-work and training programmes in August and September 1998.

40. However, food assistance has encountered some constraints in supplies because of unacceptably high levels of losses from recent shipments, practically all in the port area. A meeting with the port authorities and security officers has led to proposals for improvements, and the situation is being monitored closely.

41. The intervention of the World Health Organization (WHO) proved crucial in the confirmation of vibrio cholera 0.1 as the causative agent responsible for the unusual increase in incidences of acute watery diarrhoea syndrome, which has caused a number of deaths. A total of 1,170 cases and 55 deaths were recorded from 19 July to 20 September 1998. The epidemic now appears to be on the decline, with the support of UNICEF and WHO, which have provided medical supplies to combat the outbreak. UNICEF is also coordinating cholera prevention through regular chlorination of wells and protection of water sources.

42. The maternal mortality rate is at a world record high of 1,800 per 100,000 live births and remains a primary concern. UNICEF is targeting 1.5 million children and women by revitalizing more peripheral health units to respond to the increasing demand for services.

43. Following an appeal by the Government of Sierra Leone for UNHCR to assist in the repatriation of refugees from neighbouring countries, a UNHCR delegation visited Sierra Leone from 25 to 27 September. As a result, UNHCR is in the process of opening a new office in Kenema. Additional offices will be reopened in Bo, Segbwema and Zimmi once security permits. Moreover, UNHCR has started to facilitate the return of Sierra Leonean refugees. So far, a total of 11,000 refugees have been repatriated to Freetown where, at the request of the Government, priority has been given to the return of skilled professionals, civil servants and students, who could contribute to the ongoing reconstruction efforts. Finally, it should be noted that in August 10,000 refugees returned spontaneously from Liberia to Zimmi and Kenema and, in late September, according to reports yet to be confirmed, some 20,000 refugees returned from Liberia to Zimmi.

44. The World Health Organization commissioned a consultant in August to assess the magnitude of the problem of increased numbers of victims of amputation and has proposed rehabilitative measures to the Government.

45. To help better plan for relief and longer-term development intervention, the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) has begun discussions with the objective of helping the Government to undertake a national demographic and health survey.

VIII. SOCIO-ECONOMIC ASPECTS

46. While a humanitarian emergency still prevails in the north and east of Sierra Leone, the southern and western parts have experienced a certain amount of stability and security. However, they must cope with the continuing influx

of displaced populations and the challenges of reconstruction after the trauma and devastation brought on by the junta. The United Nations development system, under the leadership of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), is therefore supporting peace-building efforts within the context of preventive development.

47. To this end, UNDP funds three large-scale programmes, including a programme for support to resettlement, reconstruction and rehabilitation through a preventive development approach. This $4 million programme links emergency humanitarian assistance with the resumption of productive activities for longer-term development. Beneficiaries of the programme include internally displaced persons, returnee refugees, ex-combatants and host communities. UNDP is also funding a $2.5 million programme aimed at raising public awareness of issues of national reconciliation and peaceful coexistence.

IX. FURTHER ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY THE UNITED NATIONS

48. In my fifth report on the situation in Sierra Leone, of 9 June 1998 (S/1998/486, para. 69), I stated that additional deployments of United Nations military observers beyond the first phase would depend on the security situation within the country and the progress made by the Government in carrying out its disarmament and demobilization plan.

49. The security situation in Sierra Leone has not improved significantly since my last report and, in some parts of the country, may have deteriorated. In the last two months the northern province has seen a resurgence of rebel activity, including atrocities, with no sign of weakening in rebel resolve, numbers or organization.

50. Largely for this reason, the progress made by the Government in carrying out its disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has been less than was hoped for. The intensification of fighting caused by the launching of the CDF/ECOMOG offensive and the consequent large-scale mobilization of both CDF and re-inducted RSLMF personnel do not at present provide the best conditions for the rapid progress of disarmament and demobilization.

51. On the other hand, should the CDF/ECOMOG offensive lead to large-scale surrenders among the former junta elements and their participation in the disarmament and demobilization programme, it may be necessary to deploy United Nations observers very rapidly.

52. I am therefore keeping the situation under careful review, and intend to deploy additional observers only after taking full account of the security situation. I am, however, prepared to deploy observers rapidly if the situation so permits.

53. Against the background of the continuing military conflict and its effects on security, the need for the Government to improve the functioning of the Sierra Leonean police force has become all the more acute. In view of the success already achieved in implementing its current mandate, I recommend that my Special Representative, assisted by the Mission's civilian police component,

now proceed to seek donor funding for the reform and restructuring of the Sierra Leonean police force, while continuing to work closely with the Government in carrying out the three-year strategic plan referred to in paragraph 33 above.

X. OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

54. The continuing conflict in Sierra Leone imposes immense suffering on the people of that country. I strongly condemn the summary executions, torture, mutilations, rapes, looting and other acts of barbarism carried out by former junta elements and call on them to lay down their arms and surrender. I am particularly outraged by the senseless acts of terror perpetrated against children, such as the amputation of limbs of boys and girls as young as six years of age, and support the efforts to bring to justice the authors of these especially abhorrent crimes.

55. The human rights abuses committed by the rebels also give rise to the humanitarian emergency in Sierra Leone, as they continue to cause the widespread dislocation of local populations. Though United Nations humanitarian personnel and non-governmental organizations have done much to aid the victims of attacks and displacement, more needs to be done as a matter of urgency, especially in regard to the provision of medical and surgical capacity, specific services for amputees and psychosocial treatment for the trauma suffered by the victims and their families. To this end, I reiterate my call to donors to contribute to the Inter-Agency Consolidated Appeal for Humanitarian Assistance to Sierra Leone in order to meet the basic needs of the people.

56. The continuing commitment of ECOMOG has been essential in assisting the Government of Sierra Leone to restore peace and security throughout the country, and the efforts being made to deploy additional troops from ECOWAS countries are welcome. In view of the importance of the present offensive into the east and the wresting of the initiative from the rebels, I appeal to the members of the Security Council and the international community to extend all possible technical and logistical support to achieving the successful conclusion of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

57. At the same time, I am encouraged by the focus of the Government on strengthening democratic control over the reconstituted armed forces. Equally commendable is the thoroughness applied to the restructuring of the police force and its reform in line with the standards of democratic societies. In this context, I should like to express my appreciation to the Governments of Germany and the United Kingdom for the support they have lent to the Government's efforts.

58. The long-term stability of the country will also depend vitally on the successful implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme adopted by the Government. I therefore reiterate the plea I made on 30 July at the Special Conference on Sierra Leone for the donor community to lend every possible assistance to the Government in carrying out its plan. I look forward to working closely with donors to ensure that the commitments made in this and other respects at the Special Conference will be honoured. I wish to commend the United Kingdom for the important role it has played by providing

equipment and logistical support for the screening and registration exercise, and by continuing to provide food and emergency medical assistance to the ex-combatants as well as water to the larger community at Lungi.

59. The Government of Sierra Leone has made commendable efforts to ensure that the procedural aspects of the civilian group trials are in conformity with international human rights standards. However, I must express my concern that those sentenced to death in the recently concluded court martial have no right of legal appeal under Sierra Leonean law. Accordingly, in the light of the human rights issues which arise, I urge the Government, at a minimum, to consider a stay of execution of sentences pending review of the proceedings before relevant international monitoring bodies. I also encourage the Government to continue to take all reasonable steps to ensure that persons facing serious criminal charges are legally represented.

60. I should like to express my appreciation for the generous manner in which the International Bar Association has provided expert trial observers who have worked closely with UNOMSIL. I also encourage the international community to support human rights training programmes, to be carried out in close consultation with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, for the benefit of those involved in law enforcement, as well as members of the legal profession and the judiciary.

61. The latest developments in the situation between Sierra Leone and Liberia are a cause for deep concern. I urge the Governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia to continue to exercise maximum restraint, pursue dialogue and implement the confidence-building measures aimed at improving relations between the two countries which they agreed upon in July 1998. In doing so, the two Governments would continue to show their commitment to subregional peace and security and their adherence to the Non-aggression Pact and Good Neighbourliness Treaty contained in the Mano River Union Declaration of 1973. In this context, should both parties agree, the deployment of ECOMOG troops at the border, subsequently accompanied by United Nations military observers, could help to stabilize the situation and restore mutual confidence.

62. Finally, I wish to thank all Member States which have contributed military observers for deployment with UNOMSIL for the speed with which the officers were dispatched. I hope that, under the right conditions and the necessary improvements in security, the second phase of deployment can be implemented with equal success.

63. Pursuant to resolution 1181 (1998), I will continue to keep the situation in Sierra Leone under close review and report to the Council on developments on the ground as well as the continued work of UNOMSIL. In particular, I will examine with great care any realistic proposal to end the armed conflict with minimal further loss of life to combatants and to innocent civilians, and to promote lasting peace and national reconciliation in Sierra Leone.

64. I would like to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, to the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier Subhash C. Joshi, and to the military and civilian personnel of UNOMSIL for their work in accordance with the mandate provided by the Security Council.

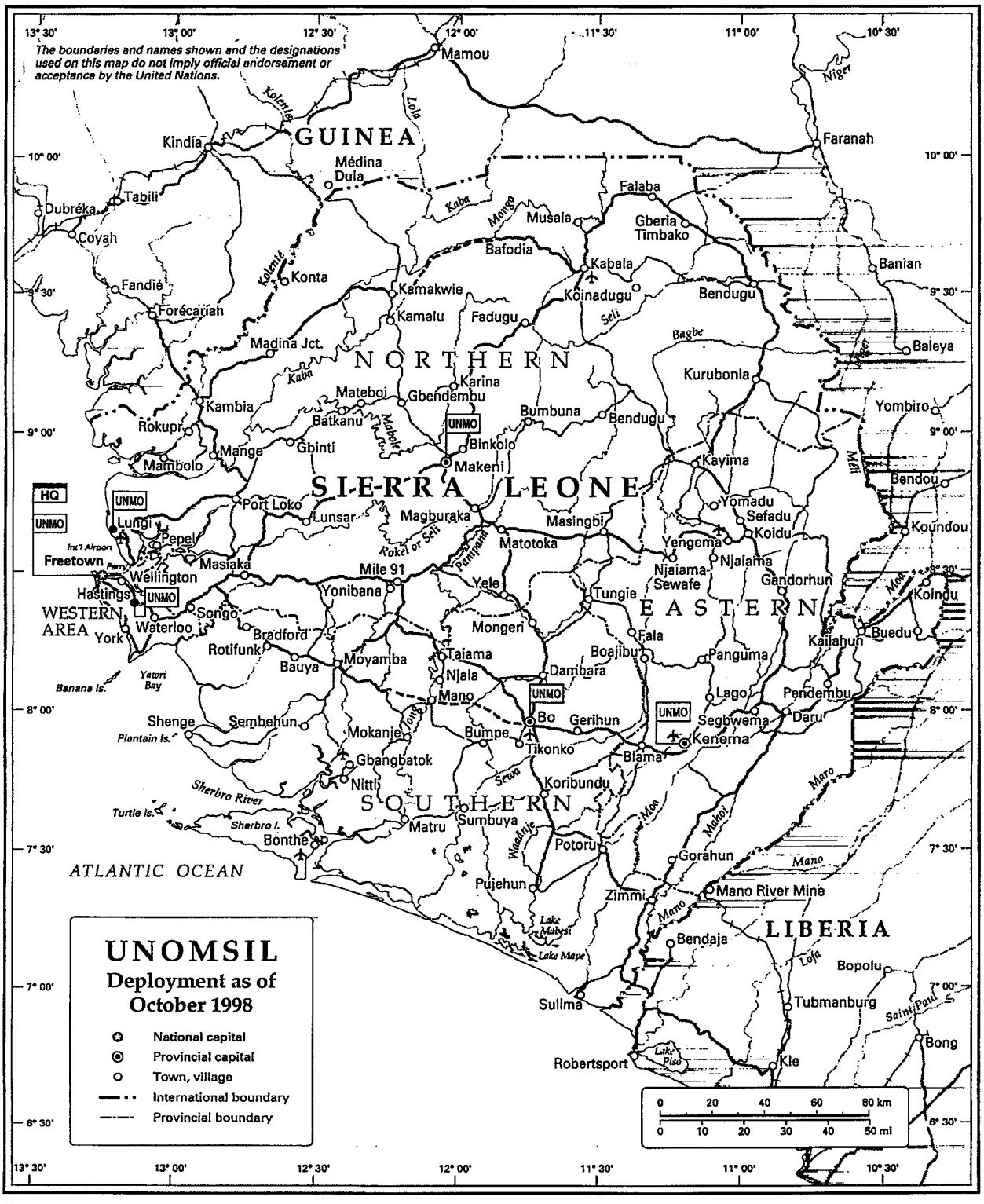
Annex

United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 1 September 1998

	Military observers	Others[a]	Total
China	3		3
Egypt	2		2
India	6	15	21
Kenya	4		4
Kyrgyzstan	1		1
New Zealand	2		2
Pakistan	5		5
Russian Federation	7		7
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7		7
Zambia	4		4
Total	41[b]	15	56

[a] Medical team.

[b] Including Chief Military Observer.



Map No. 4065 Rev. 1 UNITED NATIONS
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15. Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Third Progress Report, 16 December 1998 (S/1998/1176). Pages 4-5, 8, 14, Paragraphs 15-16, 18, 23, 36-39 and 71.

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THIRD PROGRESS REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 19 of resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998, the Security Council requested me to submit an initial report within 30 days of the adoption of the resolution and every 60 days thereafter on the deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and its progress in carrying out its mandate, and also to inform the Council on plans for the later phases of the deployment of UNOMSIL when security conditions permit these to be implemented. The present report is submitted pursuant to that request and describes developments since my second progress report on UNOMSIL (S/1998/960) of 16 October 1998. The present report is also submitted pursuant to paragraph 8 of resolution 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

2. Since my second progress report, the Government of Sierra Leone has continued its efforts to consolidate its position, to restore the stability of the country and to improve relations with its neighbours. The Government has launched initiatives to strengthen the civil service and to fight corruption. Sierra Leone is also increasingly active in the regional and international arena.

3. On 30 October 1998, the Government launched a nationwide consultative exercise, organized with the support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), aimed at enhancing the capacity of Government ministries, other national institutions and civil society to take charge of the development process. The consultations exercise is expected to conclude on 14 December with the adoption of a national consensus on major policy issues, including national reconciliation.

4. The Government has also pursued legal proceedings against both military and civilian supporters of the illegal coup of May 1997 by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). On 19 October 1998, after a court martial had sentenced 34 officers found guilty of treason to death, 24 of them were executed by firing squad. The executions took place despite appeals from the United

Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and others, including myself, for a stay of execution and the grant of the right of appeal. On 23 October 1998, a jury at the High Court in Freetown found Corporal Foday Sankoh, the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), guilty of treason and related offences and sentenced him to death by hanging. Corporal Sankoh, who had not been legally represented during his trial, has now selected legal advisers to undertake his appeal following efforts by the Government, with UNOMSIL assistance, to secure legal representation for him.

5. At their summit meeting in Abuja on 30 and 31 October 1998, the Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) agreed to combine the strengthening of its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) with efforts at dialogue to achieve lasting peace and national reconciliation in Sierra Leone. The Heads of State and Government also expressed gratitude to Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria for contributing troops to ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, encouraged Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Mali and Niger to deploy the troops they had promised to contribute as soon as possible and appealed to the international community to provide the necessary logistical support. The arrival of these additional troops is still being awaited.

6. On 7 December 1998, the Chairman of the Security Council Sanctions Committee and Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Hans Dahlgren, arrived in Freetown for a four-day assessment mission. Ambassador Dahlgren met with President Kabbah; the ECOMOG Force Commander, Major-General Timothy Shelpidi; the ECOMOG Task Force Commander, Brigadier-General Abu Ahmadu and others from the United Nations and the international community. During his visit to the front-line areas, the local authorities conveyed to Ambassador Dahlgren their requests for United Nations assistance in controlling the border with Liberia through the establishment of a buffer zone, the deployment of United Nations military observers and assistance to ECOMOG in patrolling the frontier. Ambassador Dahlgren also visited Monrovia.

7. Following his visit to the Gambia on 9 December, President Kabbah reportedly accepted an offer from the President of the Gambia to mediate a peace agreement with the rebels.

Follow-up to the Special Conference on Sierra Leone

8. As called for by the Special Conference on Sierra Leone held at United Nations Headquarters on 30 July 1998, the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland convened a meeting of the International Contact Group of donors to Sierra Leone in London on 5 November. The objectives of the meeting were to build up international support for Sierra Leone's efforts to restore peace, democracy and human rights; to encourage further assistance to ECOMOG and contributions to the United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone; to try to match specific ECOMOG requirements to donor offers; and to encourage the Government of Sierra Leone to develop political dialogue and national reconciliation beyond the programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants and to encourage participation in it.

9. The London meeting, which was opened by Mr. Tony Lloyd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, was attended on behalf of the Government

of Sierra Leone by Mr. James Jonah, the Minister of Finance, Development and Economic Planning, the ECOWAS Executive Secretary, Mr. Lansana Kouyate, and my Special Representative for Sierra Leone, Mr. Francis G. Okelo. The meeting expressed strong support for the dual-track approach (military and diplomatic) agreed upon at the ECOWAS summit on 31 October, by which efforts to strengthen ECOMOG would be accompanied by the opening of dialogue to achieve lasting peace and national reconciliation.

10. The meeting agreed on a series of next steps to be taken by the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOWAS and ECOMOG and the international community. In particular, the Government would pursue the above-mentioned dual track approach for restoring peace and stability in Sierra Leone. Troop contributors would continue their efforts to augment ECOMOG, with the aim of completing the additional deployments by the end of 1998. For its part, the international community would press on with financing and other support to help ECOMOG remain in Sierra Leone and expand its operations, including through contributions to the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts in Sierra Leone, as well as bilateral contributions.

11. It has provisionally been decided that the next meeting of the International Contact Group will be held in New York in January 1999. In Sierra Leone, a Government working group chaired by the Minister of Finance is continuing to follow up on the commitments and pledges made by donors. The membership of the working group also includes UNOMSIL and donor representatives.

Relations between Sierra Leone and its neighbours

12. On 12 November 1998, at the invitation of President Lansana Conte of Guinea, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone and President Charles Taylor of Liberia participated in an extraordinary summit meeting of the Mano River Union in Conakry. The summit was also attended by the Reverend Jesse Jackson, the Presidential Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy and Human Rights in Africa, as well as my Special Representative for Sierra Leone and my Representative for Liberia, Mr. Felix Downes-Thomas.

13. In a communiqué issued after the meeting, the three Heads of State announced their decision to rejuvenate the Mano River Union. They further pledged to ensure the strict observance of the 1986 Non-Aggression and Security Cooperation Agreement between Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea that had been signed and ratified by the three member States. The three Heads of State agreed to work collectively to restore peace in Sierra Leone and maintain stability in the subregion.

14. After the summit, in a meeting with President Kabbah in Freetown, Reverend Jackson stressed the advantage of negotiations over confrontation and called for a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Sierra Leone. A Liberian delegation, led by the Minister of National Security, concluded a two-day visit to Sierra Leone on 9 December. The Liberian Government subsequently announced that President Kabbah had agreed with President Taylor's request for cooperation on joint border patrols.

Activities of the Mission relating to the security situation

15. While reaffirming its commitment to end the ongoing rebel war as soon as possible, the Government has expressed its readiness to address any grievances the rebels might have on condition that they first stop fighting, lay down their arms and surrender to ECOMOG or UNOMSIL. There has also been discussion in Government circles of a possible offer to provide safe passage to five persons identified as leaders of the two factions comprising the rebel forces - Johnny Paul Koroma and S. A. J. Musa of the AFRC and Sam Bockarie, Dennis Mingo and Eldred Collins of the RUF - to leave the country for a non-neighbouring country of their choice.

16. In this context, UNOMSIL has cooperated closely with the Government and with ECOMOG in following up indications that S. A. J. Musa, along with several of his supporters, might be prepared to surrender to UNOMSIL. Despite suspicions that this reported offer might be a feint, UNOMSIL has made provisional preparations to accept the surrender of individuals or groups of rebels if this can be arranged under proper security conditions. UNOMSIL has also been in contact with S. A. J. Musa to try to secure the release of a Catholic priest, Father Mario Guerra, who was kidnapped near Makeni on 17 November 1998 by elements of the AFRC.

17. Since the establishment of UNOMSIL, my Special Representative has consulted the resident agencies, funds and programmes on a regular basis and has instituted weekly United Nations coordination meetings to address issues covered under the respective mandates of the organizations. Moreover, a joint security committee meets weekly to share and assess information about the situation on the ground. UNOMSIL has also actively pursued close contact with representatives of civil society, including good working relations with local non-governmental organizations and participation in civic events, such as symposia and workshops.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY SITUATION

Rebel activities

18. On the basis of the information received by UNOMSIL on the strength, organization and activities of the rebels, there appear to be six rebel battalion-type formations comprising approximately 300 fighters each. Two of these are primarily AFRC and are based in the north. The other four, believed to be RUF with some AFRC elements, are deployed around Kailahun. It is believed that the AFRC units receive supplies of arms and ammunition from the Kailahun district.

19. In the north of the country, and especially in the north-west, rebel attacks against civilians have persisted and have recently intensified. In the first few days of December 1998, a large rebel force moving southwards and westwards launched coordinated and well-planned attacks on several locations near the road from Freetown to the Guinean border, including Mange, Lunsar and Masiaka, inflicting heavy casualties on civilians and property damage and causing thousands to flee and take refuge in the capital and surrounding

districts. This rebel force is believed to be under the command of S. A. J. Musa.

20. There is much speculation concerning the motive behind these attacks, which have taken place at a time when Musa has publicly offered to surrender to UNOMSIL. These atrocities are taking place against the background of a rift which appears to have arisen between the AFRC remnants in the north and the RUF in the east. ECOMOG and the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) have done much to disrupt the supply of arms and ammunition from Kailahun to the rebels in the north.

21. In the north-east, the rebel capacity to concentrate and coordinate their forces appears to have eroded since the time of their attack on Kabala in July. The rebel concentration in Koinadugu area was broken up by combined efforts of reconstituted battalions of former soldiers of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) and ECOMOG, thus reducing the threat to Makeni and to the Koidu-Lunsar road. Repeated rebel attempts to gain control of the diamond-rich Koidu area have been unsuccessful. However, the situation remains unpredictable and the area is still in danger from rebel attacks.

22. In the south-east, rebel attacks during October and November 1998 seemed designed to surround and cut off Kenema both from Freetown and from the Liberian border by controlling the road that links Daru with Joru and Zimmi. UNOMSIL, in close collaboration with ECOMOG and CDF units based at Kenema, is standing by in case the rebels' failure to achieve their objective should lead some of them to open talks with the Government.

23. The south and south-west of the country, including Freetown, have remained calm, though tension in the capital rose during December following a rebel attack on the road linking Masiaka and Rogberi.

Civil Defence Forces/ECOMOG/RSLMF

24. In the north, ECOMOG has shown increased willingness to engage the rebels in the bush, while the CDF, which essentially originated in southern Sierra Leone, has begun to operate in the north. These developments, as well as the reinduction of former RSLMF soldiers into combat alongside ECOMOG, appear to have taken a toll on rebel strength in the north-east. As noted above, an important objective of the pro-Government forces has been to disrupt ammunition supply lines between the main rebel stronghold in the Kailahun district and rebel units in the north of the country. In the south-east, the CEF, with ECOMOG support, has now established fairly effective control of the area south of Kenema after stemming the rebel offensive along the Daru-Joru-Zimmi road.

25. The CDF in both the north and the east has, however, been hampered by serious shortages of ammunition, communications, food, transportation and medicines. In addition to logistical shortages, there have been occasional lapses in coordination between ECOMOG and the CDF. Air strikes launched by ECOMOG to disperse rebel preparations for an attack on Joru on 15 November reportedly caused casualties among a CDF concentration nearby, underlining the need for improved coordination between the two forces.

26. Despite efforts to organize and fund the deployment of reinforcements, ECOMOG also remains overstretched in terms of manpower and requires urgent logistical support. Nevertheless, there are indications that ECOMOG has been concentrating its resources to support operations into Kailahun district, apparently in preparation for more intensive activity now that the rainy season has ended. The Government continues to be fully committed to concluding the war as soon as possible.

Deployment of the Mission

27. Since my second progress report, UNOMSIL's military deployment has remained unchanged, with 40 observers, in addition to the Chief Military Observer, General Subhash C. Joshi (India), and the medical team of 15 personnel (see annex). The observers based at Lungi, Hastings, Makeni, Bo and Kenema have continued to maintain close liaison with local government authorities, ECOMOG and the CDF, to gather information through contacts and regular patrols, and to keep my Special Representative fully informed of developments. The UNOMSIL observers also give advice on humanitarian law in the field, provide security advice to other United Nations agencies, non-governmental organizations and other humanitarian agencies and assist them in their liaison with ECOMOG and the CDF as necessary.

28. In view of S. A. J. Musa's reported offer to surrender and the prospect of ECOMOG's increased activity in the east, UNOMSIL, notwithstanding the continued volatility of the situation in the north, has prepared contingency plans to deploy teams in Kabala, Kambia, Koidu and Kailahun in order to be able to respond rapidly to any willingness on the part of the rebels to surrender. The presence of UNOMSIL observers in these tense areas, to encourage and facilitate humanitarian activities and to monitor the human rights situation, would also be important. Thus, additional observers may have to be deployed expeditiously when conditions permit, within the limits authorized by the Security Council in resolution 1181 (1998).

29. In addition to making regular visits to the military observers' team sites, some members of the medical team, over and above their normal duties, have also undertaken honorary teaching assignments in the local medical college and have offered advice to local hospitals and clinics, especially those treating amputees. These contacts and services are clearly appreciated by the general public.

Creation of a new Sierra Leonean army

30. The Government of Sierra Leone is continuing to develop its plans to rebuild the armed forces under civilian management and the overall democratic control of the Government. Since October 1998, two visits to Sierra Leone have been undertaken by a British joint security sector mission to assess the Government's plans for the creation and training of new armed forces and to produce an assessment of the prospects for assistance from the United Kingdom. The Government has also requested UNOMSIL's assistance in this process, while the Chief of Defence Staff, Brigadier-General Maxwell Khobe, is currently engaged in a sensitization tour of the country to prepare for new recruitment.

IV. DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

31. The first phase of the Government's programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, as described in my last report, was to cover the demobilization of former RSLMF and RUF personnel who were captured and disarmed by ECOMOG and later encamped at Lungi. The total number of ex-combatants so far registered at Lungi is 2,973. Pre-discharge orientation activities have been held since October, but the actual reintegration process, including such programmes as vocational training, will commence as and when the funding contributed for these purposes has been made available.

32. Following the registration of 52 children at Makeni, another group of 33 child ex-combatants, mainly from the RUF, were registered at Lakka near Freetown on 21 November 1998. A further group of 94 children, mainly from the RUF, were registered at Bo on 3 December. There are also some 70 RUF and CDF child ex-combatants to be registered at Port Loko as soon as the security situation improves. Once the registration is completed, social services will take over the reintegration of the children into society. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) is closely involved with this exercise to ensure the proper treatment of the children during demobilization and reintegration.

33. Following commitments made to my Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, Mr. Olara Otunnu, during his visit to Sierra Leone in May 1998, the Executive Committee of the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration has agreed to ensure that the CDF do not initiate persons under the age of 18 and that they cooperate with the registration of children already within their ranks. They also agreed to request that ECOMOG release children in detention to UNICEF, UNOMSIL or the Ministry of Social Welfare.

34. A national sensitization programme on this subject has also been under way since early October with full radio and television coverage and a nationwide arts competition on the theme "Join Hands for Peace". The Lungi ex-combatants have embarked on community welfare work in the area, which has been well received by the local community. This, together with the programme of pre-discharge orientation, has gone a long way towards facilitating the acceptance of the ex-combatants in the Lungi area.

35. The National Committee, chaired by President Kabbah, is continuing its activities and its secretariat is functioning well. The Committee has now also identified two additional disarmament, demobilization and reintegration sites at Magburaka and Gerihun and preparations for their opening are under way. However, the pace of the programme continues to lag behind the original goals since the intensity of the war effort has not yet subsided. A further 830 ex-RSLMF soldiers are being prepared for re-induction into combat as a fifth battalion fighting alongside ECOMOG. As with the other four battalions re-inducted from among the ex-RSLMF personnel at Lungi, it is understood that most of these soldiers will undergo the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process once the war has been concluded. There has been no progress in the demobilization of CDF fighters in safe areas. Apart from the registration of CDF personnel in a few localities, there are no indications yet

that the CDF are ready to begin the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, since they are still fighting.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

Conflict-related human rights abuses and violations

36. Widespread rebel attacks on civilian populations have characterized the period since my last report. Attacks and forms of abuse of civilians exhibited a characteristic modus operandi: amputation of limbs, mutilation, actual or attempted decapitation, rape, burning alive of men, women and children, destruction of homes, abduction and looting. In one typical incident, at the end of October, five farmers were burned alive by rebels in a house some ten miles from the town of Alikalia, in the north-east. In early November, the entire northern township of Bafodia was destroyed. At the end of November, the northern town of Yifin was again devastated in a rebel attack, during which up to 50 youths were abducted.

37. During September and October 1998, the incidence of hospital admissions for amputations and mutilations reached levels similar to those during May and June, with 71 admissions in just two hospitals in the west of the country and an unverifiable number in other regions. It is likely that the hospital admission figures are much lower than the actual levels of civilian fatality and injury. During November, although the overall number of atrocities reportedly fell, there was an escalating rate of reports of actual and attempted decapitation. Particularly since late October, rebel elements have indicated that attacks were motivated by a desire for revenge against the sentencing to death of Corporal Foday Sankoh.

38. Since my last report, there have been further complaints regarding the behaviour of certain CDF contingents. One incident, investigated and confirmed by UNOMSIL, involved the killing by the CDF of four captured alleged rebels at Romeni, near Port Loko. UNOMSIL has indicated to the Government of Sierra Leone its willingness to assist in the training of key CDF personnel regarding provisions of human rights and humanitarian law applicable to their activities. There have also been reports of inappropriate behaviour by certain elements of ECOMOG, including unlawful detention. My Special Representative has taken this matter up with the Force Commander of the Monitoring Group.

39. Since my last report, there have been frequent reports of children being sent into combat environments, notwithstanding indications of some ECOMOG commanders refusing to allow under-age CDF combatants to serve under them. However, on 25 November, the Government reiterated its commitment to non-recruitment and demobilization of combatants aged under 18.

Treason trials

40. In the absence of an appeals process under court martial proceedings, most of the 34 military personnel sentenced to death in the first court martial sought recourse through petitioning the United Nations Human Rights Committee pursuant to the provisions of the Optional Protocol to the International

Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Despite the Committee's formal request for a stay of execution pending its consideration of the petitions, 24 officers were executed by firing squad on 19 October 1998. On 4 November, the Human Rights Committee adopted a strongly worded decision and requested the submission of a report by Sierra Leone pursuant to the provisions of article 40 of the International Covenant. At the request of the Committee, I brought its decision to the attention of President Kabbah in a letter to him dated 16 November 1998. In the same letter, I appealed to President Kabbah to give every consideration, once the appeals process had been exhausted, to extending mercy to those who had been condemned to death.

41. Two separate group treason trials ended, on 21 October and 5 November 1998, respectively, with the sentencing to death of a further 26 civilians, with right of appeal. Among those given prison sentences was a former Head of State of Sierra Leone, Joseph Momoh. All of those convicted have appealed their sentences.

Technical cooperation

42. UNOMSIL continues, within the limits of its resources, to advise and assist the Government and civil society in matters relating to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms. This includes advising the Government on how to meet its reporting obligations under the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as well as under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. For instance, UNOMSIL has facilitated the donation to the Government of law books for use by the legal profession and has hosted a seminar on judicial reporting for the Sierra Leone media. The human rights component has also provided other forms of advice to the United Nations community in Sierra Leone.

43. Human rights technical assistance and training support continues to be extended to the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the Sierra Leone police force and civil society, including the community of non-governmental organizations, as well as UNOMSIL military observers. During November 1998, UNOMSIL facilitated the most ambitious human rights monitoring and reporting skills training programme ever implemented in Sierra Leone, with 70 participants from all parts of the country. The trainees will now replicate the training nationwide. Other training activities since my last report include facilitation of the project of human rights training for religious leaders, primarily implemented by the World Conference for Religion and Peace and partially funded by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights.

44. In order to offer a broad range of human rights related services, UNOMSIL has sought funding under the 1999 consolidated humanitarian appeal for Sierra Leone for four human rights projects: to enhance monitoring capacity regarding rebel activities, to provide enhanced human rights training for the police and for the humanitarian community and to further strengthen the capacity of civil society to monitor human rights. Other project proposals, in course of completion in close consultation with the Government and other stakeholders, address the human rights training and resources needs of the judiciary, legal profession and prison personnel.

45. On 24 November 1998, the Government of Sierra Leone reaffirmed its regulations on the manner in which the media may report on conflict-related issues. The regulations are based on the provisions of the state of emergency instituted in March 1998, elements of which may not be in compliance with applicable provisions of international human rights law. On 9 December, the Government arrested three journalists on charges related to these regulations. UNOMSIL is monitoring the situation.

VI. CIVILIAN POLICE

46. UNOMSIL has now deployed its full complement of five civilian police advisers and they are working closely with advisers deployed by the Commonwealth and with the Government of Sierra Leone and the police force in the reform and restructuring process.

47. Policing suffered a major setback during and immediately after the junta period. Many police officers had collaborated with the junta and others were killed or forced to flee, leaving much of the country without a police service. Following the reinstatement of the Government, the poor relationship between the police and public obliged the Government to undertake a comprehensive restructuring of the police force. Although policing activities have now returned to normal, many police stations are still not functional and will have to be rebuilt. Policing has not been reintroduced in certain areas of the country owing to rebel activity and/or the shortage of funds to reconstruct buildings. The CDF has established its own police force in some of the areas under its control, which operates independently of the Sierra Leonean police force.

48. The reintroduction of policing throughout the country also requires the retraining of police officers, a process hampered by a shortage of funds. The provision of minimal financial assistance would allow the introduction of limited training programmes. Towards this end, UNOMSIL civilian police have assisted in the development of a decentralized training programme, the production of training manuals and the conduct of refresher training.

49. After the introduction of the Government Policy Statement, the Police Mission Statement and the Strategic Development Plan (1998-2001), the civilian police advisers, in collaboration with the Commonwealth, have held detailed discussions with the Sierra Leonean police force on the restructuring process, the importance of respect for human rights, the role of the police in a democratic society and the disciplinary code of conduct. After consultations with all concerned, and with the financial support of the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, pilot projects have been introduced in certain police areas to improve communications and equipment and to introduce effective and efficient policing based on local needs and community involvement.

50. As part of the effort to improve the effectiveness of the Sierra Leonean police force, restructuring has begun in the departments of human resources management, personnel development, financial and logistical accountability, operations and crime management, with the aim of streamlining and restructuring

the departments and ensuring that police officers are carefully selected, properly trained, directed by highly motivated officers and financially and logistically supported so as to be able to render acceptable service.

VII. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

51. Since my second progress report, humanitarian agencies have managed to maintain the delivery of relief assistance to populations fleeing insecurity in the north and east of the country. Most of the displaced are concentrated in a string of settlements between Makeni and Koidu in the centre of the country, in Kenema in the east and in Freetown. Fighting in the east has limited access to populations around Kenema, while hostilities in the north-west near the end of the reporting period have curtailed access there, as well as road access to Makeni. Growing insecurity along the arterial road network bodes ill for continued access and the delivery of assistance.

52. Displacement of civilian populations continued during the period under review. By mid-November, the United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordination Unit estimated that 308,695 persons had been displaced since February 1998, an increase of 58,000 internally displaced persons since my last report. The hostilities, which have continued since mid-November, have driven approximately 6,000 additional persons from their homes. As fighting continues into the dry season, the optimum period for military operations, the humanitarian community is concerned that access will continue to be constrained while displacement increases.

53. In an effort to further ensure the impartiality of relief operations and advocate for access, the Sierra Leonean humanitarian community came together at a workshop held from 19 to 23 November that resulted in a revised code of conduct for humanitarian agencies. The UNOMSIL human rights component also participated in the elaboration of the revised code, which is designed to reinforce a self-regulatory and coordinated approach for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and to ensure that the parties to the conflict recognize and observe the impartiality and inviolability of humanitarian principles.

54. Despite the prevailing hostile environment and logistical constraints, the humanitarian community has been able to avert potential humanitarian disasters through the provision of a wide range of relief programmes to the most affected war victims in Masingbi, Kambia, Kenema and Freetown.

55. A good harvest is expected in most secure areas as a result of the distribution of agricultural support packages to vulnerable farmers. Discussions are taking place in all agencies with respect to their 1999 food aid programmes, which are expected to equal the 1998 levels.

56. The delay in the issuance of transport clearances to food aid agencies by ECOMOG continues to constrain the movement of humanitarian food aid to vulnerable groups. There has also been an increase in harassment, abuse and intimidation of aid workers at some security checkpoints. Instances of ECOMOG personnel commandeering aid vehicles, including a World Food Programme (WFP) truck at Masingbi, have been raised with ECOMOG by UNOMSIL. Interventions

relating to a similar situation at the port in Freetown have led to significant improvements. Ms. Catherine Bertini, the Executive Director of WFP, will visit Sierra Leone from 10 to 12 December 1998 to assess food security issues in the country and the requirements for WFP assistance.

57. UNICEF undertook mass immunization campaigns in Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Makeni, Kambia, Port Loko and Kabala, covering an estimated 1.1 million people, about 25 per cent of Sierra Leone's population. UNICEF and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) are supporting the Ministry of Health and Sanitation in trying to reduce the maternal mortality rate, which currently averages 1,800 per 100,000 live births. A UNFPA consultant is in the country to examine various aspects of UNFPA's planned activities and issues of coordination between the relevant United Nations agencies and the Ministry of Health.

58. A World Health Organization (WHO) consultant has been working with the Ministry of Health to address future outbreaks of cholera. WHO has also provided drugs and supplies intended to further strengthen the Ministry's preparedness to cope with public health challenges. As a result, the cholera outbreak referred to in paragraph 41 of my last report is now under control. No deaths have been recorded since mid-October.

59. On 14 November 1998, President Kabbah launched activities for the forthcoming National Immunization Days, which will target polio. WHO and UNICEF, along with other agencies, are providing financial and technical support to the polio eradication drive. The first round of immunizations will take place on 19 December and the second round on 2 February. WHO has also taken steps to deal with outbreaks of meningitis.

60. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has continued to facilitate the repatriation of students and professional civil servants to Sierra Leone. During October and November, UNHCR repatriated about 1,660 Sierra Leoneans from Guinea. In close consultation with the Government and others, UNHCR is continuing to develop a reintegration strategy for returnees and internally displaced persons.

61. United Nations agencies, in consultation with the Government, national and international non-governmental organizations and donors, have completed the 1999 consolidated inter-agency appeal for Sierra Leone in the amount of $28 million. The 29 projects in the appeal range from immediate life-saving needs to longer-term projects aimed at creating a favourable environment for the promotion of peace and sustainable socio-economic development. The appeal was released in Geneva on 3 December by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs and will be launched on 17 December 1998.

VIII. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL ASPECTS

62. On 23 November 1998, the European Union signed an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone to provide 111.5 million European currency units ($124.88 million) to help rebuild its economy. The funds, to be disbursed over five years, are to support rehabilitation of infrastructure, the development of social and public sectors and good governance. The aid will include eight

million European currency units ($8.92 million) in risk capital, provided by the European Investment Bank, for projects in power supply, mining and private sector investment.

63. On 27 November, the Government presented the budget and statement of policies for the financial year 1999 to Parliament. The budget, which is being debated by Parliament, focuses on continuing the process of rehabilitating basic infrastructure and rebuilding dislocated institutions, as well as pursuing stabilization and economic reform policies.

64. The Executive Board of the International Monetary Fund has approved the Government's request for assistance under the post-conflict emergency assistance policy for Sierra Leone in the amount of approximately $15 million.

65. According to Government data, there are encouraging signs of a steady recovery in economic output. This is reflected in the 0.7 per cent growth rate in the gross domestic product in real terms, compared to negative 22 per cent for the same period last year. Increased activity in the manufacturing, services and construction sectors reflect the return of consumer and investor confidence. On the other hand, output in mining and agriculture continues to be depressed owing to persistent insecurity, especially in the east and north.

66. The generally weak economy has contributed to the continued pressure on the exchange rate. Gross external reserves have dwindled to 1.8 months of imports in 1998 compared to 5.7 months in the corresponding period for 1997. Consequently, the exchange rate, which had strengthened from 2,340 leones to the dollar in January 1998 to about 1,630 in March, depreciated to 1,850 leones in January 1998 to about 1,630 in March, depreciated to 1,850 leones in November. It is anticipated that increased donor support, particularly balance-of-payments assistance from the international financial institutions, the European Union and the Department for International Development of the United Kingdom, will reduce the pressure on the exchange rate. The Government's economic management policies have helped contain inflation and restore confidence in the private sector, bringing about the present decline in the inflation rate to 12.5 per cent as at December 1998.

IX. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

67. The General Assembly, by its resolution 53/29 of 20 November 1998, appropriated an amount of $22 million gross for the establishment and operation of the Observer Mission for the period of 13 July 1998 to 30 June 1999. This amount includes $9.1 million gross for the period from 14 January to 30 June 1999, equivalent to some $1.6 million gross per month, subject to the decision of the Security Council to extend the mandate of the Observer Mission beyond 13 January 1999.

68. Should the Council decide to extend the mandate of the Observer Mission as recommended in paragraph 76 below, it is anticipated that the estimated additional requirements of some $0.6 million gross arising during the 1998-1999 financial period in connection with the modest expansion of civilian staff of UNOMSIL recommended in paragraphs 78 and 79 below, would be met from resources already provided by the General Assembly.

69. As at 30 November 1998, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1,642.2 million.

70. Pursuant to the Council's Presidential statement of 26 February 1998 (S/PRST/1998/5), on 26 March 1998 I established the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts in Sierra Leone. As at 11 December 1998, voluntary contributions to the Trust Fund totalled $1.79 million from the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland ($0.83 million) and Japan ($0.96 million). In addition, the government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands has pledged to the Fund an amount of $1 million.

X. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

71. Despite the progress made by the Government in consolidating its authority, I am disturbed at the continuing attacks inflicted by the rebels on civilians in the north and the atrocities and abductions that accompany such attacks. I condemn these serious violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law and call again on the RUF and the AFRC to desist from attacks against their unarmed compatriots and to lay down their arms and surrender.

72. The elaboration of a dual-track approach to the resolution of the conflict following the ECOWAS summit of 31 October 1998 and the London meeting of the International Contact Group of 5 November is a welcome development, and UNOMSIL will work with the Government to pursue this approach. ECOMOG, the CDF and the re-inducted Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces personnel have done much to defend the Government and people of Sierra Leone against rebel attacks and should continue to do so. At the same time, I call on the Government to explore ways to encourage the rebels to lay down their arms and surrender in order to avoid more bloodshed.

73. Clear evidence has emerged during the national consultative process described in paragraph 4 above to demonstrate that the people of Sierra Leone are willing to reconcile themselves with the rebels, on condition that they accept the authority of the Government, lay down their arms and surrender. UNOMSIL will continue to offer its services to the Government in facilitating such surrenders, provided this can be done under acceptable security conditions. UNOMSIL is also prepared to work with the Government concerning assurances that those who surrender will be humanely treated, in accordance with internationally accepted standards, and that any rebels who face criminal prosecution for their acts receive a fair trial.

74. I am particularly encouraged by the outcome of the extraordinary summit meeting of the Mano River Union on 12 November 1998, at which President Kabbah, President Taylor and President Conte agreed to continue to strengthen the Union and improve their mutual relations. The importance of this subregional approach to the strengthening of stability and security in all three countries cannot be overemphasized. I look forward to further steps by all three Governments to prevent the use of their territory by armed groups who would seek to undermine stability and would use their territory for the illegal transit of weapons and ammunition, especially where this is in violation of United Nations resolutions. I am prepared to assist, through my Special Representative in Sierra Leone and

my Representative in Liberia, in developing and implementing a viable strategy for a subregional approach.

75. The onset of the dry season in Sierra Leone has opened the way for more effective action by ECOMOG, the CDF and the re-inducted personnel of the RSLMF. In order to maintain the pressure they have exerted to split the rebel forces, the military forces assisting the Government need to continue to receive adequate logistical support. In this context, I would like to express my appreciation to those Governments that have already made contributions to the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts in Sierra Leone and to encourage others to make similar contributions or to consider providing the necessary assistance bilaterally to ECOMOG or to individual ECOWAS countries.

76. UNOMSIL has proved its value to the Government and people of Sierra Leone as they pursue their recovery from the illegal seizure of power by the military junta, in May 1997, and all its nefarious consequences. In particular, the deployment in the countryside of United Nations military observers has demonstrated to the Government and people of Sierra Leone the commitment of the broader international community to the restoration of order and peace in the country under the legitimate Government. UNOMSIL has also provided crucial support for humanitarian operations in the countryside. I therefore recommend to the Security Council that the mandate of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone be extended for a further period of six months, until 13 July 1999.

77. The uncertain security situation in parts of the country and the delays to which the government's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme have consequently been subjected make it premature at this stage to proceed with further deployments of United Nations military observers, as authorized by resolution 1181 (1998). However, in view of the prospect that rebel fighters might begin surrendering as a result of the military operations directed against them in the east and the north, and the Government's willingness to accept their surrender under the conditions outlined above, UNOMSIL will continue to stand ready to deploy the additional observers rapidly as and when they may be required. I will keep the Security Council fully apprised of any developments in this regard and of any action I decide to take in response.

78. However, in order to address the growing demands on the ground and to be able to assist the Government and people of Sierra Leone in their efforts to normalize the situation, I am planning a modest expansion of the civilian staff of UNOMSIL. In particular, the enormity of the human rights abuses the rebels have perpetrated on the people of Sierra Leone and the large scope of human rights tasks to be performed have underlined the need for a strong human rights component. The deployment of five additional human rights officers in the provinces, in addition to the five now operating in the country, would do much to assist the Government to maintain and improve its commitment to the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Sierra Leone. I also urge Member States to consider contributing bilaterally to UNOMSIL's human rights activities in Sierra Leone.

79. UNOMSIL could also help the government develop more fully a dialogue with the rebels in keeping with the dual-track approach. To this end, I intend to deploy three additional public information officers to develop radio programmes and other information activities aimed at reaching out to rebels in the countryside to persuade them to surrender and generally to pursue the goal of national reconciliation. The additional public information staff could also help to explain the role of UNOMSIL and the international community. At the same time, the addition of another political officer in the Office of my Special Representative would assist him to coordinate these activities.

80. The restoration of stability in Sierra Leone will be a long and arduous process and will continue to require military support as well as various other forms of assistance. In particular, the Government needs assistance in its efforts to establish a new professional armed force under civilian control, as well as an effective and well-motivated police force. The commitment of all Sierra Leoneans to achieving peace through dialogue and national reconciliation will also be essential. The United Nations, through UNOMSIL, is ready to play its part in that process.

81. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi, and all the military and civilian personnel of UNOMSIL. My thanks also go to the Government of Sierra Leone and to ECOMOG, as well as to Sierra Leonean civil society, for their continuing cooperation with the United Nations.

Annex

United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 10 December 1998

	Military observers	Others[a]	Total
China	3		3
Egypt	2		2
India	6	15	21
Kenya	4		4
Kyrgyzstan	1		1
New Zealand	2		2
Pakistan	5		5
Russian Federation	7		7
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	7		7
Zambia	4		4
Total	41[b]	15	56

[a] Medical team.

[b] Including Chief Military Observer.

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16. Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Fifth Report, 4 March 1999 (S/1999/237).
Pages 1, 5, paragraphs 2, 21-27.

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FIFTH REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. On the basis of my reports dated 16 December 1998 (S/1998/1176) and 7 January 1999 (S/1999/20), the Security Council, on 12 January 1999, adopted resolution 1220 (1999). By paragraph 3 of that resolution, the Security Council requested me to keep the Council closely informed on the situation in Sierra Leone and to submit a further report, by 5 March 1999, with recommendations on the future deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and the implementation of its mandate. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

II. MILITARY AND SECURITY DEVELOPMENTS

Rebel attack on Freetown and its aftermath

2. As described in my report of 7 January 1999 (see S/1999/20, para. 10), rebel fighters belonging to the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attacked Freetown on 6 January 1999. The rebels attacked the city from the east and penetrated as far as the centre, which they held for four days before being forced to withdraw by a counterattack. The fighting resulted in the deaths of between 3,000 and 5,000 persons, including rebel fighters, soldiers of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), members of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) militia who were defending the capital and large numbers of civilian inhabitants. Many civilians were severely mutilated by the rebels. Up to 150,000 people were displaced in and around Freetown, and the rebels burnt down large numbers of public buildings and homes. A fuller description of the atrocities is contained in section IV below.

3. After fierce fighting, ECOMOG forces located in the western part of Freetown, reinforced from the main ECOMOG base at Lungi, managed to expel the rebels and regain control of the city. However, several thousand rebels are thought to remain in the Peninsula Mountains surrounding Freetown, despite ECOMOG and CDF efforts to dislodge them. It is also believed that unknown numbers of rebels might have infiltrated the city and remain there ready to

launch further attacks. Consequently, the security situation in Freetown, despite recent improvements, should still be considered volatile. On 24 February, ECOMOG succeeded in expelling the rebels from Waterloo, although they remain in a position to cut the main road from Freetown to Bo and Kenema.

4. The rebels are now thought to control much of the north of the country, though ECOMOG has, with varying success, contested rebel control around Lunsar, Port Loko and Kambia, and retains possession of Kabala and Bumbuna. In the south, ECOMOG has repulsed several rebel attacks on Kenema. Around Bo, the second largest city in Sierra Leone, the situation remains calm but tense. Rebel forces reportedly rely on some foreign mercenaries, including Europeans and Liberians, and are reported to be receiving weapons from outside the country.

5. During the crisis, which began in mid-December, ECOMOG received several thousand reinforcements from Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea and Mali. However, some doubt has been cast over the longer-term future of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone in the light of statements made by candidates in the Nigerian elections. The contribution of Nigeria to ECOMOG has been so central that ECOMOG's military viability could be threatened if that contribution were reduced. Though efforts to create a Sierra Leonean army deserve further support, the army is unlikely to be able to bear the burden alone, at least for the foreseeable future.

6. UNOMSIL evacuated all its international personnel, many of its vehicles and much of its equipment immediately prior to the 6 January attack, as did other United Nations agencies, Governments and many non-governmental organizations (NGOs) represented in Sierra Leone. The relocation was followed by a substantial reduction in the number of staff, in particular military and civilian police. The remaining staff will stay in Conakry until the security situation is considered acceptable. My Special Representative, Francis G. Okelo, and members of his civilian and military staff, including the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash Joshi (India), have paid brief visits to Freetown to study the situation first-hand and to maintain contacts with the Government of Sierra Leone and with ECOMOG, as well as with civil society. On 3 March, following improvements in the security situation, it was decided to permit the return of a limited number of United Nations personnel as soon as possible. The security situation will continue to be kept under close review.

Disarmament and demobilization

7. Following the rebel offensive in December and January, ex-soldiers in the disarmament and demobilization camp at Lungi were relocated by the Government in Freetown. The majority of them appear to have either joined the rebels or disappeared, while some lost their lives during the rebel attack on Freetown. On 4 February 1999, the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration held an emergency meeting to examine the situation regarding ex-combatants. During the meeting, the Vice-President stated that there was no change in the Government's policy on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. As of February 1999, approximately 1,000 of the 3,000 ex-combatants originally at the Lungi Demobilization Centre had reported to ECOMOG and now are temporarily located within Freetown. At the meeting it was

decided that these ex-combatants should be accommodated and cared for separately. It welcomed the offer by the Department for International Development of the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to provide food and medical treatment for ex-combatants in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and to assist in measures to improve the camp security. The Department for International Development has also been providing food, at Lungi Garrison, for 600 dependants of ex-combatants in the programme. The meeting also agreed that ex-combatants would be relocated to Lungi following an overall improvement in the security situation.

8. It may be noted that the two remaining UNOMSIL medical doctors have provided medical assistance to some of the ex-soldiers in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. This humanitarian gesture has been appreciated by the Government, ECOMOG, ex-soldiers in the programme and the public.

Civilian police

9. As described in my earlier reports, prior to the rebel attack on Freetown, UNOMSIL civilian police had undertaken a wide range of activities to promote the reconstitution of the police force in Sierra Leone. During the rebel attack on Freetown, more than 200 policemen and members of their families were killed, and police equipment and infrastructure were destroyed, including the Criminal Investigation Department headquarters and all its files, records and documentation. The Pademba Road prison was also broken into and all of the prisoners escaped, a situation which poses a serious security threat. This has significantly impaired the Government's efforts to maintain law and order in the city. As a result, the Government's plans to reorganize the police force will require substantial external assistance.

III. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Activities of the Government of Sierra Leone

10. The Government of Sierra Leone has continued to refine its policy with regard to negotiations with the rebels, and to take initiatives accordingly. On 7 January 1999, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah met with Corporal Foday Sankoh, the leader of RUF, in an effort to arrange a ceasefire. On 16 January, the President issued a statement reiterating his readiness to pursue political dialogue and repeating his offer of amnesty to the rebels.

11. On 7 February 1999, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah delivered a radio broadcast in which he again indicated his readiness to engage in a dialogue with the rebel leaders, and to allow Foday Sankoh to meet other RUF leaders, provided that RUF accepted the legitimacy of the Government. The President stated that the Abidjan Peace Agreement of November 1996 (S/1996/1034) could be used as a frame of reference for such a dialogue.

12. On 21 February, President Kabbah addressed the people of Sierra Leone in a nationwide radio broadcast in which he called on the Security Council,

especially its permanent members, to exert pressure on those States and individuals who continue to supply the weapons and logistics which are being used to kill Sierra Leoneans. President Kabbah stated that it was no longer enough for the Council to condemn the activities of the rebels, but to consider the possibility of taking further action, not excluding the threat of force, against the rebels in order to give effect to the Council's previous demands that the rebels cease all violence and seek genuine dialogue for the restoration of lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone. President Kabbah also reasserted his Government's determination to defend the territory of Sierra Leone. President Kabbah's address has been circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/1999/186).

13. On 25 February, the Minister of Information, Communications, Tourism and Culture reaffirmed the Government's commitment to dialogue with the rebels, stressing the crucial importance of seeking the views and suggestions of the civil society and expressing the Government's readiness to review the Abidjan Peace Agreement in the light of the prevailing situation.

14. On 28 February, President Kabbah again addressed the nation in a radio broadcast in which he agreed that Foday Sankoh and RUF members could hold their internal consultations in Lomé or Bamako. He stressed that, following these consultations, the RUF leader should be returned to Freetown to resume his appeal against his conviction for treason and related offences (see S/1998/1176, para. 4). The President also called for the immediate release of all civilians being held in detention by the rebels, including children and women whom they had abducted during the recent attack on Freetown.

Activities of the United Nations

15. In the aftermath of the rebel attack, my Special Representative, in close consultation with the Governments of Sierra Leone and of a number of countries of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), initiated or participated in a series of diplomatic efforts aimed at strengthening ECOMOG while opening up dialogue with the rebels. Following the initial involvement of the Government of Togo, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, and the Government of Côte d'Ivoire, my Special Representative visited Abuja, Lomé and Accra towards the end of January in order to help coordinate the ECOWAS response to the crisis.

16. These diplomatic activities culminated in the meeting, in Conakry, on 29 January, of the Heads of State of the three troop-contributing countries of ECOMOG: Ghana, Guinea and Nigeria. At that meeting, President Rawlings, President Conte and President Abubakar agreed on the need to convene an ECOWAS summit meeting on Sierra Leone, to be followed by a visit by representatives of the ECOWAS Committee of Six on Sierra Leone to New York to brief the Security Council. The Committee of Six on Sierra Leone comprises those three countries, as well as Togo, Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia. The three Heads of State also instructed their Ministers for Foreign Affairs to develop a strategy for pursuing the dual-track approach outlined in paragraph 15 above.

17. Following a visit to Freetown, from 13 to 16 February, for consultations with the Government, my Special Representative met with representatives of RUF

in Abidjan on 21 February to ascertain the RUF commitment to the dialogue and the peace process and to discuss how best to expedite the internal RUF consultations pursuant to President Kabbah's offer of a dialogue. These discussions also dealt with a number of issues, including the venue, format and duration of the internal RUF consultations; a ceasefire; respect for human rights; and the provision of humanitarian assistance. The outcome of these preliminary discussions is now being reviewed by the Government of Sierra Leone and other members of ECOWAS. Should agreement be reached on a venue for talks outside Sierra Leone, it would be necessary to temporarily lift the ban on the travel of RUF leaders imposed by Security Council resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997.

Relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia

18. In response to repeated allegations that the Government of Liberia was supporting the Sierra Leonean rebels (see S/1999/20, paras. 14 and 15), the Liberian Government issued a statement, circulated as document S/1999/193, on the conflict in Sierra Leone. In the statement, the Government reaffirmed its recognition of the Government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah as the legitimate Government of Sierra Leone, and stated further that it had not and would not support, nor be a party to, any attempt to destabilize the Republic of Sierra Leone or any other country.

19. The Government of Liberia also announced in its statement that it had launched an effort to repatriate and offer amnesty to Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone and, as a matter of urgency, requested the United Nations to assist the Governments of Sierra Leone and Liberia in identifying, documenting and processing Liberians fighting in Sierra Leone for an organized repatriation. The Government of Liberia also renewed its request to the Security Council to approve the deployment of United Nations monitors along with ECOMOG forces at the Liberia/Sierra Leone border in the light of repeated allegations of illegal shipments of arms to the rebels.

IV. HUMAN RIGHTS

20. In late January and early February, UNOMSIL human rights officers visited Freetown to conduct an assessment of the situation there. The assessment team travelled extensively within the city and interviewed numerous people, including victims of mutilations and other human rights violations. Members of the team witnessed violations during their visit. UNOMSIL human rights officers have also continued to monitor the situation in the rest of the country and have undertaken a range of technical assistance activities.

21. The team found that the ultimate responsibility for the fighting, for most of the civilian casualties and for the related humanitarian emergency in Freetown rested with the rebel forces. Though it was impossible to state with precision the actual number of civilian casualties, most estimates put the total casualty figure at between 3,000 and 5,000, including rebel fighters and ECOMOG and CDF combatants. It is feared that at least 2,000 of those casualties were civilian inhabitants of Freetown. Many civilians were killed while being used by the rebels as human shields in combat, or because they reportedly refused to

come out into the streets to demonstrate in favour of the rebels. Many were killed while trying to protect family members from death or rape, or while trying to protect their property from looting and destruction.

22. Much of the killing seems to have been arbitrary and to have been carried out by child fighters or rebel fighters under the influence of drugs or alcohol. However, there is also evidence that some of the murders were targeted, including, reportedly, the murder of 200 police personnel. The Solicitor General was killed during the fighting, as were the Resident Minister for the North, an adviser to President Kabbah and at least two journalists. Other victims who appear to have been deliberately targeted include senior officials of the Sierra Leonean National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the Council of Churches and the National Commission for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reintegration, as well as Nigerian nationals.

23. According to medical sources interviewed by the human rights assessment team, many hundreds of civilians were treated for the amputation of limbs or other forms of mutilation, including some 70 at Connaught Hospital alone. It is feared that hundreds of other victims of mutilation did not survive to seek treatment. Victims of amputation and mutilation included men, women and children, some as young as six years old. The mutilations were usually inflicted with machetes or axes. During February, there was a sharp drop in reported incidents of mutilation by rebel elements in areas where they are located.

24. There have been reports of widespread rape and other forms of sexual abuse by rebel elements in Freetown and Makeni. In Freetown, eyewitnesses reported incidents of violent group rape of young women and girls rounded up by the rebels for that heinous purpose. Many rape victims were reported to have been subsequently abducted, mutilated or killed.

25. A significant number of the rebel combatants were children. Reports were received of death and injuries being inflicted by boys as young as eight to 11 years old.

26. The rebels abducted a large but unverifiable number of people in Freetown and other places they attacked. By mid-February, child care agencies reported that some 2,000 children had gone missing in Freetown alone since 6 January. Agency staff said they had witnessed the abduction by rebels of some 300 of these children. Escapees reported that abducted boys were selected for training as fighters, or used as porters. Women and girls were taken for sexual purposes or to cook food. A small number of prominent Sierra Leonean personalities and foreigners were also abducted, including the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freetown. Foreign abductees included several Indian workers, Roman Catholic nuns of Indian and Kenyan nationality and one Spanish and one French journalist. Though some managed to escape, at least eight abductees were killed and two seriously injured. Rebels continue to hold Roman Catholic Mission personnel abducted at Makeni and Kambia.

27. Rebel forces were also responsible for the deliberate widespread destruction of civilian property and public utilities in Freetown and other locations, such as Makeni and Kambia. In the centre of Freetown, about

20 per cent of the housing stock was destroyed, with as much as 90 per cent destroyed in the eastern outskirts of the city. Some public facilities appear to have been deliberately demolished, including police stations, the Pademba Road prison, the Nigerian High Commission and UNOMSIL headquarters. The residences of human rights activists, lawyers, journalists and Government officials were also targeted, as well as churches, mosques and hospitals.

28. Eyewitnesses interviewed by the assessment team also reported summary executions of alleged rebels or rebel sympathizers by ECOMOG soldiers. Persistent reports were received of executions in various parts of Freetown, sometimes carried out after a cursory interrogation. One alleged victim of summary execution was an eight-year-old boy caught in possession of a pistol. Members of the assessment team witnessed an execution at Connaught Hospital on 3 February by men in ECOMOG uniforms. Members of CDF are also accused of mistreating civilians during the crisis in Freetown. ECOMOG jets attacking Freetown during the fighting are also reported to have caused civilian casualties. ECOMOG soldiers also detained and physically mistreated national staff members of a number of humanitarian NGOs and the International Committee of the Red Cross, apparently accusing them, without evidence, of being rebel collaborators. ECOMOG High Command has subsequently indicated to my Special Representative their intention to investigate these allegations and to take corrective action as necessary.

29. UNOMSIL continues to provide technical assistance to the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights and the National Forum for Human Rights to assist them in carrying out their human rights monitoring, reporting and advocacy activities within Sierra Leone. It also works closely with the humanitarian community to ensure that they integrate issues of human rights into their current activities.

30. Facilitated by UNOMSIL, a Human Rights Committee for Sierra Leone has been temporarily established in Conakry, comprising the Sierra Leonean National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the National Forum for Human Rights, United Nations agencies, humanitarian organizations and UNOMSIL. The Committee is facilitating the active participation of the human rights community in the process of peace-building in Sierra Leone. In the coming weeks, if possible, significant activities of the Committee will be re-located to Freetown.

V. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

31. Since my previous report, the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone has drastically deteriorated, following the latest round of fighting, which culminated in the rebel attack on Freetown on 6 January 1999. The number of refugees in neighbouring countries has increased to an estimated 450,000, with an estimated 700,000 internally displaced persons. With ECOMOG expanding its hold on the capital, the number of known vulnerable displaced persons in Freetown is now estimated at 200,000, out of which some 60,000 have sought refuge in the national stadium. Many more are living in abandoned churches and schools.

32. Following a recent eight-day tour of the region that included Côte d'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Sadako Ogata, has called for more support for repatriation programmes in the region. She also discussed plans with Guinean authorities to move 50,000 Sierra Leonean refugees away from the Guinean border to prevent the camps from becoming rear bases for the rebels. The European Union and the United States of America have promised 4 million dollars to aid this operation. The estimated number of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea today stands at 350,000.

33. UNOMSIL has facilitated the delivery of humanitarian aid by making its helicopter and fixed-wing aircraft available, to the extent possible, to United Nations agencies and international NGOs.

34. Outside Freetown, OXFAM has identified 30,000 displaced persons living in the Lungi peninsula. Further up country, approximately 50,000 internally displaced persons, who were reported to have fled Kenema during heavy fighting between the rebel forces and ECOMOG in early February 1999, appear to be returning to the area. While there are no reliable reports from further inland because of the insecure situation, thousands more are believed to have fled into the bush.

35. The suffering of vulnerable civilian populations is exacerbated by increasing levels of malnutrition, especially among children under five years of age. Preliminary surveys show that in some areas, as many as 25 per cent of the children are suffering from acute malnutrition. Furthermore, appalling sanitation conditions are rampant and health care is inadequate. Diarrhoeal diseases are on the rise in almost all the accessible areas. In addition, the disruption of routine vaccination activities has increased the risk of epidemics. The town of Kailahun is believed to be the origin of the more than 400 measles cases now being identified among displaced persons in Kenema. While a vaccination campaign has begun in Kenema, with 10,000 doses of antigen provided by UNICEF, many children are out of reach of the humanitarian community. Meanwhile, doctors and nurses at Connaught Hospital and elsewhere are struggling to treat about 500 victims of amputation and mutilation requiring extreme surgery. Lastly, approximately 1,750 children have been reported missing by their families. Very few have been reunited, while many are believed to be trapped in inaccessible areas.

36. The humanitarian community's ability to provide relief to these populations continues to be impaired by the ongoing hostilities and resultant insecurity. Following the widespread looting and destruction of humanitarian offices, warehouses, vehicles and relief supplies, humanitarian activities remain drastically reduced. Approximately two thirds of the country, roughly all of the territory north of Port Loko, Bo and Kenema, remains inaccessible by road. This has confined humanitarian interventions to the peninsula and the southern and western provinces, leaving thousands of Sierra Leoneans without basic assistance. The provision of humanitarian assistance to the needy is today being carried out, at great cost, by air. Meanwhile, the World Food Programme (WFP) has warned that if the roads to Freetown are not opened soon, allowing the free flow of commercial imports and food from upcountry, food shortages in the city could become more acute within one to three weeks.

37. Despite these constraints, the international humanitarian community has continued operations in accessible areas, particularly in the south where programmes continue in Bo, Kenema, Pujehun and Moyamba. From Conakry, international humanitarian staff continue to make day trips into the capital while national staff maintain a permanent presence in the city, where they work in collaboration with their governmental humanitarian counterparts. The humanitarian community's capacity to carry relief supplies and personnel to accessible areas of the country has been improved by the leasing of a helicopter for that purpose by the European Community Humanitarian Office and the United States Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (ECHO/OFDA).

38. In order to streamline operations, a 60-day humanitarian plan of action is being finalized by the international humanitarian community in consultation with the Government. The plan is based on five basic operational requirements. These include: full access by all humanitarian organizations to communications equipment; cooperation between the Government and humanitarian agencies; unhindered access for humanitarian assistance; effective coordination with military and security forces; and the establishment of a forward logistics base at Lungi Airport. Because the plan uses existing assets, considerable progress has already been achieved. Approximately 140,000 metric tons of food has been distributed to vulnerable groups in Freetown with an additional 100,000 reaching accessible upcountry populations. A total of 21 clinics and four hospitals in Freetown are fully operational with support from United Nations agencies and partners, and more than 1,300 rolls of plastic sheeting and 40,000 blankets are now available in Freetown for distribution.

39. The humanitarian community is committed to continuing its work of providing assistance in spite of insecurity and the difficult working environment. Relief workers and the civilian population need your support in continuously calling on all parties to the conflict to re-commit themselves to respecting international humanitarian law by: recognizing the neutrality and impartiality of all humanitarian organizations; fully guaranteeing the absolute safety and security of humanitarian personnel, including relief items and equipment; and calling upon the Government of Sierra Leone to confirm its willingness to permit the unimpeded flow of humanitarian assistance to all parts of the country.

VI. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

40. The General Assembly, by its resolution 53/29 of 20 November 1998, appropriated an amount of $22 million for the establishment and operation of the Observer Mission for the period ending 30 June 1999. The resources provided by the Assembly covered the Observer Mission's start-up costs as well as its maintenance at the full strength authorized by Security Council resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998.

41. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMSIL, as recommended in paragraph 51 below, the cost of maintaining the Observer Mission during the extension period will be well within the resources already provided by the General Assembly.

42. As at 15 February 1999, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMSIL special account amounted to $12.5 million. As at the same date, the total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations amounted to $1,666.6 million.

43. With regard to the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts in Sierra Leone, contributions received as at 28 February 1999 amounted to some $2.1 million, with authorized expenditure amounting to some $0.1 million.

VII. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

44. Sierra Leone continues to face an extremely complex and difficult situation fraught with serious risks. Though ECOMOG has succeeded in driving the rebels from Freetown and restoring order in its immediate vicinity, the capital is still threatened by rebel forces in the peninsula.

45. I unreservedly strongly condemn the merciless murders, inhuman mutilations and other appalling human rights violations perpetrated by the rebels on the innocent civilian inhabitants of Freetown, and the widespread property damage they have inflicted. In the light of some allegations that members of pro-Government forces may also have been guilty of violations, I hope that the Government will fulfil its assurances that such allegations will be investigated and welcome its assurances that these forces will adhere to international human rights standards in the future.

46. Concern over violations of human rights and the prevention of further violations stand at the heart of the Sierra Leonean conflict. For that reason, and in view of the scale and enormity of the violations inflicted recently in Freetown, I intend to deploy an additional human rights officer to UNOMSIL. This will enable the human rights component to expand its reporting and deepen its coverage of human rights abuses in Sierra Leone, as well as to maintain its technical cooperation activities with Sierra Leonean human rights organizations.

47. ECOMOG is to be congratulated on its success in repelling the rebels from Freetown and restoring a measure of order to the city. I also commend the Government of Mali for providing additional troops to ECOMOG and donor Governments, in particular the Netherlands, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, for the logistical support they have provided and continue to provide to ECOMOG.

48. In the meantime, I would urge the international community to continue to support ECOMOG logistically and to consider the provision of prompt bilateral assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone in the creation of a new Sierra Leonean army to defend the country. The Governments of Nigeria and the United Kingdom have taken the first steps in this regard.

49. The possible partial withdrawal of Nigerian forces from ECOMOG following the elections in that country and the consequent effects on ECOMOG's military effectiveness in Sierra Leone could require a major reappraisal of the situation. In particular, the dual track approach pursued so far, which

combines support for ECOMOG military action to maintain law and order with a willingness to negotiate with the rebels, may need to be reviewed. The Security Council may wish to consider the implications of this important new potential development.

50. I intend to pursue further with President Taylor some of the suggestions contained in the statement of the Government of Liberia (S/1999/193). Since practical obstacles to the proposal to deploy United Nations monitors at the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia remain, as deployment of the ECOMOG forces required to protect them is unlikely, the steps taken by the Government to encourage the repatriation, disarmament and demobilization of Liberian fighters in Sierra Leone are welcome.

51. President Kabbah's decision to allow the leader of RUF, Corporal Foday Sankoh, to meet with rebel leaders in order to develop a coherent set of political demands, which would form the basis of subsequent negotiations with the Government, is a bold and valuable initiative. The United Nations will continue to facilitate the conduct of talks through the provision of its good offices as required.

52. The preliminary meeting my Special Representative held with representatives of RUF in Abidjan on 21 February may have helped lay the groundwork for further negotiations, which might be based on the Abidjan Peace Agreement signed in November 1996 by the Government and RUF. In order to proceed, RUF must recognize the legitimacy of the Government, agree to a ceasefire, renounce violence, especially attacks on civilians, and permit humanitarian access to the areas they control under conditions of adequate security.

53. As I indicated in my report of 7 January (S/1999/20, para. 37), UNOMSIL has been substantially scaled back since its relocation to Conakry and now comprises only a small core of essential civilian and military personnel under the leadership of my Special Representative (see annex). The recent decision of the Government to allow Foday Sankoh to meet with the RUF leaders in Lomé or Bamako opens prospects for the start of a dialogue which should be encouraged. Should negotiations between the Government and the rebels take a favourable turn, UNOMSIL should remain in a position where it is capable of rendering further assistance to the peace process. I therefore recommend the extension of UNOMSIL's mandate for a further period of three months, until 13 June 1999. Its mandate will continue to be to provide information to me, and through me to the Security Council, about the situation in Sierra Leone in its political, military, security, human rights and humanitarian aspects; to continue to liaise closely with the Government of Sierra Leone and with ECOWAS and ECOMOG; to explore, in close consultation with the Government, ways of pursuing dialogue with the rebels aimed at a peaceful settlement of the conflict; to advise me on further actions the United Nations could take in the event of developments in and around Sierra Leone; and to stand ready to take quick action, on the basis of such expansion as the Security Council may authorize, to assist the implementation of any peace agreement.

54. In view of the improvement in the security situation in and around Freetown achieved during the past few days, it is my intention to re-establish UNOMSIL in Freetown as soon as possible. At least initially, the re-establishment will

take place on a small scale and with strict attention to the security situation. I therefore intend to increase the current number of military observers from 8 to 14, and to redeploy the necessary staff to support the relocation to Freetown. In the meantime, the United Nations Development Programme and other United Nations programmes and agencies have also been authorized to re-establish a limited presence in Freetown.

55. I take this opportunity to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Francis G. Okelo, and his staff. My thanks also go to the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi and the military observers of UNOMSIL, including those who have been repatriated following the relocation to Conakry. The valuable contribution made by the five civilian police advisers, who have now been repatriated, also deserves recognition.

17. Report of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), Sixth Report, 4 June 1999 (S/1999/645). Pages 5, 7-8, paragraphs 19-20, and 28-33.

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SIXTH REPORT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL ON THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 11 of resolution 1231 (1999) of 11 March 1999, the Security Council requested me to keep the Council closely informed on the situation in Sierra Leone and in this regard to submit a report, by 5 June 1999, with recommendations on the future deployment of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and the implementation of its mandate. The present report is submitted in accordance with that request.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

Dialogue process

2. Since my report of 4 March 1999 (S/1999/237), the peace process in Sierra Leone has made significant progress, culminating in the signing of a ceasefire agreement on 18 May 1999 (see S/1999/585, annex) and the start of dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) at Lomé on 25 May.

3. The signing of the ceasefire agreement and the inception of talks with RUF to a large extent reflect the outcome of a number of important initiatives undertaken by the Government of Sierra Leone. In early to mid-March, President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah visited several key countries in the subregion, including Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Nigeria and Togo, to discuss the situation in Sierra Leone and possible ways forward with the support of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and its Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). In a radio address to the nation on 14 March, President Kabbah expressed his appreciation for the assistance provided by those countries and reaffirmed his commitment to the dual-track approach, which involves strengthening ECOMOG while being prepared to talk to RUF and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC).

4. The Government's initiatives were accompanied by considerable diplomatic activity in the subregion on the part of a number of Governments and organizations in the subregion and elsewhere, including the current Chairman of ECOWAS, President Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo; the ECOMOG troop-contributing

countries, namely Nigeria, Guinea, Ghana and Mali; the Governments of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America and the United States Presidential Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa, the Rev. Jesse Jackson; and my Special Representative for Sierra Leone, Francis G. Okelo.

5. The opening of talks between the Government and RUF at Lomé on 25 May followed internal consultations there between the RUF leader, Corporal Foday Sankoh, and a delegation of 14 RUF representatives from within Sierra Leone. At the Government's request, UNOMSIL transported Corporal Sankoh from Freetown to Lomé on 18 April. Subsequently, UNOMSIL also transported the 14 other RUF representatives from other parts of Sierra Leone to Lomé via Monrovia with the cooperation and support of the Government of Liberia and the assistance of the United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Liberia. UNOMSIL has also provided some logistical support for the Government of Togo, which is hosting the talks, through the use of the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Activities in Sierra Leone.

6. Although Corporal Sankoh was still pursuing his appeal against his conviction and sentence to death for treason, the Government granted him judicial leave to pursue the dialogue process. On 29 May, the Government and the RUF delegation reached an understanding on the status of Corporal Sankoh. The Government undertook to take the appropriate legal steps to grant him an absolute and free pardon, and Corporal Sankoh said that his delegation would proceed with the dialogue.

7. The internal RUF talks lasted from 26 April to 10 May and resulted in a position paper reflecting the RUF/AFRC views and demands. The position paper calls, inter alia, for a blanket amnesty for all personnel of RUF and AFRC, which had organized the coup d'état in Sierra Leone in May 1997; and the establishment of a four-year transitional Government. The main functions of the transitional Government would include the drafting of a new constitution; the reform of the national security forces and civil service; the encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of all combatants; and the establishment of a national electoral commission. RUF expressed readiness to convert itself into a political party.

8. RUF stipulated that a neutral peace monitoring group should be deployed as part of the ceasefire arrangements following the signing of a peace agreement. Other demands include the departure of all foreign troops and mercenaries from Sierra Leone within 14 days of the signing of the agreement, and the termination of the Status of Forces Agreement between the Governments of Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

9. On 14 May, the Government of Sierra Leone issued a response to the RUF position paper, stressing the unconstitutional nature of the proposal for a transitional Government. At the same time, the Government emphasized that the proposal for an amnesty for all combatants would be examined with a view to achieving permanent peace, while taking into account gross human rights violations committed against the citizens of Sierra Leone. The government statement endorsed the importance of the transformation of RUF into a political party and pledged the Government's full support for that process.

10. In order to help create conditions conducive to the success of the Government-RUF talks, my Special Representative proposed a cessation of hostilities for the duration of the dialogue process. This proposal was strongly supported by the Government of Togo and resulted in the signing, on 18 May, of an agreement between the Government and RUF to cease fire (S/1999/585, annex). According to the agreement, which came into effect on 24 May, both parties were to maintain their respective positions and refrain from hostile or aggressive acts. Other provisions included the guarantee of safe and unhindered access by humanitarian organizations to all people in need; the immediate release of prisoners of war and non-combatants; and the deployment, subject to the authorization of the Security Council, of United Nations military observers to observe compliance with the ceasefire agreement.

11. The peace talks have started off well, with the two parties expressing their firm commitment to the peace process and determination to work together to resolve the conflict. The dialogue process is being guided by a Facilitation Committee chaired by the Foreign Minister of Togo, with the participation of ECOWAS, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and my Special Representative. Within Sierra Leone, the dialogue process has benefited from the active involvement of the Parliament and civic groups. Among these, the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone, supported by the World Conference on Religion and Peace, has played a particularly active role. President Kabbah has proposed that the Council, whose role has been appreciated by both sides, should become one of the moral guarantors of a future peace agreement.

12. On 2 June, the Government and RUF decided to ask UNOMSIL to establish a committee to effect the immediate release of prisoners of war and non-combatants in accordance with the 18 May ceasefire agreement. The committee, which is to be chaired by the UNOMSIL Chief Military Observer, comprises representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), other United Nations agencies and non-governmental organizations.

Relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia

13. There have been continued allegations of arms shipments reaching the rebels in Sierra Leone either through or from Liberia. On 8 April, the ECOMOG Force Commander, Major-General Felix Mujakperuo, announced that ECOMOG had confirmed the involvement of the Governments of Liberia and Burkina Faso in the shipment and delivery of arms to the rebels on 14 and 15 March. The details of this incident and another alleged incident on 20 April were brought to the attention of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1132 (1997) concerning Sierra Leone. The Government of Liberia has denied the allegations.

14. Given the persistent tension between Sierra Leone and Liberia resulting from allegations of arms supplies to the rebels, the Security Council requested me, in resolution 1231 (1999), to consider, in coordination with the countries of the Mano River Union and other States members of ECOWAS, the practicality and effectiveness of the deployment of United Nations monitors, along with ECOMOG forces, at the Sierra Leone/Liberia border. Such a presence could improve the security climate and build confidence between the two countries. Accordingly, I wrote to both the Chairman and the Executive Secretary of ECOWAS on 12 April,

seeking their views on the possible deployment of ECOMOG troops and the subsequent deployment of United Nations personnel along the border.

15. In his reply, dated 26 April 1999, the Executive Secretary, Lansana Kouyaté, stated that the Chiefs of Staff of the countries contributing troops to ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, who had discussed my letter at their meeting at Abuja, welcomed the proposal in principle. However, citing the difficult terrain along the border and the consequent need for adequate equipment, Mr. Kouyaté proposed that the United Nations should assist in providing the necessary logistical equipment, including helicopters, communications and ground transportation. He requested the United Nations to dispatch a technical team to discuss with ECOMOG the modalities and requirements of deployment. On 7 May, the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Bernard Miyet, invited ECOWAS to indicate how many ECOMOG troops would be required, and the time needed for their deployment, and requested a detailed statement of ECOMOG's logistical requirements. This information can be provided to the Security Council as soon as it is received.

16. There have also been positive developments in the relations between Sierra Leone and Liberia. For example, there is increased contact among civic groups in both countries as demonstrated by the visits to Liberia of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone and the National Union of Sierra Leone Students. Moreover, a delegation of the Liberian Senate met with President Kabbah in Freetown in early April to offer the support of the Government and people of Liberia for the resolution of the armed conflict in Sierra Leone. The delegation proposed that the three parliaments of the countries of the Mano River Union should work together, under the coordination of Mali, to help to end the conflict.

17. On 27 May, the first annual conference of the Mano River Parliamentary Union opened in Monrovia. Although no Sierra Leonean representative attended the conference, President Taylor stated in his address to the delegates of Liberia, Guinea and Mali that he would do his utmost to ensure peace and security in Guinea and Sierra Leone, since peace in Liberia could be assured only if its neighbours were also at peace.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY SITUATION

18. The military and security situation in Sierra Leone has remained fluid and complex. Following his assumption of the command of ECOMOG in late March, the new Force Commander, Major-General Felix Mujakperuo, launched an offensive to provide a larger security cordon around Lungi and Freetown. As a result, ECOMOG succeeded in opening the roads connecting Freetown with Lungi, Port Loko and Kambia in the western and north-western parts of the country. Moreover, the clearance of a subsidiary road from Freetown to Bo via Moyamba opened up a land route for supplies to Bo and Kenema. ECOMOG also retains its positions at Kabala and Bumbuna. Since my previous report, ECOMOG's military capabilities have been further strengthened with a substantial increase in communications facilities and air assets.

19. However, RUF/AFRC continue to dominate many areas of Sierra Leone, particularly in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. They also have considerable freedom of movement in parts of the Western Area and the Southern Province, where they retain the capability to interdict ECOMOG lines of communication and carry out raids. The Kono diamond mining area is also still under RUF/AFRC control. Two attacks on Kenema have recently been repulsed, although a large rebel group has advanced to around 15 miles north of the town. Continued reports of arms supply reaching RUF/AFRC indicate that their fighting capacity remains strong. In addition, they have significantly strengthened their anti-aircraft capabilities, an achievement attributed to the use of foreign expertise. The existence of pockets of forces behind the other party's lines, especially around the north-south Bo-Kabala axis, is expected to complicate the monitoring of the ceasefire.

20. Both before and after 24 May, when the ceasefire took effect, rebel activity in the north-west increased considerably, amid mutual accusations by the parties of violations. A rebel group, largely composed of troops of the former Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF), has been detected in the area north of Occra Hills/south of Port Loko, and there is a large build-up of RUF/AFRC in the area north of Lunsar and Port Loko. This build-up poses a threat to Port Loko/Rogberi and possibly to Lungi, which ECOMOG has warned it will forcibly resist. Prior to the ceasefire, RUF/AFRC attacked some ECOMOG positions in the area of Port Loko, including Port Loko itself, and in the Occra Hills where both sides have suffered casualties. RUF/AFRC also undertook raids on undefended villages, committing atrocities at a scale not seen since their retreat from Freetown in January (see sect. V below). Freetown remains subject to a curfew, albeit at reduced hours, and ECOMOG continues to operate checkpoints to curb rebel infiltration.

Creation of a new Sierra Leone armed forces

21. As detailed in my second progress report on UNOMSIL of 16 October 1998 (S/1998/960), the Government's efforts to improve security involve the creation of a new armed forces of 5,000 troops, the restructuring of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) and the reform of the Sierra Leone Police Force.

22. On 10 May, the first 562 troops completed three months of elementary training and, at the initiative of the Government of Nigeria, elementary cadet training has been provided for 81 future officers at the Nigerian Defence Academy. The efforts to create a new Sierra Leone army have received significant support from the Government of the United Kingdom, which is providing both training assistance and equipment.

Reconstitution of the Sierra Leone Police Force

23. Another aspect of these efforts concerns the rebuilding of the Sierra Leone Police Force, which suffered severely during the rebel invasion of Freetown, with some 200 officers being killed and many police stations destroyed. With donor assistance, the Government has made considerable progress in reconstituting a functioning police presence in the capital, but reversing the extent of the damage and the collapse of the police structure in most parts of the country will require substantial external assistance.

24. As noted in my earlier reports, the support provided by the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force and the UNOMSIL civilian police advisers had contributed significantly to the Sierra Leone Police Force reform efforts. In April 1999, two Commonwealth police advisers visited Sierra Leone with a view to the eventual resumption of their activities. I will present to the Security Council at an appropriate time in the near future my plans for a resumption of activity in Sierra Leone by United Nations civilian police advisers to render tangible assistance in cooperation with bilateral donors.

IV. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

25. Since my report of 4 March 1999 (S/1999/237), the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme has been at a near standstill. A joint World Bank/British Department for International Development team found in March that some of the original programme assumptions and guiding principles were no longer applicable and that the programme would have to be re-adjusted to reflect the changed political environment and security situation. Based on their recommendations, the pilot phase of the programme, which was designed to accommodate existing ex-combatants as well as those who might surrender before the signing of a new peace agreement, has since resumed. However, any subsequent large-scale disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activity will require the implementation of a peace agreement and the stabilization of the security situation. This matter is still under consideration by the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration.

26. The approximately 1,300 ex-combatants, who had been originally part of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process at Lungi, continue to be housed under appalling conditions in Freetown. Despite a decision on 12 April by the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration to move them to Lungi, ECOMOG opposes their relocation because of continued insecurity in the area. As a result, plans are under way to improve their current living conditions. This matter is also under consideration by the National Committee.

27. Meanwhile, under the framework of its child protection network, UNICEF, in cooperation with ECOMOG and UNOMSIL, has been providing services to children released by RUF/AFRC as part of the overall peace negotiations. Child welfare agencies have also begun developing strategies and policies for child soldiers within the overall framework of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, while the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) is reviewing its involvement in the reintegration phase of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Other specialized agencies of the United Nations system and humanitarian organizations have started conceptualizing and examining possible links to humanitarian assistance and rehabilitation programmes.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

28. The reporting period has been marked by a resurgence of rebel atrocities against civilians, most of them reported from the provincial towns of Masiaka

and Port Loko. Based on eyewitness accounts, the human rights abuses by RUF/AFRC have included significant numbers of summary executions, mutilations, limb amputations, abductions and sexual abuse, as well as the large-scale destruction of property. Civilians in the affected areas are also suffering significant humanitarian deprivation.

29. Although there was a drop in the number of reported cases of gross human rights violations during March, escapees from rebel-held territories continued to provide disturbing accounts of abusive rebel behaviour against civilians, including physical and psychological torture and harassment. In Makeni and Koinadugu, escapees reported that RUF/AFRC had imposed punitive food taxes, restricted the movement of civilians and operated a harsh justice system. A UNOMSIL investigation team that visited Masiaka after the town's recapture by ECOMOG/CDF received testimonies of ill-treatment of civilians, some of whom were killed or mutilated after being accused of sympathizing with pro-government forces. Moreover, a large number of boys and male adolescents in the area had the letters "RUF" engraved across their chests with razor blades.

30. During a rebel attack on Port Loko on 7 May, over 20 civilians are believed to have been summarily executed by a group of RUF/AFRC at nearby Mangarma village. Survivors also reported summary executions in other areas around Port Loko, which were attributed in at least two villages to a well-orchestrated rebel strategy carried out at the orders of rebel commanders. In the Masiaka area, the UNOMSIL team observed a number of bodies and received credible reports that eight decapitated bodies and severed heads of civilians had been displayed on the roadside by retreating RUF/AFRC. In one incident in Masumana village between Masiaka and Mile 38, eye witnesses described the murder of several infants by RUF/AFRC.

31. RUF/AFRC forces have also continued their practice of limb amputations, and at least a dozen victims have suffered this form of torture over the past month alone. In Mangarma village, RUF/AFRC reportedly amputated the arms of two of their civilian captives and then instructed them to walk to Port Loko town to alert the Malian contingent of ECOMOG of the RUF/AFRC impending attack. One victim, a male teacher, was hospitalized in Freetown after RUF/AFRC cut off both his arms, as well as his ears and lips.

32. A large number of civilians are believed to have been abducted by RUF/AFRC over the past three months. The abductions have reportedly followed a consistent pattern where RUF/AFRC retreating from a town or village have forced men, women and children to go with them to serve as porters, potential recruits or sex slaves. Most of these abductees are still being held by RUF/AFRC. In Matteh village near Masiaka, the section chief estimated the number of abductees in the area to be in the thousands. Most of the people interviewed in the Port Loko and Masiaka areas said they had lost close family members through abduction. One man told UNOMSIL that 15 members of his immediate family had been abducted by RUF/AFRC.

33. My Special Representative in Sierra Leone has already expressed to RUF/AFRC the deep concerns of the United Nations over the reported abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law. Following the fact-finding visit by UNOMSIL human rights officers to Masiaka, the Special Representative

shared the findings of the mission with Corporal Foday Sankoh, and presented the RUF delegates with an aide-mémoire on human rights issues. RUF has since pledged to set up an internal investigation to probe these allegations and has requested support from the international community.

34. After concerns had been raised by my Special Representative and others regarding human rights violations attributed to ECOMOG and CDF soldiers in the wake of the rebel incursion into Freetown in January (see S/1997/237), the ECOMOG High Command has taken concrete positive steps to address this issue. In April, the ECOMOG Force Commander initiated the formation of a Civil/Military Relations Committee which will, inter alia, investigate allegations of human rights violations against individual members of ECOMOG and CDF and recommend appropriate action to the higher authorities. Membership in the Committee includes representatives of the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, the Bar Association, the police, the media, civil society and the Government, with UNOMSIL participating in an observer capacity.

35. In spite of the goodwill exhibited by the ECOMOG High Command, there have been a few reports of ill-treatment of the civilian population by ECOMOG, CDF and Civil Defence Units (CDU). It is also reported that detainees from rebel-controlled areas face a high risk of intimidation and even execution as alleged rebel collaborators. For instance, information has been received of the execution of up to 30 escapees by CDF forces (Kapras) at Kagbantama, near the town of Gbinti in the Northern Province. In a separate report, a woman from Moyamba District in the south-west provided detailed information on an alleged attack on the town of Bradford by CDF forces (Kamajors) in which at least six civilians are believed to have lost their lives. In April, a reliable informant reported the severe beating and detention for two days of a man and a woman in central Freetown.

36. Various sources, including United Nations agencies, report that there is continued widespread recruitment of children by CDF in the Southern and Eastern Provinces, especially at Bo and Kenema. Agencies also report that a number of children who had been demobilized from CDF are known to have been subsequently re-recruited. This is an issue of great concern, especially considering the promise made last year by the Government of Sierra Leone to my Special Representative on Children and Armed Conflict to demobilize and discontinue the practice of recruiting children under 18 years of age into the armed forces of Sierra Leone. My Special Representative in Freetown continues to monitor the situation closely and raises the relevant issues with the Government. Government officials in the Southern Province have reportedly acted to halt underage recruitment by CDF elements.

37. On 27 April, President Kabbah announced the establishment under statute of a new Human Rights Commission for Sierra Leone, replacing the human rights role of the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights. The body will have some form of adjudicatory authority and considerable implementation powers. UNOMSIL has informed the Government of its support for this initiative and has promised to provide, in collaboration with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the necessary technical assistance.

38. In the context of its technical cooperation activities, UNOMSIL also continues to provide full secretariat support to the Sierra Leone Human Rights Committee, comprising the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, national non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies. Membership also includes the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone and Human Rights Watch. The Committee remains a valuable forum for the exchange of information and for strategy development. In this context, UNOMSIL is assisting the non-governmental organization community to develop positions on the role to be played and issues of human rights within the peace process. Renewed efforts are being made to identify funding whereby the Committee can develop its own institutional identity.

39. The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, has accepted the invitation of the Government of Sierra Leone to visit the country towards the end of June, accompanied by a panel of prominent human rights personalities. The purpose of the visit will be to support the peace process, to encourage future programmes for the promotion and protection of human rights in the country, and to draw attention to the plight of children, women and civilians bearing the brunt of the excesses in Sierra Leone. With the coordination of UNOMSIL, which is hosting the visit, a range of civil society actors in Sierra Leone are already exploring ways to maximize the impact of the visit of Mrs. Robinson with regard to both the short- and long-term human rights needs of the country.

VI. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

40. Since my previous report, an already desperate humanitarian situation has worsened. Rebel gains have increased the number of needy people while at the same time limiting aid workers' access to affected areas. At present, nearly half, or 2.6 million, of the Sierra Leonean population in the Northern and Eastern Provinces is effectively out of the reach of humanitarian agencies. Another 480,000 have become refugees. While the number of internally displaced persons in accessible areas remains relatively constant, at about 370,000, there are many more civilians countrywide who have been directly affected by the war in and around their own homes and villages. Many of these have been forced to live under rebel control and denied their right to sufficient food, shelter and health care. In addition, it is estimated that well over one million civilians countrywide still require some form of humanitarian assistance.

41. Even in government-controlled areas, despite some successes, obtaining access to civilians remains a challenge. For instance, it has been possible to access areas such as Pujehun, Bonthe and Bo districts in the Southern Province as well as parts of Kenema district in the Eastern Province. Additionally, owing to recent ECOMOG advances, agencies have assessed needs in a few towns in the north, such as Yele, by road from Bo. However, it remains impossible to move humanitarian goods to the east and south by road owing to RUF blockades of key junctions on the Freetown-Bo highway. While some aid can reach the provincial capitals of Bo and Kenema by air, the inability to transport food by road has led to a depletion of stocks in these areas. Additionally, the security situation in the immediate environs of Kenema remains unclear, and has prevented humanitarian intervention in many chiefdoms.

42. Given these difficulties, urgent measures are now being taken in cooperation with the Government to explore other ways of transporting food aid. At present, food agencies have leased a ship to transfer food to Nitti port, where it can then be driven by road to Bo. If successful, this route will allow for the supply of food to war-affected people. The World Food Programme has also requested to send food along the Freetown-Bo highway, which was recently re-opened by commercial transporters, but had not received clearance from the Government at the time of the present report. In the meantime, the remaining limited amount of food in these areas has been prioritized for therapeutic and supplementary feeding centres as well as camps for internally displaced persons.

43. Meanwhile, in government-controlled areas, including Freetown and parts of the southern and eastern areas, the humanitarian community has mobilized to provide some form of support to about 370,000 individuals. At present, more than 120,000 registered internally displaced persons living in camps are receiving a comprehensive package of assistance, including food, shelter and health services. However, with more than 80 per cent of the buildings destroyed in some parts of Freetown, many thousands more are squatting in other areas or staying with relatives. A war-ravaged economy, characterized by low incomes and high costs for food and other basic items, has compounded their suffering.

44. To address chronic food insecurity, emergency seeds and tools have been distributed to farmers who lost their property to armed groups in Port Loko, Kenema and Bo districts as well as the Western Area. The United Nations continues to support the Government in its efforts to buy imported rice and to access food on a bilateral basis from donor Governments.

45. Basic support for clinics and hospitals has continued to come from UNICEF, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the medical non-governmental organizations. Some 25 health centres and eight mobile clinics are now functioning in Freetown, with 25 operating in southern Bo, Pujehun and Bonthe districts. Large-scale expanded programme of immunization campaigns have successfully headed off a measles epidemic around Freetown, Kenema and Bonthe, with more than 65,000 children vaccinated in those areas.

46. As of mid-May, UNICEF had registered a total of 3,384 children who had been missing since January 1999 from the Freetown area. More than 500 of these have been traced and reunified with their families. However, abductions of large numbers of children persist. The Child Protection Network continues to trace such incidents and to provide programmes to help unaccompanied children, demobilized child soldiers and other children with special needs.

47. Finally, water trucking, well chlorination and waste management activities in most camps for internally displaced persons have reduced the level of waterborne diseases such as cholera and diarrhoea. Plastic sheeting, nails, wood and kitchen sets have been provided to some urban households and to displaced persons in camps in the west, east and south. The needs in this area, however are considerable and require continued intervention as well as resources.

48. While the humanitarian situation remains dire, the recent ceasefire and initiation of dialogue between the parties to the conflict has been welcomed by

the humanitarian community as the best possible means for resolution of the long-standing crisis. The provision in the recent ceasefire agreement for safe and unhindered access for humanitarian organizations to all people in need is a significant step towards ensuring the countrywide delivery of assistance. However, turning the combatants' humanitarian commitment into a reality requires careful planning, good faith and confidence-building. As noted earlier in the present report, my Special Representative has provided the parties to the conflict with a proposal on humanitarian access, detailing, inter alia, the obligations of the parties under international humanitarian law to provide the enabling environment for humanitarian intervention. This proposal, prepared by the United Nations country team under the guidance of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator, is seen as a first step towards building with the parties to the conflict a dialogue on access. In order to further the humanitarian imperative and to ensure the smooth delivery of life-saving humanitarian assistance, it is necessary that:

(a) The issue of humanitarian access must be on an equal footing with, and not contingent upon, the military and political elements of the peace process. Moreover, as the combatants' observance of the right of civilians in need to humanitarian assistance is based upon international law, the concept is non-negotiable and can only be discussed in terms of mechanisms for access;

(b) Given the fragile state of the peace process and the steadily degrading humanitarian situation, it is imperative that the humanitarian community has immediate and independent access to the parties to the conflict, in order to establish working modalities for accessing all Sierra Leoneans in need.

VII. FUTURE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS OBSERVER MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE

49. UNOMSIL currently consists of 24 military observers, including two medical personnel, as well as 29 international and 24 national staff members. This includes 10 military observers recently deployed to assist in the expanded tasks of the Mission. The planned deployment of a further 16 observers during the month of June, together with the necessary support personnel, vehicles, communications and other essential equipment, will restore the mission's military capacity to the level it had attained last December. The security situation permitting, I would then proceed to deploy additional observers up to the limit of 70, with an additional 15 medical personnel, as authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998. In view of the security considerations, the need to improve medical and casualty evacuation capacity and the enhanced monitoring and observation role being played by UNOMSIL, an additional helicopter will be required.

50. UNOMSIL's intensive preparations for the intra-RUF and RUF-Government talks have required my Special Representative and his immediate staff to travel to Monrovia and Lomé, in addition to consulting closely with the Government in Freetown. In view of the likelihood that the peace talks and related activity will require a high level of United Nations involvement, I intend to increase the civilian staff in the office of my Special Representative by two political

officers. The human rights section also needs to be restored to its previous staffing level of five persons in view of the significant human rights monitoring and technical cooperation requirements in Sierra Leone. In this connection, there is a need for forensic experts, and I would ask donors to consider making available their services.

51. UNOMSIL's military component, thus restored to its former strength, will continue to monitor the ceasefire within the limits of its resources. It will also continue to establish, maintain and improve contacts with local RUF commanders with a view to establishing joint military commissions. The functions of these commissions will include identifying and locating forces on the ground; obtaining written assurances from rebel commanders of their commitment to the ceasefire and guarantees of security for United Nations personnel; and generally to build confidence, facilitate contacts and resolve disputes. Provision would also be made for deploying teams of five or six members to Lungi, Hastings, Port Loko and Bo, depending on the security situation. Observers outside Freetown would be co-deployed with ECOMOG to ensure their security.

52. I have given much thought to activities that might be carried out by an expanded UNOMSIL presence in the event of a peace agreement. To that end, I dispatched a military assessment and planning team to Sierra Leone at the end of May to develop a revised concept of operations for a possible enlargement of the Mission.

53. My detailed recommendations to the Council on the size, mandate and configuration of an eventual expanded UNOMSIL will depend on the provisions of any peace agreement that the Government and RUF may sign in Lomé, and on the considerations on the ground, notably security.

54. One important consideration in redefining UNOMSIL's tasks would be the future strength, activities and state of deployment of ECOMOG. While these are not yet known, I would anticipate that ECOMOG would remain in Sierra Leone as a stabilizing influence, with a well-defined mandate that would include ensuring the security of vital areas of the country.

55. At this point, however, I envisage the need for UNOMSIL itself to be prepared to ensure the security of United Nations personnel if it is to deploy effectively to assist in the implementation of an eventual peace agreement. To this end, bearing in mind the likely security situation and the confused and unpredictable nature of the conflict, there might well prove to be a need for the deployment of a sizeable number of infantry and additional observers, along with the necessary equipment and military logistical support. Subject to Council authorization, these troops would be deployed in phases to accomplish a range of possible tasks.

56. These can be more precisely defined only in the light of an eventual peace agreement, but are likely to include the following:

(a) Monitoring and supervising the ceasefire;

(b) Supervising, monitoring and assisting in the encampment, disarmament and demobilization of former combatants;

(c) Providing security to United Nations personnel, including military observers;

(d) Providing assistance to humanitarian efforts;

(e) Providing planning and logistical support for an eventual election.

57. I will revert to the Council with detailed proposals for a revised mandate and concept of operations for its consideration as soon as a peace agreement has been signed. However, in addition to the military requirements outlined above, I would also envisage a significant expansion of the civilian personnel, including those engaged in political, human rights and logistical support functions. Moreover, any enhanced role that UNOMSIL might play, whatever the final shape of the peace agreement, will benefit greatly from the acquisition of a nationwide broadcasting capacity. Experience has shown the clear advantages to a United Nations peacekeeping mission of access to its own radio facility. I would therefore appeal to donors to consider making such equipment available, and would envisage a modest increase in UNOMSIL's public information staff accordingly.

VIII. FINANCIAL ASPECTS

58. As indicated in my previous report (S/1999/237), the General Assembly, by its resolution 53/29 of 20 November 1998, appropriated an amount of $22 million for the establishment and operation of UNOMSIL for the period ending 30 June 1999. With regard to the subsequent 12-month period beginning on 1 July 1999, my budget submitted to the Assembly in February 1999 (A/53/454/Add.1) amounts to $16.4 million and provides for the maintenance of the Mission at the strength authorized by the Security Council in its resolution 1181 (1998). I intend to seek authorization from the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions to use the budgeted resources once the Council takes action on my recommendation contained in paragraph 71 below as to the extension of the Observer Mission's mandate.

59. Therefore, should the Council decide to extend the mandate of UNOMSIL, the cost of restoring the Mission's military capacity to the level it had attained in December 1998 as well as its subsequent maintenance at the restored strength will be within the resources already provided by the General Assembly and my budgetary projections for the 1999/2000 financial period.

60. With regard to the estimated costs associated with the expansion of UNOMSIL, I shall submit my proposals to the General Assembly at a later date, when my detailed proposals for a revised mandate and concept of operations of the Mission will have been finalized and submitted to the Security Council for its consideration.

61. As at 31 May 1999, unpaid assessed contributions to the UNOMSIL special account amounted to $4.7 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions

for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $1.6 billion. Contributions to the Trust Fund to Support United Nations Peacekeeping-related Efforts amounted to $2.8 million, with expenditures authorized in the amount of $1.1 million.

IX. OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

62. Despite the continued unpredictability of the conflict situation in Sierra Leone, I am encouraged by the significant progress that has been made in the pursuit of dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF. This is the first time in three years that a political settlement might be within reach to break the cycle of violence that has held the country in its grip since 1991. I welcome the Government's readiness to open talks with RUF, and call upon the latter to seize this opportunity to demonstrate its willingness to show flexibility in the interest of peace in Sierra Leone. In particular, as I stated publicly at the time, I welcome the signing on 18 May of the ceasefire agreement, which has helped to create an atmosphere conducive to the success of the peace talks. I reiterate my call to RUF/AFRC, CDF, the Government and ECOMOG to adhere strictly to its terms. I wish to express my appreciation to all the Governments concerned, in particular the Government of Togo and President Gnassingbe Eyadema, the current Chairman of ECOWAS, for hosting the talks, as well as the national and international organizations which have facilitated the dialogue process.

63. Nevertheless, the killings, mutilations and other human rights abuses perpetrated by rebel forces against the civilian population in Sierra Leone as well as the widespread destruction of property wreaked on a country which already ranks among the poorest in the world are deeply deplorable. Any armed opposition that expects to gain legitimacy and recognition in the eyes of the world must be prepared to renounce and atone for inflicting such suffering on non-combatants. I call upon the RUF leadership to prove its sincere commitment to peace and ensure the compliance of all its fighters with international human rights standards and humanitarian law, including the release of all abductees. In this context, I note the announcement made by the RUF leadership of its intention to investigate abuses committed by its troops and to invite international observers to take part in this process, and call upon them to demonstrate without delay their will and capacity to do so.

64. Concern about the extent of human rights violations in Sierra Leone has received increasing international attention. I welcome the intention of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mary Robinson, to visit Sierra Leone in late June to examine the situation on the ground and to obtain tangible commitments regarding the prevention of abuses and accountability of perpetrators. I am also gratified by the proposal by President Kabbah to establish a national Human Rights Commission in Sierra Leone as well as the creation of a truth and reconciliation mechanism as part of a peace agreement. These are important steps in acknowledging the pain of the victims and restoring national dignity and faith as part of efforts to achieve lasting peace, and these measures should receive all possible support from the donor community.

65. In this context, I also wish to commend the initiative of the ECOMOG Force Commander, Major-General Felix Mujakperuo, in establishing a Civil-Military Relations Committee to investigate allegations of human rights violations by pro-Government forces. These investigations are being undertaken with the full participation of representatives of all sectors of Sierra Leonean society, with the United Nations in an international observer role.

66. In line with the dual-track approach, ECOMOG deserves praise for its continued efforts in support of the Government and people of Sierra Leone, as do the Governments of Nigeria, Guinea, Ghana and Mali for their steadfast commitment towards restoring security and stability in Sierra Leone, with the assistance of donor countries, including Canada, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and the United States. I call upon the international community to continue supporting ECOMOG logistically and also to assist the process of the rebuilding of the Sierra Leone armed forces.

67. There is also an urgent need to resume the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of the current ex-combatants and to prepare the groundwork for an expansion of such activities as part of a peace agreement. I hope that the Government of Sierra Leone will continue to provide the necessary impetus to the national disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme and ensure its viability as an incentive for all rebel fighters willing to lay down their arms at this critical juncture in the peace process. It is also important for the Government to work closely with donors on the development of a revised disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan, with a well-defined operational plan and clear funding arrangements, to be put into effect in the context of a peace agreement.

68. There is an urgent need to consider how RUF/AFRC might be transformed into a legitimate political party in parallel with the process of reintegrating former combatants into society. I would also call for an end to all recruitment of children as soldiers, and would hope that any eventual peace agreement would embody commitments on the part of all parties to demobilize their child participants immediately. Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes should consider giving priority to children under 18.

69. The persistent reports of arms supplies reaching the rebel forces are disturbing. Any support for RUF/AFRC by outside parties serves to perpetuate the conflict in Sierra Leone, whether it be motivated by economic interests or other strategic aims. I reiterate my call to all States to comply strictly with the embargo on the sale or supply of arms and related matériel to non-governmental forces in Sierra Leone imposed by the Security Council in its resolution 1171 (1998).

70. The dire humanitarian situation underscores the need to establish mechanisms to ensure unhindered humanitarian access to all parts of the country and to promote effective coordination and cooperation between humanitarian agencies, the Government and RUF. There is a critical need to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian aid to people in need, which requires the protection of and respect for humanitarian relief workers, goods and properties. Negotiation for humanitarian access should be guided by the code of conduct for humanitarian agencies operating in Sierra Leone. While recognizing the considerable

constraints of the present situation and from lessons learned negotiating humanitarian access in the Sierra Leone context, the humanitarian community is encouraged by the present political climate, and calls upon the international community for its continued support for humanitarian action. Specifically, the international community is urged to continue its support for dialogue with the aim of achieving unhindered humanitarian access to all areas of the country and, once granted, for their continued support of humanitarian assistance.

71. The recent political developments, including the signing of a ceasefire agreement and the start of the dialogue, have significant implications for the work of UNOMSIL. It is critical that the Mission, under the leadership of my Special Representative, should remain in a position to render effective assistance to the peace process in Sierra Leone. I therefore recommend the extension of UNOMSIL's mandate for a further period of six months, until 13 December 1999, along the lines described above. However, I would hope well within that time period to be in a position to revert to the Council with recommendations for an expanded mandate in implementation of a peace agreement.

72. I take this opportunity to express appreciation to my Special Representative, Francis G. Okelo, the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier General Subhash C. Joshi, and the staff and military observers of UNOMSIL for their tireless efforts and dedication to advance the peace process in Sierra Leone.

18. Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 5 June 1997, paragraph 5.

ReliefWeb

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Source: UN Department of Humanitarian Affairs
Date: 5 Jun 1997

Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 04 - 05 Jun 1997

This report has been prepared by the office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Sierra Leone

SECURITY

1. According to local UN staff in Freetown several people were killed on 4 June from indiscriminate shooting by RUF patrolling the streets. The EU delegate reported that Nigerian citizens have been deliberately targeted. There have also been unconfirmed reports of amputations. Looting has continued and more cars have been taken from UN house and from residential premises. Civilians are nervous about the threat of Nigerian air strikes primarily on account of continuous announcements made by the AFRC over the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Services warning the population of the possibility of attacks and advising them to stay indoors. On a more positive note, the Nigerian soldiers being held as hostages have been released and have returned to their barracks at Jui. The Cape Sierra hotel remains untouched although UN vehicles parked outside are being looted.

2. The Sierra Leonean Ambassador to Guinea, who was taken hostage in Kailahun in March 1997 together with other members of the Commission for the Consolidation for Peace, was brought to Freetown by Sam Bockarie, the RUF commander who masterminded the operation. The Ambassador reported that the other hostages were still alive.

SERVICES

3. The population continues to suffer from continued shortages of basic amenities including food, fuel and cash. Food stores were, however, open from 1000-1800 hours on 5 June. Business have remained closed but the banks have indicated that they will open on 9 June. The National Power Authority continues to supply electricity throughout the city but it is only a matter of time before the diesel generators run out of fuel. Pipe-borne water continues to be supplied to the capital from the reservoir in Guma Valley but fuel shortages will have a negative impact on the capacity to purify the water supply. ICRC is in the process of despatching a water engineer to Freetown to make an assessment of the current situation.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

4. On 4 June a BBC round table discussion was held. During the course of the programme Desmond Luke, Chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, stated that almost the entire civil society vehemently opposed the coup and wanted the democratically elected Government to be restored. President Kabbah, who is still in Guinea, made a statement over the BBC assuring the population that the democratically elected Government was still intact. He stated that his Government

was pushing for a diplomatic solution to the crisis but did not rule out the military option.

5. On 4 June Major Johnny Paul Koroma, Chairman of the Armed Forces Ruling Council (AFRC) called ministers and deputy ministers of the SLPP Government and heads of political parties to a meeting to discuss ways of averting external military intervention. Six ministers attended the meeting and political parties present included the SLPP, APC and the UNPR. The RUF was represented by Sam Bockarie. One of the ministers in attendance reported that attempts by the AFRC to persuade those present to collaborate were rejected as it was unanimously stated that the AFRC should step down.

HUMANITARIAN RESPONSE

Food

6. ICRC started to distribute food provided by World Vision to two hospitals in Freetown on 5 June. Beneficiaries at the Connaught hospital received a full ration and those at Netland nursing home received a supplementary ration. One of the ACF feeding centres in Freetown has also received food.

7. ICRC has reopened its office in Segbwema with a view to completing its distribution of seeds and tools int he chiefdoms in the vicinity of Daru and Segbwema before the rainy season commences in earnest. The vulnerable group feeding programme will start in Segbwema, Daru and Zimmi when ICRC receives the list of eligible beneficiaries from the US Food for Peace officer who is currently in Conakry.

8. More information on food stocks of humanitarian agencies in Sierra Leone has been gathered and it has emerged that agency warehouses have not been looted as extensively as previously thought. Current estimated food stocks are as follows:

WFP:	4,800 MTs
CRS*:	5,000 MTs
German Agro-Action:	800 MTs
World Vision:	4,410 MTs
CARE:	1,700 MTs
TOTAL:	16,710 MTs

* CRS has 5,000 MTs of bulgur remaining. The quantity of other CRS food commodities has not yet been determined.

9. As it is estimated that 3,000 MTs of food services 500,000 beneficiaries per month on a reduced (i.e., survival) ration, the food availability situation in not yet critical. However, the outlook could deteriorate very rapidly if the price of rice continues to soar as the temptation for the local population to loot aid food will become overwhelming. In this scenario shortages will occur, particularly with regard to vegetable oil and therapeutic and supplementary foodstuffs as over 80 percent of existing food stocks is in the form of cereals.

10. There are also many constraints in distribution food such as insufficient transport, fuel shortages, insecurity and a lack of management. The food agencies will meet on

9 June in Conakry in order to discuss these constraints and develop a joint strategy. In the meantime, WFP advocates that priority in any food distributions should be given to institutions, especially hospitals, in order to minimise the risk of further looting. It is believed that food shortages will be less severe outside Freetown but this situation will deteriorate with the onset of the rainy season and the traditional "hungry season" (July to October).

Health

11. In addition to distributing medical supplies to the Connaught hospital, the Netland nursing home and the hospital at Wilberforce barracks in Freetown, ICRC has reopened its clinic in Kenema as the Government hospital has closed down.

12. The ICRC and MSF surgical teams (see point 11, SitRep dated 2-3 June) arrived in Freetown during the afternoon of 5 June.

13. WHO has reported that its medical supplies including drugs, IV fluids and oral rehydration salts kept at the store at UN house and the Ministry of Health have been almost entirely looted. The stolen items are valued at approximately USD 180,000.

Humanitarian Response in Guinea

14. It is clear that the AFRC/RUF has been trying to discourage Freetown residents from leaving the Western area peninsula as many of those attempting to move north have been turned back by armed elements at Waterloo. If living conditions in Freetown continue to deteriorate, it is possible that a mass exodus could occur which the authorities would be unable to prevent. In this case, it is likely that the population would heed towards Kambia province and Guinea.

15. On 5 June ECHO convened a meeting attended by UN Agencies and NGOs from both Sierra Leone and Guinea to formulate an appropriate contingency plan which could be used if the scenario depicted above were to occur. Preliminary estimates of resource availability in the areas of health, food, non-food items, water and sanitation and logistics have been made. Sectoral committees will meet next week to build on these preliminary estimates of resource availability. Issues relating to access need to be clarified. Efforts to determine the position of the Guinean Government to asylum seekers and aid agencies wishing to provide cross border humanitarian assistance into Sierra Leone are being made.

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Complex Emergency Division (CED) - New York
Mr Peter Due
Tel.: (1 212) 963.1731
Fax: (1 212) 963.3630
E-Mail: due@un.org

Inter-Agency Support Branch (IASB)- Geneva
Mr. David Bassiouni - Chief
Mr. Chris Kaye

Tel.: (41 22) 788.6385
Fax: (41 22) 788.6389
Registry E-Mail:
Rosemary.Addo-Yirenkyi@dha.unicc.org

Press to contact (DHA-Geneva):
Ms. Madeleine Moulin-Acevedo
Tel.: (41 22) 917.2856
Fax: (41 22) 917.0023
Telex: 414242 DHA CH
E-Mail: Moulin-Acevedo@dha.unicc.org

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19. Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 14 July 1997, paragraphs 1-5.

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Date: 14 Jul 1997

Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 08 - 14 Jul 1997

This report has been prepared by the office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator for Sierra Leone in Conakry, Guinea

SECURITY

1. On 9 July, the Peoples Army attacked Lungi Airport in a bid to break through ECOMOGs outer security perimeter and destroy the 98.1 FM radio station which has recently served as a mouthpiece for President Kabbah and which they believed to be in the area. (See point seven below). The attack was comprehensively repulsed by ECOMOG troops and reliable Freetown sources have reported that at least 350 Peoples Army soldiers were killed by a combination of Nigerian and Guinean forces. The RUF commander who led the attack, Sam Bockarie (known as Mosquito) was injured in the foot during the fighting and has been seen in hospital by reliable eyewitnesses.

2. During the weekend of 12-13 July, the Peoples Army suffered another significant setback during fighting with Nigerian forces involving heavy artillery in the Jui and Hastings area. Although precise numbers of casualties are unknown, two trucks laden with corpses were observed returning to Freetown on the afternoon of 13th July. While the Nigerians suffered some casualties, the Peoples Army clearly incurred far more severe losses. ICRC reported 26 newly-wounded civilians at Netland and Connaught hospitals on 14 July. AFRC claims that Nigerian troops that were using Guineans as human shields have been ridiculed by ECOMOG Force Commander, Victor Malu. An ECOMOG warplane was observed flying over Freetown at the start of the fighting, but it was not seen to have dropped any ordnance.

3. Nigerian troops are now in control of Hastings Airport and the area up to and including Allen town. Residents from these areas are relocating in large numbers to the hills and into central Freetown. The main road out of Freetown is effectively closed as few vehicles have been observed on this route since 13 July. In Freetown, the Peoples Army have been preparing heavy machine gun positions on the high ground in the Hill station area. Some of these guns are mounted on the back of pick-up trucks and are mobile.

4. There has been sporadic but intense fighting between the RUF and the kamajors during the past week in the Zimmi area and an estimated 1,500 civilians and 300 kamajors are believed to have been forced into Liberia. Control of the strategically-important Bo Waterside bridge on the Sierra Leone/Liberia border has fluctuated between the two sides. Although the RUF was believed to have taken the bridge earlier in the week, Chief Norman, Deputy Minister of Defense and de facto leader of the kamajors, reported that the kamajors were in control of the bridge on 14 July.

5. The Kenema-Kono highway, which was previously controlled by the kamajors, has

now been secured by the Peoples Army following AFRC/RUF re-enforcement of the area.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

6. The date of Major Koromas proposed meeting with the ECOWAS committee of four has been changed from 15 July to 17 July. The meeting is scheduled to take place in Abidjan and not in Conakry.

7. President Kabbah has made several broadcasts to Sierra Leone over the 98.1 FM radio station which have proved to be a considerable irritant to the AFRC. In his first broadcast on 8 July, Kabbah urged the AFRC to step down to spare the people of Sierra Leone further pain and suffering. He also ordered soldiers and RUF to report to the nearest ECOMOG base and declare their loyalty. This tactic has been partially successful as several AFRC soldiers have since surrendered to Nigerian forces at Lungi.

8. On 8 July, in an attempt to undermine the impact of Kabbahs broadcast which took place earlier in the day, the AFRC announced its 19 member Cabinet. The majority of the posts are filled by former representatives of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). For example, Captain SAJ Musa, Secretary of Mineral Resources and Chief Secretary; Victor Brandon, Secretary of Development and Economic Planning; Col. Dr. KIS Kamara, Secretary of Health and Sanitation; Major Kula Samba, Secretary of Social Welfare, Children and Gender Affairs.

9. The Finance Secretary, Joe Amara Bangali, was a former minister in the APC and the Foreign Secretary; Dr. Paolo Bangura, was a former Ambassador to the UN. The RUF are represented through the appointment of Foday Sankoh as Deputy Chairman and SB Rogers as Acting Secretary of Lands and Environment. Two portfolios, namely Trade, Industry and State Enterprises and Energy and Power, have not been filled but the posts have been reserved for representatives of the Peoples Army. 37 posts in the Supreme Council have also been created, but only 22 have been filled to date. The extent to which nominees were consulted prior to their appointment is debatable. In a radio broadcast on BBCs *Focus*, Mr. Saaba Tumor, who was appointed Director of Information and Broadcasting, denied all knowledge of his appointment.

10. In a statement issued on 11 July following its meeting with the Committee of the four ECOWAS Foreign Ministers, the UN Security Council reiterated its view that the attempt to overthrow President Kabbahs government was unacceptable and called for the immediate and unconditional restoration of constitutional order in Sierra Leone. The Security Council expressed deep concern over the negative humanitarian consequences of the continuing crisis in Sierra Leone as well as its threat to regional stability. The Security Council welcomed the mediation efforts initiated by ECOWAS and expressed its full support for these efforts as set out in the communique issued at the meeting of the ECOWAS Foreign Ministers in Conakry on 26 June. Finally, the Security Council stated that it would continue to follow the progress of efforts aimed at the peaceful resolution of the crisis and that it was ready to consider appropriate measures if constitutional order in Sierra Leone is not restored without delay.

11. The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group, on which nine different Commonwealth countries are represented, convened on 10-11 July to review developments in Gambia, Nigeria and Sierra Leone. In its discussions on Sierra Leone, the Group urged the international community to continue to deny recognition to the AFRC and decided that participation of Sierra Leone in the councils of the Commonwealth would be suspended pending the restoration of legitimate government.

12. On 10 July, the EU issued a statement welcoming ECOWAS efforts to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone. The EU particularly, welcomed the inclusion of the OAU on the ECOWAS committee of Four. With regard to its aid programme, it was stated that Pending the return of the legitimate government to Freetown . . . the EU maintains its view that development aid to Sierra Leone cannot be continued in the present circumstances.

HUMANITARIAN DEVELOPMENTS

13. The Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) has endorsed the joint UN/NGO Strategy and protocols for Sierra Leone as well as the United Nations Strategy for Inter-Agency Emergency Humanitarian Response. See Sitrep dated 24-30 June for more details. The US-based NGO consortium, INTERACTION, has also expressed written support for these strategies.

14. There has been much speculation over the status of the embargo in Sierra Leone as envisaged in the ECOWAS communique. There is no doubt that there are four Nigerian warships off the coast of the Western Area as at 14 July. Although these vessels are not visible to Freetown residents, they have successfully prevented commercial ships from docking at Freetowns port. Rocketing insurance premiums have also been a significant deterrent to shipping companies. There have, however, been many reports of pirogues and other small vessels successfully circumventing the blockade.

15. Media reports of an influx of a million people into Bo town are hugely exaggerated. ACF and MSF, both of whom have a presence in Bo estimate that less than 10,000 people have moved into Bo since the coup.

FOOD AID

16. The increase of the price of rice in Freetown to 40,000 leones per bag from its previous cost of 25,000 leones per bag is a clear indication that rice shortages are becoming increasingly acute. Although retailers still have rice available in their stores, wholesalers have exhausted their stocks as no food vessels have arrived in Freetown since the coup. Attempts by the business community to import rice into Freetown at the request of the AFRC have been unsuccessful primarily due to the exorbitant cost of insurance. Food agencies have managed to transport limited quantities of commodities (approximately 500 MTs) to Makeni and Bo during the past week. There is still a capacity of approximately 1,400 MTs in warehouses in Port Loko and Kambia.

17. The food aid pipeline for humanitarian relief remains healthy. Providing there are

no unforseen complications, there will be 10,000 MTs of food aid in Conakry available for programmes in Sierra Leone by the end of July. Another 5,000 MTs of food commodities are due to arrive in Conakry during August 1997. Distribution modalities will be determined by the Committees on Food Aid.

18. Existing targeted feeding programmes as outlined in previous sitreps continue. A one-off emergency distribution is being planned for approximately 8,000 displaced in Kabala in Koinedugu district in the Northern province of Sierra Leone. As the normal population of Kabala is estimated to be 10,000 people, this new influx is putting considerable strain on the coping mechanisms of the local population.

HEALTH

19. **Freetown**. There is a concern over the maintenance of the drug pipeline for the eight clinics currently being operated by ICRC, SLRC and MSF in Freetown. Staff from these agencies are investigating how long existing stocks will last. The caseload for the ICRC/MSF surgical programme has continued to decrease notwithstanding recent admissions due to the fighting in the vicinity of Hastings. ActionAid has agreed to make incentive payments to Blue Flag volunteers working on cholera prevention in Freetown.

20. **Bo**. An assessment of the MSF-supported hospital in Bo on 5 July revealed that the hospital building has not been damaged by recent fighting although the emergency department is still under rehabilitation. There is deemed to be sufficient local surgical capacity to treat casualties from possible future clashes. There were only 40 in-patients in the hospital as at 5 July this is attributable to insecurity and inaccessibility due to poor public transport to local areas.

21. **Kenema**. Merlin continues to support the Kenema government hospital in the Under Five clinics (the Pediatric Ward and the Lassa Fever Ward). Support is provided through the provision of therapeutic and supplementary foodstuffs and essential drugs and equipment. Merlin also plays a supervisory role as well as enhancing cholera preparedness. The programme is supervised by Merlins Medical Coordinator who is based in Monrovia. Although Merlins drug supplies were left intact, the pharmacy in Kenema hospital was completely looted. ICRC is seeing an average of 800 patients per week at the Nongowa clinic in Kenema. Drugs are provided by ICRC, Merlin and UNICEF.

CHILD PROTECTION

22. Although the family tracing and reunification network in Sierra Leone was temporarily disrupted by the coup and the departure of several key staff, efforts are being made to restart the reunification programme as the regional focus organisations, ADRA and Christian Brothers are still operational.

23. At the first Child Protection meeting in Conakry on 7 July, it was acknowledged that there were several impediments to successful implementation of child protection/demobilisation programmes in addition to security constraints namely: lack of reliable numbers of child soldiers as the only source of information was the former Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Unit under MNRRR; uncertainty over potential AFRC counterparts (e.g., the former programme manager

of the DDR Unit, Major Kula Samba, is now Secretary of Social Welfare, Children and General Affairs and the former Army Chief of Staff, Col. Max Kanga is now Director of the National Relief, Rehabilitation and Demobilisation Commissions); the degree to which any programme might apply to the kamajors; and the current capacity of NGOs to implement any programmes. UNICEF is exploring the possibility of a pilot demobilisation project for 50-100 children to test the publicly-stated commitment of the AFRC to demobilisation of child soldiers.

REFUGEES

24. Concern Worldwide, the Irish NGO which still has one expatriate in Freetown, has reported that a caseload of 7,700 Liberian refugees have been receiving WFP food on a regular basis since the coup. All Liberian refugees have moved out of Jui camp to Waterloo camp, Clay Factory Camp and Freetown. Concern Worldwide continues to run a medical and therapeutic feeding programmes in Segbwema.

25. 200 of the 489 Sierra Leonean refugees who have been living in Waterloo camp in Freetown since their repatriation prior to the coup have indicated that they would like to return to their areas of origin. The first group of 40 will return by bus to the Eastern province as soon as possible.

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Complex Emergency Division (CED) New York
Mr. Peter Due
Tel.: (1 212) 963.1731
Fax: (1 212) 963.3630
E-Mail: due@un.org

Inter-Agency Support Branch (IASB) Geneva
Mr. David Bassiouni - Chief
Mr. Chris Kaye
Tel.: (41 22) 788.6385
Fax: (41 22) 788.6389
Registry E-Mail:Rosemary.Addo-Yirenkyi@dha.unicc.org

Press to contact (DHA-Geneva)
Ms. Madeleine Moulin-Acevedo
Tel.: (41 22) 917.2856
Fax: (41 22) 917.0023
Telex: 414242 DHA CH
E-Mail: Moulin-Acevedo@dha.unicc.org

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26. Human Rights Assessment Mission to Freetown 25 January and 1 to 4 February 1999, Findings and Recommendations, pages 3-9.

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UNOMSIL

HUMAN RIGHTS ASSESSEMENT MISSION TO FREETOWN

25 JANUARY AND 1 TO 4 FEBRUARY 1999

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

INTRODUCTION

Pursuant to the provisions of Security Council resolutions 1181 (1998) of 13 July 1998 and 1220 (1999) of 12 January, 1999, the Human Rights Section of UNOMSIL was instructed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to conduct an investigation mission in Freetown (hereinafter, "the mission"). The mission occurred on 25 January and from 1 to 4 February. The mission sought to assess the nature and extent of violations and/or abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law perpetrated in the period since the rebel offensive on the city on 6 January 1999.

The mission was tasked with an assessment of the actions of all relevant actors in the light of applicable law. For purposes of this report applicable law is considered to include, inter-alia, the Geneva Conventions, including Common Article 3, customary and other non-conventional international human rights law, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (all these instruments have been ratified by Sierra Leone).

Practices detailed in the report are referred to on the basis that they indicate violations, on the one hand, or abuse (i.e. actions which do not technically constitute violations), on the other, of international standards. Almost all such practices impugn or are inconsistent with multiple conventional and non-conventional standards. Accordingly, the report does not itemise the applicable legal provisions.

The report does not name victims, witnesses or alleged perpetrators. Some names or pseudonyms are on file with UNOMSIL. UNOMSIL is also in possession of or has access to documentary and photographic evidence of abusive activities.

MISSION ACTIVITIES

I. ADVANCE ACTIVITIES

Prior to the conducting of the mission, and during the period intervening between the two visits to Freetown, UNOMSIL interviewed some 35 persons, including religious and civil society leaders, who had left Freetown since January 6. These included former captives of the rebels, as well as witnesses to abusive activities of various armed forces. UNOMSIL also, to the extent possible, maintained contact with persons remaining in Freetown. Information was also provided on a regular basis by persons returning from brief visits to the city - including UNOMSIL personnel, UN agency staff and representatives of the NGO community.

II. FREETOWN PROGRAMME

The mission travelled throughout the city, visiting locations from Laka, in the Southwest, to Calaba Town in the East. Sites of incidents were visited and an overview of property damage was undertaken. Members of the mission also witnessed the perpetration of grave violations of human rights, including the right to life (see below).

Meetings were held with some 100 persons, including victims and witnesses of abusive behaviour, Government and ECOMOG officials, civil society and religious leaders, representatives of the human rights and humanitarian NGO communities, national staff of UNOMSIL and UN agencies, journalists and medical personnel. Information and views were also provided by CDF and Civil Defence Unit (CDU) personnel, medical patients, police officers and business people. The local print and broadcast media was surveyed on a daily basis.

The mission benefited from information and support provided by UNOMSIL military personnel and a UN Security Assessment Team, which were also present in Freetown during the mission dates.

III. FOLLOW UP ACTIVITIES

Following its return to Guinea, the team continued to interview persons arriving in Conakry from Freetown. Findings based on these interviews are taken account of in this report.

FINDINGS

I. REBEL RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONFLICT AND THE HUMANITARIAN EMERGENCY

Ultimate responsibility for the fighting, most civilian casualties and the related humanitarian emergency in Freetown rests with the rebel forces. It was the rebel forces who undertook the assault on the city and who persisted in resisting ECOMOG, thereby extending the period of fighting and destruction within an area densely populated with civilians.

The actual number of civilian casualties will never be known. One mortuary worker in Freetown stated on 25 January that over 2,000 bodies of men, women and children had already been disposed of. Observers are also of the view that a large number of bodies remain in ruined or burned buildings in the centre and east of the city. Many others have been hastily buried on waste ground or in residential compounds. Multiple reports have also been received of bodies floating in the sea and its inlets within the city, as well as on the beaches. The mission observed some body parts remaining on beaches and other locations. Most estimates put the total casualty figure conservatively at between 3 and 5,000, including up to 1,000 rebel fighters and an unknown number of ECOMOG and CDF combatants.

It is difficult to assess the extent of damage done to civilian properties. In the city centre up to 20% of the property stock may be seriously damaged. In the east the figure rises to up to 90% at locations such as Calaba Town. (See further below)

The rebel campaign, including its terrorisation elements, caused the displacement of at least 150,000 people into the city, before, during and since the battle for Freetown. The displacement has been responsible for an exacerbation of the humanitarian emergency (see the Humanitarian Plan of Action for Sierra Leone, February 1999) and the exposure of still greater numbers of civilians to conflict-related risk.

It should also be observed that abusive behaviour of rebel forces (see below) as well as the ongoing threat which they pose to Freetown form part of the background to the current perpetration by ECOMOG and CDF forces of unacceptable acts (see below)

II. KILLING OF CIVILIANS BY REBEL FORCES

Rebel forces advancing into the and through the city on 6 and 7 January frequently forced civilians into the streets for use as human shields. People who refused to comply were either killed or had their proprieties destroyed. Many reports have also been received of the killing of persons who refused to obey instructions to dance and make music on the streets. A number of interviewees describe the execution of the entire populations of residential compounds for such misdemeanours. There are reports of compounds housing up to 50 people being targeted in this manner. Similar reports indicate that then and later people were executed because of their efforts to deter looting and to protect family members from assault or rape (see below). Persons caught attempting to escape from rebel custody were frequently killed. One witness saw six children killed at Wellington in mid-January in one such incident.

Much of the killing also seems to have been entirely arbitrary. Witnesses report such killings of men, women and children by rebel fighters, including an instance in which the perpetrator is stated to have been about ten years old, and another implicating and eight year old boy. It is frequently stated that perpetrators of such acts were under the influence of cocaine and other drugs, including alcohol. Killing occasionally occurred in the context of games in which people were lined up and the executioners teasingly chose who to kill and who to spare. In one such incident at Fourah Bay Road, around 21 January, three children were executed and their three sisters had limbs amputated or mutilated (see below). One man has described how he was ordered to choose between the execution of his entire family and the surrender of his daughter to a rebel fighter.

Some of those who were burned to death in their homes had been locked in or first been disabled by gunshot. A number of elderly people and infants also died in this manner. Others died while attempting to jump from burning buildings or after being shot while attempting to escape. One five-year-old girl survived being thrown into a fire at Blackhall Road on 28 January. A six-year-old girl was executed, together with her mother, on 23 January, at Wellington.

Rebel forces targeted many individuals and categories of person for execution. It is reported that over 200 police officers were killed, either at home or at their barracks in such locations as CID headquarters, Kingtom and Kissy. The means of execution included knives, machete and gunshot. One incident, on January 6, at the city-centre Cotton Tree, involved the killing by stabbing of eleven policemen. A number of prison officials appear to have been killed during and after the assault on Pademba Road Prison on 6 January.

An escapee from Pademba Road is reported to have allegedly led an attack on the Solicitor General, who was killed and decapitated. Two senior Government officials, the Resident Minister for the North and an Advisor to the President, were captured and killed. At least two journalists were sought out and killed

(while other journalists, including foreign nationals, though not specifically targeted, were killed, injured or abducted).

A senior member of the human rights monitoring committees of the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights (NCDHR) was killed together with her husband. They had been apprehended after a servant of theirs was tortured into revealing their whereabouts. Prior to her killing, the female victim, a diabetic, was denied access to her insulin medication. Commissioners of the NCDHR and leaders of Human Rights NGOs report that they successfully evaded attempts by rebels to locate and most-likely kill them. A group of senior human rights NGO officers subsequently escaped execution when a shell blast frightened away their would be killers. Executed senior officers of the Council of Churches and the NCRRR may have been targeted on the basis of their positions. A senior judge was shot but survived. Nigerian nationals also appear to have been targeted. One witness, on 8 January, observed two Nigerian traders whose throats were cut apparently on the basis of their nationality.

It is reported, but unconfirmed, that rebels in search of a medical doctor who is a well-known advocate of democracy, having failed to locate her at the small hospital which she runs in the east of the city, killed most of the patients and nurses. Also, reports that the patients of the psychiatric hospital at Kissy have been killed and that up to 200 hundred people were executed at a Kissy Mosque remain unverified at this time.

III. REBEL PERPETRATION OF MUTILATIONS AND AMPUTATIONS

In the first days of the fighting there were very few reports of amputations or mutilations. Some incidents did occur of amputation of limbs and degradation of the bodies of ECOMOG soldiers, such as at Ferry Junction, sometime between 6 and 8 January. By 10 January, civilians were being targeted. Exact figures for the rate of amputations and mutilations are unavailable. However, by 25 January, medical sources were indicating that many hundreds of such cases had been admitted for treatment. By that date, some 70 had been treated at just one medical facility, Connaught Hospital. Doctors emphasise that many victims either fail to seek medical attention or die following the attacks.

Amputation / mutilation victims include men, women and children. One of the youngest recorded victims is a six-year-old girl whose left arm was severed by an axe at Ashobi Corner, Blackhall Road, on 21 January. Most amputations are of one or both arms. Some victims have also lost a leg. One nine-year-old boy had his right leg amputated and was shot in the other leg in an incident at Circular Road on 14 January. Mutilations are commonly of the arms and often appear to be failed attempts at amputation of the hands. Some victims have lost fingers - one 9-year-old girl had four fingers severed by machete blows in an incident at Personage Street on 15 January.

The mission witnessed a woman being admitted to Connaught Hospital, on 3 February, who reported that she had been injured in an otherwise unreported mutilation variant - the pouring over her body of boiling water.

IV. REBEL PERPETRATION OF RAPE AND SEXUAL ABUSE

Rape of females, including children, appears to have been a standard practice of the rebel combatants. Many people report that they witnessed acts of violent group rape, including in public places, including Kroo Town Road and Kissy. Persistent reports have been received from victims and witnesses indicating that young women and girls were rounded up in neighbourhoods of the city and obliged to report nightly to be sexually abused by rebel fighters.

The mission interviewed some of the victims of one well-documented incident of repeated rape which occurred in the Cline Town area, commencing on 8 January. The local rebel commander ordered that all virgin girls report for a physical examination. A female companion of the commander then checked the girls in order to verify their status as virgins. Those who passed the test, mostly aged between 12 and 15, were ordered to report each night for sexual abuse by the commander and his men. Some of the girls were subsequently abducted and taken away by the retreating rebels. A high incidence of rape of children is also reported from the Clay Factory Displaced Persons Centre from 15 to 25 January. Other reports have been received from the Pademba Road area, the city centre and Kingtom. One policeman in Kingtom reportedly saw his three daughters raped before they were abducted.

Former abductees of the rebels indicate that women captives were raped as a matter of course. One witness reported that female captives were told to submit or be killed. He saw three girls raped in these circumstances on 8 January. Many women and girls admitted to hospital with war-related injuries also report that they were raped.

A reliable report has been received that one pregnant woman lost her child after being raped and was paid "compensation money" by the perpetrator. Another informant reported the death of another pregnant women after she had been raped.

V. REBEL DEPLOYMENT OF CHILD SOLDIERS

A number of witnesses and victims report that a significant number of the rebel combatants were children. One military official puts the figure at some 10% of the rebel force. A patient at one hospital reports that his gunshot wound was inflicted by a boy aged no more than 8 years old. Another witness states that he saw a boy of about 11 years in command of a small group of fighters active in the city centre on 7 January. There are widespread reports that the rebels used

children as snipers - one child fighter in ECOMOG custody confirmed that he had been a sniper.

A number of those reportedly summarily killed by ECOMOG for alleged rebel activities were children. An informant, described by UN officials as "reliable", states that an 8-year-old boy was executed by ECOMOG having been found with a pistol. A 14 year old boy was reportedly executed on 16 January, at Customs Post, Susan's Bay, and a 16 year old boy on 18 January, at Port Loko Wharf. (See below).

While most of the child combatants are assumed to be members of the RUF, former captives of the rebels state that a significant number of children of former SLA soldiers were active.

Many informants, including former abductees of the rebels, report that rebel child combatants were frequently under the influence of drugs and that their commanders encouraged this practice. A number of reports have been received of a high usage of cocaine, self-administered in open wounds on the arm which were then covered with adhesive tape.

VI. PERPETRATION OF ABDUCTION BY REBEL FORCES

The rebels abducted a large but unverifiable number of people. These include staff of UN agencies and NGOs, students, and people from all social backgrounds. One indication of the scale of the abductions is that childcare agencies had, by February 4, received 1192 reports of children who had gone missing since January 6. 300 of these had been physically taken from their parents by rebels. Anther indication is the report of a reliable informant who escaped from the rebels that some 500 people were held together with him in just one camp in the hills to the east of Freetown. He states that 75% of the captives were women aged from 12 to 20. The youngest abductee reported to the mission is a 9-year-old girl, taken from the Clay Factory Displaced Persons Centre on 23 January. A number of abductees either escaped or were released. A number of them have provided to the mission comprehensive information on their captivity.

Escapees report that young boy abductees tended to be used as porters or were selected for training as fighters. Older men were retained solely for porterage. Women and girls were retained to cook and for sexual purposes. One former abductee displayed to the mission the "brand" which rebels had applied to his arm with burning plastic.

A small number of prominent Sierra Leone personalities and foreigners were abducted and kept under close guard. The Sierra Leoneans included the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freetown. Former President Momoh was also detained by the rebels following his removal from Pademba Road Prison. Foreign

detainees, at one time or another, included 13 Indian workers, 6 Indian and one Kenyan Roman Catholic Sisters, five Italian and one Spanish Roman Catholic priests (including Fr. Mario Guerra who had been abducted during 1998), one Spanish and one French journalist. At least eight of the abductees were killed and two others seriously injured. At least two others of the abductees were subjected to ill treatment. Most of the remainder, including the Archbishop, have either escaped or been released. It is reported that forces unknown may have killed former President Momoh. The situation of another prominent Sierra Leonean abductee is unknown.

VII. DESTRUCTION OF CIVILIAN AND UTILITY PROPERTIES AND LOOTING

Rebel forces are responsible for the deliberate widespread destruction of civilian property and public utilities. Rates of destruction of the property stock have been noted above as some 20% in the city centre and rising to some 90% in the most easterly of hinterland population centres. In the city centre, however, some streets, such as Pademba Road, near the prison, Canton Street, parts of Kissy Road and West Street have been comprehensively destroyed. Destruction extends to the simple dwellings of indigent people, as well as churches, mosques, schools, orphanages, medical facilities, community centres, police stations, the City Hall, Pademba Road Prison, New England Prison, SLBS and other non-military service facilities.

Many of the destruction sites appear to have been arbitrarily chosen. Others were reportedly picked out because of the refusal of the residents to hand over sufficient cash or goods to looting rebels or because the occupants failed to obey instructions to come out on the streets, serve as "human shields" or hand over girls for sexual purposes.

Some other homes, businesses and public utilities appear to have been targeted because of their function or the public profile of the occupants. These include public utility buildings and the residences and offices of human rights activists, lawyers, journalists and Government officials. The UNOMSIL headquarters was largely destroyed by fire, including the offices and library of its Human Rights Section, and severe fire damage was done to UN House and other UN facilities. A number of diplomatic facilities were attacked, including the Nigerian High Commission, which was entirely destroyed.

It is reported that a large but unverifiable number of people were killed in the process of destruction of buildings (see above).

An unascertainable degree of the damage to the property stock was inflicted by ECOMOG, including as a result of aerial bombardment. It is reported, for instance, that aerial attacks inflicted damage in Fisher Street, Nicol Street, Coker Lane, Bombay Street, Wilberforce Street, Clay Factory Displaced Persons Centre and at the Basharia Mosque in Susan's Bay.

In the first days of the rebel offensive witnesses report that some rebel commanders executed fighters who engaged in looting. However, during that period and subsequently, rebel forces did engage in widespread theft of money and looting of residences and business properties. Witnesses report that rebels came to steal or loot from residential compounds in wave after wave over a period of days. An unverifiable number of people were killed due to their failure to satisfy the looters. There are also widespread reports of people being abducted to transport looted property to rebel camps.

The looting and destruction of commercial properties and food stores has exacerbated the humanitarian situation in Freetown and renders more problematic the restoration of the essential commercial infrastructure.

VIII. ACTIVITIES OF ECOMOG

(a) Summary Executions

Since the first days of the combat in Freetown there have been reports that ECOMOG was summarily executing detainees who were allegedly either rebels or rebel sympathisers. One if the earliest reliable reports was provided by a senior official of an international organisation who witnessed an execution on 14 January. From then persistent reports were received of executions at such locations as Aberdeen Bridge, Kingtom, Brookfields, Siaka Stephens Street, Ferry Junction, Connaught Hospital, Kissy Road, Susan's Bay, the National Stadium and Lumley. Witnesses of the highest probity state that they were present at executions. One such observer noted that at the three executions he had seen on 24 January, at Ferry Junction and Connaught Hospital, the victims were given a cursory interrogation and immediately shot. It is reported that a large number of executions have been perpetrated at Aberdeen Bridge. Witnesses report the killing or disposal of up to 40 bodies at that location. It is stated that the victims at Aberdeen Bridge are the overflow population of a police holding facility at Aberdeen village. The Mission observed extensive blood stains at Aberdeen Bridge on 25 January. Another reliable witness observed the bodies of seven execution victims at Kingtom on 3 February. Ten people were reportedly executed at the National Stadium on 30/31 January.

Reference has been made above to the alleged execution of an eight-year old boy caught in possession of a pistol. Humanitarian agencies report that a 14-year-old boy was executed at the Customs Post, Susan' s Bay, on 16 January. On 23 January, at the same location, ECOMOG is reported to have executed a 17-year-old girl.

The mission directly witnessed an execution at Connaught Hospital on 3 February. The following day a senior officer of an international NGO witnessed another execution at exactly the same site. In both cases the perpetrators were

29. UNHCR Report on Atrocities Committed Against the Sierra Leone Population, UNHCR Conakry Branch Officer, 28 January 1999, Victim reports Cases #02, #04, #05, #06, #07, #15, #16, #18, #19, #33.

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UNHCR BRANCH OFFICE CONAKRY

REPORT ON ATTROCITIES COMMITTED AGAINST THE SIERRA LEONE POPULATION

28 JANUARY 1999 (Rev.2)

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Introduction

Ever since the ECOMOG forces regained control of Sierra Leon's capital Freetown, mid February 1998 reports have come in about serious atrocities being committed by retreating junta forces against the local population. It soon became clear that the scale and nature of the crimes perpetrated served only two purposes: intimidation and humiliation.

It has emerged that perpetrators of these crimes do not discriminate with regard to age, sex, ethnic origin or other criteria in the choice of their victims. In blind rage, they hack off peoples ears, hands and other parts of the body and then send them off with a message to ECOMOG, the President of Sierra Leone or other persons. If they do not die en route, the victims end up in Freetown and Makeni hospital or in a refugee camp in Guinea.

All victims of violence and armed conflict carry with them the indelible memory of their ordeal. What distinguishes the victims of the atrocities committed by the Sierra Leone junta forces from other victims is that they remain, in addition to being mentally affected, physically handicapped for the rest of their lives .

Unable to carry on with their work and dependent on an already burdened nation, the victims of this cruel behaviour demand from the international community that justice be served and that perpetrators of these terrible crimes be apprehended, tried and convicted.

UNHCR by virtue of its mandate and its *accord de siege* with the Government of Guinea has access to all newly arriving asylum seekers on Guinea territory. Information obtained from them may assist in determining their status but also serve as important country of origin information. If, as in the case of the maimed victims, UNHCR staff come across evidence of serious crimes committed against humanity, the public may be notified through the P.I section, and policy makers are advised by means of various speeches made by Senior Executives. It is within the discretionary powers of the High Commissioner to assist the prosecutor of a competent court or tribunal with the evidence assembled. This information sharing may be especially appropriate as victims and witnesses may vanish over time. With these points in mind, the Senior Protection Officer at B.O. Conakry has initiated the preparation of this report. It contains interview reports based on standard questionnaires prepared by field and protection staff as well as medical certificates and digital pictures of registered victims of maiming that have arrived in Guinea since the retreat of junta forces to the diamond rich district of Kono located in Eastern Sierra Leone. In order to protect the confidentiality of the interviewed victims and witnesses, all names have been deleted whilst certain the digital pictures have been adjusted so as to avoid recognition. The original reports that includes names and signatures remains on confidential file with the protection unit of UNHCR.

August 1998

Assane Samb

Representative

UNHCR B.O. Conakry, Guinea

CASE # 02

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Temne tribe
3. Sex:	Female
4. Date of Birth:	26/10/70
5. Place of origin:	Motema, Nemekoro chiefdom, Kono District
6. Occupation:	Nurse (speciality: Pregnancy and children)
7. Date of arrival:	around 26/4/98
8. Date/Place of Attack:	19/3/98 near Bakedou
9. Route followed:	Motema town, Peyma village, Bakedou, Foroconia, Kobikoro, Gueckedou From 21.02 till 26.04 they lived in the bush.
10. Accompanied by:	Her husband ******, her son XXX (7), and daughter YYY (5).
11. Physical Condition:	multiple bruises and cuts from beating
12. Date and Place of Interview:	26/5/98 and 3/6/98 at Gueckedou
13. Interviewing Officers:	Amadou Kemenani, Protection Officer Anne Paludan, Field Officer

Narrative:

Mrs. ****** and her husband, a trader, lived in Freetown with two of their children. Since 1992, two daughters have stayed in Makeni (Bombali District) with her elder sister, Mrs. ******, because it was safer there. They are ****** (13) and ****** (11). On 25 May, 1997, following attacks on the city, they left Freetown and arrived in Motema town in June. Here they stayed till the first attack in Kono on February 21, 1998. The Junta soldiers had had an argument with one of the townspeople about money which the soldiers refused to pay back. The soldiers threatened them that if they did not leave the town would be destroyed. She had seen one of the soldiers who issued the threats before but does not know his name.

The whole household of 16 people left before the town was attacked - herself, her husband and their two youngest children and their extended family. She brought a little medicine, 200.000 leones and some clothing. They hid in the bush before and after they had been attacked.

On March 19, Mrs. ****** and her family were captured by a group of at least 10 Junta soldiers in the bush near Bakedou. They were held from about 11:00 a.m. till about 3:00 p.m.. Mrs ****** did not know any of the men or hear their names. She remembers that some wore military combat uniforms, others wore civilian clothing, and they carried guns, bayonets, cutlasses, knives, bows and arrows. They spoke Krio, Mende and Temne. They were commanded by a tall man around 50 years old with greying hair. There were some captured civilians with them, seven old and young women, 10 men, and more than 15 children. The soldiers gathered their prisoners in an open area. In front of all of them

they ordered some of the women and children. "Come and lie down and we will sex you." Mrs. ****** witnessed the sexual assault of three women, mothers of 27-30 years, and many children, both boys and girls. In one case she saw the rebels kill a woman after they had raped her. In total Mrs ****** witnessed the killing of seven people. Later she saw six dead bodies.

The soldiers forced her to strip naked, took all her belongings and her clothes, tied her hands behind her back and ordered her to lie down on the ground, threatening to kill her. They then started cutting her neck with a knife. A young boy (she believes less than 15 years old) stabbed her arm with a sharp arrow, another young boy beat her in the back with the barrel of a gun, and a third stabbed her left leg and foot with a bayonet. This went on until one of the soldiers (whose face she did not see) asked the others to leave her and not kill her. She lost a lot of blood and was losing conscience.

During the attack on Mrs. ****** her son and daughter lay on the ground together with her. The soldiers had also ordered them to lie down, but their hands were not tied. XXX received a deep cut in the head with a cutlass, YYY had a cut on her right hand with a cutlass. Both of them remember seeing three people being killed.

From 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. Mrs. ****** lay on the ground. She did not see or sense what happened after she was attacked as she was unconscious most of the time. When the soldiers had left, her son XXX touched her arm and untied her, and she woke up. Around her she saw many dead bodies and all the damage that had been done. Her husband was missing.

It was then getting late in the afternoon. Some women who had been hiding in the bush came back, washed the survivors, and gave them some clothes. They gave her and Mohamed some cloth to bandage their wounds. The survivors then started walking. After 4 days on the road some villagers they met told her that her husband had been carried away by the soldiers/rebels and had been killed with a cutlass at a place called Babwa. She herself did not go there and did not see her husband's body.

She and seven other survivors stayed in the bush till about 26 April. There were two women and two men, three boys and one girl. They lived on bananas, cassava, and potatoes. They built shelters of palm branches. The men were responsible for collecting food and a woman prepared it. They drank bad water which gave them diarrhoea. They were always moving from place to place, listening for gunshots and for the rebels. Mrs. Bangura recounts that she was unable to sleep due to the pain of her injuries. When they arrived in Foroconia she and her children were at once washed and treated by doctors and given medicine. An ambulance was called, and they arrived in Gueckedou Hospital on May 1st, 1998, after 4 days in Foroconia.

CASE # 04

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE – SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Mandingo tribe
3. Sex:	Male
4. Date of Birth:	1970
5. Place of Origin:	Ngandahun, Kono District, Eastern Province
6. Occupation:	Farmer
7. Date/Place of Attack :	20/2/98 at Ngandahun
8. Date of Arrival:	20/2/98
9. Route Followed:	Ngandahun - Koundu - Fangamadou -Gueckedou
10. Accompanied by:	two unknown persons
11. Physical Condition:	blinded with caustic liquid, beaten
12. Date and Place of Interview:	5/6/98 at Gueckedou Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Charlotte Rostorf Ridung, Field Officer

Narrative:

On his way back to Ngandahun from a visit in Chukpandala, Mr. ****** met a group of armed men in a forest about three miles from Ngandahun on 20 February, 1998. He was accompanied by two men unknown to him. One escaped, when he saw the rebels. The other was captured together with Mr. ******. The rebels asked them for their ethnic origin. Mr. ****** told the rebels that he is Kissi though he considers himself to be Madingo. The other person said that he was Foulah.

Eight rebels captured him and the other person. They spoke Krio and wore civilian clothing. Mr. ****** said that they must be from "Corporal Fodey Sankoh's faction" becuase, he explained, rebels from this faction always appear in groups of eight, twelve, eighteen or twenty-four persons. He did not know the names of his assailants. Several of the rebels attacked Mr. ****** while the others formed a circle around the other man.

The rebels severely beat Mr. ****** with the butt of a rifle, kicked him and slapped him. He fell to the ground and tried to pretend to be unconscious. A boy around the age of 13 who was with the rebels came forward and poured a liquid into Mr. ******'s eyes. Mr. ****** said that his eyes started burning severely. The rebels let him go and took the other man away.

Mr. ****** does not know exactly why he was attacked. He believes that the rebels thought that he was trying to escape. He explained that the rebels have a saying: if you are running away, it is because you are supporting President Kabbah.

Mr. ****** headed straight for the border when the rebels left him. After a couple of hours, the pain in his eyes grew worse. He reached Famgamadou the same day. He stayed in the camp for two days and then continued to Gueckedou. He can sense light but is otherwise blind.

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CASE # 05

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone
3. Sex:	Female
4. Date of Birth:	Approximately 1975
5. Place of Origin:	Gbenekoro, Koinadugu District, Northern Province
6. Occupation:	Farmer
7. Date/Place of Attack :	Approximately one month and five days ago at Gbenekoro.
8. Date of Arrival:	9 June. 1998
9. Route Followed:	Faramah - Gbenekoro - Serekolia - Karifaia - Walia - Songoya - Faranah
10. Accompanied by:	Mother, brother, her three children and husband
11. Physical Condition:	Three fingers on her right hand severed, the fourth cut at the joint (one digit), left hand little finger cut in half, machete wounds between left hand and wrist deep cut on calf of left leg.
12. Date and Place of Interview:	16 June 1998 at Faranah Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Charlotte Rostorf Ridung, Field Officer

Narrative:

Ms. ****** was living with her husband and children in Faramah in Sierra Leone. Her mother was living in Serekolia. The mother came to Faramah to get her daughter and family, so that they could escape the rebels together and thus proceed to Guinea. The family left Faramah to go to Serekolia.

In Gbenekoro, they encountered the rebels coming from Semesedu. Ms. ******, her mother and children dropped their belongings and escaped into the bush. The rebels pursued them into the bush. The mother was captured before Ms. ******. Ms. ****** fell down in the bush, while she was trying to run away. She was carrying her youngest child on her back. As she was about to get back on her feet, the child fell down and the rebels captured her.

Ms. ****** did not know her assailants. She said that some of them wore uniforms, while others wore civilian clothes. There were about a hundred of them. They spoke Temne, Kuranko and Krio. She does not know why she was attacked. The rebel, who mutilated her, had wounds on both cheeks, covered by band-aid. They were probably traditional marks.

The rebels ordered her to show them the place of the Tamaboro (fighting on the side of the NPRC). She replied that she did not know where the Tamaboro were. The rebels wanted to know the way to Serekolia and she showed them. They said to her that even if she showed them the way to Serekolia, they would have to do something to her.

One rebel mutilated her right hand, while another rebel mutilated her left hand. A third rebel cut the calf of her left leg.

Ms. ****** witnessed the attack of her mother as it was the same group of rebels that mutilated ther mother, Ms. ******. Her lips were cut, the right hand cut at the wrist and the left foot severed. She later died at the hospital [see medical documentation attached].

According to Ms. ******, the rebels took out a large knife to kill her child, C, but eventually no physical harm was done to the children. The children witnessed the attacks on their mother and grandmother.

After the attack, the rebels burned their belongings and food. Subsequently, the rebels left for Serekolia. They seemed to believe that the mother of Ms. ****** had died.

The husband, Mr. ******, eventually came to help them. He had fallen behind, because he was carrying a heavy load of goods. Mr. ****** went to get his wife's uncle, and these two men carried Ms. ******, her mother, and her three children back to their family. Someone went to get medicine from ECOMO, as ECOMOG was too far away for them to be carried there. The husband decided to go to Songoya to get people to help carry his family. Five persons from Songoya helped carry the wounded in hammocks to Songoya. From Songoya they were carried by vehicle to Faranah.

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CASE # 06

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE – SUMMARY REPORT

1. **Name :**	******
2. **Nationality :**	Sierra Leone
3. **Sex:**	Male
4. **Date of Birth :**	24/10/68
5. **Place of origin:**	Bujehin District
6. **Occupation:**	mechanic
7. **Date/Place of Attack :**	20/3/98 at Waimayma Town
8. **Date of arrival :**	30/3/98
9. **Route followed :**	Kono-Waimayma town - Keikadou - Manjama - Fangamadou-Guinea
10. **Accompanied by :**	alone
11. **Physical Condition :**	left hand severed mid-forearm
12. **Date and Place of Interview:**	2/3/98 at Gueckedou Hospital
13. **Interviewing Officer :**	Angela Li Rosi, Field Officer Katharina Samara-Wickrama, Field Officer

Narrative :

In March 1997, Mr ****** left his home in Bujehin District to go to work in Kono as a mechanic. On the night of 21 February 1998, Kono was attacked by rebels. That night he walked to Waimayma Town. While in Waimayma Town, the villagers heard that the rebels had attacked a nearby neighbouring village of Jagbwema. Fearing an attack on Waimayma Town he fled with other villagers to the bush.

On 20 March 1998, Mr ****** and 22 others who had fled from Waimayma Town were in the forest processing palm oil . They noticed that a group of 17 armed men had quietly surrounded them. Of the 17 men, five were dressed in military uniform, three were civilians who had been captured as porters and nine were rebels dressed in civilian attire.

Mr ****** recognised clearly, and is able to identify, two of the men in military uniform as: (1) XXX, of average height, slim build and fair complexion, and (2) YYY, known as " Lieutenant Blood" of the "People's Army." Lieutenant Blood appeared to be in command of the group. Mr ****** recognised both men from Koidu where the two were known as members of the junta during the military regime.

The soldiers asked the group to hand over their property. They then noticed a bicycle inner tyre and asked Mr ****** for the bicycle. He replied that he did not know where the bicycle was. The soldiers then asked him where other people could be found. Mr ****** responded that he was not from the area and therefore did not know. The soldiers appeared to be upset that he did not know where the bicycle was, and then accused Mr. ****** of being a Kamajor.

The soldiers then separated out a young pregnant women, Ms ****** and two elderly men, Mr ****** and Mr ******. These three were killed with a machete. Mr ****** believes that they were killed because they were unable to act as porters for the soldiers. Mr ****** offered to carry the soldiers luggage believing that the soldiers might spare his life and he may have a chance to escape at a later time. The soldiers refused his offer.

Lieutenant Blood then ordered two soldiers to take Mr ****** to a tree stump some distance away but still within view. The two soldiers led him roughly away. Mr ****** though that the soldiers intended to kill him. During this time, the victim noted that approximately 10 of the soldiers spoke Mende, including the two soldiers leading him to the tree. Mr ****** was the only Mende in the group being ambushed. He pleaded with the two soldiers in Mende, hoping that as they were of the same tribe the soldiers might be sympathetic. His pleas were to no avail.

One of the soldiers then told Mr ****** to place his hand on the block. Mr ****** is right handed and therefore chose to place his left hand on the block. The soldiers took one swing at the victim's forearm. Mr ****** caught the soldiers arm with his free right hand as the blow fell. The soldier then warned Mr ****** that if he did this again, he would be "cut in two." Fearing that he would be so severely injured that he would be unable to walk, Mr ****** submitted to the second attempt to severe his hand. The soldier struck three times on the victim's forearm with a machete. His limb was cut almost right through but the hand remained attached by ligaments and skin. The soldiers then told him to go to the Kamajors and tell them that the soldiers are coming to attack them.

19 abducted

The group of soldiers took the remaining 19 people with them, including three small children of approximately five years old, two young women and 14 young men between the ages of 17 and 27 years old.

Mr ****** walked directly towards Keikadou. About one and a half miles from the site of the attack Mr ****** started to feel the pain of his injured arm. He continued walking but was forced to stop shortly after. He stopped and slept before continuing his journey.

About one mile from Keikadou, he was unable to continue and lay down. Shortly thereafter, he saw two farmers who ran away when he called out. He was then cautiously approached by another two people. He called out to them and asked them to call the Kamajors to come and collect him. Approximately two hours later some Kamajors arrived. Mr ****** was unconscious for some of this time. The Kamajors made a ladder with which to carry him and transported Mr ****** to Keikadou.

Mr ****** stayed in the home of the paramount chief of Keikadou from 20 March 1998 to 28 March 1998. Most of the villagers had already fled, fearing an attack by the rebels. Only the Kamajors and a few others remained in the village.

During this time, Mr ****** washed his wound every day. However, the arm was severely infected and swollen. In order to minimise the infection, Mr ****** asked

the village dispenser to complete the amputation by severing the remaining skin and ligaments.

On 29 March 1998, two junta soldiers came to Keikadou, let off warning shots into the air and fled. The Kamajors pursued the rebels into the forest but did not find them. After the warning shots were fired, all remaining civilians, including Mr ******, fled into the bush towards Guinea. Mr ****** followed a small group of people of whom one was a Sierra Leonean policeman. After about half a mile, the Policeman asked Mr ****** to return to the village as he was too difficult to carry. He begged the group not to leave him but they moved on. He managed to return to the village where he spent that night. Fearing another attack, the Kamajors warned him to leave. The next morning he took the main road to Guinea. During the journey he saw approximately 10 bodies along the road. He passed through the village of Manjama where he also saw many dead bodies.

He arrived in Guinea on 30 March 1998. Mr ****** survived 10 days after the attack without any medical treatment. On arriving in Guinea, Mr ****** was taken by a UNHCR staff member to hospital where his wound was cleaned and dressed and he was given a tetanus vaccination. He was then transported to Gueckedou with other injured refugees. He was the only one in the group who had sustained a deliberate amputation.

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CASE # 07

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE – SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Kono tribe
3. Sex:	Male
4. Date of Birth:	3/4/47
5. Place of Origin:	Saiama, Kono District
6. Occupation:	Gardener
7. Date/Place of Attack :	7/4/98 at Saiama
8. Date of Arrival:	2/5/98
9. Route followed:	Saiama - Koundu - Kolobengu - Gueckedou
10. Accompanied by:	alone
11. Physical Condition :	one finger severed, three cut, both hands mutilated
12. Date and Place of Interview:	26/5/98 at Gueckedou Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Charlotte Rostorf Ridung, Field Officer

Narrative:

Around noon of 7 April, 1998 Mr. ****** was captured along with six other men and three women by a Junta/RUF commander named Lieutenant Chairman ******. The reason for the abduction, he explained, was that Mr. ****** had not yet left Saiama and was therefore accused of being a thief. He gives no reason for the abduction of the others. The Junta soldiers informed him that as long as he lived in Sierra Leone, he would have to support Fodey Sankoh, leader of the RUF. The soldiers advised him that people from Kono should stop joining the Kamajors, traditional hunters opposing the Junta forces.

He was questioned about the whereabouts of his older brother, ******, the paramount chief of Saiama. His brother had left for Guinea about three weeks before for medical reasons. Mr. ****** recounts that his captors, Military Police XXX, Sergeant YYY and Corporal ZZZ, all from Sefadu and all known to him, then forced him to lay his left hand down on a piece of wood. Military Police XXX then struck Mr. ******'s hand with a machete: the little finger of his left hand was almost entirely severed , and three other fingers on the same hand were cut at the joints, but not severed. He believes that this was done on purpose. The hand is not mobile.The right hand was also mutilated, but no fingers were cut off.

6 dead

According to Mr. ******, all of the other prisoners were shot by Sergeant YYY. The soldiers composed a letter to the Guinean troops that Mr. ****** was told to handover to any Guinean soldier he was to meet on his way. They gave him the letter and told him to run, after which he made his way to the Guinean border and on to Gueckedou.

CASE # 15

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE – SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Natonality:	Sierra Leone
3. Sex:	Female
4. Date of Birth:	10/6/80
5. Place of Origin:	Seria
6. Occupation:	Trader
7. Date/Place of Attack:	22/5/98 at Serekolia
8. Date of Arrival:	26/5/98
9. Route Followed:	Seria - Semsadou - Benikoro - Serekolia - Kalifaya - Walia - Songoya - Faranah
10. Accompanied by:	Various
11. Physical Condition:	beaten, left hand severed
12. Date and Place of Interview:	2/6/98 at Faranah Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Charlotte Rostorf Ridung, Field Officer

Narrative:

Ms. ****** left Seria 15 February, 1998, because she was pregnant and her husband had told her to go and live with her mother in Semsadou. In Semsadou, she received news that the rebels were approaching. One day - the date is unclear to her - in the middle of the night, someone came to Semsadou to inform the people that the rebels were approaching the village. Together with her mother and grandmother, the town chief and other villagers she went to live in the bush for more than one month. In the bush, someone informed the group that the rebels had gone to Kabbala. The rebels had originally come, they said, from Kono District

The group then returned to Semsadou. After one week, they heard that the rebels had attacked Bafulabeh (3 miles away) and killed nine people there. Ms. ****** left Semsadou to go to Telekolo. She was accompanied by her mother. All the men stayed in Telekolo, while the women, including Ms. ******, and the children went into hiding in the bush. The women and children returned to Telekolo the next day and saw that the rebels had not come yet.

Most of the people that had come along with Ms. ****** then returned to Semsadou. Her mother had work to do in the bush and Ms. ****** spent five days there with her mother, after which they moved on to Gbenikoro. There, they heard that the rebels had arrived in Maya and people from Maya started arriving in Gbenikoro together with their belongings. Ms. ****** delivered twins in Gbenikoro. Both children died, because they were premature. Her mother advised her to leave the village and said that she would join her later.

She went to Serekolia, and her mother joined her on the way. Ms. ****** spent 21 - 22 days in Serekolia until a group of rebels arrived on 22 May. Her mother had returned to

Gbenikoro before the rebels came in order to get food, and according to one of the villagers, she had been captured by the rebels in the bush. She collected her belongings and went to another house in town together with a group of people.

The village was being attacked from more than one side, and eventually the rebels took control of the part of town where she was staying. The group left the house and went to another house. People came running towards them, trying to escape. Ms. ****** started running and the rebels were shooting in the air. She was caputured while trying to flee, forced to carry some heavy loads, and then handed over to a second group of rebels.

The men who now held her threatened to either kill her, gouge out her eyes or sever her hands. One rebel suggested to make her the "wife" of one of them. Some proposed to kill her, because they did not want to have anything to do with her. Others objected to killing. Instead, they suggested severing her hand. She and the rebels then left Serekolia in the direction of Gbenikoro. Outside of Serekolia, the rebels captured three more civilians, one of whom was CASE 22, whom she knew. The rebels cut off his hand in front of her. Ms. ****** was then ordered to take her clothes off. She refused, but the rebels stripped her naked themselves. She was forced to place her left hand on the road. The rebels did not succeed in severing her hand with one blow, so they struck again, severing the hand completely. She was also beaten, but when asked if she was sexually abused in any way, she answered no. She was ordered to run and did so.

Ms. ****** does not know the names of her assailants. The leader of the rebels that captured her was referred to as "Mosquito," but she does not know his real name. She had heard of him before and notes that he and his troops are reputed among the villagers as being very cruel. When asked why she thought that she had been attacked, the only response she could give was that she had voted for President Kabbah. After she had run for a couple of kilometres, she saw [her friend] behind her. One of his hands was severed and the other broken. They reached Serekolia together. There, they saw another group of rebels, and they were separated.

Ms. ****** stayed in the bush for four days alone. She was looking for the road to Mongo, where ECOMOG was based. She met a group of people whom she knew and asked them to direct her to the road to Guinea. The group had seen her uncle cross into Guinea so they gave her something to drink and showed her the way. She was very weak and walked alone. Her mother had heard what had happened to her and had started looking for her. They finally met on the road, and her mother carried her on her back to Faranah.

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✓ CASE # 16

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Temne tribe
3. Sex:	Female
4. Date of Birth:	40 years old
5. Place of Origin:	Magburaka (lived in Koidu Town)
6. Occupation:	sells fish
7. Date/Place of Attack:	early May at Tumbodu
8. Date of Arrival:	13/5/98
9. Route Followed:	Koidu - Tumbodu - Foroconia
10. Accompanied by:	Nephew, his wife and two children (2 children missing in Kono)
11. Physical Condition:	right arm severed between wrist and elbow
12. Date and Place of Interview:	3/6/98 at Faranah Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Gregory Mose, Associate Protection Officer

Narrative:

50 dead

Ms. ****** was at home when Koidu was attacked by Junta forces. She heard shooting and estimates that she saw around 50 people shot. She describes the attackers as not being in uniform and notes that they arrived in cars and on motorcycles. As the rebels entered the village, she fled as did many others. She headed north but was captured by a group of around 60 rebels and taken to Tumbodu. She notes that the rebels were of various ethnic groups but that she heard only two names: "******" and "******."

1 dead
1 amp

Ms. ****** captors explained to her that they were killing civilians because the civilians supported the Kabbah government and not the rebels, and said that they would kill anyone they found in the bush. They killed three men in front of her, and then told her to lie down. She resisted, so they cut her on the neck with a machete and forced her to lie down. They took her right hand and lay it across a stone and proceeded to amputate her right arm between the wrist and elbow with a machete. They told her to go explain to Tejan Kabbah what had happened and then left her where she lay.

She wrapped her wound in cloth and at one point put salt on it to slow the bleeding. Before leaving she dug a hole to bury her severed arm, and then began walking. She walked for 10 days before finally crossing the border and reaching Foroconia. Along the way she met a group of traditional hunters of the Koranko tribe who had captured five rebels, whom they tied up and led off into the bush. Once in Foroconia she received preliminary treatment and was then evacuated to Faranah hospital.

CASE # 18

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Kuranko tribe.
3. Sex:	Male
4. Date of birth:	40 years
5. Place of origin:	Serekolia, Koinadugu District
6. Occupation:	Farmer
7. Date/Place of Attack:	22/5/98 near Serekolia
8. Date of arrival:	25/5/98
9. Route followed:	Serekolia, Karifaria, Songoya
10. Accompanied by:	Wife and 4 children.
11. Physical Condition:	both hands severed at wrists
12. Date and Place of Interview:	27/5/98 at Faranah
13. Interviewing Officer:	Anne Paludan, Field Officer

Narrative:

On Friday 22 May Mr. ****** had gone to Gbenekoro, a neighbouring village, to collect food for his family who were in Serekolia. When he had collected the food and was on his way back he encountered a large group of armed men. He did not hear any names of the rebels and did not see who commanded the group. There were many of them, of all ages, and they spoke Krio. They carried long knives, machetes, and single barrel rifles. Some wore ordinary clothes, some military uniforms. He also notes that some members of the group were children of 13 to 15 years.

The rebels seized him, lay him on the ground, and one put a gun in his mouth. He struggled with them for about 10 minutes while they held his hands and kicked him. Then four of them put his hands on a branch and cut his hands with a machete, two blows to the right hand, two to the left hand, then they whipped him and asked him to go. He asked them to kill him, but they refused, saying they wanted to punish him, not to kill him. He lay there for some time, then ran back to Serekolia. The town was burning, so he made his way to the farm where his family was in hiding. His belongings were left where he had been attacked.

His family helped him out of his bloody clothing, and he lay down until early morning on Saturday before starting to walk toward Guinea. They travelled for two days. A friend they met on the road tried to attend to the wounds, otherwise they were not treated until he reached Faranah.

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CASE # 19

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1. Name:	******
2. Nationality:	Sierra Leone, Kuranko tribe
3. Sex:	Male
4. Date of birth:	40 years
5. Place of origin:	Sinnikoro, Koinadugu District
6. Occupation:	Farmer
7. Date/Place of Attack:	22/5/98 near Serekolia
8. Date of arrival:	26/5/98
9. Route followed:	Sinnikoro, Tumania, Kanbia, Hermakono
10. Accompanied by:	Mother, brother, wife, 2 children (2 & 6 years)
11. Physical Condition:	both hands severed mid-forearm
12. Date and Place of Interview:	27/5/98 at Faranah Hospital
13. Interviewing Officer:	Anne Paludan, Field Officer

Narrative:

On Friday 22 May Mr. ****** was walking from his farm to the village of Sinnikoro (near Serekolia) when he was ordered to stop by five men who approached him from behind. Fearing they were rebels, he began to run, but was stopped by another group of 10 men who appeared on the path in front of him. Mr. ****** did not hear any of his assailants' names. He noticed they were wearing guns, machetes, long knives, and axes. Some were in military uniforms while others wore civilian clothing. Several were naked to the waist and had tied bandannas around their heads.

Mr. ******'s assailants held him at gunpoint, and forced him to lay his arms along a tree branch. They struck both arms with a machete, severing each in one blow midway between the wrist and elbow. Mr. ****** asked them to kill him, saying that he could no longer work and support his family and that he would rather die. His attackers refused, instructing him instead to go to ECOMOG and tell them that "We are here." They also wrote a letter to ECOMOG and put it in the pocket of his trousers; Mr. ****** does not know the contents of the letter as it was lost on the way to Guinea. They also explained that they had severed his hands because they supported Foday Sankoh and not Tejan Kabbah. Mr. ****** then lost consciousness.

He awoke around 5:00 p.m. to find his assailants had left. He attempted to drag himself along on his stomach but eventually gave up and tried to sleep. The following morning his family came to look for him and found him on the path around 8:00 a.m. They took him first to the village of Tumania, and then to Kanbia and on to Heremakono just across the Guinean border. They had been unable to treat his injuries, but had removed his blood-soaked clothing and managed to carry him in a hammock. At Heremakono Mr. ****** received first aid and was then taken to Faranah for more thorough medical care.

CASE # 33

SIERRA LEONE VICTIMS OF VIOLENCE - SUMMARY REPORT

1.	Name:	*****
2.	Nationality:	Sierra Leone
3.	Sex:	Male
4.	Date of Birth:	15/2/72
5.	Place of Origin:	Kabala,, SLE
6.	Occupation:	Driver
7.	Date of Arrival:	2/5/98
8.	Date/Place of Attack:	January 1996 at Jaime Suafe
9.	Route Followed:	Koidu - Yomandou - Massadou - Soumoundou - Faranah - CKY (11/5)
10.	Accompanied by:	Wife
11.	Physical Condition:	Right arm severed several inches below shoulder
12.	Date and Place of Interview:	Conakry, 26/5/98
13.	Interviewing Officer:	Gregory Mose, Associate Protection Officer

Narrative:

Mr. ***** had his arm severed by RUF forces around January 1996 during the run up to presidential elections in Sierra Leone. He had been involved in election campaigning on behalf of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah in the village of Jaima Suafe (Kono District) when a group of RUF rebels entered the town and captured him and 15 other people with pro-democracy sympathies. He explains that all 16 people were tied up and the rebels proceeded to amputate arms one by one.

Mr. ***** was the third victim. He recounts being forced to lie down on the ground and to spread his arms wide. His attackers then made several preliminary cuts on his upper arm to determine where best to strike in order to break through the bone. This being done, they cut off his arm with two blows of the cutlass. They then tied a note around his neck which expressed RUF's resistance to elections and set him free. It was the villagers of Jaima Suafe who took him to the hospital at Koidu for treatment. He does not know the fate of the other prisoners but assumes that they too had limbs severed.

Mr. ***** claims that the person responsible is an RUF commander nicknamed "Superman." According to Mr. *****, Superman is the third ranking officer in the RUF after Foday Sankoh and the military commander known as "Mosquito." He is reported to lead a squad of around 20 rebels in a red Toyota Hilox four wheel drive vehicle, and Mr. ***** reports that he "specializes" in amputating enemies of the RUF.

31. Human Rights Watch, "Sowing Terror, Atrocities against civilians in Sierra Leone", Vol. 10, No.3 (A) July 1998, pages: 4, 11, 12, 13, 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23.

SIERRA LEONE
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350 Fifth Ave 34th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10118-3299
http://www.hrw.org

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SOWING TERROR

1630 Connecticut Ave, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20009
TEL (202) 612-4321
FAX (202) 612-4333
E-mail: hrwdc@hrw.org

33 Islington High Street
London N1 9LH UK
TEL (44171) 713-1995
FAX (44171) 713-1800
E-mail: hrwatchuk@gn.apc.org

15 Rue Van Campenhout
1000 Brussels, Belgium
TEL (322) 732-2009
FAX (322) 732-0471
E-mail: hrwatcheu@skynet.be

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SIERRA LEONE

SOWING TERROR

Atrocities against Civilians in Sierra Leone

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CDFs	Civilian Defense Forces
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
LRRRC	Liberian Repatriation, Resettlement and Rehabilitation Committee
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission to Sierra Leone

I. SUMMARY

Since losing political power in February 1998, members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) have been engaging in a war of terror against civilians in Sierra Leone. With no recognizable political platform, the AFRC/RUF rebel alliance is committing widespread and egregious atrocities against unarmed civilians in an attempt to regain power. As the violence in Sierra Leone continues, grave abuses continue to take place. Human Rights Watch interviewed civilian men, women, and children who had been intentionally mutilated or shot as recently as June 12, 1998 in eastern Sierra Leone.

Many thousands of Sierra Leonean civilians have been raped; deliberately mutilated, often by amputation; or killed outright in a campaign by the AFRC/RUF between February and June 1998 alone. Men, women and children, probably numbering in the thousands, have been abducted by the AFRC/RUF for use as combatants, forced laborers, or sexual slaves. Women have been actively targeted through sexual violence, including rape and sexual slavery. Children have been targets of killings and violence and are forcibly recruited as soldiers. In addition to various forms of physical abuse, innumerable Sierra Leoneans suffer from psychological trauma due to intentionally cruel methods of inflicting harm against these individuals and their communities.

These atrocities committed against civilians are the latest cycle of violence in the armed conflict that has devastated Sierra Leone for seven years. The fighting has caused the displacement of more than a million Sierra Leoneans. Most have become internally displaced, while hundreds of thousands have fled the country as refugees, predominantly to neighboring Guinea and Liberia.

The AFRC—led by a group of military officers—took power forcibly on May 25, 1997. During the nine months it was in power, the AFRC joined forces with the armed rebel group, the RUF, to form a regime characterized by serious human rights violations and a complete breakdown of the rule of law. In February 1998, a Nigerian-led peacekeeping force, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), forced the AFRC/RUF out of power and reinstated former President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, who had been elected president in March 1996 in the first multi-party elections for almost three decades in Sierra Leone. Since the reinstatement of Kabbah, the AFRC has joined forces with the RUF to wage a war against ECOMOG and the Kabbah government.

Since independence in 1961, Sierra Leone has endured a series of military regimes and rebellions in struggles over economic and political power. However, the latest round of violence is unique in the scale and grotesque nature of the attacks on civilians. Much of rural Sierra Leone is inaccessible due to the ongoing war, and information is available for the most part only through health facilities where victims seek care in Sierra Leone and through the testimonies of witnesses and survivors in neighboring Guinea and Liberia. Of the hundreds of testimonies collected by Human Rights Watch, many described situations in which the interviewee was the sole survivor among many victims. The cases reported in this document represent only a small fraction of the actual number of victims. The true number may never be known.

Human Rights Watch compiled information regarding the experiences of more than 500 survivors of atrocities committed in Sierra Leone between February and June of 1998. The vast majority of these abuses were perpetrated by members of the AFRC/RUF. Of this number, over 425 survivors of gunshot wounds, amputations and other mutilations, or rape were registered in Connaught, Magburaka, and Makeni hospitals in Sierra Leone. Approximately eighty-two survivors of the same types of abuse were identified in Guinea at Conakry, Faranah, Kissidougou, and Guéckedou hospitals during roughly the same period. In the Liberian refugee camps, Human Rights Watch interviewed victims of the conflict and former AFRC/RUF combatants living alongside one another.

Forces fighting on behalf of President Kabbah have also committed human rights abuses and violations of international humanitarian law. Civilian Defense Forces (CDFs), civilian militias who support the Kabbah

government, have committed numerous abuses including indiscriminate killings and torture. These killings are on a smaller scale than those carried out by the AFRC/RUF and are of a different nature: the CDFs were created in order to assure local security, and they generally limit their abuses to those they claim are AFRC/RUF combatants and to a lesser extent, those perceived as their supporters. The largest and most powerful of the CDFs, the Kamajors, have been responsible for the majority of abuses committed by those fighting on behalf of the Kabbah government since February 1998. In addition to killings and torture, Kamajors have also been responsible for obstructing humanitarian assistance and demanding money or other payment at roadblocks. There are many child soldiers among the Kamajors, and despite promises by the government to demobilize all combatants under the age of eighteen, recent reports indicate that the CDFs continue to recruit children.

According to international humanitarian groups, the shelling by ECOMOG during its assault on Freetown in early February 1998 took a high toll on civilians. ECOMOG forces have also obstructed humanitarian assistance by commandeering vehicles from aid agencies. Information from ECOMOG regarding the security situation in Sierra Leone has often been unduly positive, leading to the repatriation of refugees to unsafe areas. ECOMOG has been widely praised for ousting the AFRC/RUF and conducting itself with greater discipline than was the case in Liberia. However, international observers in Sierra Leone have expressed concerns that some members of ECOMOG may seek to prolong its mission in order to exploit the conflict for economic incentives, as was the case involving some ECOMOG contingents in Liberia.

The atrocities that drive civilians into flight are only the first chapter of hardship for many Sierra Leoneans affected by the crisis. Approximately one-quarter million Sierra Leoneans have fled to refugee camps in neighboring Guinea and Liberia to escape the abuses and fighting. The location of the camps in border areas presents problems of security for and access to the camps, which in turn have impaired assistance and protection for refugees. Security conditions in many of the camps are precarious, and humanitarian assistance has been hampered by difficult access to the camps, a lack of resources at the disposition of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and aid agencies, and in some instances, poor coordination of relief efforts.

Protecting refugees in this context remains a challenge for UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies. In the Guinean camps, many unaccompanied women, children, and other war victims suffer from inadequate protection. Delays in the distribution of identity cards for refugees have led to restricted movement for refugees, as well as extortion and arbitrary arrest by Guinean authorities. Despite repeated requests from UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Guinean authorities have denied access to detained asylum seekers they are holding as suspected combatants.

In the Liberian camps, the presence of former combatants among the refugee population has hampered humanitarian assistance and protection. The proximity of the camps to the fighting in Sierra Leone and the permeable nature of the Sierra Leonean-Liberian border present a clear security risk for refugees and for the delivery of aid to the Vahun camp, located eight to twelve kilometers from the border. Former combatants in the camps stated that the AFRC/RUF are taking advantage of the porous border situation to resupply and to recruit combatants. Assistance and protection has been further compromised by difficult access to the camps, the onset of the rainy season and poor road conditions, a lack of resources for UNHCR and aid groups, and an insufficiently rapid and well-coordinated effort to relocate refugees and separate combatants. The generally weak assistance and protection provided to the Vahun camp has increased tension and the risk of insecurity in the camp and its environs. By June 1998, most refugees in Vahun had received only one fourteen-day ration since their arrival in February and March.

Sierra Leone has been largely ignored by much of the international community, with the exception of those attempting to exploit its rich diamond and mineral deposits. This mix of exploitation and indifference, combined with a history of weak respect for the rule of law and democratic institutions, has repeatedly permitted military leaders to hold power and divert revenue from the mines for their own benefit. In attempts during recent years to gain

political and economic control, both government and rebel groups have sought to tip the balance of power by employing private security firms or mercenaries, often in exchange for lucrative contracts and mining concessions.

A major challenge to the new Kabbah government will be to promote respect for the rule of law and the establishment of institutions of justice in the midst of the present public outcry for revenge and threats against those who defend the human rights of the accused. While demanding accountability for crimes committed by all sides, the Kabbah government must assure due process for the accused, especially the fifty-nine civilians currently being prosecuted for collaboration with the AFRC/RUF. These trials constitute the first major test of the justice system under Kabbah. The government has made repeated gestures in favor of human rights, such as its pledge to provide amnesty for child soldiers and to demobilize all child soldiers; it must now follow through on these commitments. In conjunction with ECOMOG, the government must also assure that the CDFs respect international humanitarian law, are demobilized as soon as possible or integrated into the new army, and are held accountable for their abuses.

In order to end the cycles of violence in Sierra Leone, perpetrators of human rights violations must be held accountable for their actions. AFRC/RUF members suspected of having committed human rights abuses and former AFRC/RUF collaborators must be given fair trials and punished according to national and international law.

Although influencing the actions of the AFRC/RUF has proven to be difficult, international pressure must be maintained to convince them to immediately cease indiscriminate killings, rape, and mutilation of civilians, the abduction of civilians, especially children, for use as soldiers, laborers, sexual slaves or other purposes, and other violations of the laws of war.

The United States, United Kingdom, and European Union have condemned violations by the AFRC/RUF, undertaken high-level assessment missions, and provided humanitarian aid. Despite the blatant disregard of the AFRC/RUF for international humanitarian and human rights law, the U.S., U.K. and E.U. should continue to denounce the atrocities and seek means to stop them. This should include cutting the supply lines of the AFRC/RUF and stating unequivocally that no group or individual associated with these abuses will receive any international support. The international community should call upon the government of Liberian President Charles Taylor to immediately allow ECOMOG in Liberia to monitor the border area with Sierra Leone. This operation should be reinforced by simultaneous monitoring on the Sierra Leonean side of the border by ECOMOG and the United Nations Observer Mission to Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). President Taylor should also be called upon to prevent the use of Liberian territory for any support to the AFRC/RUF.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) should assure that human rights concerns are integrated into ECOMOG's mandate, as well as into its own initiatives to promote peace and stability in Sierra Leone. ECOMOG should desist from obstructing humanitarian aid and take measures to minimize the impact of their military initiatives on civilian populations and structures. ECOMOG should work closely with UNOMSIL, UNHCR, and humanitarian agencies to assure that accurate and neutral information regarding security is provided to the public, especially to refugees, displaced populations, and aid workers.

The international community also has a crucial role to play in order to promote human rights, the rule of law, and stability in Sierra Leone. United Nations agencies are well placed to implement programs and policies to meet these ends in Sierra Leone. UNOMSIL should closely monitor ECOMOG's respect for international humanitarian law and assure that ECOMOG's mandate to train the new Sierra Leonean army results in an ethnically and geographically balanced force, and includes adequate training in the laws of war. UNOMSIL should reinforce and integrate human rights into its existing mandate, primarily through further support for its human rights office. This office should be given the resources necessary at U.N. headquarters as well as in the field to monitor and report publicly on the human rights situation throughout the country. Additionally, the office must have the capacity to provide technical assistance and training to the Sierra Leonean government and local human rights nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Finally, UNOMSIL must carefully monitor the Disarmament, Demobilization, and

Reintegration (DDR) program for combatants, developed by the World Bank and the Sierra Leonean government. UNOMSIL should provide oversight to ensure that ECOMOG, responsible for the implementation of the DDR program, treats captured or surrendered combatants, especially the large number of child soldiers, in a humane fashion, and works closely with other agencies to facilitate the reintegration of children and other former combatants into civilian communities.

As resources permit, UNHCR should assure that refugees be moved in a timely and humane fashion from insecure camps near the border areas in both Liberia and Guinea. UNHCR should increase its protection of the most vulnerable refugees, in particular the significant number of unaccompanied minors, unaccompanied women, and victims of atrocities. In Guinea, UNHCR should insist upon access to asylum seekers in detention, the screening and registration process at border areas, and, in a manner compatible with security concerns, access to the refugee camps. In Liberia, former AFRC/RUF combatants should be separated from civilian refugees and registered into programs for their reintegration into civil society or prosecuted where appropriate.

In order to put an end to the cycles of violence and atrocities against civilians, the international community will have to focus and sustain its attention on the root causes of conflict in Sierra Leone. With the democratically elected Kabbah government reinstalled, the international community should seize the occasion to make the respect for human rights an integral part of its presence and programs in Sierra Leone. International interventions should support the government's efforts to establish institutions of justice and the rule of law, as well as promote a vibrant civil society with full respect for human rights. If human rights issues are not tackled head-on, the international community and Sierra Leonean people will continue to bear the high cost of further conflict and providing relief for victims.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

To All Parties Involved in the Present Conflict in Sierra Leone:

- Despite the apparent intransigence of the AFRC/RUF and its leaders' willful disregard for international humanitarian and human rights law, Human Rights Watch continues to call on all parties to the conflict in Sierra Leone to immediately cease from committing human rights abuses, including killings, rape, and mutilation of civilians. Combatants should respect the laws of war, particularly those norms related to the protection of noncombatants and civilian infrastructure.

- All parties should desist from the recruitment, forced or otherwise, of child soldiers. The AFRC/RUF in particular should cease abductions of civilians for use as soldiers, laborers, or other reasons. The AFRC/RUF should halt gender-based violence and the abduction of women and girls as sexual slaves.

To the Sierra Leonean Government:

- Perpetrators of atrocities against civilians should be held accountable for their actions. This should be achieved through arrest, prosecution, and, where appropriate, punishment according to international humanitarian and human rights law.

- In order to establish principles of accountability and the rule of law, respect for due process should be enforced by an independent judiciary. This will be extremely important in the ongoing trials of fifty-nine civilians accused of collaborating with the AFRC/RUF regime, as well as for upcoming court martial trials and the future treatment of war criminals. International observers should immediately be brought in to monitor the ongoing trials. In order to strengthen the neutrality and independence of the judiciary, the government should consider incorporating international judges into its judicial system, in particular for cases regarding war crimes.

- The government should immediately ensure that the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program underway incorporates human rights concerns. Particular attention should be paid to (1) the humane treatment of captured and surrendered combatants; (2) psychological and social preparation for the reintegration of combatants into communities; and (3) training in human rights and humanitarian law for those combatants wishing to enlist in the new Sierra Leonean army. Demobilized combatants suspected of having committed war crimes or human rights abuses should be screened by the government in compliance with international standards, and investigated and prosecuted where appropriate.

- The government should follow through on its commitments made to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children in Armed Conflict, including to stop the recruitment of children under the age of eighteen and to create a Joint Task Force to oversee the demobilization and reintegration of child combatants from all sides.

To the Liberian Government:

- The government of Liberia should respect the international arms embargo against the AFRC/RUF and assure that Liberia is not used as a point of supply or transit for combatants, arms, ammunition, food or other supplies to support the AFRC/RUF. To this end, President Charles Taylor should facilitate border monitoring by ECOMOG. The government should investigate, arrest, and hold accountable anyone on Liberian territory engaged in arms trafficking or other support to the AFRC/RUF.

- The Liberian government, through the Liberian Repatriation, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation Committee (LRRRC) and its security forces, should cooperate with UNHCR in the development and implementation of a program to screen and separate combatants from civilian refugees. This program should be in accordance with international refugee law and UNHCR's guidelines on the application of the exclusion clauses to the 1951 Refugee Convention and to the 1967 Protocol.

- Individuals suspected of having committed a war crime, crime against humanity, or any other crime which would exclude them from protection under international refugee law, should be investigated, and where warranted, prosecuted for the violations they are accused of in accordance with international standards of due process.

To the Guinean Government:

- The Guinean government should facilitate the maximum possible access for humanitarian organizations to refugee camps in the Guéckedou area.

- The Guinean government should maintain its generous asylum policy for refugees from Sierra Leone and Liberia, while taking actions to ensure local Guinean border authorities immediately cease to demand money or seize property from Sierra Leoneans who seek to enter Guinea.

- The Guinean government should give UNHCR full and unimpeded access to border entry points and allow UNHCR to monitor access to asylum procedures; conduct prima facie refugee status determination screening; and participate in pre-screening to identify refugees who may be suspected of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or other such crimes which would exclude them from international refugee protection. The latter should be done with a view to investigate and prosecute where appropriate in accordance with international standards.

- Individuals suspected of having committed war crimes, crimes against humanity, or any other crime which would exclude them from protection under international refugee law, should be held accountable for the violations they have committed in accordance with international standards of due process.

- The Guinean government should allow UNHCR full and unimpeded access to places of detention for refugees and asylum seekers.

- The Guinean government should continue to work closely with UNHCR to register all refugees and issue them identification cards. Police and military should immediately cease the arbitrary arrest, extortion, and harassment of refugees who do not have identification cards.

- The government should maintain the arms embargo against the AFRC/RUF and assure that Guinea is not used as a supply or transit point for arms, ammunition, food or other supplies to these forces. Authorities should arrest and hold accountable any Guinean military personnel or civilians found to have violated the arms embargo to the AFRC/RUF in Sierra Leone or those involved in trade with AFRC/RUF forces.

To the United Nations:

United Nations Security Council

- The United Nations should integrate human rights into its programs and further expand the capacity of the human rights office of UNOMSIL. This should include adequate resources and additional staff to monitor and report publicly on the human rights situation throughout the country, implement technical assistance programs with the government of Sierra Leone, and provide support and training to Sierra Leonean human rights groups.

- UNOMSIL should carry out its mandate of assuring that ECOMOG respect international humanitarian law during the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program. It should further monitor ECOMOG's respect for international humanitarian and human rights law during all of its activities, especially military operations.

- The U.N. Security Council should call upon Liberia to not allow their territory to be used in support of the AFRC/RUF activity in Sierra Leone. It should urge the Liberian government to take all measures necessary to assure that present and former Liberian military or rebels are not supporting AFRC/RUF in Sierra Leone. Such measures should include the deployment of ECOMOG and U.N. military observers in the border area.

- Similarly, the Security Council should call upon all governments to respect the international arms embargo against the AFRC/RUF and, in particular, assure that Liberia is not used as a point of supply or transit for arms, ammunition, food or other supplies to or from the AFRC/RUF.

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

- Refugee camps most at risk should be relocated to secure, accessible areas a safe distance from the borders of Guinea and Liberia, as soon as the availability of resources permits this. Where not already developed, plans for relocation should be designed and implemented as soon as possible.

- UNHCR should maintain a permanent presence at border entry points to Guinea and Liberia in order to monitor access to asylum determination procedures for those fleeing Sierra Leone; conduct basic screening to determine group-based prima facie refugee status; and conduct pre-screening of those suspected of having committed a war crime, a crime against humanity, or any other such crime which would exclude them from international refugee protection.

- UNHCR should seek access in writing and in practice to all detention centers in Guinea and Liberia where asylum seekers and refugees are held, including those where refugees suspected of being former combatants are held. UNHCR should monitor conditions of detention and ensure, to the extent possible, that its own guidelines on detention of asylum seekers are applied.

- UNHCR should seek a presence at screening interviews to identify refugees who are suspected of committing crimes that would deem them undeserving of international refugee protection. UNHCR should monitor screening for exclusion and ensure necessary safeguards. UNHCR should advise the governments of Guinea and Liberia on fair and just criteria and procedures for the application of the exclusion clauses, according to international refugee law and its own guidelines.

- In collaboration with the governments of Guinea and Liberia, UNHCR should ensure that an efficient and effective registration program for Sierra Leonean refugees is in place in both countries. Registered refugees should be provided with identity cards.

- UNHCR should provide refugees in Liberia and Guinea with accurate, neutral, and objective information about security conditions in Sierra Leone, to enable refugees to make informed choices about repatriation.

- UNHCR should rapidly implement an evaluation of the psychological and medical needs of the large numbers of refugee victims of psychological and physical trauma. In particular, UNHCR should respect and implement its own guidelines regarding assistance and protection for women who are victims of rape, sexual violence, or survivors of trauma. UNHCR and other relief agencies should have qualified personnel to implement these guidelines and programs and promote a general awareness and sensitivity to these issues among refugees and local authorities.

- Special considerations in programming should be made to protect the large numbers of vulnerable refugees among the new Sierra Leonean caseload, including unaccompanied children, unaccompanied women, single parents, victims of atrocities, the elderly and the infirm. Funding should be provided for the implementation of education programs for reconciliation, conflict resolution and human rights education in refugee camps, especially for youth.

To ECOWAS and ECOMOG:

- While its record in Sierra Leone has improved from past performances, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) should closely monitor ECOMOG's respect for international humanitarian and human rights law in all aspects of its mandate, especially while conducting military operations, as well as during its retraining of the new army and its implementation of the DDR program. In accordance with international humanitarian law, ECOMOG should take measures to reduce the toll of its military operations on civilians and civilian structures.

- ECOMOG should produce accurate, neutral and objective information about security conditions in Sierra Leone to enable refugees to make informed choices about repatriation.

To the United States, United Kingdom, European Union, and other Members of the International Community:

- In order to end cycles of violence in Sierra Leone, the international community should maintain a strong focus on Sierra Leone and assure that respect for human rights and the rule of law are foundations of the newly reinstated government.

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- The arms embargo against the AFRC/RUF should be strictly enforced. States, arms dealers, private security firms or others found in violation of the embargo should be held accountable. The international community should state unequivocally that no group or individual associated with abuses committed by the AFRC/RUF will receive any international support.

- Members of the international community should respond to UNHCR's $7.3 million emergency appeal for assistance to Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea and Liberia. Funds are needed for food, shelter and sanitation, medical, educational, psychological and social services, the relocation of camps, transportation and logistical support.

- Donors should also respond to bilateral requests for assistance in addressing Guinea's environmental and infrastructure damage resulting from the refugee flow. International donors should provide funds in response to OCHA's request for $11.2 million to meet humanitarian needs in Sierra Leone. Without these funds, the UNHCR and other humanitarian agencies will not have the human or financial resources to provide basic assistance to refugees, internally displaced persons, and other Sierra Leoneans affected by the crisis.

III. HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES COMMITTED AGAINST CIVILIANS

Human Rights Abuses Committed by Members of the AFRC/RUF

A War of Terror against Civilians

Human Rights Watch took testimony from dozens of survivors and witnesses of gross violations of human rights committed by the AFRC/RUF,[1] involving the physical mutilation, torture and murder of Sierra Leonean civilians. They included: amputations by machete[2] of one or both hands, arms, feet, legs, ears and buttocks and one or more fingers; lacerations to the head, neck, arms, legs, feet and torso; the gouging out of one or both eyes; rape; gunshot wounds to the head, torso and limbs; burns from explosives and other devices; injections with acid; and

[1]The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was formed in 1991 and entered eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia. Originally, the RUF was a mix of members of Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), NPFL-trained Sierra Leoneans and others. Since its inception, the RUF has failed to publicly and clearly articulate a political agenda other than ousting successive governments and has committed atrocities from the beginning. Abdul Koroma in "Sierra Leone: The Agony of a Nation," (Andromeda Publications, 1996) reports that during one of their first attacks in 1991 in eastern Kailahun district, the RUF decapitated civilian leaders and placed their heads on sticks. Over the next seven years, the RUF attempted to gain power through guerrilla warfare and attacks against civilians. RUF leader Foday Sankoh is a former colonel in the Sierra Leonean military. He was imprisoned in 1971 for his alleged involvement in a coup attempt, released seven years later and dishonorably dismissed from the army. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) was formed by a group of military officers who took power in a coup on May 25, 1997 ousting President Kabbah. Its chairman, Major Johnny Paul Koroma, had been in detention in Freetown awaiting trial for alleged involvement in a prior attempted coup in September 1996. The AFRC invited RUF forces to join them in the new government. The AFRC cited the government's failure to implement a peace agreement with the RUF and the practice of ethnic favoritism as reasons for assuming power. They also called for the release of Foday Sankoh, who had been detained in Nigeria on March 2, 1997, charged with possession of arms and ammunition. Upon taking power, the AFRC suspended the constitution, banned political parties, public meetings, and demonstrations and announced rule by military decree. Many judges, attorneys and police were among those who fled the country, causing a total collapse of the judiciary. The AFRC established the People's Revolutionary Courts, whose staff had little or no legal training. The government arbitrarily arrested and detained its suspected opponents and critics. In indiscriminate attacks on villages, AFRC/RUF forces amputated, raped, killed and abducted civilians to use as laborers and fighters.

[2]Also referred to as "cutlasses" by the survivors.

beatings. Human Rights Watch also received unconfirmed reports of sexual mutilation such as the cutting off of breasts and genitalia, among other atrocities.

This is a war being waged through attacks on the civilian population. AFRC/RUF soldiers typically capture civilians, round them up from their hiding places in the forest or in villages and commit atrocities against them in an effort to instill terror. The AFRC/RUF appears to use this campaign of fear as a means of exerting political and military control. They often summarily execute civilians, accusing them of being Kabbah or Kamajor[3] supporters, or Kamajor relatives. The soldiers further terrorize their victims by forcing them to participate in their own mutilation, asking them to make choices about which finger, hand or arm, for example, to have amputated. They also use mutilation and other forms of physical abuse as punishment for refusing to follow their instructions.

The AFRC/RUF uses the civilians it abuses to "send messages" to its opponents. Victims of amputations or other mutilations are frequently told that they should take their amputated limb and a verbal or written message to ECOMOG or the Kabbah government. The messages are typically demands that ECOMOG should "leave the country to Sierra Leoneans" or that Kabbah should replace the limbs of amputees. The AFRC/RUF also state that they will keep fighting until Kabbah is gone and their leaders are restored to power. They call for the release of RUF leader Fodey Sankoh, imprisoned in Nigeria. According to testimony from other victims and witnesses, many victims die from complications related to their wounds before their messages of horror can be heard.

Since February 1998, attacks on civilians have occurred in almost all regions of the country but with a particularly high concentration in the Koidu diamond-mining area in the east, where the AFRC/RUF maintain a strong presence. The vast majority of victims are males between the ages of sixteen and forty-five, but women, children, and the elderly are not spared. For example, testimonies collected by Human Rights Watch included male and female amputees over the age of sixty, as well as from a three-year-old boy with a gunshot wound. Attacks on villages or civilians hiding in the forest are seemingly carried out without regard for ethnic or religious affiliation. Perpetrators and victims come from diverse ethnic and religious groups, and ethnicity is seldom invoked as a motivating factor in killings or abuse.

Men of voting and fighting age are particularly targeted in order to discourage them from giving political or military support to President Kabbah or the Kamajors. When the RUF committed atrocities prior to elections in 1996, they told victims that their hands were being amputated so that they could not vote. Women and girls are also frequently subject to rape and other forms of gender-based violence, including sexual slavery. Pregnant women and nursing mothers are also targets of the AFRC/RUF.

The AFRC/RUF led at least two loosely organized campaigns of terror, "Operation No Living Thing" and "Operation Pay Yourself." These campaigns, both of which originated in the Koidu area in February 1998 and then spread throughout the country, were designed to loot, destroy, or kill anything in the path of the combatants. Operation Pay Yourself included AFRC/RUF roadblocks where civilians were forced to place their belongings into two piles, one for civilians to keep, to "pay themselves," and one to be handed over to the soldiers. One witness who fled Koidu described what happens at the road blocks:

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[3] "Kamajors," meaning traditional hunter in Mende, are among the Civilian Defense Forces (CDFs) which fight on behalf of Kabbah's government. CDFs evolved as local protection responses to insecurity and violence throughout Sierra Leone. The Kamajors are the largest and most powerful of these groups, and most Kamajors are from the Mende ethnic group. They dress in traditional clothing, often wearing charms and mirrors. Other ethnic groups, including the Temne, Mandingo and Kuranko have also formed CDFs known as "traditional hunters" in their respective languages. The Kamajors became an important fighting force under the previous government of Captain Valentine E.M. Strasser, helping to combat the RUF, but also committing human rights violations. The Kamajors were armed by and grew in number under the first Kabbah government, allegedly fueling resentment among the Sierra Leonean military and leading to the subsequent AFRC coup.

> Ten of them [AFRC/RUF soldiers] in a van with weapons—RPGs, AK47s—stopped us and told us to put down our bags. They searched us from shirt to pants. They told us to make two piles and put all the best of what we had—money, rice—into one pile, and the rest in another. They took all the best and gave us the one that wasn't good. That's "Operation Pay Yourself!"[4]

These operations were apparently designed to force the local populations to provide them with economic support and to assert their position as political and military players in Sierra Leone.

Although the attackers claim to be seeking out supporters of President Kabbah or the Kamajors, which have fought on behalf of Kabbah, there is often no distinction being made by AFRC/RUF forces. A small minority of victims are, in fact, Kabbah supporters or Kamajors; most are subsistence farmers, miners or small merchants with no history of political activity. One witness to atrocities near Koidu said, "They don't ask you if you're a Kabbah supporter; they just kill randomly... they just kill anyone. But if they know you are a Kabbah supporter, they will kill you faster."[5]

Actual supporters of President Kabbah and those who served under his first administration, in particular civilian administrators, paramount chiefs, traditional section chiefs, Catholic priests, other religious figures and other community leaders, are actively sought out by AFRC/RUF for intimidation, extortion, or abuse. Several traditional chiefs and Catholic priests interviewed by Human Rights Watch explained that the AFRC/RUF perceives them as supporters of the democratically elected government of President Kabbah. Many traditional chiefs, often with ethnic ties to Civilian Defense Forces (CDFs), fled after learning that the AFRC/RUF was looking for them. One Catholic priest who was captured by the AFRC/RUF and later escaped stated that his captors planned to execute him. They told him, "Look here's one Kamajor to take care of. You priests are supporting the SLPP government and the Kamajors. Stand here because we are going to kill you."[6] The AFRC/RUF takes whatever money and property these individuals have and brutalizes them to show the population how they will treat their opponents.

International Law Governing the Crisis

The hostilities in Sierra Leone constitute an internal armed conflict under the laws of war, also known as humanitarian law. Sierra Leone is a party to the Geneva Conventions and both optional protocols. Common Article 3 to all four Geneva Conventions sets out fundamental rules applicable to internal armed conflicts that are not subject to suspension under any circumstances, and that are widely accepted as constituting customary international law. Virtually a convention within a convention, Common Article 3 provides in relevant part:

> In the case of armed conflict not of an international character occurring in the territory of one of the High Contracting Parties, each Party to the conflict shall be bound to apply, as a minimum, the following provisions:
> (1) Persons taking no active part in the hostilities, including those placed *hors de combat* by sickness, wounds, detention or any other cause, shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction founded on race, colour, religion or faith, sex, birth or wealth, or any other similar criteria.
>
> To this end the following acts are and shall remain prohibited at any time and in any place whatsoever with respect to the above-mentioned persons:

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[4]Human Rights Watch interview; Fandouyema II Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 12, 1998.

[5]Human Rights Watch interview, Koundou Lengo Bengo Refugee Camp, Republic of Guinea, June 6, 1998.

[6]Human Rights Watch interview, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 9, 1998.

(a) violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture;
(b) taking of hostages;
(c) outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment;
(d) the passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgment pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples.

The 1977 Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions is also directed at internal armed conflicts, and elaborates these fundamental guarantees of humane conduct and protection of civilians. In particular, Article 4 of this protocol provides in relevant part:

(1) All persons who do not take a direct part or who have ceased to take direct part in hostilities, whether or not their liberty has been restricted, are entitled to respect for their person, honor and convictions and religious practices. They shall in all circumstances be treated humanely, without any adverse distinction. It is prohibited to order that there shall be no survivors.
(2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the following acts against the persons referred to in paragraph 1 are and shall remain prohibited at any time and whatsoever:
(a) violence to the life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment;
(b) collective punishments;
(c) taking of hostages;
(d) acts of terrorism;
(e) outrages on personal dignity, in particular humiliating or degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;
(f) slavery and the slave trade in all their forms;
(g) pillage;
(h) threats to commit any of the foregoing acts.

The principle of protection of civilians is at the core of both provisions, and indeed, is fundamental to all humanitarian law. For the purposes of the conflict in Sierra Leone, a civilian is anyone who is not a member of the armed forces or of an organized armed group of a party to the conflict. Included as protected persons are also members of government or insurgent forces who are wounded, sick, unarmed or in captivity. Both Common Article 3 and Protocol II bind all parties to the internal armed conflict, including the insurgent party.[7]

The government of Sierra Leone is also bound by the provisions of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the state is a party. That treaty, at Article 4(1), provides that states parties may take measures derogating from certain rights "in time of public emergency which threatens the life of the nation and the existence of which is officially proclaimed". On March 10, 1998, President Kabbah declared a state of emergency which was communicated to the office of the Secretary-General to the United Nations. Even for rights the derogation of which is permitted, however, any derogation may be only "to the extent strictly required by the exigencies of the situation" and must not "involve discrimination solely on the ground of race, colour sex, language, religion or social origin." Some of the rights that may not be derogated even during a state of emergency include the right to life

[7] The commitment of a state to these provisions applies also to private individuals in that state's territory who are thereby bound by the same rights and obligations. International Committee of the Red Cross, *Commentary on the Additional Protocols of 1977* (Geneva: International Committee of the Red Cross, 1987) p. 1344-45. The government's application of these provisions does not confer on the insurgents any international recognition on the insurgent party. Nor do Common Article 3 and Protocol II provide any special status for insurgents in internal armed conflict such as the combatants privilege to kill or capture enemy troops, or prisoner-of-war status when captured. *Ibid.* at 1344.

(Article 6), the prohibition of torture or cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment (Article 7), the ban on slavery in all its forms (Article 8) and freedom of thought, conscience and religion (Article 18).

Killings, Mutilations, Sexual Abuse, and Enslavement by the AFRC/RUF

As mentioned above, it is impossible to determine the precise number of victims of these types of abuse due to a lack of access to much of Sierra Leone and the fact that most deaths occurred without record. Human Rights Watch collected testimonies from hundreds of Sierra Leoneans who survived or witnessed these types of atrocities.[8] A few of the countless examples follow:

Ike C. was a reporter for the *Herald Guardian* newspaper in Koidu town, Kono. He is thirty-two years old and fled the AFRC/RUF's attack on Koidu on February 21 but was captured, held by the AFRC/RUF, and threatened with death. He ultimately escaped. Among other atrocities he witnessed, he described the following:

> I saw them kill two people right before my face at Tomboudou, in front of the residence of the Paramount Chief of Tomboudou.[9] One man they arrested at a village called Nemessedu. They brought him to Tomboudou along with his wife. He was killed before his wife. They tied him up and shot at him in his chest three times. Then they took his wife as their own.
>
> The second executed was a youth. He was tall, and before killing him, they told him, "You're too tall." So, they chopped off his foot, and he fell to the ground. Later, they shot him three times in the chest, too, and he died. After that, they agreed to set Tomboudou on fire as a part of Operation Non-Living Thing.[10]

Helen C. was a fish seller in Koidu. She claims that she lost her two children in chaos related to an attack by the AFRC/RUF near Koidu in May 1998. Later that month, she was caught by the AFRC/RUF in Tumbodu, Kono district, where she saw them kill approximately fifty people. The AFRC/RUF caught her and cut off her hand and forearm.

> They captured me and said lie on the floor. I was reluctant; they cut me on the neck with a machete. I was cut by a small boy. Then they put my hand on a stone and cut me. They told me to go to Kabbah and tell him what happened.
>
> They left me there. They said they would go to the bush and kill anyone they found there. I walked eleven days to Forekonia [the border with Guinea]. I left my belongings with my hand. I had to bury my own hand.[11]

Franklin M., a farmer from Sinekoro town, Kabalah district, was returning from his fields around May 21, 1998 when he saw members of the AFRC/RUF coming toward him.

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[8]The names of all the refugees interviewed have been changed in order to protect their safety and privacy.

[9]Ike C. provided this information for purposes of describing the location of the killings only, not to imply involvement of the Paramount Chief in the killings of these two individuals.

[10]Human Rights Watch interview, Boodou Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 23, 1998. Survivors referred to this military offensive both as " Operation No Living Thing" and "Operation Non-Living Thing."

[11]Human Rights Watch interview, Faranah Hospital, Guinea, June 3, 1998.

> I saw people with cutlasses and guns. So I started to run; they caught me and cut off both of my hands. Then they left me. Some of them wore uniforms, some were in plainclothes. They said I was a supporter of Tejan Kabbah.[12]

Human Rights Watch interviewed Franklin M. in Faranah Hospital, Guinea where he sought refuge and health care. He further described his dilemma as a refugee and victim of a double arm amputation.

> My family is here. How can I hope to feed my family? My mother is here. My wife is here. My children are here. I have no hands.[13]

Timothy C., a history teacher from Koidu, was one of two survivors of a group of ten civilians captured near his home by the AFRC/RUF on June 10, 1998. The other eight were killed with machetes. He was cut so deeply on his forearms that it is likely that both will have to be amputated.[14]

In March 1998, **Catherine M.**, an administrator from Segbwema, was shot in the back by the AFRC/RUF as they fled from ECOMOG. Her husband and son were shot dead in front of her. She was stripped and forced to flee with the AFRC/RUF. She witnessed the killing of many children and a nursing mother as she fled.[15]

Atrocities Against Children

Children are the frequent targets of brutal, indiscriminate acts of violence by the AFRC/RUF.[16] Children are murdered, mutilated, tortured, beaten, raped, enslaved for sexual purposes, forced to work, and forced to become soldiers by the AFRC/RUF.

In addition to violating the instruments of international humanitarian law cited above, these crimes violate the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which makes explicit children's right to life and freedom from sexual abuse, abduction and forced recruitment, among other rights.[17]

Examples of these types of violations were frequent. **Sam R.**, a farmer in the Koidu area, saw six of his children and his wife attacked in front of his house on June 12. He recalled,

> They accused me of being a Kamajor. When they want to kill you, they accuse you of anything. There is no reason. I am a farmer. I don't vote. I have no money. They burnt my house.[18]

> At about 4:00 a.m., I heard bombs and gunshots outside my house. The rebels came and banged on the door. They said they would kill us all outside. My wife took five of the children outside. I stayed inside with one. My wife threw herself on top of two of the children to protect them.

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[12]Human Rights Watch interview, Faranah Hospital, Guinea, June 4, 1998.

[13]Ibid.

[14]Human Rights Watch interview, Connaught Hospital, June 24, 1998.

[15]Human Rights Watch interview, Kolahun refugee camp, Lofa county, Liberia, June 12, 1998.

[16]Children are considered persons below the age of eighteen, as defined in Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, September 2, 1990.

[17]All states are party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child except for the United States of America and Somalia.

[18]Human Rights Watch interview, Faranah Hospital, Guinea, June 3, 1998.

They shot my wife, killed two of the children, shot my seven-year-old through the stomach, and cut another one on the buttocks. Two got away.[19]

Human Rights Watch received documentation on dozens of similar cases. According to medical records, out of 265 war wounded patients admitted to Connaught hospital from April 1 though June 20, approximately one-quarter were children. According to reports from humanitarian agencies, 111 children died between February 15 and 24, 1998 during AFRC/RUF attacks in the Bo area.[20]

Gender-based Violence

Women and girls are the primary targets of widespread rape, sexual slavery, and other forms of sexual violence.[21] Although the exact number of those raped will never be known, testimonies from survivors confirm that sexual violence has been widespread, against thousands of women and girls. Furthermore, no comprehensive medical statistics have been compiled on rape-related injuries or on pregnancies as a result of rape. Those who have witnessed, or endured and survived these and other atrocities are suffering enormous psychological trauma.

Women and girls are brutally raped and gang-raped at gunpoint and knife point by AFRC/RUF soldiers or raped with objects, such as sticks. Often, the rapes occur in front of family members and others, and in some cases relatives are forced to rape their sisters, mothers or daughters. Women and girls are frequently abducted individually or collectively and kept as so-called "wives" for members of the AFRC/RUF. Some suffer rape or gang rape multiple times as they escape one AFRC/RUF group, only to be caught by another. Rape is also used as an immediate punishment for refusing to follow instructions or in retaliation for the acts of others held in captivity.

These crimes, and other forms of sexual violence, are explicitly and implicitly condemned under international humanitarian law. The Geneva Conventions of August 12, 1949 and the Protocols Additional to the Geneva Conventions prohibit rape in both international and internal conflicts.[22] Likewise, rape, when committed on a mass scale against a civilian population, constitutes a crime against humanity. The Convention on the Rights of the Child further protects children from "all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse."[23]

The crimes of sexual violence committed by the AFRC/RUF against women and girls are often accompanied by other forms of violence. Murder or mutilation frequently follows these rapes. Many are forced to work as porters for the AFRC/RUF and witness their children being abducted, abused, or killed. Some women and young girls are abducted to care for the many young children captured by the AFRC/RUF.

Pregnant women are not spared from attacks by the AFRC/RUF. In light of the gruesome nature of the atrocities committed against them, these women seem to be targeted because of their status as pregnant women.

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[19]Human Rights Watch interview, Connaught Hospital, Freetown, Sierra Leone, June 24, 1996.

[20]Internal survey conducted in Bo, Sierra Leone, by humanitarian organizations, March 19-21, 1998.

[21]Human Rights Watch also received an account of boys having been sexually abused alongside women and girls; while sexual abuse of males has occurred, it has not occurred to the extent of the abuse of women and girls.

[22]Rape in internal armed conflict is prohibited under Article 3, subparagraphs (a) and (c), common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 and by Article 2(e) of Protocol II. For international armed conflict, this is established in the Geneva Convention Relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, August 12, 1949 [Fourth Geneva Convention], Arts. 27 and 147, 75 U.N.T.S. 287.

[23]Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 34.

Witnesses report having seen the mutilated bodies of pregnant women whose fetuses had been cut out of their wombs or who died of gunshot wounds to the abdomen. Some pregnant women are also forced into labor due to the extreme physical hardship of having to flee their homes, and at times die in flight due to complications in childbirth.

The AFRC/RUF's rape and enslavement of women and girls for sex is not only a vicious expression of power over the individual, but also a means of expressing dominance over the community. Throughout the world, sexual violence is routinely directed against women and girls during situations of armed conflict as a weapon to terrorize a community and to achieve a political end. The humiliation, terror and pain inflicted by the rapist is meant to harm not only the individual victim but also to strip the humanity from the larger group of which she is a part. The rape of one person can be translated into an assault upon the community through the emphasis placed in every culture on women's sexual virtue; the shame of the rape humiliates the family and all those associated with the survivor.

The following are some of the testimonies of Sierra Leonean women who survived or witnessed sexual violence, and of some of the service providers and others who witnessed the abuse or assisted them once they reached refugee camps in Guinea and hospitals in Sierra Leone.[24]

Ruth B. is a thirty-six-year-old farmer from Gandorhun, in Kono District. She fled her village when it was attacked by the AFRC/RUF, but was captured, beaten, raped, and forced to work. She ultimately escaped and made her way to Guinea. When Ruth described her one-month ordeal in captivity, she was visibly traumatized, in poor health and still bore scars on her back and legs. The back of her ankles had been sliced just below the Achilles tendon to prevent her from escaping:

> They took three of my children and killed my husband. The rest of us ran away. But we were captured by the junta,[25] and they took the women away to carry their loads. I was with them one month. They held us in a house. One day while we were there and they were away, another group came from Gongo and asked us what our mission was. We told them we were from Gandorhun, and they beat us. They beat us severely. They stomped on my stomach, and the next day, I was bleeding from my vagina as if I had had an operation. Now, I have a serious backache.
>
> Later the two groups came together, and the second group told the first group that we were family members of the Kamajors. They used me for sex, and they cut my heels with their bayonets so I wouldn't run or walk off. But I escaped into the bush even though I was wounded....
>
> I didn't know who captured me. They were older and younger—adults and children. Some had uniforms and machetes, and some wore ordinary clothes, like jeans, and had guns. There were lots of nicknames; one of them was called "Blood." They said they didn't like Kabbah and said, "If

[24]The majority of women Human Rights Watch interviewed fled villages in the diamond-rich Kono district of Sierra Leone and became refugees across the border in the Guéckedou area of Guinea, which is now home to over 200,000 Sierra Leonean refugees. The names of all the rape survivors interviewed have been changed in order to protect their safety and privacy.

[25]Witnesses often referred to their attackers as "rebels" or "juntas," common terminology for the RUF and the AFRC respectively. Human Rights Watch interviews revealed that attackers were in most cases a mix of plainclothes "rebels" and uniformed AFRC/RUF soldiers. They also sometimes disguised themselves as Kamajor or ECOMOG forces. For these reasons and a lack of a reliable method of distinguishing former government soldiers from rebels in Sierra Leone, this report refers to them collectively as AFRC/RUF.

he's there, we will continue to fight." They were both Liberian and Sierra Leonean. I could tell from their language.[26]

Finda T. is a forty-five-year-old woman from Koidu town, Kono who fled with her family when the AFRC/RUF attacked at the end of February. She told Human Rights Watch how her family had been killed and how she had been raped by rebel soldiers:

> The rebels caught us in the bush after my family and I had fled one Saturday in February. They killed my brother immediately, and they took my two children. One of them raped me. He used me as his wife, and another one beat me with a gun. They made me and others carry their loads. They told us to take their bags of rice back to Koidu town. They seriously used us. In Koidu, they took our clothes and freed us. I lived in the bush for two months using leaves to cover myself. Eventually, I found some people who showed me the way to Guinea. A child gave me her clothes, and I have only one dress now.[27]

In April, medical staff in Connaught Hospital, Freetown reported that they were witnessing an alarming number of patients suffering mutilations. A number of the female patients they interviewed were raped and had foreign objects inserted in their vaginas. They had been attacked by AFRC/RUF between April 15-25 in villages between Njaiama Sewafe and Koidu. The patients said the AFRC/RUF rounded up civilians in groups or lines, sent them to a cutting block and commenced limb amputations with a cutlass. Doctors reported:

> In some villages, after the people were rounded up, they were stripped naked and ordered to "use their women;" men were ordered to "use" their sister. When men refused to do so, their arm was amputated, and the women were raped by the attackers.[28]

Alice M. is a forty-one-year-old former police officer from Jabwema Fiama, Kono, Sierra Leone, who is now a refugee in Guinea. On March 10, 1998, she and her family fled their home into the forest two days after the AFRC/RUF began to attack and loot her town. The AFRC/RUF captured her with her husband in the forest, but didn't catch her children. They let her husband go, but seeing her police identification, they kept her. She remembered:

> Commander Steven Gbenya and Sergeant Moussa captured me. They had also captured other police officers, whom they killed. The commander said he wasn't going to kill me, and instead, he raped me all night. I cried and cried and prayed. I don't know why, but early in the morning, about 6:00 a.m., he let me go. I think he felt sorry for me. He and Moussa escorted me out without telling anyone else and took me to a place in the bush. They deliberately raped many women. To save your life, you have to agree, or they will kill you. They are beastly.[29]

---

[26]Human Rights Watch interview, Mangay Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 15, 1998. Many refugees interviewed described their captors as having spoken with Liberian accents. They were not able to say whether or not they were Liberian fighters or Sierra Leonean fighters from the Kailahun region of Sierra Leone, closest to Liberia, who would have spoken with the same accent. Nonetheless, many believed them to be Liberians.

[27]Human Rights Watch interview, Sowadou Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 14, 1998.

[28]"Atrocities against Civilians in Sierra Leone," Médecins Sans Frontières, May 1998, p. 4.

[29]Human Rights Watch interview, Fangamadou, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 14, 1998.

Abductions

The abduction of civilians by the AFRC/RUF is commonplace. People of all ages are abducted, but witnesses point to young men, women, and girls and boys as preferred targets. The soldiers capture individuals and groups to labor for them and in general perform tasks necessary for their subsistence and advancement.[30] Women and girls are taken as "wives," or sexual slaves, to cook and perform other domestic tasks. Young men and boys are also abducted for forced recruitment as soldiers. It is unclear whether or not they have designated large-scale holding centers, although at least one witness testified to this effect.

Human Rights Watch received reports that the AFRC/RUF abducts these groups for use as human shields against attacking ECOMOG forces, in the belief that ECOMOG would hesitate to target civilians, particularly women and children, or that in the event of an attack, the "shield" would be hit first.

As described below, many witnesses are under the impression that abductions number in the thousands. The AFRC/RUF captures many civilians apparently with the intention of holding them permanently to reinforce their numbers and ensure their future existence. Others abducted are executed or ultimately allowed to go free after having suffered a number of abuses.

Forced Labor

Many who had been captured by the AFRC/RUF and either escaped or were released testified to Human Rights Watch that they were forced to "carry loads" and perform other tasks for them. The civilians were collected or called upon individually to transport items that the fighters looted from town to town and from one point to another within villages. They prepared food for the soldiers and performed any task required of them to contribute to meeting the daily needs of the soldiers.

Mary F., a nine-year-old girl who fled Koidu town, Kono, was captured by AFRC/RUF soldiers and forced to work. She was freed by the soldiers but was separated from her parents and is now an unaccompanied minor in a refugee camp in Guinea. Upon finishing her story, her steady, serious mood changed, and she burst into tears.

> A group of about eleven junta soldiers captured me, my parents and others. They killed one person in our group in front of us. The group split, and I lost my parents. They took us back to Koidu and released us but arrested us again and used us to carry their loads. We were adults and children. They didn't tell us anything about why they were making us do this. Eventually they let us go....[31]

Sia T., who is eighteen and the mother of one, fled the fighting in Koidu town and hid in the forest for three months before making her way to Guinea. She witnessed the murder, rape and abduction of civilians and was herself captured and forced to work for the AFRC/RUF. Some of her captors were children. She remembered:

> We were hiding in the bush, not too far from where some of the junta stayed. They knew where people were. They would go into the bush and get some of them, take them to town, make them work and let them go. Then they'd go back and get more. They made me pound rice. We were afraid. They said they weren't going to do anything, but we were working at gunpoint. They were

[30]Other civilians were forced to labor for the AFRC/RUF, but weren't abducted per se. Survivors testified that often the soldiers would know where their hide-outs were in the forest and would regularly call upon them to perform tasks or subject them to other forms of abuse, under threat of additional physical harm. Although these civilians were not held inside AFRC/RUF installations, it was difficult for them to flee.

[31]Human Rights Watch interview, Boodou Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 23, 1998.

as young as the boys here. [She gestures at three young boys, approximately five to seven years old, sitting nearby the interview setting]. The small ones had guns, too. They even fought between themselves over whose girls were whose.[32]

Sexual Slavery

Human Rights Watch documented repeated accounts of women and girls being abducted by the AFRC/RUF in large numbers for sexual and other purposes. The AFRC/RUF holds these women and girls indefinitely and requires them to perform a variety of tasks, such as preparing food. Women and girls may also have been abducted to care for the many young children captured by the AFRC/RUF. Some who have escaped report that the soldiers divide them up amongst themselves and refer to them as their "wives." They have sex with them at will and at times brutalize them with other forms of physical violence. The AFRC/RUF move these women and girls with them from one location to another. Targeting women and girls in these ways serves the AFRC/RUF practically, in terms of meeting their own daily needs, and strategically, as they coopt their labor and destroy local family and economic structures.

Grace M. is from Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District. She is twenty-one years old. When the AFRC/RUF attacked Koidu in February and launched "Operation Pay Yourself," Grace fled to Kombayendeh (thirty-two miles from Koidu) to find rice. She stayed there for a while but was forced to flee again, first to Bovoma and finally into the forest. AFRC/RUF soldiers captured her along with seventeen other women and kept them as so-called "wives." She ultimately escaped and made her way to Guinea. She believes the other women who did not escape are probably still with the AFRC/RUF, perhaps in Kailahun. She said:

> It was on a Monday mid-day, that the junta stormed where we hid. They arrested eighteen of us, and we were taken to Koidu town again. We spent sixteen days with them in the township. While in Koidu town, I saw dead bodies littered all over the place. I also saw some of the soldiers' captives, regardless of age, carrying looted items from the surrounding villages; they took them to Kailahun. We were eighteen in number, all females. It was this same day that the soldiers shared us amongst themselves as wives. Each of us got a man as a husband. It was indeed horrible as one soldier that I was assigned to sexually abused me. He had sex with me any time he wished—at night, mid-day and anywhere. I can still remember his name, Alie, Mende tribe.[33]

Ike C., the newspaper reporter from Koidu town, fled the AFRC/RUF's attack on Koidu and was caught. He was able to escape, however, and among many atrocities he witnessed, he said this about sexual violence:

> There was rampant raping. I saw a fifteen-year-old girl raped right before me. They left her, but they captured others, and among them was a seven-year-old girl. I also saw many girls held in vehicles, ready to be transported. They force them to carry loads, use them as "wives" and encourage them, saying, "I will give you everything, stay with me." But they have no alternative but to stay.[34]

Forced Recruitment

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[32]Human Rights Watch interview, Fandouyema II Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 12, 1998.

[33]Center for Rural Adult Education (CREA) interview, conducted the week of June 15, 1998, Kissidougou, Republic of Guinea. Also, Human Rights Watch interview, Kissidougou, Republic of Guinea, June 17, 1998.

[34]Human Rights Watch interview, Boodou Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 23, 1998.

The AFRC/RUF is using and forcibly recruiting children and young men to engage in armed attacks against Sierra Leone civilians, Civilian Defense Forces, and ECOMOG soldiers.[35] Many witnesses told Human Rights Watch that they had seen AFRC/RUF soldiers abducting and holding young men and boys to use as child soldiers and that child soldiers had been among their AFRC/RUF attackers.

The forced recruitment of boys as child soldiers by the AFRC/RUF in Sierra Leone is not new. As armed conflict in Sierra Leone has intensified in recent years, the social fabric of the country has unraveled, and children have increasingly seen their rights erode. Many children have lost or been separated from their parents in the fighting, do not have enough to eat and do not have schools and other basic structures in place to meet their needs. They are particularly vulnerable to forced recruitment and have clearly been targeted by the AFRC/RUF as it seeks to reinforce its ranks.[36]

Young boys are targeted in part because their captors consider them to be less afraid to fight; they likely do not have children or wives to consider in risking their lives. They are readily manipulated because they are vulnerable and without protection. Child soldiers are often placed at the front line and forced to commit atrocities against their own communities. This establishes a sense of culpability in them, as well as traumatization, and makes it less possible for them to be accepted back into society or to be psychologically prepared to return.

Little is known about the condition of the young men and children abducted since February by the AFRC/RUF for use as soldiers; few have escaped to tell the story. Over the past few years, however, child recruits were typically provided with food, mind-altering drugs and firearms and were forced to fight and commit atrocities alongside the AFRC/RUF soldiers. The demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of these children will ultimately present an enormous challenge to all those involved in healing the wounds of war and building a future for Sierra Leone.

Alice M. is a forty-one-year-old former police officer in Jabwema Fiama, Kono. While she was held captive by two members of the AFRC/RUF, she was confined to a room with a ten-year-old boy. She said:

> Commander Steven Gbenya and Sgt. Moussa were also holding a ten-year-old boy in the room I was held in. They didn't release him. The house we were in was full of rebels. The room next to mine was the Liberian commando room.[37] The commander said that they no longer planned to kill children below fifteen, pregnant women, or old men and women. They said they were going

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[35]Although prevailing international law sets fifteen as the minimum age for military recruitment and participation in armed conflict, Human Rights Watch shares a growing consensus among independent, nongovernmental sources which believe that this age is too low and must be raised to eighteen. Not only does the Convention on the Rights of the Child define a child as any human being under the age of eighteen, unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier, but eighteen is the voting age in the vast majority of countries. Establishing eighteen as the minimum age for participation in hostilities would be consistent with existing international norms and offer greater protection for children in situations of particularly grave risk. In Sierra Leone, Human Rights Watch also noted the problem of birth registration; individuals often did not know their own age or the age of their children. The lack of records makes it easier for those who forcibly recruit children to do so by claiming the recruits were older than they actually were.

[36]The Child Protection Committee, a United Nations-Nongovernmental Organization group established to address child protection issues in Sierra Leone, estimated the number of children in armed groups in Sierra Leone in September 1997 at approximately 3,000. (Inter-agency strategy paper for Child Protection Activities in Sierra Leone, Child Protection Committee, Camp Conakry, September 1997.) The actual number is not known, but has increased significantly since the renewal of fighting in February.

[37]The interviewee claimed that there were Liberian fighters among the AFRC/RUF.

to train-up those children because they knew they were going to die themselves. They encouraged the boy not to be afraid. They cooked for us, but I couldn't eat. The boy didn't say much, but he was hungry, and he ate.[38]

Ike C., the reporter for the *Herald Guardian* in Koidu town who was captured by the AFRC/RUF, also testified to the role of child soldiers. Some of his captors were under ten years old and wielded guns. He said:

> I was captured by Gittaboi, who said he'd execute me because I am a press man. There were little kids, boys, around seven, nine, twelve years old who were among the soldiers. They had guns and felt they had power.... I saw girls held in vehicles ready to be transported. The last group of kids I saw were held at the Branch Energy mining group office in Koidu town. They had 1,500-2,000 of them there. I *saw* them. In Koidu, the junta forces shouted for kids and gathered them. A soldier told me they are holding those kids as a shield in the event of an ECOMOG attack. They also use them as soldiers, for labor, and for sexual purposes.[39]

Other Violations of International Humanitarian Law

In addition to the abuses described above, members of the AFRC/RUF flagrantly violated other provisions of international humanitarian law. The AFRC/RUF regularly showed a gross disrespect for principles granting protection to hospitals, places of worship, and other non-military structures providing public services.[40]

The private property of civilians was frequently looted and their homes intentionally burned.[41] Witnesses spoke regularly of theft and mass destruction by the AFRC/RUF as they retreated from ECOMOG forces. Members of the AFRC/RUF completely stripped civilians of their belongings on a regular basis. Many of those fleeing Sierra Leone arrived in refugee camps with little more than their clothing; and several witnesses explained how they had been left naked by the AFRC/RUF and spent days in flight without clothing.

In February 1998, in Lunsar town of Porto Loko district, as a part of their "Operation Pay Yourself," members of the AFRC/RUF raided the Magbesemi hospital. Medicines and equipment were taken, patients were forced to flee, and some medical personnel reportedly abducted by the AFRC/RUF. One patient being treated for a gunshot wound described their actions:

> The AFRC/RUF soldiers came to Magbesemi Hospital, fleeing the ECOMOG advance. They took the doctors away. There were many rebels—in several trucks with arms and heavy weapons. They took all the drugs. We were about twenty-five patients. They said, "this is Operation Pay Yourself."[42]

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[38]Human Rights Watch interview, Fangamadou, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 14, 1998.

[39]Human Rights Watch interview, Boodou Refugee Camp, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 23, 1998.

[40]Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol I), of 8 June 1977, Article 52, and Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II), of 8 June 1977, Articles 9, 10, 11, and 16.

[41]Protocol II, Article 4 (2) (g).

[42]Human Rights Watch interview, Faranah Hospital, Faranah, Guéckedou, Republic of Guinea, June 3, 1998.

32. Human Rights Watch, "We'll kill you if you cry, Sexual Violence in the Sierra Leone Conflict" Vol.15, No. 1 (A), January 2003, pages 3, 11, 12, 25, 26, 27, 35, 36, 42, 43.

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SIERRA LEONE

350 Fifth Ave 34th Floor
New York, N.Y. 10118-3299
http://www.hrw.org
(212) 290-4700

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A woman receives psychological and medical treatment in a clinic to assist rape victims in Freetown. In January 1999, she was gang-raped by seven revels in her village in northern Sierra Leone. After raping her, the rebels tied her down and placed burning charcoal on her body. (c) 1999 Corinne Dufka/Human Rights Watch

I was captured together with my husband, my three young children and other civilians as we were fleeing from the RUF when they entered Jaiweii. Two rebels asked to have sex with me but when I refused, they beat me with the butt of their guns. My legs were bruised and I lost my three front teeth. Then the two rebels raped me in front of my children and other civilians. Many other women were raped in public places. I also heard of a woman from Kalu village near Jaiweii being raped only one week after having given birth. The RUF stayed in Jaiweii village for four months and I was raped by three other wicked rebels throughout this period.

-Testimony to Human Rights Watch

"WE'LL KILL YOU IF YOU CRY"
SEXUAL VIOLENCE IN THE SIERRA LEONE CONFLICT

1630 Connecticut Ave, N.W., Suite 500
Washington, DC 20009
TEL (202) 612-4321
FAX (202) 612-4333
E-mail: hrwdc@hrw.org

2nd Floor, 2-12 Pentonville Road
London N1 9HF, UK
TEL: (44 20) 7713 1995
FAX: (44 20) 7713 1800
E-mail: hrwuk@hrw.org

15 Rue Van Campenhout
1000 Brussels, Belgium
TEL (32 2) 732-2009
FAX (32 2) 732-0471
E-mail: hrwbe@hrw.org

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SIERRA LEONE

"WE'LL KILL YOU IF YOU CRY"

Sexual Violence in the Sierra Leone Conflict

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GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All People's Congress
CAT	Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment
CCP	Commission for the Consolidation of Peace
CCSSP	Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CDC	Centers for Disease Control
CDF	Civil Defense Forces
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CMRRD	Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development
C. O.	Commanding Officer
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Program
DFID	Department for International Development, United Kingdom
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIDHR	European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights
E.U.	European Union
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficieny Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICC	International Criminal Court
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
ICTR	International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda
ICTY	International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia
IMATT	International Military Advisory and Training Team
IRC	International Rescue Committee
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
MSF	Médecins Sans Frontières
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OFR	Operation Focus Relief
OHCHR	Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights
PHR	Physicians for Human Rights
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SBU	Small Boys Unit
SCSL	Special Court for Sierra Leone
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
USAID	United States Agency for International Development (USAID)
VRF	Vasico-rectal Fistula
VVF	Vasico-vaginal Fistula
WHO	World Health Organization

DEFINITION OF SEXUAL VIOLENCE, RAPE AND SEXUAL SLAVERY

In this report:

Sexual violence is an overarching term used to describe "[a]ny violence, physical or psychological, carried out through sexual means or by targeting sexuality."[1] Sexual violence includes rape and attempted rape, and such acts as forcing a person to strip naked in public, forcing two victims to perform sexual acts on one another or harm one another in a sexual manner, mutilating a person's genitals or a woman's breasts, and sexual slavery.

Rape as defined in the appeals chamber judgment of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) in the 2002 *Foca* case is "[t]he sexual penetration, however slight: (a) of the vagina or anus of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator or any other object used by the perpetrator; or (b) [of] the mouth of the victim by the penis of the perpetrator; where such sexual penetration occurs without the consent of the victim. Consent for this purpose must be consent given voluntarily, as a result of the victim's free will, assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances. The *mens rea* is the intention to effect this sexual penetration, and the knowledge that it occurs without the consent of the victim."[2] The appeals chamber rejected the "resistance" requirement argued by the appellants as it is justified neither in law or fact, and stated that the use of force in itself is not a necessary element of rape. The coercive circumstances present in the Foca rapes, which were committed in circumstances similar to the crimes of sexual violence perpetrated in Sierra Leone, made the victims' consent to the sexual acts impossible. The use or threat of force often removes any requirement that a victim show resistance and most jurisdictions have discarded the idea that a rape victim must resist under all circumstances as impractical, if not absurd. This definition also underscores that rape is an attack on the physical integrity of a woman and not an attack against her honor or that of her family or community.

Rape was defined in the judgment of the *Akayesu* case at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) as "[t]he physical invasion of a sexual nature, committed on a person under circumstances which are coercive" and is not limited to the insertion of a penis into a victim's vagina or anus or the insertion of a penis in the mouth of the victim.[3] This definition, however, has been criticized for being too broad and has not been included in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Sexual slavery, defined by the 1926 Slavery Convention and the 1953 Protocol amending the same convention, refers to "[t]he status or condition of a person over whom any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership are exercised, including sexual access through rape or other forms of sexual violence."[4] The Statute of the ICC includes the trafficking of women and children in its definition of enslavement.[5]

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[1] United Nations, *Contemporary Forms of Slavery: Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices during Armed Conflict*, Final Report submitted by Ms. Gay J. McDougall, Special Rapporteur (New York: United Nations, 1998), E/CN.4/Sub. 2/1998/13, pp. 7-8.

[2] *Prosecutor v. Dragoljub Kunarac, Radomir Kovac and Zoran Vukovic* (*Foca* case), Appeals Chamber Judgement, June 12, 2002, IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, paras. 127-133.

[3] *Prosecutor v. Jean-Paul Akayesu*, Judgement, ICTR-96-4-T, September 2, 1998, para. 688.

[4] United Nations, *Contemporary Forms of Slavery: Systematic Rape, Sexual Slavery and Slavery-like Practices during Armed Conflict*, p. 9. Sierra Leone ratified the Slavery Convention on March 13, 1962.

[5] Article 7 (1) (g) lists enslavement as a crime against humanity with the definition given in Article 7 (2) (c). Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, opened for signature July 17, 1998, Article 7, reprinted in 37 I.L.M. 999 (1998). The Rome Statute entered into force on April 11, 2002 and the ICC has the authority to prosecute the most serious international crimes from July 1, 2002.

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I. SUMMARY

Throughout the armed conflict in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2001, thousands of women and girls of all ages, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic classes were subjected to widespread and systematic sexual violence, including individual and gang rape, and rape with objects such as weapons, firewood, umbrellas, and pestles. Rape was perpetrated by both sides, but mostly by the rebel forces. These crimes of sexual violence were generally characterized by extraordinary brutality and frequently preceded or followed by other egregious human rights abuses against the victim, her family, and her community. Although the rebels raped indiscriminately irrespective of age, they targeted young women and girls whom they thought were virgins. Many of these younger victims did not survive these crimes of sexual violence. Adult women were also raped so violently that they sometimes bled to death or suffered from tearing in the genital area, causing long-term incontinence and severe infections. Many victims who were pregnant at the time of rape miscarried as a result of the sexual violence they were subjected to, and numerous women had their babies torn out of their uterus as rebels placed bets on the sex of the unborn child.

Thousands of women and girls were abducted by the rebels and subjected to sexual slavery, forced to become the sex slaves of their rebel "husbands." Abducted women and girls who were assigned "husbands" remained vulnerable to sexual violence by other rebels. Many survivors were kept with the rebel forces for long periods and gave birth to children fathered by rebels. Some abducted women and girls were forcibly conscripted into the fighting forces and given military training, but even within the rebel forces, women still held much lower status and both conscripted and volunteer female combatants were assigned "husbands." For civilian abductees, aside from sexual violence their brutal life with the rebels included being made to perform forced labor, such as cooking, washing, carrying ammunition and looted items, as well as farm work. Combatants within the rebel forces had considerable latitude to do what they wanted to abducted civilians, who were often severely punished for offenses as minor as spilling water on a commander's shoes. Escape for these women and girls was often extremely difficult: In many instances, the women and girls, intimidated by their captors and the circumstances, felt powerless to escape their life of sexual slavery, and were advised by other female captives to tolerate the abuses, "as it was war." The rebels sometimes made escape more difficult by deliberately carving the name of their faction onto the chests of abducted women and girls. If these marked women and girls were caught by pro-government forces, they would be suspected of being rebels, and often killed. Even though many women did manage to escape, some escaped from one rebel faction or unit only to be captured by another. An unknown number of women and girls still remain with their rebel "husbands," although the war was declared over on January 18, 2002.

The main perpetrators of sexual violence, including sexual slavery, were the rebel forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the West Side Boys, a splinter group of the AFRC. Human Rights Watch has documented over three hundred cases of sexual violence by the rebels; countless more have never been documented. From the launch of their rebellion from Liberia in March 1991, which triggered the war, the RUF perpetrated widespread and systematic sexual violence. Its ideology of salvaging Sierra Leone from the corrupt All People's Congress (APC) regime quickly degenerated into a campaign of violence whose principal aim was to gain access to the country's abundant diamond mines. The AFRC, which consisted of disaffected soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) who in May 1997 overthrew the elected government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, were also responsible for subjecting thousands of women and girls to sexual violence, including sexual slavery. After the signing of the peace agreement in Lomé, Togo, in July 1999, sexual violence, including sexual slavery, continued unabated in RUF-controlled areas and was also perpetrated by the West Side Boys, who operated outside of the capital, Freetown. The human rights situation worsened after the May 2000 crisis when fighting broke out again, until relative peace was re-established, with U.N. and British assistance, by mid-2001. The prevalence of sexual violence peaked during active military operations and when the rebels were on patrol. Even in times of relative peace, however, sexual violence continued to be committed against the thousands of women and girls who were abducted and subjected to sexual slavery by the rebels. No region of Sierra Leone was spared.

Human Rights Watch has documented only a limited number of cases of sexual violence by pro-government forces, the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the militia known as Civil Defense Forces (CDF), the latter consisting

of groups of traditional hunters and young men who were called upon by the government to defend their native areas. Human Rights Watch has not documented any cases of sexual violence by the SLA prior to 1997. This may in part be due to the fact that survivors would have often found it difficult to distinguish between rebel and government soldiers, as the latter frequently colluded with and disguised themselves as RUF forces. Sexual violence was committed relatively infrequently by the CDF, whose internal rules forbid them from having sexual intercourse before going to battle and who believe their power and potency as warriors depends upon sexual abstinence. Some of this internal discipline, however, was lost as CDF moved away from their native areas and traditional chiefs and were given more responsibility in national security. Human Rights Watch has documented several cases of rape by the largest and most powerful CDF group, the Kamajors, who operate predominantly in the south and east.

Human Rights Watch has documented several cases of sexual violence by peacekeepers with the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), including the rape of a twelve-year-old girl in Bo by a soldier of the Guinean contingent and the gang rape of a woman by two Ukrainian soldiers near Kenema. There appears to be reluctance on the part of UNAMSIL to investigate and take disciplinary measures against the perpetrators. Reports of rape by peacekeepers with the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the majority of whom were Nigerian, deployed at an earlier stage in the war, were rare. Both ECOMOG and UNAMSIL peacekeepers have sexually exploited women, including the solicitation of child prostitutes, whilst deployed in Sierra Leone.

Rape in wartime is an act of violence that targets sexuality. Moreover, conflict-related sexual violence serves a military and political strategy. The humiliation, pain, and fear inflicted by the perpetrators serve to dominate and degrade not only the individual victim but also her community. Combatants who rape in war often explicitly link their acts of sexual violence to this broader social degradation. The armed conflict in Sierra Leone was no exception. The rebels sought to dominate women and their communities by deliberately undermining cultural values and community relationships, destroying the ties that hold society together. Child combatants raped women who were old enough to be their grandmothers, rebels raped pregnant and breastfeeding mothers, and fathers were forced to watch their daughters being raped.

To date there has been no accountability for the thousands of crimes of sexual violence or other appalling human rights abuses committed during the war in Sierra Leone. The 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement included a blanket amnesty under Sierra Leonean law for offenses committed by all sides, as the price for the RUF/AFRC agreeing to lay down arms. The United Nations (U.N.) stated that it did not recognize the Lomé amnesty insofar as it purported to apply to international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law.

Two important transitional justice mechanisms, the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL) and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) have been established with U.N. assistance and are tasked with investigating the human rights abuses, including sexual violence and sexual slavery, committed by all parties during the war. Both bodies were operational by the third quarter of 2002. The SCSL, a hybrid national and international court, is mandated by the U.N. Security Council to try "persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law" committed in the Sierra Leonean conflict since November 30, 1996. As the SCSL is likely to try only a very limited number of persons, due to funding constraints, a clear and comprehensive prosecutorial strategy is essential, with a strong affirmation that gender-related crimes will be thoroughly and competently investigated and rigorously prosecuted as crimes against humanity or war crimes. The TRC, provided for under the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement partially to offset the controversial amnesty it also included, has the mandate to establish an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law from the outset of the war in 1991, promote reconciliation, and make recommendations aimed at preventing a repetition of the violations committed. The final report on the findings of the TRC should highlight the crimes of sexual violence committed throughout the entire country during the armed conflict and make recommendations to strengthen the promotion and protection of women's human rights.

Sexual violence has remained Sierra Leone's silent war crime. Until recently, little attention has been paid either nationally or internationally to this less visible human rights abuse, although sexual violence was committed on a much larger scale than the highly visible amputations for which Sierra Leone became notorious. The underreporting is a reflection of the low status of women and girls in Sierra Leone as well as the internal shame that survivors suffer and their fear of rejection by family and communities. Women and girls in Sierra Leone are subjected to structural discrimination by practice, custom and law. They face discrimination in terms of education and employment, in the political arena, and in other walks of life. Both customary law, which governs the majority of the population, and general law, which was inherited from the United Kingdom and is primarily applied in Freetown, discriminate against women and girls in terms of family law, as well as property and inheritance rights. In addition, the provisions pertaining to rape under general and customary law offer inadequate protection. The misinterpretation of the complicated provisions of general law by the police and courts means, for example, that those who are alleged to have sexually assaulted a minor are generally charged with "unlawful carnal knowledge of a child," for which the sentence is lighter, rather than rape. Under customary law, the perpetrator is generally required to pay a substantial fine to the victim's family as well as to the chiefs. The victim may also be forced to marry the perpetrator.

The concept of sexual violence as a crime in itself is a very recent one in Sierra Leone's patriarchal society. Only rape of a virgin is seen as a serious crime. Rape of a married woman or a non-virgin is often not considered a crime at all: as in many countries, there is often a belief that the woman must have consented to the act, or she is seen as a seductress. The virtual destruction of Sierra Leone's already corrupt and inefficient court system and police force during the war, moreover, created a climate of impunity that persists, allowing perpetrators of sexual violence (as well as other crimes) to escape justice.

The lack of attention to conflict-related sexual violence means that few assistance programs have been established for women and girls who were subjected to sexual violence, including sexual slavery. Survivors not only live with the severe physical and mental health consequences of the abuses suffered, but also fear ongoing non-conflict-related sexual violence, largely perpetrated with impunity. International donors and nongovernmental organizations should work together with the government of Sierra Leone to establish programs (health care, education, adult literacy, skills training, trauma counseling, and income-generating schemes) that will help to rehabilitate the survivors of sexual violence. To combat impunity and work toward changing societal attitudes toward sexual violence, the government of Sierra Leone should, with the technical and financial support of the international community, revise its discriminatory laws to ensure that they meet international standards. The constitution also needs to be reviewed and the provision exempting personal and customary law from the prohibition against discrimination removed. In addition, the government should take steps to improve the response of the legal system to ongoing sexual and domestic violence, including strategies for effective prosecution and protection. A nationwide public awareness campaign also needs to be undertaken to educate the general population on women's human rights.

Women have a crucial role to play at this critical phase in Sierra Leone's history, but they will only be able to contribute fully in a civic culture in which women and girls are respected as equal partners and gender-based abuses are not tolerated.

II. RECOMMENDATIONS

To the Government of Sierra Leone

- Take all necessary measures to ensure that former rebels release all women and girls abducted during the armed conflict who continue to be held. Provide these women and girls with the necessary social and economic options to enable them to leave these often abusive relationships.

- Prioritize the nationwide establishment of reproductive health clinics for women and girls that can provide testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, along with other services.

- Revoke or revise existing laws (general, customary and Islamic) that discriminate on the basis of gender and ensure that they meet international human rights standards. Take the necessary steps to amend the constitution to remove the provision exempting personal law and customary law from the prohibition on gender-based discrimination. Provide training on these new laws for the judiciary, police, prosecutors, and staff of local courts.

- Establish an inter-ministerial task force with representatives from nongovernmental organizations to deal with the conflict-related sexual violence and related current problems facing women, with the aim of improving the social, medical and legal responses to women's and girls' needs.

- Take steps to improve the response of the legal system to ongoing sexual and domestic violence, including strategies for effective prosecution and protection, such as recruiting and training more female police officers, allowing nongovernment doctors to examine victims and providing legal aid to victims.

- Mainstream gender within the government and government policies. Launch a nationwide public awareness campaign on sexual and domestic violence against women to dispel the prevailing societal attitudes to sexual and domestic violence against women.

- Provide training on human rights and international humanitarian law, with a focus on women's human rights issues and gender-based crimes, to members of the security forces.

- Repeal the provision in the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement Act that grants amnesty to all warring parties, so that individuals who committed acts of sexual violence (and other crimes) during the war may be prosecuted in the domestic courts.

- Cooperate fully with the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

- Establish an independent national human rights commission as provided under the Lomé Peace Agreement that will contribute to the promotion and protection of human rights beyond the lifespan of the Special Court for Sierra Leone and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

To Members of the African Union and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)

- Provide military personnel participating in peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone (and elsewhere) with training in human rights and international humanitarian law, including a focus on women's human rights issues, and gender-based crimes. Ensure that peacekeepers understand the U.N. Code of Conduct for peacekeepers, which provides that peacekeepers should not commit any act that could result in physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to members of the local population, especially women and children. Prosecute any nationals that have been repatriated from Sierra Leone for crimes of sexual violence in line with the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation by anyone employed or affiliated with UNAMSIL.

- Issue a statement, jointly, if possible, declaring your willingness to support the Special Court for Sierra Leone and to surrender any alleged war criminals to it. Commit to extraditing to Sierra Leone individuals indicted by the Special Court, take the legal steps that may be necessary to ensure that this can happen (for example, by amending extradition laws), and otherwise cooperate with the Special Court, for example, by locating witnesses or providing information.

To Members of the International Community

- Prioritize the funding of reproductive health clinics for women and girls that can provide testing and treatment for sexually transmitted diseases, along with other services.

- Greatly increase funding for legal reform programs, including training, to ensure that both the laws and domestic courts meet international standards, as well as for programs that will establish better medical, legal and social support services for survivors of sexual violence.

- Monitor all aspects of the Special Court for Sierra Leone to ensure that cases involving sexual violence and sexual slavery are fully prosecuted and that survivors and witnesses of sexual violence receive necessary protection and support throughout the judicial process and post-trial period. Cooperate with the court and take the necessary steps for the extradition or surrender of persons indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

- Fund the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and monitor it to ensure that conflict-related sexual violence and sexual slavery are fully investigated and properly documented by the TRC in a gender sensitive manner.

- Prosecute military personnel, who have been repatriated from Sierra Leone in line with the zero tolerance policy on sexual exploitation by anyone employed or affiliated with UNAMSIL.

To the Special Court for Sierra Leone

- Conduct thorough investigations into incidents of sexual violence against women and girls including sexual slavery during the war for possible prosecution under the court's mandate. Ensure that gender-integrated teams investigating these acts have competence in investigating rape and conducting interviews with rape victims, who should only be interviewed by experienced female investigators.

- Ensure the gender crimes investigators conduct compulsory gender sensitization training for all staff, and provide more in-depth training for staff members dealing most directly with survivors of sexual violence. Ensure the gender crimes investigators have access to all cases under investigation, even the ones not previously identified as gender cases, to provide guidance and expertise.

- Recruit a staff member with expertise in juvenile justice who can provide training on juvenile justice issues and interviewing skills for staff dealing most directly with young children.

- Establish a strong Victims and Witnesses Unit with protection and support for prosecution and defense witnesses. Protect and support the victims and witnesses not only during the investigation and trial phase but extend this to post-trial protection, where appropriate.

- Provide judges, prosecutors and defense counsel with strict guidance to prevent them from unnecessarily re-victimizing witnesses on the stand or releasing their identity publicly in violation of protective measures.

To the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

- Recruit an experienced gender advisor with expertise in sexual violence, and ensure staff of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission is gender balanced at all levels.

- Recruit a staff member experienced in dealing with child victims and perpetrators who can provide training on how to interview young children.

- Investigate and document fully gender-based abuses committed throughout the country. Ensure survivors of sexual violence are heard in a manner that ensures their dignity and safety, and avoids any re-traumatisation. Guarantee the confidentiality of these hearings when confidentiality is requested.

- Highlight gender-specific abuses in the final report on the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission as well as recommendations on legal reform to ensure that the domestic laws and courts meet international standards; on human rights training for the judiciary and law enforcement officers; and on the assistance needs of survivors.

- Promote public awareness of gender-based crimes through the media umbrella organizations, NGOs and mobile community outreach teams as well as the creation of an information and resource center.

To the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)

- Investigate fully any allegations of sexual violence by UNAMSIL personnel, which will serve to enforce the policy of zero tolerance for any such acts perpetrated by anyone employed or affiliated with UNAMSIL. Establish a mechanism with the Sierra Leone Police whereby cases of sexual exploitation by persons employed or affiliated with UNAMSIL are immediately reported to the relevant UNAMSIL staff member, including the provost marshal and gender specialist in the human rights section. Establish a mechanism to follow up on cases that have resulted in military personnel who commit such crimes being repatriated to their country of origin to ensure that states properly prosecute the offender. Civilian staff that have perpetuated sexual violence should be fired and their misconduct properly recorded in their personnel file so that they are not rehired in another U.N. mission.

- Provide in-depth gender sensitization training to military and civilian staff and ensure the human rights unit systematically monitors and reports on issues of gender-based violence. Ensure that peacekeepers understand the U.N. Code of Conduct for peacekeepers, which provides that peacekeepers should not commit any act that could result in the physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to members of the local population, especially women and children.

- Collaborate with the U.N. Department of Peacekeeping Operations to revise the U.N. Code of Conduct and the Military Observer Handbook, ensuring that the zero tolerance policy for sexual exploitation by persons employed or affiliated with U.N. missions and the consequences of such acts are clearly stated in these guidelines. Compile similar guidelines for civilian staff.

- Provide capacity building with a focus on women's human rights issues to national women's groups and human rights organizations across the country under the guidance of the gender specialist in UNAMSIL human rights units.

III. METHODOLOGY

Over three hundred women and girls were interviewed by Human Rights Watch as part of ongoing research and for this report. For a variety of reasons, including the lack of an ideological aspect and the limited ethnic dimension to the civil war in Sierra Leone and the all-pervasiveness of abuse, victims of human rights abuses, including survivors of sexual violence, generally feel free to talk very openly about their experiences.[6]

Great care was taken with the victims to ensure that recounting their experience did not further traumatize them. While we sought as much information as possible from each interview, the well-being of the interviewee was always paramount and some interviews were cut short as a result. The interviews were conducted in private settings in the presence of a female interpreter. The interviews with survivors were mostly conducted in Krio, the *lingua franca* of Sierra Leone, or in one of the other languages spoken by the different ethnic groups and interpreted into English. In most interviews only females were present and in the few cases where a man was present, it was with the permission of the interviewee. In order to guarantee the confidentiality of all information, interviewees are not identified by name.

In addition to the survivors, government officials, law enforcement officers, lawyers, key figures from the rebel forces, health personnel, religious leaders, and representatives of local and international nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) working in the areas of human rights, women's rights, and health, as well as U.N. officials were interviewed.

IV. BACKGROUND

The Civil War

Sierra Leone is a coastal West African country that shares borders with Guinea and Liberia. It has a population of close to five and a half million (July 2001 estimate) composed of sixteen ethnic groups.[7] These are the Fullah, Gola, Koranko, Kissi, Kono, Krim, Krio, Limba, Loko, Mandingo, Mende, Sherbro, Susu, Temne, Vai and Yalunka. The Mende, in the south, and the Temne, in the north, are the largest ethnic groups (around 30 percent each). The Krio, who are descendants of freed slaves, were settled in the area of Freetown (now the capital) in the late eighteenth century and make up 10 percent of the total population. The educated Krio minority generally still occupies a higher social and economic position and has traditionally been resented by the other groups. Sierra Leone was a British colony, and English is Sierra Leone's official language. Krio, largely based on English vocabulary but with its own grammar, is the first language of the Krios as well as Sierra Leone's *lingua franca*. Though there are no reliable figures, Sierra Leone is a predominantly Muslim country (around 60 percent) with the remainder of the population practicing indigenous religions (10 percent) and Christianity (30 percent).[8]

In 1961, Sierra Leone gained its independence from the United Kingdom. For most of the next three decades, Sierra Leone was governed by the All People's Congress (APC), dominated by the northern Temne and Limba ethnic groups, which came into power in 1967.[9] The corruption, nepotism and fiscal mismanagement under the one-party rule of the APC led to the decay of all state institutions and the impoverishment of Sierra Leone's population, notwithstanding the country's large deposits of diamonds, gold, rutile, and bauxite. Frustration with government corruption and mismanagement led to the formation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in 1984. The RUF claimed to be a political movement with the aim of salvaging the country and overthrowing the APC. Its invasion of Sierra Leone from Liberia on March 23, 1991 triggered the civil war that was to last ten years.

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[6] Women and girls who have been raped can be presented and/or perceived either as victims or survivors and there is an ongoing debate as to which is the more appropriate term. In this report, both terms are used interchangeably without significant distinction.

[7] *See* http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/sl.html.

[8] *See* http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2001/5730.htm.

[9] *See* generally, J.A.D. Alie, *A New History of Sierra Leone* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990).

At its inception, the RUF consisted of a mixture of middle class students with a populist platform, unemployed and alienated youths, and Liberian fighters from Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), who had helped Charles Taylor in his quest to become the president of Liberia. A lesser-known covert sponsor of the RUF was the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), with its ethnic base among the Mendes from the south, which also sought the overthrow of the APC.[10] The RUF was led by Foday Sankoh, a former army corporal who had been imprisoned in 1971 for his alleged involvement in an attempted coup against the APC. Sankoh had also reportedly received training in Libya with Taylor.[11] The RUF initially consisted of two small groups of only 150 combatants in total. As the RUF captured border towns and villages in Kailahun and Pujehun districts, they used tactics similar to those used to terrorize civilians during the Liberian civil war: seizing and summarily executing chiefs, village elders, traders, government agents and suspected SLA collaborators.[12] The violence and looting or "jah-jah," especially by the Liberian mercenaries within the RUF, was sanctioned by Sankoh who justified them as reward for the mercenaries' support.[13] The RUF's ideology of salvation quickly degenerated into a campaign of violence whose principal aim was to gain access to the country's diamond and other mineral wealth. From the very beginning, the RUF's campaign of terror included sexual violence and sexual slavery, committed on a widespread and systematic basis.

In April 1992, APC President Joseph Momoh was overthrown in a military coup by twenty-six-year-old army captain Valentine Strasser, who formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Strasser vowed to end corruption and create opportunities for all Sierra Leoneans. The new regime, however, was as corrupt as the old. The RUF continued to gain strength and was joined by numerous soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) who were disgruntled with their poor conditions. These soldier-rebels or "sobels" discarded their uniforms at night to loot but wore government uniforms and continued to work for the government during the day. The "sobels," who included officers, also provided weapons, ammunition, and intelligence to RUF forces.

Starting in January 1991, Momoh and later Strasser embarked on a recruitment drive that swelled the army's ranks to approximately twelve thousand, aiming to dislodge the RUF including by offering its youthful constituency a lucrative alternative. Many of the new soldiers were unemployed drifters, petty criminals, and street children as young as twelve. Given the inability of the undisciplined and ill-trained SLA to drive out the RUF, in March 1995, Strasser invited Executive Outcomes (E.O.), a South African private security company, to fight the RUF and guard the mining areas, in return for concessions over their production. The RUF was by that time approaching Freetown and controlled most of the diamond mining areas. By December 1995, E.O. had retaken a number of key diamond areas and began to collaborate with the pro-government militia known as the Civil Defense Forces (CDF), of which the Kamajors are the largest and most powerful.

The CDF movement began with the establishment of the Eastern Region Defence Committee in 1993-4 and was greatly expanded in 1996 when regent chief Hinga Norman was appointed deputy minister of defense in Kabbah's government and head of the CDF, with the government providing the CDF with training, weapons and food.[14] The CDF movement consists of groups of traditional hunters and young men who were used by the government to defend their native areas. The Kamajors operate mainly in the south and east, the Tamaboros in the far north, the Gbettis in the north and the Donzos in the far east. Civilians who joined the CDF underwent initiation ceremonies, which were said to bestow magical powers, making them immortal and invincible.[15] Units of fighters were initially deployed only in their own chiefdoms to ensure their loyalty and discipline and make the

[10] Paul Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone* (London: The International African Institute in association with James Currey and Heinemann, 1996), p. 7. When the RUF first invaded from Liberia, villagers in Kailahun were ordered to cut palm fronds—the symbol of the SLPP—"in support" of the rebels.

[11] Ibrahim Abdullah and Patrick Muana, "The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone," in Christopher Clapham (ed.), *African Guerrillas* (Oxford: James Currey, 1998), pp. 173-178.

[12] Ibid., p. 178.

[13] Ibid., p. 180.

[14] Ibid., p. 185. By 1999, the CDF had grown into a movement of an estimated fifteen thousand fighters who had to be disarmed and demobilized.

[15] Ibid. This is a throwback to the venerated esoteric Mende cult of invincible traditional hunters who were given power through initiation ceremonies. These powers enabled the hunters, *inter alia*, to turn into an animal in order to catch their prey.

best use of their superior bush knowledge. The CDF, in contrast to the SLA and the RUF, had the support of the local civilians and were very effective, overrunning main RUF camps in late 1996 with the support of E.O. and the army.

In January 1996, Strasser was overthrown by his deputy, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Bio initiated peace negotiations with the RUF, which had begun to suffer a number of defeats, as well as a program to return Sierra Leone to civilian rule. In March 1996, elections were held, and Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP, who pledged to bring about an end to the war, became president of Sierra Leone.

In November 1996, the RUF and Kabbah's government signed the Abidjan Peace Accord, which provided for a ceasefire, disarmament, demobilization, an amnesty to the RUF, and the withdrawal of all foreign forces. The ceasefire was broken in January 1997, however, when serious fighting broke out in southern Moyamba district. In January 1997, Sankoh was arrested in Nigeria on an arms charge and imprisoned by the Nigerian government.

In May 1997, fourteen months after assuming power, President Kabbah was overthrown in a coup led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, who formed a new government called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Koroma had escaped from prison, where he had been held following an earlier attempted coup in September 1996. The AFRC suspended the constitution, banned political parties, and announced rule by military decree. Days of looting by soldiers followed the coup, which also ushered in a period of political repression characterized by arbitrary arrests and detention. An attempt by Nigerian and Guinean troops (who had been in Sierra Leone since 1995 as part of bilateral security accords to give support to the NPRC), supported by South African mercenaries, to oust Koroma failed.[16]

The AFRC consisted primarily of disgruntled ex-SLA soldiers who had become disillusioned by President Kabbah's decision to cut back support for the military. Koroma also cited the government's failure to implement the peace agreement as the reason for the coup. The SLA accused Kabbah of having put greater confidence for the country's defense in and giving more economic resources to the CDF than to the army. Formalizing an alliance between the army and the rebels based on joint opposition to President Kabbah and the SLPP, the AFRC invited the RUF to join its government in June 1997.

From exile in Guinea, President Kabbah mobilized international condemnation for and a response to the coup makers. In response to a plea from Kabbah, hundreds of Nigerian troops based in Liberia as part of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) moved to Freetown, reinforcing ECOMOG colleagues already based at the Freetown airport to defend it from attacks by the RUF. Nigerian vessels stationed off Freetown shelled the city, reportedly killing at least fifty people. Nigerian forces were, however, eventually forced to withdraw from around the capital. In August 1997, following the AFRC's announcement of a four-year program for elections and return to civilian rule, which represented a breakdown in negotiations initiated by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), ECOWAS established a strict economic embargo against Sierra Leone. In October 1997, the U.N. Security Council adopted a resolution also imposing mandatory sanctions on Sierra Leone, including an embargo on arms and oil imports, which ECOMOG forces were mandated to enforce.

After negotiations in Guinea under the auspices of ECOWAS, the Kabbah government-in-exile and the RUF/AFRC signed an agreement on October 23, 1997, providing for the return to power of President Kabbah by April 1998. The RUF/AFRC, however, undermined the implementation of the accord by stockpiling weapons and attacking the positions of ECOMOG forces. In February 1998, ECOMOG forces together with Kamajor militia launched an operation that drove the RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown. In March 1998, President Kabbah was

[16] *See* Human Rights Watch/Africa, "Getting Away with Murder, Mutilation and Rape," *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, Vol. 11, No. 3 (A), June 1999, p. 8 for a discussion of the role of foreign mercenaries in the armed conflict. *See* Human Rights Watch/Africa, "Transition or Travesty? Nigeria's Endless Process of Return to Civilian Rule," *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, vol. 9, no. 6, October 1997, for a discussion of the Nigerian intervention in Sierra Leone.

reinstated. Over the succeeding months ECOMOG forces were able to establish control over roughly two-thirds of the country, including all regional capitals: as of mid-1998, the ECOMOG contingent in Sierra Leone was composed of approximately 12,500 troops, predominantly Nigerian with support battalions from Guinea, Gambia, Ghana and Niger.[17] Sankoh was transferred to Sierra Leone from Nigeria and incarcerated in July 1998. In October 1998, the Supreme Court of Sierra Leone tried and sentenced Sankoh to death for his role in the 1997 coup.

Once expelled from Freetown, the AFCR/RUF rebels tried to consolidate their own positions in other parts of the country. The Kabbah government, which had negligible forces of its own, had to rely on ECOMOG to stay in power. Through a series of offensives, the RUF/AFRC managed to gain control of the diamond-rich Kono district and several other strategic towns and areas. By late 1998, the rebels had gained the upper hand militarily and were in control of over half of the country, including all the mineral-rich areas. From this position, the RUF/AFRC launched a major offensive on Freetown in January 1999.

The battle for Freetown and ensuing three-week rebel occupation of the capital were characterized by the systematic and widespread perpetration of a wide range of abuses against the civilian population, and marked the most intensive and concentrated period of human rights abuses and international humanitarian law violations in Sierra Leone's ten-year civil war. At least five thousand civilians were killed and one hundred civilians had limbs amputated, including twenty-six double arm amputations. Thousands of women and girls, including girls as young as eight, were raped and subjected to other forms of sexual violence. In addition, the rebels used civilians as human shields, both while advancing towards ECOMOG positions and as a defense against ECOMOG air power. They also burnt whole neighborhoods, often with the residents in their houses.

Government and the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces also committed serious human rights abuses, though on a lesser scale, including over 180 summary executions of rebels and their suspected collaborators. Prisoners taken by ECOMOG, some of who had surrendered and many of whom were wounded, were executed on the spot often with little or no effort to establish their guilt or innocence. Officers to the level of captain were present and participated in the executions. ECOWAS officials have yet to initiate a formal investigation into these killings.

As the RUF/AFRC were driven out of Freetown in February 1999, they abducted thousands of civilians, who were used to carry looted goods and ammunition, forcibly conscripted into fighting or used for forced labor. Thousands of girls and women were used as sex slaves by the rebels and forced to "marry" rebel husbands. As they moved eastward, the rebels continued to commit egregious human rights abuses, including killings and amputations, particularly in the villages around the towns of Masiaka, Lunsar, and Port Loko.[18]

In the months following the January invasion, and as a result of intense international pressure, Kabbah's government and RUF rebels signed a ceasefire agreement on May 18, 1999,[19] followed by a peace agreement in Lomé, Togo, on July 7, 1999.[20] Sankoh was released from prison by the Sierra Leonean government to participate in the peace negotiations. The accord, brokered by the U.N., the Organization of African Unity (OAU), and ECOWAS, committed the RUF/AFRC to lay down its arms in exchange for representation in a new government. Sankoh was given the chairmanship of the board of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD) and the status of vice-president.[21] Johnny Paul Koroma was made the chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP), provided for under Article 6 of the peace agreement.[22]

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[17] *See* Human Rights Watch, "Sowing Terror: Atrocities against Civilians in Sierra Leone," *A Human Rights Watch Short Report*, Vol.10, No. 3 (A), July 1998.

[18] *See* Human Rights Watch/Africa, "Getting Away with Murder, Mutilation and Rape," for a comprehensive report on the January 1999 invasion.

[19] *See* the annex to U.N. Security Council report, S/1999/585, May 18, 1999.

[20] Lomé Peace Agreement at http://sierra-leone.org/lomeaccord.html.

[21] Article 5 (2) of the Lomé Peace Agreement.

[22] The RUF delegation to the peace talks in Lomé included members of the AFRC who were also appointed as ministers as part of the agreement to share power.

The peace agreement also included a general amnesty for all crimes committed by all parties during the civil war until the signing of the peace agreement.[23] At the last minute, the U.N. secretary-general's special representative attending the talks added a hand-written caveat that the U.N. held the understanding that the amnesty and pardon provided for in Article 9 did not apply to international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. In addition, the peace agreement mandated the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and a national human rights commission.

The United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), initially established in July 1998 to monitor the military and security conditions, was transformed into a much larger peacekeeping mission.[24] In October 1999, months later than had been planned, UNOMSIL, which at its maximum deployment included 192 military observers as well as a small human rights unit of four persons, was transformed into the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). UNAMSIL was mandated to maintain the peace and monitor the ceasefire and had a maximum authorized strength of 6,000 military personnel, including 260 military observers.[25] The human rights unit was authorized to expand to a total of fourteen human rights officers. Two further Security Council resolutions followed, increasing the authorized troop strength to 11,100[26] and then 13,000.[27]

The peace process was marred by cease-fire violations, missed deadlines and infighting within rebel ranks. The RUF/AFRC failed to comply with several commitments, including the release of all civilian abductees. There was a relative decrease in human rights abuses following the peace agreement, although the RUF/AFRC continued to terrorize the civilian population in the north and east, which largely remained under its control. Sexual violence, in particular against the thousands of abducted women and girls, continued. In addition, a splinter group of the AFRC known as the West Side Boys established numerous bases in the Occra Hills near Freetown, from where they staged looting raids. The West Side Boys abducted hundreds of civilians, including girls and women, whom they raped and kept as sex slaves. In August 1999, they took hostage for one week forty-two members of a U.N.-led delegation composed of ECOMOG soldiers, religious leaders, aid workers, and journalists, who had gone to the Occra Hills to have abducted children released to them.

The Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program progressed slowly, with only 25,000 out of a total 45,000 combatants demobilized by May 2000.[28] There was also considerable delay in the deployment of U.N. peacekeeping forces, with only 8,700 peacekeepers deployed by the same month. The peace process then broke down completely, when, in early May, the RUF captured over five hundred UNAMSIL peacekeepers and military observers deployed in the north and the east, holding them for several weeks.[29] The conflict erupted again throughout the country and many of the combatants, including child combatants, who had been disarmed and demobilized, were re-conscripted. The human rights situation deteriorated sharply with numerous reports of RUF abuses, including murder, widespread rape, abduction, forced labor, and looting. During a demonstration in Freetown to protest the collapse of the peace process and hostage taking of the peacekeepers, twenty-two civilians were killed outside the house of the RUF leader, Sankoh. On May 17, 2000, several days

[23] Lomé Peace Agreement. Under Article 9 (1) of this agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone was required to grant Sankoh absolute and free pardon. Article 9 (3) refers to the amnesty granted to all combatants of the RUF/SL, ex-AFRC, ex-SLA or CDF for any crimes they may have committed in pursuit of their objectives (*See* below, p. 61, for a discussion on the amnesty).

[24] U.N. Security Council resolution 1181, S/RES/1181 (1998), July 13, 1998.

[25] U.N. Security Council resolution 1270, S/RES/1270 (1999), October 22, 1999.

[26] U.N. Security Council resolution 1289, S/RES/1289 (2000), February 7, 2000.

[27] U.N. Security Council resolution 1299, S/RES/1299 (2000), May 19, 2000.

[28] U.N. Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation report, May 29, 2001. *See* http://www.relief.int/w/Rwb.nsf/s/4A58557840970841C1256A5C0050441B.

[29] The hostages in the north were released on May 28, 2000. The hostages in the east, however, were not released until June 29, 2000. Two hundred and thirty-three peacekeepers and military observers who had been encircled by the RUF were finally freed by the U.N. military operation "Khukri" on July 15, 2000.

after the demonstration, Sankoh was arrested by the government and held in custody, together with over 125 members of the RUF, without charge, using powers under a state of emergency declared in 1998.

There was also a disturbing intensification of abuses by pro-government forces. The Sierra Leonean government caused numerous civilian casualties through helicopter gunship attacks during May and June 2000 against the RUF strongholds of Makeni, Magburaka, and Kambia. Abuses by both the government forces and the RUF caused the displacement of some 330,000 civilians from behind rebel lines. Civilians leaving RUF territory were often captured and accused of being rebel sympathizers by the CDF. Whereas previously sexual violence against women had been very uncommon among the CDF, numerous cases of sexual violence were reported, including gang rape by Kamajor militiamen and commanders.

When, in May 2000, it seemed as though the fighting would threaten Freetown again, several hundred British soldiers were rapidly deployed to Sierra Leone—in the first instance to evacuate foreign nationals who wished to leave, but also to secure the airport, allow reinforcement of the U.N. contingent, and assist in the reorganization of the pro-government forces as an effective fighting force. At their maximum, there were more than 1,200 British soldiers in Sierra Leone, though they began to withdraw within two months of the first deployment. UNAMSIL was rapidly brought up to strength: by June 5, 2000 there were 11,350 U.N. troops in the country.

At the behest of Johnny Paul Koroma, the West Side Boys in May 2000 briefly fought on the government side to prevent the RUF from entering Freetown. However, they continued to commit human rights abuses, and in August 2000 abducted eleven British soldiers of the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT) and one SLA officer. In September 2000, the West Side Boys bases were destroyed during an operation by British paratroopers to free the captured soldiers. Numerous West Side Boys, including their leader, were arrested and incarcerated.

From September 2000 through April 2001, RUF rebels and Liberian government forces acting together attacked refugee camps and villages accommodating several hundred thousand Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees just across the border with Guinea. Following the attacks, Guinean security forces and the local population retaliated against the refugees, frequently looting, raping, and unlawfully detaining them. Guinean forces also responded to these RUF raids by killing and wounding dozens of Sierra Leoneans in indiscriminate helicopter and artillery attacks in the rebel-held areas in the north of Sierra Leone. Guinean troops conducted several ground attacks during which several civilians were gunned down and girls and women were raped.

In November 2000, the government and RUF signed a cease-fire, which committed both parties to restarting the disarmament process, the reestablishment of government authority in former rebel-held areas, and the release of all child combatants and abductees. On March 30, 2001, the U.N. Security Council authorized the further expansion of UNAMSIL to 17,500 military personnel, including 260 military observers. These forces, contributed by Bangladesh, Ghana, Guinea, Kenya, Nepal, Nigeria, Pakistan, Ukraine, and Zambia, were deployed into RUF strongholds, including the diamond-rich Kono district.[30] The DDR program recommenced in May 2001, and by the end of 2001 over three thousand child soldiers, abductees, and separated children had been released by the RUF and the CDF.

During this period, serious human rights abuses continued to be committed, though on a reduced scale. Fighting between the RUF and the CDF broke out in the east of the country in June through August 2001, leaving tens of civilians dead. RUF forces committed scores of serious abuses including rape, murder, and abduction. The victims of these abuses included Sierra Leoneans returning from refugee camps in Guinea; Guinean civilians who were attacked during the cross-border raids by the RUF from September 2000 through April 2001; and Liberians fleeing renewed fighting in Lofa county of Liberia from April 2001. While the RUF released or demobilized more than 1,500 male child combatants, they were reluctant to release Sierra Leonean and Guinean female abductees, most of whom are believed to have been sexually abused.

[30] U.N. Security Council resolution 1346, S/RES/1346 (2001), March 30, 2001.

The human rights situation continued to improve in 2002, with the disarmament and demobilization phases declared completed. By January 2002, 47,710 combatants had been disarmed and demobilized. On January 18, 2002, the armed conflict was officially declared to be over in a public ceremony attended by many dignitaries. In addition, the state of emergency was lifted for the first time in four years on February 28, 2002. Following the end of the state of emergency, the government charged Sankoh, and the other RUF and West Side Boys members held in custody since May 2000, with a number of crimes, including murder and related charges. The resettlement of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees from Guinea and Liberia was ongoing as of the writing of this report. By July 2002, approximately 250,000 refugees and IDPs had been resettled. The RUF transformed itself into a political party and nominated presidential and parliamentary candidates for elections held on May 14, 2002.

In the elections, President Kabbah's SLPP was re-elected for a second term and faced the challenge of rebuilding the country and its economy. After a decade of war, Sierra Leone ranks last out of 162 countries in terms of life expectancy at birth; adult literacy; combined enrolment in primary, secondary and tertiary education; and GDP per capita.[31] Fifty-seven percent of Sierra Leone's population struggles to survive on only U.S. $1 per day.[32] Unemployment is rampant and the current economy is driven by the presence of UNAMSIL and other international organizations. Investors who could create desperately needed jobs remain cautious given the rampant corruption that permeates all levels of Sierra Leonean society and their concerns about regional security.

Women and Girls under Sierra Leonean Law

The Sierra Leonean Legal system

Three systems of law—general, customary, and Islamic—co-exist in Sierra Leone.

General Law

General law consists of the statutory law (codified) and common law (based on case law) mainly inherited from the United Kingdom, the former colonial power. General law is administered through the formal court system, which follows the usual Commonwealth structure, under which the High Court hears more important cases, and magistrates courts the less important ones, both civil and criminal. There is an appeal system, first to the Court of Appeal and then the Supreme Court, which is the ultimate court of appeal and also hears cases relevant to the interpretation of the constitution. The Court of Appeal and Supreme Court are located in Freetown. A High Court and magistrates courts are constituted in Freetown. The High Court was re-established in Kenema and Bo in 2002 and there are magistrates courts in Bo, Kenema and Port Loko.[33] The court system in the provinces, which had a limited infrastructure before the war broke out in 1991, was virtually destroyed during the war—the High Court has not held hearings outside Freetown for six years—and was only gradually being rehabilitated from 2002. Access to the judiciary for rural Sierra Leoneans is further limited by their lack of funds for lawyers, or even transport money.

Only a small number of women, primarily those who reside in the Western Area (where Freetown is located) and women with sufficient funds, have access to the formal court system. As many general law provisions have not been updated since colonial days, the protection that general law affords women is often only marginally better than that provided under customary or Islamic law.

Customary Law

Customary law is defined by the 1991 constitution as "the rules of law by which customs are applicable to particular communities in Sierra Leone."[34] Although there are sixteen ethnic groups in Sierra Leone, a general treatment of customary law is justified, as there are many fundamental similarities between the customary laws of

[31] United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), *Human Development Report 2001: Making New Technologies Work for Human Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), pp. 141-144.
[32] Ibid., p. 151.
[33] An itinerant judge covers the High Court in both Bo and Kenema.
[34] The Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991), Chapter XII - The Laws of Sierra Leone, Section 170 (3). *See* http://www.sierra-leone.org/constitution-xii.html.

these ethnic groups.[35] Customary law has not been written down or codified and is only applied by the local courts.[36] These courts operate in the provinces and not in the Western Area, which is historically where the Krio and the British colonizers settled. A chairman presides over the local courts with the assistance of chiefdom councilors who are knowledgeable in customary law. The chairmen in theory should be independent from the paramount chiefs who used to preside over the local courts before reforms were introduced both prior to and after independence.[37] Customary law officers who are trained lawyers are supposed to review decisions of local courts and provide training to the personnel of local courts. The government Law Officers' Department, however, remains chronically understaffed, and few of the customary law officers' posts are filled.

As the majority of Sierra Leoneans live in the provinces, customary law governs at least 65 percent of the population in relation to issues not reserved by statute to the magistrates courts or High Court. In practice, issues that should be dealt with in the magistrates courts and High Court are also dealt with under customary law. In addition to problems accessing the formal court system, rural Sierra Leoneans, in particular, have historically always preferred to administer justice amongst themselves to ensure that good community relations are maintained in villages where the other residents are invariably relatives by marriage or descent, rather than turning to outsiders.

Although customary law is not applied in the formal court system, it is recognized and there is some interaction between the two systems. There is the right of appeal from the local courts to the District Appeal Court, where a magistrate sits with two assessors who are chiefdom councilors from the given area of the local court and are knowledgeable about the customary law in their respective areas.[38] The assessors advise the magistrate on questions of customary law, with the decision remaining with the magistrate. Likewise, a decision of the District Appeal Court can be appealed to the High Court, with the High Court judge being advised by assessors with expertise in customary law.[39]

Islamic Law

Islamic law has been recognized by statute in Sierra Leone in relation to marriage, divorce, and inheritance among Muslims.[40] Otherwise, Islamic law, if applicable at all, is considered part of customary law. In this report, Islamic law is therefore treated as part of customary law except when referring to the specific areas dealt with by the Mohammedan Marriage Act, and cases involving Islamic law are heard by the local courts. Criminal *sharia* law is not applicable in Sierra Leone.

Constitutional Status of Women

In theory, Sierra Leonean women are granted equal rights to men under the 1991 constitution, which provides as one of the "fundamental principles of state policy" that the state "... [s]hall discourage discrimination on the grounds of place of origin, circumstances of birth, sex, religion,...."[41] The equal rights of women are again underscored in the human rights chapter of the constitution.[42] Under Section 27 of the constitution, however,

[35] H. M. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law* (Freetown: Atlantic Printers Ltd., 1983), p. 6.
[36] *See* 1963 Local Courts Act.
[37] Richards, *Fighting for the Rainforest*, p. 46.
[38] Section 29 (1) of the 1963 Local Courts Act and Section 76 of the 1965 Courts Act.
[39] Section 31 (1) of the 1963 Local Courts Act.
[40] The Mohammedan Marriage Act (Cap. 96 of the revised laws of Sierra Leone, 1960) deals with marriage, divorce, and intestate succession. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 20. Intestate successions occur when the deceased did not leave a will.
[41] The Constitution of Sierra Leone (1991), Chapter II – Fundamental Principles of State Policy, Section 6 (2). *See* http://www.sierra-leone.org/constitution-ii.html. Under Section 8 (2) (a), "... [e]very citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations, and opportunities before the law...." and specific safeguards of equality before the law in terms of health care, employment and education are provided under Section 8 (3) (d); Section 8 (3) (a), (c), (e) and Section 9 (1) (a), (b) and (2) respectively.
[42] Ibid., Chapter III - The Recognition and Protection of Fundamental Human Rights and Freedoms of the Individual, Section 15. *See* http://www.sierra-leone.org/constitution-iii.html. Section 15 provides that "every person in Sierra Leone is entitled to the fundamental human rights and freedoms of the individual, that is to say, has the right, whatever his race, tribe, place of origin, political opinion, colour, creed or sex, but subject to respect for the rights and freedoms of others and for the public

discrimination is permitted, *inter alia*, under laws dealing with "adoption, marriage, divorce, burial, devolution of property on death or other interests of personal law," which have direct bearing on the rights of women, as well as under customary law.[43] This important contradiction in the constitution—similar to that in many African constitutions—has contributed to the low status of women in Sierra Leone, as it legitimizes the application of discriminatory customary law. No protection from discriminatory customary law can be sought under the constitution on the basis of sex. Customary and Islamic laws also continue to be widely applied, notwithstanding the fact that legislation provides that general law should prevail over customary law when customary law is "repugnant to statute or natural justice, equity, and good conscience."[44]

Marriage

The rights of married women remain limited, particularly for those married under customary and Islamic laws, which govern most marriages. Women married under the general law have comparatively more rights.[45]

A married woman's position under customary law is comparable to that of a minor: a woman is generally represented by her husband who has the right to prosecute and defend actions on his spouse's behalf.[46] Sierra Leonean women can gain status through marriage as well as through their role as mothers: a woman's status within society and the polygynous household increases with the number of children she bears. Sierra Leone has one of the highest birth rates in the world, with the average number of children born to each woman estimated at 6.5.[47] Most households are polygynous, apart from the monogamous Christians (approximately 30 percent of the population); under customary law, a husband can marry as many wives as he wishes. Muslims (60 percent of the population) can marry up to four wives.

Under customary law, a girl is considered of marriageable age once her breasts have developed, her menses have started and she has been initiated, which could mean as young as twelve. Marriages are usually arranged, and the consent of the bride-to-be is not considered essential in most ethnic groups, but the consent of the girl's/woman's family is required.[48] The fact that a girl is considered "ready" for marriage at such a young age and her consent is not sought has contributed to the common practice of early forced marriages. Men wishing to marry do not need to seek consent from their own parents. The statutory age of marriage under general law is twenty-one years.

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interest, to each and all of the following—(a) life, liberty, security of person, the enjoyment of property, and the protection of law; (b) freedom of conscience, of expression and of assembly and association; (c) respect for private and family life, and (d) protection from deprivation of property without compensation."

[43] Ibid., Section 27. Subsection 27 (1) provides that "Subject to the provisions of subsections (4), (5), and (7), no law shall make provision which is discriminatory either of itself or in its effect." Under Subsection 4, however, the protection provided under Subsection 1 does not apply "... (d) with respect to adoption, marriage, divorce, burial, devolution of property on death or other interests of personal law, or (e) for the application in the case of members of a particular race or tribe or customary law with respect to any matter to the exclusion of any law with respect to that matter which is applicable in the case of other persons." Discrimination is also permitted against persons who are not citizens of Sierra Leone or naturalized Sierra Leoneans. According to Dr. Tucker, former Chairperson of President's Kabbah's Advisory Committee, the original intent of Section 27 was "to preserve certain areas of segregation which are embedded in traditional practices and are generally acceptable to both sexes, such as the segregation between male and female secret societies. What was taken up in the constitution was more extensive than what was intended." Human Rights Watch interview with Dr. Tucker (Consultant on the Law Development Program funded by the U.K.'s Department for International Development (DFID)), Freetown, April 25, 2002.

[44] Section 2 of the 1963 Local Courts Act and Section 76 of the 1965 Courts Act.

[45] Marriages under the general law are governed, *inter alia*, by the Christian Marriage Act, (Cap. 95), the Civil Marriage Act (Cap. 97), and the Matrimonial Causes Act (Cap. 102).

[46] Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 98. Under customary law, a Sierra Leonean woman is always under the guardianship of a male relative.

[47] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2001*, p. 157. This figure is based on births recorded for 1995-2000.

[48] Consent is a very relative term, as girls generally will find it very difficult to disobey their parents' wishes, which can result in severe punishment, including ostracism from the immediate and extended family.

Under Islamic law, a male or female dependant can be given in marriage against his or her will, and the legal guardian of an adult woman has the right to object to her choice of husband if the prospective husband is not of equal birth.[49] Under customary law, a dowry is usually paid to the wife's family. Under Islamic law, the dowry is paid to the bride, although the contract is concluded with the legal guardian of the bride-to-be.[50]

Under customary law, a wife can only refuse to have sexual intercourse with her husband if she is physically ill, menstruating or suckling a young child. She can also refuse intercourse during the daytime, in the bush or during Ramadan.

Under customary law, a wife's decision-making powers are limited since she is obliged to always obey her husband. This lack of decision-making power means that women in families where the breadwinner is the man find it very difficult to influence decisions on how the (generally) little income that the family makes is disbursed. Under customary law, a married woman must ask her husband for permission to work outside the house or visit her family. In families where the woman has been given permission to work outside the house and is the breadwinner, it seems that the added responsibility has not necessarily come with increased decision-making power.

A wife, especially in rural communities, is expected to cultivate food for herself and her children, whilst the husband's responsibility is limited to providing accommodation and clothing.[51] A wife residing in an urban area is generally given a lump sum of money by her husband to start a small business, usually petty trading. If the business fails, the wife must refund the capital to her husband. Given the heavy work burden on women, however, there is little opportunity for women to seek remunerated work outside the house.

Divorce and Death of Husband

Under customary law, both parties can bring divorce proceedings either extrajudicially or judicially before a local court, but in practice women are generally not as free to do so as men.[52] Only the husband has the right to divorce through unilateral repudiation.[53] A wife married under customary or Islamic law may, however, seek dissolution of marriage on grounds of impotence of the husband, for example.[54]

Under customary law, the dowry is refundable upon divorce. Dowries paid to poor families are sometimes set purposely excessively high to ensure that the wife's family will not sanction a divorce given their inability to repay the dowry, again highlighting how little control women married under customary law have over their lives.[55] Under general law, a husband is expected to pay alimony for his wife and children on divorce, which both parties may initiate.[56]

When a husband dies, the widow is expected under customary law to undergo a mourning period and rituals.[57] It is only after these rituals that widows are considered purified and can remarry. Some ethnic groups

[49] Joseph Schacht, *An Introduction to Islamic Law* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), pp. 161-2.
[50] Schacht, *Introduction to Islamic Law*, p. 161.
[51] Full maintenance of his wife is only the responsibility of the husband during the rainy season (approximately between the months of May and November) or when his wife is sick or nursing a baby. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, pp. 106-7.
[52] Judicial divorces are rare as they are more expensive. Ibid., pp. 146-149.
[53] Ibid., pp. 143-4.
[54] Schacht, *Introduction to Islamic* Law, p. 165.
[55] Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 79. Strict tribal Muslims do not require that the dowry be repaid on divorce.
[56] Christian Marriage Act, Cap. 95 of the revised Law of Sierra Leone, 1960, s. 7 (2), s. 15 (1) (b), and s. 5 respectively.
[57] A widow must mourn for forty days. Her head is shaved or, in some chiefdoms, disheveled and her body is washed with the same water used to wash her husband's corpse. In some chiefdoms her body is smeared with mud to indicate her mourning. After either one week or forty days for strict Muslims, widows are taken to a stream to be ceremonially washed.

still insist that if the widow remarries, she does so within her deceased husband's family, otherwise all marriage payments are refundable.[58]

As Sierra Leone is a patrilineal society and the husband has custodial rights over children, children are handed over to the husband's family head upon his death.[59] Under Islamic law, the mother has the right to care for a boy child until the age of nine and a girl child until she comes of age.[60]

Under customary matrimonial property law, a wife is generally only able to keep her own possessions and her self-acquired property in the event of divorce or death. A wife is generally not entitled to keep property acquired through the joint efforts of husband and wife and has no rights over the matrimonial home.[61] Nor can a wife inherit under Islamic law: either the eldest son or brother or the official male administrator of the deceased inherits.[62] Under general law, a wife is also only entitled to one third of her deceased husband's property, if he has not made a will.

This denial of inheritance rights of women is a major problem given the large number of war widows who are now able to return to their villages of origin, but have no access to land.

Domestic Violence

Societal attitudes to domestic violence are another indicator of the status of women and girls in society; physical violence against women and children is common in Sierra Leone. Indeed, under customary law, a husband has the right to "reasonably chastise his wife by physical force."[63] If the husband is persistently cruel and frequently beats his wife to the point of wounding her or causing her great pain, the wife can divorce her husband, but under customary law a single act of physical and brutal force is permitted. A population-based assessment of war-related sexual violence in Sierra Leone carried out by Physicians for Human Rights among 991 female-headed households in camps for displaced people found that, although 80 percent of women surveyed expressed that there should be legal protections for the rights of women, more than 60 percent of the women believed that a husband had the right to beat his wife.[64]

Rape as a Crime under General Law

The laws governing rape in Sierra Leone are very confusing even for persons working in the criminal justice system, such as members of the judiciary and police force. They are also archaic and date back to the British 1861 Offences Against the Person Act. Under this Act, rape is defined as "the unlawful carnal knowledge of a woman without her consent by force, fear or fraud."[65] Penetration (however slight) is required to constitute the crime of rape.[66] In addition, although a child is defined as a person under the age of sixteen,[67] Sierra Leonean law makes the extremely unhelpful distinction between unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of thirteen and

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[58] The Mende, Krim, Sherbro, Vai, Karonko and Yalunka adhere to this custom, whereas the Temne, Susu, Limba, Loko, Kissi and Kono allow a widow to select her own husband and do not require a refund of the marriage payments if she marries outside her deceased husband's family. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 138.

[59] If the couple was married under general law, the custody of the children is often determined by the courts, which generally grant the mother custody of the children.

[60] Schacht, *Introduction to Islamic* Law, p. 167. In practice, the mother and children will stay with whomever has the money to provide for them.

[61] As customary marriages are generally polygynous, a divorce with one of the wives would result in the dissolution of the whole household if she were to ask for a refund for her contribution to building the house. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Family Customary Law* , pp. 113-120.

[62] Mohammedan Marriage Act, Cap. 96 of the revised laws of Sierra Leone, 1960, s. 9.

[63] Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Family Customary Law*, p. 152.

[64] Physicians for Human Rights, *War-related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone: A Population-based Assessment* (Boston: Physicians for Human Rights, 2002), p. 55 (hereafter referred to as PHR report).

[65] Offences Against the Person Act, 1861 (24 & 25 Vict. c 100), s. 63. Unlawful carnal knowledge refers to sexual intercourse between unmarried persons. The law does not actually forbid or make sexual intercourse between unmarried persons a punishable crime, but it only recognizes the right to sexual intercourse for married couples.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act (1926), Cap. 31 of the revised Laws of Sierra Leone 1960, s. 2.

unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl between thirteen and fourteen years of age. The law is unclear about unlawful carnal knowledge committed against persons aged between fourteen and sixteen, although the few cases involving this age group that have gone to trial have reportedly been prosecuted as rape.[68]

Nor is the age of consent explicitly stated, although it is presumably by necessary implication sixteen years old. Marital rape does not exist under Sierra Leonean statutory law, and most Sierra Leoneans firmly believe that it is the duty of a wife to have sex with her husband even if she does not want to.[69]

Unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl under the age of thirteen, whether with or without her consent, is a felony and carries a maximum sentence of fifteen years of imprisonment.[70] Unlawful carnal knowledge of a girl between the ages of thirteen and fourteen, whether with or without her consent, is, however, only considered a misdemeanor and carries a maximum sentence of two years.[71] The language "with or without her consent" refers only to cases of unlawful carnal knowledge that do not constitute rape; for example, an eighteen-year-old man who has sexual intercourse with a thirteen-year-old girl with her consent.

The police and judiciary seem to have misconstrued the meaning of the law. When an offence of rape against a girl under the age of fourteen is reported, the police and judiciary turn to either Section 6 or 7—depending on the age of the victim—of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act and determine that the girl did not consent. Based on her age, they then charge unlawful carnal knowledge and not rape. This misinterpretation therefore leads to a lesser charge for the rape of a child than for the rape of an adult.[72]

Rape of a person over the age of sixteen is considered a felony and carries a maximum sentence of life imprisonment.[73] Indecent assault—sexual assault without penetration—on or attempts to have carnal knowledge of girls under the age of fourteen years carry the same maximum sentence as unlawful carnal knowledge of girls between the age of thirteen and fourteen i.e. only two years of imprisonment.[74] No person can be convicted of unlawful carnal knowledge, indecent assault or attempted unlawful carnal knowledge "upon the evidence of one witness, unless such witness be corroborated in some material particular by evidence implicating the accused."[75]

The law pertaining to the abduction of girls for immoral purposes applies to any unmarried girls under the age of sixteen.[76] Abduction of girls for immoral purposes is a misdemeanor, carrying a maximum sentence of two years of imprisonment.

In addition to the legal confusion that exists in general law concerning rape, attempts by women to obtain the prosecution of rapists are frustrated by the collapsed state of the judiciary and the lack of effective law enforcement, which has contributed to the ongoing climate of impunity for offenders.

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[68] Human Rights Watch interviews with Abdul Tejan-Cole (human rights lawyer and acting coordinator for the national nongovernmental organization Campaign for Good Governance), Freetown, February–May, 2002.

[69] As the right to have intercourse between a husband and wife is recognized, a husband cannot be guilty of raping his wife unless he has been legally separated from his wife. *See* also PHR report, p. 55.

[70] Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, s. 6.

[71] Ibid., s. 7. If a man were legally married to a girl under fourteen years of age, sexual intercourse with her would not be an offence.

[72] Human Rights Watch interview with Bill Roberts and Anne Hewlett (respectively crime adviser and criminal investigation trainer with the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project), Freetown, May 1, 2002.

[73] Offences against the Person Act, s. 48.

[74] Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, s. 9. Section 9 stipulates that "whosoever commits an indecent assault or attempts to have carnal knowledge shall be guilty of a misdemeanor, and shall on conviction before the Supreme Court be liable for imprisonment, with or without hard labour, for any period not exceeding two years." Consent is no defense to a charge of indecent assault of a child under fourteen years.

[75] Ibid., s. 14.

[76] Ibid., s. 12. There are also problems with the term "unmarried" because abduction of persons should obviously be prohibited irrespective of their marital status.

Prosecution of Sexual Violence under Customary Law

The manner in which rape is dealt with under customary law is indicative of the societal values towards sexual violence and the low status of women and girls in Sierra Leone. Although all serious criminal cases should automatically be tried under general law, rape cases continue to be prosecuted under customary law in the local courts.[77]

Under customary law, when a case is brought to the local court, the perpetrator is generally required to pay a substantial fine to the victim's family as well as to the chiefs. "Virgin money" is payable to the victim's family if the victim was a virgin. In some communities, in particular Muslim communities, the victim is forced to marry the offender, as a girl who is not a virgin is considered less eligible for marriage. Traditionally, in some ethnic groups, both the victim and the perpetrator will be made to undergo a purification ceremony. For the victim, the purification ceremony is supposed to restore her virginity and for the perpetrator to cleanse the guilt. Any man who invades the husband's exclusive sexual rights over a wife compensates the husband, and not the wife, for "woman damage."[78]

In addition to applying discriminatory laws, the local court system is problematic as women of some ethnic groups do not have direct access to the local courts, but must be represented by a male guardian.[79] The situation is further exacerbated as the chairmen and chiefdom councilors of the local courts are generally all male, which makes it difficult for women to bring cases of sexual violence as the women are often embarrassed and their cases are generally dealt with insensitively by the male court staff. The local courts are also prone to interference by the chiefs as well as the concerned parties, especially in cases dealing with sexual violence.

Many people in rural areas prefer to settle the case between the families and do not go to court. In cases settled between the two families, money or goods are given to compensate the victim's family. Paradoxically, the giving of gifts or money to a rape victim may even elevate her status within her family.

Some families turn to the local chiefs who can arbitrate between the two families but have no right to impose any fines. In practice, however, the local chiefs have been known to impose fines.

Discrimination against Women and Girls in Practice

In addition to being subjected to discriminatory laws, all women and girls face structural discrimination in Sierra Leone's patriarchal society, which accords automatic respect to its older male members. As a result of the low status accorded to them by law and by custom, women in Sierra Leone face substantial discrimination in practice.

Education

Systemic discrimination against women starts in childhood, when many parents prefer to spend their scarce resources on the education of their sons rather than their daughters. According to the United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP) Gender-Related Development Index, females account for only 21 percent of the combined primary, secondary and tertiary gross enrolment ratio, compared with 32 percent males.[80] This gender disparity illustrates not only that fewer girls attend school but also that their education is discontinued at an earlier age than boys. This is reflected in the literacy rate of persons over fifteen years: only 20 percent of females are literate compared to 40 percent of males.[81]

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[77] Under Section 13 (1) of the 1963 Local Courts Act, the local courts have no jurisdiction in seduction actions, which includes any act intended to lead the wife astray. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Family Customary Law*, footnote 34, p. 121.

[78] Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 5.

[79] Human Rights Watch interview with Dr. Mariane Ferme (Lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology, Cambridge University, U.K.), Freetown, April 19, 2002.

[80] UNDP, *Human Development Report 2001*, p. 213.

[81] Government of Sierra Leone, *The Status of Women and Children in Sierra Leone: A Household Survey Report (MICS-2)* (Freetown: 2000), p. 30. The literate population includes those who are able to read "easily" or "with difficulty." Only 30 percent of the total population over fifteen years is literate.

The high illiteracy rate among women can in part be explained by the higher demand for female labor in the family. Girls are required to work in the house at an early age given that their mothers have to take care of the household and the children and do farm work. Another contributing factor to women's illiteracy is the harmful traditional practice of early forced marriage, which is very common in the provinces (see below).

The Workplace

Sierra Leone has ratified numerous international labor conventions.[82] Some discriminatory practices, such as restricting the right to maternity leave to married women, which was the norm in the formal sector in the 1970s, have been prohibited by law. Extremely poor working conditions, however, persist in Sierra Leone for the majority of workers. In addition, women working for male bosses continue to be subjected to sexual harassment. According to the president of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, the trade union federation, much work remains to be done to ensure the full and even application of the labor laws, especially in the provinces.[83]

Sierra Leone's rural population is primarily engaged in subsistence farming, with women constituting 80 percent of the labor that produces 70 percent of the nation's food.[84] This agricultural labor is generally not remunerated by cash wages and women have unequal access to land or technology. In Sierra Leone, the different ethnic groups continue to operate under communal and family land holding systems. Women can use the land for subsistence farming but the control and management of the land and any property on it is vested in the male head of the family. With the post-war resettlement process underway, war widows returning to their villages of origin often lack the legal means or community support to reclaim their families' properties. As women have little or no property to offer as collateral, their access to credit is limited. Women therefore tend to rely on traditional sources of credit such as rotating savings, which only provide small loans.[85]

Due to the limited number of educated women, which is partly the result of the high demand for girls to perform household tasks at a young age, the preference of sending boys to school, and early forced marriages, few women are represented in the better remunerated professional or managerial jobs. Sierra Leone's crushing poverty and high unemployment have also meant that positions that in the West are perceived as women's jobs are often held by men in Sierra Leone, leaving even fewer openings for women. In the formal employment sector, women therefore constitute only 40 percent of the clerical staff and a mere 8 percent of the administrative and managerial cadre.[86] In the informal sector outside agriculture, where the cash returns are low, women are mainly involved in petty trading, soap making and tie-dying. Given the lack of opportunities for remunerated work, women tend to be heavily dependent on their husbands.

The breakdown of community values as the result of the war, combined with cultural practices, also serves to make girls and women vulnerable to abuse and sexual exploitation, which has historically been rampant in Sierra

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[82] Multilateral Convention (no. 29) concerning Forced or Compulsory Labor, as modified by the Final Articles Revision Convention, June 28, 1930, 39 U.N.T.S. 55 (entered into force May 28, 1947); Multilateral Convention (no. 105) concerning the Abolition of Forced Labor, June 25, 1957, 320 U.N.T.S. 291 (entered into force January 17, 1959); Multilateral Convention (no. 100) concerning Equal Remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value, June 29, 1951, 165 U.N.T.S. 303 (entered into force May 23, 1953); Multilateral Convention (no. 111) concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation, June 25, 1958, 362 U.N.T.S. 31 (entered into force June 15, 1960). Sierra Leone has not signed Convention 47 (40 hour week), Multilateral Convention (No. 95) concerning the Protection of Wages, July 1, 1949 (entered into force September 24, 1952), Multilateral Convention (No. 102) concerning Minimum Standards of Social Security, June 28, 1952, 210 U.N.T.S. 131 (entered into force April 27, 1955) or Multilateral Convention (No. 182) concerning the Worst Forms of Child Labor, although a social security system for both the public and private sector was recently established.

[83] Human Rights Watch interview with Uriah O. H. Davies, president of the Sierra Leone Labour Congress, Freetown, April 14, 2002.

[84] Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, *National Policy on the Advancement of Women* (Freetown: Government of Sierra Leone, 2000), p. 7.

[85] Ibid., p. 15. Rotating schemes are schemes whereby groups of women pool their resources and each member of the group has access to the funds on a rotating basis.

[86] Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, *National Policy on Gender Mainstreaming* (Freetown: Government of Sierra Leone), p. 3.

Leone.[87] Many women and girls have been driven to prostitution as a result of the increased poverty caused by the conflict and their lack of other opportunities and skills.

In the Political Arena

Discrimination against women is evident in the political arena. Women were not granted the right to vote or stand for election for any political office until after independence in 1961. Given their economic dependence on men, it is also much more difficult for women to raise the necessary campaign funds. In the Northern Province, women continue to be excluded from contesting and voting for the elections for traditional leadership positions (although there are reportedly several female chiefdom councilors).[88] Out of the 149 paramount chiefs in the country, only three are female, all based in the south.

Under the new block voting system which was introduced for the 2002 elections, 112 parliamentary seats are elected by popular vote. An additional twelve parliamentary seats are reserved for paramount chiefs who are elected in separate elections by chiefdom councilors. There are presently only eighteen female parliamentarians, including two female paramount chiefs. This does represent an increase over the previous government, which had a total of eight women parliamentarians, including two female paramount chiefs. At government level, there are only three female ministers and three female deputy ministers, which is a marginal increase from President Kabbah's previous Cabinet.[89]

Harmful Traditional Practices and Their Impact on Women's and Girls' Health

Early forced marriages

The health of many women and girls in Sierra Leone is compromised by early forced marriage.[90] Early forced marriages are very common in the provinces, where men often sponsor a girl from birth (paying for school fees, clothes, etc.) and marry her after she has been initiated (see below for an explanation of the initiation process).

Early forced marriage is one of the factors contributing to Sierra Leone's high maternal mortality rate, since young girls have several children before their bodies are fully mature. At 1,800 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, Sierra Leone's maternal mortality rate is one of the highest in the world. This mortality rate translates to approximately 4,000 maternal deaths per year based on a total population of five million.[91]

Girls who are forced to marry early not only miss out on education, but also on skills training opportunities and are therefore highly dependent on their husbands.

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[87] Human Rights Watch interview with a highly respected international observer who has worked in Sierra Leone for two decades, Freetown, February 27, 2002.

[88] Only persons paying tax can contest and participate in elections for paramount chiefs who are elected from ruling houses. The paramount chieftaincy system was introduced by the British Colonial Administration to administer the various chiefdoms in the Protectorate (i.e. the whole of Sierra Leone excluding the Western Area). Although there is reportedly no law against women paying taxes, women in the Northern Province have historically not done so probably due to lack of opportunities to find remunerated work. The tax is a negligible amount that women are willing to pay to ensure their eligibility for these elections. Human Rights Watch interview with Joseph Hall and Honerin Muyoyatta from the National Democratic Institute (NDI), Freetown, March 22 and 23, 2002.

[89] The three ministerial posts are Minister for Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, Minister for Trade and Industry, and Minister of Health and Sanitation. The three female deputy ministers are in the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Works, Housing and Technical Maintenance. The new government was sworn in on July 12, 2002.

[90] Early forced marriages are marriages whereby the consent of either party is not sought or more commonly whereby the consent of the girl is not sought and whereby one or both spouses is/are under the age of consent (which under international law should not be less than fifteen years of age). This harmful traditional practice contravenes article 16(3) of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which states that the betrothal and marriage of a child shall have no legal effect, article 16(1) and (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and article 23(3) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR), which says that "[n]o marriage shall be entered into without the free and full consent of the intending spouses."

[91] Government of Sierra Leone, *The Status of Women and Children in Sierra Leone*, p. 63.

Female Genital Cutting

Sierra Leonean girls as well as boys are traditionally initiated into secret societies at adolescence. The secret societies that perform the initiation rites take the adolescents into a sacred place in the bush where they are circumcised and taught about traditional practices. The male and female societies are segregated and males are not supposed to know what happens in female secret societies or vice versa.

Traditionally, initiation for girls entailed spending an extended period (up to two years) in the bush with girls of the same age, being taught various cultural skills (dancing, singing, drama, arts and craft, how to use local herbs, how to respect elders, etc.) and being a good wife (cooking, cleaning, child welfare, hygiene, fishing, etc.) by older women. Girls who undergo initiation through the secret societies are treated with deference after having completed the ritual and are feted by their communities.[92] Today, the duration of the initiation ceremony has been greatly reduced, minimizing the skills transfer aspect, and thus focusing on the cutting itself. Because it was not always possible to hold the ceremonies during the war, initiation rites are now often practiced on adults, girl mothers, and pregnant girls—whereas traditionally it was seen as a rite of passage into adulthood for adolescent girls, who had to be virgins. In recent years, girls and/or adult women who do not wish to be initiated have been abducted and circumcised by force by female members of the community.

Ninety percent of Sierra Leonean women have undergone female genital cutting, which can have major health repercussions, including pain, injury to adjacent tissue of the urethra, hemorrhage, shock, acute urine retention, and infection.[93] Longer-term health effects include recurrent urinary tract infections, pelvic infections, infertility, keloid scar, and problems during childbirth.[94] The high prevalence of conflict-related sexual violence, which causes trauma to the genital area, can only have served to aggravate these health repercussions and both have in turn contributed to the increased spread of sexually transmitted diseases, including Human Immunodeficieny Virus/Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS).

This harmful traditional practice, which is contrary to provisions of several international human rights instruments, continues to be practiced due to the significant societal pressure exerted by adults as well as peers.[95] Girls who have not been initiated are seen as less eligible for marriage and many future husbands sponsor the initiation of their bride-to-be.

Societal Attitudes to Sexual Violence against Women and Girls

The low status of women and girls is highlighted by the prevalent societal attitudes towards sexual violence. The notion of sexual violence as a crime is a very recent concept in Sierra Leone. It is still widely believed that only rape of a virgin is rape, which in Krio is called "to virginate." Rape of a non-virgin, on the other hand, is not considered rape, and there is often a belief that the woman must have consented to the act or is a seductress. Marital rape is not recognized under either customary or general law in Sierra Leone.

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[92] Human Rights Watch interview with Dr. Mariane Ferme, (lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology, Cambridge University, U.K.), Freetown, April 19, 2002.

[93] Dr. Olayinka Koso-Thomas, *The Circumcision of Women: A Strategy for Eradication* (London and New Jersey: Zed Books Ltd., 1992), p. 19. The type of female genital cutting performed in Sierra Leone is clitoridectomy (removal of the prepuce of the clitoris) and excision (removal of the prepuce, the clitoris and all or part of the labia minora). The extreme form of infibulation is not practiced in Sierra Leone.

[94] U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), *Report on the First Donors Meeting For FGM/FGC Elimination* (Washington D.C.: USAID, 2001), p. 12.

[95] Female genital cutting violates the right to be free from violence (Article 1 of the CEDAW) and the right to bodily integrity (Article 6 of the CRC). Under Article 5 (a) of the CEDAW, states are called upon "to modify the social and cultural patterns of conduct of men and women, with a view to achieving the elimination of prejudices and customary and all other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority or the superiority of either of the sexes or on stereotyped roles for men and women." Article 24 (1) and (3) of the CRC also requires states to abolish traditional practices that are harmful to the health of children. General Recommendation 19 of the CEDAW Committee also links traditional attitudes which subordinate women and violent practices, including female genital cutting, that "... justify gender-based violence as a form of protection or control of women."

Given the lack of statistics about rape cases before the war, it is impossible to establish the historical prevalence of sexual violence, but several doctors reported to Human Rights Watch that, before the war, they only treated a limited number of young girls who generally had been raped by older men.[96] According to the doctors interviewed, many cases of rape before the war occurred within the extended family and were considered family matters. They were rarely discussed or reported, in order to ensure that the victim's chances of marriage and obtaining a good dowry were not destroyed. Rape was also apparently unlikely to occur within a village community, where everyone knew each other and the shame attached to the offender would be too great. Rape outside the extended family was more likely to be committed in environments where there were mixed ethnic groups, such as in mining areas or larger towns. The cultural definition of rape and lack of reporting, however, may have led to the understanding that rape rarely occurred before the war. Sexual exploitation, however, has always been rampant in Sierra Leone, where economic options for women are limited and which has traditionally condoned a high level of promiscuity, despite the high value placed on virginity. With the increased poverty caused by the war, sex has become even more of a commodity.[97]

The societal attitudes to rape and the low status of women have meant that no cases of conflict-related sexual violence and few cases of non-conflict-related sexual violence are prosecuted.[98] (See also below at p. 61 for a discussion on the amnesty included in the Lomé Peace Agreement.)

V. SEXUAL VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN AND GIRLS DURING THE CIVIL WAR

Prevalence of Sexual Violence during the War

Throughout the ten-year civil war, thousands of Sierra Leonean women and girls were subjected to widespread and systematic sexual violence, including rape and sexual slavery. A survey of 991 female heads of households in communities of displaced persons carried out by Physicians for Human Rights (PHR) in 2002 found that approximately one of every eight household members (13 percent) had been subjected to one or more incidents of conflict-related sexual violence; among the actual respondents to the survey, the prevalence rate of conflict-related sexual violence was 9 percent (94 out of 991).[99] Based on this prevalence rate, as many as 50,000 to 64,000 internally displaced women may have been subjected to sexual violence as a result of the war.[100] Adding extrapolated data for other types of victim, PHR calculated that as many as 215,000 to 257,000 Sierra

[96] Human Rights Watch interview with Dr. Olayinka Koso-Thomas, Freetown, February 25, 2002; Dr. Noah Conteh, Freetown, March 1, 2002 and Dr. Bernard Fraser, Freetown, March 3, 2002. The latter two doctors practiced in the provinces as well as in Freetown.

[97] Sex can be bought for as little as U.S. $0.50. United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees and Save the Children U.K., *Sexual Violence and Exploitation: The Experience of Refugee Children in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone* (Geneva/London: UNHCR/SC-UK: 2002). Human Rights Watch has some concerns about this report as the report does not provide an adequate review of the context, including the status of women and girls within the given countries. Given the low status of women and girls in these countries, the sexual exploitation is much wider than reported: the power dynamic means that men of all walks of life, such as teachers, pastors, police, businessmen as well as aid workers or peacekeepers, exploit girls and women. It would also appear that the short-term solutions proposed do not adequately address the underlying structural issues, such as poverty, lack of education or alternative means of income generation for many women.

[98] It was not possible to obtain reliable statistics as reporting and recording of cases by the police and judiciary are not consistent.

[99] PHR report, p. 2. The PHR report captures some of the different types of sexual violence that women were subjected to. Of the ninety-four internally displaced women reporting their own experience of sexual violence to PHR, interviewees reported among other things: rape (89 percent); being forced to undress/stripped of clothing (37 percent); gang rape (33 percent); abduction (33 percent); molestation (14 percent) and insertion of foreign objects into genital opening or anus (4 percent). It should be noted that the definition of rape used by the PHR report differs from that used throughout this report. The definition used in this report, as mentioned above, is that used by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, in the *Foca* case.

[100] Ibid., p. 3. As PHR points out this figure might be an underestimate due to deliberate non-disclosure of sexual violence and the lack of privacy in some of the interviews, despite efforts made to ensure privacy.

Leonean women and girls may have been subjected to sexual violence in the conflict period.[101] Although these figures are necessarily no more than estimates, they do give an indication of the widespread nature of sexual violence during the war.

Human Rights Watch has primarily documented sexual violence committed during the latter stages of the war when the organization had a full-time presence in the country, beginning April 1999. This does not mean that sexual violence was at its worse during this period. Since that time, Human Rights Watch extensively documented crimes of sexual violence during the January 1999 invasion of Freetown as well as ongoing human rights abuses. Human Rights Watch has also received numerous reports of sexual violence dating from earlier in the war.

Perpetrators

Survivors of sexual violence mostly reported being raped by rebel forces, but were at times not able to identify which rebel faction the perpetrators belonged to or whether—especially given the frequent collaboration between soldiers and rebels—the perpetrators were indeed rebels or rather soldiers from the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). In addition, survivors explained that they often deliberately did not want to look at their rapists out of fear and because they did not want to make eye contact. For example, D.T., a twenty-five-year-old woman raped by four rebels, including one child combatant, said that she would not be able to recognize any of the perpetrators, as she was too afraid to look at them (see below at p. 36).[102] A. B., a thirty-year-old who was raped by two rebels, also said that:

> When you are with these people [rebels], you do not ask questions. I did not even look into their faces. Many of them rubbed black chalk on their face and when you looked at them would say, "What are you staring at?"[103]

Rebel Forces

The RUF committed crimes of sexual violence—often of extreme brutality—from the very beginning of the war when they invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia in March 1991. RUF rebels committed crimes of sexual violence in the course of their military operations, during which thousands of women and girls were abducted and forced to "marry" rebel "husbands." These abducted women and girls were repeatedly raped and subjected to other forms of sexual violence throughout the duration of their captivity, which in many cases lasted years. During captivity, these women and girls were also made to carry out forced labor, including carrying heavy loads, cooking, cleaning, etc. Many women and girls have given birth to children fathered by rebels. Especially during the early years of the war, the RUF were assisted by Liberian forces, who also committed rape and other sexual violence.

The AFRC committed crimes of sexual violence from May 1997, using the same tactics as the RUF. Sexual violence by the RUF and the AFRC continued to be committed after the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on July 7, 1999, and they were joined in this by the West Side Boys, a splinter group of the AFRC formed after the signing of the Agreement. An unknown number of abducted girls and women still remain under the control of their rebel "husbands" who did not want or feel able to relinquish the "families" they had founded in the bush; in many cases the abductees' own families would not have welcomed them back.

Sexual violence peaked during the rebels' military operations, which occurred countrywide as the rebels sought to capture more territory. After capturing a town or a village, the combatants rewarded themselves by looting and by raping women and girls, many of whom they later abducted. Crimes of sexual violence committed during and following military operations, such as "Operation No Living Thing" and "Operation Pay Yourself"

[101] Ibid., pp. 3-4. PHR's calculation is not inclusive of all categories of victim: to the IDP women reporting conflict-related sexual violence, PHR added non-conflict-related sexual violence among non-displaced women, assuming a prevalence rate of 9 percent.

[102] Human Rights Watch interview, Foriah, March 6, 2002.

[103] Human Rights Watch interview, Bo, February 9, 2000.

that took place in 1998, have been documented by Human Rights Watch.[104] Human Rights Watch has also extensively documented the January 1999 invasion of Freetown by the RUF/AFRC, during which sexual violence was systematically committed against women and girls on a massive scale. The sexual violence committed during January 1999 serves as an illustration of the widespread nature of sexual violence committed by the rebel forces. Among the perpetrators were child combatants, and many of the victims were also children. Members of the Small Boys Units (SBUs) within the rebel forces were known to be particularly cruel and committed egregious human rights abuses.

Although there are no exact figures for the number of women and girls subjected to sexual violence during the January 1999 invasion, Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and the Sierra Leone chapter of the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE Sierra Leone), a nongovernmental organization that has been treating survivors of sexual violence since 1999, provided medical treatment and counseling to 1,862 female survivors of sexual violence who had been raped and/or abducted during the invasion. According to MSF, 55 percent of these survivors reported having been gang raped and 200 had become pregnant.[105]

As the RUF/AFRC rebels controlled most of the countryside apart from pockets of government-controlled areas in the south and some key towns, including Bumbuna and Freetown, at different times throughout the war, women and girls living in these rebel-held areas were also subjected to sexual violence when the rebels went on patrol or simply sought to assert their domination over the population. Women and girls in government-controlled areas also lived in fear of rebel hit-and-run attacks, during which many women and girls were subjected to sexual violence and abducted. Women and girls residing in Freetown were "spared" until the January 1999 invasion by the RUF/AFRC.

Pro-Government Forces

Human Rights Watch has not documented any cases of sexual violence by the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) prior to the time of the 1997 AFRC coup. According to the survey conducted by Physicians for Human Rights, of seventy-five women and girls who reported having been raped and identified the rapists' affiliation, only three said they were raped by SLA soldiers.[106] This may in part be due to the fact that survivors would have often found it difficult to distinguish between the rebel factions and the SLA. With the "sobel" phenomenon, the SLA soldiers would disguise themselves as rebels (the rebels were also known to disguise themselves as members of the SLA or the ECOMOG peacekeeping force).

Human Rights Watch has documented only a few cases of sexual violence committed by the pro-government Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The CDF movement consists of groups of traditional hunters and young men organized into militia. They were initially only deployed by the government in their own chiefdoms, in order to ensure their loyalty and discipline and make the best use of their superior bush knowledge.[107] The government provided training, weapons and food to the units. The relatively small number of identified cases of sexual violence perpetrated by the CDF may be related to the CDF's internal rules that stipulate that warriors cannot have sexual intercourse before going to battle, as they would lose some of their protective powers that are bestowed on them during their initiation ceremonies. These powers are meant to make the fighters invincible and immortal. During the initiation ceremonies, the fighters are also instructed not to harm civilians, and required to take an oath to that effect. Thus, it is likely that the pro-government forces did not actually commit sexual violence on a widespread and systematic basis; however, the low number of identified cases may also be partially due to Human Rights Watch's human resource constraints, faced with the overwhelming number of abuses committed by the rebel forces. Research on the CDF was mainly conducted in the south where the Kamajors, the

[104] *See* Human Rights Watch, "Sowing Terror: Atrocities against Civilians in Sierra Leone," *A Human Rights Watch Report*, July 1998.

[105] Human Rights Watch interview with MSF, Freetown, March, 2000.

[106] PHR report, p. 48. and Table 5 on p. 52. *See* also Binta Mansaray, "The Invisible Human Rights Abuses in Sierra Leone: Conflict-related Rape, Sexual Slavery and Other Forms of Sexual Violence," June 2001. On file with UNAMSIL human rights section.

[107] The Kamajors operate predominately in the south and east, the Tamaboros in the far north, the Gbettis in the north and the Donzos in the far east. See also "Background" section.

largest and most powerful group of the CDF, are based. In recent years, as the Kamajors have been moved away from their villages of origin and the influence of their traditional chiefs, they have become increasingly undisciplined and cases of rape by Kamajors have become more common.

Peacekeeping Forces

Human Rights Watch has documented several cases of sexual violence by UNAMSIL peacekeepers, including the rape of a twelve-year-old girl in Bo by a soldier of the Guinean peacekeeping contingent in March 2001 and the gang rape of a woman by two Ukrainian peacekeepers in April 2002 near Kenema (see below). There appears to be reluctance on the part of UNAMSIL to investigate and take disciplinary measures against the perpetrators. Reports of rape by ECOMOG peacekeepers, the majority of whom were Nigerian, were rare.

Both ECOMOG and UNAMSIL peacekeepers have sexually exploited women and solicited child prostitutes.

Sexual Violence Committed by the Rebel Forces

"Virgination"—Targeting Young Girls

The rebel forces subjected women and girls of all ages, ethnic groups, and socioeconomic classes to individual and gang rape. Although the rebel forces raped indiscriminately irrespective of age, the rebels favored girls and young women whom they believed to be virgins. This was evident not only by their actions, but was also explicitly stated by them as they chose their victims. As in many countries, Sierra Leonean society places a high value on virginity. Girls who have been "virginated" and are therefore no longer virgins, are considered less eligible for marriage. M.B., a fifteen-year-old girl from Freetown, described how RUF/AFRC rebels deliberately sought out virgins for violation during the January 1999 invasion of Freetown:

> We were hiding in the mosque when two rebels dressed in civilian [clothing] entered. It was dark but they shone their flashlights looking for girls and said, "We are coming for young girls ... for virgins, even if they tie their heads like old grandmothers, we will find them." They also said that if the people did not hand over the young girls, they would open fire on all of us.[108]

Some victims explained that female rebels physically checked girls to see whether they were virgins.[109] M.W., a thirty-eight-year old nurse who was captured by the RUF/AFRC during the January 1999 invasion of Freetown and forced to treat wounded rebels and civilians, said that the youngest rape victim she treated was "a little nine-year-old from Calaba Town [an area of Freetown]. Her perineum was bleeding and had been badly torn. Every day we gave her sit baths and she eventually recovered."[110] The consequences of sexual violence for virgins can be particularly severe as these testimonies highlight, although mature women also reported experiencing similar consequences.[111]

R.T. was about sixteen when she was brutally raped vaginally and anally by ten RUF rebels in the forest near Koidu in Kono district in January 1997. R.T. developed vasico-vaginal fistula (VVF) and vasico-rectal fistula (VRF) from her brutal gang rape:

> I was hiding in the bush with my parents and two older women when the RUF found our hiding place. I was the only young woman and the RUF accused me of having an SLA husband. I was still a virgin. I had only just started my periods and recently gone through secret society. There were ten rebels, including four child soldiers, armed with two RPGs [rocket propelled grenades] and AK-47s. The rebels did not use their real names and wore ski masks so only their eyes were

[108] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 1, 1999.

[109] It should be noted that virginity can not be medically proven.

[110] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, October 21, 1999. The victim probably suffered from vasico-rectal fistula (a tear or opening in the tissue between the rectum and the vagina, usually resembling an open blood vessel), which would have left her incontinent.

[111] International humanitarian law prohibits all rape and other acts of sexual violence, of course irrespective of whether the victim was a virgin or not.

visible. The rebels said that they wanted to take me away. My mother pleaded with them, saying that I was her only child and to leave me with her. The rebels said that "If we do not take your daughter, we will either rape or kill her." The rebels ordered my parents and the two other women to move away. Then they told me to undress. I was raped by the ten rebels, one after the other. They lined up, waiting for their turn and watched while I was being raped vaginally and in my anus. One of the child combatants was about twelve years. The three other child soldiers were about fifteen. The rebels threatened to kill me if I cried.

My parents, who could hear what was happening, cried but could do nothing to protect me. I was bleeding a lot from my vagina and anus and was in so much pain. My mother washed me in warm water and salt but I bled for three days. I can no longer control my bladder or bowels as I was torn below. We stayed in the bush until ECOMOG took over Koidu. When we came out of the bush, even adults would run away from me and refused to eat with me because I smelled so badly. I had an operation in 2000 but it did not work. Before I got a catheter in 2001, I had no friends, as I smelled too bad. I am still in pain and have a problem with vaginal discharge. I also have nightmares and feel discouraged.[112]

This extreme sexual violence is illustrated also by the following testimony by F.B., who describes the resultant deaths of eight young girls in one Liberian refugee camp alone (no doubt many others died from similar treatment during the war). F.B.'s testimony also illustrates the RUF's connection to Liberia and the role of Liberian mercenaries in the RUF movement. F.B. was a ten-year-old girl living in Mano village in Kailahun district near the Liberian border when the RUF accused civilians in her village of helping the SLA. Her family decided to flee to Liberia in November 1991, but was fired upon by the rebels as they fled. At least fifteen civilians were killed, including her father and several women with babies on their backs:

Only six of my family survived; my mother, one brother, two sisters, one uncle, and me. After hiding and fleeing through the bush for three days, Mohammed, my uncle, found someone with a boat to help us cross over to Liberia. We crossed into Vahun where there was a sort of refugee camp. We were there for two weeks and terrible things happened. We thought we had escaped from the rebels but we found many of them there. They controlled the camp. Even though food was being air dropped, the rebels took it all. They took everything we had, our money, salt, and all our food. The rebels were mixed Sierra Leoneans and Liberians.

About a week after arriving, the rebels came into our house in the evening and took my fifteen-year-old sister away. My mother stayed up the whole night. The next day my uncle went from hut to hut looking for her. He called her name and heard her groaning inside a hut. He picked her up and carried her home. When my mom saw her she burst out crying. I was only ten and didn't know anything about man business. My sister was crying all the time and couldn't walk. She cried, "Oh mother, I'm going to die." My mother just held her and told her it would be O.K. My uncle exchanged five gallons of palm oil so we could get some salt, which my mother later mixed with water and had my sister sit in. She was bleeding a lot. She told me they had tied her mouth and raped her many times, but I didn't know what rape was.

After that my uncle shaved my head, gave me trousers and made me look like a boy. When I was walking around a camp I saw a few girls aged under twelve years old, lying on the ground with their legs spread open and blood coming out between their legs. Some had their dresses pulled up and others had cloth stuffed in their mouths. During the two weeks I was in Vahun I saw eight girls like this. Sometimes their family would come and wrap them in white so I knew they had

[112] Human Rights Watch interview, IDP camp called "Lebanese Camp," March 2, 2002. Women and girls with obstetric fistulae suffer from a constant wetness that results in genital ulcerations, frequent infections and a terrible odor. These fistulae generally require surgery although occasionally they spontaneously heal.

died. Other times no one picked them up and they stayed there for days until someone buried them. There were so many girls who had lost their parents and were there alone, so no one would come for them.

I saw the rebels catching young and even older women. Once they caught an old woman. She said, "No, leave me. I'm too old for this business." But they made fun of her saying, "Oh look, we have caught a young *Bundu* [initiate into secret society] girl here." Other times I heard women screaming in the middle of the night. Everyday people were dying—from hunger, illness, and this rape. After that I had dreams about a dead person coming to hurt me.

The only reason we stayed that long was because people were still moving across the border and we figured things were even worse in Sierra Leone. Besides, the rebels stopped us from going back home, and we did not know anyone in Liberia so we would have died of hunger.[113]

M.M. was only eleven when she was abducted, together with her aunt and her aunt's four children, when Koidu was attacked during the dry season[114] in 1994. M.M. had not yet experienced her first period or been initiated into secret society:

I was raped by seven child combatants, who were aged between fifteen and sixteen years old, on the way to Kailahun. I was raped in my vagina and anally. Other rebels and also civilians saw me being raped but the civilians were too afraid to protect me. My aunt put native herbs on my genital area but I bled for five days. The RUF had medicine but would not give it to us civilians. My aunt carried me on her back, as I could not walk because of the pain. It took us five days to reach Kailahun. A rebel commander wanted my aunt to be his wife but she refused so he killed her. In Kailahun, I was not raped again. Since my rape, I have only experienced irregular periods and my belly is always swollen like I am pregnant.[115]

M.F. was abducted from Koinadugu town in Koinadugu district in September 1998 when the RUF/AFRC attacked the town. She was only thirteen at the time and was brutally raped both vaginally and anally by five RUF rebels. During the same attack, the RUF killed over thirty older women:

I was only thirteen and a virgin. They forced me to go down on my hands and knees with my bottom in the air and raped me both vaginally and anally. Five rebels raped me on that first day. My clothes were bloodied and it hurt to urinate and defecate afterwards. The rebels who raped me promised to take me to Freetown and give me money and dresses. They gave me nothing after they used me. I was given to one of them, Mohammed, as his wife. We stayed in Koinadugu town for four days. I was with my parents but could not tell them about the rapes although my mother heard me being raped.

The RUF said they came to kill civilians who were ungrateful and talked bad about the RUF. The RUF cut my grandmother with a knife and beat her with a pestle. She died. The RUF told the older women to go to the mosque to attend a ceremony. More than thirty women, some of whom had children, went to the mosque. The RUF set fire to the mosque. Another old woman was rolled into a mat and the mat was set on fire.[116]

[113] Human Rights Watch interview, Bo, February 9, 2000. *Bundu* is one of the secret societies that initiate girls and perform female genital cutting.
[114] The dry season in Sierra Leone is approximately between November and May.
[115] Human Rights Watch interview, Lebanese Camp, March 2, 2002.
[116] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 7, 2002.

Rape Victims Subjected to Multiple Human Rights Abuses

Rapes were often preceded by or followed by other human rights abuses against the victim, her family members and/or her community. Hardly any family was unscathed by abuse during the war. The PHR report highlighted that 94 percent of the 991 female-headed households surveyed had experienced at least one serious human rights abuse during the ten-year period.[117] M.P., who was twenty-four years old when the RUF attacked Jaiweii village in Kailahun district in May 1991, testified:

> I was captured together with my husband, my three young children and other civilians as we were fleeing from the RUF when they entered Jaiweii. Two rebels asked to have sex with me but when I refused, they beat me with the butt of their guns. My legs were bruised and I lost my three front teeth. Then the two rebels raped me in front of my children and other civilians. Many other women were raped in public places. I also heard of a woman from Kalu village near Jaiweii being raped only one week after having given birth. The RUF stayed in Jaiweii village for four months and I was raped by three other wicked rebels throughout this period.
>
> The rebels, who spoke Liberian English, said they were fighting for the SLPP to be in power. When the RUF first entered Jaiweii, they accused my husband of giving information to the SLA, so they tied his hands behind his back and beat him mercilessly. They kept him tied up and continued to beat him. After six days, he died and they threatened to kill me if I cried. The RUF also shot three other men whom they accused of giving information to the SLA. My three children all died because they became sick and there was no medicine. The older one who was five years died one week before the two younger ones who died on the same day. They were only three and seventeen months old.[118]

M.P. added that the RUF had said that they could do whatever they want with women whom they "owned." A.J., a fourteen-year-old student, was abducted by the RUF from Pujehun and was held by them from February to May 1994. She was first tortured, caged, and then brutally raped:

> On February 3, 1994 at around 8:00 p.m., the RUF attacked Pujehun. There was lots of firing because the SLA was deployed here. As we were fleeing, we ran straight into a group of over one hundred RUF. They were dressed in civilian clothes and nearly all had guns. Among those rebels was one named Maliki, who was actually from Pujehun. RUF Commander Bai Bureh started to select several people from our group. As he was doing the selecting, Maliki told him to choose me because if they let me go, I would go back to Pujehun and tell the SLA that he was there. They chose eight of us, four young men and four young women, including three of my cousins. They told the rest of the civilians to go back into the bush and said that if they found them the next day they would be killed. We were taken to their camp.
>
> Two weeks later, the four young men managed to escape. When the rebels found out, they blamed us for what happened. They said the boys were really SLA solders that were there to get information on the RUF. I was then tortured by a Liberian RUF commander named C.O. Rackin. He said I was "bright and bold" and must have known how they escaped. He interrogated me, asking me if the boys were SLA's. During the interrogation he cut me in twenty-one places with a knife including a deep cut on my left breast. He drew a small, small circle in the dirt and told me to step inside and walk around in it. Any part of my body left outside he stabbed with a knife.
>
> Then a commander called Momoh Rogers, who was the battalion commander, ordered that my cousin and I be put in a wooden cage smaller than one square meter. He said that if our brothers

[117] PHR gave the following examples of serious human rights abuses: beating, bodily injury, amputation, torture, killing, forced labor, captured for less than one day, sexual assault without rape, rape, abduction, burned dwelling, looting. PHR report, pp. 45-47.

[118] Human Rights Watch interview, Lebanese IDP Camp, March 2, 2002.

who had gone to tell the SLA came to attack, it would be very easy for them to kill us. The cage was what the village people used to store their husk rice in and it had almost no ventilation. We were only let out to defecate. They told me I had to pee on myself in the box. They poured water into the cracks but it was never enough and was dirty. Sometimes they dropped cassava and boiled bananas into the cage, feeding us like we were animals. The stab wounds I had got infected and I got sores all over my body. They were painful and smelled very badly.

After about two weeks in the cage, one of Patrick's bodyguards took me to C.O. Patrick's house. When I saw him, I told him about the sores on my feet and breasts. I told him I was in pain and asked for treatment. C.O. Patrick told me to shut up and ordered me to go into the house. He turned to his bodyguard and said that if I refused, I was to be taken behind the house and executed. When we got inside, Patrick told me to lie down on the floor. Then he forced himself upon me. I was a virgin. He was violent and rough. Then he told me to turn over and give him my behind. But I told him I could not lie down because my breast was so swollen. So he brought a chair and told me to stand up and lean onto the chair. Then he stood behind me and tried to shove his penis into my vagina. The first time he did this I fell over onto my chest, which was so painful. I started bleeding from my chest wound. Then he told me to get up and said if I did not hold the chair firmly he was going to kill me. He took a long time doing that thing to me. I was crying from the pain of my breast and because it was painful, being the first time. He told me to shut up. As he was sexing me he accused my brothers of being spies and said he was going to kill me and that he was only waiting for the others to come from the frontline to do it.

C.O. Patrick asked if I had done sex before and I told him "No, I am a school-going girl." Then he said, "Well, tonight you are going to have sex, because you are going to be killed and you should do it before you die." I was terrified. I started crying. All I could think of was my death and all that guy could do was do that thing to me. After he was satisfied, I was taken back to the cage.[119]

A.M. was eighteen when she fled Freetown with her two children, two sisters, and brother after the 1997 AFRC coup. Not only was she first forced to watch the execution of three male civilians by Nigerian ECOMOG soldiers in Fadugu, Koinadugu district, but also the rebel execution of her brother and sister. The RUF tried to get her to eat her brother's liver and heart. Her sister's head was also placed on her legs:

After the rebels were driven out of Kabala by ECOMOG, the rebels spread to different towns, including Mongo, Badela, and Dankawali. One day I went with my brother to wash in the stream, as I was afraid to go by myself. We heard shots, which my brother thought must have come from ECOMOG soldiers. I was afraid. We met three rebels with guns who accused my brother of being a SLA soldier. "Superman" was the commander. They beat my brother with their gun butts and took off his clothes. "Superman" forced my brother to go down on his hands and knees and made me sit beside him. They cut his neck from the back and then took an axe and cut his back. They removed his heart and liver and put them on my hands. The heart had more shape and the liver was flat. They tried to force me to eat them but I refused to. Another rebel, Colonel Titus, a mercenary who spoke Liberian English, arrived and told the others not to force me to eat my brother's heart and liver. He said he would show me how they will deal with me. He said they should abduct me. They took me back into the village of Dankawali where we met my grandmother on her veranda. She was tied up and she said that another rebel commander, Hakim, had carried my two children and small sister away in the first group.

The rebels had abducted another group of twenty-five persons and held them by the cotton tree. My big sister was under the cotton tree. I told her that the rebels killed our brother. Colonel Titus slapped my sister and told her not to cry. They killed my sister and two other women and placed

[119] Human Rights Watch interview, Pujehun, February 12, 2002.

> their cut off heads on my legs. The rebels also locked some villagers in the houses and set all houses on fire.[120]

H.K., a sixteen-year-old student, was abducted from Freetown during the January 1999 invasion. She was taken to Makeni where she was "virginated" and forced to be the wife of Colonel "Jaja," a twenty-two-year-old half-Liberian who threatened to kill her entire family if she escaped. H.K. was brutally tortured after Colonel "Jaja" accused her of stealing his money, which was in fact taken at gunpoint from her by "Superman," a notorious rebel commander and his bodyguard called "Yellowman." She described what happened afterwards:

> Then the rebels took me into a stream and tied me to a tree in the water. They told people to beat me. I was in water up to my head. "Jaja" said the boys should cut down the tree and let me drown. I was there for several days, maybe up to a week or so. Once a water snake swam by and ate my foot in the water. When I was tied there, Jaja cut my neck and put cocaine into my body. He also gave me marijuana cigarettes to smoke. Finally he untied me and put me in an old container where I stayed for several days. While in the guardroom Jaja and Alhaji "Cold Boots" came several times to give me drugs.[121]

The rebels often used psychological torture against civilians by, for example, making them clap or sing in praise while watching family and friends being killed, raped or mutilated. They further exerted their domination over civilians by not allowing them to show any emotion, and threatening to kill anyone who did. In 1997, when K.M. was abducted by the RUF from Kabala in Koinadugu district, her brother was shot in front of her. The RUF accused him of planning to escape. She was not allowed to show any emotion and was forced to throw his body in the river. In 1999, K.M.'s husband was killed in front of her by RUF Captain Solvelar in Yomandu in Tonkolili district, when a child combatant accused her husband of not doing his job properly. As Captain Solvelar shot K.M.'s husband, he warned her not to cry otherwise she would be killed. Later in the same year, K.M.'s baby was killed in front of her in Kambia district by a rebel captain who wanted to rape her:

> Captain "Danger" pulled my baby from my back and before I could do anything, he sliced my child in two. I was told not to cry as otherwise I would be killed as well.[122]

Rape with Objects and Other Sexual Torture, including Sexual Mutilation

The rebels frequently used objects, including weapons, burning wood, and hot oil, to rape or otherwise torture (including sexually torture) women and girls, sometimes resulting in their death. In 1994, J.M., an elderly man from Giehun village in Kailahun district, witnessed the killing of nine civilians accused of plotting to set Foday Sankoh up for a government ambush. One of those civilians, a woman named Janneh, was alleged to have been one of Sankoh's "wives." J.M. described how rebels brought her into the village square, forced her to lie down and then poured boiling palm oil into her vagina and ears:

> The RUF rounded up about seventy of us civilians, including Abi and Janneh, and accused us of making a plot to arrest Sankoh. The commmander said we were to be killed but that first he would do an investigation. First he called upon Abi who accused Janneh of calling people in Freetown to arrange something against Sankoh. So Janneh was the first to be killed. The rebels grabbed her, stripped her and threw her down in front of the whole village. Several of them pulled her legs apart and held her tightly. They poured a pan of boiling palm oil into her vagina and then into her ears. This terrified us. She started shaking all over and was bleeding from the nostrils and mouth. While on the ground they struck her with a gun and danced around her saying, "When you were loving with the old man [Sankoh], you didn't show us any respect, but now your time for punishment has come." She died about an hour later. The rebels said they were sent by Sankoh who was living in Kailahun about seven miles. Nothing small or big happened without his

[120] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 9, 2002.
[121] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, October 12, 1999.
[122] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 7 and 9, 2002.

knowledge. After killing Janneh they poured hot oil in the mouths, eyes and noses of three other villagers, and then shot five others. I guess Janneh must have known all of Sankoh's secrets.[123]

M.F., the thirteen-year-old who was raped by five rebels (see above, p. 30), witnessed how her stepmother's mother was beaten by the RUF with a long pestle in Momoria village in Koinadugu district in 1998. The rebels then shoved the pestle into her anus. M.F. said that her stepmother's mother was still alive when they left her with the pestle in her anus, which was bleeding.[124] One woman also reportedly had pepper put in her vagina as the RUF suspected her of being the wife of a SLA soldier. Rebels inserted burning firewood into the vagina of twenty-five-year-old F.T. and another woman during the January 1999 invasion of Freetown:

> On 21 January 1999, I went to a neighbor's house to buy rice, as I had not eaten for over two days. The rebels had been in the area and as I bought two cups from my neighbor, we heard the rebels coming again. My neighbor told me to leave quickly so that he could lock up his house. When I left with another woman and a man, we met a group of ten rebels who surrounded us. They were dressed in full combat [uniform] and asked us where we were going in Krio.
>
> The rebels asked us what we could give them, so the man took out all his money and gave it to them. He was then allowed to go. As the other woman and I did not have any money, they told us to take off our clothes at gunpoint. We begged them not to harm us. The rebels then told us to lie on the dirt ground and open our legs. They put their guns to our throats and stomachs to make sure that we followed their order. Once we were on the ground all the rebels surrounded us, and a tall rebel well over six feet went to the kitchen of Parliament House and took a piece of burning firewood from the fire. He then squatted down and with his two hands inserted it into my vagina. Then he returned to the fire and got another piece and then a third. I felt like I was being stabbed inside.
>
> He did the same to the other woman. While they did this to us, I heard them say "This is the way we are going to fuck you. We are not able to do to you half of the things we do to people in the provinces. You bastard civilians, you hypocrites; as soon as you see ECOMOG, you start to point fingers at us."
>
> They left shortly afterwards and I managed to drag myself to a nearby house with blood gushing from my vagina. I went to a clinic where the doctor removed bits of firewood from my vagina. I feel so unhappy and fear my husband will find another wife to satisfy his sexual desire. The treatment is very slow and I do not have money for treatment. There are sores inside me. I can not sleep at night or walk more than one hundred yards.[125]

H.K., the sixteen-year-old Freetown student forced to be the wife of Colonel "Jaja," had an umbrella shoved up her vagina as part of the torture that followed her being accused by "Jaja" of stealing his money:

> When Jaja came home, I told him what happened and instead of believing me, he blamed me and accused me of having stolen the money. He dragged me out of the house into the street and started beating me. He caused a great scene. He stripped me, tied me up and hit me again and again with a stick. He also beat with the butt of his gun. Then he took an umbrella and pushed it up inside me two times—he shoved it up into my privates—hard. Many people were standing around watching and even some of the other rebels told him to leave me. He went crazy. He started shooting up in the air. I lay there for a few days, naked and bleeding. I was three months pregnant but after this I aborted. I bled for over a month. Once a boy named Junior came by and put his hand inside my vagina. He brought out his hand, which was all bloody and said, "Look at

[123] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, November 11, 1999.
[124] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 7, 2002.
[125] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 21, 1999.

your blood, you're sick." All the civilians seeing this felt sorry for me, but of course they couldn't say anything.

Rebel forces were known for mutilating pregnant mothers to find out the sex of the unborn child. According to witnesses, they would bet large sums of money, and the rebel who had rightly guessed the sex of the unborn child after the women's belly had been cut open would keep the money. Some women were cut open alive, but sometimes the women were killed before the rebels cut their abdomens open. K.M. who was abducted during the 1997 attack on Kabala, witnessed the killing and sexual mutilation of a pregnant woman near Kono in Kono district (see above):

> They captured a Koranko woman who was pregnant. Two RUF, Captain "Danger" and C.O. "Cut Hand" argued about the sex of the child. They bet 100,000 leones [approximately U.S.$50] on the sex of the child. Then they shot the woman dead and opened her belly. The RUF held up the baby with the placenta, which they shook in the air. The baby cried and then died. I wanted to run away but my husband said that the civilians would think that I was a rebel and that they would kill me.[126]

Fifteen-year-old F.K. was raped by the RUF in Lunsar in Port Loko district in May 2000 and witnessed the sexual mutilation of a pregnant woman as well as the killing of her three male relatives, and six amputations:

> I was raped when the RUF attacked Lunsar in May 2000 by four rebels including one man called "Put Fire," who had made me his rebel wife from 1997 to 2000. One of the other rebels was called "Kill Man No Blood." While I was being raped, the rebels found my three male relatives who were hiding under their beds. They stabbed them with their bayonets and then shot them. They raped me in my bedroom and then brought me into the living room. Three men and three women were also brought into the room. They were put in line and then the rebels gave them the choice between their life or their money. The rebels strip searched each one and then killed them on the spot. The group was forced to watch as each was killed.
>
> One of the women was six months pregnant and slightly disabled. She was last in the row. When it was her turn, she was stabbed in the neck and fell down. The rebels started to discuss whether she was carrying a boy or a girl. They bet on the sex of the baby so they decided to check it. Kill Man No Blood split open her belly. It was a boy. One of the other rebels took the baby out and showed everyone that it was a boy. The baby was still alive when he threw it on the ground next to the woman but died shortly after. As the rebels took me away, I saw six men who had just been amputated. Some had an arm cut off below the elbow, others above the elbow. They were screaming, "Please kill us, don't leave us this way."[127]

Sexual Violence with the Added Element of Violating Cultural Norms

The rebel forces have used sexual violence as a weapon to terrorize, humiliate and punish, and to force the civilian population into submission. The rebels sought complete domination by doing whatever they wanted with women, including sexual acts that, by having the additional element of assailing cultural norms, violated not only the victim but also her family or the wider society. The rebels have forced civilians to commit incest, one of the biggest taboos in any society. One survivor witnessed the RUF trying to force a brother to rape his sister in Sambanya village in Koinadugu district. When the brother refused to do so, the rebels shot him.[128] Fathers were forced to rape their daughters. Fathers were forced to dance naked in front of their daughters and vice versa. In Sierra Leone, postmenopausal and breastfeeding women are presumed not to be sexually active, but rebels violated this cultural norm by raping old women and breastfeeding mothers. Child combatants also raped women who could have been their mothers or in some instances even their grandmothers. Many rapes were committed in

[126] Human Rights Watch interview, March 7 and 9, 2002.
[127] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 25, 2000.
[128] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 9, 2002.

full view of other rebels and civilians. Victims were also raped in mosques, churches, and sacred places of initiation.

During the January 1999 invasion of Freetown, A.C. was forced to watch the rape of his daughter by RUF/AFRC rebels:

> The rebel in charge was a thirty-year-old ex-SLA known as "Amos." I knew him from before. He had plasters on his face. The others were called "Junior" and "Blood," who did most of the talking. They gathered five young girls together, including my fifteen-year-old daughter, and put them in the back room. They asked us for five million leones [approximately U.S. $2,500] otherwise they threatened our girls would be killed. We managed to collect 350,000 leones [approximately U.S. $175], which we gave to them.
>
> Then they brought out the girls. They pushed my daughter and a seventeen-year-old on the bed in the parlor and started tearing off their clothes. I peeked through a crack in the door and could see them fighting with my daughter. They put clothes in her mouth so she would not scream. The rebels punched, slapped her and knocked her head with the butt of their rifle. Then one of them opened the door and asked who the fathers of the girls were. One of them took us and lined us up right in front of the bed and said, "Don't you want to see what we do to your daughters?" We begged them to leave them alone but they said, "If you continue to talk, we will burn this house and kill everyone of you." A rebel had his gun pointed at us the whole time and there were two more at the door. Amos raped my daughter and Blood raped another girl. Then the rebel with the gun and the one guarding took their turns. My daughter was crying but they covered her mouth and told her to shut up. Blood then told the girls to get dressed and they took them away.[129]

S.G., a fifty-year-old widow, was raped by a teenage rebel called Commander "Don't Blame God" and subsequently had both arms amputated in Mattru village in Bo district prior to the 1996 elections:

> I pleaded but Commander Don't Blame God said he was going to kill me if I didn't lie down. I told him it had been such a long, long time since I had sex. During the rape I was pleading with him saying, "Don't kill me, please don't kill me." He was so rough with me. Then he took me up a big dune above Mattru village. As we were walking, he said he was going to kill me. I pleaded with him and he then said, "I've changed my mind, I'm going to give you a letter." Once we got there I saw many more rebels, about twenty. I was stripped naked down to my underwear. It was humiliating. Then they asked me to sit down and wait. Commander Don't Blame God said: "I have a letter for you but wait for the cutlass man to come." Then the one with the machete came and told me to put out my left arm. It took them three chops with the cutlass to cut off my arm. After this I begged them not to cut my other arm but they struggled with me and a rebel held it down and cut it off. The cutlass man said, "We belong to Foday Sankoh's group." Then one of them took my left arm and put it under my vagina and kicked me twice in the vagina ... very, very hard.[130]

D.T. was gang raped by a child combatant and three other RUF rebels in the rainy season in 2000 near Foriah village in Koinadugu district:

> I was hiding in the bush from the rebels with about fifteen other villagers when the rebels found us. The rebels separated me from the others because my nine-month-old son was crying. A child combatant ordered me at gunpoint to put my son down. He then raped me. I do not know how young he was but he had not yet been circumcised. He was maybe as young as twelve. Then three other rebel men raped me. When I was being raped, I made no movement as they might think that

[129] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 3, 1999.
[130] Human Rights Watch interview, Bo, March 2, 2000.

> I was trying to resist. I was bleeding after being raped by four males. After being raped, the rebels forced me to carry a heavy load and walk to Kania town. I escaped the same day and returned to the farm. I explained to my husband that I had been raped but he was happy to accept me back.[131]

R.F., a thirty-three-year-old farmer, explained how she felt after she was gang raped by West Side Boys, including four child combatants, at Petifu village in Port Loko district in November 1999:

> Four children between ten and twelve years used me. They were so small I could barely feel them inside me. The small ones tried to imitate the older ones and one of them kept saying, "I'm trying it, I'm trying it." It was the war that brought that humiliation. I kept comparing them to my own children; my first-born son is ten. I forgave them because they are children. It was not of their own making. They must have been drugged.[132]

In December 1994, thirty-year-old A.B. was abducted with six other women from Yonibani in Tonkolili district by the RUF when they launched a surprise attack with the collusion of the SLA. The RUF made the women carry looted items to their camp, where A.B. stayed for a week before escaping. She herself was repeatedly raped by two rebels, including one Liberian, and witnessed the rape of an old woman with gray hair:

> At least four of the women I had been abducted with were raped. Before they raped me, the rebels went for an old woman with white hair. When she realized what they wanted, she took off her headscarf to show her white hair and said, "I'm old, I have stopped having sex." At first the commander said the rebels should not touch her because she was old. But the other rebels got annoyed and started insulting the commander saying, "Fine, you can fuck any woman you want, anytime you want, but now that we have one we want, you say no." The commander finally said that they could go ahead so all five rebels, including a small boy of fifteen years raped her. One was on his knees with his trousers down while the others stood around watching.
>
> When I saw that I felt sick. When I saw a young boy and that old woman, I realized they could do anything and that they were going to do the same thing to me. But I guess I was lucky as only two did it to me.[133]

S.J., a wealthy forty-five-year-old woman, was raped by RUF rebels, including a child combatant, and then burnt in late January 1999 in Manjoro village in Bombali district:

> Thirty rebels attacked our village. The rebels said that we, the civilians don't want peace. I saw them kill three people and were it not for God, I would have been the fourth. Then they burned thirteen houses and looted all our things. I ran with my four children to the house in the bush where we tend to the cows. We slept there with the cows for a few days but then seven rebels surprised us there. The commander of this group was called C.O. Caca Scatter. He was a Mende. Others were speaking Mandingo and Temne.
>
> They started stealing what few possessions I had and then C.O. Caca Scatter said that I should be raped. When I heard that order I pleaded, "Please, don't do that one to me." But they said they would do whatever they wanted. Four raped me and the last one to rape me was a fifteen-year-old. I could have given birth to him, he was so young. He put a knife to my throat and said he was going to kill me but the C.O. said I shouldn't be killed.
>
> Then they tied my hands behind me and C.O. Caca Scatter burnt me. He scooped up hot charcoal from the fire we had been cooking with and tried to burn my face with it. I struggled and turned

[131] Human Rights Watch interview, Foriah, March 6, 2002. The rainy season starts in May and ends in October.
[132] Human Rights Watch interview, Port Loko, November 27, 1999.
[133] Human Rights Watch interview, Bo, February 9, 2000.

> my face so he burned my chest instead. He did this four times on my front and seven times on my back. Each time they picked up the charcoal and held it on my body until it burned deep into my skin. They left me with my skin burning but I could not roll on the ground for fear it would catch fire and burn me even more. When they started to burn me I pleaded for them to kill me. I started screaming and my children came around to try and save me. They took two of my children, gave them looted property to carry and took them away. That is the last I have heard of them.[134]

T.B., a fifty-year-old woman was abducted from Freetown during the January 1999 invasion and made to walk to Magburaka in Bombali district. There, a RUF/AFRC rebel raped her until she developed an abscess in her vagina:

> In Magburaka, I was first raped by three rebels. While doing it they called me a bastard child and that civilians wanted to burn them all alive. After that I was taken as a wife by a commander called "Bird Bod" who was in his thirties. He raped me every day. They were always on drugs. He said he didn't have a wife so I cooked and washed for him. He roughed and beat me and used to put his fingers violently up inside me. He would get an erection while he was doing this and would sometimes rape me afterwards. I think this is how I started to get boils—I had five or six of them. It started to create an ulcer. Over the two months I was with them it got worse and worse. It was terribly painful but Commander Bird still raped me and put his fingers up me even though I had this problem. I don't know why the RUF would treat an old woman like me in such a way.
>
> The abscess got very swollen and started to hang down between my thighs. I could barely walk. It started to smell very bad and it was then that the commander finally drove me away. I walked for two to three weeks through the bush going from village to village until I got to Masiaka. In every village I went, the women felt for me and would give me food and make a bath of herbs and salt for me to soak in. Then when I felt strong enough, I would walk to the next village. When I reached Freetown, I received medical treatment. My husband has accepted me back and feels sorry for me.[135]

Breastfeeding mothers were also not spared by the rebel factions even though in Sierra Leonean culture, women are not supposed to have sexual intercourse until their children have been weaned and can walk, which can take up to three years.[136] Sierra Leoneans believe that doing so will weaken the breast milk and the ability of the child to fend off infection. Women whose infants died from malnutrition after they—the mothers—had been raped frequently attributed the death of their child to the fact that they had been raped. It is also a specific crime for a man to commit adultery with another man's wife while she is breastfeeding. Traditionally, the guilty spouses are thought to be under a curse and will suffer misfortune.[137] A.B., who was raped by two rebels and witnessed the rape of an old woman, tried at first to dissuade the first rebel from raping her by telling him that she was a breastfeeding mother with full breasts, but the rebel said he did not care.[138] M.C. was breastfeeding her two-week-old baby when she was brutally gang raped by RUF/AFRC rebels in early January 1999 near Mabang in Tonkolili district; she breastfed her baby while being raped. She suffered a prolapsed uterus[139] as a consequence of the rape:

> At the time of the January 1999 offensive, my husband who is a policeman was based in Mile 91. I became very worried about him and decided to travel to find him. I left Bo on January 8. I had just given birth to a baby girl two weeks before so was still feeling very weak but I desperately wanted to find my man.

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[134] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 17, 1999.
[135] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, July 8, 1999.
[136] Mariane C. Ferme, *The Underneath of Things: Violence, History, and the Everyday in Sierra Leone* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2001), p. 131.
[137] Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Law*, pp. 127-8 and 131.
[138] Human Rights Watch interview, Bo, March 2, 2000.
[139] A prolapsed uterus is a condition in which the uterus drops from its normal position. In severe cases, such as those that may be associated with injury from sexual violence, the cervix and uterus may protrude beyond the vaginal opening.

I arrived late in the evening. Then all of a sudden we heard firing. There was confusion and armed rebels captured me. They took me to their bush camp in a place called Mabang. They started sexing me two days later. I tried to fight and told them to leave me, but several times they put a pistol into my vagina. I gave myself up to God and asked that he save me. The first day, about ten sexed me. After the first day there were fewer men, between three and six a day. Every day they came and stood in line waiting to rape me. All together there were over thirty different men. They were aged between seventeen and twenty-five years old. The younger ones were rough and most of them seemed to be on drugs. I think these were RUF people. Most of them seemed to be Mendes. I saw many young girls in their camp. I guess the lucky ones only had one rebel. But I'm from Bo and wouldn't allow myself to be together with one of them. I told them I wasn't a Kamajor and that my husband was a policeman and they said, "Oh policemen are our enemies ... we've killed them all. Forget about your husband."

Sometimes they tied my legs to my arms with my legs spread and raped me one after the other. They said since I was from Bo and I was a Kamajor's wife that they were going to rape me to death. [Sometimes] I held my baby Hawanatu in my arms while they were raping me. When she cried they said they wanted to shoot her so I gave her the breast.

They raped me for two or three weeks and then in early February, my vagina came out [i.e. she suffered a prolapsed uterus]. It was so, so painful. I can't tell you how much it hurt. When this happened, I thought I was going to die. In order to get it to go back in I had to lie down and push it back in. To urinate, I had to lie down. They provoked me and made fun of me. They said now my Kamajor husband will not be able to have sex with me. A wife of one of the commanders told a villager to help me escape which they did. He took me to a nice woman in another village away from the rebel area and after explaining my problem, she helped me so much. She gave me herbs and tried to cure me and my baby who by that time was vomiting and very sick. It's only God that helped keep my little Hawanatu alive. He decided that this little child is mine to keep. Later, when I was stronger, I made it to Freetown and had an operation for my prolapsed uterus. I feel much better now.[140]

Rebels also raped pregnant women. In polygynous marriages, pregnant women generally stop having sexual intercourse with their husbands once their pregnancy has been confirmed, to protect the fetus. R.F, the thirty-three-year-old farmer gang raped by West Side Boys at Petifu, Port Loko, in November 1999 (see above, p. 39), was six months pregnant at the time. As the result of the gang rape she delivered prematurely, causing the baby's death:

I went with Isatu, her husband and my five-year-old son to harvest rice in Isatu's village, Petifu. We traveled by boat and at night to avoid the rebels. When we were resting having worked all the next day, we heard the rebels. They were all over the village and told us to give them our rice and palm oil. Several of them started hitting me on the head with their guns. Three were wearing uniform, the others wore civilian clothes. They spoke all different languages.

One of them tied a rope around my waist like a goat and pushed me out of the door screaming, "Show me where your people are." My little boy was left sleeping on the bed. Seven of the rebels then led me about a mile out of the village, screaming at me to tell them where we had hidden the rice and palm oil. I told them I was a stranger there but they did not believe me. They took me into a small farmhouse where they all used me. This went on for a few hours until the cloth I was lying on was soaked. I could barely walk. Then they ordered me to get up and dragged me like a sheep back to the village.

[140] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 5, 1999.

> Once back in the village, they put me in a house and more of them started raping me. I was used by at least twenty rebels. I think the whole unit raped me throughout the night. The only one who did not use me was the commander. He kept coming in and saying, "Have you had your turn?" He was the one they kept calling "Commander."
>
> When one of the Temne speaking rebels was raping me I said, "Please brother, talk to these people and ask them to leave me." But he said he could not do anything. Another rebel pulled out a knife when he was on top of me and said if I said anything he would kill me. I told them I was pregnant and said, "Can't you see? I have a six month belly." But they said, "We do not care. We see your belly but so what." Two of them told me to stoop down, but I couldn't and they just pushed me down and used me. After many had used me one of them said, "Oh, there is no more sweetness there," so they turned me over and did it to me from behind. Three of them did it to me like that, and now when I go to the toilet it is so painful; I am still bleeding and it feels like my insides are coming out. One rebel had sex with me several times. He said he was punishing me for not having shown him where the rice and palm oil was hidden. I yelled for the commander and complained, saying, "He wants to kill me, tell him to leave me!" but he said, "We have killed others that are better than you." I did not complain after that. They kept saying they were about to stop fighting—that they really want peace and that after peace comes, they won't do these things any more.
>
> In the early hours of the morning, they finally left. They wanted me to carry their looted items but I could not walk. They took other people whom they used to carry the looted goods. At one point I tried to get up but could not, I slipped and fell down to earth. By this time I had started bleeding. I felt my baby trembling in my belly. A few hours later the water broke and then I started to have contractions. I have five children and had never even had a miscarriage. I had about three hours of labor before giving birth. The little thing shook for a minute or so and then it died. It was so beautiful; it had fine hair and the face was so pretty. I wrapped it with a cloth. I could not bear to look whether it was a boy or a girl. I was gushing out blood and shortly after I delivered the placenta. I felt dizzy. I was barely able to walk.
>
> Later when I had a little more strength I covered my baby and threw it in a pit latrine. I felt so bad for throwing it away like that but I did not have the strength to bury it properly. After thinking everything over, I am only angry at this war and thankful that I still have my life and that the life of my child [her five-year-old] was spared. It's only God that saved him. He was lying on the bed the whole time.[141]

Forced Pregnancies

Many women and girls became pregnant as the result of the rape(s) they were subjected to. Although some women were reportedly able to abort without the knowledge of the rebels using traditional herbal treatments, the majority had no choice but to carry the child to full term. M.W., the abducted nurse already quoted above (see p. 28), said that many girls who had been raped had miscarriages that might have been self-induced with herbs. I.S., a twenty-seven-year-old student who was abducted by the AFRC during the January 1999 invasion, tried to abort, but was unsuccessful:

> When I got pregnant I didn't tell my rebel husband for months. I asked a woman who knows about medicine to give me herbs to abort the baby, but it never worked and after my belly started to swell, he found out. He warned me that if I tried to flush the baby out, he'd kill me. He said he wanted the baby and that he hoped it would be a boy.[142]

M.W., the abducted nurse, also mentioned that medical personnel were instructed by a rebel doctor, Dr.

[141] Human Rights Watch interview, Port Loko, November 27, 1999.
[142] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 17, 1999.

Lahai, not to perform abortions, give birth control, or advise that traditional herbal treatments be taken, as the rebels felt that too many people had died and they needed to increase the population.[143] Many women did have miscarriages because of the brutal rapes and trauma they were subjected to by the rebels, as well as the difficult conditions in the bush.

Forced Abortion by West Side Boys

Human Rights Watch has documented one case of forced abortion by the West Side Boys, the splinter group of the AFRC that took power in the 1997 coup. Twenty-year-old M.K. was abducted from Magbele village in Port Loko district in July 2000, when she was four months pregnant. She was raped by four West Side Boys and was made the wife of a rebel who forced her to abort:

> I was abducted with two other civilians, including my brother-in-law, by the West Side Boys. They were all wearing uniforms; some uniforms were new, and others wore old ones. We were taken to their base in Magbele Junction where there were many other abductees. At nighttime one of the rebels called Umaro Kamara came to me and said he wanted to have sex with me. He spoke nicely with me and said that he wanted to take me to Makeni and make me his wife. He raped me that day. The rebels saw that I was pregnant and said to Umaro, "We are not going to work along with any pregnant woman, we should kill her." Umaro said that he wanted to take me as his wife and that I should be given an injection instead. Umaro called me and tried to convince me to get rid of the baby. He said, "They will kill you if you do not agree so you better have the injection." I was taken to the doctor who gave me an injection and some pills. Two days later I started bleeding. I felt weak and had pain all over my body. Then I lost the baby.
>
> When Umaro was on patrol, three other rebels raped me. When we moved out to go to another base, I saw the body of my brother-in-law. After one day I started bleeding again so Umaro took me to the doctor who gave me another injection. When we reached Lunsar, Umaro wanted to make me his wife. Even while I was bleeding, Umaro used me. He told me to wash myself before raping me.[144]

Rape by Female Combatant

Human Rights Watch has documented a case of a female rebel manually raping female abductees. The virginity checks performed by female rebels on abductees prior to their "virgination" by male rebels, noted above, also constitute rape given that penetration occurred without the consent of the victim. More of such abuses may have been committed but not reported due to shame, as expressed in the testimony below. The rebels captured sixteen-year-old F.P. on January 7, 1999 when—as she was fleeing the fighting in central Freetown with two other girls—she ran into a patrol of five heavily armed rebels, including one female rebel. They knew the female rebel from before as Aminata; she had lived in their neighborhood before the 1997 AFRC coup. She had joined the rebels at that time and had not been seen since the AFRC was driven out of Freetown in February 1998. F.P. remembered having had an argument with her several years ago. The rebels called her "C.O. Sally." F.P. was taken with her sister and another girl whom she did not know to a rebel base. Her friend was raped by five men, which she was made to watch. F.P.was also "virginated" by male rebels and sexually molested by "C.O. Sally," along with another girl, also called Sally:

> C.O. Sally came into the room where we were kept and said, "Why are you hollering? These are my boys, why are you refusing them?" Since we knew C.O. Sally, we asked her to help us get away, so finally on January 10 she took us at gunpoint to another house. She made us cook and wash for her. Once she told us to go into a room and take off our clothes. She had an RPG [rocket propelled grenade] on the ground as well as a gun. We took off our clothes and then she took two long sticks and tied our hands to them straight out from our shoulders. She stood us in front of her and asked if we remembered her to which I answered, "No." Then she said that she remembered

[143] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, October 21, 1999.
[144] Human Rights Watch interview, Port Loko IDP camp, July 13, 2000.

> me and that we had fought last time we had met each other. She made me put one leg up on a drum and then she fingered me with two fingers. I was so embarrassed and ashamed. I asked her why she was doing this but she screamed at me to shut up. She did not touch herself or say anything, but kept on fingering me. Then she called Sally and did the same thing to her. When she was finished, she left us standing there with our arms tied. A little later she fingered us again. It did not seem sexual to me and I do not know why she did it. An hour later a young rebel came and said he thought he was hearing gunshots from ECOMOG. C.O. Sally ordered the boy to untie us as "I have punished these people already."[145]

Rape and Other Sexual Violence against Boys and Men by Male and Female Rebels

According to FAWE Sierra Leone, boys and men were also raped by male rebels. FAWE Sierra Leone treated fourteen boys aged between nine and fifteen years old who had been raped, but suspects that there are more cases. Due to the stigma attached to homosexuality in Sierra Leone, male victims of rape feared they would be perceived as homosexuals and therefore few boys were willing to report it. Human Rights Watch has not documented any of these crimes of sexual violence, which were apparently committed on a much smaller scale than sexual violence committed against women and girls. FAWE Sierra Leone did not want Human Rights Watch to interview the boys they had treated as they feared that interviewing them would re-traumatize them.[146]

Human Rights Watch documented two cases in which female rebels forced men to have sexual intercourse at gunpoint. One case involved a female rebel forcing a male civilian to have sex during the January 1999 invasion of Freetown, and the second involved a RUF female training commander and male conscripts in Kono. Cases of these crimes of sexual violence were also reported by FAWE Sierra Leone. It is impossible to determine the prevalence of this type of sexual violence, but—given the general level of violence within the rebel forces and the power that female combatants had over civilians—Human Rights Watch believes that such incidents did happen more often than has been reported, albeit again on a much reduced scale compared to male combatants raping female civilians.

Abduction, Sexual Slavery, Forced Labor, and Conscription

Abduction

The rebel forces used abduction as their primary method for recruitment. During an attack on a town or village, rebels typically rounded up civilians as they tried to flee or were found hiding. Men were abducted to carry the looted items as well as being forcibly conscripted. The abducted children were also given military training and forcibly conscripted.

In thousands of cases, women and girls were abducted after being subjected to sexual violence. The rebels often killed family members who tried to protect their women and girls. Abducted women and girls described being "given" to a combatant who then took them as their "wives" (see also "Sexual slavery" section, below).[147] Abduction of civilians continued for the duration of the armed conflict. In the early years of the conflict, the RUF went on hit-and-run raids, returning to their base camps with looted items and abducted civilians. As the RUF took over more territory, an increasing number of civilians were abducted. As their ranks increased with more men and boys being forcibly conscripted, so did their abduction of women and girls. The AFRC and West Side Boys used the same tactics. Some women had the extreme misfortune of escaping from one rebel faction, or unit, only to be abducted by another. One such victim, thirteen-year-old M.F. (see above, p. 34), who was first

[145] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 18, 1999.

[146] Human Rights Watch interview with Christiana Thorpe (founding Chairperson of FAWE Sierra Leone Chapter), Freetown, March 22, 2002.

[147] The PHR report found that 9 percent of women reporting having themselves experienced sexual violence had been forced to "marry" their rebel "husband." PHR report, p. 2. These types of marriage are similar to marriages by capture, which were common at the turn of the nineteenth to twentieth centuries. In tribal wars, the conquerors would kill the male inhabitants of the vanquished village and capture the women who subsequently became the wives of the conquerors. The "marriage" was validated by the captor's public declaration of his intention to cohabit with his captive. Such a wife was regarded as a slave and her children could not inherit from their father. Joko Smart, *Sierra Leone Customary Family Law*, p. 29.

abducted from Koinadugu by the RUF/AFRC and gang raped, was driven out of Makeni in October 1999 when it came under attack by the RUF. She was subsequently abducted by the West Side Boys and raped by two child combatants.[148]

Sexual Slavery and Forced Labor

Women and girls were primarily abducted to be the sex slaves of the rebels and to perform slave labor. The survey conducted by Physicians for Human Rights found that 33 percent of the interviewees reporting war-related sexual violence had been abducted and 15 percent had been subjected to sexual slavery. Consistent with fairly common practice among the Sierra Leonean male population at large, many rebels had polygynous "marriages," including with abducted women whom they had forced to "marry" them. Rebels also changed "wives" frequently when they tired of them or when their "wives" were too ill to perform their tasks (a consequence of the brutality that they were often subjected to). Victims interviewed by Human Rights Watch reported attaching themselves to one rebel to avoid gang rape and be given a degree of protection. The more highly ranked the commander, the more protection a woman had. Women and girls, however, remained vulnerable to sexual violence by other rebels. M.F., the thirteen-year-old who was gang raped by the RUF/AFRC in Koinadugu was raped by two other commanders when her "husband" Mohammed was out on patrol.

Women who were "married" to high-ranking rebels benefited not only from "protection" but also were able to exert power over others. The women and girls often benefited from the looted items that their rebel "husbands" gave them, and took part themselves in looting raids to steal clothes, shoes, and jewelry. Not all were abductees: some women and girls voluntarily joined the rebel forces and sought to benefit from their relationship with the rebels, i.e. from the looted goods or escaping from their parents (some girls would use a relationship with a rebel boyfriend to gain freedom from parental control, by threatening to involve the boyfriend in their dispute over parental restrictions). Such women consenting to marry a rebel were probably still vulnerable to sexual violence from other rebels.

Numerous victims described being subjected to abuse or forced to work by commanders' wives. FAWE Sierra Leone also reported that female combatants "married" to rebels killed new abductees if their "husbands" showed a preference for them. A.J., the fourteen-year-old student who was abducted in Pujehun and tortured by the RUF from February to May 1994 (see above, p. 31) is an example of how some "wives" were treated by other female abductees or combatants:

> I was put under the control of Commander Patrick, a Liberian. He was married to a woman called Neneh who was very jealous of me. Once, after the commanders had gone to the war front, Neneh told one of our guards to open up the cage where I was being held and take me out. She said, "My husband is interested in you. If you accept him to have sex with you, I'll kill you, so be forewarned." Neneh and Patrick have one child. She told me she'd joined the rebels voluntarily. She said, "You are just a captive. Do you think I was abducted? I was not abducted. I joined voluntarily. So you have no right to fall in love with my husband."[149]

A few victims also described how some of these women, usually the wives of commanders, used their power to try and protect, and at times facilitate the escape, of other abductees. For example, M.C., who was brutally raped by rebels in early 1999 in Mabang and suffered a prolapsed uterus (see above, p. 38) was helped to escape by a commander's wife who felt sorry for her.[150]

Abducted women were made to carry out forced labor during their captivity, including cooking, cleaning, washing clothes, and carrying heavy loads of ammunition and looted items. In many instances, women—intimidated by their captors and the situation they were in—felt powerless to escape their lives of sexual slavery, and were advised by other female captives to tolerate the abuses, "as it was war." The rebels often deliberately

[148] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, 7 March 2002.
[149] Human Rights Watch interview, Pujehun, February 12, 2000.
[150] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 5, 1999.

marked abducted civilians with the letters "RUF" or "AFRC" carved mainly onto their chests. This made escape more difficult because, were they to be caught by government forces, they would likely be suspected of being rebels and killed. Some women used traditional herbal remedies to remove their markings, and international organizations have also performed surgery on these victims to remove the scars.

Relationships between Rebels and Abductees

The relationships that developed between the abductees and rebels were very complex and varied. Most relationships were obviously very volatile, as described by I.S., the twenty-seven-year-old student who was abducted by the AFRC in the January 1999 invasion (see above, p. 40). She stayed with the AFRC/West Side Boys until August 1999 when she was able to escape:

> We stayed there for months and they were always going on attacks in the Port Loko area. Occasionally C.O. Blood was nice to me and I had to kiss him and play love with him. But I could never tell him what was really in my heart; that I missed my family and wanted to escape. Other days he would beat me for nothing. He did the same thing to his other "wife." Neither of us could complain.[151]

H.K. was assigned as the wife of "Jaja" and was so badly treated by him that even the other rebels sometimes tried to prevail on him to be less violent:

> Jaja was already "married" to another abductee, and when she saw what he had done to me, she escaped. He always beat both of us. He used to sex me twice every night. He made me take his penis in my mouth. I tried to refuse him but he always threatened to kill me. He was actually an SLA soldier but had joined the RUF. His C.O. was Colonel Stagger, who used to criticize him for how he treated us. Colonel Stagger used to say, "Look, when we take these kids, we should take care of them and now you beat her for nothing." Jaja used to say it was not Stagger's business. Stagger's own abductees were treated pretty well. He never beat them.[152]

Some women fled at the first opportunity. Other women, especially those who had children with the rebels, found it difficult to leave these abusive relationships. Many women and girls experienced their first sexual relationship with their rebel "husband" and may have developed aspects of the "Stockholm Syndrome," whereby the hostage identifies with the hostage-taker. They adjusted to the level of violence with the rebels, which over time became "normal," in order to survive.[153] Others feared that their "husband" might seek revenge if they escaped and returned to their family. The rebels instilled fear in their "wives" by telling them that their families would not accept them back. The abductees also feared to some extent that they would be blamed for what happened to them. For some women who had lost their families, the rebels became a surrogate family. As many rebels had themselves lost their families or could not return to their villages of origin, given that they had in some cases committed human rights abuses in their communities, they did not want to relinquish their surrogate families or their slave labor.

As the women and girls were never registered in the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program and there was insufficient documentation of this large category of victims throughout the armed conflict, it is unclear how many girls and women were abducted. It is now impossible to establish how many remain under the control of their rebel "husband" or have returned to their village of origin.

The ones who have remained involuntarily will only re-examine their situation when alternatives become available. Women who wish to sever links with ex-combatants have few alternative economic or social options. They are a very vulnerable group that has little or no means of support. They are often not able to return to their

[151] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 17, 1999.
[152] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, October 12, 1999.
[153] A group of female ex-combatants and abducted women, for example, defined to Human Rights Watch domestic violence as "wounding or losing consciousness."

villages out of fear, lack of funds and social stigma, especially if they have given birth to children fathered by rebels. The women are therefore often forced to remain in situations in which they are vulnerable to continuing abuse. Numerous victims end up being commercial sex workers, selling their body for as little as U.S.50¢ Exploited girls and women can end up abandoned with several children to raise by themselves by the time they are in their early twenties.

Rebel Control over Abductees

Life with the rebels was very tough. Civilian abductees, in particular, were treated ruthlessly. The RUF established a military police system and courthouses to administer a form of justice to those who contravened RUF rules of behavior. Some of the RUF rules were written, but the rules, trial and punishment were to a large extent arbitrary, dependent on the particular commander. Interviewees reported that severe punishment was meted out for small incidents such as spilling water on a commander's shoes (one week in a cell with daily beatings) or not lodging complaints through the official channels (imprisonment in a dungeon). "Courthouses" were established to try both combatants and the civilians.[154] A rebel was expected to provide for his "wives" and children during their captivity even if he had taken on another "wife" or "wives." If a rebel reneged on his responsibility, then he could be put in a cell and beaten to death. Civilian women who were tried by the court were raped and beaten if they did not have a commander to stand up for them. According to K.M., who was abducted by the RUF from Kabala, Koinadugu, the three male rebels who presided over the courthouse in Burkina, a training camp in Kailahun, would arrange amongst themselves who could rape the women. She also said that one woman was raped to death by six rebels.[155]

Forced Conscription: Female Combatants

Women and girls were also forcibly conscripted into the rebel fighting forces. The RUF established military training camps for women. During active fighting, female combatants were sent into battle after the men and the Small Boys Units (SBUs). There were only very few high-ranking female commanders in the rebel forces and a much smaller number of female combatants than adult men or boys. Female combatants had more power than female civilians: combatants, including female combatants, who had received military training, had substantial power to do whatever they wanted to civilians. Within the rebel forces, however, women still held much lower status: female combatants were assigned "husbands."

Forcibly conscripted female combatants were in many ways as vulnerable as civilian abductees, and may have decided to stay with their rebel "husbands" for the same reasons as their civilian counterparts i.e. shame, lack of alternative options, and economic dependence on their "husbands."

RUF Officers' Responsibility for Sexual Violence

In addition to their individual criminal responsibility, rebel commanders can bear direct command responsibility for crimes of sexual violence and sexual slavery, for ordering the rape and abduction of women and girls (see below, p. 60, for a discussion of the principle of command responsibility in international law). C.O. Caca Scatter, for example, ordered the gang rape of S.J., the wealthy forty-five-year-old woman (see above, p. 37). A.J., the fourteen-year-old student, was tortured, caged and brutally raped by C.O. Patrick (see above, p. 43). S.G., the fifty-year-old widow was raped and had both arms amputated by Commander "Don't Blame God" (see above, p. 36).[156] Indeed, the organized way in which victims frequently describe being rounded up and taken, as well as the number of rebels involved in these abductions and the number of victims abducted, suggests an element of premeditation and planning on the part of the RUF, AFRC and West Side Boys command. Victims also frequently described being specifically selected to be given to a commander or being sexually abused in the presence of commanders, which again suggest that sexual violence was committed under the direction of and with the consent of members of the rebels' hierarchy. I.S., the twenty-seven-year-old student who was abducted and

[154] Abdullah and Muana, "The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone," p. 189.
[155] Human Rights Watch interview, Kabala, March 7 and 9, 2002.
[156] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, May 3, 1999. Under Article 6 (1), persons are held individually responsible for the planning, instigating, ordering, committing or otherwise aiding and abetting in the planning, preparation or execution of a crime referred to in articles 2 to 4 of the statute.

gang raped by the West Side Boys from January to August 1999 explained how Commander "Blood" had initiated the "wife" selection process:

> One of the commanders said he was going to amputate all of us too. But another commander, C.O. Blood, said, "Don't kill them, let's chose them as wives." Then we were divided up. The one who seemed to be in charge, C.O. Blood, chose me. When he looked at me I was frightened. His pupils were huge—he was high on drugs. He took me to a house and told me to lie down on the ground. He said if I did not allow him to have sex, he would kill me. He took out a knife and said he would not even waste his ammunition on me. He would just chop me to pieces. I knew he meant what he said. He forced my clothes off and used me twice. He was rough and after the second time I begged him to leave me, but he said he did not care. My insides hurt so much. Then he used me from behind. Other women were being raped in the same room. They [the West Side Boys] did not care.[157]

According to the survey conducted by Physicians for Human Rights, thirty-four of the ninety-four survivors directly reporting sexual violence believed that their attackers' commander was aware of the attack.[158] While it is difficult to generalize from this figure, it does tend to confirm the findings of Human Rights Watch that sexual violence and slavery, which were committed on a widespread and systematic nature, were part of the rebel forces' military strategy to dominate, humiliate and punish the civilian population.

The RUF has made occasional efforts to declare rape a crime within certain areas under their control and disciplined ordinary soldiers accused of raping. The disciplinary measures included summary trials followed by execution. These efforts failed to prevent sexual violence in practice. One commander, for example, prevented at least temporarily the rape of an eight-year-old girl who was abducted by a ten-year-old child combatant by ordering the child combatant to only use the young girl "for cleaning and cooking for now."[159] A.B. witnessed the gang rape of an old woman, which the commander had originally tried to stop but then allowed to happen (see above, p. 37).

Senior male and female figures in the RUF interviewed by Human Rights Watch mainly denied that sexual violence had happened, explaining that the women joined the RUF movement voluntarily and fell in love with their rebel "husbands."[160] A key figure in the AFRC admitted that he had heard of cases of sexual violence and blamed it on the breakdown of law and order.[161] He also said that none of his men had expressed any remorse for the human rights abuses they committed. In the vast majority of the cases documented by Human Rights Watch, those who committed rape were not disciplined or punished in any way

Sexual Violence Committed by the CDF

As already noted, there are relatively few reported cases of rape committed by the CDF. The CDF were reasonably disciplined during the war, although their discipline deteriorated when they were deployed in chiefdoms outside their own native areas. Sexual intercourse is believed to act against the protection bestowed on the fighters during their initiation ceremonies. However, Human Rights Watch has documented several crimes of sexual violence by the Kamajors, the CDF based in the Southern Province.

In March 1998, a forty-five-year-old Temne man, M.B., witnessed the rape of a young Temne woman called Jeneba by the Kamajors in Kenema town. The Kamajors also mutilated and killed Jeneba. M.B. explained that during the ECOMOG intervention to restore the democratically elected government in 1998, Kamajors accused members of the Temne and Limba ethnic groups of being RUF/AFRC supporters and persecuted them. According to M.B., the Kamajors identified Temnes and Limbas as such by their last names and publicly beheaded or

[157] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, September 17, 1999.
[158] PHR report, p. 54.
[159] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, June 16, 1999.
[160] Human Rights Watch interviews, Freetown and Makeni, April 1999 to May 2002.
[161] Human Rights Watch interview, Freetown, April 26, 2002.

34. Amnesty International, "Sierra Leone 1998 –a year of atrocities against civilians", pages 1, 2, 3, 13, 14, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26.

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Amnesty International

SIERRA LEONE

1998 - a year of atrocities against civilians

Introduction

During 1998 the scale of atrocities against civilians in Sierra Leone has reached unprecedented levels. Several thousand unarmed civilians, including many women and children, have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed and mutilated by forces of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and the armed opposition Revolutionary Front (RUF) since February 1998. These atrocities are continuing.

The AFRC, which seized power in a military coup in May 1997 and which was joined by the RUF, was deposed in February 1998 by West African forces deployed in Sierra Leone. The government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, which had been elected in 1996, returned to Freetown in March 1998. Although security has since returned to the capital, Freetown, and much of the south of the country, the scale of human rights abuses committed by AFRC and RUF forces in the north and east of the country has escalated and taken on grotesque forms. From April 1998 reports emerged of civilians suffering mutilations such as crude amputations of their feet, hands, arms, lips or ears. Women and girls have been systematically raped. Hundreds of civilians, in particular children and young men and women, have been abducted by rebel forces. The violence has resulted in hundreds of thousands of Sierra Leoneans fleeing to neighbouring Guinea and Liberia or becoming internally displaced within Sierra Leone. AFRC and RUF forces must respect international humanitarian law and immediately end the gross human rights abuses which they are perpetrating against unarmed civilians.

The international community, including the United Nations (UN), the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Commonwealth and the European Union (EU), has devoted considerable attention and effort to resolving the political crisis in Sierra Leone and to restoring the government of President Kabbah. It has since repeatedly condemned the atrocities being committed by AFRC and RUF forces. The international community has committed itself to bringing peace and security to Sierra Leone and also to assisting in its reconstruction and rehabilitation. This commitment must include initiatives to help end the gross human rights abuses being perpetrated by AFRC and RUF forces, to prevent further abuses and also to lay solid foundations for the respect and protection of human rights in the future.

The challenges facing Sierra Leone in confronting the widespread and gross human rights abuses which have continued and worsened since May 1997 are difficult and daunting. Sierra Leone's social and economic infrastructure needs to be rebuilt. Its institutions, such as the legal and judicial systems and the army and police, need to be restructured and reinforced in order to ensure protection of human rights. Civil society, including the human rights community, has a crucial role to play. The government of Sierra Leone has to respond to these challenges in a way that ensures that the fundamental human rights of all those in Sierra Leone are protected.

West African forces and a civilian militia who are fighting rebel forces must also respect international humanitarian and human rights law. Forces of the civilian militia have been responsible for extrajudicial executions, torture and ill-treatment, although on a far lesser scale than rebel forces. West African forces have in some cases illegally detained civilians and tortured and ill-treated captured combatants. Concerns have also been expressed about the protection of non-combatants during military operations.

Accountability for the gross human rights abuses which have occurred in Sierra Leone must be established. National reconciliation within Sierra Leone will not be possible if there is impunity for those who have perpetrated human rights abuses. All those charged in connection with the military coup in May 1997 and the period of AFRC rule must be granted trials which conform to international standards of fairness. Recourse to the death penalty will not contribute to the process of reconciliation.

The international community should continue to assist Sierra Leone to respond effectively to the challenges which it faces in ensuring the long-term protection and respect of human rights in Sierra Leone.

The political context

On 25 May 1997 the government of President Kabbah was overthrown in a military coup and the military formed the AFRC, headed by Major Johnny Paul Koroma. President Kabbah had come to power in March 1996 following parliamentary and presidential elections, ending four years of military rule. The AFRC claimed that they had overthrown the government because it had failed to consolidate peace in Sierra Leone following a peace agreement concluded in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, in November 1996 between the government and the RUF to end the internal armed conflict which began in 1991. It also claimed that the government was undemocratic and that it had promoted tribalism by appointing people mainly from the Mende ethnic group from the south and the east to prominent government positions. A major grievance was the perceived lack of resources accorded by the government to the Sierra Leone armed forces and a favouring of a civilian militia composed of traditional hunters of the Mende ethnic group, known as *kamajors*, which supported the government in the conflict against the RUF. These accusations were strongly denied by President Kabbah, members of his government and their supporters. The AFRC also called for the release and return of the RUF's leader, Foday Sankoh, in detention in Nigeria.

Foday Sankoh remained held, effectively under house arrest, in Abuja, Nigeria. He had been detained by Nigerian authorities on arrival in Nigeria in March 1997, apparently for possession of arms and ammunition. From Nigeria, Foday Sankoh announced his support for the military coup. The AFRC was subsequently joined by RUF forces who arrived in large numbers in Freetown. Foday Sankoh was named as Vice-Chairman of the AFRC and prominent members of the RUF were appointed to the AFRC's ruling council.

The overthrow of President Kabbah was condemned by the international community which demanded the return of constitutional order to Sierra Leone. Negotiations by the

international community with the AFRC faltered, a global economic embargo was imposed and military intervention to restore the government of President Kabbah was seriously considered by countries in the region if dialogue and sanctions failed. Following the military coup the OAU gave a mandate to ECOWAS to take necessary action to restore legality and constitutionality to Sierra Leone and subsequently provided strong support for ECOWAS's initiatives to bring peace, security and stability to Sierra Leone. The UN Security Council also expressed its full support for the efforts of ECOWAS to resolve the political crisis in Sierra Leone.

On 23 October 1997 the AFRC signed an agreement in Conakry, in neighbouring Guinea, with representatives of five other West African governments to return power to President Kabbah by 22 April 1998. Implementation of this agreement, however, which included cessation of hostilities, disarmament and demobilization, encountered serious set-backs. Fighting between AFRC and RUF forces on the one hand and the *kamajors* on the other intensified.

In early February 1998, following attacks on its bases outside Freetown, West African forces deployed in Sierra Leone, the ECOWAS Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) [1], launched an offensive on Freetown. Chaos and violence ensued the following week during which there were many civilian casualties. Civilians were killed by AFRC and RUF forces who also looted and destroyed their homes. Reports described soldiers and RUF forces, also joined by Liberian fighters, going from house to house of those they suspected of opposing them and deliberately and arbitrarily killing them. Others died as a result of shelling both by ECOMOG and also AFRC and RUF forces. While fighting continued in Freetown, civilians in Southern and Eastern Provinces were facing an equally desperate situation as they were caught in fighting between the *kamajors* and AFRC and RUF forces. Thousands of people, including women and children, fled into neighbouring Liberia to escape. The humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, already critical, deteriorated still further with the increase in hostilities.

Although after the ECOMOG intervention and the return of President Kabbah's government comparative calm and the rule of law returned to Freetown and Southern Province, armed confrontation has continued throughout the following months in Northern and Eastern Provinces as ECOMOG forces have fought to defeat remaining rebel forces. Appalling atrocities have been committed against civilians as conflict has continued. Major Johnny Paul Koroma and other prominent members of the AFRC and the RUF, including Sam Bockarie, known as Mosquito, remained with rebel forces in the north and east of the country.

The government of Sierra Leone has adopted a comprehensive program for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants which contains clearly defined roles for ECOMOG and the UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), which was established by the UN Security Council in July 1998. The program is aimed at some 33,000 former combatants of the disbanded national army, the RUF and the civilian militia, known as the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The government has expressed a particular commitment to demobilizing some 2,500 child soldiers who have fought in the

internal armed conflict. Funding was expected from international financial institutions, several UN agencies and important donor nations such as the United States and the United Kingdom. As violence has escalated and offensives by ECOMOG and CDF against rebel forces have continued, however, effective implementation of this program has been prevented.

On 25 July 1998 Foday Sankoh was released by the Nigerian government into the custody of the Sierra Leonean authorities. He appeared in a television interview calling on his fighters to end atrocities against civilians and to surrender to either ECOMOG or UNOMSIL. The government subsequently reiterated a deadline of 8 August 1998 for an amnesty for rebel forces but there was no significant response. Members of the RUF were subsequently reported as claiming that Foday Sankoh had made these statements under duress and continued to demand his release. The RUF threatened to continue their campaign of violence against civilians if he remained in detention. The government announced its intention to prosecute Foday Sankoh for crimes, including gross human rights abuses, committed during Sierra Leone's internal armed conflict. He was brought to trial on 24 September 1998 and convicted and sentenced to death the following month. This prompted further attacks by rebel forces against unarmed civilians in retaliation.

Also in September 1998 rebel forces called on the government to begin negotiations for peace through the UN, the OAU and the Commonwealth Secretariat, the moral guarantors of the peace agreement signed in Abidjan. The Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group on the Harare Declaration (CMAG)[2] on 9 October 1998 called on rebel forces to make an immediate statement accepting the following terms: the recognition of the legitimacy and authority of the government; an unconditional and indefinite cessation of all hostilities; and a willingness to enter into talks to bring about an immediate end to the conflict. At the same time CMAG expressed its grave concern about the humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone, in particular the continuing atrocities by rebel forces, which it condemned unreservedly. The government also responded to the call by rebel forces for negotiations by saying that they should lay down their arms and surrender to UNOMSIL military observers.

President Kabbah repeated calls for rebel forces to surrender on 19 October 1998 and renewed an offer of amnesty for those surrendering. It appeared that the amnesty implied that those surrendering who had not been responsible for crimes would be included in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process whereas those who were accused of criminal offences would prosecuted with due process of the law. There was, however, no significant increase in the number of those surrendering.

The West Africa sub-region

Liberia was widely reported to be providing combatants, arms and ammunition to AFRC and RUF forces in Sierra Leone. Liberian fighters were present in Freetown at the time of the ECOMOG intervention and survivors of the gross human rights abuses which followed stated that the armed groups which had attacked them had included Liberians.

As atrocities against unarmed civilians by rebel forces have continued, the need for concerted action by the international community remains. The OAU Central Organ should continue to play a role both in attempts to resolve the conflict in Sierra Leone and also to respond to post-conflict needs, in particular assistance for creating and reinforcing institutions aimed at long-term protection of human rights in Sierra Leone.

The African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Commission), meeting in Banjul, Gambia, on 22 October 1998 agreed to send its Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, Dr Mohamed Hatem Ben-Salem, to Sierra Leone in November 1998.

Recommendations

- **in view of the continuing gross human rights abuses in Sierra Leone, the Central Organ of the OAU Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution should consider requesting that the UN Security Council increase the resources of the human rights component of UNOMSIL in order to investigate and document these abuses;**

- **in addition to its Special Rapporteur on extrajudicial, arbitrary or summary executions, the African Commission should also consider a visit to Sierra Leone by its Special Rapporteur on women in order to investigate and report the gross human rights abuses which continue to be committed in Sierra Leone, including against girls and women;**

- **the OAU Central Organ should send a delegation to Sierra Leone to assess the country's post-conflict needs including the establishment of effective structures for the future protection and respect of human rights;**

- **ECOWAS should ensure full compliance of its forces in Sierra Leone to international humanitarian and human rights law; there should be a mechanism to monitor human rights violations and take measures to prevent further violations.**

Human rights violations during the period of AFRC rule

The period from 25 May 1997 until 12 February 1998 was marked by a total disregard for the rule of law and demands from the international community to respect international humanitarian and human rights law. The rule of law completely collapsed and violence engulfed the country.

Hundreds of people who were associated with the government of President Kabbah or his political party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), or who were perceived to be opposed to the AFRC were detained without charge or trial, torture and ill-treatment were systematic, and many of those perceived to be political opponents of the AFRC were

extrajudicially executed.

On 20 October 1997 Amnesty International published a report which documented the human rights violations systematically committed by the AFRC and the RUF after the military coup [8]. The victims included those associated with the government of President Kabbah, journalists, students and human rights activists. Between October 1997 and February 1998 arrests, torture and killings continued relentlessly. The full toll of those detained, tortured, ill-treated and killed while the AFRC and RUF held power only emerged after they were forced from power.

During the period of AFRC rule, while it was possible to obtain limited information about human rights violations in Freetown, few details of what was happening in the Provinces were accessible. When an Amnesty International delegation travelled to Sierra Leone in May 1998, the extent of the suffering of civilians became evident. Killings, rape and looting were systematic in all parts of the country. Hundreds of people had been deliberately and arbitrarily killed, thousands lost their possessions, homes and livelihoods. Rape of girls and women was systematic throughout the country.

Amnesty International repeatedly called on the AFRC to end the systematic human rights violations which occurred after May 1997 and to adhere to its obligations under international human rights law, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights (African Charter)[9]. It called for urgent measures to end arbitrary arrest and detention of those perceived to be opposed to the AFRC and to end torture, ill-treatment and extrajudicial executions.

It is important that there continue to be full and independent investigations into the human rights violations committed during the period of AFRC rule and that the truth of what occurred during those months is established and documented in order to bring those responsible to justice. There should be no impunity for the grave human rights violations committed throughout the period of AFRC rule. Investigation and accountability for these human rights violations will also contribute towards the process of national reconciliation within Sierra Leone.

Arbitrary arrest and detention

Hundreds of political detainees were held incommunicado without charge or trial. It was difficult to assess with any accuracy the number of those detained because of continuous arrests and releases, the failure of the authorities to provide information about detainees and lack of access to places of detention. Detainees were held at the Central Prison, Pademba Road, the police Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters and Cockerill military headquarters in Freetown as well as other military camps, such as that known as the SS camp at the village of Regent in the hills above Freetown.

Throughout the period of AFRC rule journalists were particular targets of arrest, detention and torture. During October and November 1997 the crack-down on the press

intensified; at least 20 journalists were detained and many were tortured and ill-treated. They included Jon Z. Foray, editor of the *New Storm* newspaper, who was arrested by soldiers on 11 October 1997. He was taken first to Cockerill military headquarters where he was handed over to the military police and then held in a freight container. Also held in the container was Prince Akpu, a Nigerian journalist who had established a newspaper called *Alpha jet*, and who was arrested around the same time and accused of subversive activities. (Nigerian ECOMOG forces had used military aircraft called Alpha jets in their operations.) Two days later the two journalists were collected by a senior AFRC member, apparently to be taken to CID headquarters. They were, however, blindfolded and taken to the SS camp. Jon Z. Foray was beaten and stabbed with bayonets by soldiers and sustained a serious injury to his spine. He and Prince Akpu were released on 22 October 1997. With the help of friends, Jon Z. Foray managed to leave Sierra Leone for Ghana where he was admitted to hospital and received two months of medical treatment.

Arrests of journalists continued into November 1997: Dorothy Awoonor Gordon, acting editor of the *Concord Times*, Ibrahim Karim-Sei, editor of the *Standard Times*, and Pius Foray, editor of *The Democrat*, were among those detained and subsequently released without charge.

Sylvanus Kanyako, a journalist working for the *Herald Guardian*, and David Kamara, the newspaper's proprietor, were arrested on 10 January 1998, the day after an article suggested that a prominent member of the AFRC, Sergeant Abu "Zagalo" Sankoh, should be arrested in connection with the looting of the Iranian Embassy in Freetown on 31 December 1997. Sylvanus Kanyako was arrested by soldiers after being identified by an AFRC supporter. He and David Kamara were detained for three weeks. Both men were tortured. Sylvanus Kanyako was tied tightly with his arms behind his back, beaten all over his body and burned with a cigarette. At one point he lost consciousness. He sustained serious injuries to his arms and hands. He was then taken to CID cells where he remained, without any medical treatment, until he managed to escape on 30 January 1998.

On 30 January 1998 Michael Lawson, a university student at Fourah Bay College in Freetown, was arrested. He was apparently accused of passing information to a radio station broadcasting in support of the government of President Kabbah. The radio station, 98.1 FM, had been broadcasting clandestinely since July 1997. Many people suspected of providing information to the radio station, or knowing from where broadcasts were transmitted, had previously been arrested and detained. He was reported to be held at CID headquarters until his release in February 1998 after the intervention by ECOMOG.

Torture and extrajudicial executions

Ill-treatment, torture and extrajudicial executions were systematic throughout the period of AFRC rule. Soldiers and RUF members operated with impunity and created a climate of fear both in Freetown and throughout the country.

On 14 January 1998 a trader, Sama Turay, was shot dead by soldiers on Wilkinson Road

in Freetown after an argument. Local residents were forced to hand the body over to soldiers. Residents of the area staged a demonstration along Wilkinson Road the following day in protest against the killing. This demonstration coincided with a visit to Freetown of a delegation headed by the UN Secretary-General's Special Envoy to Sierra Leone, at that time based in Conakry, for discussions with the AFRC on the implementation of the peace agreement signed in Conakry in October 1997.

The demonstration on 15 January 1998 was brutally suppressed; soldiers indiscriminately beat civilians and raided homes in the area around Wilkinson Road. They went from house to house accusing civilians of deliberately discrediting the AFRC during the visit of the delegation. One of the victims was a 25-year-old trader. When soldiers arrived at his stall he was hit in the face with butt of an AK 47 gun and was also badly beaten on his back. He recognized the soldiers who beat him and described them as relatives of Major Johnny Paul Koroma.

Another of the victims was an 18-year-old girl, also living in the Wilkinson Road area, who had joined the demonstration. Three days later six soldiers came to her home. She was raped by all six soldiers who then cut her hair and shaved her head with a broken bottle.

In Kenema, Eastern Province, terror reigned throughout the period of AFRC rule. The town was effectively under the control of the RUF and, in particular, Sam Bockarie. As in Freetown and other parts of the country, rape of girls and women was systematic and at least a hundred civilians were reported to have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed in Kenema. Every house in the town was looted. The homes of those perceived to have been supporters of the SLPP were destroyed.

On 13 and 14 January 1998 several prominent members of the community in Kenema were arrested by members of the RUF under the supervision of Sam Bockarie. They included B.S. Massaquoi, the chairman of the town council, Dr P.B. Momoh, a medical doctor, Paramount Chief Moinama Karmor, a traditional leader, and Ibrahim Kpaka, a businessman. They were arrested at a time of fierce fighting between the *kamajors* and AFRC and RUF forces around Kenema and were accused of supporting the *kamajors*. They were held at the AFRC Secretariat building in Kenema, which had been the local SLPP headquarters, and some were later moved to the police station and army brigade headquarters. They were stripped and repeatedly beaten with sticks, electric cable and strips of tyres and were threatened with death. Their arms were tied tightly behind them. One of those detained sustained a serious head wound and injury to his eye after being beaten on his head with a gun. At least one of these detained died as a result of beatings.

Some of those arrested were released on 26 January 1998 and escaped to safety. B.S. Massaquoi, however, was among those who remained held at army brigade headquarters. He was killed by members of the RUF on 8 February 1998 as news arrived of ECOMOG's offensive on Freetown and as *kamajors* entered Kenema. Dozens of other people were also reported to have been killed. The mutilated body of B.S. Massaquoi and 35 other people were reported to have been found in mass grave near Kenema on 23

March 1998.

The use of the death penalty by the AFRC

The AFRC resorted to the use of the death penalty in an apparent attempt to be seen to be taking action to impose law and order but in doing so violated international human rights standards. On 25 October 1997 10 soldiers were executed after being convicted of murder and sentenced to death by a military court. A further 17 people were reported to have been executed on 2 November 1997, apparently after conviction by a military court although some reports suggested that summary executions took place without any form of legal proceedings. Another eight people were publicly executed in Koidu on 2 December 1997. According to reports, they had been convicted of armed robbery by a military court, from which there was no right of appeal.

On 28 November 1997 a new decree was promulgated which was retroactive to the time of the military coup and which extended the scope of the death penalty by making death sentences statutory for the offences of looting and commandeering vehicles.

International standards prohibit the retroactive use of the death penalty. The ICCPR states that the death sentence may be imposed only "in accordance with the law in force at the time of the commission of the crime" and also that a heavier penalty shall not be imposed than the one that was applicable at the time when the criminal offence was committed. The Safeguards Guaranteeing the Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty state that: "Capital punishment may be imposed only for a crime for which the death penalty is prescribed by law at the time of its commission...".

In addition, the ICCPR states that: "In countries which have not abolished the death penalty, sentence of death may be imposed only for the most serious crimes...". The Safeguards Guaranteeing the Protection of the Rights of Those Facing the Death Penalty, adopted by the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1994, also state that "... capital punishment may be imposed only for the most serious crimes ... with lethal or other extremely grave circumstances." The UN Human Rights Committee, a body of 18 experts established under the ICCPR, stated in 1996 that: "Extension of the scope of the application of the death penalty raises questions as to the compatibility with Article 6 of the Covenant", which guarantees the right to life. The UN Commission on Human Rights, in a resolution adopted in April 1997, called on all states which have not yet abolished the death penalty "progressively to restrict the number of offences for which the death penalty may be imposed".

Amnesty International urged the AFRC to repeal this legislation and to ensure that all death sentences were commuted and that no further executions took place.

Recommendations

- investigations into the human rights violations committed during the period of AFRC rule should continue to be undertaken in order to bring those

responsible to justice and to provide compensation to the victims of human rights violations;

- assistance for documenting the human rights violations which occurred during this period should be provided by the international community.

Human rights abuses by AFRC and RUF forces since February 1998

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 or mutilated. Hundreds of others have been abducted from their villages and forced to join their attackers. Members of the AFRC and the RUF again inflicted on unarmed civilians the atrocities which they had endured throughout Sierra Leone's internal armed conflict but now on a much greater scale [10].

The abuses perpetrated by rebel forces of the AFRC and RUF constitute the most egregious violations of international humanitarian law. The Geneva Conventions of 1949 which apply to international conflicts - wars between nations - also contain provisions which apply to internal armed conflicts. Article 3, common to all four Conventions, extends to "armed conflict not of an international character" fundamental rules for the protection of non-combatants which each party to the conflict is "bound to apply, as a minimum". Under the terms of common Article 3, people who take no active part or who have ceased to take an active part in hostilities must be treated humanely in all circumstances. Common Article 3 specifically prohibits: violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture; the taking of hostages; and outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment. This prohibition applies not only to government forces but to all parties to internal armed conflicts including armed political groups.

Article 4 of the Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions of 1949 relating to the protection of victims of internal armed conflicts prohibits violence to life, health and physical well-being, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment, of all those not taking a direct part in hostilities or who have ceased to take part in hostilities. [11]

In the days immediately after their removal from power by ECOMOG, AFRC and RUF forces indiscriminately killed unarmed civilians, looted and burned houses, both in Freetown and other towns. As the rebel forces were pursued eastwards by ECOMOG forces through towns such as Bo in Southern Province, Kenema and Koidu in Eastern Province and Makeni in Northern Province during February, March and April 1998, they were responsible for widespread killings, torture and ill-treatment, including rape and other forms of sexual assault, and abduction. Villages and towns were burnt to the ground, destroying thousands of homes. Koidu, a major town in the diamond-rich Kono District, was almost totally destroyed by AFRC and RUF forces and villages between Njaiama-Sewafe and Koidu were repeatedly attacked.

Several foreign nationals were captured by RUF forces in mid-February 1998. They included Spanish, Italian and Austrian religious brothers working at St Joseph's Hospital in Lunsar, Port Loko District, Northern Province, who were abducted on 14 February 1998. Eldred Collins, a prominent RUF member, was reported to have demanded the release of Foday Sankoh, at that time still detained in Nigeria, in exchange for the release of the hostages. They were, however, released on 27 February 1998. Two staff of the humanitarian organization *Médecins Sans Frontières* (MSF), a Canadian and a French national, were also abducted around 14 February 1998 at Rogberi while driving between Port Loko and Lunsar. They were also released after two weeks.

Those perceived to be opposed to the AFRC and the RUF were particularly targeted by rebel forces. They included Catholic priests. As almost all other sectors of Sierra Leonean society, the Catholic Church in Sierra Leone had condemned the military coup. Catholic priests were specifically sought by AFRC and RUF forces after February 1998 and some narrowly escaped death. Their homes were looted and destroyed. Traditional leaders, known as Paramount Chiefs, were also singled out; 44 Paramount Chiefs were reported to have been killed in the months following February 1998.

"*Operation no living thing*"

An even more grotesque pattern of killing, rape and mutilation became evident in April 1998 and the number of victims increased dramatically. Rebel forces called their campaign of terror against civilians "*Operation no living thing*". As fighting continued between ECOMOG and rebel forces around Koidu attacks on civilians in villages in the area persisted and then spread west and north. Later in April and into May 1998 Alikalia, Yifin and other villages in Koinadugu District, Northern Province, were attacked. Unarmed civilians who were taking no active part in the conflict were killed, their homes burned and their villages destroyed.

Although the exact number of those killed is unknown, it is likely to be several thousand. Most survivors of attacks described hundreds of bodies lying in the bush where they had fled and of several members of their families and communities being killed. More than 200 people were killed during an attack on one village, Yifin, in Koinadugu District, in late April 1998. More than 650 bodies, many of them women and children, were reported to have been buried following fighting in the area around Koidu in mid-June 1998.

With these attacks came reports of mutilations. The arms, hands, legs, ears and lips of victims were deliberately cut off. By early May 1998 some 120 victims of severe mutilations had been admitted to Connaught Hospital in the centre of Freetown; about 60 were admitted on one day alone, 26 April 1998. Four had both arms cut off, another 23 had one arm cut off, and others had deep lacerations on their lower arms, severed tendons or broken bones in their arms after being attacked with machetes. Some had a complete hand, several fingers or ears missing. They were all civilians: farmers, housewives, traders, miners, school students. These numbers swelled in the weeks and months which

followed as more victims arrived at Connaught Hospital and other hospitals in the north of the country, including in Makeni and Magburaka. Some of these hospitals lacked the equipment needed to perform war surgery. Connaught Hospital in the centre of Freetown, which had the necessary facilities, struggled to cope with the influx of patients. Between 6 April 1998 and 27 July 1998 an MSF surgical team treated almost 300 patients with amputations, severe mutilations or gunshot wounds at the hospital. The majority of the cases treated were lacerations to the head or neck or amputations of arms, hands, fingers, ears or lips. About a fifth of these victims were children, one aged 18 months. This number represented, however, only a fraction of the number of such victims, many of whom never reached medical help. Between 25 May 1998 and 12 June 1998 International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) delegates evacuated 23 people from the north of the country with gunshot wounds, deep lacerations and amputated limbs requiring urgent reconstructive surgery. A helicopter was used to reach areas inaccessible by road because of insecurity and fear of attack by armed groups. Evacuation of wounded civilians continued throughout the following months. According to humanitarian agencies in Freetown, only about one in four victims of mutilations by rebel forces survived their injuries. In June 1998 the ICRC rehabilitated Netland Hospital in Freetown for the surgical treatment of victims of amputations. By the end of September 1998, some 400 victims of amputations were reported to have undergone surgery at Netland Hospital. By October 1998 estimates of the number of victims of mutilations since February 1998 were put as high as 4,000.

Among the thousands of refugees arriving from Eastern and Northern Provinces into Guinea to escape attacks were civilians with similar mutilations. Between April and June 1998 some one hundred refugees were reported to have arrived in Guinea with serious injuries; half of them had suffered deliberate mutilation. By September 1998 a regional representative of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported that more than 400 refugees in a camp at Kissidougou in Guinea had hands, limbs or ears cut off or were suffering other injuries.

Many of the survivors provided accounts of the violence inflicted upon them. Groups of armed men arrived in their villages, claiming to be ECOMOG, that they had come to liberate the villagers and that they were safe. Forced out of their homes, they realised that they were not ECOMOG troops. Civilians were rounded up, in groups or in lines, and then taken individually to a pounding block in the village where their hands, arms or legs were cut with a machete. In some villages, after the civilians were rounded up, they were stripped naked. Men were then ordered to rape members of their own family. If they refused, their arms were cut off and the women were raped by rebel forces, often in front of their husbands. As well as rape, women and girls also suffered other forms of sexual assault such as having foreign objects inserted into their vaginas. Victims of these atrocities also reported women and children being rounded up, locked into houses which were then set alight.

The UN Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs, Sergio Vieira de Mello, following a visit to Sierra Leone, said on 15 June 1998 that the brutal treatment of civilians by AFRC and RUF forces was unlike anything he had seen in 29 years of

humanitarian work. Describing the pattern of amputations, lacerations and maiming of civilians, including of children, he said that "*hands are cut off and ears and noses are amputated ... there are no words to condemn this sort of practice ...*".

Villagers from Kondeya, Kono District, fled into the bush when they heard that rebel forces were approaching their village in early April 1998. On 9 April 1998 a group of about 50 rebel forces found them and captured about 120. One of the men was strangled. A baby who was crying was pulled from its mother's back and thrown into a river. They were forced to return to the village where all the houses were burned. Twenty-seven of the captured villagers were then attacked with machetes; some were decapitated, others had their throats cut or their eyes gouged out.

Survivors were often taunted by rebel forces to go to ECOMOG and tell them that the AFRC and RUF were there or to go to President Kabbah to ask for a new limb. One was given a letter and told to deliver it to President Kabbah. Victims who had one or both ears cut off were told that without their ears they could no longer listen to the government or ECOMOG.

In some cases it took victims days or weeks to reach medical assistance. One man who had both arms cut off in April 1998 walked for several weeks from village to village until he was able to find a vehicle to take him to Freetown. Many more, unable to reach a medical centre in time, died as a result of their injuries. Some spent weeks in the bush either attempting to walk to safety or waiting until it was safe to return to their homes. The fate of several thousand people who fled into the bush during attacks on villages remains unknown. Many of those wounded have died in the bush.

An Amnesty International delegation which visited Sierra Leone in May 1998 met some of the victims of these atrocities at Connaught Hospital. One, a farmer aged 40 from the village of Badala, in Koinadugu District, had both hands cut off when the village was attacked on 3 May 1998. Hearing reports of advancing attacks, including those on Yifin and Alikalia, he had previously sent his family to safety in Kabala. At the time of the attack he was preparing food in his compound. Up to 400 men, armed with machetes, AK 47 guns and rocket propelled grenades entered the village. They caught him and asked him where ECOMOG was. When he said that he did not know, he was hit on the head with an AK 47. He was then forced to lie down and both arms were cut off. He was also beaten on his legs. He begged to be killed. The men who attacked him wrote three letters and put them in the pockets of his trousers. He was then told to go to tell President Kabbah that they were coming to Freetown, adding "*No AFRC, no peace*". He lay injured for three days in Badala and arrived at Connaught Hospital four days later. He had no news of his wife and three children. Other villagers, of all ages, from Badala were also mutilated and killed; they included a woman who was raped and then cut with machetes.

Another of the victims, a 15-year-old schoolboy from Koidu who had arrived at Connaught Hospital on 10 May 1998, had suffered severe lacerations to his right ankle in an attempted amputation. He and his family - his parents and six brothers and sisters - had been hiding in the bush for more than two months after being driven from Koidu

after it was attacked by rebel forces. They had no food throughout that time other than bananas. On 1 May 1998 the family had heard reports that ECOMOG had arrived in Koidu and they went to enter the eastern part of the town. They and those with them were attacked by rebel forces who accused them of supporting President Kabbah. Almost 50 people were killed. The young boy stayed for four days in a house without food or treatment for his severely injured leg. He was taken first to Makeni by ECOMOG forces and then brought to Connaught Hospital. He did not know what had happened to his family.

Three young women survived an attack on the village of Boima in Bombali District, Northern Province, on 7 May 1998; one had a deep cut to her arm, the other two had been beaten all over their bodies. One of the women had witnessed the killing of several members of her family, including her children. Twelve people, including three of her children, died when their house was set alight. Another child, a girl aged three, was pulled from her back and cut with machetes.

There were many atrocities in villages around Karina, between Makeni and Fadugu, in Northern Province, which were attacked on 7 May 1998. All those who were unable to run away were killed; others had limbs amputated.

In an incident which occurred on 7 May 1998 in Northern Province, a woman survivor recounted that one of her sisters had been killed by having her throat cut and two others were covered in kerosene and burned. Other victims, including children, were wrapped in a foam mattress which was then set alight.

The village of Tumbodu, north of Koidu, was attacked repeatedly during April and May 1998. During one of these attacks, on 11 May 1998, a woman aged in her twenties who was hiding in the bush outside the town was caught and asked for rice, which she did not have. She was forced to carry a heavy load; when she faltered she was beaten. When she reached Tumbodu she was forced to place her legs on a stone which were then cut in an attempted amputation. She suffered deep laceration to both legs and also to her arms. She arrived in Connaught Hospital on 15 May 1998. Her 10-year-old son was abducted by the rebels.

Massenbendu, a village close to Tumbodu, was also attacked on 11 May 1998. One of the victims, a farmer, was in his house when the door was broken down by rebel forces who demanded money; he said that he had none. Rebel forces told him that they were going to kill him because he supported President Kabbah. He sustained deep lacerations to his neck, head and arms. He was taken first to an ECOMOG base at Masingbi and was then transferred to Freetown. Three members of his family - two men and a small boy -were abducted.

Human rights abuses by rebel forces since July 1998

Atrocities declined significantly during July and August 1998 as the rainy season advanced. Despite this decreased level of atrocities concerns remained that rebel forces

could mount future attacks against unarmed civilians. In his First Progress Report on UNOMSIL, the UN Secretary-General said that he remained "*deeply concerned about the plight of innocent civilians in the country, who may still be suffering the depredations of the rebel forces or at risk from future attacks.*"

Incidents of killing and mutilations continued to be reported. On 27 July 1998 rebel forces, after feigning surrender, attacked Kabala was held by ECOMOG. Rebel forces threatened to use civilians as human shields. No mutilations were reported but a large number of civilians, including children and young people, were reported to have been abducted. Rebel forces held Kabala for about four days before it was retaken by ECOMOG. Some 200 houses had been destroyed, property was looted and money extorted from civilians. All relief goods, medical supplies and logistics for humanitarian efforts had been looted or destroyed. At about the same time, rebel forces attacked a bus carrying civilians about 10 kilometres south of Kabala, killing seven people. Three young boys were also reported to have been abducted.

During attacks on villages in the area of Gbinti, Port Loko District, in early August 1998 victims of killings and mutilations included three women and a two-year-old child who were subsequently admitted to hospital with gunshot wounds, either to the backs of their bodies or their head. Three men were also admitted to hospital with deep lacerations apparently inflicted in attempted amputations.

In late August and during September 1998 an escalation of attacks was reported in Northern Province. Reports began to be received of victims having the initials "AFRC" carved into their foreheads and backs. Around 24 August 1998 there were attacks on villages, including Thawuya and Masunthu, in Kambia District. Several civilians were subsequently admitted to the Government Hospital in the town of Kambia with amputated limbs or severe lacerations. Three had both hands and ears amputated; others had deep wounds to their arms, shoulders and faces. One of the victims was a three-month-old baby with lacerations to the nape of its neck. On 6 September 1998 the town of Kamalu, near Kamakwie, in Bombali District, was attacked by rebel forces. At least 40 civilians, including children, were reported to have been killed in the attack; others were seriously injured with machete wounds. Some of those killed had been first been subjected to torture and sexual abuse; others had been burned alive. A Paramount Chief, Samura Bangura, was reported to have been abducted from Kamalu, together with some 50 others. On 11 September 1998 Fadugu, Koinadugu District, was attacked. According to reports, during that attack eight civilians, including a Paramount Chief, Alimamy Fanna Thoronka II, were burned alive.

Three villages in Kambia District, Yebaya, Kathatinah and Kakula, were reported to have been attacked by around one hundred rebel forces on 12 September 1998, resulting in the deaths of at least 16 civilians. According to witnesses of the attack on Yebaya, at least nine people were killed either by being shot or attacked with machetes. In late September 1998 and early October 1998 more than 50 people were reported to have been killed in attacks in Kambia District, near the border with Guinea, including on the village of Kukuna, and at least 25 civilians were reported to have been mutilated, including by

amputations, by rebel forces.

On 8 October 1998 the town of Mange in Port Loko District, some 150 kilometres from Freetown and on the main road to Guinea, was attacked by more than 200 rebel forces in an attempt to gain control of a strategic bridge. Some 25 civilians were reported to have been killed in the attack but the toll was expected to be higher since rebel forces were reported to have set fire to more than 40 homes, in some cases with civilians inside. Most of the town's 15,000 inhabitants fled and many of the wounded arrived at the hospital in the town of Port Loko for treatment. ECOMOG forces maintained control of the bridge after three days of fighting.

There were further attacks by rebel forces on villages in Bombali District during September 1998. Among the victims were two men, Pa Bai Munu and Morlai Munu, from the village of Mabunduka, between Pendembu and Mateboi, some 40 kilometres from Makeni. Pa Bai Munu, a farmer aged over 70, had fled his village for Makeni following an earlier attack during which two other members of his family, including Sorie Kabbie Munu, were abducted by rebel forces. The village was burned. Other members of the same family, Pa Amadu Munu and Pa Santigie Munu, had been killed by having their throats cut during an attack on Mateboi in May 1998. Pa Bai Munu later returned to a village, Four Road Loko, close to his home at Mabunduka. He, Morlai Munu and about 20 other people were killed when Four Road Loko was attacked on 16 September 1998. According to reports, Pa Bai Munu was tied by the neck and dragged for about 10 kilometres before he was hacked to death and his body mutilated. At least six members of the family had been killed or abducted.

Attacks on villages around Kabala, including Benikoro and Badala, resumed and intensified during September 1998. The town of Kabala itself, earlier attacked and held briefly by rebel forces in late July 1998, was again attacked on 18 September 1998. Some 20 civilians were reported to have been killed and houses burned. Among the victims who were evacuated to Freetown by the ICRC were three children, two of whom were suffering from extensive burns. One of them had hidden with his family in a hut which was set alight by rebel forces; he was the only survivor.

On 24 October 1998, apparently in retaliation at the death sentence imposed on Foday Sankoh the previous day, the village of Alikalia was attacked by some 300 rebel forces. Reports of the attack referred to civilians, including women and children, being shot, decapitated or having their arms amputated. Civilian survivors of the attack on Alikalia were admitted to Connaught Hospital with gunshot wounds and multiple lacerations.

Attacks by rebel forces also escalated in Kenema District from August 1998. Among the villages affected were Mendekelema, Neama and Sandaru, which was completely destroyed, less than 30 kilometres from the town of Kenema. One of the victims of the attack on Mendekelema in late August 1998 had both hands amputated. Survivors of attacks consistently described mutilation, rape, torture, killing and the burning of houses. Entire local communities were displaced from the area, many fleeing to the towns of Kenema, Segbwema and Daru.

Recommendations

- the international community must continue to condemn in the strongest possible terms the grave breaches of international humanitarian law committed by forces of the AFRC and RUF;

- leaders of AFRC and RUF forces must take immediate measures to end human rights abuses committed by their combatants, including deliberate and arbitrary killing of non-combatants, torture, mutilation and rape, and must publicly state their commitment to respecting international humanitarian law;

- those in command of AFRC and RUF forces should exert effective control over those under their command in order to prevent torture and killing of non-combatants; those suspected of committing human rights abuses should be removed from any position of authority or duties which bring them into contact with prisoners or others at risk of abuse;

- AFRC and RUF forces must respect human rights and the basic principles of international humanitarian law and abide by minimum standards of humane behaviour at all times.

Children at the centre of the violence

Children have not escaped the violence and brutality of the conflict in Sierra Leone; they have often been the principal victims of gross human rights abuses, including the atrocities in Eastern and Northern Provinces which occurred in the months following the removal of the AFRC and RUF from power in February 1998. They have been deliberately and arbitrarily killed, mutilated and maimed, abducted and forcibly recruited by rebel forces. Among the thousands of Sierra Leonean refugees in neighbouring countries or internally displaced within Sierra Leone after February 1998 were hundreds of unaccompanied children, separated from their families as a result of the violence.

Several thousand children, including babies and very young children, have been separated from their families as a result of seven years of internal armed conflict. Most of those abducted in the earlier years of the war were from Southern and Eastern Provinces. The most common reason for the separation of children from their families was abduction by rebel forces. Others became separated from their parents as a result of attacks on their towns and villages when their parents were killed, abducted or became missing.

Many families have rejected children who had been forcibly recruited into rebel forces and have refused to take them back into their homes. Even in cases where parents are willing to take back their children, the level of resentment and bitterness within their communities sometimes prevents them from doing so.

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Significant and coordinated efforts are being undertaken by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) together with a coalition of non-governmental organizations to reunite these children with their families and to help their reintegration into their families and communities, often in the most difficult of circumstances.

The work of UN agencies and non-governmental organizations in providing help and protection to children traumatized by the conflict, including former child combatants, should be supported and reinforced by the international community.

Abduction of children

Large numbers of civilians, in particular children and young men and women, have been abducted by the RUF throughout the years of the internal armed conflict. They have been forcibly recruited to fight or forced to undertake other tasks such as carrying loads, including looted property and food, and cooking. Women and girls have been forced to become the sexual partners of rebel forces. While in the early years of the conflict representatives of the RUF claimed publicly that some of those abducted had joined rebel forces willingly, in most cases captured civilians have been held under duress, threatened with killing or ill-treatment, and have had little option but to cooperate.

Capture and abduction of civilians, including many children, has continued throughout the months since the AFRC and RUF were deposed and has occurred increasingly in Northern Province. In those areas of the country which remained under the control of rebel forces thousands of civilians, including women and children, effectively remained captive, many of them in Kailahun District, a stronghold of the RUF since the beginning of the internal armed conflict. Some estimates put this number as high as 10,000. They were used to carry goods, as human shields or for sexual slavery.

Testimonies of victims of the attacks by rebel forces which occurred in Northern Province from April 1998 invariably referred to the abduction of large numbers of people, including children. When the town of Kabala was attacked by a large group of rebel forces in July 1998, a large number of children were abducted. Njalia Nimikoro, a village some 10 kilometres southwest of Koidu, was reported to have been attacked around 18 August 1998. Nine civilians, including a 10-year-old child were admitted to hospital with gunshot wounds, and a woman and her five children were reported to have been abducted by rebel forces. A few days earlier, on 15 August 1998, rebels in the area around Koidu were reported to have released around 250 captured civilians. Dozens of civilians were reported to have been abducted, however, when three villages in Kambia District were attacked in September 1998.

The abuse of children by rebel forces

Many of those abducted have been trained and forced to fight. When RUF forces joined the AFRC in Freetown following the military coup in May 1997 many of its fighters, some as young as 11 or 12 years and many in their teens, who had previously been abducted arrived in Freetown. Many had spent several years in RUF camps in the bush

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and had fought in the conflict. In some cases their names had been changed by the RUF. Fear played a significant role in forcing these children to remain with the RUF. Those who attempted to escape were beaten or killed. Former RUF child combatants have recounted summary killing, torture and ill-treatment. These children also relied on the RUF for their means of survival, including food and shelter. As well as being forced to fight, they were used as porters to carry goods and looted property. The use of drugs such as amphetamines was reported to be widespread. Sex was used in a systematic way by the RUF to enslave girls, often very young, and young women. While some later expressed a wish to remain with their partners, most remained under duress. Many had become pregnant and had children, making eventual reintegration into their own communities even more difficult.

The histories of many of the children abducted by the RUF since 1991 emerged when they arrived in Freetown. An 11-year-old boy caught and abducted during an ambush by the RUF near Bo several years earlier had been forced to take drugs and fight. Another boy had been captured in Kailahun District in 1992 when he was six years old and separated from his mother, sister and brother. Six years later he did not know where his family were or whether they were still alive. Another boy had been abducted during an attack in Kenema District in 1992, in which both his parents had been killed, when he was 10 or 11 years old. He had been with the RUF for six years and had been trained to use a gun and fight. A girl, aged 14 at the time of her abduction in 1995, was forced to become the sexual partner of a member of the RUF. She was forced to cook and taught how to use a gun.

Victims and perpetrators of human rights abuses

When the AFRC and RUF were forced by ECOMOG from Freetown in mid-February 1998 many of these children, some of whom had been responsible for killings and torture, were identified as members of the RUF and risked revenge attacks by civilians, placing their safety and lives in jeopardy. Almost 3,000 children associated with the RUF, fearing reprisals from civilians, were reported to have fled from Freetown in a matter of days. There were reports of such children being beaten by civilians before being handed over to ECOMOG troops and one child who had been living on the streets of Freetown was reported to have been burned alive in an apparent revenge attack. ECOMOG troops were also reported to have ill-treated some of these children when they were handed over into their custody.

Recruitment of children by Civil Defence Forces

Large numbers of children have also been recruited into the ranks of the CDF which support President Kabbah and are fighting with ECOMOG against rebel forces. Although the CDF has made a commitment to end initiation of children into the traditional hunters' societies which form the CDF, there were reports that new members, including children between the ages of 15 and 17, were recruited near Magburaka in Tonkolili District, Northern Province, in July 1998. Initiation of children into the CDF was also reported to be continuing in Southern and Eastern Provinces, for example at Daru and Segbwema,

during the following months and children, some as young as seven years, were still seen carrying arms and guarding CDF checkpoints. In early October 1998 Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defence, during a visit to Sierra Leone by the Executive Director of UNICEF, Carol Bellamy, was reported as stating his commitment to disarming and demobilizing children recruited by the *kamajors*, adding, however, that the conflict in Sierra Leone was not yet over.

Efforts by the international community to meet the needs of children

The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, visited Sierra Leone in both March and May 1998. During his visit in May 1998, when he travelled to the east of the country, it became clear that one of the most pressing challenges facing Sierra Leone was the "*crisis of the young*": the plight of children affected directly or indirectly by the conflict. He identified five areas requiring urgent action by the international community: demobilization and reintegration of child combatants; resettlement of internally displaced people; tracing the families of unaccompanied children; rehabilitation and support of victims without limbs; and provision and rehabilitation of medical and educational services.

At a meeting with the UN Special Representative during his visit in May 1998, the government agreed not to recruit children under the age of 18 years into a reconstituted national army. The CDF also agreed to stop initiation and recruitment of children under the age of 18 and to begin the process of demobilization of child combatants within their ranks [12]. Both ECOMOG and the CDF agreed to provide special protection to AFRC and RUF child combatants in their custody as a result of surrender, capture or escape. On 5 November 1998 Olara Otunnu again appealed to both the CDF and rebel forces to end the recruitment of child soldiers.

Olara Otunnu called on the international community to respond in a more vigorous and concerted way to the needs of children affected by the conflict in Sierra Leone and urged it to make the rehabilitation of children in Sierra Leone a pilot project for post-conflict reconstruction. Meeting the specific needs of children, young people and women affected by the conflict in Sierra Leone were particularly important in plans for rehabilitation and reconstruction.

In a press conference following his address to the UN General Assembly in October 1998, Olara Otunnu made specific references to the plight of children in Sierra Leone and called for the international community to provide both political commitment and resources. He recommended to the key actors responsible for post-conflict reconstruction programs, such as the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), that the needs of women and children who had been victims of conflict should be at the centre of such programs.

On 29 June 1998 the UN Security Council strongly condemned the targeting of children in war, in particular their abduction, sexual abuse and recruitment as soldiers, and said that it would pay serious attention to the situation of children affected by armed conflicts.

35. Amnesty International, "Sierra Leone: Childhood – a casualty of conflict", AI Index: AFR 51/69/00, 31 August 2000, pages 3, 7-8, 22.

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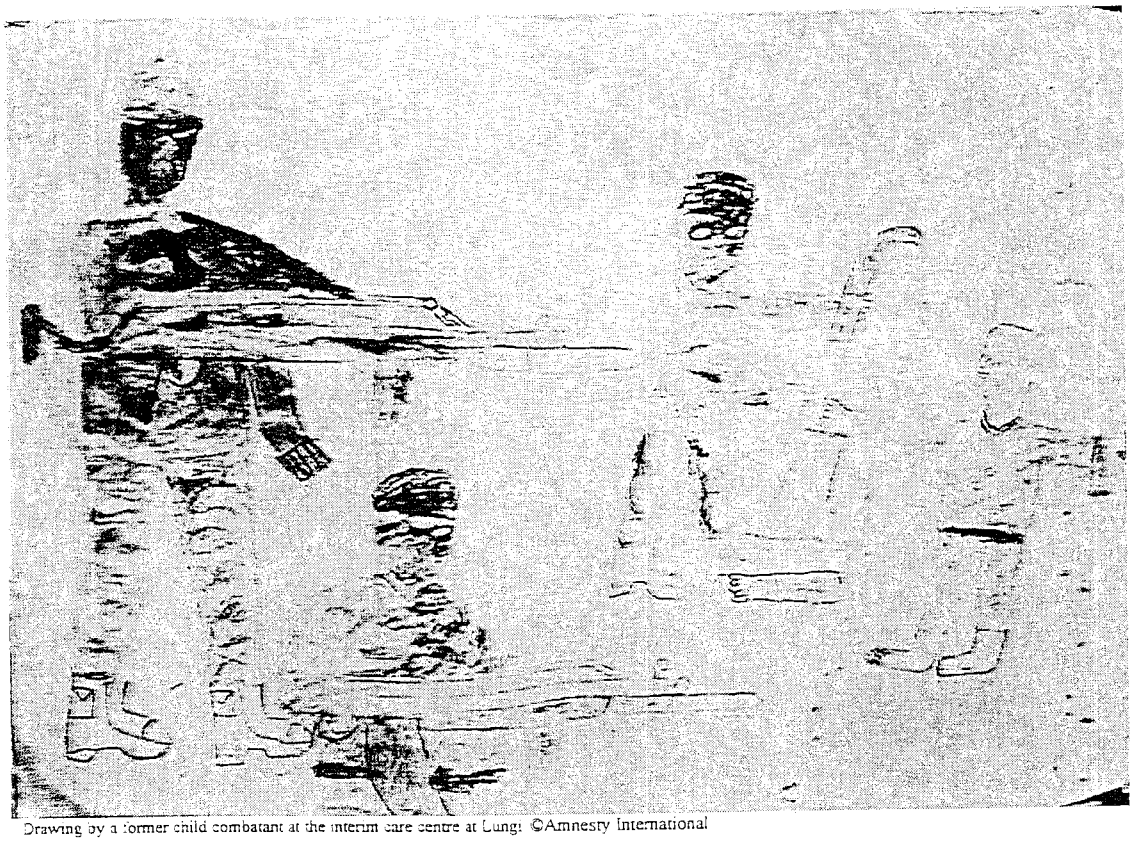
SIERRA LEONE

Childhood - a casualty of conflict



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SIERRA LEONE
Childhood - a casualty of conflict

31 August 2000 SUMMARY AI INDEX: AFR 51/69/00
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More than 5,000 children under the age of 18, both boys and girls and some as young as five, have fought as combatants in Sierra Leone's internal armed conflict. Children have been specifically singled out for recruitment by both the armed opposition and forces fighting in support of the government. Most of the children fighting with rebel forces have been abducted from their homes and families and forced to fight. Victims themselves, they have also been perpetrators of human rights abuses, sometimes against members of their own families and communities. Many have been forced to kill and mutilate under the influence of drugs, alcohol or simply because of fear. Former child combatants often say that they do not know why Sierra Leoneans are killing Sierra Leoneans.

A further 5,000 children, again both boys and girls, have been associated with rebel forces although not directly deployed in combat; they have been used to carry goods, cook or collect firewood, and girls have been raped and forced into sexual slavery. Some girls are forced to "serve" many male combatants. These figures are estimates; the real figures may be much higher.

On 7 July 1999 in Lomé, Togo, the government of Sierra Leone and the armed opposition Revolutionary United Front (RUF) signed a peace agreement which was to end Sierra Leone's eight-year conflict. The difficult task of disarming and demobilizing very large numbers of child combatants and helping them to return to a normal life with their families and communities began.

While some progress was being made towards securing the release, disarmament and demobilization of child combatants following the signing of the peace agreement, further efforts have since been curtailed. The political and security situation in Sierra Leone deteriorated in early May 2000 with the capture of some 500 United Nations (UN) peace-keeping troops by rebel forces and a resumption of hostilities. The recruitment and use of children as combatants

by both rebel forces and government-allied forces, among the most distressing features of the internal armed conflict, are continuing.

In this report Amnesty International describes the violation of the most fundamental rights of the children of Sierra Leone. Much of the information included comes from the children themselves who were interviewed by Amnesty International representatives during visits to Sierra Leone in March, June and July 2000.

The scale of the problem of child combatants in Sierra Leone is well known and has been recognized, including by the UN, the government of Sierra Leone and non-governmental organizations, both national and international. There is a wealth of international and regional standards, resolutions and statements on the protection of children in situations of armed conflict. What is now urgent is to give substance to the repeated commitments to end the recruitment and use of children as combatants.

Amnesty International is making a series of recommendations to the government of Sierra Leone, the leaders of RUF forces and the international community aimed at finally ending the use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone. These include:

- the highest priority should be given to resuming the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child combatants and prompt and effective measures should be taken to ensure that no child under the age of 18 is recruited for military service, including by raising the minimum age for military recruitment to 18;
- all children held by RUF forces should be released immediately and RUF forces should immediately cease forcible or voluntary recruitment and use of children under the age of 18;
- in all efforts by the international community to resolve the political and security crisis in Sierra Leone, the needs of children affected by the internal armed conflict, including child combatants, should be given the highest priority and concrete steps should be taken to implement commitments made to end the recruitment and use of child combatants in Sierra Leone;
- those responsible for grave breaches of international human rights law and humanitarian law, including the abduction and forcible recruitment of children, should be brought to justice.

KEYWORDS: CHILD SOLDIERS1 / RECRUITMENT OF CHILD SOLDIERS1 / JUVENILES / ARMED CONFLICT / MILITARY / NON-GOVERNMENTAL ENTITIES / WITNESS TESTIMONIES / REHABILITATION / MSP / HUMAN RIGHTS INSTRUMENTS / INVESTIGATION OF ABUSES / PEACE-KEEPING / UNICEF / PHOTOGRAPHS

This report summarizes a 40-page document (15,129 words), *Sierra Leone: Childhood - a casualty of conflict* (AI Index: AFR 51/69/00), issued by Amnesty International on 31 August 2000. Anyone wishing further details or to take action on this issue should consult the full document. An extensive range of our materials on this and other subjects is available at http://www.amnesty.org and Amnesty International news releases can be received by email: http://www.amnesty.org/news/emailnws.htm

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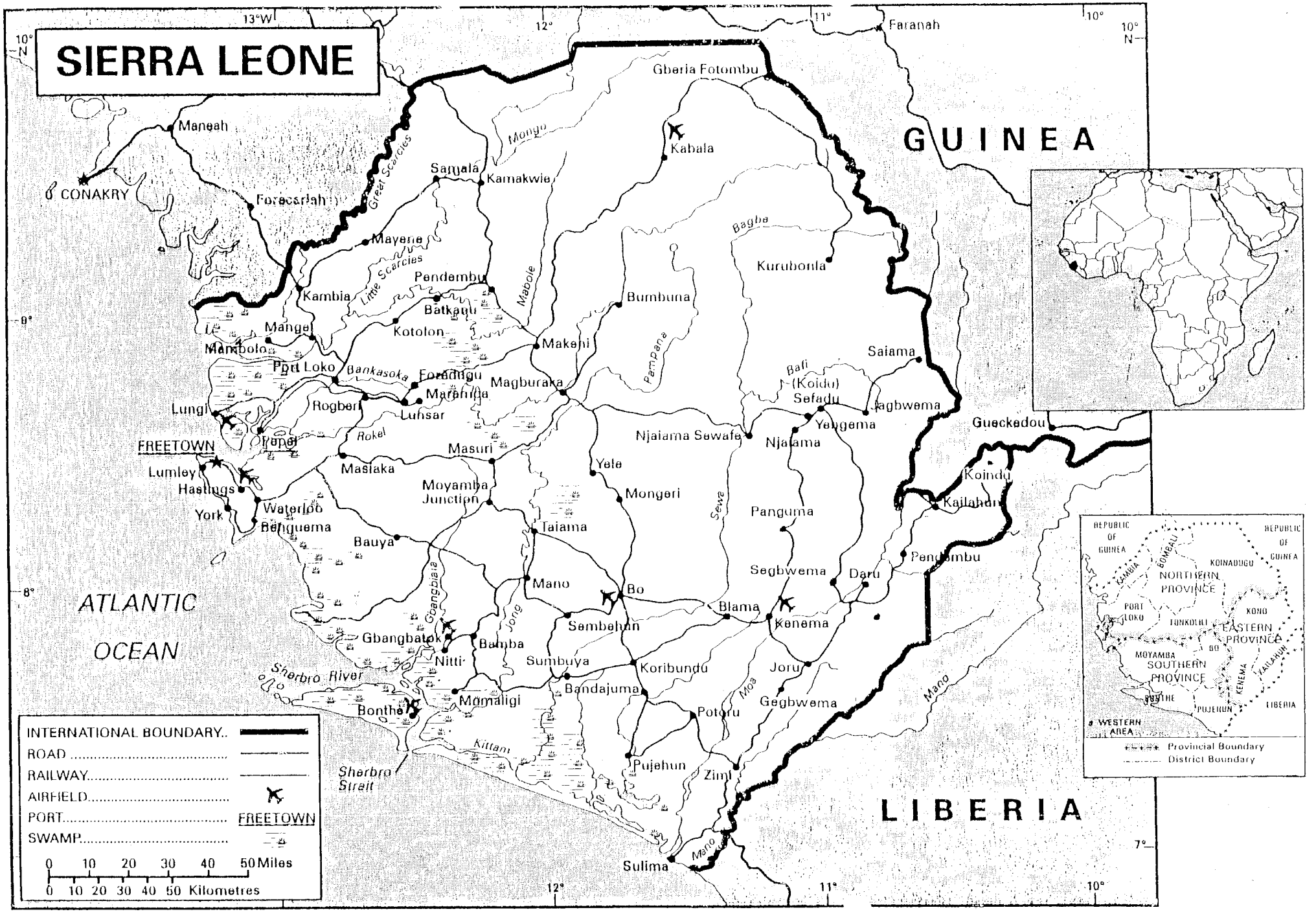
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SIERRA LEONE

Childhood - a casualty of conflict

Introduction

More than 5,000 children under the age of 18, both boys and girls and some as young as five, have fought as combatants in Sierra Leone's internal armed conflict. Children have been specifically singled out for recruitment by both the armed opposition and forces fighting in support of the government. Most of the children fighting with rebel forces have been abducted from their homes and families and forced to fight. Many were separated from their families at a very young age. Victims themselves, they have also been perpetrators of human rights abuses, sometimes against members of their own families and communities. Many have been forced to kill and mutilate under the influence of drugs, alcohol or simply because of fear. Former child combatants often say that they do not know why Sierra Leoneans are killing Sierra Leoneans.

A further 5,000 children, again both boys and girls, have been associated with rebel forces although not directly deployed in combat; they have been used to carry goods, cook or collect firewood, and girls have been raped and forced into sexual slavery. Some girls are forced to "serve" many male combatants.[1]

These are the figures provided by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) but they are estimates; the real figures may be much higher. The Special Representative of the United Nations (UN) Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, after a visit to Sierra Leone, said on 9 September 1999 that '*more than 10,000 children have been serving as child soldiers in various fighting groups*'.

On 7 July 1999 in Lomé, Togo, the government of Sierra Leone and the armed opposition Revolutionary United Front (RUF) signed a peace agreement which was to end Sierra Leone's eight-year conflict. The difficult task of disarming and demobilizing very large numbers of child combatants and helping them to return to a normal life with their families and communities began.

While some progress was being made towards securing the release, disarmament and demobilization of child combatants following the signing of the peace agreement, further efforts have since been curtailed. The political and security situation in Sierra Leone deteriorated in early May 2000 with the capture of some 500 UN peace-keeping troops by rebel forces and a resumption of hostilities. The recruitment and use of children

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[1]For further information about the abduction, rape and other forms of sexual violence committed against girls and women, see *Sierra Leone: Rape and other forms of sexual violence against girls and women* (AI Index: AFR 51/35/00), published by Amnesty International on 29 June 2000.

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as combatants by both rebel forces and government-allied forces are continuing. This is among the most distressing features of a conflict which has also been characterized by systematic and widespread deliberate and arbitrary killing, amputation of limbs and mutilation, rape and other forms of sexual violence.[2]

In this report Amnesty International describes the violation of the most fundamental rights of the children of Sierra Leone. Much of the information included comes from the children themselves who were interviewed by Amnesty International representatives during visits to Sierra Leone in March, June and July 2000.

The scale of the problem of child combatants in Sierra Leone is well known and has been recognized, including by the UN Secretary-General, his Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict, UNICEF, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, the government of Sierra Leone and non-governmental organizations, both national and international. There is a wealth of international and regional standards, resolutions and statements on the protection of children in situations of armed conflict. What is now urgent is to give substance to the repeated commitments to end the recruitment and use of children as combatants, by whatever side.

Amnesty International is making a series of recommendations to the government of Sierra Leone, the leaders of RUF forces and the international community aimed at finally ending the use of child soldiers in Sierra Leone. These include:

- the highest priority should be given to resuming the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child combatants, and prompt and effective measures should be taken to ensure that no child under the age of 18 is recruited for military service, including by passing legislation raising the minimum age for military recruitment to 18;

- all children held by RUF forces, either used as combatants or in any way associated with fighting forces, should be released immediately and RUF forces should immediately cease forcible or voluntary recruitment and use of children under the age of 18;

[2] For further information about human rights committed during the conflict, see previous reports published by Amnesty International, in particular: *Sierra Leone: Recommendations to the international contact group on Sierra Leone, New York, 19 April 1999* (AI Index:AFR 51/05/99), 19 April 1999; *Sierra Leone: 1998 - a year of atrocities against civilians* (AI Index: AFR 51/22/98), November 1998; *Sierra Leone: A disastrous set-back for human rights* (AI Index: AFR 51/05/97), 20 October 1997; *Sierra Leone: Towards a future founded on human rights* (AI Index: AFR 51/05/96), 25 September 1996; and *Sierra Leone: Human rights abuses in a war against civilians* (AI Index: AFR 51/05/95), 13 September 1995.

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- in all efforts by the international community to resolve the political and security crisis in Sierra Leone, the needs of children affected by the internal armed conflict, including child combatants, should be given the highest priority and concrete steps should be taken to implement commitments made to end the recruitment and use of child combatants in Sierra Leone;

- those responsible for grave breaches of international human rights law and humanitarian law, including the abduction and forcible recruitment of children, should be brought to justice.

The use of child combatants in the internal armed conflict

Children have fought with the various forces involved in Sierra Leone's internal armed conflict which began in 1991. These forces include the RUF, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), the Sierra Leone Army and the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The AFRC came to power following the military coup on 25 May 1997 which overthrew the government of President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah elected in 1996. The AFRC joined forces with the RUF after coming to power and remained its ally after the AFRC was forced from power in February 1998 by forces deployed in Sierra Leone by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), known as ECOMOG. With the signing of the peace agreement in July 1999, the AFRC allied itself to the government of President Kabbah but some of its forces continued to engage in hostilities against government-allied forces. Rebel forces who remain in control of parts of the north and east of the country continue to forcibly recruit and use child soldiers. Previously disarmed and demobilized members of the AFRC and those members of the Sierra Leone Army who had remained loyal to the government, including children under the age of 18, have again been recruited and rearmed to fight on behalf of the government since May 2000. Large numbers of children have also been recruited and used in combat by the CDF, the civilian militia based on societies of traditional hunters, such as the *kamajors*, which support the government of President Kabbah.

The involvement of children in conflict has devastating effects on their physical and mental integrity. There have been higher casualty rates among children because of their inexperience, fearlessness and lack of training. Children are considered as particularly useful because their size and agility means that they may be sent on particularly hazardous assignments. Frequently ill-treated or even killed by the commanders, they have no protectors. Adult combatants who commit human rights abuses, including crimes against humanity and war crimes, involve children in those crimes. In addition to the obvious risks

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of death or serious injury in combat, children suffer disproportionately from the general rigours of military life, especially in the bush, and are particularly vulnerable to disease and malnutrition. As for the severe psychological consequences of active participation in hostilities, with children witnessing and at times also committing atrocities, the full extent of the impact on child combatants as well as society as a whole may only become apparent over a long period.

Former child combatants tell their stories

Those children who have been released or have escaped and who have been disarmed and demobilized provide horrifying accounts of how the conflict has affected them. The names of the children whose testimonies are included have been changed in order to protect their identities. Most were interviewed by Amnesty International representatives during June and July 2000.

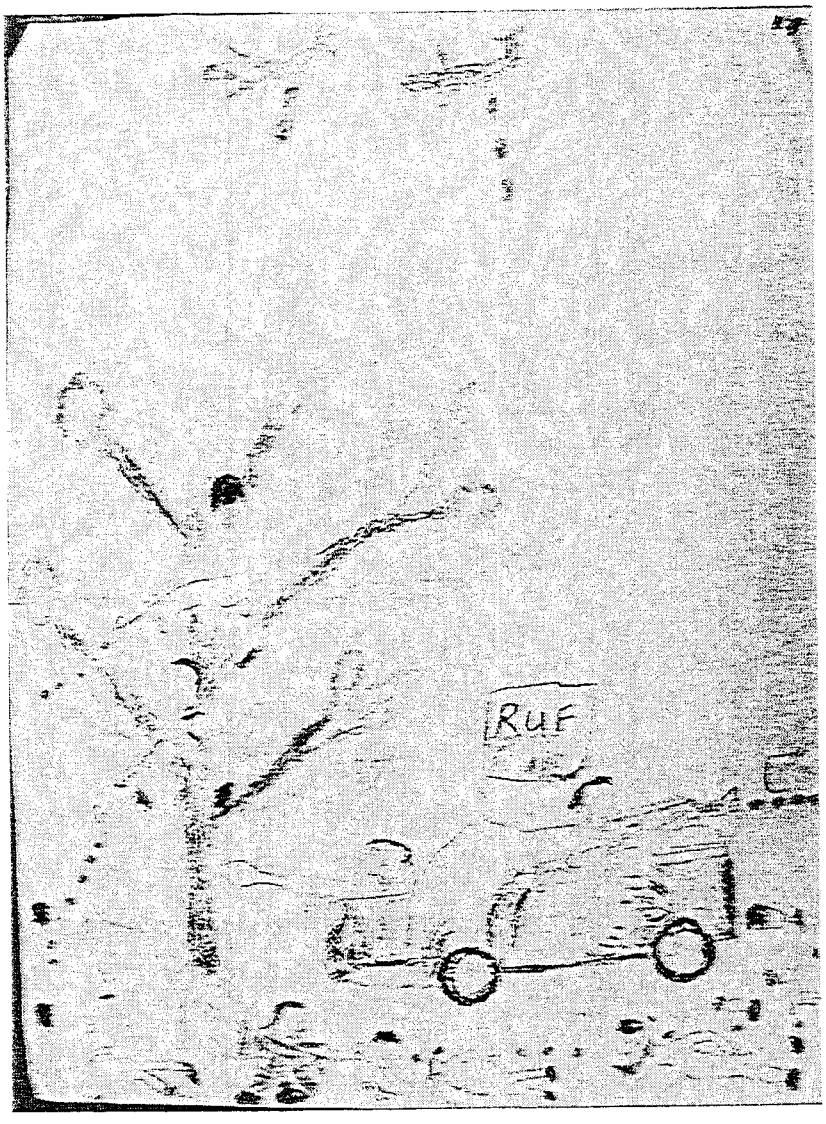
Child combatants live in constant fear of being beaten and killed. Many former child combatants describe being threatened, intimidated and severely beaten; others recount the killing of their friends and companions. Former child combatants describe the killings and mutilations of civilians which they carried out while fighting. If they refused, they risked being beaten or killed. Peter, a 12-year-old former child combatant, said: "*When I was killing, I felt like it wasn't me doing these things. I had to because the rebels threatened to kill me.*"

Former child combatants fighting with RUF

Ibrahim is now aged 16 and living at a centre for former child combatants at an internally displaced people's camp at Waterloo, 20 kilometres east of Freetown. He was captured by the RUF in 1992 in Kono District, Eastern Province, and from there was transferred to the rebel stronghold of Kailahun District, also in Eastern Province. He was taught how to use weapons, how to advance and attack the enemy and how to ambush. He described how before attacks, each combatant, including child combatants, was given cocaine and marijuana: "*After sniffing cocaine, I was not afraid of anything. I became bloody.*"

Ibrahim told Amnesty International on 19 June 2000 that when the RUF forces with whom he fought heard that RUF leader Foday Sankoh was going to be tried in 1998: "*We were ordered to kill any civilian that we came across. Any fighter or children suspected of being reluctant to do the killings were severely beaten. We were asked to advance and to do everything possible to terrorize the civilians. It was during this period that people's hands and limbs were cut off, in Kono, Masingbi, Matatoka, Magburaka and Makeni.*

During that time, one of the children asked the commander the reasons for the killings. He said that the civilians were supporting President Kabbah's government. Sheriff Kabia, who was 17 and known as 'Crazy Jungle', was killed because he asked this question." Sheriff Kabia was reported to have been killed in November 1998. Ibrahim also described the death of Mamadu Kamara, aged 14, who was killed because he refused to cut off the hand of someone from his own village.



Drawing by a former child combatant at the interim care centre at Lungi
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Abdul, now aged 17, was abducted by the RUF in 1997 during an ambush in Kenema District, Eastern Province. He told Amnesty International on 21 July 2000 that he was taken to an RUF training camp, known as Camp Lion, near Pendembu in Kailahun District where he was trained by both Sierra Leoneans and Liberians. He was taught to use a variety of weapons, including AK47 and AK58 rifles, which he said came from Liberia. "*After the Lomé peace accord, we thought that was the end of the whole war. We were waiting to disarm; there was no fighting. Instead we all went to Tongo Field to mine. Most rebels did that.*" Abdul was then ordered to go to Lunsar, Port Loko District: "*We didn't even reach the front line when we met some wounded colleagues. I wanted to surrender but I was afraid.*" When he gave himself up to Sierra Leone Army forces, his arms were tied tightly behind his back; rope marks on both arms were still visible. He was first taken to Masiaka, some 50 kilometres east of Freetown, where he was hit on the head with a pistol by a soldier and then transferred to Cockerill military headquarters in Freetown. "*They threatened to kill me. For the first week I was treated badly but then I was given food and water and no one treated me badly. For the first two weeks I was not allowed out of the cell.*" He remained there for more than three weeks before being transferred to an interim care centre in Freetown. "*I want to go back to school but here in Freetown, not in the provinces. I am scared that I'll get taken back to the front line.*"

David, now aged 14, from Bumbuna, Tonkoiili District, Northern Province, was abducted in 1996 by the RUF when they attacked Bumbuna. He is now at a centre established to care for former child combatants, known as an interim care centre, run by an international non-governmental organization, in Freetown. When interviewed by Amnesty International on 12 July 2000, he said that after his abduction he was taken first to Kabala, Koinadugu District, Northern Province, and then to Bunumbu in Kailahun District, an RUF stronghold. There he, together with another 40 children, was trained to fight at Camp Lion. "*I had to go through the training and learn to fight, otherwise the RUF people would beat me or kill me.*" Among those killed by the RUF during the training was a boy, aged about 11, with whom David had become friends. He was beaten to death because he refused to continue training. He had complained of being tired - the training was difficult and he was exhausted. He was beaten in front of more than 30 other children and his body was thrown into the bush. Another child, aged 14, was also beaten and killed.

David described how, even under the influence of marijuana and alcohol, he was still afraid to fight, but he did not tell anyone for fear of being killed. David remained with rebel forces for three years until surrendering to forces of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) at Makeni, Bombali District, Northern Province, after the peace agreement was signed in July 1999. Now at the interim care centre, he said: "*I want to become a doctor now and go back to school to learn how to cure people.*"

Many former child combatants with rebel forces have described how they were forced to drink alcohol and take drugs and the effect that it had on them. Among the drugs used were marijuana, amphetamines, commonly referred to as "blue boats", and cocaine. When child combatants refused to take drugs they were beaten and, in some cases, killed.

Komba, now aged 15, was captured by the RUF in 1997 in Binkolo, Bombali, District. Now at the centre for former child combatants at Waterloo, he told Amnesty International on 20 June 2000 that he was among rebel forces who attacked Freetown in January 1999: "*My legs were cut with blades and cocaine was rubbed in the wounds. Afterwards, I felt like a big person. I saw the other people like chickens and rats. I wanted to kill them.*"

When interviewed by Amnesty International on 20 June 2000, Gibril, aged 11, said: "*Before battles, I was given white powder which was mixed with rice. It made me brave, it made me think that I could do anything.*"

Fifteen child combatants, including at least two girls, were among some 2,500 Sierra Leonean refugees who fled into Gueckédou in Guinea during the first two weeks of August 2000 to escape intensified fighting and bombing by government forces of rebel-held areas in Eastern Province. All but one had been abducted by rebel forces and forced to fight for periods of up to seven years. According to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), all the children said that they had been heavily drugged with cocaine and they acknowledged that they had been extremely brutal. They were separated from other refugees because they feared that victims of the atrocities which they had committed would recognize them.

Former child combatants fighting with the AFRC

After being removed from power in February 1998 by ECOMOG forces acting in support of President Kabbah, the AFRC, together with the RUF, wreaked a campaign of terror against civilians, particularly in Northern Province. From April 1998 reports emerged of widespread killings, amputations and abductions in villages in Northern Province.

When interviewed on 19 June 2000 by Amnesty International, Sayo, now aged 14, said that he was abducted by AFRC forces in 1998 in Makali, Tonkolili District. He was trained in different places, including Koinadugu District. He described how his skin was cut in different places, including near his eyes, and cocaine put in the wounds. "*When I go to the battle fields, I smoke enough. That's why I become unafraid of everything. When you refuse to take drugs, it's called technical sabotage and you are killed.*" After the peace agreement was signed in July 1999 Sayo was freed and taken to a centre for former child

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combatants run by a non-governmental organization, CARITAS-Makeni, in Kabala. He is now at the centre for former child combatants at Waterloo.

Hassan, now aged 15, from Makeni, told Amnesty International on 21 July 2000 at a centre for former child combatants in Freetown that he was abducted with four of his cousins by the AFRC in 1998 when he was aged 13. He was trained in a camp near Kabala where he was given an AK 47 rifle. He claimed that there were several hundred other young boys in the camp. The training lasted three months. He had to learn how to dismantle a weapon, how to use a rocket propelled grenade (RPG), how to attack, how to undertake guard duty and how to parade. He also said that he had to parade for AFRC leaders, including Johnny Paul Koroma, now head of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, established under the July 1999 peace agreement, and Brigadier, now Colonel, Gabriel Mani, who was appointed in July 2000 as Director of Army Training.

Hassan spent over a year with the AFRC in Kono District, Eastern Province. Following the signing of the peace agreement in July 1999 he remained with the AFRC in the Occra Hills, some 40 kilometres east of Freetown, the stronghold of a faction of the AFRC known as the "West Side Boys" who had not disarmed after the peace agreement. In late June 2000 Hassan travelled to Freetown to purchase drinks for the "West Side Boys". He was not armed and he travelled in a public transport vehicle. At a checkpoint he was recognized as a West Side Boy by members of the Sierra Leone Army and the *kamajors* and ordered to get out of the vehicle. His shoes and trousers were removed but, initially, he was not otherwise ill-treated. He was taken to Benguema military training camp, 20 kilometres east of Freetown, and the following day to Cockerill military headquarters in Freetown. He was interrogated about a recent attack on the town of Masiaka. One soldier, however, beat him severely on his back; three weeks later, in July 2000, deep scars were still visible. The beating was stopped by a more senior officer.

Hassan said: "*At first, I loved being in the bush. I could get money and other things, including vehicles, for free. But then I got tired. Now I want to go home.*"

When interviewed on 24 July 2000 John, now aged 15, from Mokanji, Moyamba District, Southern Province, did not remember when he had been abducted by the AFRC and did not know what had happened to his family. He was threatened that he would be killed if he did not go with the AFRC and was taken to Makeni where he was trained how to use weapons and how to fight the CDF and ECOMOG. John said that he was told not to kill civilians and that civilians were killed in the cross-fire. He was also instructed not to loot property but said that many AFRC members did engage in looting. "*I was not happy living in the bush but I had no way to escape. I asked to leave and was told 'go if you can' but I then saw children being killed - many of them - when they tried to escape to go home.*

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I was afraid of fighting but I was given 'blue boats'. After that I felt like I could do anything. I never refused to take drugs."

John recalled that children were punished if they refused to obey orders: "*I was punished after I was asked to be part of an advance team to attack Koinadugu. I was not feeling well; I was feeling sick and had a stomach ache. I said that I could not go and fight. The commander ordered other small boys to beat me. After I was beaten a doctor who had been captured helped me.*"

Isatu, a girl now aged 17, was abducted by AFRC forces from Fadugu, Koinadugu District, in 1998. She told Amnesty International on 24 July 2000 at a centre for former child combatants: "*I did not want to go; I was forced to go. They killed a lot of women who refused to go with them.*" She was forced to become the sexual partner of the combatant who captured her and is now the mother of their three-month-old baby: "*When they capture young girls, you belong to the soldier who captured you. I was 'married' to him.*"

Isatu was trained in a base near Kabala to use weapons, including a bayonet, gun and knife, and fought in the area around Fadugu and Makeni. She admitted that she had cut off the hands of children and adults, and set fire to houses with civilians locked inside. "*There is a law of the AFRC that forces you to kill; if you refuse to, you yourself are killed.*"

Former child combatants fighting with the CDF

Child combatants recruited by the CDF have also recounted their experiences. The parents of 12-year-old Brima, now at the centre for former child combatants at Waterloo, gave permission to the CDF to use him as a child combatant in 1998. He continued to live at his home but was active with the CDF in areas around Masiaka, Port Loko and Yele. He was trained to fight by CDF "initiators", those who admit members into the societies of traditional hunters. Brima told Amnesty International on 20 June 2000 that when children disobeyed orders they were beaten unless their parents paid a fine. Brima recalled: "*I was beaten because I became separated from a CDF patrol.*"

Brima recounted that when a rebel is caught, his arms are tied up behind his back. The captive is then interrogated and stabbed to death. "*I saw four executions.*"

Mohamed, also aged 12, from Port Loko, Port Loko District, Northern Province, was recruited by the CDF in 1998. His parents were not informed about the recruitment but they did nothing to prevent it because of the status attached to membership of the society of traditional hunters, such as the *kamajors*, described by Mohamed as "*the supremacy of the society*". In addition to carrying water and machetes for the CDF, he escorted captured

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rebels to the Sierra Leone Army. He also described to Amnesty International on 20 June 2000 how the CDF executed rebels they had captured or those suspected of being rebels: *"I saw three captured rebels being killed; their heads were cut off. The children had to bring the heads to the SLA [Sierra Leone Army] headquarters to show that the CDF were effective."*

Rehabilitating child combatants

Until the resumption of hostilities in May 2000 UNAMSIL, including its human rights section, played an important role in negotiating the release of children held by rebel forces and providing logistical support and military escorts to ensure their safe transfer to interim care centres. It worked with a number of non-governmental organizations, both national and international, who have been active in trying to secure the release of children and to provide the assistance they need. In March 2000 UNICEF and non-governmental organizations were supporting more than 700 children in interim care centres; about 80 per cent of these were demobilized child combatants.

Following the July 1999 peace agreement and before the resumption of hostilities in May 2000, specific procedures had been adopted for child combatants. When children presented themselves to a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration reception centre - sometimes simply a table in the middle of the road - those who were not combatants were handed over to child protection agencies and taken to an interim care centre. If, after questioning, it was established that they were combatants, they were transferred to the children's sections of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camps. For those who had fought with the RUF, the AFRC or the former Sierra Leone Army this program lasted for five weeks; for those with the CDF a shorter program was provided because normally the children had not been separated from their families and communities.

At interim care centres former child combatants are provided with medical treatment, food and clothing, psycho-social rehabilitation, education and recreation. Some of the older children, especially those who had spent months or years with rebel forces, have bullet wounds or other injuries. Malnutrition, respiratory and skin infections and other ailments are common, as are sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV/AIDS. Some still suffer the effects of narcotic drugs.

When Amnesty International met former child combatants at the centre for former child combatants at Waterloo on 25 March 2000, a boy aged 14 who had been abducted by AFRC forces in 1998 said: *"I want to go to school and learn so that I can forget the old*

times." Another former child combatant interviewed at Waterloo on 19 June 2000 said: "*We want to go back to school; we don't want to go back to the bush.*"



Former child soldiers in the interim care centre at Waterloo, east of Freetown, 25 March 2000
© Amnesty International

The psychological effects of the conflict on children have often been severe: many have killed, mutilated or raped or have witnessed such atrocities. During the rebel incursion into Freetown in January 1999 - when at least 2,000 civilians were killed, more than 500 people had limbs severed, and rape of girls and women was systematic - it was estimated that some 10 per cent of rebel combatants were children. Often under the influence of drugs, many of them committed atrocities. During the first few weeks after they are disarmed and demobilized, former child combatants are reported to be often aggressive and violent, to show other behavioural problems, to suffer nightmares, alienation, outbursts of anger and an inability to interact socially.

In a report published in January 2000, the international humanitarian organization *Médecins sans Frontières* (MSF-Holland) said that: "*The psychological impact of actually witnessing horrific events imposes a serious psychological stress. Deliberately or not, witnessing at least once events such as torture, execution,(attempted) amputations, people being burnt in their houses and public rape often results in traumatic stress or even post-traumatic stress disorder.*"[3]

[3] *Assessing Trauma in Sierra Leone*, Médecins Sans Frontières (Holland), 11 January 2000.

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At an interim care centre in Lungi, former child combatants have been encouraged to make drawings of their experiences as child combatants. Many have depicted horrific scenes of the mutilation, rape and killing in which they have been involved.



Drawing by a former child combatant at the interim care centre at Lungi
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After considering Sierra Leone's initial report under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in January 2000, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed concern that the government had insufficient capacity to provide psycho-social

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assistance to the many children who have suffered forms of psychological trauma. The Committee urged the government to make every effort to strengthen available psycho-social assistance and to recruit more mental health workers, recommending in addition that the government seek international assistance in this area.

After undergoing the demobilization and rehabilitation process, efforts are made to reunite former child combatants with their families. Child protection agencies have developed programs for family tracing and reunification, often with success. In some cases, however, former child combatants, especially the younger ones, do not know their real names and have lost all knowledge of what a family is. One boy now aged 16, who was abducted by the RUF in 1992, said: "*The commander told me when I was captured: 'Your father is gone. Now I am your father'.*" Another, aged 15, who was abducted in 1997 said: "*After you are captured you cannot think about your family; that is out. Sometimes, when I was by myself, I would think about them. But when you are captured you have to change or you are a dead man.*"

Many former child combatants have been transferred to the province from which they originally came, if this has been possible, in order to increase the possibility of tracing their families. In other cases, however, their parents have been killed or displaced. Where their families cannot be traced, the children are placed temporarily with foster families. Significant efforts have been made to sensitize communities to the plight of former child combatants and to promote reconciliation. In some cases, however, former child combatants have been rejected by their families and communities because of the atrocities committed by rebel forces during the conflict. One 16-year-old former child combatant said: "*I don't want to go back to my village because I burnt all the houses there. I don't know what the people would do, but they'd harm me. I don't think I'll ever be accepted in my village.*"

Girls who have been abducted and forcibly recruited often face specific problems. When an Amnesty International delegation visited Sierra Leone in March 2000, it identified that the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants appeared often not to provide any real opportunity to those girls and women who had been abducted by rebel forces and forced to become their sexual partners to free themselves from former combatants when they reported for disarmament and demobilization. The Fourth Report of the UN Secretary-General on UNAMSIL of 19 May 2000 recognized "*the need to protect dependants of ex-combatants, the majority of whom are women and children*" and that "*the majority of 'wives' of the combatants are in fact abductees and, if not interviewed*

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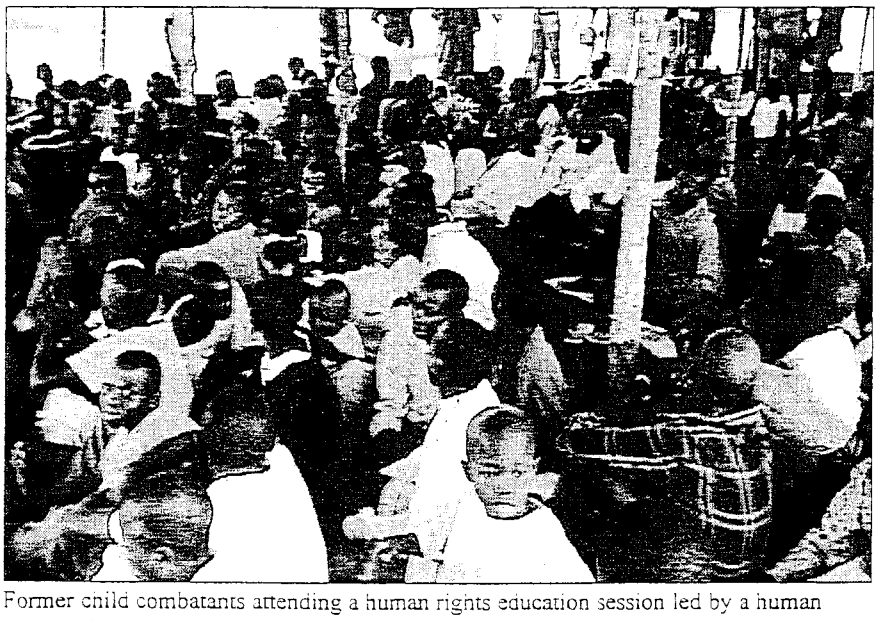
separately from their 'husbands', would most likely not feel free to express their wish to return to their original families".[4]

Effective provision needs to be made for those girls and women, many of whom are pregnant or have young children, to leave former combatants, if they wish. This would require: firstly, the opportunity to indicate privately to UN personnel their desire to leave the men who abducted and sexually abused them; secondly, support to enable them to receive all necessary medical and psycho-social care; and thirdly, support either to return to their families where this is possible or to re-establish their lives together with their children.

In Resolution 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict of 11 August 2000 the UN Security Council underlined "*the importance of giving consideration to the special needs and particular vulnerabilities of girls affected by armed conflict, including, inter alia, those heading households, orphaned, sexually exploited and used as combatants*" and urged "*that their human rights, protection and welfare be incorporated in the development of policies and programmes, including those for prevention, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration*".



Former child combatants attending a human rights education session led by a human rights officer for CARITAS-Makeni at the interim care centre at Lungi, July 2000
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[4]Fourth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2000/455.

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May 2000 - children again forced into conflict

"A whole generation of children has already been emotionally traumatized and physically scarred. They'd been told that peace had finally arrived. Now what are we supposed to tell them?" - Johanna van Gerpen, UNICEF representative in Sierra Leone, 10 May 2000.

After the signing of a peace agreement between the government and the RUF in July 1999, several hundred children were released by rebel forces; by the end of 1999 some 800 children, many of them combatants, had been handed over to UNICEF and other child protection agencies. During the first months of 2000 there was a significant increase in the release of children, most of them combatants, by AFRC forces from the Occra Hills to the east of Freetown and from Kabala, Northern Province. By the end of April 2000, some 1,700 child combatants, of an estimated total of 5,000, had been absorbed into the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program. According to estimates by UNICEF, about 800 of them had been reunited with their families or placed in foster care, or had run away, leaving 900 in interim care centres. Several thousand children, however, remained in the hands of rebel forces, particularly in Northern Province.

When the political and security situation in Sierra Leone deteriorated seriously at the beginning of May 2000, fears of an imminent attack on Freetown by rebel forces intensified and hostilities between RUF forces and forces of the Sierra Leone Army, the CDF and UNAMSIL troops were reported close to the capital and in Port Loko District.

Moves to secure the release of children still held by rebel forces halted. Former child combatants in interim care centres in areas where rebel forces were active again became vulnerable to being abducted and forcibly recruited by rebel forces. UNICEF and the child protection agencies with which it works have tried to ensure adequate protection for these children.

In his Fourth Report on UNAMSIL to the UN Security Council on 19 May 2000, the UN Secretary-General cited preliminary reports which suggested that child combatants were being used extensively as hostilities resumed. UNAMSIL human rights officers who visited Masiaka on 15 May 2000 observed several child combatants, mostly boys, with the CDF, the AFRC and former Sierra Leone Army and the reconstituted Sierra Leone Army. Some 25 per cent of the combatants observed were under 18 and some freely admitted that they were between 7 and 14. Almost all of them were armed. Other reports indicated that RUF forces were using a similar proportion of child combatants at the front line. In his subsequent report to the UN Security Council on 31 July 2000, the Secretary-General reported that both the RUF and forces fighting for the government continued to use children

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in combat.[5] He expressed deep concern about continuing human rights abuses, including the forced recruitment of children, and urged "*all fighting forces to immediately release all child combatants among their forces and to cease the recruitment of children as combatants*".

Continuing recruitment of children by the RUF

Since May 2000 RUF forces have continued to abduct and forcibly recruit children as combatants, some of whom had previously been demobilized. While some of the children recruited by both rebel and government-allied forces since May 2000 were forcibly recruited, usually after being abducted, others were reported to have volunteered to join the RUF. It appears, however, that in many cases these children had little option but to do so. Reports from Kambia District, Northern Province, during May 2000 described RUF forces going from village to village demanding a quota of men and boys, most of whom were forced to join under duress. Local traditional rulers, known as Paramount Chiefs, were ordered to provide a certain number of recruits and families were forced to hand over children, including those aged under 18. For example, in Madina Junction, Kambia District, 300 men and boys were demanded. Similar reports have been received from the towns of Kambia and Kamakwie. This practice explained the comparatively high number of young men and boys, without their families, who fled across the border into Forécariah region, Guinea, during May 2000. Reports of forcible recruitment were also received from Mange in Port Loko District.

In Makeni, when the RUF first confronted UNAMSIL troops in early May 2000, children were pressed by RUF forces by threats and intimidation into joining them. RUF commanders positioned vehicles at the entrance of an interim care centre, run by CARITAS-Makeni, and repeatedly coaxed the older boys to rejoin them, through enticement and implicit threat. Some of the children were told by RUF forces that their families had been traced and that the RUF would help them return to their homes. It was also reported that the RUF had threatened to kill all those in the interim care centre if the children did not rejoin the RUF. Staff at the centre believed that up to 30 boys aged from 14 to 17 rejoined the RUF; other estimates put the number of those who rejoined the RUF at 40 or as many as 50. It appeared that shortage of food at the centre, which had been looted by rebel forces, was also a factor influencing the children's return to rebel forces. The centre had been looted on 2 May 2000 by rebel forces; some of the older boys in the interim care centre had tried to prevent the looting and one of the adult carers, a woman, had been beaten. The rebels came the following day and again looted the centre.

[5] Fifth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, S/2000/751.

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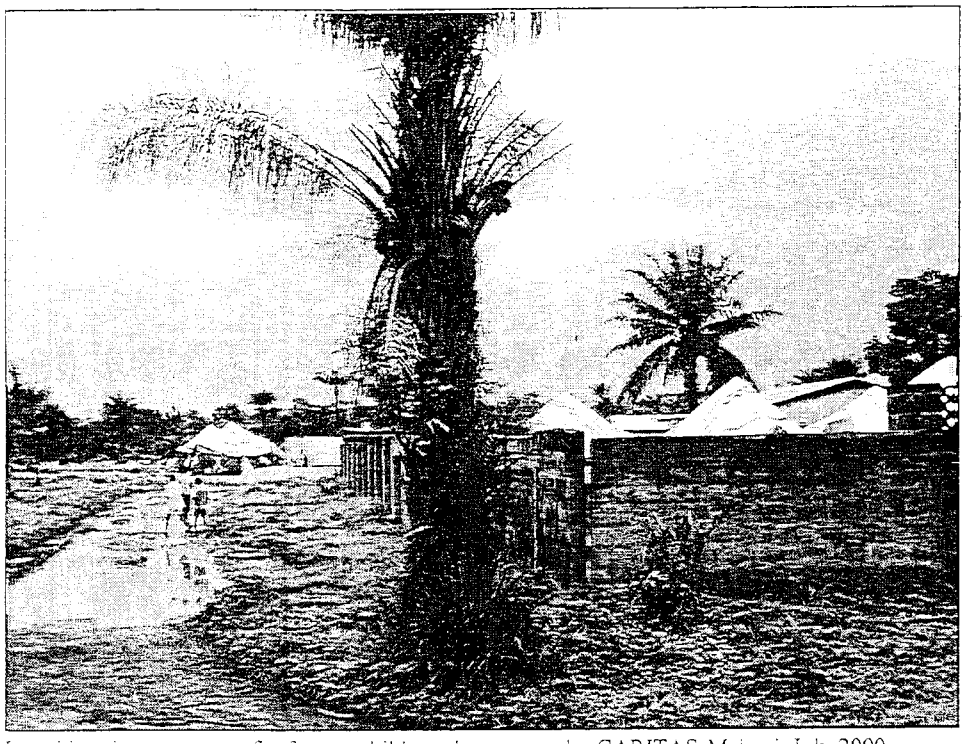

Lungi interim care centre for former child combatants run by CARITAS-Makeni, July 2000
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For fear of further attack, on 23 May 2000, 83 children from the centre - 73 boys and nine girls, most aged between 6 and 12 years - and 27 adult carers fled the centre for Freetown. On their arduous three-day trek their remaining possessions, including food and money, were stolen by RUF combatants. When they arrived in Petifu, Tonkolili District, some of the group, both children and adults, were beaten by members of the CDF. The children finally arrived safely in Freetown on 26 May 2000 and were taken to the interim care centre at Lungi.

One former child combatant, Francis, now aged 16 who had been abducted in 1998, described to Amnesty International on 15 July 2000 at the interim care centre in Lungi how RUF forces had tried to lure children back into their ranks from an interim care centre in Lunsar, Port Loko District: "*by then the rebels had moved from Makeni to Lunsar. They came to our camp and asked some children to join them again and we refused. We have rights to live and play. They encouraged us to join them. We told the manager of the centre to move us. At that time there were no vehicles; even the NGO's vehicle was not around. We walked along the road to Rogberi Junction where we met the rebels. They told us to return to our camp. We knew that they were killing people around. After that they said, please, come and join us or we are going to kill you people. After that we fled in the bush.*"

On 31 May 2000 RUF forces were reported to have killed two boys and a young man at the village of Maforay, near Port Loko, after they refused to join them. On 15 June 2000, a farmer from a village near Magbile, Port Loko District, between Masiaka and Rogberi Junction, described to Amnesty International the killing of his sons by RUF forces on 11 June 2000: *"My four sons, aged 11, 21, 23 and 25, were building a new hut when the rebels asked them to join them. They refused and the rebels shot and killed them."* His three eldest sons were all farmers, married with children; his youngest son worked on his father's farm.

Continuing recruitment of children by government-allied forces

Government-allied forces have also continued to recruit children and use them in combat. Some of the child combatants who had been disarmed and demobilized after the peace agreement were again recruited to fight against the RUF. Government-allied forces comprise a loose alliance of the Sierra Leone Army, the AFRC and the CDF. Although in theory these various forces are under the command of the Chief of Defence Staff, in practice it appears that chain- of-command control is diffuse and often unclear and that, in the confused and unstable situation which prevails, it is unlikely that senior military personnel of the Sierra Leone Army exert effective control over all forces fighting on behalf of the government.

When an Amnesty International delegation met the Deputy Minister of Defence, Chief Samuel Hinga Norman, who is also the National Coordinator of the CDF, in Freetown on 25 May 2000, he denied that the CDF recruited children or "initiated" them into the societies of traditional hunters. He said that the children with CDF forces had been rescued or captured from rebel forces and that they were handed over to child protection agencies. Chief Hinga Norman has publicly announced that child combatants will be demobilized from government and government-allied forces. In mid-July 2000 he held a meeting in Bo, Southern Province, with CDF leaders and "initiators". He instructed that no further children were to be "initiated" into the CDF. It is not clear, however, to what extent this instruction is being heeded. While it may reduce the number of children newly admitted into the CDF, it does not resolve the problem of those already with CDF forces.

A senior member of the CDF in Kenema, Eastern Province, told Amnesty International on 27 July 2000 that, although he personally opposed the use of children, he acknowledged that it was normal practice within the CDF. He was in the presence of two boys who appeared to be under 18 and who were both armed. He claimed that, before the peace agreement, there were some 600 children in the CDF forces around Kenema but that they were all subsequently demobilized and that there was no further recruitment of children.

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On 12 June 2000 in Masiaka, an area where hostilities were continuing, much publicity was given to the apparent demobilization of 135 child combatants with government-allied forces, in particular the CDF. It subsequently transpired, however, that only 13 of these children were serving as combatants, nine with the CDF and four with the AFRC. It appeared that children and their families were attracted by the potential assistance and facilities provided to former child combatants, including food and education, as well as the opportunity to remove the children to safety from an area close to the front line. The children who were not former child combatants, and who had been separated from their families, were subsequently returned to their homes.

According to some reports, recruitment of children by the CDF is continuing in Bo and Moyamba Districts in Southern Province. It is often difficult, however, to distinguish between "initiation" into the societies of traditional hunters and recruitment to fight. Child protection agencies report that recruitment of children, including those who had previously been demobilized, is continuing. According to reports which remain unconfirmed, villages in Southern Province are expected to provide a certain number of children to the CDF. In some areas the CDF appear to be no longer using children so openly to guard checkpoints along major roads in Southern Province; children, some of them armed, have been seen close to checkpoints but hidden in the bush. In late May 2000 two children with the CDF aged about 14 or 15 were observed in Moyamba close to a checkpoint. In other areas, however, an increase in the number of children guarding checkpoints has been observed.

Arming the children

Military assistance to rebel forces

Rebel forces in Sierra Leone have received and continue to receive significant military assistance, including arms and ammunition, despite a UN embargo on the provision of such assistance. UN Security Council Resolution 1132 (1997) of 8 October 1997 imposed an arms embargo on Sierra Leone following the military coup of 25 May 1997 which brought the AFRC to power. After the government of President Kabbah was restored to power in March 1998, UN Security Council Resolution 1171 (1998) of 5 June 1998 lifted the arms embargo on the government of Sierra Leone but prohibited the sale and supply of arms and related *matériel* to non-governmental forces in Sierra Leone.

In view of the appalling level of human rights abuses against civilians perpetrated by rebel forces, military assistance to rebel forces can be assumed to have contributed, and to continue to contribute, to continuing violations of international human rights and humanitarian law. Among these violations are the recruitment and use of child combatants.

Arms and ammunition reaching rebel forces inevitably fall into the hands of the children abducted and forcibly recruited by rebel forces. Traffic in small arms and light weapons clearly facilitates and encourages the use of child combatants. Amnesty International is calling for the cessation of all military assistance to rebel forces in Sierra Leone, including the provision of arms, ammunition, combatants and training.

The government of Liberia has been consistently cited as violating the embargo on military assistance to rebel forces in Sierra Leone. Following a visit to Sierra Leone and Liberia in December 1998 the Chairman of the UN Security Council sanctions committee on Sierra Leone said that arms and ammunition were crossing into Sierra Leone from neighbouring countries, including Liberia, in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1171 (1998).[6] At the time of the rebel incursion into Freetown in January 1999, the governments of both the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States of America (USA) unambiguously accused the government of Liberia of supporting rebel forces. Burkina Faso has also been reported to have acted as a transit route for military assistance to rebel forces in Sierra Leone. Some of this assistance has originated from countries in the former Soviet bloc and has been facilitated by the activities of international arms brokers and shipping agents, some of them based in Europe.

In April 1999 the commander of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone accused Liberia and Burkina Faso of transferring arms to rebel forces. He asserted that a Ukrainian-registered cargo plane had delivered arms and ammunition to Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, for on-shipment to RUF forces through Liberia.[7] A Gibraltar-based company was reported to have organized the arms shipment to Burkina Faso, using a UK-based air company.

These accusations against Liberia and Burkina Faso have continued and intensified, especially as the international community has focused increasing attention on the role of the illicit trade in diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone in financing the provision of military assistance to rebel forces.[8]

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[6]S/1998/1236, Report of the Security Council Committee established pursuant to Resolution 1132 (1997) concerning Sierra Leone, 31 December 1998.

[7]For further information, see *Neglected Arms Embargo on Sierra Leone Rebels*, published by Human Rights Watch on 15 May 2000.

[8]For further information on Amnesty International's position on military assistance to rebel forces and the trade in diamonds, see *Sierra Leone: Cutting the link between diamonds and human rights abuses "forever"* (AI Index: AFR 51/56/00) 14 July 2000, *Sierra Leone: Amnesty International calls for fast and effective action on diamonds* (AI Index: AFR 51/54/00), 30 June 2000, and *Sierra Leone: Cutting the link between diamonds and guns* (AI Index: AFR 51/27/00), 31 May 2000.

On 5 July 2000 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1306 (2000) which imposed an embargo on all diamond exports from Sierra Leone for 18 months until the government of Sierra Leone can establish a proper certification system for diamonds and regain full access to those areas of the country - notably in Eastern Province and in particular Kono District and Tongo Field - where RUF forces remain in control. Liberia was specifically referred to as a transit route for diamonds from rebel-held areas; the Security Council expressed its concern "*at the role played by the illicit trade in diamonds in fuelling the conflict in Sierra Leone, and at reports that such diamonds transit neighbouring countries, including the territory of Liberia*". The resolution decided that "*all States shall take the necessary measures to prohibit the direct or indirect import of all rough diamonds from Sierra Leone to their territory*".

The international diamond industry has meanwhile responded to growing international pressure. The International Diamond Manufacturers' Association and the World Federation of Diamond Bourses, meeting in Antwerp, Belgium, from 17 to 19 July 2000, agreed that they will not trade in diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone. The industry has sought further legal action from governments, such as import control and certification systems.

In line with the provisions of Resolution 1306 (2000), on 31 July and 1 August 2000 the UN Security Council sanctions committee on Sierra Leone held a public meeting, which included representatives of the international diamond trade, governments and non-governmental organizations, to debate the role of the illicit trade in diamonds from rebel-held areas in procuring military assistance for rebel forces.

Further allegations were levelled against Liberia and Burkina Faso, notably by representatives of the UK and USA governments. Ambassador Jeremy Greenstock of the UK said that: "*a variety of reliable sources show that President [Charles] Taylor [of Liberia] is orchestrating the activities of the RUF. He is giving direct military support, encouraging attacks against UNAMSIL and Sierra Leone government forces, providing strategic direction, influencing decisions on leadership and on command and control. Moreover, he is using the RUF to retain control of Sierra Leone's diamonds reserves.*" Ambassador Richard Holbrooke of the USA said that: "*there was reason to believe that RUF leaders and the President of Liberia have taken increasingly large commissions for each of themselves, and particularly for Liberian President Taylor for his services as a facilitator of diamond sales and related arms transfers*" and added that the government of Burkina Faso was also involved providing arms to the RUF.

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The governments of both Liberia and Burkina Faso vigorously denied these allegations and called on the international community to conduct independent investigations in their countries in order to substantiate these claims.

The UN Security Council sanctions committee on Sierra Leone established a panel of five experts to continue to investigate the link between the diamond trade and the conflict in Sierra Leone, including the alleged implication of the governments of Liberia and Burkina Faso. The panel of experts is expected to report on its findings by the end of October 2000.

In Resolution 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict, the UN Security Council expressed its grave concern at: "*the linkages between the illicit trade in natural resources and armed conflict, as well as the linkages between illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons and armed conflict, which can prolong armed conflict and intensify its impact on children, and, in this regard, expresses its intention to consider taking appropriate steps, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.*"

Military assistance to government forces

Since May 2000 combatants below the age of 18 have continued to be recruited by the Sierra Leone Army and other government-allied forces, including the AFRC and the CDF.

While recognizing the responsibility of the Sierra Leone government to maintain security and protect its population and territory, Amnesty International opposes the provision of assistance to armed forces where it can be reasonably assumed to contribute to the recruitment of children under the age of 18 by the armed forces or other armed groups and their participation in hostilities. Effective mechanisms need to be put in place to monitor the distribution and use of arms and ammunition provided by other countries to the Sierra Leone Army and other forces fighting on behalf of the Sierra Leone government in order to ensure that they do not reach combatants under the age of 18. Continuing military assistance to government forces should be conditional on guarantees being provided that such assistance does not facilitate the recruitment and use of child combatants, or contribute to other human rights violations. If evidence is found that military assistance from other countries facilitates the recruitment and use of child combatants, the international community has a responsibility to ensure that such assistance is suspended.

The UK government has provided substantial assistance to the government of Sierra Leone for training and equipping the new Sierra Leone Army. As a condition for proceeding with training and equipping the Sierra Leone Army, the UK government sought and obtained assurances from President Kabbah in March 1999 that children under the age

of 18 would not be used by the Sierra Leone Army or the CDF and that equipment supplied would be used in accordance with international human rights and humanitarian law.

The UK leads what will become a 90-strong military training team composed of military personnel from several other countries. Some 200 UK military personnel are providing a two-month training for recruits for the new Sierra Leone Army; a first contingent of 1,000 recruits completed their training in July 2000 and a further contingent of 1,000 is now being trained. All have been over 18. In addition, the UK continues to provide arms and ammunition to the Sierra Leone Army.

On 23 May 2000 the UK Ministry of Defence announced that it would be transferring 10,000 self-loading rifles to the Sierra Leone Army to assist in military operations against the RUF. UK government officials stressed at the time that the program to train and equip the Sierra Leone Army would be carried out under strict supervision. It sought to allay fears that arms supplied by the UK government would fall into the hands of children. These fears were fuelled by a photograph published by a UK newspaper of a 14-year-old boy, alleged to be fighting with government-allied forces, with a weapon previously supplied by the UK government. A spokesperson for the UK government said on 24 May 2000 that: "*We have instructed the [UK] High Commissioner in Sierra Leone to remind the President of his undertaking last year that UK-supplied weapons would be used only by regular soldiers and in accordance with international law.*" During a visit to Sierra Leone in early June 2000 UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, obtained clear and public commitments from the leaders of government-allied force that they would not use child soldiers and that any remaining in their ranks would be disarmed and demobilized.

Further assurances were provided by the UK Secretary of State for Defence, Geoffrey Hoon, following an announcement that further military assistance, including ammunition, was to be transferred to the Sierra Leone Army. He was reported to have said on 12 July 2000 that: "*the ammunition is being provided subject to further reassurances that it will be used only by regular soldiers, in accordance with humanitarian law and human rights standards, and not by child soldiers.*"

A violation of children's rights and a war crime

The recruitment and use of children under the age of 15 as combatants is prohibited by both international human rights law and international humanitarian law.

Invariably, the use of children as combatants violates the rights enshrined in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989, ratified by Sierra Leone on 18 June 1990, for example by depriving them of a family environment, education and basic health care.

On 13 January 2000 the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child considered Sierra Leone's initial report on its implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and adopted its concluding observations on 28 January 2000.[9] The Committee expressed "*its deep consternation at the very high numbers of children who have been forcibly recruited into armed forces, including children at least as young as five years old, and who have been forced to commit atrocities against other people, including other children and members of their community*". The Committee added that it was "*deeply saddened by direct effects of the armed conflict on all child victims, including child combatants, and is concerned with the tragic loss of life and severe psychological trauma inflicted upon them*".

Article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

For the purposes of the present Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.

Article 38 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child states that:

1. *States Parties undertake to respect and ensure respect for rules of international humanitarian law applicable to them in armed conflicts which are relevant to the child.*

2. *States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 15 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.*

3. *States Parties shall refrain from recruiting any person who has not attained the age of fifteen years into their armed forces. In recruiting among those persons who have attained the age of fifteen years but who have not attained the age of 18 years, States Parties shall endeavour to give priority to those who are oldest.*

4. *In accordance with their obligations under international humanitarian law to protect the civilian population in armed conflicts, States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by an armed conflict.*

[9]Concluding Observations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child: Sierra Leone, CRC/C/15/Add.116.

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Amnesty International believes that voluntary or compulsory recruitment and participation in hostilities, whether on the part of governments or armed opposition groups, ultimately jeopardize the mental and physical integrity of anyone below the age of 18. For this reason, Amnesty International actively opposes the voluntary or compulsory recruitment, as well as participation in hostilities, of children below 18 by governments or armed opposition groups.

In line with the general age of majority set in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, Amnesty International and five other international non-governmental organizations have been calling for the age of military recruitment - be it voluntary or compulsory - as well as deployment in hostilities to be raised to 18.[10]

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict states:

Article 1	*States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.*
Article 2	*States Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.*
Article 4(1)	*Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.*
(2)	*States Parties shall take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use, including adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.*
(3)	*The application of the present article under this Protocol shall not affect the legal status of any party to an armed conflict.*

The Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict was adopted by the UN General Assembly on 25 May 2000 and is now open for signature and ratification. The Optional Protocol raises the age for participation in hostilities, for both the armed forces and armed groups, from 15 to

[10]Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, International Federation *Terre des Hommes*, the International Save the Children Alliance, the Jesuit Refugee Service and the Quaker UN Office (Geneva) launched the Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers in June 1998. For further information, see *Stop Using Child Soldiers!*, Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, second edition published by Rädda Barnen on behalf of the International Save the Children Alliance in November 1998.

18. Eight countries have so far signed the Optional Protocol; only one, Canada, has ratified it. UN Security Council 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict urged member states to ratify the Optional Protocol.

The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, which entered into force on 29 November 1999, is the only regional instrument which specifically prohibits the recruitment and use as combatants of children under 18 in both international and internal armed conflicts. Article 22 (2) requires States Parties to "*take all necessary measures to ensure that no child shall take a direct part in hostilities and refrain in particular from recruiting any child*". Sierra Leone has signed but not yet ratified the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.

International humanitarian law - the laws of war - also prohibits the recruitment of children under 15 into the armed forces of governments and armed opposition groups as well as their participation in hostilities.[11]

Article 4 (3)(c) of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions states that:

Children who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities.

Francis, now aged 16 and at the interim care centre in Lungi, was abducted by rebel forces in 1998. He told Amnesty International on 15 July 2000: "*As far as the Geneva Conventions are concerned, we should not fight. They have violated our rights. Even the government troops, they some time ago made a mistake of killing the children because the rebels use children.*"

Many of the children who have been abducted and forcibly recruited have also been victims of deliberate and arbitrary killing, beatings and other forms of torture or ill-treatment. Girls have been raped and forced into sexual slavery. These abuses constitute the most serious violations of international humanitarian law. Article 3, common to all four Geneva Conventions, extends to "*armed conflict not of an international character*" (internal armed conflict) fundamental rules for the protection of those taking no active part in hostilities which each party to the conflict is "*bound to apply, as a minimum*". Under the terms of common Article 3, people who take no active part or who have ceased to take an active part in hostilities must be treated humanely in all circumstances. Common Article

[11]Sierra Leone acceded to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 on 10 June 1965. On 21 October 1986 it acceded to both Additional Protocol I of 8 June 1977 relating to the Protection of Victims of International Armed Conflicts, and Additional Protocol II of 8 June 1997 relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts.

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3 specifically prohibits: "*violence to life and person, in particular murder of all kinds, mutilation, cruel treatment and torture; taking of hostages; outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment.*" This prohibition is binding not only on government forces but on all parties to internal armed conflicts, including armed political groups.



Former child combatants playing volleyball at the interim care centre at Lungi, July 2000
© Amnesty International

Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions relating to the protection of victims of internal armed conflicts, which develops and supplements common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions, requires all parties to the conflict to treat humanely every person affected by the conflict. Article 4 of Additional Protocol II prohibits: "*violence to the life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment*" of all those not taking a direct part in hostilities or who have ceased to take part in hostilities.

In Resolution 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict the UN Security Council urged: "*all parties to armed conflict to respect fully international law applicable to the rights and protection of children in armed conflict, in particular the Geneva Conventions*

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of 1949 and the obligations applicable to them under the Additional Protocols thereto of 1977, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 and the Optional Protocol thereto of 25 May 2000, and to bear in mind the relevant provisions of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court."

Bringing to justice those who recruit and deploy children as combatants

Although the recruitment of children is unlawful in many countries, prosecution is rare. The majority of the world's nations finalized in July 1998 the Statute of a permanent International Criminal Court which will have jurisdiction to prosecute those charged with war crimes, genocide, aggression and crimes against humanity. Included in the list of war crimes is "*conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into national armed forces or using them to participate actively in hostilities*" and, in the case of an internal armed conflict, "*conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities*". The International Criminal Court will be formally established once 60 states have ratified the Statute, thereby giving the court jurisdiction over these provisions. Sierra Leone signed the Statute on 17 October 1998 and intends to ratify it shortly.

On 12 February 1999, Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, stated at a UN Security Council Open Briefing on the Protection of Civilians that: "*over 300,000 children, girls as well as boys, have participated as combatants in the 30 most recent conflicts. Many are recruited - others are abducted. Some join simply to survive. And many of these children, some less than 10 years old, have witnessed or taken part in acts of unspeakable violence, often against their own families or communities... Children's recruitment as members of the armed forces, their rape and slaughter, and the targeting of their schools and hospitals are recognized by the International Criminal Court statute for what they are: heinous atrocities.*"

The UN Security Council, in Resolution 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999 on children and armed conflict, called on all parties concerned to comply strictly with their obligations under international law, in particular the Geneva Conventions, the Additional Protocols, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and stressed "*the responsibility of all States to bring an end to impunity and their obligation to prosecute those responsible for grave breaches of the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949*".

This was reiterated by the UN Security Council in Resolution 1314 (2000) in which it emphasized the responsibility of all States: "*to put an end to impunity and to prosecute those responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes, and, in this regard, stresses the need to exclude these, where feasible, from amnesty provisions and relevant legislation.*" In a statement issued on 11 August 2000 when the resolution was

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adopted, UNICEF said that it: "*underlines the urgent need for an end to impunity for those who commit crimes against children.*"

Although the use of child combatants under 15 violates both international human rights and humanitarian law, no one in Sierra Leone has yet been brought to justice for these crimes. The peace agreement signed in July 1999 provided an amnesty for all activities undertaken in pursuit of the conflict, including human rights abuses, even when amounting to crimes against humanity or war crimes. The UN at the time added a disclaimer to the agreement that the amnesty would not apply to international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Although the amnesty did not apply to crimes committed after 7 July 1999, human rights abuses against civilians, including deliberate and arbitrary killings, mutilation, rape, abduction and forcible recruitment continued to be committed with impunity.

By June 2000, with the lack of implementation of key provisions of the peace agreement, the resumption of hostilities and the arrest of the leader of the RUF, Foday Sankoh, and other leading members of the RUF, initiatives by the authorities began to address the issue of impunity. On 12 June 2000 the government wrote a letter to the UN Secretary-General requesting assistance from the UN in establishing a special court to try Foday Sankoh and other senior members of the RUF for "*crimes against the people of Sierra Leone and for the taking of UN peace-keepers as hostages*".

On 14 August 2000 the UN Security Council passed Resolution 1315 (2000) on the creation of an independent special court. Amnesty International has urged that the special court try all those alleged to be responsible for crimes under international law, including crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, as well as certain grave crimes under national law, throughout the period since the conflict began in 1991. This would include the forcible recruitment and deployment of children under 15. Although forces of the RUF have been responsible for systematic and widespread abuses throughout the conflict, those of the AFRC, the Sierra Leone Army and the CDF have also been responsible for gross human rights abuses, including violations of international humanitarian law. Those allegedly responsible for these crimes, whether they be members of the RUF, the AFRC, the Sierra Leone Army and regardless of their current political position or allegiance, must be brought to justice.[12]

[12]For further information on Amnesty International's recommendations for ending impunity in Sierra Leone, see *Sierra Leone: The United Nations Security Council should strengthen the independent special court to prosecute perpetrators of human rights abuses* (AI Index: AFR 51/66/00), 4 August 2000, and *Sierra Leone: Ending impunity - an opportunity not to be missed* (AI Index: AFR 51/60/00), 26 July

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Child combatants themselves will not be brought to trial before the International Criminal Court, as the Statute bars it from exercising jurisdiction over any person who was under 18 at the time that the crime was committed. Child combatants in Sierra Leone have been responsible for gross human rights abuses; many of the worst atrocities have been carried out by children who were abducted and subjected to horrifying acts of violence. In a situation where crimes have been committed by children terrorized and brutalized into submission, complex questions about their criminal responsibility are raised.

While recognizing the need for justice and accountability, former child combatants must be treated in accordance with the principles of juvenile justice, which place the best interest of the child as a priority, recognize the special factors and needs of childhood, and place an emphasis on rehabilitation and reintegration rather than punishment. In conformity with the provisions of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, arrest, detention or imprisonment of a child must be in accordance with the law and shall be used only as a measure of last resort and for the shortest appropriate period of time. Any child who is detained should be held separately from adults.

The Sierra Leone government's responsibility to end the use of child soldiers

The government of Sierra Leone has made repeated commitments to demobilize all combatants under the age of 18, to raise the legal age of military recruitment to 18 and to fulfil its obligations under the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Considering Sierra Leone's initial report in January 2000, the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child expressed its deep concern about the massive participation of children associated with fighting forces in Sierra Leone, either as combatants or in other roles. The Committee also noted that there is no minimum age defined by national legislation for voluntary recruitment, when the consent of a specified adult party is given. The Committee welcomed the government's intention to pass legislation raising the minimum age of recruitment to 18 and urged the government to move quickly towards passing this legislation and to ensure that the new legislation was enforced.

On 24 May 2000, following reports that children were either fighting with government-allied forces or were being allowed to remain in front-line positions, the government issued a statement reiterating its position on the recruitment of child soldiers (see appendix A).

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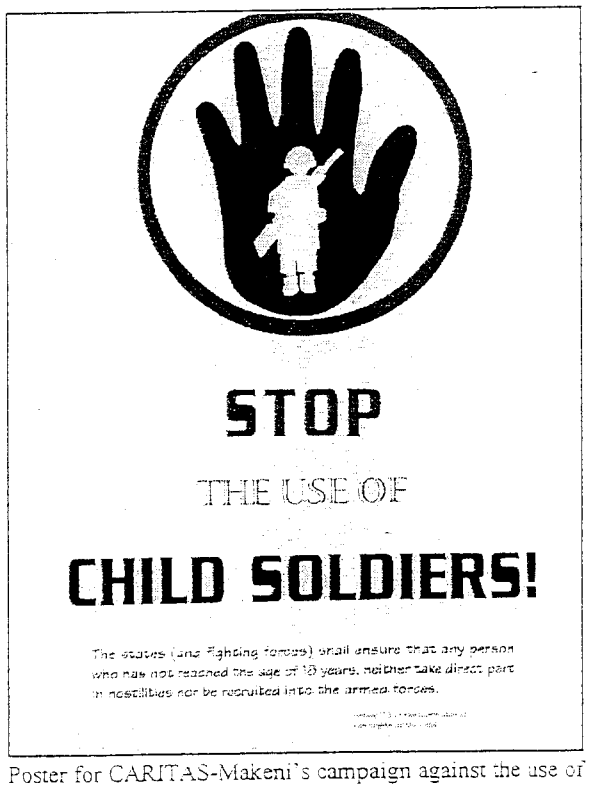
The government stated that this practice was "*totally against government policy which stipulates that 18 years is the minimum age for bearing arms in Sierra Leone*". The statement continued: "*The Acting Chief of Defence Staff has been instructed to ensure that all those below the age of 18 currently involved in fighting on the side of the government should be immediately withdrawn, demobilized and handed over to competent institutions for rehabilitation. Henceforth, any commander who allows a child below 18 years to carry arms within his area of operations or allows children to remain in areas of active conflict will face severe disciplinary action.*" It is not clear, however, what measures have been taken to implement these commitments.

On the same day Johnny Paul Koroma, leader of the AFRC, issued statements on behalf of the AFRC and the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace which he heads. In these statements Johnny Paul Koroma "*warned all warring factions to desist from recruiting child soldiers*" and stated his strong opposition to the recruitment of child soldiers by both government-allied forces and rebel forces.

On 22 March 2000 CARITAS-Makeni launched a campaign to end the use of child combatants. Secondary school children marched through the centre of Freetown and speakers representing the government, UN agencies and non-governmental organizations called publicly for an end to the use of child combatants.



Poster for CARITAS-Makeni's campaign against the use of child soldiers © Amnesty International

A Declaration of Commitment to the Release of Child Combatants and Child Abductees by the Various Factions was drafted as part of the campaign and signed by Chief Hinga Norman, Deputy Minister of Defence and National Coordinator of the CDF, Johnny Paul Koroma, leader of the AFRC and Chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, and Colonel Tom Carew, acting Chief of Defence Staff. RUF leader Foday Sankoh declined to sign the

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declaration (see appendix B). The declaration made the following commitments:

Article 1 *The parties hereto shall forthwith facilitate the disarmament of all child combatants, that is to say, children under the age of 18 years and bearing arms and shall take immediate steps to prevent the use of child combatants in any manner whatsoever.*

Article 2 *The parties hereto shall in tandem with the actions contemplated in Article 1 above, release, free and cause to be released, all children and other persons abducted both during the conflict and after the signing of the Lomé peace accord.*

Article 3 *The parties shall in utmost good faith facilitate the return and/or handing over of child combatants and abductees to UNAMSIL, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration camps and other humanitarian agencies by 15 May 2000 (the International Day of the Family), to enable them to receive care and attention and ultimately to be reunited with their families and relatives.*

Article 4 *The parties in this regard undertake to cooperate with UNAMSIL, all agencies concerned with the welfare of children and the war affected and shall assiduously work towards the attainment of goals enumerated in the Declaration.*



Demonstration by schoolchildren to launch CARITAS-Makeni's campaign against the use of child soldiers in Freetown, 22 March 2000 © Amnesty International

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Following the signing of the peace agreement in July 1999 Foday Sankoh became the Chairman of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development, and assumed the protocol rank of Vice-President. Other RUF members also became part of the government by being appointed to ministerial and deputy ministerial positions. The RUF therefore became obliged not only to implement the provisions of the peace agreement which it had signed, but also to implement the government's commitments under the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article XXI of the peace agreement stated specifically that all prisoners of war and non-combatants should be released immediately and unconditionally by both parties. This would include the thousands of civilians, including children, who had been abducted by rebel forces. Article XXX of the peace agreement stated that the government of Sierra Leone should give particular attention to the issue of child combatants and should mobilize resources, both within Sierra Leone and from the international community, to address the special needs of former child combatants in the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

Foday Sankoh frequently denied that the RUF had abducted children. In a meeting with Amnesty International representatives on 25 March 2000 he said that the RUF had not abducted any children but had "rescued" them and was not holding any children captive. He was arrested on 17 May 2000, after more than 20 civilians were shot and killed by his forces during a demonstration outside his house in Freetown on 12 May 2000, and remains in detention. Other prominent members of the RUF are also detained. They are expected to be charged with a number of offences, including crimes amounting to violations of international humanitarian law.

In late April 2000, just before the resumption of hostilities, the government of Sierra Leone agreed to establish a National Commission for War-Affected Children in order to ensure that children's concerns are addressed at the highest political levels. This agreement was reached during a visit to Freetown on 29 and 30 April 2000 of the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, and the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Lloyd Axworthy.

Moves by the international community to end the use of child soldiers

The plight of children in Sierra Leone has been highlighted repeatedly by the international community and commitments have been made to assist the children whose lives have been blighted by nine years of conflict. In the Eighth Report of the UN Secretary-General on the

UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (then known as UNOMSIL) of 23 September 1999, the Secretary-General stated that "*the plight of children is among the most pressing challenges currently facing Sierra Leone*".[13]

On 25 August 1999 the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1261 (1999) on children and armed conflict. The Security Council urged States and all relevant parts of the UN: "*to intensify their efforts to ensure an end to the recruitment and use of children in armed conflict in violation of international law through political and other efforts, including promotion of the availability of alternatives for children to their participation in armed conflict*"; and also "*to facilitate the disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration of children used as soldiers in violation of international law.*"

At a debate on children and armed conflict at the UN Security Council on 26 July 2000, Carol Bellamy, Executive Director of UNICEF, said that many of the values, principles and concrete commitments enshrined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child remained unfulfilled, as did those of Resolution 1261 (1999). The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunnu, said that the use of child combatants must be curbed by mobilizing political pressure, addressing the economic, social and political factors leading to the use of child combatants and increasing capacity on the ground for receiving and rehabilitating child combatants.[14] Commenting on UN Security Council 1314 (2000) on children and armed conflict which was passed of 11 August 2000, UNICEF said that: "*The council has reminded the world that it is both immoral and illegal to make children the victims and protagonists of war... It has helped to maintain awareness of the unacceptability of turning children into soldiers, of forcing millions of children and women to flee their homes, and of subjecting children to forced labour, sexual abuse and the pressure to commit atrocities.*"

Olara Otunnu has visited Sierra Leone on several occasions, most recently in April 2000, and has made recommendations for a special program for assisting children affected by the conflict. Following a visit in late August and early September 1999, he formulated a 15-point agenda for action for children affected by the conflict, which included recommendations in respect of: ending the recruitment and use of child combatants; access to and release of abducted children; demobilization of child combatants; and the establishment of a National Commission for Children in Sierra Leone.

[13]Eighth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone, S/1999/1003.

[14]SC/6985, Security Council holds debate on children and armed conflict, 26 July 2000.

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UNAMSIL, whose current full strength is 13,000, but which is expected to be increased to 16,500 peace-keeping troops, was deployed to assist with the implementation of the peace agreement, including the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants. UN Security Council Resolution 1313 (2000) of 4 August 2000 extended UNAMSIL's mandate until 8 September 2000 and requested the UN Secretary-General to make recommendations for the restructuring and strengthening of UNAMSIL.

The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was first hampered by the failure of large numbers of combatants to disarm and demobilize and then halted by the resumption of hostilities in May 2000. The human rights section of UNAMSIL is providing training in human rights, including children's rights, and international humanitarian law for peace-keeping troops. Since the peace-keeping force comprises troops from several countries with different training and experience, it is essential to ensure that adequate time and resources are devoted to comprehensive human rights training, including in children's rights. A child protection adviser was appointed to UNAMSIL in February 2000 and the UNAMSIL human rights section includes human rights officers with specific responsibilities for children's rights.

Resolution 1261 (1999) of 25 August 1999 on children and armed conflict specifically requested the UN Secretary-General to ensure that: "*personnel involved in United Nations peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace-building activities have appropriate training on the protection, rights and welfare of children.*" It urged States and relevant international and regional organizations to ensure that appropriate training was included in their program for personnel involved in similar activities.

At the end of the African Conference on the use of Children as Soldiers, held in Maputo, Mozambique, from 19-22 April 1999, participants adopted a declaration against the use of children as combatants. The Declaration calls on all African states to end the recruitment of all children under 18 into the armed forces. The Declaration also condemned the use of children by armed opposition groups and called upon these groups to end the recruitment of children and to demobilize or release into safety children already being used as combatants.

On 27 and 28 April 2000 a West African ministerial conference on war-affected children was held in Accra, Ghana, sponsored and co-hosted by the governments of Ghana and Canada. It brought together ECOWAS foreign ministers, as well as civil society organizations, donor governments, UN representatives, including Olara Otunnu, and children affected by conflict in the region. The primary objective of the event was to mobilize concrete action for child protection in a region whose children have been acutely affected by armed conflict. The conference focused on practical ways to implement and

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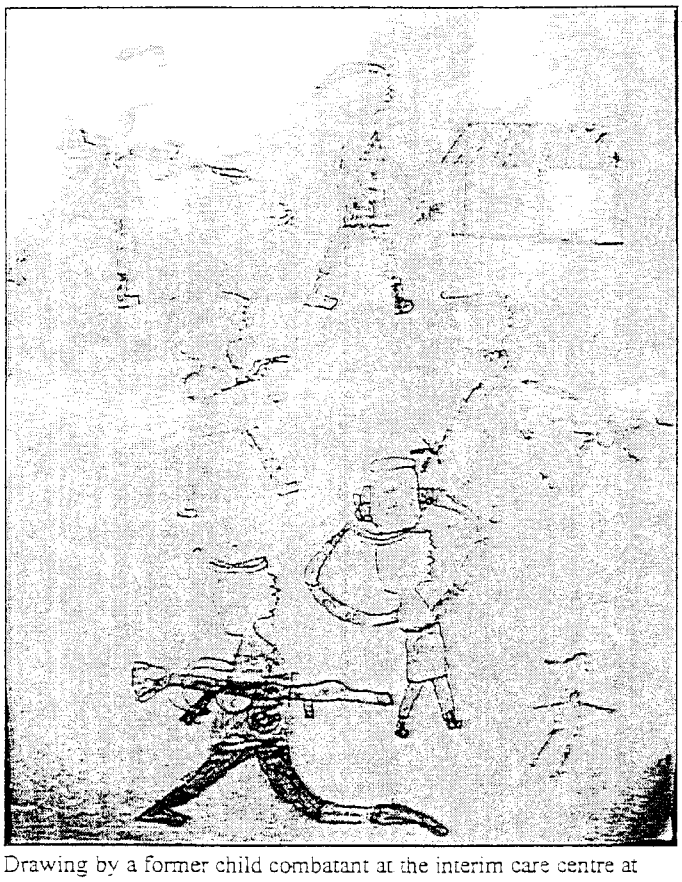
support international instruments of child protection, such as the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child and the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

At the end of the conference the delegates adopted and signed a West African Declaration on War-Affected Children which is expected to lead to commitments to: implementation of existing international, regional and local norms; ratification of the Statute of the International Criminal Court; incorporation of child rights and civilian protection into military training; and implementation or early warning/response systems to prevent armed conflict. At the conclusion of the conference, the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs said: "*The protection of children affected by war and the promotion of their well-being is a moral, political, social and economic imperative.*" The outcome of the conference will be discussed and developed at an International Conference on War-Affected Children to take place in Winnipeg, Canada, in September 2000.



Drawing by a former child combatant at the interim care centre at Lungi © Amnesty International

While some countries have made commitments towards providing assistance to children affected by the conflict and others have made significant contributions towards the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants, the attention of the international community should continue to focus on the needs of former child combatants, both on securing their disarmament and demobilization and also providing the assistance they need to be rehabilitated and reintegrated into their families and communities. All these initiatives will require sustained commitment and resources from the international community.

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Amnesty International's recommendations

Amnesty International is urging that the Sierra Leone government, the leaders of the RUF and the international community implement swiftly and effectively the following recommendations in order to end the recruitment and use of child combatants in Sierra Leone and to meet the particular needs of former child combatants.

Recommendations to the Sierra Leone government, including the Chief of Defence Staff, the Deputy Minister of Defence and the leader of the AFRC:

- the highest priority should be given to the immediate disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child combatants;

- prompt and effective measures should be taken by the government to ensure that no child under the age of 18 is recruited for military service, including by passing legislation raising the minimum age for military recruitment to 18;

- the Chief of Defence Staff should ensure that there is effective chain of command over all forces fighting on behalf of the government to ensure the immediate demobilization and disarmament of child combatants currently serving in these forces and to ensure that no child under the age of 18 is recruited or used in the future;

- the leader of the AFRC should give immediate effect to his condemnation of the recruitment and use as combatants of children under the age of 18 by instructing AFRC forces to release all children, both those used as child combatants or in any way associated with AFRC forces;

- the Deputy Minister of Defence and National Coordinator of the CDF should immediately and unequivocally denounce the recruitment and use of children under the age of 18 by the CDF and instruct all CDF leaders to immediately demobilize and disarm all child combatants serving with the CDF and to cease any further recruitment;

- the government of Sierra Leone should take steps to implement the recommendations of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child, including by identifying priorities relating to child combatants and defining strategies to implement those priorities;

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- the government should ratify without delay the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, and the Statute of the International Criminal Court;

- the government should take effective measures to end impunity and prosecute those responsible for crimes under international law including violations of international humanitarian law, such as the abduction and forcible recruitment of children under the age of 15.

Recommendations to the leaders of the RUF:

- leaders of the RUF should immediately and publicly condemn and prohibit the recruitment and use of child combatants and RUF forces should immediately cease forcible or voluntary recruitment and use of children under the age of 18;

- RUF forces should be instructed to release immediately all children either used as combatants or in any way associated with fighting forces;

- leaders of the RUF should make a public commitment to observing international humanitarian law, in particular Additional Protocol II of the Geneva Conventions of 1949;

- RUF forces should be instructed to end deliberate and arbitrary killings, rape, sexual abuse and other forms of torture or ill-treatment of all captured civilians, including children;

- RUF forces should also allow immediate, full and unhindered access by child protection agencies and UNAMSIL personnel supervising the disarmament and demobilization program to children who continue to be held;

- RUF forces should allow immediate, full and unhindered access by humanitarian agencies, both national and international, to all civilians, including children, who continue to be held, and the delivery of humanitarian assistance.

Recommendations to the international community:

- the international community should repeat its condemnation of the continuing recruitment and use of children as combatants in Sierra Leone which constitute a crime under international law and a violation of both international human rights and international humanitarian law;

- the highest priority should be given to implementing commitments made to end the use and recruitment of child combatants, including by taking concrete measures to implement UN Security Council Resolution 1314 (2000) of 11 August 2000;

- in all efforts to resolve the political and security crisis in Sierra Leone, including any reconsideration or renegotiation of the peace agreement signed in Lomé, Togo, on 7 July 1999, the needs of children affected by the internal armed conflict, including child combatants, should be given the highest priority;

- all governments should take all possible measures to end military transfers, including arms, ammunition, combatants and training, to rebel forces in Sierra Leone and enact legislation to prevent the trade in diamonds from rebel-held areas of Sierra Leone from facilitating the provision of military assistance to rebel forces;

- those governments which are providing military assistance, including training, arms and ammunition, to the Sierra Leone Army and other forces fighting on behalf of the government should first ensure that stringent safeguards are in place to ensure that this assistance does not facilitate or encourage violations of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the recruitment and use of child combatants; these safeguards should also include effective mechanisms to ensure that arms do not reach combatants under the age of 18; if evidence is found that such assistance facilitates the recruitment and use of child combatants, such assistance should be suspended;

- the international community should provide full and sustained support and assistance to relevant UN agencies and non-governmental organizations, both national and international, in order to strengthen initiatives for child protection, prevent further recruitment and use as combatants of children under the age of 18 and assist the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former child combatants, including by addressing their social, psychological and material needs;

- the child protection adviser and human rights section of UNAMSIL must be given full political support and adequate resources in order to undertake their work in relation to child protection;

- the UN should ensure that all troops participating in the UNAMSIL peace-keeping force are fully trained in international human rights and humanitarian law, including children's rights, and that they have training in addressing the specific needs of child combatants;

- the international community should ensure that those responsible for grave breaches of international human rights and humanitarian law, including the abduction and forcible recruitment of children, should be brought to justice; this should include provision of the necessary expertise and practical assistance for the independent special court to be established under UN Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000) of 14 August 2000.

38. Amnesty International Annual Report 2000, "AI Report 2000: Sierra Leone", pages 2 and 3.

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Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone

Republic of Sierra Leone
Head of state and government: Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
Capital: Freetown
Population: 4.4 million
Official language: English
Death penalty: retentionist

The political and human rights crisis deepened as rebel forces attacked Freetown in January 1999. Thousands of unarmed civilians were deliberately and arbitrarily killed, mutilated, raped or abducted. Although conclusion of a peace agreement in July provided opportunities to end human rights abuses, the political and security situation remained precarious and human rights abuses against civilians continued. The peace agreement included a general amnesty which provided impunity for human rights abuses, including war crimes and crimes against humanity, committed during the conflict.

Background
Rebel forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) attacked Freetown on 6 January and committed large-scale atrocities against civilians. Extensive destruction of property made as many as 200,000 people homeless. Although rebel forces were forced to retreat by forces of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), fighting continued in other parts of the country and some towns, including Makeni in Northern Province, remained under rebel control. Liberia was widely accused of providing military support to rebel forces, in violation of a UN Security Council resolution.
A cease-fire was agreed in May, and a peace agreement — signed in Lomé, Togo, in July — provided for an immediate cessation of hostilities and disarmament and demobilization of former combatants. RUF and AFRC members were appointed to ministerial positions in a government of national unity in October and the RUF became a political party. RUF leader Foday Sankoh, with the status of vice-president, chaired a commission to manage mineral resources and post-conflict reconstruction, and Johnny Paul Koroma, leader of the AFRC, a commission to oversee implementation of the peace process.
Implementation of key provisions of the peace agreement, including disarmament and demobilization, release of captured civilians and unhindered humanitarian access, was, however, limited. Full deployment of a UN peace-keeping force to monitor the cease-fire and assist with disarmament and demobilization was delayed. By the end of 1999

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only some 3,500 of an estimated 45,000 combatants had been disarmed and demobilized. Despite the appointment of their leaders to official positions, political rivalry between AFRC and RUF forces resulted in heavy fighting, in particular in Makeni and Lunsar in October. Rifts also emerged between Foday Sankoh and other rebel leaders who had yet to disarm, and doubts remained about the commitment of the RUF to the peace process. Parts of the north and east of the country, including strategic diamond-mining areas, remained inaccessible.

Abuses by rebel forces

RUF and AFRC forces committed gross human rights abuses on a large scale. AI repeatedly called for an end to abuses and to transfers of arms, ammunition and combatants to rebel forces.

Despite improvement after the signing of the peace agreement, there was a marked increase in attacks on civilians from October in areas west of the Occra Hills and in Northern Province, in particular around Makeni, Lunsar, Port Loko, Kambia and Kabala, and a pattern of deliberate intimidation and terrorizing of civilians re-emerged. From November such attacks, often during raids for food, money and other goods, occurred almost daily in Northern Province.

Deliberate and arbitrary killings

Although it was impossible to ascertain the exact number of deaths during the rebel incursion into Freetown, an estimated 5,000 people, at least 2,000 of them civilians, were killed. Medical authorities subsequently put the figure at over 6,000. Although most killings were arbitrary, some individuals and groups — including government officials, journalists, lawyers, human rights activists, prison officials and police officers — were deliberately targeted. For example, more than 200 police officers and eight journalists were reported to have been killed.

After being forced from Freetown, rebel forces continued to commit atrocities. In Masiaka, east of Freetown, civilians accused of sympathizing with government forces were killed or mutilated. In one incident in a village between Masiaka and Mile 38, several babies and young children were reported to have been killed. Deliberate and arbitrary killings of civilians continued after the peace agreement, particularly in Northern Province.

Torture, including mutilation and rape

As rebel forces retreated from Freetown, they mutilated civilians by cutting off limbs, most frequently hands and arms. In February reports indicated that some 500 victims of mutilation who required surgery were being treated in Freetown hospitals. Among the youngest recorded victims was a six-year-old girl whose left arm had been severed. It was probable that many other victims failed to reach medical help and died from their injuries.

Amputations and others forms of torture continued to be reported after rebel forces retreated from Freetown, although on a lesser scale. In May boys and young men in the area around Masiaka were seen with the letters RUF carved across their chests. In an attack on a village near Port Loko in October there were cases of attempted amputation of limbs, and burns inflicted by molten plastic.

Rape and other forms of sexual abuse of women and girls were systematic and widespread. During the rebel incursion into Freetown, women and girls were rounded up and gang-raped, often in public. More than 90 per cent of women and girls abducted and held captive were believed to have been raped: many were forced to submit to rape or be killed. Many girls subsequently released were pregnant, had given

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birth or had contracted sexually transmitted diseases. Rape of women and girls caught up in the fighting between AFRC and RUF forces in Makeni and Lunsar in October was common.

Abduction of civilians

Rebel forces abducted several thousand civilians, including children, from Freetown in January. Some of those abducted were subsequently killed. Some were selected for training as fighters, others used as porters to carry looted goods. Abducted women and girls were forced into sexual slavery and retained to cook and undertake other tasks. Up to 4,000 children were reported missing from Freetown, most of them abducted. A small number of prominent Sierra Leoneans, including the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Freetown, and foreign nationals, including priests and nuns, were also abducted. At least eight were killed and two others seriously injured. Others, including the archbishop, either escaped or were released.

Although the peace agreement provided for the release of captured civilians, only some 1,000 adults and children, a comparatively small number, had been freed by December. Many of those released suffered from malnutrition and disease. The release of girls and young women was particularly difficult to secure. Some 2,400 children, most of them girls, abducted from Freetown remained missing.

As attacks against civilians increased from October, the number of civilians being abducted exceeded those released.

Hostage-taking

AFRC forces captured more than 30 UN military and civilian personnel who had gone to the Occra Hills in August with an ECOMOG escort to supervise the release of abducted civilians. Their captors claimed that Johnny Paul Koroma was held under duress by RUF forces and that the peace agreement disadvantaged AFRC forces. All were released after six days.

In December RUF forces captured two foreign nationals working for an international humanitarian organization, *Médecins sans frontières* (MSF-France),in Kailahun District, Eastern Province, and held them hostage for 10 days in protest against disarmament and demobilization being supervised by UN peace-keeping forces and ECOMOG troops.

ECOMOG and Civil Defence Forces

ECOMOG forces were commended by the international community for their role in Sierra Leone. They and the civilian militia supporting President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), however, also committed human rights violations. During the rebel incursion into Freetown, large numbers of captured or suspected rebels were extrajudicially executed by ECOMOG and the CDF, often without any real attempt to establish guilt or innocence. Children, including an eight-year-old boy caught in possession of a gun, were among the victims. Ill-treatment, including beatings, whippings and public humiliation, was common at ECOMOG and CDF checkpoints.

At least 10 Sierra Leonean staff of humanitarian organizations and the International Committee of the Red Cross were detained by ECOMOG forces in January; most were beaten. Although accused of cooperating with rebel forces, these allegations were unfounded.

Indiscriminate aerial bombardments on densely populated areas of Freetown during the rebel incursion resulted in large numbers of civilian casualties.

AI called for strict compliance by ECOMOG forces with international human rights and

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humanitarian law. In April the ECOWAS Executive Secretary called for an investigation into extrajudicial executions by ECOMOG forces but none took place. A committee subsequently established to monitor relations between ECOMOG forces and the civilian population failed to function effectively.
Reports of harassment and ill-treatment by ECOMOG forces continued in the months which followed. Detainees held by ECOMOG forces and the CDF were ill-treated, including by being beaten and having arms and hands tied extremely tightly. Civilians and humanitarian convoys travelling along major roads were frequently harassed.

Child combatants
Several thousand children under the age of 18 fought with rebel and CDF forces. An estimated 10 per cent of rebel forces who attacked Freetown were children, many of them previously abducted and frequently under the influence of drugs. Some were responsible for killings and mutilations.
Before the peace agreement, widespread recruitment of children by the CDF in Southern and Eastern Provinces continued. The peace agreement specified that particular attention be given to the issue of child combatants and the government made repeated commitments to end recruitment of children. Although the CDF subsequently demobilized some child combatants, it admitted in November that some 200 children aged between 15 and 18 were in its forces in the Kabala region and that there had been no effort to demobilize them.
In September the UN estimated that 5,400 child combatants were awaiting disarmament and demobilization; the real number, however, was likely to be much higher. Child combatants, including those who had been abducted, were still engaged in combat; in October a number of boys were among those injured in fighting between rebel forces.
AI called for priority to be given to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers and for adequate resources for agencies, including UNICEF, specifically helping them.

Refugees and internally displaced people
More than a million people were internally displaced and half a million were refugees, most of them in Guinea. Often still at risk of human rights abuses, they also suffered acute hardship including shortage of food and basic health care. In some areas up to 80 per cent of internally displaced people were reported to be children, many unaccompanied.
Delays in disarmament and demobilization, continuing insecurity and lack of access to parts of the country limited the return of internally displaced people and refugees.

Intergovernmental organizations
Human rights abuses and violations of the peace agreement by rebel forces were repeatedly condemned by the international community which took major initiatives to establish peace and security. An international contact group bringing together intergovernmental organizations and key governments met in April and July. AI called on the international community, including the UN and the World Bank, for protection and respect of human rights to be at the centre of efforts to resolve the political crisis and during post-conflict reconstruction.
A Human Rights Manifesto for Sierra Leone was adopted during a visit by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights in June. It included commitments to promote children's rights and to raising the age of military recruitment to 18 years. It also

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pledged UN support for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a National Human Rights Commission, both subsequently included in the peace agreement.
In September, after visiting Sierra Leone, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict proposed specific measures to meet the needs of children affected by the conflict.
In October the UN Security Council authorized the deployment of an international peace-keeping force of 6,000 troops as part of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). The force, to include a substantial number of troops from ECOWAS countries, was to be deployed for an initial period of six months to help implement the peace agreement, in particular monitoring the cease-fire and the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants. The full complement of troops, however, had not been deployed by the end of 1999. A reduced ECOMOG force was to remain to maintain security and help implement the peace agreement with UNAMSIL. Subsequent plans to withdraw ECOMOG troops, however, prompted a recommendation by the UN Secretary-General in late December for a substantial increase in UNAMSIL troops. The UN peace-keeping force was mandated to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, within its capabilities and areas of deployment.
Following the peace agreement, the UN Security Council agreed to expand the human rights section of UNAMSIL, including by appointing advisers on child protection. The human rights section monitored and reported abuses and promoted respect and protection of human rights. It was actively involved in securing the release of prisoners and captured civilians and in assisting in the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the National Human Rights Commission. It also provided human rights training for police and UN military observers and support for Sierra Leonean human rights groups. AI called for the human rights section to receive full political support and adequate resources.
In November the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights decided to send a delegation to Sierra Leone in early 2000.

Impunity
The peace agreement provided for a general amnesty for all acts undertaken in pursuit of the conflict. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General for Sierra Leone, signing the peace agreement as a moral guarantor, added a disclaimer that the UN did not recognize the amnesty as applying to genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. It remained unclear, however, how impunity for such abuses would be addressed. While the Truth and Reconciliation Commission provided by the peace agreement could examine human rights abuses committed during the conflict, it could not alone establish full accountability because of the amnesty.
Shortly after the peace agreement was signed, the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights called for an international investigation into human rights abuses during the conflict and the UN Secretary-General acknowledged that the amnesty was difficult to reconcile with the goal of ending impunity. He suggested to the UN Security Council that it consider measures to ensure accountability for serious violations of human rights and humanitarian law, including the establishment of an international commission of inquiry. While noting the views of the Secretary-General, the Security Council neither explicitly supported nor endorsed such a commission, judging that insistence on accountability for human rights abuses at that stage would undermine the peace process.
In a letter to the Security Council in July, AI urged that it recommend an effective

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international mechanism for investigating human rights abuses and for bringing those responsible to justice. Although the High Commissioner's Office established a study on the possible relationship between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and an international commission of inquiry, no recommendations were known to have been made by the end of the year.

AI country reports

- Sierra Leone: Escalating human rights crisis requires urgent action (AI Index: AFR 51/001/99)
- Sierra Leone: UN human rights presence reduced as abuses worsen(AI Index: AFR 51/003/99)
- Sierra Leone: Recommendations to the international contact group on Sierra Leone, New York, 19 April 1999 (AI Index: AFR 51/005/99)
- Sierra Leone: Mary Robinson's visit to Freetown — placing human rights centre stage (AI Index: AFR 51/006/99)
- Sierra Leone: A peace agreement but no justice (AI Index: AFR 51/007/99)
- Sierra Leone: The Security Council should clarify the United Nations' position on impunity (AI Index: AFR 51/010/99)
- Sierra Leone: Amnesty International's recommendations to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, Durban, South Africa, 12–15 November 1999 (AI Index: AFR 51/011/99)
- Sierra Leone: Escalating human rights abuses against civilians (AI Index: AFR 51/013/99)

45. No Peace without Justice, Sierra Leone Conflict Mapping Program, 9 March 2004

Letter from "No Peace without Justice" certifying the report

Report

No Peace without Justice: pp. 1-3

Conflict Mapping Program: pp. 7-11

Overview of the conflict: pp. 31-39, 49-51

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NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

866 UN Plaza #408; New York NY 10017 Tel. +1 212 9802558 Fax +1 212 9801072
Via di Torre Argentina 76; I-00186 Roma; Tel. +39 06 68803613 Fax +39 06 68803609

I, Lacey Alison Arnot Smith, formerly Country Director for No Peace Without Justice in Sierra Leone, hereby affirm that:

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2. *Conflict Mapping in Sierra Leone: Violations of International Humanitarian Law from 1991 to 2002* is an authorised publication of No Peace Without Justice.

3. The version of *Conflict Mapping in Sierra Leone: Violations of International Humanitarian Law from 1991 to 2002* published on the NPWJ Sierra Leone Mission website[1] is the current and authentic version of this publication to date.

Signed:

L. Alison A. Smith
Legal Counsel/Coordinator International Criminal Justice Program
No Peace Without Justice

Done on 21 July 2005 in Venice, Italy

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[1] Available through the NPWJ Sierra Leone Mission website on http://www.specialcourt.org/SLMission/CMFullReport.html. In addition to the pdf file of the report, that page has for download a winzip file containing the same pdf document encrypted for the purposes of certifying its authenticity: http://www.specialcourt.org/Outreach/ConflictMapping/NPWJCMReport10MAR04pp.zip. The password to open the encrypted file is nopeacewithoutjustice. This certificate of authenticity refers to that encrypted file, as opened with this password.

European Office
Rue du Pépin, 54; B-1000 Bruxelles, Belgium
Tel. +32 (0)2 548-3910; Fax +32 (0)2 511-8100

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No Peace Without Justice

Sierra Leone Conflict Mapping Program

Preliminary edition for the opening of the SCSL Courthouse

10 March 2004

Conflict Mapping in Sierra Leone: Violations of International Humanitarian Law from 1991 to 2002

L. Alison Smith, Catherine Gambette and Thomas Longley, for No Peace Without Justice

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NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

Conflict Mapping in Sierra Leone:
Violations of International Humanitarian Law from 1991 to 2002

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NPWJ Conflict Mapping Report
10 March 2004



NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

FORWARD

The purpose of this report is to examine information gathered in Sierra Leone by No Peace Without Justice's Conflict Mapping Program and analyse it through the lens of international humanitarian law, particularly those crimes within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Special Court.

Accountability exists in many forms and at many levels; this report focuses on accountability for the violation of the laws of war in the belief that it is only by holding responsible those who violate those laws can there be deterrence for future would-be perpetrators. Too often, there are those who argue for the preservation of general amnesties and other guarantees of immunity in the name of "stability" or "moving on"; yet too often, history shows that the only way to achieve real stability and to move forward is to account for what has happened in the past.

Accountability for violations of international humanitarian law for conflicts such as that experienced by Sierra Leone requires more than one avenue; even the formal institutions established for this purpose – the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court – can only do so much. This report hopes to contribute to the accountability process, to the strengthening of the rule of law and to sustainable peace by adding to the historical record of what happened during the long years of the conflict.

The Conflict Mapping Program deliberately took a wide approach: chronologically, it covers the whole period of the conflict and substantively, it covers all violations of humanitarian law, irrespective of whether they are subject to the jurisdiction of Sierra Leone courts or of the Special Court. Thus, it hopes to demonstrate two main things. First, that what happened to the people of Sierra Leone were crimes, whether they are prosecuted or not. Second, to demonstrate that all such crimes are worthy of an account, from the harassment of one person in a remote village, obliged to give all he owns to an invading force, to the systematic killing of hundreds or thousands of people.

The world characterised the conflict in Sierra Leone in two words: diamonds and amputations. For certain, those two factors construct a persuasive framework by painting acts of great horror and ruthlessness against a background of solid greed. However, the conflict was about much more than that, as the facts gathered and analysed for this report show. There is another story of a decade of cruelty and petty humiliations, systematic brutality, murder, theft and exploitation: a million or more tales of human suffering, sadness and loss. The conflict in Sierra Leone was characterised by extreme levels of violence against a civilian population from all sides, even from those supposed to be their protectors. The violence focused on the domination of a country and her resources, particularly her people: the most valuable resource of all.

If the rule of law is to be upheld, the perpetrators of these acts, which are astonishing not only in their brutality but also in their repeating pattern across more than a decade, must be held to account. Such perpetrators rely upon people not watching closely and not speaking out, in keeping quiet and living with fear in their hearts and minds; they rely on the language of "forgive *and* forget". It is hoped that this report goes some small way towards removing the shield of impunity for the planners and perpetrators of such predatory enterprises and that in its reading, the plight not only of the hundreds or thousands killed but also the one person who lost everything will remain in our memory.



NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

Through the years we have worked in Sierra Leone, we have made many close and valuable friends. This report is dedicated to two friends who are no longer with us, to ***Idrissa Kendor****, one of NPWJ's Conflict Mapping Recorders, and to* ***Mr S.A. Sankoh****, former Treasurer of the Special Court Working Group, whose enthusiasm and dogged determination are sorely missed.*

NPWJ Conflict Mapping Report
Preliminary edition for the opening of the SCSL Courthouse
10 March 2004

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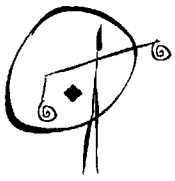

NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE

Conflict Mapping in Sierra Leone:
Violations of International Humanitarian Law from 1991 to 2002

Preface: An overview of NPWJ activities in Sierra Leone

1. No Peace Without Justice

No Peace Without Justice (NPWJ) is an international non-profit organisation working for the establishment of an effective international criminal justice system and in support of accountability mechanisms for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide, with a view to strengthening democracy and the rule of law worldwide.

Since its creation in 1994, NPWJ has been engaged in activities to promote public awareness on the International Criminal Court (ICC) as well as to pressure Parliaments, Governments and other decision-making bodies with the aim of accelerating the entry into force of the first permanent international jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

NPWJ's international activities have involved a series of inter-governmental regional conferences in Europe, Africa, Asia, North America and Latin America to foster the prompt creation of the ICC. At an academic level, NPWJ has organised a series of seminars and workshops to create a "Task Force" to enable the participation of developing and less developed countries in the process towards the establishment of the Court. On the eve of the 1998 Rome Diplomatic Conference, NPWJ launched a project of concrete technical cooperation called the "Judicial Assistance Program" (JAP) to assist small delegations to participate in ICC-related negotiations. To date, some 15 countries have benefited from this program, profiting from the competence and expertise of more than 40 jurists, lawyers, law professors and researchers.

In August 1998, NPWJ launched an ad hoc campaign to support the activities of the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia (ICTY) concerning the crimes perpetrated in Kosovo. This was followed in 1999 by an extensive Humanitarian Law Documentation Project, conducted under the auspices of the International Crisis Group, which gathered statements from witnesses of serious violations of international humanitarian law committed during the Kosovo conflict, primarily for use by the Office of the Prosecutor at the ICTY. In addition, the "analysis" part of the project produced a report generalising the findings and helping to reconstruct chains of command.[1] A third purpose was to build local capacity to continue this work and promote human rights after the project ended in December 1999.

In June 2000, NPWJ also launched a Judicial Assistance Program related to internationalised courts, including the Serious Crimes Panel established by the United Nations in East Timor after the obtainment of independence and the then-proposed Special Court for Sierra Leone. Following the entry into force of the Rome Statute on 1 July 2002, NPWJ has continued its international activities to universalise the jurisdiction of the ICC aimed at enlarging the membership of the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute and continues to assist developing countries to participate in

[1] See "Reality Demands" on the ICG website for the report from this project: www.crisisweb.org.

ICC-related meetings. NPWJ has also expanded its scope of action to other issues such as the fight against Female Genital Mutilation and the direct promotion of the enforcement of democracy.

NPWJ projects are carried out in collaboration with a variety of international and regional entities, such as the United Nations and the European Union, as well as groups of Non-Governmental Organisations, such as the International Coalition of NGOs for the ICC and others. NPWJ publishes a quarterly newsletter and operates a website at www.npwj.org.

2. No Peace Without Justice in Sierra Leone

NPWJ's involvement in Sierra Leone began with the secondment of experts in international criminal law to the Government of Sierra Leone in June 1998 on the occasion of the Rome Diplomatic Conference that adopted the Statute of the International Criminal Court. Since 2000, NPWJ-seconded experts have been working in Freetown and New York, within the Mission of Sierra Leone to the United Nations and the Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice, to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in relation to the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

Since 2001, NPWJ has also been engaged in a wide-ranging field-based Outreach and public information campaign on the Special Court, in cooperation with Sierra Leonean grassroots organisations and civil society groups. In 2002, after the Special Court came into existence, NPWJ's Sierra Leone project considerably expanded both its scope of activity (and its expenditure) to include a Conflict Mapping program and a Legal Profession program designed specifically for the Sierra Leonean Legal Profession.

NPWJ's most recent Sierra Leone program, which ran from July 2002 to October 2003, included four principal components:

1. The Judicial Assistance Program ("JAP" Program), namely the secondment of expert personnel to the Government of Sierra Leone in Freetown and New York to assist with dealing with requests of assistance and other requests by the Special Court and to build the capacity of the relevant Government Departments to deal with these requests, as well as to provide advice on issues relating to international law in general;
2. The Outreach Program, namely cooperation with local grassroots organisations to carry out public information and education on the Special Court and on accountability mechanisms in general, in order to facilitate a sense of ownership of these mechanisms and increase reliance on the rule of law and the mechanisms of democracy; this included the organisation of "Training the Trainers" workshops throughout the country, seminars, the production of outreach materials in different media, community events including street theatre and creating a robust network of non-governmental organisations centred on issues of accountability;
3. The Legal Profession Program, namely the promotion of the role of the Special Court within the legal profession in Sierra Leone and the role of the Sierra Leonean legal profession within the Special Court, in order to enhance the relevance of the Special Court in the lives of legal professionals and the potential of the Special Court for leaving a legacy of respect for the law and knowledge of international human rights standards; this included training seminars, public lectures and the production of reports and informational materials;
4. The Conflict Mapping Program, namely the reconstruction of the chain of events during the ten-year war through the scrupulous selection and debriefing of key individuals throughout



the country whose profession, role in their community or in the forces involved in the conflict, placed them in a position to follow events as they unfolded.

Each program, while distinct in their specific aims, was conducted so as to reinforce the other programs and thereby increase the contribution of each program to the project's overall aim of strengthening the ability of Sierra Leone society to address violations of human rights and humanitarian law. The most striking example of this was the close cooperation between the Outreach and Conflict Mapping programs. While the Outreach Program trained villages and towns on the Special Court, through "Training the Trainers" sessions and community events, these same communities continued to participate in accountability efforts by providing the Conflict Mapping program with their own views on and experiences of the conflict, by being consulted on the events and by directly taking part in the gathering of information. In addition, the project as a whole operated so as to maximise the participation of Sierra Leoneans in decision-making processes, both in relation to project policy as well as the design, implementation and follow-up for activities. This was premised on the belief that for Sierra Leone's accountability mechanisms to make a meaningful impact and achieve their goals, there must be "ownership" of the processes by Sierra Leoneans. It is also underpinned by the notion that, as a matter of policy, Sierra Leoneans are best placed to know what activities and approaches would be the most effective to reach the people of Sierra Leone.

2.(a). Judicial Assistance Program

Since 2000, NPWJ-seconded experts have been working in Freetown and New York, within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Office of the Attorney-General and Ministry of Justice, to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in its negotiations for the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone. This component of the project addresses the consequences of the conflict in Sierra Leone by increasing governmental awareness of and commitment to accountability mechanisms, which is vital for the successful operations of these mechanisms. Increasing the awareness of the Government and Parliamentarians of the benefits of international human rights and humanitarian law increases the likelihood of legislation passing through Parliament, which in turn strengthens the rule of law by providing legal mechanisms by which to seek redress for its violation.

In July 2000, responding to the request of Sierra Leone to provide specialised assistance, NPWJ seconded a legal expert to the Sierra Leone Mission to the UN in New York to continue assisting the Sierra Leone Ambassador to the UN, which had begun during the negotiations for the establishment of the ICC in 1998. In August 2000, a further two legal experts were seconded to the Office of the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice in Freetown, Sierra Leone. This ensured that the Government, with the advice of NPWJ-seconded personnel, was able to form a co-ordinated response, both in Freetown and in New York, and to convey that response in the best possible way at the best possible time. By maintaining this close contact, NPWJ-seconded legal experts have kept the often delicate negotiations balanced and have ensured that the concerns of Sierra Leone were not lost in the debate.

The work of NPWJ-seconded legal experts has centred around advising the Sierra Leone Government on critical issues arising in relation to the Special Court and issues of international criminal justice in general, including representing the Government during meetings and negotiations. This, together with detailed legal and policy analyses and recommendations on a range of issues

raised directly and indirectly by the ongoing negotiations, has enabled Sierra Leone to formulate policies and address all the relevant issues in a timely manner.

In addition, NPWJ-seconded legal experts have been assisting the Attorney-General and the Sierra Leone Mission with various other tasks relating to international human rights and humanitarian law. For example, in New York, NPWJ-seconded legal experts have been participating in the VI (Legal) Committee of the General Assembly, while in Freetown, the Government has often taken advantage of the presence of NPWJ-seconded international law experts to provide information and analyses on matters within their areas of expertise, such as the requirements of implementing legislation for the International Criminal Court.

2.(b) Outreach Program

During the team's stay in Freetown in 2000, NPWJ identified a need for public sensitisation and education, given that what was being reported concerning the Special Court in the local media was often wildly inaccurate. The NPWJ Sierra Leone Mission was therefore expanded in 2001 to include an Outreach Program, designed to facilitate public information and sensitisation on the Special Court. The Outreach Program increased awareness of the mandate and operations of the Special Court, including promoting knowledge about human rights and humanitarian law issues to the public at large. The Outreach Program worked through the medium of local organisations, in particular the Special Court Working Group, by building the capacity of such local organisations to formulate and disseminate information coherently and in simple terms. Part of this process includes working with local organisations to formulate the issues in language and ways easily understandable by the general public. This fosters the role of civil society in promoting accountability within Sierra Leonean society and creates a stronger civil society by supplementing them with potent means to raise the issues publicly, both in general and in terms of prompting the Government to ensure international standards are promoted.

The Outreach Program commenced with "The Freetown Conference on Accountability Mechanisms for Violations of International Humanitarian Law in Sierra Leone", held in the Lagoonda Complex on 20 to 22 February 2001 and attended by over 100 mainly Sierra Leonean participants. The conference provided a vehicle for the exploration of mechanisms designed to provide accountability for atrocities committed in Sierra Leone during the course of the conflict. It focussed on the two mechanisms then envisaged for Sierra Leone (the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission) and the interaction between those institutions as well as exploring how traditional or customary justice could be incorporated into or operate alongside those mechanisms. Two key recommendations were adopted at the plenary session of the Conference, both based on participants' perceived need for ownership of accountability mechanisms by the people of Sierra Leone: holding training workshops on the Special Court and establishing a coalition of interested Sierra Leonean NGOs to conduct the bulk of public sensitisation and information sharing about the Special Court. This concrete set of recommendations formed the basis for much of NPWJ's subsequent outreach work.

The "Training the Trainers" seminars presented a detailed overview of the provisions of the (then) draft Statute and Agreement for the Special Court. To place the Special Court in context, the seminars began with a brief introduction to the purposes and principles of international

humanitarian and criminal law and discussed practical issues surrounding the Special Court. A number of identical workshops were held over a period of days, limiting the number of participants within each session to ensure the maximum opportunity for discussion. This model was employed over a number of months to facilitate holding seminars both in Freetown, the capital city, and in the provinces. The series of seminars thus held in 2001 attracted a total of over 600 participants from a diverse range of human rights, civil society and other organisations, including the RUF and the CDF. Training sessions were also held at the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) camp in Lunsar and "extra-ordinary" sessions were held for specialised groups, such as the legal profession and human rights monitors.

An additional motive for the training seminars conducted in March 2001 was to identify those members of Sierra Leone civil society who were interested in establishing a "Special Court Working Group", a coalition of Sierra Leone civil society organisations who were interested in the issues and who could play a crucial role in outreach and sensitisation, including ensuring that information being disseminated about the Special Court by various groups within Sierra Leone would be uniform and consistent. NPWJ organised a number of meetings of the Special Court Working Group (SCWG); over the course of 2001, the number of participants in working group meetings grew to a total of 39 members representing as many organisations. The SCWG, which met every two weeks in plenary and more often in smaller specialised groups, discussed the types of messages concerning the Special Court that would need to be directed to specific groups within Sierra Leone, together with the modalities through which the sensitisation program would be implemented. The SCWG adopted its constitution on 30 June 2001 and held elections for the national executive in July 2001, from which time the Special Court Working Group Sierra Leone (SCWG-SL) was established as an independent entity.[2]

During 2002-2003, the NPWJ Outreach Program gathered momentum and expanded in terms of the range of activities undertaken, its geographical reach and its implementing partners, which at the end of 2003 included the Special Court for Sierra Leone itself. NPWJ continued to work with the SCWG, including facilitating the establishment of 12 District Working Groups and the holding of elections for the national executive in August 2003, as required by the constitution. NPWJ also cooperated with the SCWG to hold "top-up training" for existing and new SCWG members, to ensure people were kept well informed about ongoing developments in relation to the Special Court. Among the targeted training held in 2002-3, NPWJ held a seminar for performing artists, which saw the creation of "The Right Players", a group of Sierra Leonean dramatists who write and perform skits, short plays and songs on themes related to the Special Court. Building on this and the targeted training held for market women, NPWJ organised a series of Market Tours for the Right Players, in which the Right Players staged short plays about the Special Court in 16 markets across the Freetown area, with NPWJ staff on hand to answer questions from the audience.

Together with the Peace and Conflict Studies Department of Fourah Bay College at the University of Sierra Leone, NPWJ organised a series of public lectures, which commenced with the first public engagement of the newly-elected President of the Special Court, Judge Geoffrey Robertson. These

[2] The Special Court Working Group subsequently changed its name to the Coalition for Justice and Accoutability. Given that during the time period covered by this preface they were still known as the SCWG, that is the name this preface will use.



lectures were video-taped and broadcast on SLBS, Sierra Leone's national television station. In addition to television, NPWJ continued to facilitate the SCWG's "Special Court Hour", held every Saturday on Radio UNAMSIL since 2001, and helped to establish and support similar radio shows in five locations across the country. Again in conjunction with the SCWG, NPWJ held a series of training sessions for the newly-established District Working Groups in 13 locations in the provinces. These sessions were attended by over 520 participants, ranging from NGO and civil society activists to the Sierra Leone Police and Sierra Leone Army, traditional leaders and the local Law Officers' Departments. These were followed by two major conferences in the provinces for the District Working Groups, based on the model adopted for the Freetown Conference in 2001, which resulted in concrete plans of action for the District Working Groups for the coming months. During August 2003, NPWJ and the Special Court for Sierra Leone built on these seminars and conferences by conducting a major series of training seminars across the country targeting specific groups such as the military, children, women and others.

The Outreach Program continued to develop and distribute materials on the Special Court, including production of the "Special Court Times", a newspaper-sized broadsheet on issues related to the Special Court, and its accompanying "Pocket Edition", which contained "Frequently Asked Questions" about the Special Court. In addition, NPWJ produced a number of small informational pamphlets, reproduced the constitutive and supporting legal documents of the Court[3] and assisted the Special Court to put together a booklet covering all aspects of the Special Court, illustrated by local artists. NPWJ also produced a series of informational materials on the International Criminal Court, to accompany two seminars hosted by NPWJ, one for civil society in conjunction with the Coalition for an International Criminal Court and other foreign and local NGOs, including the National Forum for Human Rights, and one at the request of Sierra Leone Parliamentarians.

2.(c) Legal Profession Program

In 2002, after the Special Court came into existence, NPWJ's Sierra Leone project expanded to include a Legal Profession Program, aimed specifically at the Sierra Leonean Legal Profession and working primarily in partnership with the Sierra Leone Bar Association. The Legal Profession Program promoted knowledge of human rights and humanitarian law norms within the legal profession in Sierra Leone. A robust legal profession with knowledge about human rights will lead to a profession capable of defending human rights through various means, including legal means. This in turn strengthens the rule of law by enabling the Sierra Leone legal profession to ensure they have the knowledge required to work effectively with and within Sierra Leone's accountability mechanisms.

The activities undertaken within the Legal Profession Program included training seminars, roundtable discussions and the drafting of explanatory and critical documents. The program also encouraged the Special Court to involve itself in the legal community so that the Court may make a sustainable contribution to the rule of law in Sierra Leone. To that end, NPWJ together with the Sierra Leone Bar Association and the Special Court held a half-day seminar on the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court in December 2002. During this seminar, selected members of the Bar Association made submissions to the newly sworn in Judges on different

[3] Namely the Agreement establishing the Special Court, the Statute, the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, the Rules of Detention and the indictments.



aspects of the Rules, in particular with reference to the laws of Sierra Leone. In addition, NPWJ brought an international law expert to Sierra Leone to consult with the Special Court and others on potential models for defence before the Special Court. Both activities resulted in reports that were made available to, among others, the Judges of the Special Court during their first plenary meeting to consult on the Rules in early 2003.

The Legal Profession Program also worked closely with the Outreach Program on the public lecture series, including selecting an international law expert to provide specialised training for the members of the Sierra Leone Bar Association on the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court.[4] In July 2003, NPWJ in partnership with the Bar Human Rights Committee of England and Wales held a week-long "IHL Training Seminar" for members of the Sierra Leone Bar Association and other interested legal practitioners. This training resulted in a set of lecture notes, which was widely distributed in Sierra Leone and abroad. In addition, many of the trainers participated in another NPWJ activity, the Lawyers' Guide to the Special Court, which is a guide to the substantive and procedural law relating to the Special Court.[5]

A major component of the Legal Profession Program was providing access to relevant library resources through the establishment of the NPWJ International Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Library in Freetown. This library was a continuation of the "Book Donation" program launched in 2000, whereby foreign universities, individuals and others donated legal books and materials to NPWJ's international law reading room and resource centre in Sierra Leone. NPWJ was fortunate to receive a large donation from the Colombia University Human Rights Law Program, which was shipped to Sierra Leone in 2002 and formed the backbone of the library, which also included donations from Penguin Publishers, the Canadian Law Book Company, Geoffrey Robertson QC (as he then was), Caroline Morgan and others. The library was officially opened at the beginning of 2003 by Desmond de Silva, QC, the Deputy Prosecutor of the Special Court. NPWJ hired a qualified librarian to manage the collection, which included a digital library compiled by NPWJ, and to oversee the library itself, which also contained internet stations and photocopying facilities. The majority of users consisted of human rights activists and university and school students, who used the library for research on human rights, humanitarian law and related matters. Following the conclusion of the NPWJ Sierra Leone project in 2003, NPWJ embarked on a partnership with the Campaign for Good Governance, who are now housing the library at their Freetown headquarter office and ensuring continued public access to the collection.

2.(d) Conflict Mapping Program

In 2002, NPWJ launched the Conflict Mapping Program, which reconstructs the chain of events during a conflict through gathering information in the field and analysing the decision-making processes to ascertain the role of those who bear the greatest responsibility for policies of systematic and massive violations of the laws of war. This analysis is based on testimonial and other data overlaid with order of battle and command structures of the various forces as they evolved over time and space. This chronological and geographical mapping of the conflict, including reconstructing the order of battle and chain of command, serves to prevent denial of those events. An analysis of events according to international law establishes prima facie accountability for

[4] Staff of the Special Court also attended these training seminars.

[5] The Lawyers' Guide is available from www.specialcourt.org.



violations of international humanitarian law. In so doing, it both serves to strengthen the rule of law and to promote and defend human rights by publicising the price for violating them. In addition, establishing the chain of command within the armed forces operating in Sierra Leone and assembling these disparate pieces of information to create the bigger picture of the decade-long conflict in Sierra Leone enables the crucial first phase of establishing who bears direct and command responsibility for crimes committed during the conflict. This will enable the people of Sierra Leone to establish who should be held accountable for those crimes, thereby avoiding the trap of blaming a group or segment of society and promoting peaceful conciliation.

Beginning in 2002, the Outreach Program increased its geographic spread. This opened up new channels, networks and possibilities for collaboration and consequently increased the diversity and size of NPWJ's network of partner organisations and individuals. In addition, the Outreach Program deepened NPWJ's pre-existing relationships with many key sectors of society. These factors made it possible to conceive of a field based nation-wide Conflict Mapping Program in two main ways. NPWJ's extensive and trusted network of partners would be essential in devising and implementing any system of collecting information. Following this, NPWJ's network of partners embedded in communities throughout the country would also be essential in maximising the possible impact of the program: in encouraging people to participate in the program; in promoting the underlying rationales of accountability; and then in disseminating the results.

Meaningful long-term conciliation and reintegration can only take place if the accountability process belongs to each and every community – and if each community is able to participate in it. Rehabilitation and reintegration is not simply a matter of locating next of kin and assisting in individual reintegration; it is about enabling society and each community to move forward and to accept individuals back into their fold. The outreach and information gathering processes have contributed towards establishing confidence in the accountability mechanisms, by providing victims and witnesses with the opportunity to recount their stories and the stories of others in such a way as to help them understand their personal and their communities' experiences in the context of the conflict.

In the implementation of the Conflict Mapping Program, NPWJ worked closely with local partner organisations, with whom an excellent relationship had been built over the previous two years. The Conflict Mapping Program has therefore involved as much of the country as possible in conducting sensitisation and documentation in this manner so as to encourage a sense of ownership of the processes by the people of Sierra Leone.

The results of this work, which are found in this report, together with the work of organisations in Sierra Leone undertaking human rights reporting, are hoped to support the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court. It must however be emphasised that the process in itself is as important as the final document, because the direct involvement of Sierra Leoneans (both as interviewer and interviewee) in this program has allowed them to be at the heart of the accountability work being carried out in the country.



Chapter One: Methodology

The purpose of the Conflict Mapping Program, as outlined in the preface, is two-fold: to gather reliable information so as to put together an accurate picture of what happened in Sierra Leone and to make the process meaningful for Sierra Leoneans. Initially, on the basis of NPWJ's experience in other situations, it was determined that there were four main ways in which a report such as this one could be produced, namely:

1. Individuals recounting their own experiences;
2. Individuals giving an overview of what happened in their area, through their own experience and what they have learnt from others;
3. Groups recounting their experiences in a shared environment; and
4. Open source materials.

The question facing the program during the conceptual phase was which method to select in order to maximise both the quality of the information gathered and the impact of information-gathering on Sierra Leoneans, given the resources and constraints. The main constraints were limited financial resources; a limited amount of time; the size of the country and lack of ease of movement, including the condition of the roads; and the fact that Sierra Leone experiences torrential rains for six months of the year, making many roads completely impassable.

In addition, each method listed above has its own pros and cons. For example, while the first method involves Sierra Leoneans to the greatest degree, every single person in the country would have to be given an opportunity to tell their story in order to gather enough information to be able to put together an accurate picture of what happened across the country. This would be difficult if not impossible to achieve at the national level for a ten-year conflict with limited resources and limited time. On the other hand, while the last method can also give a very comprehensive picture of what happened across the country, it would have limited to no impact on or involvement of the people of Sierra Leone.

Given these factors, it was considered that the most appropriate method for NPWJ to conduct a Conflict Mapping Program that focused on the whole of the country rather than a limited geographical area was to use information gathered from people in Sierra Leone with a good general overview of the conflict in their area ("key persons"),[6] supplemented with open source materials. In order to maximise community participation, enhance the quality of the information and overcome potential cultural and linguistic barriers, it was considered that the best people to take records from people with an overview were Sierra Leoneans from the same geographical area as the key persons ("Conflict Mapping Recorders" or "CMRs"). In addition, it was considered that in order to enhance community "ownership" of the accountability mechanisms, the Conflict Mapping and Outreach Programs should as much as possible be conducted together. Marrying the sensitisation and the documentation processes ensures that the perception of the communities reached is not that of being "told" about the accountability process as something that happens elsewhere and is relevant to others, but rather of truly taking part in it.

[6] Key persons provided information to NPWJ on the basis of confidentiality, subject to certain exceptions for which the consent of the key person was obtained prior to taking the record, including use of the information in the compilation of this report.



While this method was the most appropriate in the circumstances, it comes with its own potential drawbacks, which had to be addressed during the conceptual phase so as to minimise their possible impact during implementation. There are seven major areas of concern of such importance that failure to recognise and address them would have compromised the value of both the process and outcomes of the program, described here as "critical areas". These are addressed comprehensively in the following sections, but are worth discussing briefly here.

The first critical area is the quality of the CMRs and their ability to draw out relevant information from the key person so as to compile a record that could be used during the analysis phase. This was addressed through a rigorous two-fold selection process. In the first instance, NPWJ outlined the program to partner NGOs in the regions, often members of the SCWG, who would nominate persons they considered suitable to be CMRs. Following that initial nomination, NPWJ held a training session for the potential CMRs, including a practical exercise in record-taking, and selected CMRs on the basis of the results of that training. In addition, CMRs were trained in recognising their own potential biases and how to overcome them and, at the very least, to identify those biases for the analysts.

The second critical area concerns the quality and usability of the records, which is distinct from the quality of the person taking the record, although the two often correlate. This was overcome by rigorous training in how to take a record and what information might be relevant, which included practical exercises in taking a record before interviewing the first key person. In addition, once the first record had been taken, NPWJ personnel reviewed the record with the CMR, to point out potential problems and provide advice on how to take a more comprehensive record.[7]

The third critical area is the type of the key persons interviewed by the CMRs in terms of the kind of information they might provide. In order to overcome this concern, CMRs were provided with rigorous guidelines and criteria for ideal candidates for key persons. Once CMRs had made their initial selection of the key persons they wished to interview, NPWJ personnel went through the list with them and discussed their choices, suggesting alternatives where the initial choices were inappropriate.

The fourth critical area is the accuracy of the information provided by the key persons. This was addressed by providing CMRs with guidelines and training in interviewing and how to take a record, including the importance of accuracy and not "making up" information to fill in gaps, as well as recognising potential bias in key persons.

The fifth critical area concerns the accuracy of the information itself. Given that the conflict ranged over the course of a decade and many key persons were either relatively young when events happened or were relatively elderly at the time they gave their record, not to mention the potential effects of post traumatic stress disorder, even with the best intentions on the part of both the CMRs and the key persons there is always the possibility that people are mistaken. This was addressed by reviewing the first factual analysis with well respected local human rights activists who were not involved in the Conflict Mapping Program and who themselves had a good general overview of

[7] In most cases, CMRs were required to go back to the first key person to fill in information that was lacking in the record, which would generally improve the comprehensiveness of the remaining records that were taken.

what happened in a particular District. In addition, it was addressed by providing the factual analysis to other local and foreign experts and by cross-checking the information with open source materials.

The sixth critical area was geographical coverage. In its original conception, the Conflict Mapping Program was to have one CMR per chiefdom, in order to have saturation coverage across the whole country. However, time, financial and logistical restraints meant that this was not possible, as there are 149 chiefdoms across the country, plus the rural Western Area, not all of which are accessible at all times of the year. In order to avoid making arbitrary decisions about which chiefdoms to cut and with a view to minimising the damage to the report as a whole, NPWJ therefore discussed this issue with the Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), the leading human rights NGO in Sierra Leone with human rights monitors in every District, and the SCWG. NPWJ sought their advice on which chiefdoms could be covered by a CMR from a neighbouring chiefdom (termed "linked") and which chiefdoms were not the scene of a great deal of activity during the conflict and could be cut altogether. In addition, NPWJ discussed with CGG the chiefdoms about which they would be able to provide information, on the basis of their regular human rights reporting work as well as a special human rights violations reporting project they undertook during 2001.

The final critical area related to processing the raw information generated by the project – in short, information management. Failure to secure, store and accurately break down the records into a practical format for analysis would undermine efforts to buid an accurate reconstruction of the events described in them. In November 2002, NPWJ together with Sensible Data srl, an Italian IT company specialising in emergency situations, began developing a customised database that would allow the narratives in the records to be broken down into incidents, storing simple information about the incident alongside data about the exact location and date of its occurrence. As soon the first completed records began to be collected in mid May, they entered a process of digitisation. In late June, once all the records were collected, records were broken down into incidents by a team of specially trained database analysts. A thorough system of cross-checking was implemented throughout to maintain the accuracy of information from record through to database.

1. Selecting and training Conflict Mapping Recorders

The gathering of information in the field in Sierra Leone was conducted by national human rights workers or "Conflict Mapping Recorders", trained and supervised by NPWJ personnel, in communities and villages throughout the country.

1.(a) Selection of CMRs

While the selection of the CMRs in the communities was one of the most important parts of the program, it also presented one of the greatest challenges from a quality control perspective. In this process, NPWJ was very heavily reliant on the judgment and expertise of its collaborating organisations and their representatives, with whom a relationship of trust had been built over the previous two years.

As a system of quality control, NPWJ tried to ensure the collaborating organisations selected their best people to nominate as CMRs, by discussing with the organisations the purpose of the program and providing the following checklist for indicators that people could make good CMRs:

- They should have a good level of knowledge about the conflict in their chiefdoms.



- They should have a good level of written and spoken English.
- They should be able to overcome their bias as much as possible.
- They should show willingness and have time for the program, since much of its success lies in the quality of their records.

Following the initial selection stage by local partners, NPWJ held a training workshop at which the final selection was made (see below), based on how the CMR responded to the training and their performance in the practical exercise of taking a record. By the end of April 2003, the selection stage was complete and NPWJ had hired a total of 136 CMRs to cover 146 chiefdoms.[8] Twenty-two CMRs were hired to cover the Western Area, which is a densely populated area to which many IDPs fled during the war. In each District, NPWJ appointed a focal point, who was the main contact person for that District and who assisted with logistical and other arrangements, including bringing the final records to Freetown for review purposes. These CMRs and the focal points represented a broad cross section of civil society and included human rights activists, teachers and others.

1.(b) Training of CMRs

NPWJ conducted training workshops in various locations in the Western Area and in the 12 headquarter towns throughout the country. In order to provide greater participation and information sharing, as well as due to time and logistical constraints, CMRs travelled from their chiefdoms to the headquarter town rather than NPWJ personnel travelling to each chiefdom. In addition, this allowed the focal point to meet every CMR selected and identify possible logistical obstacles. The training was divided into three distinct components: the introductory workshop, the training workshop and the review process.

The first visit, called an "introductory workshop", was dedicated to meeting with community leaders and collaborative organisations to introduce the program. This session was the final part of the "Training the Trainers" seminar held by the NPWJ Outreach Program and the Special Court Working Group. This placed the Conflict Mapping Program in the context of the Special Court, accountability mechanisms and the difficulties faced in reconstructing accurately the events of the conflict in Sierra Leone. The introductory workshops laid the groundwork for the quality of the CMRs selected, following the considerations outlined above, as well as the relevance of the key persons identified. One of the main aims of this session was to engage the participants, so that over the following days they could identify potential CMRs for the training workshop and compile a list of potential key persons for reviewing at the end of that training workshop. This stage was completed for the whole country by mid April 2003.

The second visit was the "training workshop", a one-day session composed of sensitisation on the Special Court to ensure that CMRs would be well versed in crimes under international law, in particular those within the jurisdiction of the Court, to enable them to take all the relevant details from their key persons. This sensitisation was followed by a workshop on the Conflict Mapping

[8] CMRs were paid a small stipend to cover transport and incidental costs incurred during their time spent taking records. It should be noted, however, that CMRs were not paid according to the number of records they took but were paid a sum that had been set in advance. It was felt that paying according to the number of records taken could harm the quality of the records, as there was the possibility, however remote, that some people may take more records, which could be of reduced quality, in order to increase their remuneration.



Program itself, concluding with the selection of Conflict Mapping Recorders to take records from key persons. The training focused on explaining the Conflict Mapping Program, how conflict mapping differs from human rights reporting, how to take a record, what type of information to focus on and discussed the fact that these interviews would be taxing and draining on both the CMRs and the key persons. The session culminated in practical exercises in record taking. In addition, this stage included training in the crucial first step of selecting appropriate key persons who have a good general overview of the conflict in their area. On the basis of performance during this training session, including perceived understanding of the process and principles and the quality of the practice record, NPWJ selected a limited number of individuals to work as CMRs. This stage was completed for the whole country in the first week of May 2003.

The third stage consisted of reviewing the first records collected by the CMRs for content and organisation before the final two records were taken from key persons selected by the conflict mapping recorders in consultation with NPWJ. This stage was essential to provide top up training (if necessary), to address problems the CMRs may have encountered, to ensure the quality of the records taken and to ensure that CMRs never felt abandoned. The fact that this process took place after the collection of each CMR's first record and before the collection of subsequent records enabled NPWJ to undertake a thorough system of quality control on an ongoing basis. This stage was completed for the whole country in June 2003.Thus each location was visited at least three times by NPWJ according to a schedule worked out in advance with local partners, especially the SCWG, and the NPWJ Outreach Program.

The structure of the training was developed by NPWJ in consultation with local partners during October and November 2002 and was reviewed on an ongoing basis to incorporate lessons learnt during the training process. The first round of training commenced in December 2002 in Freetown, followed by further meetings and the training of conflict mapping recorders in the rural Western Area, near Freetown. Although this ran the risk of appearing there was a "Freetown bias",[9] NPWJ selected the Western Area as the first point of entry to enable NPWJ to perfect the conflict mapping training before taking it into the provinces, as logistically it is more difficult to perfect such processes in the provinces. Lessons learned from the training in the Western Area were incorporated into the planning process for the provincial training and in late March 2003, following preparatory work undertaken in consultation with the SCWG and the Outreach program, conflict mapping training began in the provinces.

Partly in consideration of the time frame and the impending rainy season, which starts in May and during which many roads become impassable, NPWJ hired a Sierra Leonean team comprised of the best CMRs from the Western Area to undertake the training workshops and the collection of the first records in some parts of the country. This enabled there to be two conflict mapping training teams working simultaneously in different locations around the country, allowing full coverage of the whole country by the conclusion of the time frame for the gathering of records.

[9] A common criticism by Sierra Leoneans of foreign NGOs and others in Sierra Leone is that they focus too much on the capital, Freetown, and do not focus enough on the provincial and rural areas in Sierra Leone.



2. Key persons

The Conflict Mapping Program was primarily based on the scrupulous selection and debriefing of selected individuals ("key persons") whose profession, role in their community or in the forces involved in the conflict placed them in a position to follow events as they unfolded.

To facilitate proper identification and selection of key persons, CMRs were provided with the following guidelines for characteristics of people who would likely be best suited to being a key person:

1. The widest possible overview of the conflict in their area.
2. They were present in their chiefdom for much of the conflict.
3. Reliability.
4. Trustworthiness.
5. They have a good reputation in their community.
6. They would usually be regarded in their community as a person that others can confide in.
7. Honesty.
8. They are able to pass on their knowledge to the Conflict Mapping Recorders accurately and fully.
9. They are as free from bias as possible or at least are able to recognise their own bias.
10. They will usually be recognised as local community leaders in some respect.

In addition, CMRs were provided with the following list of people who may make good key persons:

1. Teachers.
2. Doctors.
3. Lawyers.
4. Counsellors/Social workers.
5. Youth Leaders.
6. Women's Movement Leaders.
7. Senior Police from the local area.
8. Local Magistrates.
9. Chiefs.
10. Section Leaders.
11. Local Commanders from the different fighting factions.
12. Any person in the local community who has been able to gain an overview of the conflict through a number of other persons talking to them or through holding some respected and trusted position in their community.

To facilitate and monitor the quality of the records and the key persons selected for interviews, the CMRs were asked to provide a report prior to conducting an interview, in order to maintain the focus of the process and the standard of the key persons selected. These reports covered the following matters:

1. Why that key person was selected from their list of potential key persons.
2. How the selected key person meets the criteria, for example how and why that key person has an overview of the conflict in that area.
3. The nature of the information provided by that key person.
4. The key person's knowledge of the conflict.



Each CMR was to select three key persons in their chiefdom from whom to take a record, based on the time necessary to take a record and the time frame within which the record-taking phase had to be completed. Nevertheless, the main emphasis was on quality and not quantity when identifying key persons to be interviewed. It was therefore the case that fewer key persons were selected for interviewing in some chiefdoms where the scale of the conflict was minimal or where there was a smaller population.

Following these criteria, the Conflict Mapping Program gathered records from 401 key persons across the country, who ranged in age between 19 and 82. Of these, 6.7% were former members of one of the fighting factions; 6.7% were women; and 10.7% had been captured by one or more of the fighting factions and used either as forced labour or were recruited into a fighting faction.[10] The most common occupation of key persons was a farmer, most of whom had occupied some position of authority during the conflict (such as Town or Section Chief) and many of whom were members of a fighting faction, most commonly the Civil Defence Forces. Other occupations included Paramount Chiefs, Town Chiefs and other chiefdom authorities, teachers, fishermen, housewives, retired military personnel and civil servants.

3. Database

The information gathered by CMRs from key perons comprised over 400 records, each containing an average of 30 pages, with a total of approximately 5,500 separate incidents, that is, instances of an alleged violation of international humanitarian law or key strategic or other information contained in a record. Given the amount and breadth of information, it had to be collated and stored in such a way as to enable easy search and retrieval in order for it to be used by analysts.

NPWJ therefore entered this information into a database designed specifically for the purposes of analysis according to order of battle and chain of command information. Prior to the completion of the design and programming of the database,[11] typists entered the records in their entirety into digital format. The resulting files underwent rigorous proofreading to ensure they were exactly the same as the record provided by each CMR. These documents then formed the basis of the data entry process and were used extensively during the analysis phase.

For data entry purposes, each record was broken into incidents, which consist of discrete parts of information, usually chronological, containing examples of serious violations of international humanitarian law or other relevant information. Each incident was classified according to what crimes were allegedly committed, who allegedly committed them, what weapons they allegedly used and other pertinent information. To ensure accuracy and consistency in the classification of incidents, NPWJ personnel provided training to data entry operators in the basics of international humanitarian law as well as a manual outlining how different factual scenarios should be classified. To ensure accuracy of the database as a whole and to enhance its effectiveness for analysis purposes,

[10] These people are not included in the 6.7% who were former members of a fighting faction, which refers only to those people who joined willingly, according to the information they provided to the CMR.

[11] The database was designed and developed by Sensible Data s.r.l. Sensible Data is an IT company that specialises in information technology, data processing and secure communications for emergency and humanitarian operations: www.sensible.it.



each entry went through a thorough process of checking and cross-checking, to ensure that it was consistent, complete and correct.[12]

4. The analysis

4.(a) District level analysis

At the conclusion of the data entry stage, NPWJ's analysts began piecing together what happened during the 10 years of war in Sierra Leone, using three tools: the database; detailed maps, mostly at District level; and the typed records. The result of this stage, which involved collating and cross-checking vast amounts of information, was a rough outline of what happened in each District during the conflict, highlighting troop movements, chains of command and events, including acts likely to constitute violations of international humanitarian law.

Following this stage, the rough drafts for each District were reviewed in Freetown with field monitors from the Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) responsible for that District. CGG's field monitors are very experienced human rights activists with an in-depth knowledge about what happened during the conflict in the District for which they are responsible. NPWJ specifically did not hire any CGG field monitors as Conflict Mapping Recorders, so that their experience could be better utilised once the first analyses were done, to ensure that there were no major errors or inconsistencies in the District-level analyses, thus providing a crucial first level of cross-checking.

In addition, over a six month period, NPWJ debriefed a former high-level member of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), who provided a great deal of information on the inner workings of the RUF and an overview of the conflict since it began in 1991. The hours spent working with this key person yielded a statement of over 100 pages, plus various documents and maps describing the structure, procedures and geographical locations of the RUF, which were of immense benefit during the analysis phases. A senior Kamajor was also debriefed for the same purposes, although not as extensively.

The process as a whole enabled analysts to piece together the conflict as it happened across time and space and, in particular, to draw out patterns of conduct that may constitute crimes against humanity, namely those crimes committed in a widespread or systematic manner.

4.(b) The first draft factual analysis

Once these stages were complete, experienced analysts began the long process of putting all the information together, which consisted of three stages. First, a "first review" was conducted of the rough drafts, checking for internal sense and consistency. Second, each rough draft went through a more thorough review, addressing potential problems in the analysis, often going back to the original records and maps to clarify issues. Finally, the rough drafts for each District were put together and cross-referenced, which enabled the compilation of the general overview of the conflict. This first stage was based purely on the information gathered in the field and, as such, did not incorporate any information from open sources or other materials.

[12] In compiling the database and the data entry process, NPWJ hired personnel who had worked on the ICG Humanitarian Law Documentation Project so as to enable this phase to benefit from lessons learnt during that project.



4.(c) The second draft factual analysis

The first draft factual analysis formed the backbone of the work that followed, namely the incorporation of information from open sources and other materials, going back to the records when necessary to iron out inconsistencies and to fill in details. Further, at this time, cross-checking, filling in details and checking dates and other information was undertaken when there was conflicting, contradictory or inadequate data. To facilitate this process, NPWJ incorporated a range of diverse information into a fully searchable open source database, with 8,500 entries comprised of news reports,[13] UNAMSIL press briefings,[14] situation reports from NGOs and the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), United Nations press briefings and documents, press releases from other relevant bodies, such as mining companies, and other relevant information. Other open source materials were also used, including reports from major human rights organisations, particularly Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International.

The primary purpose for open source and other material was to provide background material, cross-check the information gathered from key persons and to fill in gaps where any existed. Nevertheless, it must be emphasised that the main source of information for the facts as analysed in this report was Sierra Leoneans themselves, through the records of key persons gathered by Conflict Mapping Recorders throughout the country. Wherever open sources provided information used in the report, that is noted in a footnote to the relevant portion of the text.

The result of this was the second draft factual analysis, which incorporated all verified information from the first draft, with the addition of open sources and other material that had not been gathered directly by NPWJ in the field, but which was useful for confirming or correcting the data. This second draft factual analysis was then sent to a selected number of "resource persons", namely Sierra Leoneans and foreigners with expertise in the conflict in Sierra Leone who had agreed to review the information contained in the draft report and help clear up any lingering inconsistencies or unclear information.

4.(d) The legal analysis

While the factual analysis was being perfected with the assistance of resource persons, NPWJ put together a legal analysis of the events that happened during the conflict. This involved researching, presenting and discussing the relevant principles of international humanitarian and criminal law, which were then applied to the information contained in the factual analysis, so as to ascertain what crimes under international law and Sierra Leonean law were committed during the conflict.

The draft of the legal analysis was sent to NPWJ's network of international law experts, many of whom have had experience working on similar projects, such as the Humanitarian Law Documentation Project in Kosovo, or practicing before international courts or tribunals. These people are to the legal sections what the CGG field monitors and the factual resource persons are to the factual sections.

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[13] The main sources used were BBC and AFP wire reports and reports from the Xinhua News Agency.

[14] Often, the records did not contain as detailed information about events that occurred from late 2000, partly because the decade-long conflict was beginning to come to an end. As such, UNAMSIL press briefings – which were regular and very detailed about UNAMSIL deployment in particular – were used to bring structure to the recollections of key persons, where necessary.



5. Notes on the report

One difficulty in a country with limited resources is the availability of detailed, comprehensive and up-to-date maps. In Sierra Leone, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has begun producing detailed maps, which were vital for the analysis of the information gathered during the Conflict Mapping Program. Difficulties were nevertheless encountered because a number of villages mentioned in the records – which span back to 1991 – were completely destroyed during the conflict and, as such, no longer exist. Wherever possible, this report tries to identify the location of such villages based on the information contained in the reports.

Due to the fact that OCHA maps were used in the analysis phase and specially-constructed maps were provided by OCHA as visual aids for the report itself, this report adopts the spelling of place names used on the OCHA maps. If that was not available, this report uses the spelling used in the records. Throughout, the report tries to be as specific as possible about the location of a particular place, adopting the formula of naming first the town or village, then the chiefdom and District, where it is different from the District under analysis. For example, if Peyema is being discussed as part of the factual analysis for Bo District, it will read: "Peyema (Lower Bambara Chiefdom)"; however, it is is being discussed as part of the factual analysis for Pejuhun District, it will read "Peyema (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Bo District)". In addition to avoid any possible confusion, the word "Town" was used to distinguish a town from a District, for example, "Pujehun Town", although "Town" is not an official part of the place name.

Finally, while it may appear counter-intuitive in a report on a conflict in which many victims and perpetrators were named in the media, this reports does not "name names" of either victims or perpetrators. While the case for not naming victims is clear, it was decided also not to name perpetrators, even where they might be considered to be "notorious". This decision was taken because the allegations made are often extremely serious and would require further investigation before public disclosure could be considered. It must be borne in mind that the information analysed in this report has not been tested to the level required for sustaining a conviction, for example through cross-examination in court, nor have the alleged perpetrators had the opportunity to tell their side of the story or answer the allegations made in this report. Therefore, although some names are well known and the decision not to include them may seem artificial, it was decided that the best approach would be to omit entirely any references to names.

6. Partners

NPWJ would have been unable to complete the Conflict Mapping Program without the support and assistance of a number of partners. First and foremost, the Special Court Working Group, both in Freetown and across the country, was invaluable at every stage of the process from the initial design of the training seminars, to planning the up country trips, to providing us with CMR candidates. They also assisted us in undertaking training on the Special Court, together with the Outreach Program, during the first phases of training of the CMRs.

Another crucial partner was the Campaign for Good Governance (CGG), who provided assistance both as a member of the SCWG and independently. In particular, the CGG field monitors provided vital assistance by going through the preliminary District-level analyses for their District to verify the

accuracy of the information and fill in any gaps. CGG field monitors are particularly well placed to undertake this task, as they are based in the District and have been gathering information on human rights abuses for CGG, one of Sierra Leone's leading and most reputable organisations.

A proper understanding of the movement of forces and how events interplayed would not have been possible without the use of maps provided by OCHA. The illustrative maps contained in the report were produced with the generous assistance of OCHA personnel, who put together District-level maps that contain as many of the places mentioned in the report whose location could be identified.

Special recognition should go to the European Commission, who financed the bulk of our 2002 and 2003 activities in Sierra Leone, including the Conflict Mapping Program.

Finally, the Special Court for Sierra Leone provided much needed co-financing during the analysis stage of the Conflict Mapping Program. It must be emphasised, however, that this assistance was limited to financial assistance only and in no way implies endorsement by the Special Court of any of the material or conclusions, factual or legal, contained in this report.

Indeed, the content and conclusions drawn in this report are the sole responsibility of No Peace Without Justice and cannot be attributed to any of our partners.

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The present report does not and cannot mention or even truly reflect the varied range of tasks carried out by all NPWJ personnel in the Conflict Mapping Program or or other programs in the project. Nor can it acknowledge fully or exhaustively the wide range of assistance and support given to us by our partners, friends and people we met throughout the country. Rather, the purpose of this report is to provide as comprehensive as possible a picture of what happened during the decade-long conflict in Sierra Leone, analysed over time and space according to chains of command and order of battle information. With this picture, we hope to demonstrate that what happened to the people of Sierra Leone over the course of more than 10 years was a crime – the result of deliberate policies to commit systematic and massive violations of the laws of war – and by so doing to give a voice to the countless victims of these crimes, to play our part in ensuring they will not be forgotten.



Chapter Two: A General Overview of the conflict in Sierra Leone from 1991 to 2002

Sierra Leone is located on the south-west coast of Africa, bordered on the north and north-east by Guinea, on the east and south-east by Liberia and on the west coast by the Atlantic Ocean. Sierra Leone's compact shape and coastal situation mean that her international borders are only 555 miles in total, sharing 397 miles with Guinea and 158 miles with Liberia. Sierra Leone's territory covers 27,699 square miles (71,740 km^2), housing a pre-conflict population estimated at 4.3 million. The 13 ethnic groups in Sierra Leone had strong administrative structures in the provinces prior to British colonisation in the late 18thor early 19th century, which were utilised by the British when they expanded control from Freetown across the rest of the country. This is echoed in today's legal and administrative systems, which are comprised of both traditional structures and traditional or customary law as well as a Westminster style Parliament and the application of British common law.

Sierra Leone is endowed with mineral resources, namely diamond, gold, bauxite, rutile and iron ore. Although only 6.7% of the land is arable, it also produces cash crops, in particular, coffee, cocoa, ginger and rice. Of the 800 km of waterways running through the country, 600 km is navigable the year round. Very few of the major highways running through the country are paved and there are no common carrier railroads, rendering travel through the country difficult during the rainy season, which runs from May to October. Indeed, rainfall along the coast can reach 495 cm (195 inches) per year, making Sierra Leone one of the wettest countries in West Africa. Prior to the rainy season, from December to February, the dry haramattan winds carry sand from the Sahara, depositing large amounts of sand throughout the country and bringing corresponding dust storms.

The early years of independence, which Sierra Leone attained in 1961, are marked by a number of military coups until 1968, after which the one-party State was established in the late 1970s. Once prosperous Sierra Leone would experience a steady decline throughout the 1980s, widely regarded to be the result of rampant corruption, which would set the stage for the conflict that erupted in the 1990s.

On 23 March 1991, combined forces of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL) entered Kailahun District from Liberia through the town of Bomaru in Upper Bambara Chiefdom. On 27 March 1991, another group of RUF/NPFL entered Kailahun District from Liberia through the town of Koindu in the north of the District. By mid April, these two fronts would join in the centre of the District, having by then occupied the majority of it. On 28 March 1991, a third RUF/NPFL group crossed the Mano River forming the border between Liberia and Sierra Leone, in the south-east part of the country. They immediately occupied Zimmi, the southern-most town on the road network in Pujehun District.

As at 23 March 1991, units of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) were stationed in the towns of Koribondo (Bo District), Daru (Kailahun District), Gandorhun (Kono District) and Kenema Town (Kenema District). RUF/NPFL forces would move towards these locations to confront directly the SLA in an aggressive inland-moving campaign that was accompanied by systematic attacks against the civilian population.

In April 1991, the RUF unit that had entered Bomaru was engaged with the SLA at Daru Barracks in the south of the District. This was an important SLA position on the northern bank of the Moa

River, as it controlled further inland access by road. Occupying Daru Barracks would be a continuing objective of RUF/NPFL forces throughout 1991 and 1992. Again in April, the RUF/NPFL unit that entered through Koindu town immediately attacked SLA forces stationed some 20 km south in the town of Buedu, forcing them to retreat to Kailahun Town.

When the RUF/NPFL forces entered a town or village, civilian residents were gathered together in the centre of town, at the Court Barrie, where the RUF/NPFL forces introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" seeking to redeem the people of Sierra Leone from the corrupt All People's Congress (APC). Government. NPFL members were immediately identified as Liberian through their foreign accent and use of Liberian dialects. Enlisting, conscripting and training of both adults and children started immediately, particularly in Kailahun, where numerous training camps were established; the ranks of the RUF swelled quickly.

Reacting to such events, the Government of Sierra Leone requested and received support from the Governments of Nigeria and Guinea, who sent forces to provide security for strategic locations in and around Freetown. The Government of the United States would also provide indirect logistical and training assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone throughout 1991.

The RUF/NPFL unit entering Pujehun District from Liberia spread out across the District in a 45 mile arc from the town of Zimmi. They attacked through Pujehun Town, northwards into the southern chiefdoms of Bo District and north-east toward Koribondo Town, where the SLA was garrisoned. RUF/NPFL forces would attack the SLA in villages on the route to Koribondo until August 1991. The advance of RUF/NPFL forces in April allowed them access to land running south-west into Bonthe District, where RUF/NPFL occupied a number of small towns in the extreme south and east of the District, eventually trying but failing to occupy the District headquarter town of Bonthe, on Sherbro Island. Around this time, SLA forces were deployed in Bonthe Town and by the end of the year had opened new bases in the south-east of the District. RUF/NPFL forces moved into the southern chiefdoms of Kenema District using the main road linking Zimmi to the south of the District. Combined Guinean and SLA forces checked their advance through Kenema District into Kenema Town, where the main SLA brigade was located.

As they advanced, RUF/NPFL forces uniformly abducted civilians, simply killing them, or forcing them to carry looted property and perform domestic tasks. Almost without exception, sexual violence against women accompanied the arrival of RUF/NPFL forces in a locality. The burning of civilian residences and targeting of government and traditional authorities, in addition to the violence against civilians, caused massive panic and an exodus of civilians northwards inland. Rudimentary administrative structures – pass systems, checkpoints and appointment of their own personnel as town and chiefdom authorities – were put in place by the RUF/NPFL as they advanced. This would continue throughout the following years.

In June 1991, RUF/NPFL forces moved further north into Kono District along the main road to the District headquarter town of Koidu, staging a number of attacks on SLA positions in the south of Kono District. Throughout August and September, SLA forces from Koribondo would react offensively, forcing RUF/NPFL forces to retreat back through Pujehun District along the routes by which they had entered. In recapturing Pujehun and pushing the RUF/NPFL southwards, the SLA



collaborated with forces of the United Liberian Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), a Liberian movement engaged in warfare with the NPFL in Liberian territory.

To consolidate their own advance and successes against RUF/NPFL forces, SLA forces in Kono District began supporting the establishment of civilian vigilante groups, armed with bladed weapons and short-barrel shotguns. Throughout Pujehun District, SLA forces executed civilians suspected of collaborating with RUF/NPFL forces in even the most menial of ways.

By December 1991, RUF/NPFL forces had consolidated positions in Kailahun District and were compressed into small pockets of activity away from main towns in Pujehun District.

In April 1992, junior officers from the SLA Tiger Unit led by 25 year-old Captain Strasser moved from the war front to Freetown to complain about poor conditions. They successfully staged a coup, ousted the APC Government and established a military government known as the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Following the coup, SLA forces looted many civilian shops and residences in the Western Area, which was accompanied by the infliction of violence upon civilians.

In early 1992, the SLA, now under the command of the NPRC, continued to unseat RUF/NPFL forces throughout Pujehun District. Moving southwards from Koribondo (Bo District), SLA and ULIMO forces retook the network of roads crossing the Sewa River and moved towards Pujehun Town. With the assistance of the SLA, a civil militia group comprised of local hunters called the "Donsos" gained in strength in Kono District, participating as auxiliary forces to the SLA and ULIMO. The Donsos, together with other local hunting societies across the country – the largest of which were the Kamajors – would later join forces under the umbrella of the Civil Defence Forces.

RUF/NPFL forces attempted again to enter Kenema District, having failed in 1991. Entering Kenema from points in the east of the District, RUF/NPFL were resisted by ULIMO and freshly deployed SLA forces. SLA secured these positions until late 1993.

RUF/NPFL forces continued to attack Kono District, uniformly attacking the civilian population as they advanced until their expulsion from the District in early 1993. In mid 1992, in response to this increasing northwards movement of RUF/NPFL forces, the NPRC Government initiated, supported and strengthened the process of mobilising a civil militia group in Koinadugu District, in the extreme north-east of Sierra Leone. Comprised of local hunters, the "Tamaboros" – as they became known – were deployed to Kono District to engage RUF/NPFL forces. In late October 1992, RUF/NPFL forces occupied Koidu Town and were able to attack further inland in the northern chiefdoms of Kono District. Combined SLA, ULIMO and civil militia forces pushed them out of Koidu Town and Kono District in early 1993.

By May 1992 in Pujehun District, combined SLA and ULIMO forces had pushed RUF/NPFL forces back across the Moa River, leading by the end of the year to their retreat back into Liberia across the Mano River. Pockets of RUF/NPFL activity continued to pressure the SLA in the southern chiefdoms of Pujehun District and in the extreme south-east of Bonthe District.



The SLA intensified attacks on "collaborators" from October 1992 to February 1993. To the SLA, there appeared to be little distinction between civilians who cooperated enthusiastically with the RUF/NPFL and those who found themselves with little choice or simply failed to escape when the RUF/NPFL entered an area. The criteria used to determine who was and was not a "collaborator" were largely arbitrary. The SLA forced civilians to mine diamonds, provide food and carry out other forms of manual labour. In Pujehun Town, the SLA started providing basic military training, weapons and ammunition to civilians.

In Kailahun District, RUF/NPFL forces continued to attack Daru and other SLA positions in the west of the District. At the end of 1992, the RUF/NPFL grip on the northern chiefdoms of Kailahun District was unchallenged. Within these areas, a special unit of NPFL forces known only as "TAP 20" executed terror operations against the civilian population, including the widespread killing and cannibalism of civilians. Later, in 1993, "TAP 40" and "TAP Final" would continue this operation.

In the early months of 1993, SLA forces established positions in advance of Daru and started to engage RUF/NPFL forces stationed in the northern chiefdoms of Kailahun District, where RUF/NPFL forces had first entered Sierra Leone. The SLA built on this eastward progression by successfully preventing the RUF/NPFL from moving northwards into Kono District. By mid-1993, the SLA had rolled back and confined RUF/NPFL forces to the far eastern part of Kailahun District.

RUF/NPFL activity in Pujehun District resumed in December 1992 to January 1993 when the RUF/NPFL moved a large force into the District, crossing the Moa River, entering Pujehun Town and Potoru, a strategic town giving access to Kenema District. Their push into Pujehun District, while brief, was accompanied by a brutal attack against the civilian population; the RUF/NPFL forces routinely killed, raped and abducted people and burnt down large numbers of civilian residences. However, their control of these two towns and the surrounding areas was quickly overturned by SLA and ULIMO forces. RUF/NPFL forces were then confined to the bordering chiefdoms with Liberia and in the swampland south of Pujehun District. RUF/NPFL forces also made intermittent attacks on locations in the south-east of Bonthe District, following the course of the Wanjei River.

In December 1993, the then Head of State announced a unilateral ceasefire, RUF/NPFL forces having been repelled almost entirely back to Liberia. Taking advantage of this ceasefire, in the last days of December 1993, RUF forces moved across the border from Liberia into Kenema District, occupying its seven southern chiefdoms by March 1994 and inflicting violence on the civilian population. By this point, NPFL had withdrawn from Sierra Leone to fight ULIMO forces in Liberia. "Camp Zogoda", established in March 1994 to the north of the Moa River in the south-west of Kenema District, became the RUF's main base until 1996. From Camp Zogoda, RUF forces were able to stage ambushes on the main Bo-Kenema highway, a major arterial route.

In early 1994, the number of forces under arms in the SLA swelled to around 12,000 owing to a recruitment drive by the NPRC Government. RUF forces in Pujehun District fully repelled the SLA eastwards towards Koribondo, allowing their forces to push northwards into Bo District. SLA



forces stationed in Bonthe Town on Sherbro Island used boats to patrol the coastal waters off Sherbro Island, engaging on the water RUF forces entering the mouth of the Sewa River. The RUF had control over the boundary between Bonthe and Pujehun Districts, setting up a number of town and village level administrations and continuing to inflict similar violence on the civilian population as had begun earlier in Kenema District.

Although in April 1994, RUF forces made incursions into Kono District, they were from the beginning of 1994 unable to undermine significantly the hold over the District exercised by the Donsos and SLA forces in the northern chiefdoms and the Civil Defence Units, mainly composed of local hunters known as the Kamajors, in the south. This prevented RUF forces moving directly through to Koinadugu District, to the immediate north of Kono District. However, an alternative route was found.

Thus the RUF expanded their operations in a westerly direction from the three Districts bordering Liberia, continuing to inflict serious violence against the civilian population as part of an attack that had begun in Kenema District in 1993 and would last until the end of 1994. Thousands of civilians in Pujehun District were asked by SLA forces to go to an Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camp in Gondama (Bo District), placed under the protection of foreign forces. RUF forces established a base in the north of Kenema District in February 1994, thus preceding their advance through Kenema District from the south and guaranteeing control over the entire District, bar Kenema Town, by April 1994. From this northern base, RUF forces staged ambushes on the main Koidu-Makeni highway in Tonkolili District, making it impassable for civilian and military traffic alike. In April, RUF forces attacked the towns of Masingbi and Makali, both along the Koidu-Makeni highway, very close to the northern tip of Kenema District. SLA forces sent from Makeni were repelled from Makali by the RUF. RUF forces would move progressively further along this road, attacking Matotoka in July. Getting ever closer to Magburaka Town, by October the RUF were able to loop round through Tonkolili District into the southern chiefdoms of Koinadugu District. A string of attacks on the Magburaka-Alikalia highway by an RUF expeditionary force culminated in a heavy attack on Kabala Town on 7 November 1994. This force would leave Kabala the next day and return to Tonkolili District in the following week, leaving in its path a trail of destruction and hundreds of civilian deaths.

The RUF grip on Pujehun and Kenema Districts presented opportunities for the RUF to further infiltrate Bo and Bonthe Districts. In early 1994, RUF forces executed countless "hit and run" attacks on villages in the eastern chiefdoms of Bo District along the entire boundary with Kenema District. Initially, these were "food-finding missions", mostly staged from Camp Zogoda. Between June and December, however, these missions became more substantial, with RUF forces attacking but not occupying towns just across the District boundary. In November, RUF forces attacked an IDP camp in Gerihun, but were repelled by SLA forces. On 24 December, RUF forces attacked the IDP camp at Gondama, killing hundreds of civilians displaced from the fighting in the preceding years. On 25 December, Kenema Town was attacked but left unoccupied. Towns in the centre of Bo District, including the District headquarter town of Bo on 27 December, were attacked by the RUF; none of these towns were occupied. RUF forces re-entered Bonthe District, occupying the eastern chiefdoms, using the natural features of the District to expand their control in areas in the three chiefdoms on the east and south.

Responding to RUF advances into Bo and Tonkolili Districts, groups of civilians were formed into civil militia, variously labelled "Civil Defence Units" or "Territorial Defence Forces". In Jaiama Bongor Chiefdom (Bo District), these units were gathered, trained and armed under the auspices of the Resident Government Minister for Bo District. In Jaiama Bongor Chiefdom alone, 2,800 civil militia were under arms by June 1994.

Initially, these units were deployed alongside SLA forces, used to operate checkpoints, identify RUF "collaborators" and carry out patrols within chiefdoms. Despite this cooperation, tensions between the SLA and civil militia groups had been simmering since 1993 throughout the country. This was due to widespread civilian mistrust of the SLA, owing to their involvement in the same enterprises of killing civilians, raping women, looting private property and exploiting mineral resources. For example, in the Tongo Field area of Lower Bambara Chiefdom, the SLA engaged in diamond mining in Tongo Town itself and forced civilians to work at the mining sites. In nearby Peyema, also in Lower Bambara, the RUF did the same. These practices were aggravated further by numerous attacks on civilian settlements and ambushes on civilian traffic carried out by unknown assailants suspected to be members of the SLA. Two such attacks occurred in Moyamba District in 1994. Civilians branded such SLA members "So-bels", or "Soldier-Rebels".

By late December 1994, RUF forces had entered the western chiefdoms of Tonkolili District, having had access to the eastern chiefdoms since April. Earlier in 1994, it is highly likely that RUF forces began establishing a foothold in the Kangari Hills in the south of the District, which they would use as a launching point for attacks on the surrounding villages. Since June, SLA forces had been stationed in Mile 91, which is located on a key junction; to the west lies Masiaka, the gateway to Freetown. Leading north-east from Mile 91, the highway goes to Magburaka. Leading south-east, the highway runs through to Bo, Kenema and Kailahun. On 22 December, the SLA were forced out of Mile 91 by the RUF, although they regrouped outside of the town and regained control the following day. Many locations in the chiefdoms around Mile 91 were attacked as the RUF forces established a new Brigade base in the Kaitkant Hills, spanning the borders of Tonkolili with Port Loko and Bombali Districts. The location of the Kaitkant Hills between the two main highways leading into the Western Area allowed the RUF to begin a new phase of their campaign, opening up for the first time since 1991 the possibility of attacking Freetown. By the end of 1994, rumours of imminent RUF attacks on Moyamba District, so far unaffected by the RUF, were widespread. Since 1992, SLA forces had been deployed in the District, although they had also been harassing civilians, including stealing property, which intensified from December 1994 to early 1995.

As the RUF expanded the territory over which it had control throughout 1994, violence against the civilian population continued unabated. The proliferation of "hit and run" missions into Bo District, across Kenema District and in Tonkolili District resulted in the widespread burning and looting of civilian residences, accompanied by a high number of civilian deaths. Sexual violence against women was perpetrated by RUF forces during raids. Beating, molestation and abduction of both men and women for use as porters to carry stolen property or for conscription into the fighting force continued. The RUF assaults on Bo, Kenema and Kabala resulted in the denigration and destruction of public infrastructure such as government offices, hospitals, schools and Police barracks.



As 1995 began, RUF forces controlled the southern Districts of Kailahun, Pujehun and Kenema. Deployments of SLA within the occupied Districts occasionally offered short-term effective resistance to RUF attacks, but had little long-term strategic influence. Camp Zogoda continued to be the RUF's main base in the south and it was common practice for abducted civilians and looted property from the whole occupied area to be sent to the camp. The RUF expanded their operations in Bo District, opening a new base, "Camp Bokurr", in the north-east. The Bo-Freetown highway, at least until Mile 91, and the entire Bo-Kenema highway were under RUF control. The IDP camp in Gerihun was attacked again, this time successfully. RUF forces killed over 100 civilians. Even before 1995 ended, the RUF controlled all of Bo District and would attack the civilian population there until April 1996, systematically killing civilians, burning houses and committing similar acts of violence against civilians.

The strong grip on Pujehun and Bo Districts and on the south-east part of Bonthe District allowed a rapid and large-scale expansion of RUF forces into the whole of Moyamba and Bonthe Districts. Entering the eastern part of Moyamba District in January 1995 from Bo District, RUF forces proceeded southwards and took control of the bauxite mining area of Mokanji before moving south-west to upper Bonthe District, the location of the economically important Sierra Leone Rutile Mining Company. By February 1995, RUF forces controlled all the northern chiefdoms of the District, using the developed road network in this area. These attacks on the south of Moyamba District and the north of Bonthe District paralysed an economic area vital to the Government of Sierra Leone. From the north of Bonthe District, RUF forces rapidly spilled over into the southern chiefdoms of the District. Despite this, they failed to gain control of Sherbro Island and Bonthe Town. This movement in Bonthe District was carried out during the same period of a concerted action accompanied by attacks against civilians in Moyamba District.

Throughout January and February 1995, RUF forces attacked villages and towns in the chiefdoms of Tonkolili District in which the Kaitkant Hills are located. In early January, the RUF extended military operations into Port Loko District, attacking two key towns on the Freetown-Makeni highway. On 1 January 1995, RUF forces advanced north-west from their Kaitkant Hills base and from positions near Mataboi in Bombali District, towards the town of Foredugu in Port Loko District. The RUF force, which numbered 500, overcame the SLA forces stationed in the town, forcing their retreat. RUF forces attacked other villages in the Foredugu area. From Foredugu, RUF forces attacked Lunsar, but were beaten back by SLA forces stationed in the town. Lunsar would fall to the RUF later in the year.

At the end of January 1995, RUF forces moved north from Port Loko District and attacked Kambia, the headquarter town of Kambia District. RUF forces did not attempt to occupy Kambia Town and the attack was staged primarily to demonstrate their ability to strike in areas previously thought to be secure.

In early March 1995, RUF forces moved north into Kono District from Kailahun District and the Tongo Field area in Kenema District, taking advantage of SLA groups abandoning a comprehensive defensive position in favour of illicit mining operations. Throughout March, April and May, RUF forces occupied many towns in the western, diamond-rich area of Kono District, including Koidu Town, which was accompanied by violent acts against the civilian population.



The pattern of RUF activity in Moyamba District in March-April 1995, part of an overall attack from December 1994 to April 1995 across several Districts, clearly shows that their immediate objective was to attack Freetown. The RUF did not initially intend to settle in Moyamba District, rather use it as a transit into the Western Area and the capital. RUF forces attacked Moyamba Junction, in the north of the District, to paralyse any SLA response to a simultaneous attack on Moyamba Town. The group that attacked Moyamba Town would then follow the Moyamba-Freetown road, attacking the major roads and settlements on its way, before being slowed down by SLA forces in the north-west of the District. In March, RUF forces settled in Moyamba District, progressively reaching all the chiefdoms and establishing a strong base in the north, known as "Camp Fol Fol". As the RUF consolidated their hold over Districts in the south and encamped in Moyamba District, SLA forces increased security activities throughout the Western Area, adopting defensive deployments at locations along the road running around the Freetown Peninsula and on the main inland highway.

Also in early March 1995, RUF forces deployed from their Kaitkant Hills base and attacked Mile 91, partly in response to reports of an advance by SLA forces towards RUF positions. In late March, SLA forces coordinated by members of a private military company called the Gurkha Security Group attacked RUF forces at Kaitkant Hills using intensive bombardment from a helicopter gunship and a Guinean Airforce fighter jet. Evacuating the base, RUF forces consolidated at the recently established Camp Fol Fol (Moyamba District). From this location, RUF forces raided the surrounding chiefdoms in Moyamba District between March to May 1995.

In early April, RUF forces moved into the Western Area in a bid to attack Freetown. RUF forces attacked settlements in Koya Rural District in a triangular area delimited by Songo to the east, Waterloo to the west and Fogbo Jetty to the south. RUF forces met resistance from SLA forces. Many civilians were killed and many civilian houses were burnt down by RUF forces. By late April, the RUF had pushed its front lines into Waterloo, where they attacked SLA and Guinean positions in the town. Replacing the Gurkha Security Group, the Government of Sierra Leone contracted another private military company called Executive Outcomes at the beginning of May 1995.

Executive Outcomes started training activities at the Benguema Training Centre near Freetown and formed a "Special Task Force" using a large number of demobilised Liberian militia from ULIMO. The Special Task Force attacked the RUF, pursuing them out of the Western Area. Following this, civilians and SLA forces in the Western Area attacked and killed persons suspected to be "rebel collaborators".

In mid-May, the RUF established a camp at Ro-Source in the west of Bombali District and commenced attacking nearby towns. RUF activity in northern Port Loko District, near Camp Ro-Source, recommenced, following a lull during the RUF push into the Western Area.

Moving to the north-east, Executive Outcomes, together with the SLA and civil militia, attacked RUF positions in Kono District from land and air. They successfully recaptured Koidu Town from the RUF by June. By the end of 1995, Executive Outcomes had control over the western chiefdoms of Kono District, where the mining areas are to be found. This did not, however, prevent RUF



forces from launching "food-finding missions" into the eastern chiefdoms of Kono District and the southern chiefdoms of Koinadugu District.

In June 1995, the RUF commenced a second wave of attacks in Port Loko District, advancing beyond the Foredugu area towards Port Loko Town, attacking on two fronts. The first advance came from the south, possibly again from Kaitkant Hills or from Camp Fol Fol. The second advance was from the north, through Gbinti Town from Camp Ro-Source in Bombali District. Both advances converged upon Port Loko Town on 8 June 1995. RUF forces attacked and entered Port Loko, but did not capture the town from the SLA forces stationed there. Following this attack, RUF forces took up temporary positions in the chiefdoms to the north and east of Port Loko Town. By mid June, a contingent of Guinean soldiers deployed into Port Loko, commencing heavy artillery bombardments on the RUF's positions. This forced an RUF retreat towards Camp Fol Fol (Moyamba District) and Camp Ro-Source (Bombali District). Following their stalled advance on Freetown and the failure to take Port Loko Town, RUF activity concentrated on the strategic town of Masiaka and other towns in the surrounding area across June 1995.

In October 1995, the Special Task Force, comprised of Executive Outcomes, SLA and ULIMO members, deployed to Bonthe District and started dislodging the RUF forces from their positions, notably in the primary mainland town of Mattru Jong. Joined later by Kamajors, the Special Task Force progressively dislodged the RUF from their positions throughout Bonthe District. In late 1995, RUF forces, defeated in certain areas of the District, gathered thousands of civilians at Bauya Junction, killing hundreds of them. A few years later, over 1,000 human skulls would be discovered in that area. RUF activity in Port Loko District continued unabated, with the attack and brief occupation of Lunsar in December.

In 1996, Executive Outcomes controlled the diamond mining areas of Kono District, also taking control of other strategic sites. In collaboration with the Kamajor Society, Executive Outcomes took control of the Sierra Rutile mining operation in mainland Bonthe District and were contracted by the Sierra Ore and Metal Company (Sieromco) in Moyamba District. Alongside the SLA, Executive Outcomes were hired by the owners of the hydroelectric plant at Bumbuna (Tonkolili District) to provide security.

In January 1996, the NPRC Deputy Chairman overthrew the NPRC Chairman, thereby seizing power. In the weeks preceding the Presidential and Parliamentary elections planned for 26 February 1996, RUF forces in a number of locations across Sierra Leone threatened civilians, posing the question about whether they wanted peace before elections, or vice versa; the implication being that "elections before peace" would lead to reprisals against the civilian population. A national consultative conference held in Freetown in February gauged the national mood and decided that elections should go ahead. This decision was not without dissenters other than the RUF, including sections of the SLA and a number of Paramount Chiefs.

In late January and across February, RUF forces attacked Madina, Kukuna and Rokupr in Kambia District and Kamakwie in Bombali District, resulting in huge damage to civilian residences and some particularly brutal killings of civilians. RUF forces staged attacks on villages in Moyamba District, killing, raping and mutilating civilians. Just before Election Day, the NPRC commenced peace talks



with the RUF in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. On Election Day itself, RUF forces attacked the towns of Kenema and Magburaka, the elections nevertheless proceeding in the wake of killing, rape and looting.

Following the February elections which resulted in the formation of a government by the candidate of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), Guinean armed forces were deployed at two locations in the north-west of Sierra Leone. Nigerian forces set up checkpoints in the Western Area and the Nigerian 28th Battalion arrived in Port Loko District. An entire SLA battalion deployed from Freetown to the far east of Kono District. Guinean forces were also deployed in small numbers in southern Koinadugu District and established a base in Kambia District.

Around this period, the various civil militia groups that had formed throughout Sierra Leone were united under a central coordination system known as the Civil Defence Force (CDF) and the Kamajor leader was appointed to the position of Deputy Defence Minister by the newly elected President. The Kamajor Society was the largest component of the CDF, which also included the Gbethis, the Kapras the Donsos and others.

The process of initiating Kamajors already underway in Bonthe District since 1995 spread in 1996 to Bo District. The Kamajor High Priest and Chief Initiator was moved from Bonthe District to Bo District to initiate young men into the Kamajor Society. By late 1995, Kamajor Societies were formed in some of the southern chiefdoms of Bo District. By mid-1996, the initiation process had spread throughout Kenema, Bo and Pujehun Districts and into parts of Moyamba, Kailahun and Tonkolili Districts.

In the early stage of this process, recruitment for the Kamajor Society was carried out exclusively through the traditional authorities, who nominated men from their chiefdoms for initiation. However, as the war escalated and the territory over which the Kamajors gained control increased, new initiates did not require this nomination by traditional authorities.

The most striking feature of 1996 is the exponential increase in strength of the Kamajor Society throughout the Southern and Eastern Provinces. By early 1996, a Kamajor Society had formed in every chiefdom of Bo District. Initiates in Bo District were first sent to locations in Bo Town and Jiama Bongor Chiefdom where they were initiated and given basic military training. In the first half of 1996, initiates from Kenema were sent either to Kenema Town or a location in Bo District for training. In the southern Kenema chiefdoms, Kamajors were initially gathered into two battle groups, one of which was known as the Upper Wanjei Defence Committee. Alongside Nigerian, Guinean and SLA forces and other Kamajor groups from chiefdoms in Bo and Pujehun Districts, the Upper Wanjei Defence Committee successfully destroyed the RUF stronghold of Camp Zogoda. In the north of Kenema District, Kamajor units successfully confronted and eliminated RUF camps, including "Camp Joe Bush", undermining completely the hold over Kenema District that was enjoyed by the RUF throughout 1995. In late 1996, Kamajors attacked another main RUF base known as "Camp Booloko", just north of Bo District. Also in late 1996, Kamajor units in Moyamba District attacked the RUF at Camp Fol Fol, removing one of the RUF's main staging points for attacking Port Loko and Tonkolili Districts. On other occasions, Kamajors from different chiefdoms regrouped in order to engage the RUF more efficiently. Kamajors from Bonthe District

were also active in Moyamba District, assisting those chiefdom authorities that did not have a Kamajor Society.

In Tonkolili District, other components of the CDF were formed. Civil militia movements known as the Gbethis and the Kapras were formed in the south and north of the District respectively. The Gbethis were active in the area surrounding the Kaitkant Hills, a former RUF stronghold. In June 1996, Gbethis worked alongside SLA forces stationed in Mile 91, before being driven out of town by SLA forces after a skirmish concerning the division of contributions offered by civilians under their control. The Gbethi leadership demanded that the civilian population provide support for their positions, punishing with physical violence those "RUF collaborators" who did not cooperate willingly. The Gbethis set up checkpoints and patrolled villages at night, looking for "strangers" and fining civilians who failed to give notice of their arrival. Similar practices were carried out by members of the CDF throughout the territory they occupied.

On 30 November 1996, the Government of Sierra Leone negotiated a peace agreement with the RUF leadership in Côte d'Ivoire. One of the key provisions of the Abidjan Peace Accord, as it became known, was the removal of all foreign forces and Executive Outcomes from the country; Executive Outcomes would leave the country by early 1997.

At the beginning of 1997, SLA and CDF forces continued to confront the RUF. "Camp Libya" in Pujehun District, one of the RUF's longest held positions, fell to a combined SLA and CDF attack in the first months of 1997. Until May, Kamajors also engaged the RUF, sacking the RUF's main defence headquarters in the Kangari Hills. RUF activity in Bombali District continued from Camp Ro-Source with a number of food-finding raids into Port Loko. In mid May, RUF forces captured the northern town of Kamakwie, meeting no resistance and capturing an ammunition dump from the SLA forces stationed there.

The tensions between the CDF and SLA that were ignited in 1996 burned on into 1997, with numerous armed confrontations between the two forces throughout the country. For example, in Tonkolili District, SLA forces ambushed a Kamajor night patrol and attacked Gbethis defending Yonibana. Kamajors in Pujehun District forcibly dismantled SLA checkpoints. These tensions led the SLA to abandon some chiefdoms. Already in the middle of 1996, civilians from Moyamba District had asked the governmental authorities in Freetown to withdraw the SLA forces from the District. SLA forces moved out shortly after and left the security of the District to the Kamajors who, by the end of the year, had control of the south of the District, while RUF forces were still active in the north of the District. The CDF, however, was partially weakened in Kono District with the disbanding of the Donsos in February 1997 as a sign of good faith in the wake of the Abidjan Peace Accord.

Civilian populations fared badly throughout areas controlled by both CDF and SLA forces. Throughout Moyamba and Bonthe Districts, civilians suspected of being "RUF collaborators" or who were considered to be insufficiently supportive or respectful of the CDF, were subjected to gruesome punishments. In the areas they controlled, Kamajors put in place rudimentary administrative structures, preventing regular local authorities from exercising any power and took actions affecting various aspects of civilian life. These practices continued throughout the following

years. The SLA also continued their illicit mining and looting activities, often using civilians to carry the loads.

On 25 May 1997, junior elements of the SLA overthrew the elected government of President Kabbah. This coup d'état resulted in the formation of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), led by an SLA officer awaiting trial in Pademba Road Prison in Freetown, charged with treason for a planned coup attempt. Immediately following the advent of the AFRC, its leadership called for the RUF to join them and share power, an offer the RUF leadership promptly accepted. Immediately following the coup, AFRC forces looted extensively throughout Freetown and the Peninsula area. A large RUF force moved into the Western Area, initially concentrating around Waterloo and Hastings, stealing from and harassing civilians.

Following the coup, former-SLA deployments gave the AFRC a strong foothold throughout the country, particularly in the major towns of Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Koidu, Pujehun and Bonthe. The AFRC did not inherit territory the SLA did not control, such as CDF strongholds. Nevertheless, AFRC positions were reinforced and strengthened when RUF forces allied with them, moving from the bush towards towns where the AFRC was deployed. The RUF also established new positions throughout the north. RUF forces moved into Port Loko District, living amongst the civilian population. In Bombali District, they occupied a number of strategic locations. They also established a large base in Kambia District. At this time, the RUF/AFRC staged a sharp and brutal attack against the civilian population, including massive killings, abductions, rapes and other acts of severe violence; staged simultaneously across the whole country, every District would be affected to different degrees.

The RUF/AFRC immediately found itself in a tense standoff with Nigerian forces stationed in Freetown. Nigerian forces were reinforced by sea and air in the days following the coup. At the beginning of June, Nigerian forces attempted to unseat the RUF/AFRC but the operation was called off the day it had begun, when RUF/AFRC forces overpowered and briefly held hostage around 300 Nigerian soldiers. Nigerian forces took control of Freetown International Airport in the following days, although civilians were killed during exchanges of mortar fire between Nigerian and RUF/AFRC forces throughout the year.

Throughout 1997, the RUF/AFRC appeared to have two closely related priorities. The first was to destroy the base of support for the CDF movement. The second was to consolidate their hold over the country and find ways of supporting their regime. Accordingly, the RUF/AFRC began suppressing political dissent, civil society and student activism in Freetown. RUF/AFRC forces in Freetown arrested many journalists, activists and demonstrators. Some were tortured and killed, others detained in freight containers and other places.

In June, the CDF rejected a call by the leadership of RUF/AFRC to demobilise and surrender their arms and register at Police Stations. Instead, the CDF retreated to strongholds where there was no previous SLA – now RUF/AFRC – deployment and commenced attacking combined AFRC and RUF positions. CDF forces in Bonthe District did not, however, go underground, as RUF/AFRC forces were concentrated in Bonthe Town on Sherbro Island and not on the mainland.



On the boundary between Kenema and Kailahun Districts, RUF/AFRC forces established a base known as "SS Camp" and used this to attack surrounding villages and towns in the hunt for "CDF collaborators". Throughout the areas in which they were deployed, RUF/AFRC forces attacked civilian settlements and hunted through the bush for civilians, stealing any property they found. In general, screening systems were put in place, especially at checkpoints, where RUF/AFRC forces were searching civilians thoroughly for any evidence that they were supporters of the CDF. Such brutal tactics swelled the numbers of civilians willing to give active support and be initiated into the Kamajor Society.

In some places, more sophisticated methods of extracting support from civilians were put into place by the RUF/AFRC, including local tax administrations and systems allowing the regime to communicate demands to civilians less violently. Nevertheless, the number of "food-finding missions" ballooned, including such plainly-titled looting sprees as "Operation From your Hand to My Hand, from Your Pocket to my Pocket". In Tonkolili District, RUF/AFRC forces concentrated their actions in the chiefdoms around Mile 91 and in the area around Magburaka, where they were strongly engaged by the CDF from the south and west of the District.

In Moyamba District, a CDF stronghold, the RUF/AFRC commenced an aggressive campaign, culminating in the attack on and week-long occupation of Moyamba Town in July 1997. RUF/AFRC forces perpetrated large scale violence against civilians in retaliation for the earlier rejection by civilians of SLA protection. Until CDF forces repelled the RUF/AFRC from Moyamba Junction, the Mile 91-Bo highway fell under RUF/AFRC control, evidenced by intense attacks on towns and their civilian inhabitants along the route. The mainland of Bonthe District remained under CDF control, but they were forced to move from Bonthe Town after the RUF/AFRC deployment in the town. Throughout 1997, RUF/AFRC forces occupied the diamond-rich areas of Kono District, continuing the established practice of forcing civilians to work in the mines.

In August 1997, ECOWAS imposed a trade and arms embargo on Sierra Leone and extended the mandate of their Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to cover sanctions enforcement in Sierra Leone. ECOMOG artillery and Alfa Jets began shelling vessels approaching Freetown's Kissy Terminal; stray ECOMOG shells resulted in the deaths of civilians in Freetown's densely populated east end. Eventually, ECOMOG and the RUF/AFRC negotiated a ceasefire in late October. This, however, did not hold firm and there were many breaches of the letter and spirit of the ceasefire agreement.

Starting in September 1997, having regrouped in villages and strongholds, CDF forces successfully launched attacks on RUF/AFRC positions. These actions would yield greater results in early 1998 with the inland advance of ECOMOG forces. In late December 1997, CDF forces intensified pressure on provincial RUF/AFRC positions by preventing civilian and military traffic from moving towards Freetown and vice versa. The consequences of "Operation Black December" – namely the deprivation of food and other supplies - were sharply felt in the towns of Bo, Kenema and Pujehun. From then until March 1998, the CDF would engage in a systematic attack against the civilian population, including massive killing of "RUF collaborators", the widespread use of small cages in which they imprisoned people and similar acts of brutality.

Between 6 and 12 February 1998, following renewed RUF/AFRC attacks on ECOMOG positions, ECOMOG forces invaded Freetown and gained control of the Western Area, forcing RUF/AFRC forces to retreat inland. From the Western Area, RUF/AFRC forces retreated along the main highway to Masiaka, where they split into three groups. The first headed directly towards Magburaka through Mile 91. The second group moved to Makeni (Bombali District) through Lunsar. These two groups would meet after 14 February and move to Kono District, occupying main towns along the route. The third group regrouped at a pre-existing RUF/AFRC base in Port Loko District and moved northwards into Kambia District. RUF/AFRC forces counter-attacked ECOMOG and CDF positions on the roads to Port Loko Town. All these groups left in their wake a trail of destruction, including the loss of civilian life and property.

The RUF/AFRC forces reaching Makeni and Magburaka moved into Kono District along two routes. One group moved along the main highway though southern Tonkolili District, enduring ambushes from CDF forces positioned along the route. The second group moved into Koinadugu District, both by the main highway through Foredugu and along a secondary road though Bumbuna, before moving south into Kono District.

By 21 February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces had reasserted control over Koidu Town and its immediate environs. A large RUF/AFRC base known as "Superman Camp" was established in the east of Kono District and served as a training base through 1998 and 1999. Shortly after, RUF/AFRC forces scattered throughout the District and parts of the southern chiefdoms of Koinadugu District.

At the beginning of March, ECOMOG forces deployed from Port Loko and moved into towns throughout the Northern Province, following the retreating RUF/AFRC forces and reaching Lunsar, Magburaka, Masingbi and Makeni. By mid March, they had entered Kabala, Foredugu and Alikalia (Koinadugu District). In addition, by mid March, ECOMOG had also occupied the towns of Kamakwie (Bombali District), Falaba and Mongo Bendugu (Koinadugu District), which are the key access routes to the Guinean border for the entire Northern Province. ECOMOG forces also deployed from Guinea to Kambia Town. Throughout their deployment, ECOMOG forces were assisted by CDF members in patrolling these areas.

From the southern entry point, ECOMOG moved directly north and in early February entered Kenema Town, which had been deserted by RUF/AFRC forces a few days earlier. Since December 1997, CDF forces had undermined RUF/AFRC control over Kenema District. Shortly after entering Kenema Town, ECOMOG and CDF forces overran SS Camp. By March 1998, the RUF/AFRC had retreated from Kenema District entirely, although in April they made a few minor incursions from Kailahun District.

As ECOMOG forces coming from Kenema Town retook Bo Town from the RUF/AFRC in early March, CDF forces dislodged the RUF/AFRC from Pujehun District. RUF/AFRC forces withdrew from Sherbro Island in the days following the ECOMOG intervention, leaving the District entirely under the control of the CDF (Kamajors). From Bo Town, ECOMOG deployed in Mile 91, where they engaged in patrolling the area, assisted by the CDF. By March 1998, the entire Southern Province was free of the presence of RUF/AFRC forces and would remain so throughout the year,



although RUF/AFRC forces retreating from Freetown who went through the Northern Province towards Makeni and ultimately Koidu Town made a few rapid incursions into the north of Moyamba District. Nevertheless, the level of violence inflicted upon civilians and those alleged to have collaborated with the RUF/AFRC heightened in 1998 since CDF forces, primarily Kamajors, were unchallenged throughout this Province and in most of Kenema District. The CDF progressively exercised greater control over civilian life, replacing both State and traditional structures with their own invasive and largely arbitrary system of administration.

By April, ECOMOG units attacked and occupied Koidu Town and other major towns on the main highway, forcing the RUF/AFRC further into Kono District. ECOMOG forces based in Kenema Town, together with SLA and CDF forces, reinforced the Moa Barracks at Daru and other positions in the south of Kailahun District. Between March and May, RUF/AFRC forces attacked these positions as ECOMOG Jets attacked the RUF/AFRC headquarters in Buedu, in the far east of Kailahun District.

Following their ejection from Freetown and the commencement of ECOMOG provincial operations, RUF/AFRC forces launched "Operation Pay Yourself". In all the areas passed through or occupied while retreating from the Western Area, RUF/AFRC forces stole civilian property. Between mid February and mid March, towns and villages throughout the entire Northern Province and, to a limited extent, the north of Moyamba District were attacked. RUF/AFRC forces took anything that could be of use, from livestock and other food items, domestic items such as mattresses and cooking pots and motor vehicles, trucks and motorcycles. Although looting had been standard practice throughout the previous RUF campaigns and "food-finding missions" had been commonplace since 1992, the scale and intensity of "Operation Pay Yourself" was unprecedented in Sierra Leone.

A heightened level of violence against civilians accompanied "Operation Pay Yourself". Shortly after the reinstatement of the exiled Sierra Leonean President on 10 March 1998, RUF/AFRC forces launched "Operation No Living Thing". During a period running from February to June, in locations across Sierra Leone, but primarily in Kono District, hundreds of civilians were killed, or had limbs amputated and hundreds of women were raped. This operation marked a specific period of military activity during which the scale and intensity of violence against civilians in Sierra Leone was elevated to new and unprecedented levels. Thousands of civilians in Kono District were abducted and brought into the mining areas in the western part of the District to work, many of them dying as a result of the squalid living conditions.

From April to early December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces in Kambia, Koinadugu and Bombali Districts expanded the territory over which they had control and consolidated their positions in some areas in Tonkolili District. A striking feature of this period in 1998 was how ineffective CDF forces and other civil militia groups in Bombali and Koinadugu Districts were compared to their high concentration and success in the Southern and Eastern Provinces and, to a lesser extent, in the south and west of Moyamba District. In those areas where ECOMOG cooperated with what groups did exist and CDF forces deployed alongside them, their forces often had success in holding rural outposts, gaining good intelligence and extending their influence throughout smaller settlements in the surrounding bush. There are episodes, however, indicating that ECOMOG was reluctant to

leave main fortified positions, or support others in so doing, thereby handing RUF/AFRC forces immeasurable advantages.

In Koinadugu District, RUF/AFRC forces gradually expanded their activity around the two main roads arcing in towards Kabala from the south of the District, while at the same time moving fluidly through bush areas bypassing ECOMOG positions and continuing their operations without needing recourse to main roads and tracks. A strong ECOMOG and SLA presence in Kabala guaranteed that the RUF/AFRC never captured Kabala for more than five days in late July 1998, despite many attacks during the course of 1998. Nevertheless, RUF/AFRC placed all other major towns in the District under constant pressure, offering RUF/AFRC forces easy access to the area surrounding Kabala Town and influence over the arterial roads leading to it. ECOMOG forces were prevented from moving south, pre-empting any attempt to reinforce or counter-attack from Kabala.

In Bombali District, the RUF/AFRC adopted a similar strategy. They expanded their territorial hold and continued the occupation of towns to east of Makeni Town, thereby controlling the major east-west axis roads through the District. Throughout November, RUF/AFRC advanced closer to Makeni Town. Additionally, they secured control over a main latitudinal road, which gave the RUF/AFRC free access to the eastern boundary of Port Loko District.

In Port Loko District, RUF/AFRC forces intensified activity to the north of Port Loko Town between May and November 1998, with the formation of large looting squads and the gradual encroachment on Port Loko Town. ECOMOG forces based in the town were reinforced by CDF from numerous locations. CDF forces proved effective in Port Loko District, creating with ECOMOG a defensive arc around the north of Port Loko Town that prevented RUF/AFRC forces infiltrating southwards from Kambia District. During this period, RUF/AFRC forces attacked many villages in the south of the District. As for Tonkolili District, CDF continued engaging the RUF/AFRC forces concentrated in the north-west of the District. A massive IDP camp hosting thousands of civilians fleeing fighting in Kono District was opened in Masingbi in the west of the District.

In mid April, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 10-strong team of military and security observers to Sierra Leone, who arrived in May 1998. The UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), comprising around 70 military observers and accompanying logistic support, was established on 13 July 1998.

In October 1998, a splinter group of the RUF/AFRC comprised primarily of ex-SLA members commenced operations in the Okra Hills area in the south of Port Loko District. The "West Side Boys", as they later became known, staged "hit and run" attacks on a large number of villages in the area that would continue until April 1999, with a lull in January and February when the West Side Boys were in Freetown. During this period, the West Side Boys systematically killed civilians, stole property and burnt houses. In addition, they ambushed civilian and military traffic on the main highway to Masiaka, often making the road impassable.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked ECOMOG forces in Masiaka (Port Loko District), and Kamalo, in the north of Bombali District in November 1998. These preparations would put the logs beneath the

stones of a large-scale RUF/AFRC action in December. Kono Town was overrun by RUF/AFRC forces on 20 December 1998, beginning a chain of attacks across the Northern Province that culminated in the invasion of Freetown on 6 January 1999. These would be accompanied by massive violence systematically inflicted on the civilian population in all areas in which the RUF/AFRC had a presence. While retreating south from Koidu, ECOMOG left with thousands of civilians, hundreds of whom were abducted by the RUF/AFRC during ambushes on convoys.

On 21 December, RUF/AFRC forces from Port Loko District attacked Songo and Mile 38 and moved into Waterloo – the gateway to Freetown – by 22 December. This foothold was reinforced over the following days, as RUF/AFRC forces began moving from Kono District on 21 December. RUF/AFRC forces advanced from Koidu towards Magburaka and Makeni, taking control of both towns by 24 December. The attack from Magburaka was coordinated with attacks on Makeni from RUF/AFRC positions immediately north-east of the town. ECOMOG was forced to retreat north to Kamakwie, which by 28 December would also be in RUF/AFRC hands.

RUF/AFRC forces continued the westwards movement from Makeni directly to Port Loko Town, where they were supplemented by RUF/AFRC forces already in Port Loko District and prepared for the assault. From 28 December 1998 until 3 January 1999, they launched a sustained attack from three directions on ECOMOG forces stationed in Port Loko Town. Meanwhile, on 30 December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces in Kailahun District moved from their headquarters in Buedu and successfully forced SLA and ECOMOG units out of the town of Segbwema. This move was undertaken to pre-empt any possible counter-attack on Freetown from SLA and ECOMOG forces based at the Moa Barracks in Daru. In mid January, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Mile 91, blocking the highway leading to Freetown and pre-empting any ECOMOG counter-attack.

After staging a number of preliminary attacks on towns west of Waterloo in the Western Area, RUF/AFRC forces advanced on Freetown. On 6 January, RUF/AFRC entered the eastern end of Freetown and advanced into the centre. On the first day, RUF/AFRC forces released 700 inmates from Pademba Road Prison. During their advance in the capital, hundreds of civilians were killed, mutilated or raped in the eastern end of Freetown. At night, in the Freetown suburbs held by the RUF/AFRC, civilians were forced to gather in the streets and sing songs about peace in support of the RUF/AFRC. Others were burned alive in their homes. Behind ECOMOG lines, civilians were gathered in the National Stadium and screened; a number were lined up against the walls and shot dead by ECOMOG forces. The westward movement of RUF/AFRC forces into Freetown was halted by ECOMOG at the Congo Cross Road Bridge on Freetown's Main Motor Road, held by ECOMOG, SLA and CDF forces. By 9 January, unable to advance further into the Freetown urban area and under constant attack from ECOMOG Alpha Jets, the RUF/AFRC were forced to retreat gradually from Freetown back towards Waterloo.

In the following days, ECOMOG forces pushed the RUF/AFRC out of the Greater Freetown Area. During the retreat, RUF/AFRC destroyed much of the State infrastructure in the centre of town, killed and mutilated civilians and burnt down many houses. RUF/AFRC forces held firm in Waterloo until late February and remained in control of Masiaka and Mile 91. The towns of Lunsar and Magburaka, however, remained under firm RUF/AFRC control for much longer.

Following the assault on Freetown, the RUF/AFRC clearly concentrated their actions on mining activities, strengthening their positions in the Northern Province and planning actions to take place on Guinean territory. At this time, the RUF/AFRC commenced a large defensive operation, at the heart of which was their continuing occupation of Makeni and Kono District. The RUF/AFRC defensive headquarters was also moved to Makeni at that time. Between February and July 1999, RUF/AFRC forces consolidated their positions as of December 1998 and expanded their control over Kambia District. The RUF/AFRC's strength throughout the Northern Province guaranteed a strong hand during the peace negotiations that started in the aftermath of the Freetown invasion.

Across the Northern Province and Kono District, RUF/AFRC forces devised methods of rationalising the use of civilians by making them participate in their own administration. Throughout Koinadugu, Bombali and Kambia Districts, RUF/AFRC commanders selected individuals to form committees of "G-5" civil-military intermediaries, communicating RUF/AFRC demands for food and human resources to local communities. The G-5 committees administered the collection of house and trade taxes, food and other financial contributions from the civilian population to the RUF/AFRC. In western Tonkolili District, civilians were required to register with the RUF/AFRC military police. Unregistered civilians were deemed "CDF collaborators" and were flogged, fined or killed. However, G-5 committees proved to be inadequate in providing enough subsistence resources for the combined RUF/AFRC forces, and "food-finding missions" again proliferated through the Northern Province. In a cynical irony, the same commanders that supported the G-5 system by ordering their subordinates to cease looting and theft also ordered the commission of food-finding missions, again increasing the levels of violence inflicted on civilians. Facing shortages, RUF/AFRC forces raided trade fairs in Guinean towns just over the border from Kambia District, prompting the Guinean armed forces to bombard suspected RUF/AFRC positions in the District.

In late January 1999, SLA forces deployed in Bumbuna, a town in the north of Tonkolili District. This brought a limited amount of relief to the civilian population who quickly converged on the town. The area surrounding Bumbuna remained under RUF/AFRC control, although Kamajors from the south of the District continually attacked this concentration of RUF/AFRC forces. This fighting led to the substantial destruction of much of the central chiefdoms of Tonkolili District.

CDF forces strengthened their deployment in Port Loko District, where they established a recruitment and training centre, and the south of Tonkolili District. CDF forces directed excesses of violence at civilians as a means of encouraging the creation of more Gbethi Societies in the District, as people frequently joined in order to avoid harassment by the CDF. Nevertheless, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Port Loko Town in May 1999. In April 1999, CDF, SLA and ECOMOG forces retook control of Mile 91, which rapidly saw the influx of thousands of civilians from the areas around Makeni and Magburaka.

In the north of Kenema District, the RUF/AFRC retook control of Tongo Field, the most important diamond mining area in the District. CDF forces continually attacked RUF positions in Tongo Field, but did not disrupt mining operations. South-east of Tongo Field, RUF/AFRC forces maintained a hold over Segbwema (Kailahun District), denying the CDF, ECOMOG and the SLA the opportunity of moving north into Kono District from Moa Barracks. The RUF/AFRC diamond mining office was established in Koakuima, to the immediate south of Koidu. All diamonds mined



by RUF/AFRC operations were trafficked through Koakuima onto their final destinations. Throughout 1999, hundreds of civilians from Kono District who had not fled into neighbouring Guinea were abducted to work in the mining areas of the District. RUF/AFRC forces continued to inflict physical violence on civilians, although on a lower scale than in 1998. Throughout RUF/AFRC-occupied areas of Sierra Leone, civilians were forcibly transported into Kono District to work in the mines.

In Koinadugu District, RUF/AFRC intensified gold mining operations in Diang Chiefdom, at the same time putting pressure on the SLA Brigade stationed at the strategic hydroelectric plant in nearby Bumbuna (Tonkolili District). RUF/AFRC forces had unimpeded access along all main roads in Koinadugu District, surrounding Kabala Town completely. RUF/AFRC brigade headquarters were established in Kayima, in Kono District and in Gberifeh (Koinadugu District) splitting between them responsibility for administering the expansive Neini Chiefdom.

The RUF/AFRC divided Bombali District into two, establishing headquarters in Makeni for the south and Kamakwie for the north. The intermediate territory remained under complete RUF/AFRC control. The RUF/AFRC began conscripting large numbers of able-bodied men in Bombali and Tonkolili Districts, in part due to CDF attacks on Magburaka Town. The RUF/AFRC increased their control over the northern chiefdoms of Bombali District, crossing the Little Scarcies River and establishing stronger supply lines by land through to Kambia Town, which was occupied completely in February 1999. The RUF/AFRC's increasing hold over Kambia District was sealed with the establishment of additional RUF/AFRC bases and a brigade headquarter in the District. The RUF/AFRC also occupied many of the wharf towns on the Great Scarcies River, thereby controlling a valuable economic and strategic asset. ECOMOG forces created checkpoints on main roads leading to Kambia Town, but this did little to prevent the RUF/AFRC moving freely throughout the District.

Throughout 1999, the West Side Boys raided villages located on each side of the Rokel Creek in Koya and Maforki Chiefdoms (Port Loko District). Initially operating from a base in the densely forested Okra Hills inside Koya Chiefdom, the West Side Boys opened a new base on the other bank of the Rokel Creek in Maforki Chiefdom.

Except for brief "food-finding missions" carried out by RUF/AFRC units into parts of northern Moyamba District, the CDF hold over Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun, Bo and most of Kenema Districts, bar the mining area in the north, remained unchallenged.

Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire, which entered into force on 24 May. Full talks commenced on 25 May, leading to the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (Lomé Peace Agreement). Shortly after the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed, the main RUF/AFRC training centre at Camp Superman (Kono District) was supplanted by a new one in Gbendembu Town, north of Makeni. This was primarily to train conscripts for missions into Guinea.



After a few months, however, hostilities resumed in Bombali District, with the RUF/AFRC attacking civilians. Internal divisions within the RUF/AFRC created following the retreat from Freetown heightened, resulting in violent confrontations between the senior commanders of the combined movement as the disarmament process grew nearer. To a certain extent, the RUF and the remnants of the AFRC started controlling different parts of the country. In Kailahun District, disagreements over disarmament between the RUF leader and the most senior RUF officer resulted in the flight of the latter to Liberia.

On 22 October, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 6,000-strong peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone, to assist with the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) commenced deployment in late November 1999 and by 10 January, 4,500 UNAMSIL troops were present in Sierra Leone. The UNAMSIL force was initially deployed alongside ECOMOG forces and was gradually reinforced as the United Nations Security Council expanded the size of the mission.

Despite the official launching of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) program by the Sierra Leonean President in Freetown on 4 November 1999 and a nationwide sensitisation tour conducted by the leaders of the RUF, the AFRC and the CDF, hostilities rapidly resumed. The CDF in Kono District engaged the RUF/AFRC forces in the north and east of the country but failed to impact upon the strongly embedded RUF/AFRC forces, who retained their positions in the north of Tonkolili District and in the areas bordering Bombali and Port Loko Districts.

In early May 2000 and following the withdrawal of the last Nigerian ECOMOG contingent, RUF forces launched a number of attacks against UNAMSIL peacekeepers in Kambia, Port Loko, Tonkolili, Bombali and Kailahun Districts, leading to the taking of around 500 UN peacekeepers as hostages. Following the capture of the UNAMSIL peacekeepers, RUF forces first advanced south-west along the main highway towards Masiaka and Songo, unsuccessfully attempting to occupy the towns. As these events unfolded, the bodyguards of the RUF leader fired on a crowd of thousands of civilians gathered around his home in Freetown, killing around 20 people. The RUF leader was later captured in Freetown and detained by the Government of Sierra Leone. RUF/AFRC forces then attacked Port Loko Town, but were repelled by UNAMSIL and SLA forces. UK armed forces arrived in Freetown to provide security for the Freetown area and, in the following months, to re-train the SLA. By the middle of July, the RUF/AFRC had released all the UNAMSIL peacekeepers it had previously captured. The SLA also staged a number of counter-attacks, attempting to retake Lunsar and using a helicopter gunship to bombard RUF/AFRC positions in and around the major towns of Makeni, Magburaka and Rokupr and other locations in the Northern Province, resulting in civilian casualties.

On 30 August, 11 UK Royal Marines were taken hostage by the West Side Boys in the Okra Hills area. Following a breakdown in negotiations, UK paratroops rescued the hostages in September 2000, practically destroying this volatile splinter group in the process.



Starting in July, the hostilities had become sporadic and in August 2000, RUF/AFRC forces surrendered to UN peacekeepers in Kabala. The disarmament process continued, although the RUF/AFRC were still engaged in mining activities, mainly in the centre of Koidu Town.

In May 2000, RUF forces in Kono District started engaging Guinean forces in the Guinean area known as "The Parrot's Beak", using the hundreds of civilians they had abducted and trained during the previous months. In early September 2000, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Guinean towns of Pamelap and Madina Oula and carried out similar actions in the Parrot's Beak area from Kailahun District. Throughout September and October, Guinean forces also adopted a "hot pursuit" policy, in which RUF bases inside Sierra Leone along the Guinean–Sierra Leonean border were directly attacked in addition to the pursuit of RUF/AFRC forces from inside Guinea. This was manifested through intensified artillery and helicopter gunship bombardment of towns just south of the border in Sierra Leone, resulting in many civilian casualties and in the large-scale displacement of the population, mainly Sierra Leoneans who had found refuge in Guinea. Guinean armed forces also moved their security checks three miles inside the territory of Sierra Leone in Bombali District and erected some checkpoints in Kailahun District. RUF/AFRC forces nevertheless continued to attack Pamelap and Guinean infantry and airborne operations against RUF/AFRC positions in Kambia District continued into 2001.

Representatives of the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone met in Abuja, Nigeria, to negotiate the reactivation of the ceasefire and peace agreement signed in Lomé in July 1999. The Abuja Ceasefire Agreement was signed on 10 November 2000. In December 2000, RUF forces went to Guinea to bring back Sierra Leonean refugees as a proof of their commitment to the peace process. By January 2001, thousands of Sierra Leoneans were thus brought back to the east of Kono District, where they were relocated by the RUF to different towns across RUF territory. Harassment, however, continued and many civilians were sent to Koidu to work in the mines.

In the first three months of 2001, RUF/AFRC forces entered into negotiations with UNAMSIL. This resulted in the opening of a number of key stretches of road leading into Kambia and Bombali Districts and the eventual deployment of UNAMSIL peacekeepers throughout those areas.

In March and April 2001, Donsos and Kamajors who had sought refuge in Guinea were armed by Guinean authorities and launched successful attacks on RUF forces in the east of Kono District, thereby opening three flanks in Kono and Kailahun Districts. They were, however, prevented from entering Koidu Town when the RUF requested the intervention of UMASIL to remind the CDF of the terms of the successive ceasefire agreements.

The November 2000 ceasefire was renewed in Abuja on 4 May 2001 and it was agreed that an accelerated disarmament should be carried out on a District-based level. To this end, disarmament was to take place successively and simultaneously in two Districts. The DDR program started in Kambia and Port Loko Districts, where in May 2001, reception centres were opened. In Port Loko District, the DDR process was accompanied by sporadic looting of civilian settlements by demobilised members of all factions. The stealing of corrugated zinc roofing material from houses was commonplace. Nevertheless, disarmament continued across the country throughout 2001; the



last two Districts to be disarmed were Kailahun and Kenema. Mining activities would continue in Kono District until the last days of the disarmament.

Following disarmament and demobilisation of members of all the different fighting factions, the Sierra Leonean President declared that the war was over and held a symbolic "Arms Burning Ceremony" at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom, Port Loko District) on 18 January 2002.



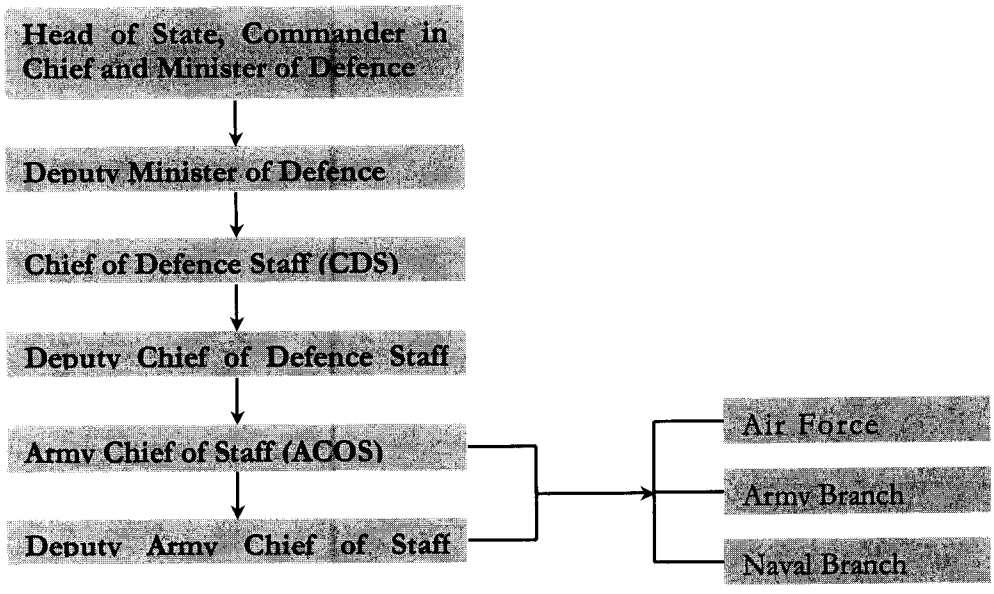
Chapter Three: Overview of Armed Forces Involved in the Sierra Leone Conflict

1. Fighting factions

a. The Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF)

The Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) is commonly known and referred to as the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). When RUF/NPFL forces commenced military operations in the south and east of Sierra Leone in March 1991, the SLA was under-staffed, under-equipped and often poorly trained. The SLA had three battalionsdeployed in the Eastern and Southern Provinces.

Until 2002, when the Government of Sierra Leone embarked on significant military reforms, the sennior heirarchy of the SLA was as follows:



Army Branch forces below Army Chief of Staff were and are divided into brigades, battalions, companies, platoons and sections, with a conventional officer and non-commissioned officer ranking hierarchy. In addition to barracks in provincial Sierra Leone, the SLA has a number of major installations in the Western Area, including the Defence Headquarters at Cockerill and the Armed Forces Training Centre near Waterloo.

From the beginning of the war in 1991, the SLA did not engage RUF forces unaccompanied. In addition to ad-hoc civilian security initiatives and local militias, including those evolved from traditional hunting societies throughout Sierra Leone, the SLA fought alongside foreign forces primarily from other West African countries at different times throughout the conflict. This foreign involvement was also expressed through the provision of logistics, resources, military training and guidance to the SLA. As the war progressed, the SLA collaborated with a Liberian fighting force engaged in the Liberian conflict called ULIMO and a selection of international private military companies, including the Gurkha Security Guards and Executive Outcomes. In 1992, a contingent of the SLA made up part of the ECOMOG peacekeeping forces in Liberia.



On two occasions during the 11-year conflict, in 1992 and in 1997, members of the SLA overthrew the Government of Sierra Leone, establishing military regimes in its place. The two juntas were very different in nature. On 29 April 1992, junior officers of the SLA came to Freetown to complain about the desperate situation on the war front. They successfully staged a coup, ousting the then President and the All People's Congress (APC) establishment. They created the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), swearing in 25 year-old Captain Strasser as Head of State. Shortly after the coup, SLA members looted civilian property in major centres, particularly in Freetown and the Western Area. In December 1992, SLA members suspected of having planned a coup were convicted of treason and executed, resulting in international condemnation of the NPRC. The NPRC engaged in an extensive recruitment drive, more than doubling the number of infantry available to the SLA by 1994. New recruits received only summary military training before being sent to the front lines and were unable to contain the RUF advance across the country, despite initial successes in 1993.

The swelling of the SLA ranks was accompanied by some breakdowns in discipline, compounding many of the problems already caused by the dramatic subversion of the traditional military hierarchy by junior officers. SLA attacks against civilians, including theft and summary executions of suspected RUF "collaborators" and the SLA's inability to protect civilians from RUF attacks led to a profound deterioration in civil-military relations. Many called the SLA "So-bels", or "Soldier-Rebels", noting that in some cases there was little to distinguish the two. The NPRC regime came to an end with the Presidential and Parliamentary elections in February and March 1996, during which the leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was elected President of Sierra Leone.

Just over a year later, on 25 May 1997, SLA officers staged a military coup, ousting the Sierra Leonean President and establishing a military regime called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The elected Government moved into Guinea. Unlike the NPRC, the AFRC chose not to fight the RUF; rather, the AFRC Chairman — Johnny Paul Koroma — called upon the RUF leadership to join the AFRC regime, which they promptly did. The majority of the SLA aligned with the AFRC, but some "loyal SLA" retained an allegiance to the elected Government. As the coup was driven by non-commissioned officers, most of the senior SLA officers who did not want to take part in the new regime went into hiding, chased by AFRC members. This military regime was ousted from power in February 1998 by an ECOMOG military intervention.

The situation of the SLA became a priority for the Sierra Leonean President after his reinstatement on 10 March 1998. During a presidential address delivered on 22 May 1998, President Kabbah revealed he had appointed the former ECOMOG Task Force Commander as Chief of Defence Staff to "use his wide experience in helping [Sierra Leone] to develop guidelines for putting together a new army."[15] Two months later, the disbanding of the "unpatriotic Army" was announced.[16] The framework of the new army, composed of 5,000 members was announced to Sierra Leoneans in

[15] Presidential address delivered on the occasion of the State Opening of the Second Session of the First Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone, 22 May 1998: http://www.sierra-leone.org/kabbah052298.html.

[16] Statement of the Sierra Leonean President at the Special United Nations Conference on Sierra Leone held at the United Nations, New York, 30 July 1998.



early September.[17] Newly trained SLA members began fighting alongside ECOMOG forces. Earlier in the year, former SLA members were hastily retrained by ECOMOG forces and absorbed into the ECOMOG force structure to help fight the retreating RUF/AFRC forces in the Provinces.[18]

In the middle of 2000 and at the request of the Sierra Leonean Government, the United Kingdom started providing assistance in the "national restructuring exercise" of the SLA by providing advice and training.[19] UK forces carried out a series of six-week basic training courses for around eight battalions of the SLA.[20] The 180-strong team began arriving in Freetown on 10 June 2000,[21] dovetailing with the withdrawal of the Royal Marines after 15 June 2000.[22] On 24 July, nearly 1,000 SLA members graduated from the UK-run training course,[23] the first group of a total of around 8,000 who would eventually be trained this way. SLA forces again began to participate in combat actions against the RUF/AFRC in mid 2000.

Following the initial rounds of UK short-term training programs, a UK-led long-term International Military and Training Team (IMATT) was established to push a wider process of military reform. In 2002, the SLA was renamed Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the separate army, navy, and air force command structures were restructured.[24]

b. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commenced attacks inside Sierra Leone on 23 March 1991, at which time little information about the RUF was available to the public. The RUF finds its origins in a movement to overthrow the regime of the All People's Congress (APC). In an internal RUF document written in the early stage of the conflict and entitled "Reasons Why We Took Up Arms to Fight", it is stated that, "We are fighting against corruption, because the past and present government seized political, economic and social justice in this country".[25] In 1991, the RUF was composed of around 230 members. These included former Fourah Bay College students, political opponents of the APC, former members of the SLA and other public figures that considered themselves victims of the APC regime. The majority were trained in Liberia at Camp Namma, although eight of the original members – referred to as "vanguards" –were trained in warfare and the "ideology"[26] in Libya. RUF numbers swelled rapidly following their entry into Sierra Leone.

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[17] See point 10 of the Broadcast to the Nation on Peace and Security by the Sierra Leonean President.

[18] The ECOMOG 128th Infantry Battalion was created to remedy the ECOMOG personnel shortage in their "mopping up operations" in the province and was mainly composed of former SLA members: Brig. Gen. R. A. Adeshina: *The Reversed Victory: Story of Nigerian Military Intervention in Sierra Leone*, Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc., pp. 66-7.

[19] Address by the Sierra Leone President at the Pass Off Ceremony for the First 1000 Military Personnel, under the UK Short-term Training Program, Benguema Training Centre, 22 July 2000:

[20] The UK Military handed over to the UK-led International Military and Advisory Training Team (IMATT) in September 2001.

[21] BBC Online News, 10 June 2000 (19:28 GMT 20:28 UK).

[22] IRIN West Africa, 14 June 2000.

[23] IRIN West Africa, 24 July 2000.

[24] IRIN West Africa, 22 January 2002. See also the speech of the Sierra Leone President at the Opening of the New Defence Ministry Building, Tower Hill, Freetown, 21 January 2002.

[25] See also the RUF's manifesto, *The Footpaths to Democracy, Towards a new Sierra Leone*. For a full text of this manifesto, see http://www.sierra-leone.org/documents.html#RUF.

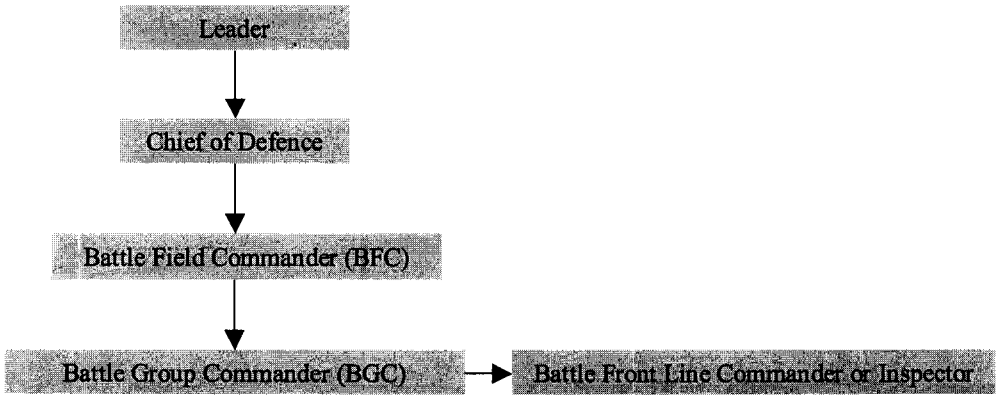
[26] Including the Green Book of Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi.

At first, many civilians joined the RUF voluntarily, seeing it as a solution to corruption and poverty. Nevertheless, the RUF commenced abducting and conscripting civilians shortly after, a practice that continued throughout the conflict. The RUF conscripted thousands of Sierra Leoneans of all ages and of both sexes to be trained as fighters at large training bases. These were opened from time to time depending on the state of the RUF advance, on the number of new conscripts and recruits and on the logistic support available. While one senior RUF officer was responsible for the opening of bases and the provision of training, this did not stop other, smaller training bases from being opened under localised commands. When the RUF needed "manpower" for planned actions, RUF members known as "Safari Teams" were sent to the villages to bring back civilians in accordance with pre-agreed figures. Children under the age of 15 were abducted, conscripted and trained to operate as Small Boy Units (SBU) and Small Girl Units (SGU). Adults were organised into platoons and trained. Instructors in the training bases were responsible for providing training on drill, military tactics, weapons and ideology, among other things.

The NPFL clearly supported and even controlled, to an extent, RUF operations in Sierra Leone. NPFL members fought alongside RUF forces and the NPFL provided logistical support to the RUF as a whole. When they first entered Sierra Leone and during the early stage of the conflict, NPFL members, who not only outnumbered the RUF but also held most of the commanding positions, dominated the RUF forces. Although the NPFL withdrew from Sierra Leone in 1993, links with the NPFL and its leader were never severed completely.

Following the SLA coup in May 1997, the AFRC invited the RUF to join the regime. RUF forces joined with and strengthened AFRC positions throughout areas of Sierra Leone that the SLA had previously controlled. RUF members held ministerial positions in the Council of the AFRC and the movement re-branded itself the "Peoples' Army".

From the beginning of the movement, the RUF, who leader was a retired signals corporal from the SLA, adopted a military-style internal organisation and disciplinary system, with clearly identified positions and tasks allocated to its members:





The BFC moved between front lines depending on to the battles in preparation and ongoing military activity, while the BGC remained in the rear at headquarters. The BGC's primary function was to take care of logistics, under the orders of the BFC. The Battle Front Line Commander moved between the front lines according to logistical needs. RUF forces were divided into brigades,[27] battalions, companies, platoons and sections. A section was composed of 8 to 10 combatants and five sections made a platoon. A platoon was composed of 30 or more combatants and five platoons made a company. A company was composed of 100 or more combatants and five companies, plus an administrative one, made a battalion. A battalion comprised around 1,000 combatants; three battalions made one brigade.

Representatives from specific supporting units were attached at battalion level. The G-5 Unit was responsible for coordinating relations between combatants and civilians, including the collection of taxation and food contributions from civilians. G-5 was also responsible for disseminating political ideology. The Army Agricultural Unit was to take care of all farming and food production in the battalion. The S-4 Unit was responsible for the storage and distribution of food and was battalion quartermaster. The Intelligence Office Unit was responsible for monitoring all operations within the battalion and for sending intelligence reports to headquarters. The Combat Medic Unit was responsible for all medical affairs and the health for everybody in the battalion. The G-4 Unit took care of all arms and ammunitions. Armoury was a sub-unit and was responsible for the maintenance of all arms. The Logistics and Motor Pool was responsible for the maintenance of all mechanical and vehicular equipment in the battalion. The Signal Unit was responsible for internal and external communications. The Military Police (MP) Unit was responsible for disciplinary actions and, therefore, for the maintenance and enforcement of law and order. Military Police (MP) also escorted prisoners and were attached to brigades, battalions and companies. The Internal Defence Unit was responsible for all necessary investigations in the battalion and also served as a link between the G-5 and other operational units.

When they entered Sierra Leone in 1991, the RUF established a headquarters in Pendembu (Kailahun District), where they remained until 1993 when SLA forces retook the town. From 1994 until they joined the AFRC in Freetown, the RUF leader was not settled in one place but was generally mobile.[28] When the RUF joined with the AFRC in Freetown, the high command established headquarters in Freetown in the Defence Headquarter at Cockerill. Following the retreat from Freetown in February 1998, a War Office was opened in Buedu (Kailahun District, on the border with Liberia). This was the administrative headquarter, the permanent radio base and the base for one of the most senior RUF officers. Important meetings involving the senior RUF command took place in Buedu until disarmament in 2001. The RUF defensive headquarter was moved as RUF forces captured towns, but remained in Makeni (Bombali District) from 1999. As the RUF's positions stabilised following the general retreat from Freetown in 1999, the territory under their control was subdivided further and a number of brigade headquarters were established.

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[27] Growing rapidly after the first attack in March 1991, the RUF had one and a half brigade. Following the retreat from Freetown in 1998, the RUF had three brigades, one in Kailahun District, one in Kono District and one in Bombali District.

[28] During this period, it is not completely clear whether the RUF retained a headquarters as such and if it existed, where it was located.



The appointments of the most senior officers within the movement were approved personally by the RUF leader. Some appointments were approved by the Liberian President, in particular when the RUF leader was in custody in Nigeria in 1997 and then Sierra Leone in 1998. When the RUF leader was again arrested after the 8 May 2000 events,[29] the then Battle Field Commander was made Interim Leader and would take instructions directly from the Liberian President.

The RUF set up a disciplinary system to deal with offences committed by its members. When an RUF member committed an offence, he or she was sent to the Military Police (MP), which would obtain a statement and issue a report. When the offence reached a certain level of severity, the MP had to refer the matter to the General Staff Officer Class One (GSO1),[30] who in turned would convene a Board of Investigation. The report of the Board of Investigation would then be sent to the RUF leader or the most senior RUF officer,[31] who would be responsible for taking appropriate measures, including recommending that a court martial be conducted. For minor offences, local commanders were vested with certain powers to conduct investigations and administer punishment in line with the gravity of the offences committed. Most of the time, commanders settled cases at the front line without going through the proper channels. The senior officers in charge of the RUF were allegedly aware of this conduct, but did not intervene to deter it. During the 11-year conflict, very few courts martial were conducted.[32]

c. National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL)

The National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL) emerged in the neighbouring country of Liberia in 1989. The NPFL's aim was to oust the Liberian President, who had been in power since 1980 and whose regime was accused of being corrupt and excessively tribalistic. Backed up by foreign countries, the NPFL movement rapidly expanded its actions across the country towards Monrovia, the capital. In August 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent to Monrovia a peacekeeping force known as the ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). ECOMOG established a rear base near Freetown's International Airport in Lungi. In September 1990, the President was arrested, tortured, killed and his body paraded through Monrovia by an NPFL splinter group called the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL). An Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) was formed in November 1990. Despite a

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[29] On 8 May 2000, a crowd gathered outside the Freetown residence of the RUF leader to protest the resumption of hostilities in Sierra Leone and the taking hostage of UN peacekeepers by RUF forces. RUF bodyguards fired on the crowd, killing around 20. The RUF leader was detained by the Sierra Leone Police on 17 May and was subsequently held in custody.

[30] As an example of the structuring of the RUF, the functions given to the GSO1 were as follows: to maintain an ongoing roadmap or prepare a yearly forecast of events concerning general training, including bush camps, recreational sports, ceremonial parades and the planning and implementation of training courses; maintenance of a list of all courses to be undertaken by RUF members throughout the year; to maintain a manifest of the seniority of officers and senior NCO's in the RUF for promotions; appointments and reversions; to request course bids based on existing vacancies for various courses stating educational qualifications required; to be in charge of general discipline; and to post officers.

[31] Depending on the period, it was sent to the RUF leader, to the Battle Field Commander, or to the officer who later became the Interim Leader.

[32] For example, a Board of Investigation was seized of a case involving a senior RUF officer who allegedly diverted some Guinean currency and failed to give it to the movement. The Board investigated some of the most senior RUF officers.

reconciliation accord signed in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire, between the President of the IGNU and the NPFL leader in October 1991, fighting continued in Liberia. In March 1991, the NPFL assisted the RUF in launching its "revolution"[33] in Sierra Leone. NPFL members started fighting alongside the small RUF force. The strength and involvement of NPFL forces in Sierra Leone would decline over the subsequent years owing to the emergence of the United Liberian Movement for Democracy (ULIMO), a counter-revolutionary force comprised of supporters of the late President. The NPFL's physical withdrawal from Sierra Leone did not, however, lead to the withdrawal of the NPFL's active support for the RUF.

In March 1994, pursuant to the Cotonou Agreement signed in July 1993 between the NPFL, ULIMO and the Interim Government of National Unity, a tripartite Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG), headed by a five-seat Council of State replaced the IGNU. The three signatories each obtained one seat in the Council of State. Hostilities continued in Liberia and a splinter group of the NPFL, the NPFL-Central Revolutionary Council (NPFL-CRC) emerged and formed a coalition with the ULIMO-J. Following a new peace agreement signed in Abuja, Nigeria in August 1995, a new six seat Council of State was established, and the coalition obtained a seat in the Council.[34] Pursuant to a peace accord signed between the same fighting factions in August 1996 – referred to as Abuja II – disarmament started and in February 1997, the various groups were disbanded. In July 1997, Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in Liberia; the NPFL leader was elected President of Liberia, his National Patriotic Party also winning a majority of seats in the National Assembly.

d. United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO)

The United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), mainly composed of former members of the Liberian Armed Forces (AFL) and other refugees who had found refuge in Sierra Leone and who were supporters of the late Liberian President, emerged in 1991 as an opposing force to the NPFL. In September 1991, ULIMO forces attacked NPFL forces in the west of Liberia, using Sierra Leonean territory as a staging point. ULIMO rapidly started fighting alongside the SLA to push the combined RUF/NPFL assault back into Liberia.

Over the subsequent years, the existence of this fighting force would be punctuated by rivalries between two personalities, leading to various splits and reunifications. In May 1992, the ULIMO Chairman was removed and the movement was split between two potential leaders, one of whom was accused of using ULIMO to wage a holy war while the other was accused of financial impropriety and hijacking the movement for political ends. Nevertheless, between August and December 1992, ULIMO reunified and resumed fighting with the NPFL. Following this, two branches of ULIMO clearly appeared: a Freetown-based branch, fighting alongside the SLA in Sierra Leone, and a branch based solely in Liberia.

A reunification congress between the two branches in October 1993 and a selection of joint communiqués issued in early 1994, some at the initiative of the Sierra Leonean NPRC Chairman, did not prevent the two branches from fighting. One of the main points of disagreement was the

[33] This is how the RUF referred to its actions in Sierra Leone. The RUF would further consider itself a government, referring to property stolen from civilians by RUF members as "government property".
[34] For a full text of these peace agreements, see http://www.usip.org/library/pa/liberia/pa_liberia.html.

participation of the ULIMO Liberian branch in the Cotonou peace process for Liberia in July 1993.[35] In June 1994, the violence committed against civilians by ULIMO fighting alongside the SLA led a delegation of Sierra Leonean Chiefs to call for the withdrawal of ULIMO from Sierra Leone and also resulted into the disarmament of some members of the Freetown-based branch by the SLA.[36]

In 1994, the two branches were clearly identified by two different acronyms: ULIMO-J (Freetown) and ULIMO-K (Liberia); the letters "J" and "K" referred to the names of the respective branch leaders. From the end of 1994 until 1996, ULIMO forces as such were not active within Sierra Leonean territory. In May 1995, demobilised ULIMO-J members based in Freetown were remobilised by Executive Outcomes, a private military company hired by the Government of Sierra Leone. The Special Task Force, as the ULIMO-J/Executive Outcomes force became known, assisted the SLA in driving back the RUF from the Western Area. The Special Task Force continued to operate under the umbrella of the SLA and Executive Outcomes in Bonthe District and briefly in Bo Town in late 1995 and 1996.

The ULIMO-J branch was formally included in the peace process in Liberia in August 1995. By signing the Abuja Agreement,[37] the parties agreed to form a six-seat Council of State to exercise executive power in Liberia. The leader of the ULIMO-K branch represented ULIMO in the Council of State while the NPFL-CRC/ULIMO-J coalition received one seat and the ULIMO-J wing gained ministerial positions.[38] However, factional fighting resumed and ULIMO-K and the NPFL collaborated to capture the leader of the ULIMO-J, who they accused of murder. This fighting culminated in the widespread destruction in Monrovia, the capital, in April 1996.

Peace negotiations resumed and resulted in the signing of a supplement to the Abuja Accord, referred to as Abuja II, which would be the first step towards the end of the conflict in Liberia. This provided for the representation of both ULIMO-K and ULIMO-J in the Council of State. ULIMO was officially disbanded in early 1997, pursuant to the Abuja II Agreement. Nevertheless, ULIMO resurfaced in Sierra Leone in 1997 and 1998 when some former members joined the Kamajors and others fought alongside the RUF/AFRC.

e. Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)

On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a coup d'état and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC released over 700 inmates from Pademba Road Prison, including their leader, an SLA officer who had been charged with a coup attempt in 1996. The AFRC immediately suspended the Constitution of Sierra Leone and the elected President escaped to the Republic of Guinea by helicopter. In an address to the nation, the AFRC leader advanced as a justification for the coup the polarisation of the country "into regional and tribal factions",[39] and the

[35] This accord was signed by the NPFL, ULIMO and the Interim Government of National Unity in Cotonou, Benin; the ULIMO leader of the Liberian Branch appeared in the agreement as the leader of the ULIMO. No mention of different branches was made.

[36] Those disarmed ULIMO members were encamped at Waterloo refuge camp in the Western Area.

[37] This supplemented the previous Akosombo, Cotonou and Accra Agreements.

[38] For a full text of the Agreement, see http://www.usip.org/library/pa/liberia/pa_liberia.html.

[39] The President of Sierra Leone had appointed the leader of the Kamajors, a pro-government local militia, as the Deputy Defence Minister in 1996.

lack of control of the President over the situation". Amidst international condemnation of the explosion of violence and looting that accompanied the coup, the AFRC leader was sworn in as Head of State on 17 June 1997.

Immediately after the coup, the AFRC invited the RUF to share power. On 28 May, the RUF leader – at that time in custody in Nigeria for a firearms offence – broadcast a statement over SLBS Radio, encouraging RUF solidarity with the AFRC. Part of his statement is worth quoting: "You will always get instructions from me through [the AFRC leader]. They are our brothers. Let no one fool you. You have to work with them to put the situation under control, especially in the Western Area. As you [sic] the field commander, instruct your other Commander ... to stand by for any reinforcement needed by [the AFRC leader] for any eventualities. We have to defend our sovereignty. You are to act on these orders immediately."[40] On 30 May, the RUF declared their support for the AFRC on SLBS television and radio and on 1 June, the AFRC declared the RUF leader to be the Deputy Head of State of Sierra Leone. The RUF/AFRC Cabinet hierarchy was as follows: Chairman and Head of State, Vice Chairman and Deputy Head of State, Chief Secretary of State, Secretaries of State and Public Liaison Officers. In June 1997, the RUF/AFRC created a 17-member supervisory team to prevent the apparatus of civilian government from grinding to a halt following lengthy strikes by public sector workers.[41]

Immediately after the coup and throughout 1997, the RUF/AFRC found itself in an escalating military standoff with Nigerian forces stationed in Freetown and Lungi. ECOWAS established a Committee mandated to negotiate with the RUF/AFRC regime. On 29 August 1997, at its 20th Annual Summit, ECOWAS imposed sanctions on Sierra Leone, effective throughout all ECOWAS member States.[42] The ECOWAS embargo included military hardware, supplies and spare parts, petroleum and petrol-derived products; an export ban was also imposed. A travel ban was imposed on AFRC members and their families, in addition to a freeze on their assets. Moreover, ECOWAS formally expanded the mandate of ECOMOG to include the use of force to impose sanctions against Sierra Leone.[43] Effectively, this gave legal backing to a complete navel blockade of the Port of Freetown and the prohibition of air-freight traffic. On 8 October, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1132 (1997), imposing a range of global arms, oil and travel sanctions on Sierra Leone.[44] During peace talks in Conakry, Guinea, on 22 and 23 October 1997, the ECOWAS Committee of Five[45] and representatives of the RUF/AFRC agreed to an immediate ceasefire and a six-month peace plan guaranteeing a return to civilian government by 22 April 1998.

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[40] BBC Media Monitoring, 30 May 1997 transcribing SLBS, 28 May 1997.

[41] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 24 - 30 June 1997.

[42] Decision on sanctions against the junta in Sierra Leone, Twentieth Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government, Abuja, 28-29 August 1997.

[43] *Ibid.* "Article 7. The sub-regional forces shall employ all necessary means to impose the implementation of this decision. They shall monitor closely the coastal areas, land borders and airspace of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and shall inspect, guard and seize any ship, vehicle or aircraft violating the embargo imposed by this decision."

[44] On 29 August 1997, ECOWAS had issued a recommendation on the application of sanctions against the AFRC regime: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 23 August - 1 September 1997.

[45] Initially, ECOWAS established the Committee of Four. In August 1997, a fifth nation, Liberia, was added to the Committee of Four, which became known as the Committee of Five.

Following RUF/AFRC attacks on ECOMOG positions and other breaches of the Conakry Peace Plan, ECOMOG intervened militarily. Starting on 6 February 1998, ECOMOG drove the RUF/AFRC regime from power and its forces from the Western Area. Ousted from Freetown, the RUF/AFRC alliance survived but the balance of power between the allies was inverted. The situation of the AFRC members was varied: most fled from Freetown into the Provinces with their leader, others surrendered to ECOMOG forces and many of the senior officers were charged with treason, convicted and executed in 1998.[46]

Following the RUF/AFRC invasion of Freetown in January 1999, most of the AFRC forces withdrew to Makeni (Bombali District) and the rift between RUF and AFRC forces deepened. The AFRC leader did not take part in the peace negotiations in Lomé, Togo that concluded with the signing of a Peace Agreement between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone.[47]

While provisions in the Lomé Peace Agreement granted the RUF leader status equivalent to Vice President, the AFRC leader was appointed as Chairman of a governmental body called the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace. Following serious infighting between RUF and AFRC forces in the Northern Province in October 1999, the rift between the two groups further deepened. Both forces controlled different areas of the country. Nevertheless, the alliance between the leadership of the two forces was still valid. The two leaders issued joint statements and continued to appear together publicly.[48] The AFRC leader visited RUF/AFRC strongholds in an attempt to engage AFRC commanders in the disarmament program[49].

When RUF forces disarmed and held hostage of UNAMSIL peacekeepers in early May 2000, the AFRC leader called on his forces to support the Government and halt the RUF advance on Freetown. In May and June 2000, AFRC forces fought the RUF alongside the SLA in Masiaka and Lunsar. The AFRC leader's declaration marked a public shift in relations between the AFRC and the RUF, compounding the division of operational areas that happened in late 1999. AFRC forces were remained active on the ground in only two principal locations.

f. The West Side Boys

Between October 1998 and the end of 2000, the West Side Boys, a splinter group from the RUF/AFRC alliance, concentrated its actions in the Okra Hills (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District). While it is not possible to say the West Side Boys did not fall under the command of the RUF/AFRC, their actions followed a clear pattern that was different from the RUF/AFRC and later

[46] ECOMOG forces, SSD and even civilians arrested many alleged members and collaborators of the AFRC regime and brought them to Pademba Road Prison, Freetown, where – despite only having the capacity for 400 – the number of inmates rose to between 3,000 and 5,000. Following the reinstatement to power of the President, civilians and military personnel were tried on treason grounds and on 19 October, 24 ex-members of the SLA who had joined the SLA were executed by firing squad.

[47] AFRC members alleged that their former leader was detained by the RUF second-in-command in Kailahun District: BBC Online News, 7 August 1999.

[48] The RUF leader announced that the RUF/AFRC alliance was transformed into a political organisation called the Alliance for Peace. UN OCHA, 30 September 1999. In early November, the two leaders issued a joint statement guaranteeing the safety of humanitarian staff and resources even in times of insecurity. IRIN West Africa, 4 November 1999.

[49] IRIN West Africa, 18 November 1999 and 6 December 1999.



RUF actions in Port Loko District. Although the group considered the AFRC leader to be their figurehead – the absence of the AFRC leader in Lomé and their belief that their interests had been inadequately represented[50] was the origin of the West Side Boys taking UNOMSIL, ECOMOG and NGO officials hostage in 1999 – the AFRC leader publicly dissociated himself from the group and officially disbanded the AFRC in mid-August 2000. The West Side Boys, primarily ex-SLA who aligned with the RUF/AFRC, achieved international notoriety by kidnapping 11 UK Royal Marines in late August and provoking a decisive military response from the UK that would all but destroy the West Side Boys.

g. Civil Defence Force (CDF)

As RUF/NPFL forces expanded activities the Southern and Eastern Provinces, numerous civilian initiatives emerged between 1991 and 1993 to assist the SLA. Across the Districts, NPRC and SLA authorities, traditional structures and popular personalities[51] supported the foundation of civilian security schemes. This led to the creation of a number of vigilante groups sometimes known as Civil Defence Units (CDU), whose main role was to operate checkpoints. The traditional authorities selected civilians, usually experienced hunters and well-known community people, to join these CDUs. This quality control system guaranteed that Paramount Chiefs could exercise a degree of actual and moral authority over the CDUs. In addition, the mobilisation of tribal-based hunting societies was actively encouraged and supported by the NPRC authorities. Various State agencies were involved in administering the general mobilisation of various hunting societies, which included the "Donsos" in Kono District, the "Tamaboros" in Koinadugu District and the "Kamajors" in the Eastern and Southern Provinces. Affiliates of the Kamajor Society were the largest in number of these societies.

These local militia used their intimate knowledge of their immediate localities to assist the SLA in fighting the RUF/NPFL. Both the civil militia and CDUs were given bladed weapons and rustic single-barrel shotguns and deployed alongside the SLA during combat against RUF forces. As the conflict expanded westwards across the country, similar initiatives emerged in Moyamba and Tonkolili Districts. Traditional hunters known as "Kapras" and "Gbethis" regrouped in the Northern Province.

The organisation of local militias entered a new phase in 1995, when initiation of civilians into the Kamajor Society began in Bonthe District (Southern Province). Hidden behind a veil of secrecy, Kamajor initiation ceremonies revolve around an assortment of mystical beliefs and charms performed by a High Priest Initiator.[52] The purpose of the ceremony was to render initiates fit to serve at the war front, through the granting of special powers such as the ability to be "bulletproof" and being able to smell enemies. Initiators of the Gbethi Society called this process "washing". Once initiated, Kamajors had to adhere to the rules of the Kamajor Society, which governed the conduct of the members. Infractions of the rules were believed to deprive Kamajors of the powers they had been granted at the time of initiation. In the early stages of this process, hunters and youths were

[50] They also believed that their leader was held hostage by a senior RUF commander in Kailahun District: IRIN West Africa, 12 August 1999.

[51] In Kenema and Kailahun Districts, for example, a renowned local personality who was a former professor played the role of a catalyst in the regrouping of the Kamajors group.

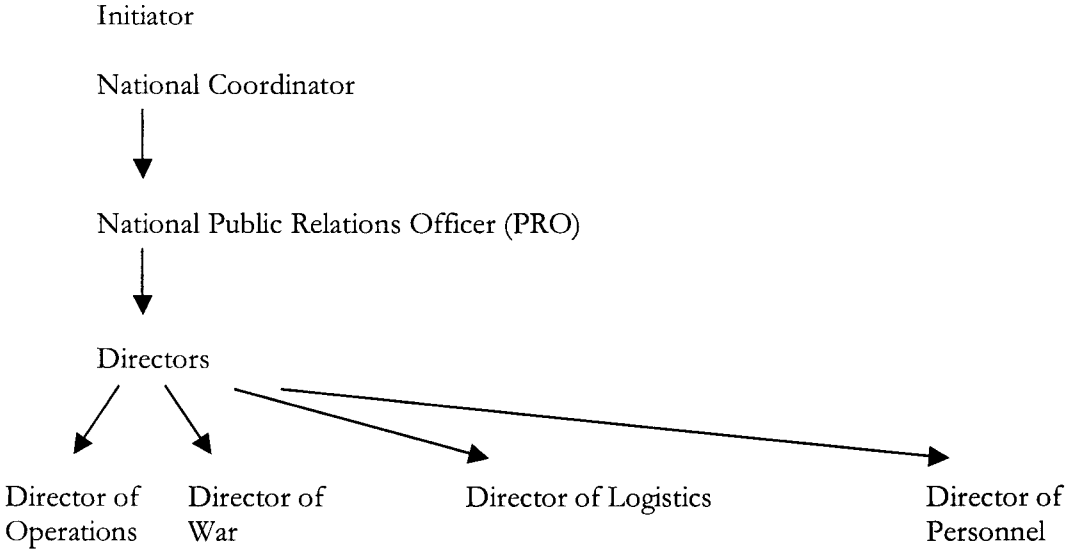
[52] The first Chief Initiator was an herbalist believed to have magical powers.

nominated for initiation by chiefdom authorities. Once initiated, Kamajors were sent back to the chiefdom from which they originated.

The number of initiates and the rate of initiation into the Kamajor Society increased rapidly throughout 1995 and 1996. Kamajor deployment alongside SLA forces steadily expanded into the other Districts of the Southern Province and into the Eastern Province. By 1996, almost every chiefdom in the Southern and Eastern Provinces had their own Kamajor Society. The initiation of men into the Kamajor Society brought with it the structuring of this local militia at a chiefdom level. Other organised pro-government militias – Gbethis, Kapras and Donsos – were active in the Northern Province and in Kono District.

The Civil Defence Force (CDF) emerged in late 1995 or early 1996 as a union of the various local militias active across the country. Members of the Kamajors were the main force within the CDF and presented strong resistance to RUF attacks throughout the Southern Province and, to a lesser extent, in the Eastern Province. The role and efficiency of the CDF in fighting the RUF received formal recognition from the newly-elected President in early 1996, who appointed the then leader of the Kamajor Society as Deputy Defence Minister. This strong symbolic support was backed up with practical support when the Government of Sierra Leone provided the CDF with staple food items and gave them responsibility for providing security throughout the country. Although originally aligned with and to some extent subordinate to the SLA, the CDF progressively distanced itself from SLA forces, objecting to their action and behaviour. Rivalry and tension between the two groups erupted, frequently resulting in armed clashes.

On the national level, the internal organisation of the CDF was as follows:[53]



[53] The then Deputy Defence Minister was made National Coordinator in the aftermath of the military coup in May 1997. Accordingly, although the coordination of the local militias within the CDF took place in 1995 or in early 1996, the schematised internal structure applies only for the period starting in June 1997.



↓

Deputy Directors
of Operation

↓

Administrators

↓

Battalion Commanders

Below battalion level, the CDF adopted a regular structure similar that of the SLA, dividing battalions into companies, platoons and sections of varying numbers. The CDF also put in place administrative structures at the chiefdom level. For example, in Dasse Chiefdom (Moyamba District), the Chiefdom Ground Commander was assisted by a Deputy Chiefdom Ground Commander, below whom was Section Commanders and then Patrol Commanders. The CDF also appointed civilians as Welfare Officers to liaise between civilians and CDF forces. Chiefdom commands often merged to form battalions comprising over 500 armed personnel.[54]

Following the military coup in May 1997, the AFRC leader officially disbanded the CDF and asked its members to surrender and disarm to the Sierra Leone Police. The CDF command rejected this order and CDF members remained armed, initially keeping a low profile before regrouping to fight the RUF/AFRC. The scale of their military actions increased and progressively more initiates joined the various components of the CDF, in particular the Kamajors. With the increase in the rate of Kamajor initiations came a number of problems. The CDF started to loose control over the selection of initiates and there was some loss of discipline among the newly-initiated. The role of the traditional authorities in selecting initiates was, opening the door for the initiation of children below the age of 15. Increasingly, but notably in 1998, a dichotomy between new members and "old Kamajors" came to the fore.[55]

Following the restoration of the elected Government, the President of Sierra Leone placed the CDF under the control of ECOMOG.[56] CDF forces were deployed in Freetown; both Kamajors and members of a group called the Organised Brotherhood of Hunting Societies (OBHS) were deployed at checkpoints throughout the Western Area and deployed alongside ECOMOG. CDF forces would be active in defending Freetown in January 1999. In September 1998, the President decided to formalise their position, stating that a Civil Defence Force with a CDF Administrator would be

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[54] For example, in Bonthe District, Dema, Sittia and Bendu Cha Chiefdoms merged to form a battalion, while the CDF battalions were formed through pairing the chiefdoms of Kwamebai Krim and Nongoba Bullom, Jong and Imperi, Kpanda Kemo and Bum, and Sogbini and Yawbeko. In Bo District, nine battalions were formed to cover 15 chiefdoms.

[55] In April 1998, for example, the High Priest and Chief Initiator called for registration of the Kamajors "because of growing lawlessness among them": AFP, 29 April 1998.

[56] CDF fought alongside ECOMOG forces for the restoration to power of the Sierra Leonean President.



appointed to liaise with the SLA in every District. The District CDF would report directly to the Paramount Chiefs, thus restoring much of the authority that had been eroded during the development of the CDF.[57] However, the CDF continued to impose a progressively more insidious system of administration throughout the territory it occupied, invading many aspects of civilian life.

2. Private military companies

a. Gurkha Security Guards Limited

In January 1995, the NPRC Government entered in a three-month renewable[58] contract with the Gurkha Security Guards Limited (GSG), a British company based in the Channel Islands. Nepalese Gurkhas have long been trained and incorporated into the UK armed forces pursuant to a tripartite agreement between the governments of Nepal, India and Britain. The British Government made significant cuts to the number of Gurkhas serving in the armed forces, resulting in their increased availability to private security and military firms. GSG's contract was to train and advise the SLA in jungle warfare tactics and provide security for the SLA base at Camp Charlie, near Mile 91. GSG was not contracted to engage in direct military actions against the RUF. In February 1995, RUF forces killed two senior GSG advisers and the aide-de-camp of the NPRC Chairman during a road ambush near the Kaitkant Hills in Tonkolili District.[59] The NPRC Government let GSG's contract lapse in April 1995.

b. Executive Outcomes

In late April or early May 1995, the NPRC contracted Executive Outcomes, a South African private military company, to train SLA forces.[60] At the time Executive Outcomes was contracted, RUF forces had pushed through Moyamba District into the Western Area and were engaging SLA and Guinean forces in and around Waterloo, not far from metropolitan Freetown. Near Freetown, Executive Outcomes created a "Special Task Force" of around 600 re-mobilised Liberian militia from the ULIMO-J movement. The Special Task Force assisted the SLA and organised civil militia in forcing the RUF to withdraw from the Western Area. Executive Outcomes rapidly expanded operations into the Provinces, securing the diamond-rich areas of Kono District. The Special Task Force also engaged RUF forces in Bonthe District later in the year. In March 1996, the newly-elected President of Sierra Leone retained the services of Executive Outcomes.

Executive Outcomes were also hired by mining and hydroelectric companies in Kono, Moyamba and Tonkolili Districts to provide security at their sites. Their departure from Sierra Leonean territory would be one of the main terms insisted on by the RUF during the peace negotiations that led to the signing of Abidjan Peace Agreement on 30 November 1996 between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone. Article 12 of the Peace Agreement provided that, "The Executive Outcomes shall be withdrawn five weeks after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG). As from the date of the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group, the Executive

[57] Broadcast to the Nation on Peace and Security by the Sierra Leone President, 2 September 1998.
[58] AFP, 23 March 1995.
[59] For background information, see Cillers, J. and Mason, P. (eds.), *Peace, Profit and Plunder: The Privatisation of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, 1999, pp. 129-33: http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Books/PeaceProfitPlunder/Chap7.pdf [Link alive: 7 January 2004].
[60] Associated Press Worldstream, 11 May 1995.



Outcomes shall be confined to barracks under the supervision of the Joint Monitoring Group and the Neutral Monitoring Group."[61] In early 1997, Executive Outcomes left Sierra Leone.

c. Sandline International

Sandline International is a British private military company[62] linked both to Executive Outcomes and to an array of companies with commercial mining interests in Sierra Leone. On 23 December 1997, Sandline International entered into a contract with the exiled Government of Sierra Leone to assist the Government in removing the RUF/AFRC regime through the "provision of technical knowhow, military logistics and equipment" to a value of around 10 million US dollars. This included the provision of 2,500 assault rifles, 180 rocket launchers, 50 machine guns and quantities of ammunition and spare magazines.[63] A number of finance problems reduced the money available to around 1.35 million US dollars. Sandline International flew 35 tonnes of weapons costing 700,000 US dollars to Freetown International Airport at Lungi.[64] Landing on 23 February 1998, the shipment arrived well after ECOMOG forces had driven the RUF/AFRC from the Western Area. The arms shipment was placed in storage by ECOMOG, who passed on a small number of weapons to the CDF commander for use by the Kamajors.[65] Sandline International was also responsible for establishing an operations base at Lungi for use by the returning Government of Sierra Leone.

In late March 1998, a few weeks after the Sierra Leone President's reinstatement to power, UK Customs and Excise investigated Sandline International's arms shipment as a possible breach of UK law implementing the arms and oil embargo imposed on 8 October 1997 by the UN Security Council.[66] Ultimately, Customs and Excise decided that it was not in the public interest to prosecute Sandline International.

The details of the investigation and allegations made in the media, led to a political row in the UK concerning the possible involvement of Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials and ministers in the breaking of UN sanctions. On 18 May, the UK Government announced an independent inquiry into what had become known as "the Sandline affair", to be led by Sir Thomas Legg. The report of the Legg Inquiry led to a series of administrative and policy changes concerning internal Government communications, particularly in the FCO, and the clear elucidation of future Government policies concerning both economic sanctions and private military companies. Following the submission of the findings of the Legg Inquiry, the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Select Committee also conducted its own investigation into the handing of the Sandline Affair by the FCO.[67]

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[61] For the full text of the Agreement, see http://www.sierra-leone.org/abidjanaccord.html.

[62] For the company profile of Sandline International, see http://www.sandline.com/site/.

[63] Sir Thomas Legg, KCB QC and Sir Robin Ibbs, KBE; *Report of the Sierra Leone Arms Investigation, 27 July 1998* (the "Legg Report"), paras. 4.15-4.18. Full text and annexes of the report are available from the Official Documents section of the UK Foreign and Commonwealth website: http://www.fco.gov.uk/Files/kfile/complete.zip [Link last visited: 28 February 2004].

[64] *Ibid,* para. 4.24.

[65] *Ibid,* para. 7.9.

[66] UN Security Council Resolution 1132 (1997), 8 October 1997.

[67] The Second Report of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the House of Commons: http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199899/cmselect/cmfaff/116/11602.htm.



3. Peacekeeping forces

a. Economic Community of West African State (ECOWAS) Cease-fire Observer Group (ECOMOG)

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) is a regional organisation comprising 15 member States, including Sierra Leone. It was created in 1975 and its founding Treaty was re-affirmed by all member States in July 1993. The ECOWAS Treaty allows ECOWAS to "establish a regional peace and security observation system and peace-keeping forces where appropriate",[68] although it does not have a standing military component.

Since 1990, the forward operating base of the ECOMOG mission in Liberia had been located in Lungi, near the Freetown International Airport. The military mandate of ECOMOG, however, did not encompass Sierra Leone until 29 August 1997, when the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government authorised ECOMOG to "employ all necessary means" to enforce a comprehensive trade embargo on Sierra Leone.[69] In addition to the ECOMOG forces already deployed in Sierra Leone in support of operations in Liberia, additional forces from ECOWAS member States were also deployed alongside the SLA in Sierra Leone pursuant to a series of defence pacts and agreements between those States and Sierra Leone. In early 1993, for example, Nigerian forces were deployed in Kono District while Guinean forces were active in Kailahun District. However, according to the Abidjan Peace Accord signed on 30 November between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, all foreign forces were to leave the county.[70]

The evolution of ECOMOG's direct military involvement in Sierra Leone began with the AFRC coup on 25 May 1997. Nigerian forces reinforced the ECOMOG deployment at Lungi and the Nigerian force headquarters at Kossoh Town, near Freetown. On 2 June 1997, Nigerian forces – not acting under ECOMOG, the mandate of which did not cover Sierra Leone – attempted and failed to unseat the combined RUF/AFRC forces.

The military situation between the RUF/AFRC and Nigerian forces remained tense throughout 1997. Following the failure of diplomatic negotiations carried out by the ECOWAS Committee of Five, the ECOWAS Heads of State and Government imposed a trade, arms and petroleum products embargo on Sierra Leone on 27 August 1997. As noted, this decision also expanded ECOMOG's mandate to include monitoring and supervising ceasefire violations and enforcing the sanctions and the embargo instituted by the authority of the Heads of State and Government against the RUF/AFRC regime.[71]

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[68] Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States, article58(2)(f). Available online at: www.sec.ecowas.int.

[69] ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, Decision on Sanctions Against the Junta in Sierra Leone, 29 August 1997, article7: "The sub-regional forces shall employ all necessary means to impose the implementation of this decision. They shall monitor closely the coastal areas, land borders and airspace of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and shall inspect, guard and seize any ship, vehicle or aircraft violating the embargo imposed by this decision."

[70] Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, Abidjan, 30 November 1996, article 12.

[71] ECOWAS Heads of State and Government, Decision on Sanctions Against the Junta in Sierra Leone, 29 August 1997.

Although Nigerian forces had established a de facto naval blockade of the Port of Freetown since the coup, the ECOMOG mandate allowed them to intensify enforcement operations. The UN Security Council supported the ECOWAS action and applied its own sanctions regime to Sierra Leone, authorising ECOWAS to ensure its strict implementation.[72]

The continuous shelling of strategic locations in Freetown, the effects of the embargo and the RUF/AFRC's inability to dislodge ECOMOG from Kossoh and Jui prompted them to continue the negotiations started early in the year. ECOWAS mediators, led by the then Nigerian Foreign Minister, hammered out a peace plan. This led to a ceasefire on 21 October 1997, followed on 23 October by the signing of the ECOWAS six-month peace plan for Sierra Leone (23 October 1997-22 April 1998).[73] The central provisions of this agreement were the maintenance of a ceasefire and the return of the elected Government by 22 April 1998.

On numerous occasions during the remainder of 1997, RUF/AFRC, CDF and ECOMOG forces violated the spirit and the letter of the Conakry Peace Plan. During the seventh meeting of the ECOWAS Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Committee of Five on Sierra Leone, held in Abuja on 19 December 1997, "the Ministers deplored the incessant and unprovoked attacks on ECOMOG peace-keepers. They reaffirmed ECOMOG's right of self defence".[74] In early January, ECOMOG had begun planning a military intervention to remove the RUF/AFRC from Freetown. On 6 February 1998, as the impasse in implementing the Conakry Peace Plan appeared to deepen, ECOWAS reaffirmed the three options available for the resolution of the conflict, namely: the pursuit of dialogue; the imposition of a sanctions regime; and the possible use of force.[75] On the same day, ECOMOG forces in Freetown commenced a military intervention that led to their capture of Freetown and the Western Area by 12 February.

Following the success of their Freetown intervention, ECOMOG forces commenced provincial operations in March. The ECOMOG force was divided into three brigades. The 24th Infantry Brigade would execute operations in the Northern Province and parts of the Eastern Province. The 26th and 15th Infantry Brigades would take responsibility for operations in the Southern Province and the remainder of the Eastern Province. After April, four "loyal" SLA battalions were put under the command of the ECOMOG 24th Infantry Brigade.

ECOMOG's mandate in Sierra Leone was expanded following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF on 7 July 1999. ECOMOG forces became a key component and actor in the peace process.

To reflect the provisions of the Lomé Agreement, ECOWAS redefined the mandate of ECOMOG on 25 August 1999. Although the Government of Nigeria had announced the drawdown of its

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[72] UN Security Council Resolution 1132 (1997), 8 October 1997.

[73] ECOWAS Six-month Peace Plan for Sierra Leone (23 October 1997-22 April 1998). Available online at: http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierra_leone_09231997.html [Link last visited 28 February 2004].

[74] Final communiqué, point 14.

[75] ECOWAS eighth meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Committee of Five on Sierra Leone, New York, 5-6 February 1998. Full text available at: http://www.sierra-leone.org/ecowas020698.html [Link last visited: 28 February 2004].

contribution to ECOMOG, their withdrawal was delayed to ensure that there was no security vacuum during the deployment of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).[76] At this time, ECOMOG's additional responsibilities included monitoring the ceasefire, providing security for and disarming ex-combatants at DDR sites and guarding any arms and ammunition retrieved during the disarmament process. ECOMOG gradually scaled down its operations and UNAMSIL deployed in the areas previously under the control of ECOMOG. Out of the six Nigerian battalions deployed in Sierra Leone, four were absorbed by UNAMSIL and the remaining two had left Sierra Leone by 2 May 2000.[77]

b. United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)

On 22 October 1999, in the aftermath of the Lomé Peace Agreement and following the extension of the ECOMOG mandate, the United Nations Security Council adopted Resolution 1270 (1999) establishing the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL). Initially, the authorised force strength of UNAMSIL strength was 6,000 military personnel, including 260 military observers[78] to "cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and the other parties to the Peace Agreement in the implementation of the Agreement". This included establishing a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra Leone and assisting the Government of Sierra Leone in implementing the DDR plan.

UNAMSIL had been preceded in 1998 by the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL),[79] composed of military observers and aiming at "monitor[ing] the military and security situation in Sierra Leone" and the "disarmament and demobilisation of former combatants", at "assist[ing] in monitoring respect for international humanitarian law" and at "monitor[ing] the voluntary disarmament and demobilisation of members of the Civil Defence Force".[80] The presence of UNOMSIL within Sierra Leonean territory and the number of its personnel would vary over the subsequent months, as its terms of deployment were amended taking into account the security

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[76] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 5 - 16 January 2000 and IRIN West Africa, 31 January 2000. On 23 December, the Governments of Nigeria, Guinea and Ghana informed the Secretary-General of their intention to withdraw their remaining ECOMOG contingents from Sierra Leone.

[77] IRIN West Africa, 2 May 2000.

[78] For a full text of the resolution, see http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1999/sc99.

[79] UN Security Council Resolution 1181 (1998), 13 July 1998.

[80] UNOMSIL was initially established for a six-month period between 13 July 1998 and 13 January 1999. Its authorised deployment contained up to 70 military observers. As hostilities between ECOMOG and the RUF/AFRC resumed in January 1999, the Security Council extended the mandate of ù UNOMSIL until 13 March 1999 in UN Resolution 1220 (1999), 12 January 1999, paragraph 2 of which authorises the Secretary General "to reduce the number of military observers in UNOMSIL and to retain in Conakry a small number who would return to Sierra Leone when conditions permit together with necessary civilian substantive and logistical support staff under the leadership of his Special Representative". UNOMSIL's mandate was extended to 13 June by Resolution 1231 (1999) of 11 March 1999. At this time, however, there were only eight military observers and they were not deployed inside Sierra Leone. Resolution 1245 (1999) of 11 June 1999 expanded the mandate of UNOMSIL until 13 December. On 20 August 1999, Resolution 1260 (1999) authorised the expansion of the mission to include 210 military observers to monitor the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement and to assist with the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) program. The full texts of all the above-mentioned resolutions are available online at http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1999/sc99 and http://www.un.org/Docs/scres/1998/scres98. Additional sources of information on UNOMSIL can be found at http://www.un.org/Depts/DPKO/Missions/unomsil/Unomsil.htm.



situation in Sierra Leone. UNOMSIL personnel were highly dependant on ECOMOG forces for their security.

In establishing UNAMSIL, the UN Security Council decided that UNAMSIL was to "take over the substantive civilian and military components and functions and to that end" decided "that the mandate of UNOMSIL shall terminate immediately on the establishment of UNAMSIL".[81] Furthermore, despite the ECOWAS statement of impending withdrawal from Sierra Leone, the United Nations included the role and functions of ECOMOG in the resolution, stating the "need for close cooperation and coordination between ECOMOG and UNAMSIL", "commend[ing] the readiness of ECOMOG to continue to provide security for the areas where it is currently located" and noting the need "to conduct other operations in accordance with their mandate to ensure the implementation of the Peace Agreement".

UNAMSIL force numbers would increase over the subsequent months as ECOMOG forces left Sierra Leone. In May 2000, hostilities resumed and UNAMSIL forces were targeted directly by RUF/AFRC forces. The capture of nearly 500 UNAMSIL peacekeepers by RUF/AFRC forces, a series of military events including the intervention of the UK Armed Forces and expanded combat operations by the SLA identified a clear need not only for an increase in UNAMSIL's force strength, but a reform of its structure. In late 2000, the UN Security Council increased the number of authorised personnel in UNAMSIL to 13,000[82] and ultimately to 17,500.

The first of these expansions would be decided on 7 February 2000, with the Security Council approving the extension of the military component of the UNAMSIL to 11,100 military personnel, deciding the revision of UNAMSIL's mandate and approving its extension for a period of six months.[83] UNAMSIL's force strength was increased to a ceiling of 17,500[84] by 30 September 1999. While the mandate of UNAMSIL was renewed in September 2003,[85] recent UN Security Council Resolutions have authorised the gradual drawdown of UNAMSIL, paving the way for a possible withdrawal by December 2004.[86]

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[81] UN Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999), 22 October 1999, para. 10.
[82] UN Security Council Resolution 1299 (2000), 19 May 2000.
[83] UN Security Council Resolution 1289 (2000), 7 February 2000.
[84] UN Security Council Resolution 1346 (2001), 30 March 2001.
[85] UN Security Council Resolution 1508 (2003), 19 September 2003.
[86] UN Security Council Resolution 1492 (2003), 18 July 2003.



Chapter Four: Legal Analysis

1. Introduction

NPWJ's Outreach and Conflict Mapping Programs focused on the crimes within the jurisdiction of the Special Court for Sierra Leone so that the people of Sierra Leone might understand more about how the Court could assist in the accountability process, by gaining an understanding of the types of crimes on which the Court would be able to adjudicate. This section is, in many ways, intended to be an extension of that program, therefore this analysis focuses on the crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court and related matters, including the principle of individual criminal responsibility. As such, it is not intended to be an academic analysis of all aspects of the crimes within the Court's jurisdiction. Rather, it is aimed at filling out the factual analysis contained in this report by outlining the crimes and their elements in more detail than was possible during the training seminars and demonstrating how this law might apply to the facts uncovered from the information gathered during the Conflict Mapping program.

This section will first give an overview of what is international humanitarian law (IHL), including its sources and key provisions. It will go on to examine whether or not there was an armed conflict in Sierra Leone and, if so, its duration and its nature. The section will go on to discuss the legal aspects of each category of crimes over which the Court has jurisdiction, in the order in which the crimes are listed within the Statute of the Special Court. The discussion of each category of crimes will conclude with an identification of what crimes were committed during the conflict, by applying the law as discussed to the facts as described in the factual analysis. The section will conclude with a discussion of the personal and temporal jurisdiction of the Court, namely the people over whom the Court has jurisdiction and when the acts had to be allegedly committed in order to be considered by the Court, finishing with a brief discussion of the principles of individual criminal responsibility, both direct and command responsibility.

It should be noted that in some circumstances the same set of facts can be characterised as a crime against humanity, a war crime and a crime under Sierra Leone law. For example, the rape of a 10 year-old can be the crime against humanity of rape, where committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack; the war crime of rape, when committed during an armed conflict; and a crime under Sierra Leone law, namely a violation of section 6 of the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act 1926. In such a situation, this report considers that the legal basis for each of those crimes has been made out and reflects this in the list of crimes committed, although an accused may be charged with only one of those crimes. Conversely, there are some crimes that do not have counterparts and, as such, some facts only fit into one category of crimes over which the Court has jurisdiction. These include the crime against humanity of enslavement, the war crime of pillage, the serious violation of international humanitarian law of the conscription of children and the crime under Sierra Leone law of the burning of public buildings.

For reasons of clarity and manageability, the crimes are also identified according to the fighting faction identified as being responsible. However, it must be emphasised that responsibility for these crimes cannot be extended to every member of the fighting faction: the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law are premised on the basis of individual criminal responsibility, both direct and command responsibility. As such, liability will only fall on the people who devised and implemented the policies to commit such crimes, i.e. the leaders and planners, the commanders



responsible for the individuals who committed the crimes and each individual who committed that crime.

As mentioned, the facts as described in this report are the result of the collection of information from key persons throughout Sierra Leone; that is, persons who by virtue of their profession or their position in society were in a position to have an overview of the conflict in particular in their area. This information has been used to compile the factual analysis section of this report, on which the following legal analysis is based. Every care has been taken to establish the veracity of the information gathered in Sierra Leone, including cross-checking and, to an extent, supplementing this information with open source and other materials.[87] Details that could not be verified or information on events coming from only one source were generally not included in the final report. However, it must be borne in mind that this information has not been tested to the level required for sustaining a conviction, for example through cross-examination in court, nor have the alleged perpetrators had the opportunity to tell their side of the story or answer the allegations made in this report. Therefore, although every care has been taken to ensure the correctness of the facts contained in this report, these limitations must be borne in mind when considering the following analysis.

2. Applicable law

2.a Introduction to international humanitarian law (IHL)

International humanitarian law, also known as "the laws of war", is the area of international law that regulates conduct during an armed conflict. In the modern era, the development of the rules of IHL began in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in an attempt to mitigate some of the consequences of the conflicts prevalent at the time. In essence, they attempted to regulate wars to prevent unnecessary suffering being inflicted upon combatants and civilians. Their development attempted to set specific rules concerning what were and were not legitimate targets in conflict and refined the distinction between combatants and civilians. The protection of persons not taking an active part in hostilities became a basic principle of IHL.

Traditionally, there have been two branches of international humanitarian law: the "Hague law", concerned with means and methods of warfare, and the "Geneva law", concerned with the more humanitarian issues, including the protection of civilians; this distinction is largely illusory, as there is a wide degree of overlap between the two.[88] The prohibition on intentionally directing attacks against civilians, which is applicable irrespective of the nature of the armed conflict, is one of the cornerstones of international humanitarian law. This prohibition derives from one of the key tenets of international humanitarian law, that a distinction be made between legitimate and illegitimate military targets. Accordingly, some targets will always be illegitimate, such as undefended towns and objects employed solely for the provision of humanitarian assistance, while some targets will always

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[87] For a full description of this process, see section A on the methodology of the Conflict Mapping program.

[88] See McCoubrey, H., *International Humanitarian Law: The Regulation of Armed Conflicts*, 1990, Dartmouth Publishing Company Limited, Great Britain, pp. 1-2. Indeed, the Hague Law of 1907 and its annexed Regulations on the Laws and Customs of War on Land, which have the status of customary international law, were to a large degree complemented and supplemented in the Third and Fourth Geneva Conventions of 1949 and Additional Protocol I: Roberts, A. and Guelff, R., *Documents on the Laws of War* (3rd edn.), 2000, Oxford University Press, Great Britain, p. 68.



be legitimate, such as military installations. Additionally, some methods of attack, such as carpet bombing, and some weapons, such as indiscriminate weapons, may not be employed. A key feature underpinning international humanitarian law is the principle of proportionality, according to which the military advantage expected to be gained in any attack must be balanced against the likely incidental or collateral damage to non-military persons and objects. Therefore, in all cases where either the target, methods, or weapons are not prohibited, the military commander must apply the principle of proportionality to weigh whether or not a particular target can be attacked in a particular way using particular weapons.

Currently, the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and the two Additional Protocols of 8 June 1977,[89] form the heart of international humanitarian treaty law and are its most frequently cited sources.[90] The 1949 Geneva Conventions, much but not all of which are now considered to be customary international law, were aimed at both codifying customary international humanitarian law as it had emerged following World War II and at developing law to address the experiences of World War II.[91] These four Conventions concern the treatment of:

(I) sick and wounded combatants on land;
(II) sick and wounded combatants at sea;
(III) prisoners of war (POWs); and
(IV) civilians.

The Geneva Conventions marked the first inclusion in a humanitarian law treaty of a set of war crimes explicitly attracting individual criminal responsibility – the "grave breaches" of the conventions.[92] Each of the four Conventions contains its own list of grave breaches, expanded by Additional Protocol I of 1977. Grave breaches are crimes considered so serious that all States Parties are required to prosecute persons accused of such offences, or to hand them over to other States Parties willing to conduct such prosecutions. However, the grave breaches provisions only apply in international armed conflicts as opposed to non-international armed conflicts[93] and then only to acts against persons protected by each of the Geneva Conventions ("protected persons"), namely sick and wounded combatants on land and sea, POWs and civilians who find themselves in the hands of a State of which they are not nationals. The primary responsibility for enforcement of these grave breaches provisions, and indeed of international humanitarian law in general, rests with States themselves.

International humanitarian law has two main sources: treaty law and customary international law; it can also be found in general principles of law and in judicial decisions and the writings of eminent jurists,[94] as subsidiary means that are of particular importance in this field. Treaty law refers to the

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[89] Sierra Leone succeeded to the Geneva Conventions on 10 June 1965 and acceded to the Additional Protocols on 21 October 1986.

[90] McCoubrey, *supra*, n. 2, p. 15. Note also the Geneva Protocol on the Prohibition of the Use in War of Asphyxiating, Poisonous or Other Gases, and of Bacteriological Methods of Warfare 1925, which has the statue of customary international law (Roberts and Guelff, *supra*, n. 2, p. 157) and is reflected in the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, article 8(2)(b)(xviii).

[91] Roberts and Guelff, *supra*, n. 2, pp. 195-6.

[92] See, for example, the Fourth Geneva Convention, articles 146-7.

[93] See below for a discussion of this distinction.

[94] Statute of the International Court of Justice, article 38(1)(c)-(d).



obligations binding on a State because they are a party to a treaty containing those obligations. Customary international law, on the other hand, refers to those obligations that are binding on States irrespective of whether they are contained in a treaty or not. The existence of customary international law is determined by reference to State practice and *opinio juris*.[95] State practice is the actions undertaken by States and *opinio juris* means that States undertake such actions because they believe they are under a legal obligation to do so.[96] State practice in the absence of *opinio juris*, no matter how uniform or consistent, will therefore not amount to customary international law; one example is the cancellation of diplomats' parking tickets, which is a standard practice but does not give rise to legal consequences if it is not followed. Official statements and declarations can provide evidence of *opinio juris* and can even amount to State practice in some circumstances, depending on their context. Generally, customary international law is binding on all States. However, it is not binding on a persistent objector, namely a State that has consistently made its objections manifest during the emergence of a new rule,[97] except if it amounts to *jus cogens*, which is a peremptory norm of international law from which no derogation is permissible and, as such, is binding on all States.[98] It should be borne in mind that customary international law is a continually evolving process and what was customary international law 20 years ago will not necessarily be customary international law today.

While international humanitarian law regulates the conduct of war, not all of its provisions attract individual criminal responsibility. For example, the violation of the provision stating the prisoners of war shall be permitted to use tobacco[99] is not considered to be a crime. However, there are a wide number of provisions, based both in treaty and customary law, that do attract individual criminal responsibility, so that people who violate the obligations in those provisions can be held accountable in a court of law. These provisions are considered to form part of a discrete area of law called international criminal law.[100] Many of these provisions will be discussed in the following sections on the crimes over which the Special Court has jurisdiction. The classic modern examples of the enforcement of international humanitarian law are found in two military tribunal established after World War II: the Nuremberg Tribunal, established to try the 22 major Nazi war criminals and the International Military Tribunal for the Far East, established to try major war criminals in the Pacific. The Nuremberg Charter, which gave the Tribunal jurisdiction over war crimes, crimes against humanity and crimes against peace,[101] is often cited as the basis for the development of

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[95] *North Sea Continental Shelf Case* [1969] ICJ Rep 3, 44.

[96] See the Statute of the International Court of Justice, article 38(1)(b), listing one of the sources of international law as "international custom, as evidence of a general practice accepted as law".

[97] Stein, T. L., 'The Approach of a Different Drummer: The Principle of the Persistent Objector in International Law (1985) 26 Harv. Int'l L.J. 457, p. 458.

[98] Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties 1969, article 53; norms amounting to *jus cogens* can only be replaced by norms of a similar character. The prohibition on genocide is generally considered to be *jus cogens*: see, for example, Bassiouni, M. C., 'International Crimes: *Jus Cogens* and *Obligatio Erga Omnes*' (1996) 59 Law & Contemp. Probs. 63, p. 68.

[99] Third Geneva Convention 1949, article 26.

[100] These provisions form part of International Criminal Law, which is also considered to include a range of other offences such as drug trafficking, piracy and fraud: see, for example, Bassiouni, M. C., *International Criminal Law* (2nd edn), 1999, Transnational Publishers, Ardsley, NY.

[101] Nuremberg Charter, article 6; note that conspiracy to commit any of these acts was also within the jurisdiction of the Nuremberg Tribunal.

international criminal law in the latter half of the twentieth century. In fact, "[t]he 1949 Geneva Conventions were prepared in the wake of the Nuremberg trials and were heavily influenced by them".[102]

2.b The International Criminal Court (ICC), including the Elements of Crimes

The preliminary and traditional problem with international humanitarian law is its lack of enforceability. Despite the advances made after World War II by the International Military Tribunals and several notable cases tried in domestic courts, including Eichmann, Barbie and Trouvier, it is only with the advent of the ad hoc tribunals and subsequent developments through the 1990s and beyond that this historic lack of enforceability is being addressed.[103]

In the early 1990s, the international community took steps to enforce international humanitarian law in the former Yugoslavia and in Rwanda, through the establishment of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda (ICTY and ICTR) in 1993 and 1994 respectively. These Tribunals were established by Security Council Resolutions adopted under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.[104] Crimes within their jurisdictions include genocide, crimes against humanity and violations of the laws and customs of war. The decisions of these tribunals, which are based on customary international law as identified by the judges, represent the first major post-Nuremberg decisions on crimes under international humanitarian law. While the decisions of these international tribunals are not binding on other courts, whether domestic and international, this growing body of jurisprudence is at the very least highly persuasive and was referred to extensively by the Preparatory Commission of the International Criminal Court (ICC) when the time came to elaborate the Elements of Crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC.

Indeed, the main step forward in the codification of international criminal law since Nuremberg and Tokyo is the creation of the International Criminal Court. In many ways, the ICC can be seen as a logical next step of the process begun at Nuremberg and traced through the establishment of the ICTY and ICTR, albeit a step that would be blocked for 50 years by the Cold War, among other things. The main difference between the ICC and the tribunals that preceded it is that the Statute of the ICC was negotiated by all member States of the United Nations, thereby representing for the first time a truly universal attempt to codify those laws and customs of war that attract individual criminal responsibility.

The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court was adopted in Rome on 17 July 1998, after weeks of intensive negotiations and debate, and entered into force on 1 July 2002. Following the

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[102] *The Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Separate Opinion of Judge Abi-Saab on the Defence Motion for Interlocutory Appeal on Jurisdiction, 2 October 1995.

[103] For further reading, see McCormack, T. and Simpson, G., *The Law of War Crimes: National and International Approaches*, 1997, Kluwer Law International, Boston.

[104] ICTY: Security Council Resolution 827 (1993), 25 May 1993; ICTR: Security Council Resolution 955 (1994), 8 November 1994. The Security Council is mandated under Chapter VII with determining the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace or act of aggression, pursuant to article 39(1) of the UN Charter. Having made that determination, the Security Council may then make recommendations or decisions regarding measures to be taken to maintain or restore international peace and security. Any such decisions are binding on all member States (article 25) and are superior to all other international obligations (article 103).

Diplomatic Conference, the Preparatory Commission comprised of representatives of States[105] with significant input from international organisations and non-governmental organisations, debated the particulars of the supporting documents for the Rome Statute, in particular the Elements of Crimes and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence.[106] During the negotiations, the often long debates centred around what was and what was not customary international law, with delegates accepting the former and rejecting the latter. As such, the crimes within the jurisdiction of the ICC, found in articles 6 to 8, are the best possible indication of customary international law at the time of the adoption of the Rome Statute, as are their Elements of Crimes, which were approved at the June 2000 session of the Preparatory Commission for the International Criminal Court and subsequently adopted during the first meeting of the Assembly of States Parties in September 2002.[107]

2.c Note on procedural law

Along with substantive provisions on international criminal law, the ICTY, the ICTR and the ICC have also contributed to the development of a set of procedural rules for international courts and tribunals. Thus each of the international criminal tribunals and the ICC has its own "Rules of Procedure and Evidence", which represent a cross-fertilisation between major legal systems.[108] The rules have a large impact on the evidence that is accepted at trial and, as such, forms the basis for judgments. As such, these rules have contributed to the development of the procedural and substantive elements of this area of law. While the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court fall outside the ambit of this report, interested readers are directed towards NPWJ's *Lawyer's Guide to the Special Court*, which goes into these Rules in detail.[109]

3. Special Court for Sierra Leone: Background and establishment

In June 2000, the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone requested the assistance of the United Nations to establish a court to try people who committed crimes in Sierra Leone during the conflict. On 14 August 2000, the UN Security Council passed a Resolution requesting the Secretary-General to negotiate an agreement with the Government of Sierra Leone to allow the Special Court to be established.[110] It also asked the Secretary-General to report back to the Security Council on a number of points raised in the resolution, including: from what date the Special Court should have

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[105] The Republic of Sierra Leone was one of the most active participants in these discussions and made numerous statements, both in formal and informal negotiations, as to what constituted customary international law in respect of the crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court.

[106] Both the Elements of Crimes and the Rules of Procedure and Evidence, as adopted, are found in UN Doc. ICC-ASP/1/3.

[107] See Politi, M. and Nesi, G. (eds.), *The Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court: A Challenge to Impunity*, Dartmouth Publishing Company Ltd, UK, 2001, p 25 and Lee, RS (ed), *The International Criminal Court: Elements of Crimes and Rules of Procedure and Evidence*, Transnational Publishers Inc, USA, 2001, pp. 5, 8 and, generally, Chapter 6, "Reflections on the Elements of Crimes". While there is some debate as to whether the Rome Statute and the Elements of Crimes entirely reflect customary international law, they are used in this report as the most authoritative statement of customary international law to date, due to their manner of negotiation and adoption.

[108] The Rules were made in different ways: for the ad hoc tribunals and the Special Court, they are made by the Judges themselves, whereas for the ICC, they were the product of lengthy negotiations between States, which took place at the same time as the negotiations on the Elements of Crimes.

[109] NPWJ's *Lawyers' Guide to the Special Court* is available from www.specialcourt.org.

[110] Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000), 14 August 2000.

jurisdiction, where an alternative seat for the Special Court outside Sierra Leone might be located, how appeals should be made and how much assistance will be required from the international community in terms of finance and personnel.

Negotiations between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations began in September 2000 in New York, continuing later that month in Freetown. The Secretary-General reported back to the Security Council on 4 October 2000. This was followed by an exchange of letters on some of the more contentious areas in the Sierra Leone-United Nations negotiations between the Security Council and the Secretary-General in December 2000 and January 2001, which detailed some changes the Security Council believed should be made to the draft Statute and Agreement. These changes were agreed to by Sierra Leone and the Agreement for the Establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, to which the Statute is annexed, was signed in a ceremony in Freetown on 16 January 2002 by then Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and the then UN Under Secretary-General for Legal Affairs. This Agreement forms the legal basis for the Special Court and in addition to the substantive functioning of the Court includes matters such as privileges and immunities of officials, staff and the premises of the Special Court, which was supplemented by a Headquarters Agreement signed on 21 October 2003 by the Attorney-General and Minister of Justice and the Registrar of the Special Court.

In early 2002, the Prosecutor, Registrar and Judges of the Special Court were named by the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone, each of whom was responsible for appointing a number of officials. The Special Court began its operations in late July 2002, when the Registrar, the Prosecutor and some initial staff arrived in Freetown. The first set of indictments was approved on 7 March 2003, arrests were made on 10 March 2003 and initial appearances began on 15 March 2003 at temporary facilities in Bonthe, a small town in southern Sierra Leone. A number of indictments were approved in the following months and all detainees were moved to the Special Court's detention facilities in New England, Freetown, once construction on the site of the Special Court was complete. Since that time a number of pre-trial motions have been heard by the Judges of the Special Court, including applications for provisional release[111] and jurisdictional matters, heard by a panel of Judges of the Appeals Chamber sitting for the first time in October 2003.[112]

4. Crimes within the jurisdiction of the Special Court

In his letter of 12 June 2000, the President of Sierra Leone suggested that the Special Court have as its applicable law a blend of international and domestic Sierra Leone law.[113] Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000) therefore recommended that the Special Court was to have jurisdiction over crimes under international law and selected crimes under Sierra Leonean law. Pursuant to the Statute of the Special Court, the crimes under international law fall under the broad categories of crimes against humanity; violations of common Article 3 of the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II; and other serious violations of international humanitarian law, including crimes against

[111] All of the applications for provisional release have, at the time of writing, been denied.
[112] It should be noted that the courtroom for the Special Court was, at the time of writing, still under construction and pre-trial hearings were being held at a temporary courtroom on the New England site.
[113] UN Doc. S/2000/786, 'Framework for the Special Court', para. 3.

peacekeepers and the use of child soldiers.[114] These are crimes under international humanitarian law that were considered to have had the status of customary international law at the time the alleged crimes were committed.[115] Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II and the "other serious violations of international humanitarian law" both require the existence of an armed conflict as a condition of applicability, therefore this will be discussed separately at the beginning of this section. The crimes under Sierra Leonean law cover offences relating to the abuse of girls and wanton destruction of property, taken from Sierra Leone legislation dating from 1926 and 1861 respectively; these are the only crimes under Sierra Leone law over which the Special Court has jurisdiction.[116]

This selection of subject matter jurisdiction was done to pre-empt any challenge to the Court's legality on the basis of the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege*,[117] since the acts these provisions are purporting to address had been criminalised at the time those acts were allegedly committed.[118] It should be emphasised that the Statute of the Special Court does not create the crimes to which it refers: rather, articles 2 to 5 of the Statute simply provide that the Special Court has jurisdiction over pre-existing crimes. Therefore, an examination of the applicability and content of the norms referred to within the Statute – whether as a result of customary international law or voluntary adoption of norms by Sierra Leone – is necessary to determine the elements of the crimes.

Thus the elements elaborated below are drawn primarily from the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which are the best current indication of customary international law, and the decisions of the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda. While their decisions are not binding *per se* on the Special Court for Sierra Leone, they are persuasive. According to the Statute, the Appeals Chamber "shall be guided by the decisions of the Appeals Chamber of the International Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda";[119] furthermore, it is also in the interests of certainty of the law and consistency of the application of its provisions that the Special Court for Sierra Leone follow these decisions.

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[114] Crimes against humanity (article 2); violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II (article 3); and other serious violations of international humanitarian law (article 4).

[115] See, for example, *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone*, UN Doc. S/2000/915, para. 12.

[116] This may leave a gap in accountability for violations committed during the conflict, leaving aside the question of the Lomé Amnesty for now. For example, if a person is tried for murder as a crime against humanity before the Special Court and the contextual elements are not proven, that person must be acquitted. The Special Court has no jurisdiction to find that person guilty of murder under Sierra Leone law. However, the *non bis in idem* principle then bars any trial of that person in domestic courts for murder based on the same facts. See the Statute, article 9(1): "No person shall be tried before a national court of Sierra Leone for acts for which he or she has already been tried by the Special Court."

[117] According to this principle, nobody may be found guilty of a criminal offence for acts that were not criminalised, whether under national or international law, at the time of their commission: see the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, article 15(1).

[118] One of the indictees has filed a motion challenging the Court's jurisdiction in relation to the recruitment of children, submitting that this was not a crime under customary international law at the time of the alleged commission of the alleged acts. Oral arguments were heard in November 2003 and, at the time of writing, the Judges of the Appeals Chamber have not yet decided the matter.

[119] Statute of the Special Court, article 20(3).



4.a The existence and nature of an armed conflict: the law

International humanitarian law applies during times of armed conflict, whether international or non-international in nature. The exception to this is crimes against humanity, namely certain acts committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population, and genocide, namely certain acts committed against a national, racial, ethnic or religious group with the intent to destroy that group in whole or in part, as such.[120] According to customary international law, the prohibitions against these acts apply during times of war and times of peace.[121] In all other cases, however, in order to apply these norms, it must first be determined whether an armed conflict existed, before going on to consider whether the conflict was international or non-international in nature.

The ICTY considered the definition of an armed conflict early in its history and stated the following:

> "[A]n armed conflict exists whenever there is a resort to armed force between States or protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State. International humanitarian law applies from the initiation of such armed conflicts and extends beyond the cessation of hostilities until a general conclusion of peace is reached; or, in the case of internal conflicts, a peaceful settlement is achieved. Until that moment, international humanitarian law continues to apply in the whole territory of the warring states or, in the case of internal conflicts, the whole territory under the control of a party, whether or not actual combat takes place there."[122]

International humanitarian law draws a distinction between international armed conflicts, i.e. those between two or more States, and non-international armed conflicts, i.e. those between a State and a non-State organised armed group or between such groups. The majority of provisions in the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocol I apply only to international armed conflicts. Nonetheless, article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and Additional Protocol II lay down a set of basic minimum rules and basic protections applicable in any armed conflict.[123]

Whether an armed conflict is international or non-international in nature depends on the parties to the conflict. In essence, a conflict will be "international" when it is conducted between two or more States and will be "non-international" when it is conducted between a State and another armed force not qualified as a State or between such forces.[124] The character of a conflict can change during its course from being non-international in nature to being international in nature.[125] In the *Tadic*

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120 See the Genocide Convention 1949.

121 The ICTY Statute limits the jurisdiction of that Tribunal to crimes against humanity committed in the context of an armed conflict (see article 5) but the Statute of the Special Court contains no such limitation, so this aspect of ICTY jurisprudence will not be discussed in the present report.

122 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995 (Tadic Jurisdiction Decision), para.70.

123 *Prosecutor v Naletilic and Martinovic*, Case No. IT-98-34, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 March 2003, para. 228.

124 *Prosecutor v Kayishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-I, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, para. 170.

125 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 84. In addition, there can be both non-international and international armed conflicts taking place side by side. Note, however, that the ICTY Appeals Chamber discussed the issue of the applicable law in such a situation. Addressing the argument that the existence of two types of conflicts meant the application of two different legal regimes in the same place at

decision, the ICTY Appeals Chamber specifically addressed the question of when a conflict that is *prima facie* internal in nature may be regarded as involving forces acting on behalf of a foreign power, thereby rendering the conflict international in nature.[126] The Appeals Chamber identified three specific tests concerning the necessary degree of control by a foreign power to determine whether this had occurred, namely overall control of an armed group or individuals; specific instructions to an armed group or individuals; and actual behaviour of an armed group or individuals, irrespective of any specific instructions.

The Statute of the Special Court only gives the Court jurisdiction over crimes committed in non-international armed conflicts. Particularly given the three-part test identified by the Appeals Chamber, it is debatable whether the drafters of the Statute for the Special Court should have limited the jurisdiction of the Special Court only to crimes committed within an non-international armed conflict. A more sensible approach would have been to leave that determination to the Special Court itself, so it could have applied the test of whether the conflict was rendered international in nature on the basis of evidence presented to it.

4.b The existence and nature of an armed conflict: the facts

It seems almost counter-intuitive to be asking the question of whether an armed conflict existed in Sierra Leone. The facts as adduced in this report, including the descriptions of fighting between various forces at different times, as well as the numerous public reports from the media, human rights organisations and others seem to negate the need for even raising the issue. Nevertheless, it is important to examine this question, in particular to determine when the conflict began, which determines when international humanitarian law begins to apply, and also to determine the nature of the conflict, in order to determine what provisions of international humanitarian law are applicable.[127]

4.b.i Existence of an armed conflict

As noted, an armed conflict is deemed to have begun whenever there is "protracted armed violence between governmental authorities and organized armed groups or between such groups within a State."[128] Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) forces coming from Liberia first entered Sierra Leone through Kailahun District on 23 March 1991, at which time they engaged the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) in battle. From the very beginning, the RUF was organised according to a military structure, including identifiable chains of command, rules of engagement and disciplinary structures. From that time, RUF/NPFL forces would spread throughout the country, engaging the SLA in battle and establishing their own bases, including for recruiting and training.

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the same time, the Appeals Chamber stated that such an interpretation would "authorize the International Tribunal to prosecute and punish certain conduct in an international armed conflict, while turning a blind eye to the very same conduct in an internal armed conflict" (para. 78). This led the Appeals Chamber to consider that "to the extent possible, the subject-matter jurisdiction of the International Tribunal should extend to both internal and international armed conflicts" (*Ibid*).

[126] See *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, point IV.B.3.

[127] It should of course be remembered that for crimes against humanity, customary international law does not require the existence of an armed conflict; rather, it requires a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population and that prohibited acts be committed as part of that attack.

[128] *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995, para.70



As the conflict progressed, different fighting factions became involved, including loosely organised groups of local hunters and "vigilantes"; the more organised and structured Civil Defence Forces; the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), who took over power during a coup in May 1997; Nigerian and Guinean forces, both independently at the invitation of the Sierra Leone Government and as part of ECOMOG; Executive Outcomes, the South African private military company who entered Sierra Leone under contract with the Sierra Leone Government; and the United Nations military peacekeeping force (UNAMSIL). Some of these armed forces and groups would, at different points, also begin fighting each other, notably the Civil Defence Forces and the SLA, both before and after the establishment of the AFRC during the coup of May 1997.

Thus to greater and lesser degrees from 1991 there was protracted armed violence between both governmental authorities and organised armed groups[129] on the one hand and between such groups[130] within the territory of Sierra Leone on the other hand. It is therefore clear that an armed conflict began in Sierra Leone in March 1991, thereby triggering the application of international humanitarian law.

The question of when the armed conflict ended turns on when a general conclusion of peace was reached or when a peaceful settlement was achieved.[131] At various times throughout the conflict, attempts were made to reach a peaceful settlement between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone. A number of ceasefires were declared and peace agreements were negotiated and signed, notably in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, on 30 November 1996 and in Lomé, Togo, on 7 July 1999.[132] None of the agreements would last for any appreciable length of time, instead taking on the appearance of temporary lulls in the fighting, during which each of the armed forces and groups would regroup, sometimes retrain and on all occasions prepare for further fighting.

By the end of 2001, disarmament was well under way in all Districts across the country, leading the President of Sierra Leone to declare an official end to the war during a symbolic weapons-burning ceremony on 18 January 2002. Such a declaration does not necessarily mean that an armed conflict has concluded, as this falls to be determined by whether there is a general conclusion of peace or a peaceful settlement. Nevertheless, those conditions had clearly been met by that time, therefore this report is taking 18 January 2002 as the date on which the armed conflict ended.

4.b.ii Nature of the armed conflict

The fact that there was a non-international armed conflict – that is, between government authorities and organised armed groups – is clear. The more complex question is whether the armed conflict was international in nature at any point and, if so, when and for how long.

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129 For example, RUF/NPFL v SLA; RUF v SLA; RUF v CDF; RUF/AFRC v CDF; RUF v SLA/ULIMO; RUF v ECOMOG; SLA v CDF.

130 For example, RUF/NPFL v local hunters/vigilantes.

131 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995, para.70

132 The ECOWAS Six-month Peace Plan for Sierra Leone, signed in Conakry, Guinea, on 23 October 1997, should also be noted in this context.

Because the Special Court only has jurisdiction over those crimes specifically included in the Statute, the answer to this question does not have a practical effect on the work of the Court. Nevertheless, it is useful from the perspective of contextualising the conflict in Sierra Leone and, furthermore, as an indication of whether international or internationalised courts should have jurisdiction over all crimes under international humanitarian law and then determine on the basis of evidence presented to them whether a conflict was international or non-international in nature.

The test of whether an armed conflict is an international armed conflict is based on the presence of forces that are under the control of a foreign power. This falls to be determined by who was controlling the different fighting factions at any given time, for which the ICTY has identified a test consisting of three parts, namely:

1. Overall control of an armed group or individuals;
2. Specific instructions to an armed group or individuals; and
3. Actual behaviour of an armed group or individuals, irrespective of any specific instructions.[133]

Factual information gathered in Sierra Leone reveals very clearly that the RUF was operating under direct orders from Charles Taylor, the leader of the NPFL[134] to greater and lesser degrees throughout the entire conflict, particularly during the early years of the conflict. Indeed, NPFL forces had entered Sierra Leone together with the RUF in 1991 under the direct orders of their leader. Throughout the conflict, logistics and weapons were supplied from Liberia – first through the NPFL and subsequently through the Liberian President, who was the former NPFL leader – in exchange for property taken by RUF/NPFL forces and later by RUF forces from civilians and other commodities, in particular diamonds mined throughout the country.

Therefore, given that the test of control is satisfied, the conflict in Sierra Leone was international in nature during those periods when Charles Taylor was an official of the State of Liberia. For those periods when he was not an official of the State of Liberia, even during times when the NPFL controlled up to 90% of the territory, there is at least a question about the nature of the conflict, although the answer to this question is beyond the scope of this report. However, as noted, the fact that the conflict was international in nature for at least some periods of time does not alter the crimes over which the Special Court has jurisdiction and it is those crimes that this report will focus on in the following sections.

4.b.iii Conclusion

The facts clearly demonstrate that there was an armed conflict in Sierra Leone from 23 March 1991 until the most definitive statement of peace, namely in 18 January 2002. In addition, albeit with less clarity, the facts also demonstrate that at times, this armed conflict was international in character, at the very least from 1997 until sometime in 2001. Given this, international humanitarian law began to apply in Sierra Leone on 23 March 1991 and continued to apply across the whole territory until 18 January 2002.

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133 See *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, point IV.B.3.

134 This section does not consider the position of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Cease-fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) or other foreign forces engaged in Sierra Leone, which is also beyond the scope of this report.



4.c Crimes Against Humanity (Article 2): The law

Article 2 of the Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone reads as follows:

> "The Special Court shall have the power to prosecute persons who committed the following crimes as part of a widespread or systematic attack against any civilian population:
>
> (a) Murder;
> (b) Extermination;
> (c) Enslavement;
> (d) Deportation;
> (e) Imprisonment;
> (f) Torture;
> (g) Rape, sexual slavery, enforced prostitution, forced pregnancy and any other form of sexual violence;
> (h) Persecution on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds;
> (i) Other inhumane acts."

Aside from the Elements of Crimes of the International Criminal Court, there is no other document defining crimes against humanity and their legal elements. There are eleven international texts defining the crimes and they all differ slightly. Although the term originated in the preamble to the 1907 Hague Convention IV Respecting the Laws and Customs of War on Land,[135] which codified then existing customary law relating to armed conflict, the crimes were first defined in article 6(c) of the Nuremberg Charter following the end of World War II. The category of crimes has been included in the Statutes of the ICTY and ICTR and, in 1998, in the Rome Statute of the ICC.

The UN Secretary-General's report on the establishment of the Special Court for Sierra Leone states that "The list of crimes against humanity follows the enumeration included in the Statutes of the International Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and for Rwanda, which were patterned on article 6 of the Nürnberg Charter."[136] Considerations on this by the Appeals Chamber of the ICTY and ICTR clearly state that these crimes had the status of customary international law as at the time of the establishment of those Tribunals, i.e. in 1993 and 1994 respectively.[137]

4.c.i Contextual elements of crimes against humanity

There are two sets of elements for crimes against humanity; one of which may be described as the "contextual" elements; the other of which may be described as the elements of the acts enumerated in article 2 of the Special Court Statute. The contextual elements – spelt out in the chapeau to article 2 – must be met in all cases for an act to constitute a crime against humanity. These elements are:

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135 The preamble states that until a more complete code on the laws of war is established, "the inhabitants and belligerents remain under the protection and the rule of the principles of the law of nations, as they result ... from the laws of humanity".

136 *Report of the Secretary-General to the Security Council on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone*, UN Doc. S/2000/915, para. 14.

137 See, for example, the *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995 and *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 1 June 2001.

1. There is an attack against a civilian population;
2. The attack is widespread or systematic;
3. The act in question was committed as part of that attack; and
4. The accused knew of the broader context in which his or her act is committed.

1. An attack against a civilian population

The "attack against a civilian population" means a course of conduct involving the multiple commission of acts enumerated in article 2.[138] Thus the "attack" does not refer to an armed conflict as such, or even to an armed attack or a military attack, but instead refers to one of the acts enumerated in article 2. As such, the attack does not need to be a physical attack but can consist of other forms of inhumane mistreatment of a civilian population.[139]

Customary international law does not require that the attack itself be committed on discriminatory grounds.[140] The case law of the ICTR can be distinguished on this point, as the jurisdiction of the ICTR over crimes against humanity is limited solely to cases where the attack was carried out on discriminatory grounds.[141] The Statute of the Special Court does not contain such a limitation, therefore, in keeping with customary international law, there is no requirement that the attack itself be committed on prohibited discriminatory grounds.

A "civilian population" refers to a population that is predominantly civilian in nature, i.e. that the people comprising the population do not take a direct part in the hostilities or no longer take a direct part in hostilities, including those who are placed *hors de combat*, namely those who are not fighting because they are wounded or otherwise incapacitated.[142] The presence of non-civilians within the population will not deprive that population of its civilian character.[143] In addition, the specific situation of a victim at the time of the commission of a crime is the critical point at which to determine the person's standing as a civilian rather than his or her general status.[144] The definition of "civilian" and "civilian population" is of critical importance in international humanitarian law, which prohibits targeting civilians, a civilian population and civilian objects, such as schools and hospitals. To constitute a crime against humanity, the civilian population must be the primary object of the attack, although it is not required that the entire population of a territory is victimised.[145]

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138 See the preamble to the ICC Elements of Crimes.

139 See, for example, *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, para. 327.

140 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, paras. 283, 292 and 305. See also *Prosecutor v Blaskic*, Case No. IT-95-14, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 3 March 2000, paras 244, 260.

141 ICTR Statute, article 3. See also *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 1 June 2001, para. 464, footnote excluded.

142 See, for example, common article 3 to the Geneva Conventions and the Additional Protocols.

143 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 7 May 1997, para. 638.

144 *Prosecutor v Blaskic*, Case No. IT-95-14-T, Judgment, 3 March 2000, para. 214.

145 *Prosecutor v Bagilishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-1, ICTR Trial Chamber, 7 June 2001, para. 80.



2. The attack is widespread or systematic

To fulfil the contextual elements for a crime against humanity, an attack must be *either* widespread *or* systematic, but does not have to be both.[146] 'Widespread' means that the attack takes place on a large scale and is perpetrated against a number of victims, whereas 'systematic' refers to an organised pattern of conduct.[147]

Early jurisprudence of the international criminal tribunals considered whether 'systematic' required the existence of a pre-conceived policy or plan, either of a State or some other organised group.[148] The Appeals Chamber of the ICTY has concluded that while a widespread or systematic attack can be evidence of a pre-existing policy or plan, and in practical terms such a policy or plan would in all likelihood be necessary for an attack to be carried out in a widespread or systematic manner, such a policy or plan is not in itself a necessary element:

> "There was nothing in the Statute or in customary international law at the time of the alleged acts which required proof of the existence of a plan or policy to commit these crimes ... proof that the attack was directed against a civilian population and that it was widespread or systematic, are legal elements of the crime. But to prove these elements, it is not necessary to show that they were the result of the existence of a policy or plan. It may be useful in establishing that the attack was directed against a civilian population and that it was widespread or systematic (especially the latter) to show that there was in fact a policy or plan, but it may be possible to prove these things by reference to other matters. Thus, the existence of a policy or plan may be evidentially relevant, but it is not a legal element of the crime."[149]

3. The act was committed as "part of" the attack

An act must have been committed or intended to be committed as part of the attack against a civilian population to qualify as a crime against humanity. There must therefore be a nexus between the act and the attack,[150] namely that the act was related to the attack.[151] As such, this excludes random or isolated acts – those not forming "part of" the attack – from the definition of crimes against humanity.

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146 See, for example, *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 580. See also the Rome Statute, article 7.

147 *Ibid.*

148 *Ibid.*

149 *Prosecutor v Kunarac*, Case No. IT-96-23&23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, 12 June 2002, para. 98. In reaching this conclusion, the ICTY Appeals Chamber reviewed a wide range of precedents, including article 6(c) of the Nuremberg Charter; Nuremberg Judgement, Trial of the Major War Criminals before the International Military Tribunal, Nüremberg, 14 November 1945 – 1 October 1945, in particular, pp. 84, 254, 304 (*Streicher*) and 318-19 (*von Schirach*); Article II(1)(c) of Control Council Law No 10; *In re Ahlbrecht*, ILR 16/1949, 396; *Polyukhovich v The Commonwealth of Australia and Anor* (1991) 172 CLR 501; Case FC 91/026; *Attorney-General v Adolph Eichmann*, District Court of Jerusalem, Criminal Case No. 40/61; *Mugesera et al. v Minister of Citizenship and Immigration*, IMM-5946-98, 10 May 2001, Federal Court of Canada, Trial Division; *In re Trajkovic*, District Court of Gjilan (Kosovo, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia), P Nr 68/2000, 6 March 2001 plus various reports of the UN Secretary-General and the International Law Commission.

150 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 251; *Prosecutor v Kordic*, Case No. IT-95-14/2, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 26 February 2001, para. 33.

151 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 271.

While the attack itself will generally involve a large number of acts, as evidenced by the definitions of 'widespread' and 'systematic', a single act may constitute a crime against humanity if it is perpetrated as part of a larger attack. This has been made clear by the ICTY Trial Chamber, which stated that:

> "Crimes against humanity are to be distinguished from war crimes against individuals. In particular, they must be widespread or demonstrate a systematic character. However, as long as there is a link with the widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population, a single act could qualify as a crime against humanity. As such, an individual committing a crime against a single victim or a limited number of victims might be recognised as guilty of a crime against humanity if his acts were part of the specific context identified above."[152]

4. The accused knew of the broader context in which his or her act was committed

As with most crimes, there is a mental element to crimes against humanity that must be satisfied in order for an accused to be found guilty of that crime. This element is twofold, namely that the accused acted with knowledge of the broader context of the attack and the accused knew that his or her act formed part of the attack on the civilian population.[153]

Simple knowledge on the part of the accused is sufficient to satisfy this requirement; it is not necessary to show that the accused shared the purpose or goal behind the attack against the civilian population.[154] Indeed, the motive with which the accused commits the act is irrelevant. There is no requirement that an act must not have been carried out for purely personal reasons; the only requirement is that the act is related to the attack and the accused knows it is so related.[155]

This is made clear in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which states that: "The perpetrator *knew that the conduct was part of* or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population."[156] This is elaborated in the chapeau to the elements of crimes against humanity, which states that:

> "[This element] should not be interpreted as requiring proof that the perpetrator had knowledge of all characteristics of the attack or the precise details of the plan or policy of the State or organization. In the case of an emerging widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population, the intent clause of the last element indicates that this mental element is satisfied if the perpetrator intended to further such an attack."[157]

4.c.ii Elements of enumerated acts constituting crimes against humanity

Once the contextual elements are met, the elements of the acts that constitute crimes against humanity also have to be established. There are nine types of acts that can constitute a crime against humanity, as outlined in paragraphs (a) to (i) of article 2 of the Statute of the Special Court.

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152 *Prosecutor v Mrksic, Radi and Sljivancanin*, Review of the Indictment pursuant to Rule 61, 3 April1996, IT-95-13-R61, para. 30.

153 See, for example, *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 7 May 1997, para. 656 and *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, para. 331.

154 *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, para. 332.

155 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, paras. 271, 272.

156 See, for example, the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 7(1)(a), para. 3, UN Doc. ICC-ASP/1/3, p. 116 (emphasis added).

157 Chapeau of the Elements of Crimes Against Humanity, UN Doc. ICC-ASP/1/3, p. 116.

Although not all of these acts have been considered by the ICTY or ICTR, they have all been elaborated in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC.

a) Crime against humanity of murder

The elements for the crime against humanity of murder are:[158]

1. The perpetrator unlawfully killed or caused the death of one or more persons.
2. The perpetrator acted:

(a) With the intent to cause someone's death; or

(b) With the intent to cause grievous bodily harm and with the knowledge that that bodily harm was likely to cause death and was reckless as to whether death would actually occur.[159]

3. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.
4. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

Customary international law does not require the element of premeditation for the crime against humanity of murder and, as such, all the different types of murder known to common law would satisfy this requirement.[160] This is mirrored in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which refer simply to "killing", with a footnote indicating that this is interchangeable with the phrase "caused the death of".[161]

b) Crime against humanity of extermination

The elements of the crime against humanity of extermination are:[162]

1. The perpetrator unlawfully killed or caused the death of one or more persons, including by inflicting conditions of life calculated to bring about the destruction of part of a population.
2. The conduct constituted, or took place as part of, a mass killing of members of a civilian population.
3. The perpetrator acted:

(a) With the intent to cause someone's death; or

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158 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(a) and below, note 68.

159 See also the Rome Statute of the ICC, article 30 (2) for a description of the required *mens rea.*

160 *Prosecutor v Kayishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-I, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, para. 138. See also *Prosecutor v Kordic*, Case No. IT-95-14/2, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 26 February 2001, para. 235 and *Prosecutor v Jelisic*, Case No. IT-95-10, ICTY Trial Chamber, 14 December 1999, para. 51. The decisions of the ICTR can be distinguished on this point, as they have found that pursuant to the ICTR Statute, this crime requires an element of premeditation, due to the elements of the crime of *assassinat* under French law: see *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 588 and *Prosecutor v Kayishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-I, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, paras. 138-9 for discussions on this issue.

161 Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(a), para. 1.

162 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(b), *Prosecutor v Vasiljevic*, Case No. IT-98-32, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 29 November 2002, para. 229 (for the fourth element) and below, notes 72-6.

(b) With the intent to cause grievous bodily harm and with the knowledge that that bodily harm was likely to cause death and was reckless as to whether death would actually occur.

4. The accused acted with the knowledge that his or her act was part of a vast murderous enterprise in which a large number of individuals were systematically marked for killing or were killed.

5. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

6. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

Extermination contains an element of mass destruction, requiring that the act of extermination be "collective in nature rather than directed towards singled out individuals."[163] This mass destruction can include direct killing of individuals but can also include causing the conditions of life calculated to bring about such destruction, for example by detaining individuals and withholding food or by introducing a deadly virus into a population and withholding vital medical supplies.[164] Generally, a numerically significant proportion of the population must be destroyed to constitute the crime against humanity of extermination.[165]

The ICTY recently considered the crime against humanity of extermination in *Valsijevic*, in particular the required level of participation of the accused. The Trial Chamber concluded that in order to be guilty of the crime against humanity of extermination, an accused person has to be responsible for a "large number of deaths",[166] even if the accused's involvement was remote or indirect. Further, the accused must have known of the "vast scheme of collective murder and have been willing to take part therein".[167]

c) Crime against humanity of enslavement

The elements of the crime against humanity of enslavement are:[168]

1. The accused exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty.

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163 *Prosecutor v Vasiljevic*, Case No. IT-98-32, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment of 29 November 2002, para. 227.

164 See, for example, *Kayishema* Judgment, para. 146.

165 *Prosecutor v Krstic*, Case No. IT-98-33, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 August 2001, para. 503, *Prosecutor v Vasiljevic*, Case No. IT-98-32, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 29 November 2002, para. 227. See, however, *Prosecutor v Stakic*, Case No. IT-97-24, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 July 2003, para. 640, where the Trial Chamber considered this must be considered on a case-by-case basis and that no specific minimum number of victims is required.

166 *Prosecutor v Vasiljevic*, Case No. IT-98-32, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 29 November 2002, para. 227.

167 *Prosecutor v Vasiljevic*, Case No. IT-98-32, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 29 November 2002, para. 228; see also *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003. But see *Prosecutor v Stakic*, Case No. IT-97-24, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 July 2003, para. 640, which specifically rejected the requirement of a "vast scheme of collective murder".

168 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(c) and below, notes 78 to 83.



2. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

3. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

The ICTY has held that the crime against humanity of enslavement has the same elements as the war crime of slavery and violates both treaty and custom based international humanitarian law.[169] Indeed, the prohibition against slavery is an "inalienable, non-derogable and fundamental right, one of the core rules of general customary and conventional international law".[170]

The ICTY Appeals Chamber has held that "the traditional concept of slavery, as defined in the 1926 Slavery Convention and often referred to as "chattel slavery", has evolved to encompass various contemporary forms of slavery which are also based on the exercise of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership."[171] Thus the indicia of slavery include the following: "control of someone's movement, control of physical environment, psychological control, measures taken to prevent or deter escape, force, threat of force or coercion, duration, assertion of exclusivity, subjection to cruel treatment and abuse, control of sexuality and forced labour".[172] This is mirrored in the footnote to the Elements of Crimes of the crime of humanity of slavery, which reads as follows:

> "It is understood that such deprivation of liberty may, in some circumstances, include exacting forced labour or otherwise reducing a person to a servile status as defined in the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956. It is also understood that the conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children."[173]

Given that the definition of slavery is exercising "any or all" of the powers attaching to "ownership" over a person,[174] the exaction of forced labour from a person held captive would be sufficient to establish the commission of this crime, provided the other elements are also established. It should further be noted that the lack of consent is not an element of the crime, although "consent may be relevant from an evidential point of view as going to the question whether the Prosecutor has established the element of the crime relating to the exercise by the accused of any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership."[175]

d) Crime against humanity of deportation

The elements of deportation as a crime against humanity are:[176]

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169 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, paras. 352, 353.

170 *Ibid*, para. 353.

171 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al*, Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1 , ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 117.

172 *Ibid*, para. 119.

173 Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(c), footnote.

174 *Ibid.*

175 *Ibid*, para. 120.

176 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(d) and below, notes 86-7.

1. The accused deported, without grounds permitted under international law, one or more persons to another State, by expulsion or other coercive acts.

2. Such person or persons were lawfully present in the area from which they were so deported or transferred.

3. The accused was aware of the factual circumstances that established the lawfulness of such presence.[177]

4. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

5. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

Deportation is to be distinguished from forcible transfer, with the former referring to the displacement of people across national borders and the latter simply referring to the forced movement of people, which can occur within the confines of national borders.[178] The ICTY has made it clear that "forced displacement" – charged in the *Krnojelac* case as persecution – is a stand-alone crime and is not a lesser, included offence of deportation.[179] This is mirrored in the Rome Statute of the ICC, which refers to the crime against humanity of "deportation or forced transfer of population".[180]

e) Crime against humanity of imprisonment

The elements of imprisonment as a crime against humanity are:[181]

1. The accused imprisoned one or more persons or otherwise severely deprived one or more persons of their liberty.

2. The gravity of the conduct was such that it was in violation of fundamental rules of international law.

3. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the gravity of the conduct.[182]

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[177] This element is intended to clarify that the perpetrator does not need to be aware that the presence is lawful, just the facts that go to make up that lawfulness; in other words, the perpetrator does not need to made a legal determination that the victim is lawfully present in the area.

[178] *Prosecutor v. Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, para. 474.

[179] The Appeals Chamber of the ICTY has recently stated that "acts of forcible displacement underlying the crime of persecution ... are not limited to displacements across national borders", without making a definitive pronouncement on the crime in general: *Prosecutor v. Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 17 September 2003, para. 218. The recent Trial Chamber decision in *Stakic* held that the crime encompasses "forced population displacements both across internationally recognised borders and *de facto* borders, such as constantly changing frontlines, which are not internationally recognised *Prosecutor v Stakic*, Case No. IT-97-24, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 July 2003, para. 679. While this may be indicative of evolving customary international law, the distinction between the crime of deportation and the crime of forced displacement is retained for the purposes of this report.

[180] Rome Statute of the ICC, article 7(1)(d).

[181] See the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 7(1)(e) and notes 91-6.

4. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

5. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

The crime against humanity of imprisonment, which incorporates deprivation of liberty, has only been considered in two cases at the international criminal tribunals.[183] The ICTY has held that the elements of this crime are not limited by the elements of the similar crime of unlawful confinement, which is a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions, but that any form of arbitrary physical deprivation of liberty might constitute imprisonment.[184] This is mirrored in the Elements of Crimes of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, in which the elements of this crime differ from those for the crime of unlawful confinement.[185]

One of the elements of the crime against humanity of imprisonment is that the deprivation of liberty is imposed arbitrarily, namely that no legal basis can be invoked to justify the deprivation of liberty.[186] Therefore, a determination has to be made regarding the legality of imprisonment as well as the procedural safeguards pertaining to the subsequent imprisonment of the person or group of persons in question,[187] including the fact that the deprivation may be initially justified but may become arbitrary "if the deprivation is being administered under serious disregard of fundamental procedural rights of the person deprived of his or her liberty as provided for under international law."[188] This is mirrored in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which refers to the gravity of the conduct being in violation of fundamental rules of international law.[189]

f) Crime against humanity of torture

The elements of the crime against humanity of torture are:[190]

1. The perpetrator inflicted severe physical or mental pain or suffering upon one or more persons.

2. Such person or persons were in the custody or under the control of the perpetrator.

3. Such pain or suffering did not arise only from, and was not inherent in or incidental to, lawful sanctions.

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182 This element is intended to clarify that the perpetrator does not need to be aware that the conduct is in violation of fundamental rules of international law, just the facts that go to make up that violation; in other words, the perpetrator does not need to made a legal determination that his or her conduct violates international law.

183 The first of these cases, *Kordic*, considered that this crime was identical in its elements to the crime of unlawful confinement as a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions, whereas the second case, *Krnojelac*, considered that imprisonment as a crime against humanity should not be limited by the elements of unlawful confinement as a grave breach of the Geneva Conventions.

184 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, para. 112.

185 See the Elements of Crimes, article 7(1)(e) (imprisonment) and article 8(2)(a)(vii)-2 (unlawful confinement).

186 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, para. 115 (footnote deleted).

187 *Prosecutor v Kordic*, Case No. IT-95-14/2, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 26 February 2001, para. 302-3.

188 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, footnote 347.

189 Elements of Crimes, article 7(1)(e), para. 2.

190 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(f) and below, notes 99-113.

4. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

5. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

The essential element of the crime against humanity of torture is "the infliction, by act or omission, of severe pain and suffering, whether physical or mental".[191] Torture can therefore be distinguished from ill treatment or other inhumane acts by the level of intensity of the pain or suffering inflicted; the standard adopted by the European Court of Human Rights, for example, is "very serious and cruel suffering".[192] The ICTY Appeals Chamber has also addressed this question, stating that, "In assessing the seriousness of any mistreatment, the Trial Chamber must first consider the objective severity of the harm inflicted. Subjective criteria, such as the physical or mental effect of the treatment upon the particular victim and, in some cases, factors such as the victim's age, sex, or state of health will also be relevant in assessing the gravity of the harm."[193] The ICTY Appeals Chamber has further stated that rape, as an act necessarily implying pain and suffering, can amount to torture provided the other elements are established.[194]

The Convention Against Torture, which requires States to criminalise torture as a self-standing offence, contains the element that the torture be inflicted "by or at the instigation of or with the consent or acquiescence of a public official or other person acting in an official capacity".[195] However, both the ICTY Appeals Chamber[196] and the Elements of Crimes for the ICC[197] recognise that this element is applicable only to torture pursuant to the Convention and that customary international law does not impose such a limitation in the context of crimes against humanity.

Where the ICTY and ICTR jurisprudence and the Elements of Crimes of the ICC diverge is on the question of whether a purpose is required as an element of this crime. Both the ICTY[198] and the ICTR[199] have held that one of four purposes is required for conduct to rise to the level of torture, namely that the conduct was committed for the purposes of 1) obtaining information or a confession from the victim or a third party; 2) punishing the victim or a third party; 3) intimidating

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191 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al*, Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 142.

192 *Republic of Ireland v UK* (Series A, No 25), European Court of Human Rights, (1979-80) 2 EHRR 25, 18 January 1978.

193 *Prosecutor v Kvocka et al.*, Case No. IT-98-30/1, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 November 2001, paras. 142-3.

194 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al*, Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, paras. 149-51.

195 The Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment 1984, article 1(1). The Convention against Torture entered into force on 26 June 1987.

196 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al*, Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, paras. 142, 144-8.

197 Elements of Crimes, Article 7(1)(f), p 119.

198 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, para. 185.

199 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 594.



or coercing the victim or a third party; or 4) for any reason based on discrimination of any kind, although the conduct need not have been committed solely for one of the prohibited purposes.[200]

The Elements of Crimes of the ICC, however, specifically states that "[i]t is understood no specific purpose need be proved for this crime".[201] This was considered by the vast majority of delegations at the Preparatory Commission to reflect customary international law, in part because the Rome Statute – which includes only those crimes already established under customary international law – does not contain any reference to a purpose element.[202] This can be distinguished from the elements of the war crime of torture, which does contain the purpose requirement[203] so as to distinguish it from inhuman treatment,[204] which is included within the offence of torture.[205] Nevertheless, for the purposes of crimes against humanity, the international community has affirmed that torture does not require that the conduct in question be carried out for any particular purpose.[206]

g.i) Crime against humanity of rape

The elements of the crime against humanity of rape are:[207]

1. The perpetrator invaded the body of a person by conduct resulting in penetration, however slight:

(a) of any part of the body of the victim or of the perpetrator with a sexual organ; or

(b) of the anal or genital opening of the victim with any object or any other part of the body.

2. The invasion was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment, or the invasion was committed against a person incapable of giving genuine consent.

3. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

4. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

Much of the jurisprudence of the ICTR about this crime has focused on the discussion of whether rape should be defined as a contextual framework, or whether the elements of the crime should be explicitly defined. The general trend at the ICTR has been to adopt a contextual framework,

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[200] *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al,* Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 155. These purposes are also included in the Convention Against Torture, article 1(1).

[201] *Ibid*, footnote.

[202] Lee, pp. 5 and 90-2. The Preparatory Committee also referred to the European Court of Human Rights, in particular the separate opinion of Fitzmaurice J in *Ireland v UK*, who stated that a certain purpose is not a necessary requirement and that the distinguishing feature of torture is its severity: Series A, o.25 (1976), pp. 129 *ff.*

[203] Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(a)(ii)-1, para. 2.

[204] Lee, p. 91.

[205] The Rome Statute of the ICC, article 8(2)(a)(ii), prohibits "torture or inhuman treatment".

[206] *Ibid*, p 92.

[207] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(g)-1 and below, notes 115-9.

according to which rape is defined as "the physical invasion of a sexual nature committed under circumstances that are coercive".[208]

However, the ICTY Appeals Chamber, considering this matter in the context of common elements in national legislation and the trend for States to broaden the definition of rape, which has as its core element forced physical penetration, has followed the approach of defining the elements of the crime. Thus, the Appeals Chamber held that rape means the non-consensual penetration, however slight, of the vagina or anus of the victim by the perpetrator's penis or another object used by the perpetrator, or of the victim's mouth by the perpetrator's penis.[209] Consent must be given freely and voluntarily, which must be assessed in the context of the surrounding circumstances.[210]

The question of consent is further addressed in the Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court, which set out the following guiding principles:

"(i) Consent cannot be inferred by reason of any words or conduct of a victim where force, threat of force, coercion or taking advantage of a coercive environment undermined the victim's ability to give voluntary and genuine consent;
(ii) Consent cannot be inferred by reason of any words or conduct of a victim where the victim is incapable of giving genuine consent;
(iii) Consent cannot be inferred by reason of the silence of, or lack of resistance by, a victim to the alleged sexual violence;
(iv) Credibility, character or predisposition to sexual availability of a victim or witness cannot be inferred by reason of [the] sexual nature of the prior or subsequent conduct of a victim or witness."[211]

It is submitted that explicitly stating the elements of the crime, rather than adopting a loose conceptual framework, is the more appropriate approach, as it gives more certainty to the law in respect of this crime. Indeed, this is the approach adopted in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which also incorporates aspects of the contextual approach and, as such, better reflects customary international law.

g.ii) Crime against humanity of sexual slavery

The elements of the crime against humanity of sexual slavery are:[212]

1. The perpetrator exercised any or all of the powers attaching to the right of ownership over one or more persons, such as by purchasing, selling, lending or bartering such a person or persons, or by imposing on them a similar deprivation of liberty.

2. The perpetrator caused such person or persons to engage in one or more acts of a sexual nature.

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208 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 598.
209 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al*, Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, paras. 127-8.
210 *Ibid*, para. 120.
211 Rules of Procedure and Evidence of the Special Court, rule 96. Unlike the ICTR, however, evidence of consent does not first have to be raised before a Judge in Chambers: cf. ICTR Rules of Procedure and Evidence, rule 96. For further reading, see the Lawyers' Guide, available from www.specialcourt.org.
212 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(g)-2.

3. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

4. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

While the crime of sexual slavery is not addressed in the jurisprudence of the ad hoc tribunals, it is nevertheless comprehensively addressed in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC. While not explicitly stated in the elements, the framers understood that "deprivation of liberty" in this context may, in some circumstances, include exacting forced labour or otherwise reducing a person to a servile status as defined in the Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery, the Slave Trade, and Institutions and Practices Similar to Slavery of 1956. It is also understood that the conduct described in this element includes trafficking in persons, in particular women and children.[213]

g.iii) Crime against humanity of enforced prostitution

The elements of the crime against humanity of enforced prostitution are:[214]

1. The perpetrator caused one or more persons to engage in one or more acts of a sexual nature by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or persons or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment or such person's or persons' incapacity to give genuine consent.

2. The perpetrator or another person obtained or expected to obtain pecuniary or other advantage in exchange for or in connection with the acts of a sexual nature.

3. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

4. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

g.iv) Crime against humanity of forced pregnancy

The elements of the crime against humanity of forced pregnancy are:[215]

1. The perpetrator confined one or more women forcibly made pregnant, with the intent of affecting the ethnic composition of any population or carrying out other grave violations of international law.

2. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

3. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

g.v) Crime against humanity of other forms of sexual violence

The elements of the crime against humanity of other forms of sexual violence are:[216]

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[213] *Ibid*, footnote 18.

[214] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(g)-3.

[215] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(g)-4.

1. The perpetrator committed an act of a sexual nature against one or more persons or caused such person or persons to engage in an act of a sexual nature.

2. The act was committed by force, or by threat of force or coercion, such as that caused by fear of violence, duress, detention, psychological oppression or abuse of power, against such person or persons or another person, or by taking advantage of a coercive environment or such person's or persons' incapacity to give genuine consent.

3. Such conduct was of a gravity comparable to the other offences in article 2(g) of the Statute of the Special Court.

4. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the gravity of the conduct.[217]

5. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

6. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

The crime of other forms of sexual violence has been addressed in the ICTR, which has held that sexual violence is any act of a sexual nature that is committed on a person under circumstances that are coercive.[218] In addition, the crime of other forms of sexual violence is comprehensively addressed in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC.

h) Crime against humanity of persecution

The elements of the crime against humanity of persecution are:[219]

1. The perpetrator severely deprived, contrary to international law, one or more persons of fundamental rights.

2. The perpetrator targeted such person or persons by reason of the identity of a group or collectivity or targeted the group or collectivity as such.

3. Such targeting was based on political, racial, national, ethnic, or religious grounds.

4. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

5. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

The crime of persecution is premised on the discriminatory intent of the perpetrator. Thus both acts enumerated in article 2 of the Special Court Statute as well as other acts can constitute

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216 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(g)-6 and below, note 126.

217 This element is intended to clarify that the perpetrator does not need to be aware that the conduct is in violation of fundamental rules of international law, just the facts that go to make up that violation; in other words, the perpetrator does not need to made a legal determination that his or her conduct violates international law.

218 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 688; sexual violence can also fall within the scope of "other inhumane acts" (para. 688).

219 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(h) and below, notes 128-40.



persecution when they are carried out against a particular group on prohibited discriminatory grounds, namely on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds. Indeed, the ICTY has characterised persecution as follows: "Persecution is grounded in discrimination. It is based on the notion that people who share ethnic, racial or religious bonds different to those of the dominant group are to be treated as inferior to the latter. In the crime of persecution, this discriminatory intent is aggressively achieved by grossly and systematically trampling upon the fundamental human rights of the victim group."[220]

The material element of persecution as a crime against humanity, in addition to the requirement that the acts be carried out on discriminatory grounds, is that there is a gross or blatant denial of a fundamental right laid down in customary international law or conventional law, reaching the same level of gravity as other enumerated acts.[221] The acts that constitute persecution need not themselves be physical acts and must be evaluated in context by looking at their overall cumulative effects,[222] rather than the effect of one specific act. Indeed, it is a requirement that the *effect* of the acts be discriminatory; discriminatory intent is not itself sufficient to warrant characterising an act as persecution, the act must also have discriminatory consequences.[223]

The question of which grounds are prohibited is not a closed issue and customary international law has developed to the extent where, in addition to those grounds listed in article 2(h) of the Special Court Statute, the following grounds are also prohibited: cultural, gender and other grounds that are universally recognised as impermissible under international law.[224] The restriction of the grounds in the Statute of the Special Court can therefore be seen as a jurisdictional limitation only, similar to the requirement of a nexus with an armed conflict in the ICTY Statute[225] and the requirement that the attack itself be committed on discriminatory grounds in the ICTR Statute.[226]

Early jurisprudence of the ICTY and ICTR considered the question of whether discriminatory intent was required for *all* crimes against humanity,[227] not just for persecution. The Trial Chambers initially adopted the position that not only did the attack have to be carried out on discriminatory grounds[228] but that each of the enumerated acts also had to be committed with discriminatory intent to constitute a crime against humanity. However, the Appeals Chamber of both the ICTY[229] and the

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220 *Prosecutor v Kupreskic*, Case No. IT-95-16, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 751.
221 *Ibid*, para. 621. See also the Elements of Crimes of the ICC for the crime against humanity of persecution.
222 *Prosecutor v Kupreskic*, Case No. IT-95-16, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 622 and *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, para. 349.
223 *Prosecutor v Krnojelac*, Case No. IT-97-25, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 March 2002, para. 432. See also *Prosecutor v Stakic*, Case No. IT-97-24, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 July 2003, para. 733.
224 See the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 7(1)(h).
225 ICTY Statute, article 5; see also *Prosecutor v Kupreskic*, Case No. IT-95-16, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 545.
226 ICTR Statute, article 3; see also *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 580.
227 See, for example, *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 7 May 1997 and *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998.
228 See, for example, *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 578.
229 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 305.



ICTR[230] overturned this position, holding that the perpetrator did not have to have discriminatory intent each time an act constituting a crime against humanity was committed, in part because this would render the crime of persecution redundant.

i) Crime against humanity of other inhumane acts

The elements of the crime against humanity of inhumane acts are:[231]

1. The perpetrator inflicted great suffering, or serious injury to body or to mental or physical health, by means of an inhumane act.

2. Such act was of a character, i.e. in terms of gravity and nature, similar to any other act referred to in article 2.

3. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the character of the act.[232]

4. The conduct was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against a civilian population.

5. The perpetrator knew that the conduct was part of or intended the conduct to be part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population.

This is a "catch-all" provision that covers all other acts of similar gravity that are not enumerated in article 2. The International Law Commission has noted the impossibility of listing all the various acts that may fall within this category of crimes against humanity, stating that it includes "acts of similar gravity that are intended to cause and in fact actually cause injury to a human being in terms of physical or mental integrity, health or human dignity".[233] This has been followed in the Statutes of the ICTY and ICTR and in the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, which provides greater guidance as to what may constitute an inhumane act.

There must be some nexus between the act and the suffering of the victim, which does not necessarily require physical injury to the victim as such. Mental injury consequent on witnessing acts committed against other people may constitute an inhumane act where the perpetrator intended to inflict suffering on the victim or knew such suffering was likely to occur and was reckless as to whether that suffering would result.[234]

4.d Crimes Against Humanity (Article 2): The facts

The accusation of having committed a crime against humanity is a very serious one; indeed, it could be said that it is the most serious crime over which the Special Court has jurisdiction. In order for an act to be considered a crime against humanity, there is no need that it occur in the context of or

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230 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 464.

231 See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 7(1)(i) and below, notes 143-4.

232 This element is intended to clarify that the perpetrator does not need make a legal determination that his or her conduct constitutes a crime against humanity.

233 ILC Commentary on article 18 to the Draft Code of Crimes Against the Peace and Security of Mankind. See also *Prosecutor v Kupreskic*, Case No. IT-95-16, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 14 January 2000, para. 566, for a discussion of what might constitute an inhumane act falling within this category.

234 *Prosecutor v Kayishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-I, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 1 June 2001, para. 153. This is reflected in article 30 of the Rome Statute of the ICC, dealing with the *mens rea* of the perpetrator.

be associated with an armed conflict of any type. Rather, what needs to be demonstrated is that the prohibited act was committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population and that the accused knew of the broader context in which his or her act is committed.

An analysis of the individual events that occurred across the whole of Sierra Leone shows very clearly that the same patterns were employed time and again throughout the country and throughout the conflict. In order for satisfy the contextual elements for crimes against humanity, there must be a widespread or systematic attack against the civilian population.[235] An attack against the civilian population is different from an armed attack or a military attack; in fact, as noted, the existence of an armed conflict is not an element of crimes against humanity. Rather, an attack consists of prohibited acts being committed against a civilian population on a widespread or systematic basis.

For the purposes of this report, the conflict has been analysed according to patterns of conduct and patterns of attack over time and over geographical space, based on a strict application of the law to the facts. The attacks have therefore been identified based on whether similar conduct was occurring at the same time in different locations, at different times in the same location, or against a large number of victims at different times in different locations; such attacks satisfy either the widespread or systematic requirement, or both. In identifying such attacks, this report errs on the side of caution: there are a number of other potential attacks that took place during the conflict in Sierra Leone that have not been included in this discussion because the facts as analysed in this report do not necessarily yield the level of certainty about the widespread or systematic nature of the attack required to sustain a criminal conviction.

The information gathered for this report reveals that there were two general attacks against the civilian population: one by the RUF and one by the CDF. A series of more specific attacks was also committed by each faction within the context of those broader attacks. In the case of the other fighting factions, it was not possible to identify general attacks against a civilian population stretching over a period of years. The West Side Boys committed an attack against the civilian population during the period spanning late 1998 to early 1999. In the case of the SLA, there were clearly a number of specific attacks committed against the civilian population between 1991 and 1996. However, for ECOMOG, it was not possible to identify any attack committed against the civilian population on a widespread or systematic basis, although there are numerous incidents of specific acts being committed against civilians, which are examined in the section on war crimes.

The selection of the specific attacks for analysis has been undertaken on the basis of the proportion of attacks committed by each faction. An examination of the conflict as a whole reveals the commission of 33 discrete widespread or systematic attacks against a civilian population:[236] 21 committed by the RUF and their allies; eight committed by the SLA; three committed by the CDF and one committed by the West Side Boys. Accordingly, the legal analysis below reflects the fact

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[235] In the following analysis, only those acts committed by the fighting forces concerned that were committed in relation to such an attack and with the knowledge of the broader context of the attack have been characterised as crimes against humanity.

[236] As noted, these attacks were selected on the basis of a strict application of the law to the facts as analysed in this report. Nevertheless, based on the information gathered, any additional attacks that may have taken place are unlikely to alter significantly the proportion of attacks committed by each faction.

that more crimes were committed by the RUF without absolving the members of any other fighting faction of responsibility for the crimes that they committed. Similarly, the description of specific crimes in the various categories of crimes against humanity are not exhaustive of *all* the crimes committed during a particular attack, but are highlighted as representative examples of the types of crimes that were committed.[237]

4.d.i Crimes Against Humanity Committed by members of the RUF, the RUF/NPFL and the RUF/AFRC

The RUF, joined by the NPFL between 1991 and 1993 and the AFRC from 1997 onwards, committed a general attack against the civilian population lasting from 1991 until 2000. This attack was both widespread, in that it took place on a large scale and with a multiplicity of victims, *and* systematic, in that it constituted an organised pattern of conduct. That there was a policy to attack the civilian population is clearly demonstrated by the targeting of civilians in virtually every month in every District in which the RUF or their allies had a presence, particularly during military advances and retreats, but also when military manoeuvres were not being undertaken. Those instances in which there was relative calm usually represent periods during which the RUF was regrouping and rearming or periods during which the population had fled. During the period spanning from 1991 to 2000, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the intentional and reckless killings of thousands of civilians;
(b) **Extermination**, for several mass killing events, namely the gathering of hundreds of civilians at different times in different locations to be shot or hacked to death;
(c) Enslavement, for the abduction of thousands of civilians and their use as porters, cooks, food-gatherers, domestic work, construction work and for similar purposes;[238]
(d) **Rape**, for the rape of hundreds of women and girls, including girls aged below 14, for sexual slavery, namely the abduction of hundreds of women and girls as "wives", for sexual violence, including numerous incidents of sexual abuse and sexual assault, including forcing people to have sex with members of their own families;
(e) **Imprisonment**, for the arrest and detention of hundreds of civilians, who were held for weeks without charge;
(f) **Torture**, for the infliction of pain and suffering on people under RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC custody and control, including severe beatings and floggings, dripping melted plastic or rubber into people's eyes and onto people's bodies and a range of other equally grave acts;
(g) **Other inhumane acts**, for the variety of severe acts of violence committed against civilians throughout the attack, including mutilation, amputation, beatings, floggings and a range of other similar acts as well as for the effect on the population of cannibalism, drinking blood, displaying internal organs and severed heads at checkpoints, parading severed heads around

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[237] All of the specific examples listed in these sections are detailed in the factual analysis.

[238] The crime of enslavement requires that the perpetrator exercise any or all of the powers of ownership over the abducted person. As such, this report does not characterise as enslavement the thousands of incidences where civilians were abducted but the purpose is not revealed; in addition, it does not characterise as enslavement the thousands of incidences where civilians were abducted and forced to carry loads for a short period of time before being released.

villages and forcing civilians to sing and dance at gunpoint in celebration of the actions of the RUF/NPFL, the RUF and the RUF/AFRC.

Within that general attack, there were a series of specific attacks committed against the civilian population. Of the 21 identified attacks committed against the civilian population,[239] six will be discussed below as being representative of the types of actions carried out by the RUF/NPFL, the RUF and the RUF/AFRC throughout the conflict. It should, however, be emphasised that the selection of these attacks is in no way intended to reflect any judgment about the relative importance of the attacks not selected for further exploration.

a) The RUF/NPFL attack from March to July 1991

In March 1991, the RUF/NPFL entered Sierra Leone from Liberia, arriving first in Kailahun and Pujehun Districts and spreading across Bonthe, Bo, Kenema and Kono Districts before being gradually pushed back in early August. During that time, the pattern of conduct employed by the RUF/NPFL reveals a clear policy to direct attacks against the civilian population, as evidenced by the abduction, killing, sexual assault, massive burning of houses and countless other actions inflicted on civilians. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/NPFL committed the following crimes against humanity:

a) **Murder**, for the numerous intentional and reckless killings of civilians, including the killing of 100 people in Pujehun District in July 1991 and the killing of 62 people in Kailahun District in June 1991;
b) **Enslavement**, for the abduction of hundreds of civilians and their use as porters, guides, food-gatherers and similar purposes, including the abduction of 800 civilians to work in farms in Kailahun District in July 1991;
c) **Imprisonment**, for the detention of children who refused to be conscripted in Kailahun District in May 1991;
d) **Torture**, for the numerous beatings administered to people under the control of the RUF, for the dripping of rubber or plastic into people's eyes in Bonthe District in May 1991 and for tying a man up under the sun for one week in Bo District in May 1991;

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[239] Those attacks that are not discussed in detail in this report are: the RUF/NPFL attack in Kailahun, Kenema and Pujehun Districts from January to June 1992; the RUF/NPFL attack from May 1992 to early 1993, primarily the movement from Kailahun to Kono District; the RUF/NPFL attack in Pujehun District from December 1992 to the end of January 1993; the RUF attack across several Districts from December 1993 to September 1994; the RUF attack on Bo from January 1995 to April 1996; the RUF attack from May to June 1995 in Port Loko, Bombali and Koinadugu Districts following the failure to take Freetown; the RUF attack in Kono District from April to September 1995; the RUF attack in Moyamba District from August 1995; the RUF attack in the northern Districts in the lead up to elections from January to February 1996; the RUF/AFRC attack from May to December 1997 in Freetown, during which journalists and civil society were particularly targeted; the RUF/AFRC attack from July to January 1998 in District Headquarter towns in Bonthe, Kailahun, Kenema, Tonkolili, Bo and Pujehun Districts; the RUF/AFRC attack from February to November 1998, during which there named policies to commit certain acts, including "Operation No Living Thing" and "Operation Pay Yourself"; the RUF/AFRC attack in the Northern Province from February 1999 to February 2000; the RUF/AFRC attack in Kono District for the purposes of mining from 1999 to March 2001; and the RUF/AFRC attack on the Northern Province from May to November 2000.



e) **Rape**, for the rape and sexual assault of dozens of women, including the rape of a 10-year-old girl in Kailahun District in May 1991, and for sexual slavery, namely the abduction of women as "wives";
f) **Other inhumane acts**, for ordering people to dance while women were being raped in Pujehun District in June 1991 and for the effect on the population of frequent acts of cannibalism.

b) The "TAP" operation: April 1992 to May 1993

From April 1992 to May 1993, successive groups of NPFL forces committed an ongoing attack against the civilian population, which was striking in terms of the similarity of the conduct employed, including cannibalism, and the brutality inflicted on civilian men, women and children in the areas of Kailahun District over which the RUF/NPFL forces exercised control. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the NPFL committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the intentional killing of scores of people, including people who tried to escape, people who were abducted for use as porters and people selected for their large size in Penguia Chiefdom in May 1992;
(b) **Enslavement**, for the abduction of dozens of people for use as porters;
(c) **Torture**, for the infliction of severe pain and suffering on people under RUF control, including the severe cutting of people's flesh and dripping melted plastic or rubber into people's eyes in Luawa Chiefdom;
(d) **Rape**, for the rape of dozens of women, including young girls, and often by multiple assailants, including the rape of women by multiple assailants in Penguia Chiefdom in May 1992 and the rape of a woman in Kissi Teng Chiefdom in February 1993;
(e) **Other inhumane acts**, for cooking people alive, pounding a baby in a mortar and for the effect on the population of frequent acts of cannibalism, including the people who had been selected for their large size in Penguia Chiefdom in May 1992.

c) RUF attack between December 1994 and May 1995

From the end of 1994, the RUF had consolidated its control over Kailahun, Pujehun and Kenema Districts. From there, they expanded across Bo, Bonthe, Moyamba and Port Loko Districts in a clear push towards Freetown, which culminated in April 1995 in attacks on settlements in the Western Area. Throughout this westward expansion and their subsequent retreat on being repelled from the Western Area, the RUF engaged in an attack on the civilian population in towns through which they passed. This attack was both widespread, in that it affected a large area of the country and a large number of victims, and systematic, in terms of the remarkable similarity among the acts carried out across these Districts. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the intentional and reckless killing of thousands of people, including the killing of dozens of civilians at an IDP camp in Bo District in 1994;
(b) **Enslavement**, for the abduction of hundreds of people for use as porters, food-gatherers and cooks;

(c) **Rape**, for the rape of scores of women and girls, for sexual slavery, namely the abduction of women as "wives" and for sexual violence, including forcing people to have sex with their own family members;
(d) **Torture**, for beatings and other acts inflicting pain and suffering on people under RUF control, including dripping melted plastic in people's eyes,
(e) **Other inhumane acts**, including amputation of limbs, branding people with hot irons and carving words on their bodies with razor blades.

d) RUF attack on Bonthe District: 1995

Throughout 1995, the RUF were progressively taking firm control of Bonthe District; their arrival in towns across the District was accompanied by severe brutality against civilians and the deposing and replacement of traditional authorities. The attack was carried out in a systematic manner, in that it was clearly conducted according to an organised plan. From January to November, not a month passed without significant violations being committed against the civilian population. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) Murder, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including the killing of 300 people in Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom) in February;
(b) **Extermination**, for rounding up thousands of civilians from many different places and killing hundreds of them in Bauya Junction (Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom) in October;
(c) **Enslavement**, for abducting civilians and forcing them to work, including as food-gatherers, cooks and porters;
(d) **Rape**, for the rape of scores of women and girls, including the rape of young girls in front of their parents, for sexual slavery, namely the abduction of women as "wives" and for sexual violence, including forcing people to have sex with their own family members;
(e) **Other inhumane acts**, for the amputation of limbs, for the effect on the population of leaving mutilated corpses on the road, for severe beatings and for pouring petrol over a man and setting him on fire.

e) RUF/AFRC Attack in May and June 1997

On 25 May 1997, the AFRC staged a military coup, and were joined in power soon after by the RUF, thereby establishing a presence in areas previously held by the SLA. Between the end of May and the middle of June, the RUF/AFRC staged a sharp and brutal attack against the civilian population across the country that would affect every District to greater and lesser degrees. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/AFRC committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including reprisal killings against civilians for failing to be "sufficiently supportive", the killing of civilians deemed to be "enemy collaborators" and civilians who refused to work;
(b) **Enslavement**, for the use of civilians as food-gatherers, cooks and porters;
(c) **Imprisonment**, for the arbitrary arrest and detention without charge of dozens of journalists, lawyers and civil society activists;
(d) **Torture**, for the infliction of severe pain and suffering on people detained by the RUF/AFRC, including severe beatings;

(e) Rape, for the rape and sexual abuse of dozens of women, including young girls, and the padlocking of women's genital areas in Pujehun District;

(f) **Other inhumane acts**, for the mutilation of several civilians, the amputation of one or more of their limbs, the effect on the population of displaying people's intestines at checkpoints and forcing people under gunpoint to dance and sing in support of the RUF/AFRC.

f) RUF/AFRC Attack from December 1998 to January 1999

From December 1998, the RUF/AFRC orchestrated a campaign to retake Freetown, moving from various Districts, particularly in the north, towards the Western Area. As they advanced, as well as during their retreat, the RUF/AFRC implemented a systematic attack against the civilian population that reached its peak during the invasion and brief occupation of parts of Freetown. This attack was striking particularly in terms of the sheer number of acts committed against the population and the destruction wrought in such a short period of time. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/AFRC committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including alleged "enemy collaborators" and the killing of 27 people in a market place in Bombali District in January 1999;

(b) **Enslavement**, for the abduction of hundreds of civilians for their use as porters and cooks;

(c) **Torture**, for the regular and severe beatings administered to people under the control of the RUF/AFRC, including one man who was beaten for 24 hours and then buried alive in Bombali District in January 1999;

(d) **Rape**, for the rape of dozens of women and girls;

(e) **Other inhumane treatment**, for forcing people at gunpoint to dance and sing in support of the RUF/AFRC in Freetown's East End in January 1999, for the mutilation of dozens of civilians, including carving words onto their bodies, and the amputation of one or more of their limbs.

4.d.ii Crimes Against Humanity Committed by members of the West Side Boys

The West Side Boys committed an attack against the civilian population in Port Loko District lasting from October 1998 to April 1999 across Koya and Maforki Chiefdoms.[240] This attack was both widespread, in that it took place on a large scale and with a multiplicity of victims, *and* systematic, in that it was an organised pattern of conduct. The facts clearly demonstrate that there was a policy to commit such an attack, with civilians being targeted for a variety of reasons. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the West Side Boys committed the following crimes against humanity:

(a) **Murder**, for the killing of dozens of civilians, including the killing of two civilians by hanging and the public execution of 20 civilians and the burning of 73 civilians in a house in April 1999;

[240] There was a lull in this attack in January and February 1999, during which time the West Side Boys were participating in the attack on Freetown. Nevertheless, the actions before and after that time form part of the same attack against the civilian population.



(b) **Enslavement**, for the abduction of civilians for their use as porters;[241]
(c) **Rape**, for the rape of dozens of women and girls and for sexual violence, including forcing people to have sex with their own family members
(d) **Other inhumane acts**, for the mutilation of several civilians, including carving words onto their bodies.

4.d.iii Crimes Against Humanity Committed by members of the SLA

While there was no general attack spanning a number of years, the SLA committed a number of specific widespread or systematic attacks at different periods between 1991 and 1996 that reveal a policy to commit an attack against a civilian population, generally for the purposes of reprisals, abducting civilians for the purposes of mining or other work and to obtain property. Of the eight identified attacks committed against the civilian population, two will be discussed below as being representative of the types of actions carried out by the SLA.[242] It should, however, be emphasised that the selection of these attacks is in no way intended to reflect any judgment about the relative importance of the attacks not selected for further exploration.

a) SLA attack from January to April 1992

As the SLA started gaining successes over RUF/NPFL forces across Pujehun and Kailahun Districts, they progressively and rapidly launched attacks on civilians. Beginning by targeting civilians they arbitrarily labelled as RUF/NPFL "collaborators", often in the areas they had retaken from the hands of RUF/NPFL forces, the SLA soon expanded these activities to encompass the entire civilian population in those areas. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the SLA committed the following crimes against humanity:

a) **Murder** for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including the killing of alleged "collaborators" at Makibi Bridge in Pujehun Town and the tying up of alleged collaborators and throwing them off the Yonni Bridge (Kpaka Chiefdom, Pujehun District) in early 1992;
b) **Enslavement**, for the use of civilians under SLA control for work, including breaking down houses and uprooting cocoa and coffee plantations in Kangama (Kissi Teng Chiefdom, Kailahun District) and as food-gatherers in Pujehun District in early 1992;
c) **Deportation**, for the use of radical measures such as setting fire to houses as part of a clear action to evict civilians from an area in Pujehun District in early 1992;
d) **Rape**, for the rape of several women, including the rape of a woman in Makpele Chiefdom (Pujehun District) in early 1992, and for other acts of sexual violence;

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[241] The crime of enslavement requires that the perpetrator exercise any or all of the powers of ownership over the abducted person. As such, this report does not characterise as enslavement the incidences where civilians were abducted but the purpose is not revealed; in addition, it does not characterise as enslavement the incidences where civilians were abducted and forced to carry loads for a short period of time before being released.

[242] Those attacks that are not discussed in detail in this report are: the SLA attack in Bonthe District from June to July 1992; the SLA Attack from October 1992 to February 1993, particularly in Kono District; the SLA attack from March to June 1994; the SLA attack in Moyamba District from December 1994 to February 1995; the SLA attack in Kenema District from March to June 1994; and the attack carried out by the Special Task Force in October 1995 in Bonthe District.

e) **Other inhumane acts**, for the amputation of ears and hands, the plucking out of eyeballs and for putting civilians in a bag that was then set on fire in Kpanga Krim Chiefdom (Pujehun District) in early 1992.

b) SLA attack in Kenema District from March to July 1994

Between March and July 1994, while RUF forces were continuing expanding their operations in the District, SLA forces together with members of ULIMO-J conducted an attack against the civilian population in the area remaining under their control. The widespread or systematic nature of the attack is evidenced by the numerous acts of violence committed against civilians across different chiefdoms. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the SLA committed the following crimes against humanity:

a) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of dozens of civilians, including those alleged to be RUF "collaborators" and those they accused of not respecting their "orders", including the killing of 12 young people from Damawuro and the killing of a man in Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom) in March;
b) **Imprisonment**, for detaining an alleged RUF "collaborator" in a cell in Blama in March and for detaining civilians in a guardroom for some days in Blama;
c) **Enslavement**, for the forceful use of civilians to work at mining sites in the Tongo Field area;
d) **Rape**, for sexual slavery, namely the abduction of women as "wives" and for sexual violence committed against several women and girls.

4.d.iv Crimes Against Humanity Committed by members of the CDF

The CDF committed a general attack against the civilian population lasting from January 1996 until October 1999. This attack was both widespread, in that it took place on a large scale and with a multiplicity of victims, *and* systematic, in that it was an organised pattern of conduct. The facts clearly demonstrate that there was a policy to commit such an attack, with civilians being targeted for a variety of reasons; reprisals against civilians for having cooperated with the RUF were systematic and particularly brutal throughout this period. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the CDF committed the following crimes against humanity:

a) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including civilians arbitrarily labelled as "RUF collaborators";
b) **Enslavement**, for the use of civilians under their control to harvest food for the CDF in Tonkolili District in October 1999;
c) **Imprisonment**, for the detention without charge of people in cells and cages, particularly at checkpoints;
d) **Torture**, for the use of "FM ropes",[243] beatings, dripping melted plastic on people and other acts inflicting pain and suffering on people under the control of the CDF;
e) **Rape**, for sexual slavery, namely forcing women to become "wives", and for sexual violence committed against women;

[243] "FM rope" stands for "Frequency Modulation". A victim would be tied up with a length of nylon, which would be progressively tightened. The more the nylon tightened, the more pain and suffering it would cause and the more the victim would "talk", hence the analogy with a radio tuner.

f) **Other inhumane acts**, for the effect on the civilian population of acts of cannibalism and displaying internal organs at checkpoints.

Within that general attack, there were a series of specific attacks committed against the civilian population. Of the three identified attacks committed against the civilian population, one will be discussed below as being representative of the types of actions carried out by the CDF.[244] It should, however, be emphasised that the selection of these attacks is in no way intended to reflect any judgment about the relative importance of the attacks not selected for further exploration.

CDF Attack from November 1997 to May 1998

During this period, the CDF engaged RUF/AFRC forces throughout the Southern Province, repelling them from most of the areas previously under their control. The CDF actions in those areas demonstrate a clear pattern of violent activities directed against civilians, in particular against suspected RUF/AFRC "collaborators", leading to the infliction of severe physical violence and the draconian regulation of every aspect of civilian life. During this period, in addition to the war crimes and other crimes under the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the CDF committed the following crimes against humanity:

a) **Murder**, for the intentional and reckless killing of dozens of civilians, including the killing of alleged RUF/AFRC "collaborators" in Bonthe Town in February 1998;
b) **Imprisonment**, for the detention of civilians in cells or specially designed cages, including the detention in a cell for two days of civilians in Bonthe Town in February 1998, the detention of civilians in a cage at Baiama Junction (Bo District) in February 1998 and in Kwellu (Moyamba District) in December 1997;
c) **Torture**, for the infliction of severe physical and mental violence, notably by the use of cages and FM ropes across the Southern Province, including tying up suspected collaborators with an FM rope, beating them and locking them up in Blama (Kenema District) in February 1998;
d) **Rape**, for the use of three women as sex slaves in Makpele Chiefdom (Pujehun District) in January 1998;
e) **Other inhumane acts**, for the effect on the population of frequent acts of cannibalism, including the decapitation of a civilian and the drinking of his blood in Nomo Chiefdom (Kenema District) in December 1997.

4.e Violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II (Article 3): The law

Article 3 of the Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone reads as follows:

> "The Special Court shall have the power to prosecute persons who committed or ordered the commission of serious violations of article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949 for the Protection of War Victims, and of Additional Protocol II thereto of 8 June 1977. These violations shall include:

[244] Those attacks that are not discussed in detail in this report are: the CDF Attack from January 1996 to September 1996 in Bonthe District, which included attacks on Moyamba District from April to August 1996; and the CDF attack from December 1998 to May 1999 in Tonkolili, Moyamba and Port Loko Districts.

(a) Violence to life, health and physical or mental well being of persons, in particular murder as well as cruel treatment such as torture, mutilation or any form of corporal punishment;

(b) Collective punishments;

(c) Taking of hostages;

(d) Acts of terrorism;

(e) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault;

(f) Pillage;

(g) The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without previous judgement pronounced by a regularly constituted court, affording all the judicial guarantees which are recognized as indispensable by civilized peoples;

(h) Threats to commit any of the foregoing acts."

The four Geneva Conventions of 1949 were, as noted, concerned mainly with international armed conflicts, that is, conflicts involving two or more States. The Geneva Conventions were expanded on in 1977 with the adoption of the two Additional Protocols, the first of which was also concerned with international armed conflicts. However, article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions, which has been described as a "treaty in miniature", contains the minimum set of protections applicable in any armed conflict.[245] Additional Protocol II expands on common article 3 to specify in more detail the protections that apply during a non-international armed conflict.

In order for these norms to become applicable, they must have been in force at the time of the alleged commission of the crimes, whether through customary international law or because the State in question had ratified these instruments and, as such, was bound by these provisions. In respect of the first possibility,[246] it is clear that common article 3 has the status of customary international law;[247] indeed, most States have criminalised the acts listed in common article 3 within their domestic penal codes. Additional Protocol II as a whole is generally not regarded as having the status of customary international law, but article 4(2) relating to fundamental guarantees both reaffirms and supplements common article 3 and, as such, has the status of customary international law.[248]

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[245] It should be noted that while common article 3 refers to its applicability in non-international armed conflicts, it is now recognised that customary international law dictates that these protections are applicable in *any* armed conflict, not just those that are non-international in nature.

[246] Note that Sierra Leone succeeded to the Geneva Conventions on 10 June 1965 and acceded to the Additional Protocols on 21 October 1986, therefore these instruments were, in any case, in force in the territory of Sierra Leone at all relevant times.

[247] See for example *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999 and *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 608.

[248] See, for example, *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, paras. 608-10.

Nevertheless, in order not to offend the principle of *nullum crimen sine lege*,[249] it is not sufficient simply to show that these instruments had the status of customary international law at the time the alleged crimes were committed. It must also be established that the violation of those norms attracted individual criminal responsibility: the ICTY Appeals Chamber has found that customary international law imposes criminal liability for serious violations of common article 3, as supplemented by other general rules and principles, in particular Additional Protocol II.[250]

4.e.i Contextual elements of violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II

Once it is established that these instruments were in force, there are two sets of elements that need to be met, one of which can be described as "contextual" elements, the other of which are the elements of the acts enumerated in article 3 of the Statute of the Special Court. The contextual elements are as follows:

1. The applicability of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II must be established.
2. The personal jurisdiction (relating to victims and perpetrators) and the geographical jurisdiction must be met.
3. There must be a nexus between the act constituting the crime and the armed conflict.
4. The act constituting the crime must be a serious violation.

1. Applicability of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II

Both common article 3 and Additional Protocol II contain conditions of applicability that must be considered in order to determine whether or not they apply at a particular location or during a particular time. As noted, the inclusion of these crimes within the Statute of the Special Court is not in itself sufficient to conclude that these instruments apply to the situation in Sierra Leone, nor is it sufficient to establish that the instruments were in force at the time in question.

Common article 3 applies during any armed conflict,[251] thereby ruling out its application during internal disturbances and tensions. Whether an armed conflict exists or not[252] must be determined on an evaluation of the intensity and organisation of the parties to the conflict; indeed, the *Tadic* decision refers to "protracted armed violence".[253]

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[249] According to this principle, nobody may be found guilty of a criminal offence for acts that were not criminalised, whether under national or international law, at the time of their commission: see the International Convention on Civil and Political Rights, article 15(1).

[250] *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 15 July 1999, para. 134. The Appeals Chamber reached this conclusion following consideration of the decisions of the Nuremberg Tribunal, elements of international practice showing that States intend to criminalise serious breaches of customary rules and principles applicable during a non-international armed conflict as well as national legislation aimed at implementing the Geneva Conventions.

[251] *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Decision on the Defence Motion for Interlocutory Appeal on Jurisdiction, 2 October 1995, para. 137.

[252] See above for a discussion on what constitutes an armed conflict.

[253] *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995 (Tadic Jurisdiction Decision), para.70.



The situations to which Additional Protocol II will apply are more limited than those to which common article 3 will apply.[254] It is worth noting that while Additional Protocol II develops and supplements common article 3, the more restrictive conditions of its applicability are not automatically extended to common article 3, which continues to apply during any armed conflict. In order for Additional Protocol II to apply, the following elements must be satisfied:

(a) An armed conflict is occurring between the armed forces of a State and dissident armed forces or other organised groups.
(b) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups were under responsible command.
(c) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups exercised control over territory such that they were able to carry out sustained and concerted military operations.
(d) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups are able to implement Additional Protocol II.

(a) An armed conflict is occurring between the armed forces of a State and dissident armed forces or other organised groups

The jurisprudence of the international criminal tribunals refers to the fact that "armed forces", namely those fighting on behalf of the State, covers all armed forces described in national legislation.[255] It is unclear whether this would cover armed forces fighting on behalf of the State that are not so described in national legislation but are established as a result of some other procedure. In the absence of a decision on this matter, it is submitted that a test similar to that in *Tadic* related to forces under the control of a foreign power could be adopted to determine whether armed forces are fighting on behalf of the State on whose territory the conflict is being fought.[256] The test could therefore be: overall control of an armed group or individuals by the State; specific instructions to an armed group or individuals by the State; and actual behaviour of an armed group or individuals, irrespective of any specific instructions.[257]

(b) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups were under responsible command

This requirement refers to the degree of organisation of the groups, namely that they were able to carry out military operations and that they were able to impose discipline in the name of the *de facto* authority,[258] although it does not imply that there needs to be a hierarchical system identical to that employed by the armed forces of a State.

(c) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups exercised control over territory such that they were able to carry out sustained and concerted military operations

While the previous requirement refers to the command *ability* of the groups, this requirement considers whether the military operations actually carried out were continuous and planned. This

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254 In this respect it should be noted that if the requirements for Additional Protocol II are met, then the lower threshold conditions for common article 3 are also automatically met.

255 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 625; *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 256.

256 This question could be relevant, for example, if there are protracted periods of fighting between dissident armed forces and armed forces not described in national legislation that are in fact fighting on behalf of the State, without the involvement of the armed forces of a State.

257 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Appeals Chamber Judgment, 15 July 1999, point IV.B.3.

258 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 626.



requires that the groups in fact dominate part of the territory that is no longer under government control.[259]

(d) The dissident armed forces or other organised groups are able to implement Additional Protocol II

This refers to the degree of organisation of the dissident armed forces or other organised group, such that they can carry out obligations under Additional Protocol II, which includes matters such as searching for sick, shipwrecked or wounded personnel and providing them with medical care and attention.[260]

2. Personal and geographical jurisdiction

i) Personal jurisdiction: Perpetrators

Anybody who commits a violation of common article 3 or Additional Protocol II can be held accountable; there is no category of persons to whom these provisions cannot apply. The early jurisprudence of the ICTR focused on whether there were certain criteria that needed to be satisfied in order for an accused to fall within the *ratione personae* for perpetrators. Thus the Trial Chamber in *Akayesu*, while recognising that this should not be interpreted restrictively and that civilians could be held liable for violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II, applied a "public official" test to determine whether a person could be held liable. According to this test, if a person was not a combatant, they could be held liable only if they were public officials or agents or exercised some public authority such that they were mandated and expected to support or fulfil the war effort.[261] However, this was overturned by the Appeals Chamber, who held that this test was not supported either by the language of the Statute nor customary international law. Considering that the core of common article 3 is the protection of victims, which implies effective punishment of perpetrators,[262] the Appeals Chamber held that common article 3 and Additional Protocol II are applicable to everyone.[263] As such, the existence of a special link or relationship between the accused and the armed forces of a State is not a pre-condition for the applicability of these instruments.[264]

ii) Personal jurisdiction: victims

Common article 3 and Additional Protocol II are concerned primarily with the protection of civilians, namely people who do not bear arms. Thus common article 3 refers to persons who are taking no active part in hostilities, including members of the armed forces who have laid down their arms and those who are placed *hors de combat*, namely those who are no longer fighting due to injury or some other similar incapacity, whereas Additional Protocol II refers to those persons who do not take a direct part in hostilities or who have ceased to take a direct part in hostilities.

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259 *Ibid.*

260 Additional Protocol II, part III.

261 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, paras. 630-4.

262 In this consideration, the Appeals Chamber cited the Appeals Chamber of the ICTY in the *Celebici* case, para. 143, which stated that the quintessence of international humanitarian law is the respect for a few essential rules of humanity that are valid everywhere, under all circumstances, and which exist above and outside war.

263 *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 1 June 2001, para. 443.

264 *Ibid*, para. 444.



To take a "direct part" in hostilities means to undertake acts of war that, by their nature or purpose, are likely to cause actual harm to personnel or equipment of the enemy armed forces.[265] Should a civilian undertake such acts, they would lose their right to protection as civilians and could thereby fall within the class of combatants, thus becoming legitimate military targets.

The central question in this respect is, therefore, whether the alleged victim was taking a direct part in hostilities at the time of the alleged offence. If they were not, then they fall within that class of persons protected by common article 3 and Additional Protocol II. As such, it must be determined on a case-by-case basis whether a victim has the status of a civilian and, as such, whether the provisions of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II apply.

iii) Geographical jurisdiction

The geographical jurisdiction refers to the geographical territory within which common article 3 and Additional Protocol II apply. As noted, international humanitarian law applies across the territory affected by the conflict from the moment hostilities commence until there is general conclusion of peace or, in the case of internal armed conflicts, a peaceful settlement is reached.[266] Customary international law, as reflected in the jurisprudence of the Tribunals, makes it clear that the application of the law is not confined to the narrow geographical scope of the actual theatre of combat operations. Rather, international humanitarian law applies throughout the territory affected by the conflict whether or not actual combat is taking place in parts of the territory under the control of a party to the conflict.[267]

In addition, international humanitarian law also has a temporal scope, namely from the commencement of hostilities until the conclusion of peace or the reaching of a peaceful settlement. Customary international law, as reflected in the jurisprudence of the Tribunals, also requires that the temporal factor not be given a restrictive interpretation. As such, there only needs to be some kind of nexus between the act and the conflict, but not that the act itself occurs during the midst of battle.[268]

3. Nexus between the crime and the conflict

There must be some kind of link between the crime and the armed conflict, whether it be "closely related",[269] "in conjunction with",[270] or – more reflective of customary law – "in the context of or associated with".[271] This requirement stems from the fact that international humanitarian law, concerned as it is with law during an armed conflict, does not protect persons against crimes unrelated to the conflict,[272] which should be dealt with by other means.

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265 *Prosecutor v Rutaganda*, Case No. ICTR-96-3, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 6 December 1999, para. 100.
266 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995, para.70.
267 *Prosecutor v Kunarac et al,* Case No. IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 12 June 2002, para. 57.
268 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, Appeals Chamber, Jurisdiction Decision, 2 October 1995, para.70 and *Prosecutor v Kayishema*, Case No. ICTR-95-I, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 21 May 1999, para. 183.
269 *Prosecutor v Tadic*, Case No. IT-94-I, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 7 May 1997, para. 573.
270 *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, para. 369.
271 See generally the ICC Elements of Crimes, contextual elements for article 8(2)(e).
272 *Prosecutor v Semanza*, Case No. ICTR-97-20, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 15 May 2003, paras. 368-9.

The ICTY Appeals Chamber has addressed this issue in *Kunarac*, holding that an armed conflict must, at a minimum, have played a substantial part in the perpetrator's ability to commit the crime, his or her decision to commit it, the manner in which it was committed or the purpose for which it was committed. Hence, establishing that the perpetrator acted in furtherance of or under the guise of the armed conflict would be sufficient to conclude that the acts were closely related to the armed conflict. In determining whether or not an act is sufficiently related to the armed conflict, the Appeals Chamber suggested a number of factors that may assist in making that factual determination: the fact that the perpetrator is a combatant; the fact that the victim is a non-combatant; the fact that the victim is a member of the opposing party; the fact that the act may be said to serve the ultimate goal of a military
campaign; and the fact that the crime was committed as part of or in the context of the perpetrator's official duties.[273]

4. The violation must be serious

The chapeau of article 3 of the Statute of the Special Court gives the Special Court jurisdiction over "serious violations" of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II. Broadly speaking, the requirement that it be 'serious' refers to "the breach of a rule protecting important values involving grave consequences for the victim".[274] The jurisprudence of the Tribunals makes it clear that violations of the fundamental guarantees related to the protection of victims during an armed conflict are, by their very nature, considered to be serious.[275]

4.e.ii Elements of enumerated acts constituting violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II

For the most part, the elements of the crimes constituting violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II mirror the elements required for crimes against humanity. This has been explicitly stated, for example, for murder,[276] torture[277] and rape[278] and it is reasonable to predict that the same approach would be adopted for other crimes. There are, however, some crimes within common article 3 and Additional Protocol II that have no direct counterpart within crimes against humanity, which are discussed briefly below.

a) Mutilation

The elements of the war crime of mutilation are:[279]

1. The perpetrator subjected one or more persons to mutilation, in particular by permanently disfiguring the person or persons, or by permanently disabling or removing an organ or appendage.

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[273] *Prosecutor v Kunarac*, Case No. IT-96-23&23/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, 12 June 2002, para. 58.
[274] *Prosecutor v Akayesu*, Case No. ICTR-96-4, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 2 September 1998, para. 616.
[275] *Prosecutor v Rutaganda*, Case No. ICTR-96-3, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 6 December 1999, para. 106.
[276] *Ibid*, para. 107.
[277] *Prosecutor v Kunarac*, Case No. IT-96-23&23/1, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 22 February 2001, para. 465. It should be noted that the purpose element will apply in relation to torture as a war crime: see above for a discussion of the elements of the crime against humanity of torture.
[278] *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 285.
[279] See *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 285 and the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(e)(xi)-1.

2. The conduct was neither justified by the medical, dental or hospital treatment of the person or persons concerned nor carried out in such person's or persons' interests.

3. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

4. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

b) Cruel Treatment

The elements of the war crime of cruel treatment are:[280]

1. The perpetrator inflicted severe physical or mental pain or suffering upon one or more persons.

2. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

3. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

c) Taking of hostages

The elements of the war crime of taking hostages are:[281]

1. The perpetrator seized, detained or otherwise held hostage one or more persons.

2. The perpetrator threatened to kill, injure or continue to detain such person or persons.

3. The perpetrator intended to compel a State, an international organisation, a natural or legal person or a group of persons to act or refrain from acting as an explicit or implicit condition for the safety or the release of such person or persons.

4. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

5. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

d) Outrages on personal dignity, including degrading and humiliating treatment

The elements of the war crime of outrages on personal dignity are:[282]

1. The perpetrator humiliated, degraded or otherwise violated the dignity of one or more persons.

2. The severity of the humiliation, degradation or other violation was of such degree as to be generally recognised as an outrage upon personal dignity.

3. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

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[280] See the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(c)(iii).

[281] See the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(c)(i)-3. See also *Prosecutor v Naletilic and Martinovic*, Case No. IT-98-34, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 31 March 2003, para. 246.

[282] See the ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(c)(ii). See also *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 285.



4. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

The Elements of Crimes of the ICC explicitly states that "persons" can include dead people, going on to say: "It is understood that the victim need not personally be aware of the existence of the humiliation or degradation or other violation. This element takes into account relevant aspects of the cultural background of the victim."[283]

The ICTR has interpreted "humiliating and degrading" treatment as treatment designed to subvert the self regard of the victims.[284] The ICTY held that rape could amount to an outrage on personal dignity and therefore could be covered by this provision.[285] In *Aleksovski*, the ICTY held that the use of detainees as human shields or trench diggers, beatings and the constant fear of being robbed or beaten could constitute outrages upon personal dignity.[286]

e) Indecent assault

The elements of the war crime of indecent assault are:[287]

1. The accused inflicted pain or injury on the victim or victims.

2. The act inflicting pain or injury was sexual in nature and was committed by coercion, force, threat or intimidation.

3. The act was non-consensual.

4. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

5. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

f) Pillage

The elements of the war crime of pillage are:[288]

1. The perpetrator appropriated certain property.

2. The perpetrator intended to deprive the owner of the property and to appropriate it for private or personal use.

3. The appropriation was without the consent of the owner.

4. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

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283 ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(c)(ii), footnote.

284 *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 285.

285 *The Prosecutor v Furundzija*, Case No. IT-95-17/1, ICTY Trial Chamber, Judgment, 10 December 1998, paras. 172-3.

286 *Prosecutor v Aleksovski*, Case No. IT-95-14/1, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgment, 24 March 2000, para. 36.

287 *Prosecutor v Musema*, Case No. ICTR-96-13, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 27 January 2000, para. 285

288 See ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(e)(v). See also *Prosecutor v Jelisic*, Case No. IT-95-10, ICTY Trial Chamber, 14 December 1999, paras. 48-9.

5. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

The crime of pillage encompasses isolated acts of looting committed by individual soldiers for private gain as well as organised forms of the seizure of property, for example as part of a systematic economic exploitation of occupied territory. However, as indicated by the use of the term "private or personal use", appropriations justified by military necessity cannot constitute the crime of pillaging.[289]

4.f Violations of Article 3 common to the Geneva Conventions and of Additional Protocol II (Article 3): The facts

Certain conditions must be met before common article 3 and Additional Protocol II will apply. For common article 3, the condition is the existence of an armed conflict. As stated, there was an armed conflict occurring on the territory of Sierra Leone from March 1991 until 18 January 2002. As such, common article 3 applied throughout that time across the whole territory. For Additional Protocol II, the conditions centre around the degree of organisation of the armed forces against whom the State's armed forces are fighting. While it is not intended to go into this issue for each of the fighting factions, the analysis of the non-State fighting factions involved in the conflict of Sierra Leone clearly reveals that these conditions are met, in that at any given point during the conflict, dissident or other armed groups were organised, were under responsible command, exercised control over the territory such that they were able to carry out sustained and concerted military operations and were able to implement Additional Protocol II.

Given that, the provisions of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II applied throughout the territory of Sierra Leone throughout the conflict, whether or not actual combat was taking place. Therefore, although there were lulls in the fighting at different times in different places throughout Sierra Leone, IHL continued to apply in those places as well as those areas where fighting was occurring until the end of the conflict as a whole.

Aside from these, there are other contextual elements that need to be established in order for an act to constitute a violation of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II, namely that the victims are civilians, the violation is serious and that there is a nexus between the act and the armed conflict. These contextual elements were taken into account in describing the crimes listed below;[290] for example, murder of a civilian has been included whereas murder of a combatant during a battle has not been included. Similarly, acts that could otherwise amount to a violation of the law but were not committed "in the context of or associated with" the armed conflict have not been included.

In every military action there is the requirement of proportionality, such that a military commander must weigh the military advantage to be gained as against civilian casualties. There is also the requirement that a distinction be made between legitimate and non-legitimate targets, which is highlighted by the prohibition on indiscriminate firing. In Sierra Leone, there were many instances

[289] ICC Elements of Crimes, article 8(2)(e)(v), footnote.

[290] It should be noted that due to the meaning in international law of the term "terrorism" and the types of acts to which this term is generally applied, such as hijacking planes, this category of crimes has not been considered in this report.

of significant civilian deaths that resulted from what appeared to be predominantly military actions and it is not possible to determine to the requisite degree of certainty whether the military attack was proportional or what was the intended target. In those cases where it is possible to make that determination, this report characterises such deaths as murders.

4.f.i Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II by members of the RUF, the RUF/NPFL and the RUF/AFRC

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, the following war crimes were committed:[291]

(a) **Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular—**

(i) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of tens of thousands of civilians for a variety of reasons, including for allegedly "collaborating" with forces aligned against the RUF movement, for supporting the elected Government and for failing to show sufficient support for the RUF movement, which was often determined on an arbitrary basis, and by a variety of means, including decapitations, disembowelling pregnant women and throwing babies into the bush or into burning houses, and by using a variety of weapons, including shooting people, hacking people to death with bladed weapons and by locking people in houses that were then set on fire;

(ii) **Torture**, for the infliction of severe pain and suffering on people under the custody or control of the RUF and their allies for the purposes of inflicting punishment or obtaining information, including by the means outlined below;

(iii) **Mutilation**, for the hundreds of mutilations, amputation of limbs, the carving of words into people's skin with razor blades and other similar acts;

(iv) **Corporal punishment**, for the beating and flogging of tens of thousands of civilians;

as well as for several other acts that inflicted violence to the life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, including the frequent instances of the infliction of severe pain and suffering by means such as the dripping of melted plastic into people's eyes and onto their bodies, setting people on fire, forcing people to lie on the ground and stare at the sun, cutting off people's genital organs and a variety of other similar acts;

(b) **Collective punishments**, for the arbitrary infliction of various degrees of punishment as reprisal actions for real or imagined wrongs on groups of civilians, such as the retaliatory killing of 100 people and the burning of 200 houses in Kailahun District in March 1992;

(c) **Taking of hostages**, for the abduction of civilians, their continued detention under threat of death or personal injury and thereby using the detainees as a bargaining tool to achieve various aims with third parties;

(d) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular—

(i) **humiliating and degrading treatment**, for the severe humiliation, degradation and violation of the dignity of tens of thousands of civilians, including by forcing traditional authorities and elders to sit on the floor, [292] by forcing adults to "frog

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[291] For those crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that are not listed here, there is no evidence that members of the RUF, RUF/NPFL, RUF/AFRC committed those crimes.

[292] Note that this element takes into account the cultural background of the victim, such that the infliction of these acts on elders, adults and women in the Sierra Leone context amounts to a violation of their dignity.

jump" or "pump", for shaving the heads of female abductees, by decapitating, mutilating and displaying corpses, severed body parts and internal organs in public places, by frequent acts of cannibalism, including the drinking of blood,[293] by forcing men to watch the rape of their wives, by forcing parents to watch the rape of their children, by gambling on the sex of a baby who has yet to be born and settling the bet by disemboweling the mother, for the use of detainees as human shields in a few cases and by keeping the civilian population in constant fear of being robbed, beaten, abducted, having their children abducted and having their houses burnt down and for a variety of other similar acts;

(ii) **rape,** for the rape, often by multiple assailants, of hundreds[294] of women and young girls, including girls as young as 10 and including the rape of women and girls who had been abducted as "wives";

(iii) **any form of indecent assault,** for sexual violence committed against thousands of civilians, including children, and for forcing people to have sex with members of their own families;

(e) **Pillage**, for the stealing of personal property including food, domestic animals, cooking utensils, money and valuable items from hundreds of thousands of civilians in villages and towns and at checkpoints, for the stealing of personal property from civilian residences and for the stealing of property from other buildings, including companies, organisations, churches and others, none of which was justified by military necessity;

(f) **The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without due process**, for the capture and execution of hundreds of civilians on varied grounds, in particular on the accusation of being a member, collaborator or relative of one of the other fighting forces, and for the infliction of often severe punishment for real or imagined wrongs, such as stealing or adultery, without any form of trial;

(g) **Threats to commit any of the foregoing acts**, for the daily threats meted out to civilians wherever the RUF, RUF/NPFL or RUF/AFRC had a presence to kill them, steal their property, beat them and commit a variety of other brutal actions against them.

4.f.ii Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II by members of the West Side Boys

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the West Side Boys committed the following war crimes:

(a) **Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular—**

(i) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians;

(ii) **Torture**, for the infliction of pain and suffering on people under the control of the West Side Boys, including beatings;

(iii) **Mutilation**, for various acts of mutilating civilians, including the carving of words into people's skin with razor blades;

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[293] Note that in the context of this crime, "persons" can also include dead people and that the victim does not necessarily need to be aware of the humiliation, degradation or other violation of dignity.

[294] It is likely that thousands of women and girls were raped as descriptions of "sexual assault", the "breaking of marital homes" and similar references likely refer to rape. However, this report has taken a cautious approach and only characterised an act as "rape" when the facts as described specifically meet the elements of the crime.

(iv) **Corporal punishment**, for the frequent instances of beating and flogging civilians;

(b) **Collective punishments**, for reprisal killings and other punishments inflicted in retaliation for military defeats suffered by the West Side Boys;

(c) Taking of hostages, for the capture of 40 UNOMSIL, ECOMOG and civil society workers, under the threat of continued detention, in August 1999 for the purpose of securing the release of the AFRC leader from RUF custody and for the capture of United Kingdom military personnel in August 2000, under threat of continued detention, for the purpose of seeking their integration into the SLA, the release of detained members of the West Side Boys and a review of the Lomé Peace Agreement;

(d) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular—

(i) **rape,** for the rape of scores of women;

(ii) **any form of indecent assault,** for sexual violence committed against hundreds of civilians, including children, and for forcing people to have sex with members of their own families;

(e) **Pillage**, for the stealing of property from thousands of civilians, including at checkpoints and from civilian residences, none of which was justified by military necessity.

4.f.iii Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II by members of the SLA

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the SLA committed the following war crimes:[295]

(a) **Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular—**

(i) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians for a variety of reasons, mainly for "collaborating" with the enemy, which was often determined on an arbitrary basis;

(ii) **Torture**, for the infliction of serious pain and suffering on people under the custody or control of the SLA for the purposes of inflicting punishment or obtaining information;

(iii) **Corporal punishment,** for the beating and flogging of hundreds of civilians, including traditional and local authorities;

(b) **Collective punishments**, for the targeting of towns and villages suspected of being supportive of the RUF and the consequent infliction of punishment on them, including the burning of property and the bombing of a prison;

(c) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular—

(i) **humiliating and degrading treatment**, for the severe humiliation, degradation and violation of the dignity of hundreds of civilians, including by forcing adults to "frog jump" or "pump", by forcing men to watch the rape of their wives and by keeping civilians in constant fear of being robbed or beaten by the armed forces that were supposed to be providing them with protection;

(ii) **rape,**[296] for the rape of scores of women and girls;

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[295] For those crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that are not listed here, there is no evidence that members of the SLA committed those crimes.

[296] There was no evidence that enforced prostitution was committed by the SLA during the conflict, although there was ample evidence of sexual slavery.

(d) **Pillage**, for the stealing of property including food from thousands of civilians, including at checkpoints and from civilian residences, none of which was justified by military necessity;
(e) **The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without due process**, for the capture and execution of hundreds of civilians accused of being "collaborators" often on an arbitrary basis, including having come from an RUF-held area, without any form of trial.

4.f.iv Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II by members of the CDF

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the CDF committed the following war crimes:

(a) **Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular—**
  (i) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, mainly people suspected of being members, relatives or collaborators of the RUF and their allies;
  (ii) **Torture**, for the infliction of pain and suffering on people under the control of the CDF, including the common use of FM ropes, detaining people in cages made of sharp sticks, pouring hot ashes on people and other similar acts;
  (iii) **Mutilation**, for various acts of mutilating civilians, including the cutting off and chewing of a woman's ear in Moyamba District;
  (iv) **Corporal punishment**, for the frequent instances of beating and flogging civilians, including traditional and local authorities;
(a) **Collective punishments**, for the targeting of towns and villages suspected of being supportive of the RUF and their allies and the consequent infliction of punishment on them, including the burning of property and the execution of inhabitants;
(h) Outrages upon personal dignity, in particular—
  (i) **humiliating and degrading treatment**, including forcing adults to "frog jump" or "pump", the decapitation and mutilation of corpses, targeting the traditional and local authorities and keeping the civilian population in constant fear of being physically violated;
  (ii) **rape,** for the rape of scores of women;
(b) **Pillage**, for the stealing of property from thousands of civilians, in particular at checkpoints, none of which was justified by military necessity;
(c) **The passing of sentences and the carrying out of executions without due process**, for the capture and execution of suspected RUF members and collaborators without any form of trial;
(d) **Threats to commit any of the foregoing acts**, including threatening to kill people and use their bodies as roadblocks in Port Loko District in March 1999.

4.f.v Violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II by members of ECOMOG

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of ECOMOG committed the following war crimes:

(a) **Violence to life, health and physical or mental well-being of persons, in particular—**
  (i) **Murder**, for the intentional or reckless killing of hundreds of civilians, including the killing of 100 alleged RUF supporters in Kailahun District in May 1998 and

killings that occurred as a result of the artillery and aerial bombardment of market places and other heavily populated civilian areas;[297]

(ii) **Corporal punishment**, for the frequent instances of beating and flogging civilians;

(b) **Pillage**, for the stealing of property from thousands of civilians, often at checkpoints, none of which was justified by military necessity.

4.g Other serious violations of international humanitarian law (Article 4): The law

Article 4 of the Statute of the Special Court reads as follows:

"The Special Court shall have the power to prosecute persons who committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:

(a) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities;

(b) Intentionally directing attacks against personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, as long as they are entitled to the protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict;

(c) Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities."

These provisions give the Special Court jurisdiction over additional crimes under international humanitarian law that have achieved the status of customary international law, including the imposition of individual criminal responsibility for their violation. They are also all included in the Rome Statute of the ICC both for conflicts of an international nature[298] and for conflicts that are not international in nature.[299] As these crimes were not included in the Statutes of the ICTY or ICTR, there is no jurisprudence directly on these provisions and the only authoritative pronouncement on the elements of the crimes comes from the Elements of Crimes of the ICC and in the writings of eminent jurists.

a) Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population

The elements of the crime of intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population are:[300]

1. The perpetrator directed an attack.

2. The object of the attack was a civilian population as such or individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities.

3. The perpetrator intended the civilian population as such or individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities to be the object of the attack.

4. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

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[297] While this report characterises these deaths as murder, more information is needed as to whether civilians were the target during these attacks and/or whether these deaths were proportionate to the military advantage gained.

[298] See Rome Statute of the ICC, article 8(2)(b).

[299] See Rome Statute of the ICC, article 8(2)(e).

[300] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 8(2)(e)(i).



5. The perpetrator was aware of factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

The crime of intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population confirms the fundamental and long-standing distinction between combatants and civilians[301] and the prohibition on intentionally directing attacks against the latter.

b) Intentionally directing attacks against personnel and objects of humanitarian and peacekeeping missions

The elements of the crime of intentionally directing attacks against personnel and objects of humanitarian and peacekeeping missions are:[302]

1. The perpetrator directed an attack.

2. The object of the attack was personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles involved in a humanitarian assistance or peacekeeping mission in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

3. The perpetrator intended such personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles so involved to be the object of the attack.

4. Such personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles were entitled to that protection given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict.

5. The perpetrator was aware of the factual circumstances that established that protection.

6. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.

7. The perpetrator was aware of factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

The crime of intentionally directing attacks against personnel and objects of humanitarian and peacekeeping missions also recognises the fundamental distinction between civilians and combatants.[303] This provision is explicitly directed towards such missions in recognition of the need to extend special protection to them in light of their nature and purpose.[304]

These missions will only be entitled to such protection so long as they retain their civilian character, that is, provided that they do not take a direct part in hostilities, which has been defined as undertaking acts of war that, by their nature or purpose, are likely to cause actual harm to personnel or equipment of the enemy armed forces.[305] These provisions expressly do not apply to "United Nations operations authorized by the Security Council as an enforcement action under Chapter VII

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[301] See earlier, section X.

[302] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 8(2)(e)(iii).

[303] This is an evolving area of international law and is currently under extensive discussion in the Sixth (Legal) Committee of the United Nations General Assembly: see http://www.un.org/law/UNsafetyconvention/index.html, last visited on 28 February 2004.

[304] See *Report of the Secretary-General on the establishment of the Special Court*, UN Doc. S/2000/955, para. 16.

[305] *Prosecutor v Rutaganda*, Case No. ICTR-96-3, ICTR Trial Chamber, Judgment, 6 December 1999, para. 100.



of the Charter of the United Nations, in which any of the personnel are engaged as combatants against armed forces and to which the law of international armed conflict applies".[306]

c) The recruitment and use of child soldiers

The elements of the war crime of the recruitment and use of child soldiers are:[307]

1. The perpetrator conscripted or enlisted one or more persons into an armed force or group[308] or used one or more persons to participate actively in hostilities.
2. Such person or persons were under the age of 15 years.
3. The perpetrator knew or should have known that such person or persons were under the age of 15 years.
4. The conduct took place in the context of and was associated with an armed conflict not of an international character.
5. The perpetrator was aware of factual circumstances that established the existence of an armed conflict.

Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15, or using them to participate actively in hostilities, is a war crime under all conditions, whether the child is recruited into national armed forces or armed groups, whether the conflict is international or non-international and whether the child is coerced or has volunteered. This crime was first included in Additional Protocol II, article 4(3)(c) and subsequently in other instruments, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989, article 38(3) and the Rome Statute for the ICC, article 8(2)(e)(vii).[309] An examination of State practice and *opinio juris* in this area, which is beyond the scope of the current report, demonstrates that the act of conscription, enlistment and use of child soldiers is a crime under customary international law.[310]

4.h Other serious violations of international humanitarian law (Article 4): The facts

As noted, there was an armed conflict in Sierra Leone that began in March 1991 and continued until January 2002. As such, IHL – including the crimes listed in article 4 of the Statute of the Special Court – applied across the whole territory of Sierra Leone for that time period both in those places where actual combat was not taking place as well as those areas where fighting was occurring.

In respect of the crime of intentionally directing attacks against peacekeeping personnel, it should be recalled that the Rome Statute of the ICC reflects customary international law in limiting the crime to intentional attacks against personnel and objects "as long as they are entitled to the protection

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[306] *Report of the Secretary General on the Scope of Legal Protection under the Convention on the Safety of United Nations and Associated Personnel*, UN Doc. A/55/637, endnote 1.

[307] See the Elements of Crimes of the ICC, article 8(2)(e)(vii) and below, notes 199-200.

[308] With respect to armed conflicts that are international in nature, this element prohibits the conscription or enlistment of children into the national armed forces: see the Rome Statute, article 8(2)(b)(xxvi).

[309] The entry into force in 2002 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989 on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict raises the minimum age for compulsory recruitment and participation in hostilities to 18. This signifies the gradual emergence of a new standard, albeit one that has not yet reached the status of customary international law.

[310] See NPWJ and UNICEF, *International Criminal Justice and Children*, 2002, available from www.npwj.org, and the Amicus Brief submitted by UNICEF and others, including NPWJ, to the Special Court for Sierra Leone in *The Prosecutor v Norman*, SCSL-03-08-PT-129, filed on 21 January 2004, both of which go into this issue in great detail.



given to civilians or civilian objects under the international law of armed conflict". The critical question is, therefore, whether UNAMSIL military peacekeepers had civilian status or whether they were combatants. UNAMSIL was established by the Security Council acting under Chapter VII of the Charter,[311] authorising the use of force in certain circumstances, which gives rise to the *prima facie* conclusion that they were combatants, rather than civilians.[312] It is therefore submitted that UNAMSIL peacekeepers did not have civilian status, at least not to the level of certainty required to sustain a criminal conviction. As such, this report considers that the elements of this crime are not made out in relation to various actions against UNAMSIL peacekeepers.

4.h.i Other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:

(a) **Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities**, for the general and specific attacks committed against the civilian population as outlined above and the attacks against individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities as outlined above;

(b) **Intentionally directing attacks against humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles**, for the attacks committed against humanitarian personnel and objects, specifically the abduction of personnel of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) and World Health Organisation (WHO) and the stealing of property from the United Nations Higher Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) at the IDP camp in Bo and Pujehun Districts;

(c) **Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities**, for the abduction of tens of thousands of children[313] under the age of 15 years, some being as young as 10 at the time of their abduction, conscripting them into the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC forces and using them to participate actively in hostilities and in the commission of crimes under international humanitarian law as members of the regular forces and as members of "Small Boy Units" and "Small Girl Units".

4.h.ii Other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by members of the West Side Boys

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the West Side Boys committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:

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311 Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999), 22 October 1999.

312 See Shraga, D, 'Current Developments: UN Peacekeeping Operations: Applicability of International Humanitarian Law and Responsibility for Operations-Related Damage' (2000) 94(2) *American Journal of International Law* 406; see in particular page 409, in which Ms Shraga states that "The [Secretary-General's] instructions apply to members of UN forces when they are actively engaged in situations of armed conflict as combatants ... They *accordingly* take effect in enforcement actions when the use of force is authorized *in pursuance of a Chapter VII mandate*, and in peacekeeping operations *when it is permitted in self-defence*' (emphasis added).

313 The first instance of recruitment of children by the RUF/NPFL was recorded in March 1991; children would continue to be abducted and used as soldiers throughout the conflict by the RUF and their allies until at least June 2000, which is the last recorded instance of this practice.



(a) **Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities**, for the specific attack against the civilian population as outlined above and for attacks against individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities as outlined above;
(b) **Intentionally directing attacks against humanitarian and peacekeeping personnel, installations, material, units or vehicles**, for the abduction of 40 UNOMSIL and civil society workers in August 1999.[314]

4.h.iii Other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by members of the SLA
During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, the following war crimes were committed
(a) **Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities**, for the specific attacks against the civilian population as outlined above and for attacks against individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities as outlined above;
(b) **Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities**, for using children under the age of 15 to carry arms and ammunition to the warfront in Pujehun District in January 1992.

4.h.iv Other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by members of the CDF
During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the CDF committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:
(a) **Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities**, for the general and specific attacks against a civilian population as outlined above and for attacks against individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities as outlined above;
(b) **Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities**, for the initiation of boys aged under 15 in Kenema in May 1997, the use of children aged as young as 13 in hostilities in Kenema in 1999, the initiation of children aged below 15 in Pujehun District in late 1997, the use of children aged under 15 as spies and soldiers in Pujehun District in February 1998 and the conscription of children and their use as soldiers in Kailahun in May 1998.

4.h.v Other serious violations of international humanitarian law committed by members of ECOMOG
During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the war crimes that were committed, members of ECOMOG committed the following serious violations of international humanitarian law:

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[314] The members of the United Kingdom armed forces captured in August 2000 were clearly combatants and, as such, the elements of this crime in relation to that incident are not satisfied.

(a) **Intentionally directing attacks against the civilian population as such or against individual civilians not taking direct part in hostilities**, for attacks against individual civilians not taking a direct part in hostilities as outlined above.

4.i Crimes under Sierra Leonean law (Article 5): the law

Article 5 of the Statute of the Special Court reads as follows:

> "The Special Court shall have the power to prosecute persons who have committed the following crimes under Sierra Leonean law:
>
> (a) Offences relating to the abuse of girls under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1926 (Cap. 31):
>
> (i) Abusing a girl under 13 years of age, contrary to section 6;
>
> (ii) Abusing a girl between 13 and 14 years of age, contrary to section 7;
>
> (iii) Abduction of a girl for immoral purposes, contrary to section 12.
>
> (b) Offences relating to the wanton destruction of property under the Malicious Damage Act, 1861:
>
> (i) Setting fire to dwelling - houses, any person being therein, contrary to section 2;
>
> (ii) Setting fire to public buildings, contrary to sections 5 and 6;
>
> (iii) Setting fire to other buildings, contrary to section 6."

Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000) explicitly refers to Sierra Leonean law as being among the provisions over which the Special Court should have jurisdiction. The provisions were selected to cover specific situations that were "considered to be either unregulated or inadequately regulated under international law."[315] The elements of these crimes are governed by Sierra Leone Statute and case law[316] and, as such, do not require any connection with an armed conflict.

a) Abuse of girls

The provisions of the *Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1926* listed in the Statute of the Special Court are designed to protect girls under the age of 16 from sexual abuse and exploitation. They vary in terms of the ages of the children they protect, from under 13 in the case of section 6, through between 13 and 14 in the case of section 7, to under 16 in the case of section 12. The different crimes are considered to have different levels of seriousness and entail different penalties under Sierra Leone law, from 15 years in the case of section 6, which is a felony, to 2 years in the case of sections 7 and 12, which are misdemeanours.

The elements for the crimes under sections 6 and 7 are that the accused "unlawfully and carnally" knew and abused a girl within the stated ages. The elements for section 12 are that the accused took or caused to be taken an unmarried girl under the age of 16 out of the possession of and against the will of her father or mother or any other person having lawful charge of her.

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[315] *Report of the Secretary-General on the Establishment of the Special Court*, UN Doc. S/2000/955, para. 19.

[316] In this regard, it should be noted that regular case reporting in Sierra Leone ceased in 1973 for a number of reasons, mainly to do with lack of resources, and it was only in 2002-3 that the first steps started being taken towards its reintroduction.

There are two possible defences to the crimes under these provisions. First, 'belief of age' is a defence to the charge: thus if the accused can prove that he had reasonable cause to believe the victim was of or over the required age, this will be a complete defence.[317] In addition, in keeping with the common law applicable in Sierra Leone related to these types of crimes,[318] if the accused can show that the victim was his wife, particularly under the customary law of Sierra Leone, this will also be a defence.[319] However, consent of the girl is no defence to the crime, as lack of consent is not an element of the crime.

b) Wanton destruction of property

These provisions only cover setting fire to specific buildings, namely dwelling houses, public buildings and "other" buildings, which include any type of building not explicitly mentioned elsewhere in the *Malicious Damage Act, 1867*.[320] It should, however, be emphasised that setting fire to a house will only fall within the jurisdiction of the Special Court should a person actually be inside, due to the elements of section 2 of the *Malicious Damage Act, 1867*.[321] Furthermore, the Statute of the Special Court does not incorporate the other provisions of the *Malicious Damage Act, 1867*, thereby excluding setting fire to buildings other than those listed above and excluding other types of damage to all buildings.

An essential element of this crime is that there was actual burning, no matter how slight, of some part of the building or property in respect of which the charge is laid.[322] Each of the crimes listed in article 5(b) constitute a felony under Sierra Leone law, with penalties ranging from 14 years (section 6), through 16 years (section 5) to life imprisonment (section 2).

The mental element is that the act must be committed "unlawfully and maliciously" in order to constitute an offence. In this instance, "malice" does not mean malevolence or ill will, but refers instead to the intention of the accused. The mental element is therefore that the accused either intended to do the act, without just cause or excuse,[323] or was reckless and foresaw or ought to have foreseen the result, even if that result was not necessarily intended.[324]

4.j Crimes under Sierra Leonean law (Article 5): the facts

Sierra Leone law applied throughout the territory of Sierra Leone throughout the time period covered by the conflict, without the need to prove any contextual elements such as those applicable to crimes against humanity (a widespread or systematic attack against a civilian population) or

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317 *Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1926*, proviso section 15(3).

318 Many common law countries have abolished immunity for spousal rape, considering it to be a breach of human rights, in particular those relating to the dignity of the person and discrimination on the basis of sex; arguably, Sierra Leone law also constitutes a breach of the rights of the child.

319 Thompson, B., *The Criminal Law of Sierra Leone*, 1999, University Press of America, USA, p. 70.

320 These are: a church, chapel or other place of divine worship (section 1); a house (with no person inside), outhouse, manufactory, farm building or similar building (section 3) and railway stations (section 4).

321 Apparently, the person inside the house may be the accused person: *R v Pardoe* (1894) 15 Digest 1027, 11-547.

322 *R v Stallion* (1833) 15 Digest 1026, 11-541 (no flame visible); *R v Parker* (1839) 15 Digest 1027, 11-542 (charring); and *R v Russell* (1842) 15 Digest 1027, 11-543 (scorching).

323 *Bromage v Prosser* (1825) 4B & C 247, 255 per Bayley J.

324 *R v Pembliton* (1874) LR 2CCR 119, 122 per Blackburn J.

violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II and other serious violations of international humanitarian law (the existence of an armed conflict). It should, however, be noted that an amnesty applies in relation to crimes committed before 7 July 1999,[325] so that those crimes cannot be prosecuted in the national courts of Sierra Leone or before the Special Court. Nevertheless, this report characterises acts as crimes where the elements of the crimes are met, irrespective of whether they can be prosecuted or not.

One of the signature acts committed during the conflict in Sierra Leone was the widespread burning of residential houses. While this is a crime under Sierra Leone law,[326] it is not a crime over which the Special Court has jurisdiction: the Special Court is limited to those circumstances in which a person is inside the house at the time it is burnt. Similarly, while wanton destruction of property is a crime under international law, it is not a crime over which the Special Court has jurisdiction. Therefore, while there is evidence of the burning of hundreds of thousands of houses – effectively destroying the lives of hundreds of thousands of people – this in itself is not a crime that can be prosecuted before the Special Court.

4.j.i Crimes under Sierra Leone law committed by members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity, war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC committed the following crimes under Sierra Leone law:

(a) **Offences relating to the abuse of girls under the Prevention of Cruelty to Children Act, 1926**, for the rape of scores of girls aged under 13 years, with some aged as young as 10, the rape of girls aged between 13 and 14 years and the abduction of girls aged under 16 years for their use as "wives";[327]

(b) **Offences relating to the wanton destruction of property under the Malicious Damage Act, 1861**, for the burning of people in residential premises, including locking people inside houses before setting fire to them, and for the burning of public buildings, including schools, courthouses and other buildings;

4.j.ii Crimes under Sierra Leone law committed by members of the West Side Boys

During the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, in addition to the crimes against humanity, war crimes and other crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court that were committed, members of the West Side Boys committed the following crimes under Sierra Leone law:

(a) **Offences relating to the wanton destruction of property under the Malicious Damage Act, 1861**, for the burning of people in residential premises, in particular the locking of 73 people in a house prior to it being set on fire in April 1999.

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325 See below for a discussion of the temporal jurisdiction of the Special Court, including the issue of the Lomé Amnesty.

326 *Malicious Damage Act, 1861*, section 3.

327 This report proceeds on the basis that the fact that members of the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC labelled these girls as their "wives" does not establish there was a marital relationship sufficient to mount a defence to this charge.



5. Temporal jurisdiction of the Special Court (Article 1(1))

The Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone states that its temporal jurisdiction runs from 30 November 1996 to a future date as yet undetermined.[328] This date was selected on the basis of three considerations during the negotiations:

(a) the temporal jurisdiction should be reasonably limited in time so that the Prosecutor is not overburdened and the Court overloaded;
(b) the beginning date should correspond to an event or a new phase in the conflict without necessarily having any political connotations; and
(c) it should encompass the most serious crimes committed by persons of all political and military groups and in all geographical areas of the country.

Three different dates were discussed in this context:

(a) 30 November 1996 (i.e., the date of the failed Abidjan Peace Accords);
(b) 25 May 1997 (i.e., when the AFRC launched its coup d'état against the government of Sierra Leone); and
(c) 6 January 1999 (i.e., when the AFRC and RUF launched their attack on Freetown).

The date of 25 May 1997 was rejected as having too many political overtones, while 6 January 1999 was rejected as giving the impression of favouring Freetown over the provinces. The date of 30 November 1996 was therefore considered the most appropriate, as it represented the first time the fighting factions had attempted to reach a peaceful settlement of the conflict. Additionally, it was considered to encompass the most serious crimes committed in the provinces, thereby ensuring the Court would not be too 'Freetown-centred'. Sierra Leone and the United Nations therefore agreed that this would be a suitable starting date for the Court. It has to be queried whether these reasons provide sufficient justification for setting a start date for the Court that is halfway through the conflict, a compromise criticized by Sierra Leoneans from all along the social, political and professional spectrum.[329] The perception in Sierra Leone is that the Statute unjustly favours Freetown over the provinces, as the November 1996 date corresponds to the time when the capital first became a target of attack. For the provinces, the conflict has generally been one long, continuous experience from the beginning of the 1990's, whereas Freetown witnessed intermittent, although extreme, episodes of violence only from the mid-1990's onwards.

Following consultations with civil society groups and others, the Government of Sierra Leone sought to alter the date so as to give the Court temporal jurisdiction over the whole of the conflict in Sierra Leone, i.e. commencing in 1991. This was sought both to provide greater recognition to the situation in the provinces throughout the war, as well as to be more faithful to the tenets of IHL, which applies from the commencement of a conflict rather than at an arbitrarily-set date midway

[328] Statute of the Special Court, article 1(1).

[329] Freetown newspapers, for example, have consistently attacked this issue on numerous occasions. In addition, it was criticised in every one of the 26 Special Court Training Seminars conducted by NPWJ, which were held in Freetown, Bo, Kenema and Mile 91 in 2001, when negotiations on the creation of the Special Court were still ongoing. These seminars attracted a total of over 600 participants, including civil society and human rights organisations, lawyers, Paramount Chiefs, police, teachers, combatants and ex-combatants: not a single voice was raised in support of retaining the start-date at 1996.

through the conflict.[330] However, the general feeling within the United Nations was that this issue should not be reopened, lest 'delicate' balances achieved during the negotiations be upset, thereby requiring the re-opening of other aspects of the Statute or Agreement. In addition, the United Nations considered that an extension of the Court's temporal jurisdiction would increase the burden on the Prosecutor and the Court to an unacceptable level. The United Nations also maintained that the Prosecutor would in any event also be relying on evidence relating to events before 1996 (provided it is relevant to cases before the Court), therefore crimes committed prior to 1996 would not necessarily be excluded from consideration by the Court.[331] In order to avoid further delay, the Government therefore withdrew its request, while still maintaining the legitimacy of the reasons behind making it.[332]

Another factor to be considered when examining the Special Court's temporal jurisdiction is the amnesty granted under the Lomé Peace Agreement of 7 July 1999. The UN Secretary-General denied that this would act as any bar to the determination of the start-date of the Special Court's jurisdiction, reasoning that the "United Nations has consistently maintained the position that amnesty cannot be granted in respect of international crimes, such as genocide, crimes against humanity or other serious violations of international humanitarian law."[333] In addition, he reiterated the disclaimer issued by his Special Representative for Sierra Leone at the time of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement to the effect that "the amnesty provisions contained in article XI of the Agreement ('absolute and free pardon') shall not apply to international crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law."[334] However, the Statute acknowledges that amnesties will be valid in respect of the included provisions of Sierra Leone law.[335] This makes for a situation in which the Special Court will be able to hear violations of international humanitarian law committed since 30 November 1996 but only hear violations of the Sierra Leone provisions committed from the date of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, namely 7 July 1999, in effect creating a dual start-date for the Special Court's temporal jurisdiction.

As noted, international humanitarian law begins to apply from the moment hostilities commence until such time as there is a conclusion of peace or a peaceful settlement is reached. Thus international humanitarian law applied across the territory of Sierra Leone from 1991, the date that hostilities first commenced. As such, this report looks at the time period of the whole of the conflict, from 1991 until 2002, when considering what violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law were committed in Sierra Leone during the conflict.

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330 11th Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, 7 September 2001, UN Doc. S/2001/857.

331 Letter from the Office of Legal Affairs to the Government of Sierra Leone (19 October 2001).

332 Letter from the Government of Sierra Leone to the Office of Legal Affairs (29 November 2001).

333 *Report of the Secretary-General on the Establishment of the Special Court*, UN Doc. S/2000/955, para. 22.

334 *Ibid*, para. 23.

335 Article 10 of the Statute provides: "An amnesty granted to any person falling within the jurisdiction of the Special Court in respect of the crimes referred to in articles 2 to 4 of the present Statute shall not be a bar to prosecution." The omission of Article 5, which inscribes the provisions of Sierra Leone law, indicates that amnesties granted in respect of these crimes will be a bar to prosecution.



6. Personal jurisdiction of the Special Court (Article 1(1))

Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000) states that the Special Court should have jurisdiction over those who bear the "greatest responsibility" for crimes committed within Sierra Leone. This was understood to be a limitation on the number of accused who would be tried, according to their command authority and the gravity and scale of crimes committed. The UN Secretary-General's report recommended this be altered to "those most responsible" in order to widen the potential pool of defendants before the Special Court.[336] However, the Security Council refused to accept this change, preferring instead to remain consistent with the wording of Resolution 1315 (2000).[337] Therefore, the Statute retains the wording of "those who bear the greatest responsibility". It should be emphasised that article 1 contains no other limitations on personal jurisdiction, in particular it does not limit jurisdiction based on nationality, political affiliation or official position.

Article 1 also specifically refers to the ability of the Special Court to try peacekeepers who otherwise satisfy the requirements of the personal jurisdiction. Article 1 basically replicates what is found in most Status of Forces Agreements, namely those agreements between troop-contributing and troop-receiving States. According to these types of agreements, the primary responsibility for prosecuting peacekeepers for crimes committed on the territory of the recipient State remains with the sending State. Article 1 contains an exception to this principle, whereby it may be possible to try peacekeepers before the Special Court if the sending State is unwilling or unable genuinely to investigate or prosecute peacekeepers for crimes committed in Sierra Leone. The Special Court may hear such cases upon receiving authorisation from the Security Council,[338] which may act on the proposal of any State.[339]

The aspect of the Special Court that has, perhaps, provoked the most public debate is its position vis-à-vis accused below the ages of 18 at the time of the alleged commission of the crimes. Pursuant to article 7 of the Statute, the Special Court shall have no jurisdiction over persons under the age of 15 at the time of the alleged commission of the crime but persons between the ages of 15 and 18 at the time of alleged commission of the crime may be brought before the Special Court,[340] although the Prosecutor is directed to have resort to alternative truth and reconciliation mechanisms, where appropriate. If convicted, juvenile offenders may not be sentenced to imprisonment, instead the Special Court may order a variety of correctional care. Nevertheless, the personal jurisdiction limitation of bearing the "greatest responsibility" always made it unlikely that children aged below 15 at the time of the alleged commission of the crime would be prosecuted before the Special Court; more recently, the Prosecutor of the Special Court has stated publicly that no child will be prosecuted before the Special Court.[341]

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[336] *Report of the Secretary-General on the Establishment of the Special Court*, UN Doc. S/2000/955, paras. 29-31.

[337] Letter from the Security Council to the Secretary-General, 22 December 2000.

[338] Although many Status of Forces Agreements require the consent of the sending State before trials are launched against their forces, there does not appear to be such a limitation in the Statute of the Special Court, presumably due to the involvement of the Security Council.

[339] As at the time of writing, no peacekeepers have been publicly indicted by the Prosecutor of the Special Court.

[340] The position represents a break with the Statute for the ICC, which provides that the "Court shall have no jurisdiction over any person who was under the age of 18 at the time of the alleged commission of a crime": article 26.

[341] Press release of the Special Court, "Special Court Prosecutor Says He Will Not Prosecute Children", 2 November 2002.



7. Individual criminal responsibility (Article 6)

7.a Direct criminal responsibility

Following well-established principles of customary international law, article 6 of the Statute states that any person who planned, instigated, ordered, committed or otherwise aided and abetted in the planning, preparation or execution of a crime referred to in articles 2 to 4 shall be individually responsible for the crime. The accused does not necessarily have to be a member of the armed forces in order to attract liability; civilians, for example, can also be held criminally responsible for violations of the laws of war.[342] Criminal responsibility for the crimes contained in article 5, namely those under Sierra Leonean law, falls to be determined by the relevant laws of Sierra Leone.

The fact that the accused was acting under the orders of a Government or superior does not relieve the individual of his or her criminal responsibility, although – according to general principles of law as well as the Statute – it may be taken into account in mitigation of sentence. According to these principles of liability, if a commander orders that certain acts be committed, he or she would bear direct responsibility for those acts, as the Statute specifically refers to 'ordering' that the act be committed as a basis for liability.

7.b Command responsibility

The laws of war also impose what is known as "command responsibility", referring to the principle by which a superior will be responsible for the acts of subordinates under his or her control.[343] This concept, which is longstanding in military hierarchies,[344] has also become a well-established principle in customary international law, particularly following its development at the Nuremberg, Tokyo and post-Nuremberg Trials.

Command responsibility is concerned with being in a position of command, namely that the commander is in a certain relationship towards his or her subordinates, rather than actually giving commands. Thus the commander will be responsible for any acts of his or her subordinate, irrespective of whether the commander actually issued an order to commit such acts. If a command is actually given, as noted, the commander will bear direct responsibility for acts carried out pursuant to that command. The theory of command responsibility as been described by the ICTY as follows:

> "The distinct legal character of the two types of superior responsibility must be noted. While the criminal liability of a superior for positive acts follows from general principles of accomplice liability ... the criminal responsibility of superiors for failing to take measures to prevent or repress the unlawful conduct of their subordinates is best understood when seen against the principle that criminal responsibility for omissions is incurred only where there exists a legal obligation to act. As is most clearly evidenced in the case of military commanders ... international law imposes an affirmative duty on superiors to prevent persons under their control from committing violations of international humanitarian law,

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342 See above, discussion on violations of common article 3 and Additional Protocol II.

343 See, in general, Bantekas, I., 'The Contemporary Law of Superior Responsibility' (1999) 93(3) *American Journal of International Law* 573.

344 See, for example, Charles VII's Ordinance "Ordonnances des Rois de France de la Troisieme Race", cited in Meron, T., *Henry's Laws and Shakespeare's Wars*, 1993, Cambridge University Press, p.149, fn.40.

> and it is ultimately this duty that provides the basis for, and defines the contours of, the imputed criminal responsibility under Article 7(3) of the Statute."[345]

This type of responsibility is applicable in two situations: first, where the superior knew or ought to have known the acts were about to be committed or were being committed and did nothing to stop their commission. Second, where the superior knew that such acts had been committed and failed to punish those responsible for their commission. The ICTY Trial Chamber has described the relevant elements for the imposition of command responsibility in the following way: (i) the existence of a superior-subordinate relationship; (ii) that the superior knew or had reason to know that the criminal act was about to be or had been committed; and (iii) that the superior failed to take the necessary and reasonable measures to prevent the criminal act or punish the perpetrator.[346] As with direct responsibility, command responsibility is not limited to military personnel but extends also to civilian commanders. It is also worth emphasising that the principle of command responsibility does not limit or extinguish the individual criminal responsibility of the subordinates for the acts they have committed.

Command responsibility applies during any armed conflict, both international and non-international in nature. The ICTY Appeals Chamber addressed this issue recently, stating that, "the fact that it was in the course of an internal armed conflict that a war crime was about to be committed or was committed is not relevant to the responsibility of the commander; that only goes to the characteristics of the particular crime and not to the responsibility of the commander. The basis of the commander's responsibility lies in his obligations as commander of troops making up an organised military force under his command, and not in the particular theatre in which the act was committed by a member of that military force."[347]

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[345] *Prosecutor v Delelic et al*, Case No. IT-96-21-T, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Judgement, 16 November 1998, para. 334.

[346] *Ibid*, para. 346; the first two of these grounds was appealed and the Appeals Chamber upheld the decision of the Trial Chamber in this respect.

[347] *Prosecutor v Hadzihasanovic, Alagic and Kubura*, Case No. IT-01-47, ICTY Appeals Chamber, Decision on Interlocutory Appeal Challenging Jurisdiction in Relation to Command Responsibility, 16 July 2003, para. 20.



Chapter Five: Factual Analysis



C. Northern Province

a. Bombali District

1. Introduction

Bombali District is in the centre-north of Sierra Lone. The town of Makeni is both the district headquarters of Bomalia, and the administrative centre of the Northern Province. The northern boundary of Bombali District is formed by the Republic of Guinea. Koinadugu District is found to the east and north east of Bombali District, and Tonkalili District is located to the south and south east. Kambia and Port Loko Districts border Bombali District to the west.

There are 13 chiefdoms in Bombali District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter Town
Biriwa	Kamabai
Bombali Sebora	Makeni
Gbanti Kamaranka	Kamaranka
Gbendembu Ndowahun	Kalangba
Libeisaygahun	Batkanu
Magbaiamba Ndowahun	Hunduwa
Makari Gbanti	Masongbon
Paki Masabong	Mapaki
Safroko Limba	Binkolo
Sanda Loko	Kamalo
Sanda Tendaren	Mataboi
Sella Limba	Kamakwie
Tambakha	Fintonia

A main highway runs from the Western Area through Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Makeni (Bombali Sebora). At Makeni, the highway splits. The southern fork runs to Magburaka, the headquarter town of Tonkalili District. The northern fork runs through the towns of Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) and Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom) to Kabala, the headquarter town of Koinadugu District. Makeni and Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) are linked by a poor quality secondary road that runs north-south through the towns of Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) and Kamalo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). Running north from Kamakwie, the road continues to a ferry point over the Little Scarcies River into Tambahka Chiefdom. A route running north through Tambahka Chiefdom leads directly to the international border with Guinea and the Guinean town of Madina Oula. From Kamakwie, a road runs west over the Little Scaries River into Kambia District, and the town of Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District) and Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District). A route runs east from the main Makeni-Kabala highway nearby Karina, through Gbendembu, Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom) to Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom). From Batkanu, the road continues west into the northern chiefdoms of Port Loko District, ending at Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom, Port Loko District).

The Little Scarcies River runs latitudinally through the north of Bombali District, forming the boundary between Sella Limba and Tambakha Chiefdoms. It also forms the boundary between

Bombali and Kambia Districts before running into Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom (Port Loko District).

Bombali District was not directly affected by the conflict until early 1994. Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces attacked a number of locations in Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom on the boundary with Port Loko District. During the RUF attacks, which lasted for around two weeks, civilians were targeted, killed and raped. Many homes were burned down. SLA forces stationed Makeni were involved in countering RUF incursions in Tonkolili District to the south. During 1994, civilian unrest and mistrust of the SLA boiled over into a demonstration in Makeni Town (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), which was brutally suppressed by SLA forces. RUF activity in early 1995 was concentrated on attacking the Western Area, through major assaults on town like Port Loko (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). RUF forces briefly extended their activity into Kambia District in early 1995. In May 1995, RUF established a base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), a village on land between two rivers that is inaccessible by land except by an impractical detour. From Ro-Source, RUF forces attacked nearby villages raping women, abducting civilians to carry stolen items, and burning down houses. Later in the year, RUF forces established a base at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). The RUF forward operating bases in 1995 were in the Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and later at Camp Fol-Fol in the South of Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District.

Before the Parliamentary and Presidential elections scheduled for 26 February 1996, RUF forces attacked villages on Batkanu- Gbendembu road, killing civilians and looting property. A civilian was burnt alive in his vehicle by RUF forces. RUF forces also attacked Kamakwie Town (Sella Limba Chiefdom), in the north of Bombali District, opening their attack with indiscriminate fire from with RPG. RUF forces killed and cut open the stomach of a farmer, and shot a deaf and mute man before withdrawing to their camp at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). The elections in Bombali District passed without any widespread violence, and the Abidjan Peace Accord was signed in late 1996. The ceasefire held until early May 1997, when RUF forces again attacked Kamakwie, meeting no resistance from the SLA. Here they seized the contents of an SLA ammunition dump. The RUF again withdraw to their camp at Masonkorie.

On 25 May 1997, element of the SLA overthrew the elected government and formed a military regime called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Shortly after the coup, the RUF and AFRC joined. RUF forces took up positions in Bombali District at Karina and Kamabai (both in Biriwa Chiefdom), taking control of the prosperous agricultural area. In Karina, RUF forces shot dead ten civilians attending a Muslim feast, and abducted a large number of others to be trained to fight for the RUF/AFRC or used as sex slaves by RUF/AFRC members. Other settlements around Karina were attacked. In late 1997, Guinean long-range artillery fire from Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District) forced the RUF/AFRC to temporarily abandon the Ro-Source base. They established a new base at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District). Relations between Nigerian forces stationed within Sierra Leone and the RUF/AFRC deteriorated rapidly across 1997 as Nigerian forces, given an ECOMOG mandate in late 1997, used force to police a trade and arms embargo. In late December, ECOMOG jets bombed RUF/AFRC positions outside of Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), claiming that the RUF/AFRC was constructing a runway to allow arms supplies to enter the country.



In early February, ECOMOG forces attacked Freetown, dislodging the combined RUF/AFRC forces and forcing their retreat into provincial Sierra Leone. On 14 February, heavily armed RUF/AFRC forces retreating from the Western Area began concentrating in Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), commencing a 17 day spree of looting and violence known as "Operation Pay Yourself". RUF/AFRC forces performed house to house searches, stealing valuable items and food from civilians. In early March, ECOMOG commenced provincial operations and moved from Port Loko (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) through Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Makeni, establishing a base at Makeni's Teko Barracks. CDF forces deployed in the town, and a hunt for "collaborators" began. ECOMOG also occupied the northern towns of Kamalo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) and Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom).

Following ECOMOG's arrival in Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces dispersed throughout Bombali District, staging hit-and-run attacks on settlement on the Makeni-Kamalo axis, and attacking towns in the northern Tambakha Chiefdom. In the chiefdom headquarter of Fintonia (Tambakha Chiefdom), RUF forces executed 11 civilians and burned down large numbers of houses. Civilians from the town were abducted to assist RUF/AFRC forces in navigating the dense jungle terrain. In late April, RUF/AFRC forces amputated the arms from over ten civilians in Komoyah (Tambakha Chiefdom). They erected a rudimentary checkpoint, a rope across the road and tied the amputated arms along the length of the rope, leaving the amputees for dead nearby. Mid-year, towns on the Batkanu-Karina axis, and throughout the north of Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom came under attack from RUF/AFRC forces. RUF/AFRC forces strengthened their positions in Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom) and commenced frequent food-finding missions or "Jar Jar" throughout the west of the Chiefdom. By August, RUF/AFRC forces were again active in Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom). ECOMOG artillery shelled the base from Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom) for seven days continuously, leaving the base littered with the corpses of RUF/AFRC forces.

At the end of October 1998, RUF/AFRC forces concentrated around Kamalo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) in preparation for an attack of the town. Villages to the east of Kamalo were raided by RUF/AFRC squads. This forced many civilians to seek safety behind ECOMOG lines in Kamalo. During these preliminary attacks, RUF/AFRC forces cut a man in half from head to groin. Despite reinforcing in advance of the RUF/AFRC attack, ECOMOG withdrew north from Kamalo to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom), taking casualties. From Kamalo, RUF/AFRC forces moved south attacking Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom). During both attacks, large number of houses were burnt down, and civilians killed. ECOMOG forces, and SLA and CDF forces that had been infused into ECOMOG took up positions at Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), Kamaranka and Kamakwie on the northern axis running from Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom). The CDF began initiating local youths around Gbendembu, "washing" them spiritually to render them bullet-proof.

In early December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked SLA and ECOMOG forces in Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), killing over 20 SLA soldiers and amputating the limbs of six civilians. In the closing weeks of late December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces cleared ECOMOG forces from within a corridor from Koidu (CHIEFDOM, Kono District) through Magburaka (Kholifa

Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkalili District) and Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District, Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). RUF/AFRC forces assaulted Freetown between 6 and 20 January. In late December, RUF/AFRC forces in Bombali District were closing in on Makeni, attacking towns to the north including Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom), Karina and Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC had also broken out of Kono District, and were moving on Makeni along the highway through Tonkalili. On 24 December, RUF/AFRC force assaulted Makeni from three directions, forcing ECOMOG to retreat to Kamakwie, which fell to the RUF/AFRC in the days following. A huge RUF/AFRC force moved through Makeni towards Port Loko District, and onwards to the Western Area.

Makeni (Bomali Sebora Chiefdom) now became the RUF/AFRC stronghold until April 2001. The town was at the heart of the RUF/AFRC's defensive operation following their failure to hold onto territory in the Western Area. The RUF/AFRC occupied Kambia District and the key entry points into the district. Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) was also under RUF/AFRC control, as was the town of Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). The RUF/AFRC controlled all the northern border routes in Guinea. Bombali District was divided into two commands, seated at Makeni and Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom).

Throughout RUF/AFRC controlled territory, local RUF/AFRC began establishing joint civilian and military cooperation committees known as G5 committees. Without fail, the establishment of the G5 committee was accompanied by promises that RUF/AFRC commanders would prevent their forces from inflicting violence upon civilians. The G5 committees administered the collection of periodic - sometimes daily - contributions of money and food from the civilian population to the RUF/AFRC. ECOMOG's move to secure the highways between the Western Area, Port Loko and Mile 91 removed vital trade routes that could supply RUF/AFRC with basic goods and supplies. The G5 system appeared not to provide adequate resources to feed or pay RUF/AFRC members. The few instances of extremely brutal punishment metered out by RUF/AFRC commanding officers to their subordinates - on RUF/AFRC member was beaten with a cane infused with razor blades, another was stoned to death – did not to restrain RUF/AFRC forces from carrying out "food finding missions", stealing civilian property and food. To supplement the resources gained through G5 Committees and "food finding missions" the RUF/AFRC began selling stolen property in Guinean trade fairs just over the border from Tambahka Chiefdom. Often, the same commanders that promised discipline and the rule of law ordered these missions.

On 7 July 1999, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF signed the Lomé Peace Agreement, consolidating a ceasefire that had been in force since May 1999. The RUF/AFRC continued to consolidate within Bombali District, setting up a training camp at Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom). Intense raids, both day and night were conducted around the training camp, intensifying the terror of the civilian population. The training camp at Gbendembu was also used to train recuits and conscriptees for missions inside Guinea territory. In late 1999, infighting between the the leadership of RUF and the AFRC in Makeni led to a division of operational areas, although the depth of the split between the two group is not clear. UNAMSIl commenced deployment in late 1999 to bolster the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement.

In January 2000, the 450 peacekeepers tried to deploy in Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) but were delayed a few days en route at an RUF/AFRC checkpoint because they did not have the correct papers. In February, diamonds were discovered in Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom, leading to a concentration of RUF/AFRC forces in the chiefdom. In May, the RUF/AFRC surrounded and attacked UNAMSIL peacekeepers in Makeni, killing an unknown number and attacking them with sniper fire as they fled to Kabala. RUF/AFRC forces also disarmed over 200 Zambian UNAMSIL peacekeepers and took them to Makeni, and then to Kailahun. The RUF/AFRC captured a significant haul of armoured vehicle, weapons, uniforms and communications apparatus from UNAMSIL. Simultaneously, the RUF/AFRC again pushed towards the Western Area, attacking towns in Port Loko District and on the main highway through Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District). By mid-May, the RUF/AFRC advance had stalled. Between May and July, Sierra Leone Government helicopter gunships commenced attacking RUF/AFRC positions in and around Makeni, resulting an frequent civilian deaths and destruction of property when RUF/AFRC forces engaged with Anti-Aircraft guns. Similar attacks occurred in Kambia, Port Loko and Tonkolili Districts. The RUF/AFRC often deserted their positions as the gunship appeared.

In September 2000, RUF/AFRC forces in Tambakha Chiefdom staged attacks on attacked border towns just inside Guinean territory. Guinean armed forces adopted a "Hot Pursuit" policy, bombarding RUF/AFRC positions inside Sierra Leone and moving their border security forces three miles within Sierra Leonean territory. Civilian movement was restricted, and as the RUF/AFRC reprisals against civilians for suspected collaboration with Guinean force intensified.

Negotiations between UNAMSIL and the RUF/AFRC continued in line with the Aduja Ceasefire Agreement and its review process. In the first few months of 2001, the RUF/AFRC had opened the Lunsar-Makeni highway and returned to UNAMSIL much of weaponry and hardware it had confiscated in 2000. Long range UNAMSIL and MILOBs patrols commenced and by April Nigerian UNAMSIL had deployed into Makeni. The disarmament process in Bombali began in late September, accompanied by the arrival of Sierra Leone Police to Makeni (Bombali Sebora)

2. Factual Analysis

a) Events between 1992 and 1994

Following RUF attacks in Kono District on 22 October 1992, residents of the village of Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) who had moved to Kono District to mine diamonds, returned to their village on foot, a distance of over 100km. Many residents of Kambia Mapulen (Gbati Kamaranka Chiefdom) packed up their belongings and fled to larger towns such as Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District) and Freetown (Western Area). On 21 January 1994, the NPRC Resident Minister for the Northern Province arrived in Kambia Mapulen for a meeting with the chiefdom elders, during which he promised to provide security for civilians.

The RUF entered Bombali District in February 1994. RUF forces attacked the villages of Rogboreh, Makalan and Mateboi (all Sanda Tenderen Chiefdom), to the northwest of Makeni town, and bordering Port Loko District. The troops were armed with AK-47s, RPGs, and hand grenades and wore military-style uniforms. Thirty people were abducted from Rogboreh and a number of women

were raped. Following the attack on Rogboreh, RUF forces chanted slogans about the leader of the RUF. Rogboreh was occupied for 2 weeks, during which no houses were burned. An RUF Commander was identified as killing three people in Makalan, taking their property. In Mateboi, RUF forces burned down an unknown number of homes.

On 3 April 1994, 200 SLA soldiers in Makali (Konike Barina Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) were also under the command of the Resident Minister for the Northern Province. On 11 April, SLA forces deployed from Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) and recaptured the town of Makali from RUF forces.

In Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), on 18 April 1994, there was a public demonstration by civilians in response to a strongly-held belief that those SLA forces had been responsible for earlier attacks on the villages of Masanga and Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and on Magburaka town (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). SLA forces fired on civilian demonstrators, killing at least two people.

In the late morning of 1 November 1994, a large RUF force attacked the town of Bungbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), southwest of Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom). One hundred and ninety-three houses were burned during the attack. Civilians displaced from Bungbuna moved westwards to Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom). On 2 November 1994, SLA forces moved from Teko Army Barracks in Makeni and repelled the RUF forces from Bungbuna. Over the following week, these forces eastwards towards the town of Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom, Koinadugu District).

b) Events in 1995 and 1996

RUF activity in 1995 was concentrated on attacking the Western Area, through major assaults on town like Port Loko (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). Although the RUF established two camps in Bombali District – at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom) and Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) – the RUF forward operating bases in 1995 were in the Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara, Tonkolili) and later at Camp Fol-Fol in the south of Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili. The bases in Bombali would take on a greater significance in 1996, as the RUF suffered a series of military defeats and failed to move into Freetown or hold territory in the Western Area.

Between 1 and 5 January 1995, RUF forces attacked the town of Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom, Port Loko District) from the direction of Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) and Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom).

In May 1995, RUF forces entered the Bombali District from Kambia or Port Loko, neighbouring districts to the west. Between 14 and 18 May 1995, RUF moved eastwards from Romeni (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District) towards Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom, Port Loko District) crossing into Bombali District and establishing a base on an island beween two river at Ro-Source (Sanda

Tendaren Chiefdom)[348]. RUF forces operated from Ro-Source until at least September 1997. RUF forces again attacked the village of Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), southeast of Ro-Source along the primary route between Batkanu and Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) in May 1995. RUF forces raped five women and burnt down 10 homes. Civilians were abducted and forced to carry stolen property to an unknown destination. In the same year, RUF forces also established a base at Masonkorie, a village in Sanda Loko Chiefdom, 15km east of the town of Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom).

Sometime in February 1996, before the Presidential and Parliamentary elections on 26 February, RUF troops left their camp in the Kangari Hills, (Malal Mara Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) crossed the Makeni–Freetown highway and headed in the direction of Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom, Bombali District). From this point, RUF forces took an alternative route towards the town of Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), avoiding the main Batkanu–Gbendembu road, and attacked Makundu village (Sanda Tenderen Chiefdom). At least four civilian men were killed during the attack. Subsequently, 200 RUF forces moved in the direction of Gbendembu, attacking the town early in the morning on 22 or 23 February 2003 having camped the previous night in dense forest to the west of the town.

It is likely that RUF forces were active around the Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) area from 1 February, since they had control over Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District). On or around 23 February 1996, civilians in Kamakwie learned of the RUF attack on Gbendembu (Gbendembu-Ndowahun Chiefdom) prior to the subsequent attack on their town. Attacking Gbendembu, RUF forces were armed with AK47s, G3s, RPGs and hand grenades. Properties were looted and the doors of homes were destroyed. Civilian traffic travelling northwards from Gbendembu towards Kamakwie was targeted by RUF forces. The driver and passenger of a passing car were shot and wounded, and their car looted. RUF forces burned the car with the dying occupants trapped inside.

Between 23 and 26 February 1996, an RUF of between 150 and 200 personnel attacked Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) to the north of Makeni, north east of their base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), and 15 Km west of the RUF base at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). The attack came from the south of the town, through the village of Kathumpeh (Sella Limba Chiefdom). The main north-south road through Kamakwie passes through Gbendembu. The attack commenced in the morning, when a member of the RUF entered the town on a motorbike and began firing indiscriminately, possibly with an RPG. In addition to the burning down of 67 houses, RUF forces also burned offices of several international NGOs operating in the town. At least two people were abducted during this attack and taken to an RUF base at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko chiefdom). In the same period, in the village of Kagberi (Sella Limba Chiefdom), about 4 km west of Kamakwie, RUF forces captured and killed a farmer. They cut open his stomach and for an unspecified reason placed some "gari"[349] inside it. Although no location was specified, it is likely that these same RUF forces also shot a deaf and mute man in Kagberi for not responding to their orders

[348] Given the attacks in the north eastern chiefdoms of Port Loko in early January 1995, and accounts in the records detailing attacks on locations in these chiefdoms as coming from the direction of Mateboi (Sanda Tenderen, Bombali), it is likely that the RUF had a presence around Ro-Source well before June 1995.
[349] Dried, cracked cassava root.

RUF forces withdrew from Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) to their camp at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom), 15km east of Kamakwie. Abductees held at Masonkorie camp had their movement severely restricted and there are reports that female abductees were raped. Following the attacks on Kamakwie, the RUF unit stationed at Masonkorie redeployed to Kambia District.

Between 26 February 1996 and May 1997 no incidents are recorded within Bombali District. On 30 November 1996 the Abidjan Peace Accord was signed between leadership of the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone. Beginning early May 1997, Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) began to experience steady RUF activity. Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) was attacked during this month.

On 10 May 1997, the SLA deployed heavily armed units at a number of unknown locations in Bombali District.[350] In the evening of 12 May 1997, SLA forces in Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) came under attack from RUF forces. RUF forces met little to no resistance and displayed considerable knowledge of the SLA deployment within the town, including the exact location of an SLA ammunition dump. RUF forces killed over ten people during the attack. RUF forces captured an officer of the Sierra Leone Police, who was dressed in civilian clothes. Amongst his possessions they discovered a handgun, with which they subsequently killed him. RUF forces raped an elderly woman before killing her with a blow to the head from the butt of a handgun. RUF forces seized an SLA ammunition dump located within the town during the 12 May attack, although there is no indication of the quantity of ammunition taken. RUF forces selected the most prestigious residences in sections I and II of Kamakwie and burned them down. At 14:00 on 13 May 1997, RUF forces again returned to their base at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). By 20 May, government sources claimed Kamakwie was secure and free from RUF activity.[351] Sometime during May or June of 1997, likely following the 12 May assault on Kamakwie, RUF forces raped and killed a women in the village of Kaforad (Sanda Loko Chiefdom), about three miles from Kamakwie.

On 25 May 1997, elements of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces overthrew the elected government. This coup d'etat resulted in the formation of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), led by an SLA officer released from prison by the coupists. Shortly after the coup, the RUF and AFRC joined. AFRC forces, comprising primarily SLA elements remained stationed in Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom). There are no reports of any atrocities committed by the ARFC in Kamakwie after this time. There are reports that troops clearly identified as belonging to the RUF had free access to Kamakwie.

Following the AFRC coup, the towns of Karina and Kamabai (both Biriwa Chiefdom) were occupied by RUF/AFRC forces. Both towns are located along the main east of the Batkanu – Gbendembu highway, on a key junction joining the north-south highway from Makeni to Kabala. Like Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom), Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) and Mataboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), control of these towns serves to restrict movement north out of Makeni, the district headquarter town, cutting it off from Kabala (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District). Karina is situated on top of a hill simplifying greatly the rearing of herd

[350] AFP, 10 May 1997
[351] Detail from AFP 20 May 1997



animals. In May 1997, it had a very high degree of agricultural productivity, including a large cattle stock, making it a valuable location for the RUF to control.

In the early hours of 27 May 1997, the town of Karina (Biriwa Chiefdom) was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces carrying guns and other weapons. Soldiers surrounded the central mosque and killed 10 civilians celebrating the Muslim feast of "Jonbedeh", including the Section Chief. Of those escaping this attack on the mosque, an unknown number were injured. The majority of residents of the town heard gunfire and fled into the surrounding bush. RUF/AFRC forces raped an unknown number of women, and abducted 30 young civilian men and women. During the attack, numerous houses were burned down including those belonging to the town chief and the section chief. RUF/AFRC forces stole property. On the same day, RUF/AFRC forces moved west towards the village of Mandaha towards Gbendembu town (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), taking with them the 30 abductees. Some of the abductees were given military training and forced to join the RUF/AFRC, and some were forced into sexual slavery. The next day, the residents of Karina returned to the town and buried ten corpses in a mass grave. Given that Karina was on a regular patrol route from the RUF/AFRC camp at Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom), the burial was performed quickly, as residents feared the return of RUF/AFRC forces.

Also on 27 May 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Malongbo (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), nearby Karina. A father and son were killed when RUF/AFRC forces set their house on fire. An old man was killed when RUF/AFRC forces set fire to his grass house. RUF/AFRC forces amputated the hand of a civilian man, before shooting him dead in response to his complaints that he was now useless to his community.

From May 1997 to October 1997, Guinean forces were stationed at Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District). During August and September 1997, the RUF/AFRC base at Ro-Source came under pressure from long-range rockets fired by Guinean forces at Madina. RUF/AFRC forces moved from their camp at Ro-Source (Ro-source) and established a new camp at Bainkoro (between Dibia and Sanda Magbolontho Chiefdoms, Port Loko).

On 16 December, ECOMOG jets bombed RUF/AFRC positions outside of Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), claiming that the RUF/AFRC was constructing a runway to allow arms supplies to enter the country more freely in violation of ECOWAS and UN sanctions.[352]

c) Events in 1998

Between 6 and 14 February 1998, ECOMOG forces attacked Freetown, dislodging the combined RUF/AFRC forces and forcing their retreat into provincial Sierra Leone. This general retreat moved northwards, along the Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) –Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) - Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) axis.[353] After 14 February, RUF/AFRC forces were stationed in Lunsar, to the west along the highway from Makeni Town (Bombali Sebora). RUF/AFRC forces also attacked key locations in Kambia District, including the economic centres of Kambia Town and Rokupr (both Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District).

[352] AFP, 16 December 1997.

[353] See factual analysis for Western Area and Port Loko District in 1998 for further information.



On 13 February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces entered the village of Masongbo (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom), 3 km west of Makeni along the main Freetown-Makeni highway. They were identified as RUF/AFRC because of their half military, half civilian attire. One member of the RUF/AFRC fired a single round between the legs of a civilian man in order to extort money from him; another civilian was robbed. On 14 February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces regrouped in Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown. On the same day, ECOMOG Alpha Jets attacked Teko Barracks in Makeni. In addition, ECOMOG targeted the Makeni Police barracks, believing them to be the RUF/AFRC brigade headquarters. At least five civilians were killed during this attack.

RUF/AFRC commenced "Operation Pay Yourself", which lasted 17 days in Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), from 14 February 1998 until 3 March 1998. "Operation Pay Yourself" was executed in response to the failure of the AFRC to resist attacks on Freetown by ECOMOG forces between 8 and 14 February 1998.[354] A similar operation was launched between the same dates in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District). RUF forces were reported as entering Makeni from the Magburaka (Kholifa Rhowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) highway with Toyota Hi-Lux and Mazda pick-up trucks. They were armed with AK-47s and G3s. At night, RUF/AFRC forces fired upon the exterior of houses before entering and performing searches. During these searches, mattresses, watches, foodstuffs, and personal and saleable items were taken. RUF/AFRC forces retreated from Makeni in the wake of ECOMOG forces

In the early evening of 1 March 1998, troops from the ECOMOG 24th Infantry Brigade entered Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) from Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District). They engaged RUF/AFRC snipers en route at Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and exchanged fire with RUF/AFRC forces for about an hour as they entered Lunsar. Apart from that, ECOMOG met no further resistance from RUF/AFRC forces in Lunsar.[355]

On 2 March 1998, ECOMOG forces moved from Lunsar and arrived at the village of Magbema, 2km west of Makeni (both Bombali Sebora Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces retreated northwards from Makeni in the direction of Kamaboi (Biriwa Chiefdom), to the east of Makeni, which had been under RUF control since May 1997. Some forces moved further towards Kabala Town (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District), settling in the town of Fadugu (Mambolo Chiefdom, Koinadugu District). On 2 or 3 March 1998, ECOMOG arrived in Makeni and established a base at Teko Barracks, taking control of Makeni. At some point after ECOMOG entered the town, forces from the CDF 9th Battalion were deployed to assist in patrolling the Makeni area.[356] An ECOMOG major stated that any civilian who is caught and found to have been an RUF/AFRC collaborator "will be treated as if they are not human" and commenced house to house searches, screening civilians and searching for possible RUF/AFRC infiltrators.

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[354] Clarification is required from the records about the date, as the starting date of "Operation Pay Yourself" is reported at different times across different Districts, the earliest being in the Western Area in 1997.
[355] R.A. Adeshina, pp.36-38.
[356] All Africa News, 11 December 1998 taken from Concord Times

Around midday on 22 March 1998, the RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Kambia Mapulen (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom). They were driven to Kambia Mapulen through the town of Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) on the main northern road to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom), in a big truck with a civilian driver. Some of the RUF/AFRC forces were dressed in full military attire and others were dressed in civilian clothes. All were well armed with G3 and AK-47 rifles, and support weapons including RPGs. The RUF Commander first called a village meeting and informed the assembled civilians that they were being "liberated from their struggle". As the meeting progressed, RUF/AFRC forces surrounded the village. In the afternoon, the RUF/AFRC forces began firing on civilians, who fled the village. One girl did not escape the attack, was captured and raped by five members of the RUF/AFRC. The RUF/AFRC forces left the village along the same road they entered in the direction of Kamaranka. Villagers returned to find their valuables and livestock looted by the RUF/AFRC forces.

At this point, ECOMOG forces had taken control of Kamolo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) and Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom). ECOMOG met little resistance and easily took control of Kamakwie. During this time, RUF/AFRC forces were based at Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District) at the other end of a highway leading directly to Kamakwie. In April and May 1998, ECOMOG informed representatives of the village of Laya (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) that they had insufficient logistical capacity to patrol the road between Kamalo and Laya.

In April 1998, RUF/AFRC forces entered the northern Tambakha Chiefdom, passed through the Northern Jungle from Wara Wara Bafodia Chiefdom (Koinadugu District) on their way to the chiefdom headquarter town of Fintonia. Duguta (Tambakha Chiefdom), a village along their route, was the first town to be attacked in the chiefdom. Reports indicate that the RUF/AFRC did not fire a shot as they entered, although RUF/AFRC forces aged between 13 and 16 years were given orders to shoot should anyone try and escape. Fifty residents were held under armed guard for the duration of the attack. Twenty-five homes were burned down and 30 people were abducted and forced to carry stolen property, including livestock and poultry. Nobody was killed, although threats were made to abductees by RUF/AFRC forces that anyone caught resting would be killed.

In the early hours of one Wednesday in April 1998, over 100 RUF/AFRC forces eventually arrived at and attacked Fitonia (Tambakha Chiefdom). They were armed with AK-47 rifles, RPGs and bladed weapons. The town was surrounded within 30 minutes of their arrival. Over 20 people were caught trying to escape the town. They were rounded up and placed into groups. During the RUF/AFRC attack, eleven people were killed. sixty-eight houses were looted and burned. At least 17 civilians were abducted to carry stolen property. Those abducted were ordered by RUF/AFRC forces to assist them in avoiding "Government positions", because of their familiarity with the terrain.

On the same day the same RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Kottoh (Tambakha Chiefdom) in the Outanma Kilimi National Park, three miles west of Fintonia. At this village, they amputated the hand of an old civilian man, who died from loss of blood whilst heading south to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) to seek medical attention. Following this assault, the same RUF/AFRC forces proceeded towards Komoyah (Tambakha Chiefdom), which is about sixteen miles south west of Fintonia. RUF/AFRC forces killed 10 civilian men one after the other in this attack and

amputated the arms of a further 11 civilian men. An unknown number of houses were also looted by RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG forces visiting Komoyah following the attack reported that RUF/AFRC forces had erected a checkpoint, a rope across the road. They had tied the amputated arms along the length of the rope and left the amputees dying nearby. ECOMOG forces took the amputees to their base at Kamakwie, where they received medical attention. From here, RUF/AFRC forces continued westwards to Sarakuda (Tambakha Chiefdom) where they killed an old woman.

Overnight between 10 and 11 May 1998, RUF/AFRC force attacked Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), a town on the road to Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom, Port Loko District) that sits upon the Batkanu–Gbendembu route. During the attack, the Chiefdom Speaker and another prominent elder were killed. Seven other civilians were also killed. Many of the brick houses in the town had been burnt down, and much of the property stolen by RUF/AFRC forces.

In late June 1998, Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) once again came under attack by RUF/AFRC forces. The town was surrounded before the RUF/AFRC forces announced their presence with a single signature shot. Further sporadic firing by RUF/AFRC forces caused many of the residents to flee the town. An hour after RUF/AFRC forces first entered the village, a large group of RUF/AFRC forces in full combat fatigues passed through the village in a westerly direction, heading towards Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom). Following these military forces were between 1000 and 1500 people in civilian dress carrying looted property. In Mayainku village (Sanda Tenderen Chiefdom), on the road to Batkanu, RUF/AFRC forces abducted a man, who was later found dead, his body containing many bulletholes. In Mamaya (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), also on the road to Batkanu from Gbendembu, RUF/AFRC forces raped a 10-year old girl, who later died of blood loss.

In July 1998, villagers in Gbendembu heard from displaced persons that the village of Loihindi (both Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), east of Gbendembu on the route to Kabala, had been attacked by RUF/AFRC forces. During the attack, RUF/AFRC forces had mutilated a young boy and an old man.

In July 1998, the village of Masiba (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces from the direction of Karina (Biriwa Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces went from house to house searching for civilians. Those captured were first tied up as the search continued, and were then taken to the village of Kortulay (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) and forced to take the rice of the Section Chief. The captives then transported the rice in the direction of Biriwa Chiefdom. Two days after the initial attack, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Masiba again, to recapture a number of abducted civilians who had escaped and returned to Masiba. The second RUF/AFRC attack on Masiba came from the village of Hundowa, to the north. A trader was shot dead in the centre of town. RUF/AFRC forces broke into all the houses in Masiba, looting what could be carried. At least 10 houses were burnt down. The escapees were recaptured by RUF/AFRC forces. Following this attack, the RUF/AFRC forces immediately moved to the nearby village of Wanworowah (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), where they captured 20 civilians. The men were hung beneath trees and set on fire. The women were cut with blades on their chests and backs.

On 17 July 1998, in Laminaya (Sanda Loko Chiefdom), 28 civilians were killed by RUF/AFRC forces. A man was handcuffed and then burned to death, and RUF/AFRC forces mutilated a woman's genitals. Laminaya was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces again in the afternoon of 5 September 1998.

On 23 July RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Matoko in the north of Biriwa chiefdom, about 20 miles from the village of Laya (Sanda Loko Chiefdom). RUF forces opened the attack at 2200 with an RPG, and went house-to-house searching for civilians. Many fled into the surrounding bush. Over 20 of those that were captured were tied in pairs and shot dead by RUF/AFRC forces. The attack ceased at 0200 on 24 July 1998.

On 29 July, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Kalangba (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) south of Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) on the North-South Kamakwie-Makeni highway. There are no further details about this attack.

Since late May 1997, RUF/AFRC forces had occupied the town of Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom) From this location, RUF/AFRC forces were able to establish a strong presence in the area, bolstered by forces driven from Makeni in early March 1998 by ECOMOG forces. RUF/AFRC activity in the neighbouring town Karina and its environs was mainly limited to "food finding missions" or "Jar-Jar". The July 1998 attacks on Masiba (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) and Karina (Biriwa Chiefdom) described above are good examples of "food finding missions": civilians were captured and instructed to lead RUF/AFRC forces to sources of salt, livestock, crops and vegetables. The same civilians were then force by RUF/ARFC forces to transport the stolen food to RUF bases.

On 2 August, ECOMOG began planning an operation to remove RUF/AFRC forces from their camp as Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), deploying an artillery battery at Mateboi (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom), and sending a Nigerian infantry platoon to Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom). Across seven days in mid-August ECOMOG artillery and air support bombarded Ro-Source continually. On or around 22 August, a group of civilians volunteered to head to Ro-Source and provide information to ECOMOG. They reported that the village was deserted, and that there were many corpses littering the area.[357] RUF/AFRC activity nevertheless continued in and around Ro-Source into 1999.

On 1 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked the town of Kalangba, south of Gbendembu (both Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom). On 5 September RUF/AFRC forces attacked the town of Laminaya to the east of Kamalo town (both Sella Limba Chiefdom). Many civilians had moved to Kamolo following these attacks, seeking protection from the ECOMOG forces stationed in the town.

Around midnight on 8 September 1998 RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Maharibo (Sando Loko Chiefdom), immediately to the east of Kamalo (Sella Limba Chiefom). RUF/AFRC forces were armed with AK-47s, RPGs, machetes, grenades, and G3s, and dispensed heavy machine gun fire throughout the town. The shooting stopped at 0300. RUF/AFRC forces gathered the villagers into the centre of the town, and requested information about the security arrangements in Kamalo,

[357] Account from R.A. Adeshina, p. 115-116

which had been held by ECOMOG forces since early March 1998. Following the attack, RUF forces departed westwards for Bankabie (Sella Limba Chiefdom), a village immediately south of Kamalo and joined with other RUF/AFRC units. RUF/AFRC units that participated in this attack re-established Camp Ro-Source (Sanda Tenderen Chiefdom), which had previously been abandoned in September 1997.

About fifteen miles south of Kamalo (Sella Limba Chiefdom), on 8 October, two groups of RUF/AFRC forces joined at a camp outside Masomba (Sella Limba Chiefdom), where some 500 RUF/AFRC forces were already deployed. RUF/AFRC forces abducted a man rumoured to have mystical powers, and forced him to perform religious rites for the unit. These including creating talisman to guarantee RUF forces would not suffer injuries, in addition to offerings of kola-nuts, sacrifices of goats and sheep for military success. The RUF/AFRC were certain that that another group of RUF/AFRC forces would arrive at the camp on 20 October. Once that unit arrived, all RUF/AFRC forces stationed at the camp would prepare for an attack on Kamalo. In the northern part of Magbaiamba Ndowahun Chiefdom, RUF forces attacked the village of Gbendebu on 27 October. RUF forces captured one civilian and divided him into two sections by splitting his body in two from head to groin. On 31 October, the group of RUF/AFRC forces who had been expected entered the RUF camp outside Masomba (Sella Limba Chiefdom).

By the end of October 1998, around 500 "loyal" SLA troops had been deployed to Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), south of where the RUF/AFRC were concentrating for the attack on Kamalo. The CDF deployed at Kalangba frequently patrolled Gbendembu. Parents were encouraged by the CDF commander to send their children to be initiated into the CDF, or "washed", so they could become bulletproof. A number of people died when trainers shot them at during the final stages of initiation.

As RUF forces prepared to attack Kamalo (Sella Limba Chiefdom) from the south, ECOMOG reinforced their positions in the town on 13 November 1998 with troops from Kamakwie. On 14 November, RUF forces attacked Kamalo. During this assault, RUF/AFRC forces killed an unknown number of ECOMOG forces, who were buried by civilians two days later, on 16 November. In addition, 80 homes were burnt and an unknown number of civilians were killed. Five RUF/AFRC wounded were returned to the camp outside Masomba (Sella Limba Chiefdom). ECOMOG and SLA forces were driven out of Kamalo and retreated north to the town of Kamakwie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom), still at this stage held by ECOMOG.

On 21 November RUF/AFRC forces headed south from Kamolo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) along the main highway and on 21 November they attacked Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces abducted seven men and two women, burnt down homes, and took property. The village clinic was also destroyed. They then established a base there that was still in operation in December 1998. On 22 November, ECOMOG deployed to Kamaranka, but did not engage forces at a nearby RUF/AFRC camp identified by two youths who had escaped from the camp the night before. ECOMOG troops remained in Kamaranka. It is reported in general terms that ECOMOG forces treated civilians accused to being "rebel collaborators" with extreme brutality. On 23 November 1998 in Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom), ECOMOG forces tied-up and beat to death



a well known and popular businessman accused of being a "rebel collaborator" by a woman in the town.

CDF forces established a checkpoint Ferrah Loko village, on the main Makeni-Kamkwie highway south of Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom). On 27 November 1998, CDF forces detained two civilians at the checkpoint and accused them of being "rebel collaborators". The civilians were led to a nearby river and shot dead with AK-47s. On 28 November, at the same checkpoint, CDF confiscated a quantity of prescription drugs to be used in the treatment of an outbreak of cholera in Kamaranka from a pharmacist travelling from Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) to Kamaranka.

In December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked many villages in Sella Limba Chiefdom, around the headquarter town of Kamakwie. Six miles from Kamakwie, at the crossing point over the Mongo River at Kabbah Ferry, RUF/AFRC forces burnt several houses and looted property in their attack on the village. Then, seven miles from Kamakwie, the town of Kamaportho (Sella Limba Chiefdom) was also attacked. RUF/AFRC forces killed an unknown number of civilians, burnt homes and looted properties.

Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) was attacked on 9 December by RUF/AFRC forces again entering the town from the west along the Batkanu–Gbendembu Highway. ECOMOG and SLA forces stationed in the town were driven out by RUF/AFRC forces. During the engagement, RUF/AFRC forces lined up eleven civilians and shot them one after the other. RUF/AFRC forces set fire to two machine guns located in the vacated ECOMOG position. ECOMOG and "loyal" SLA forces regrouped to the south of Gbendembu and launched a counter attack. During the attack RUF/AFRC forces killed 23 SLA forces and amputated the limbs of six civilians. Nevertheless, RUF/AFRC forces were successfully dislodged from Gbendembu. Residents buried the dead civilians in mass grave near the Wesleyan Church. The 25 dead SLA soldiers were taken to Makeni (Bombali Sembora). Civilians buried an unknown number of RUF/AFRC dead in the bush surrounding Gbendembu.

On Monday 20 December, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Binkolo town (the headquarter town of Safroko Limba Chiefdom), near Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) on the main road to Kabala (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District). On 21 December, RUF forces took property, including food items, and burnt down 133 homes. Five people were shot dead in the attack. RUF/AFRC forces established and manned checkpoints in Binkolo between 30 December 1998 and 4 January 1999.

On 23 December, RUF/AFRC forces took control of Magburaka Town (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). Later that day RUF/AFRC forces commenced a major assault on Makeni from three directions. The nearby towns of Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom), Karina and Kamabai (both Biriwara Chiefdom) to the northeast were already under RUF/AFRC control. Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) and Kamolo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom) to the northwest were both under pressure from RUF/AFRC forces. From the south, RUF/AFRC forces entered Bombali district through Magburaka town (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and continued towards Makeni, whilst another RUF/AFRC force launched their attack on the town

from the north. RUF/AFRC forces also moved from Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District), attacking Makeni from the west.

On 24 December at 1200 RUF/AFRC forces succeeding in dislodging ECOMOG forces from the Teko Barracks in Makeni. ECOMOG forces retreated north to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom). Teko Barracks was home to the brigade headquarters of the ECOMOG 24th Infantry Brigade. ECOMOG forces ran short of ammunition and were overpowered by the attacking RUF/AFRC force. During the attack, RUF/AFRC forces inflicted heavy casualties on ECOMOG, and managed to capture the ECOMOG brigade intelligence officer and much of the brigade documentation.[358] By 26 December, ECOMOG had withdrawn from Makeni.

In late December, RUF/AFRC forces Fintonia (Tambakah Chiefdom) was attacked. Many people were abducted some of whom were made to carry looted goods. Eleven civilians were killed and at least one woman was sexually assaulted and forced to be a sex slave for RUF/AFRC forces. RUF/AFRC forces abducted over 40 people, 11 were killed. 68 houses were burned down. Civilians were forced to carry looted items for the RUF/AFRC forces.

On 24 December 1998, SLA forces retreating from Makeni towards Koinadugu District arrived in the village of Bombali Bana (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom), 3km west of Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom), to the north of Makeni. Bombali Bana was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces after 24 December 1998. In this attack, 25 houses were burned down. Throughout the night of 25-26 December report hearing the movement of convoys of vehicles moved towards Makeni through Binkolo on the Kabala-Makeni highway. Between 30 December 1998 and 1 January 1999, convoys of civilians carrying sacks of rice on their heads, and livestock over their shoulders, were being escorted by armed RUF/AFRC forces through Binkolo towards Makeni.

After 26 December, ECOMOG forces retreated from the town of Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) through the village of Konba towards Kambia District, and eventually to Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District). On 30 December, RUF/AFRC forces entered the town immediately, without engaging ECOMOG. RUF/AFRC forces quickly set up an administration, and started recruiting young men and women from throughout Sella Limba Chiefdom. RUF/AFRC forces also crossed into Kamakwie from Tambakha Chiefdom, stealing much of the kerosene and food waiting to be ferried across the Little Scarcies River to Kamakwie. Soon after arriving in Kamakwie, RUF/AFRC forces sought to extend their authority over the Mongo River north towards the border with Guinea. Also on 30 December, RUF/AFRC forces advanced into Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and engaged ECOMOG positions.

d) Events in 1999

Through December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces cleared ECOMOG forces from within a corridor from Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District) through Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkalili District) and Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom), Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District, Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). RUF/AFRC forces assaulted Freetown between 6 and 20 January. Following an intense battle for

[358] Detail only. R.A. Adeshina, p.133

the control of metropolitan Freetown, ECOMOG forces pushed RUF/AFRC forces back to Waterloo, where they remained in force until at least 25 February 1999.

At the beginning of 1999 the RUF/AFRC focused on several initiatives to consolidate their gains of late December 1998, and corral ECOMOG in Port Loko District. Initially, RUF/AFRC forces retained control over the arterial routes from Western Area running through Port Loko District towards Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom). Additionally, RUF/AFRC forces took control of the key junction town of Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). In the first months of 1999, however, ECOMOG forces pushed along the main highway from the Western Area into Port Loko District, retaking Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) from RUF/AFRC forces by late April, and creating a relatively secure route between Masiaka and Port Loko Town through Ro-Gberray (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District). Maforki and BKM Chiefdoms, and those behind Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom)[359] remained primarily under ECOMOG control. In April, ECOMOG also moved from Masiaka and retook control of Mile 91.

The RUF/AFRC consolidated in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Makeni (Bombali Sembora), and took control of all the key towns in Kambia District.[360] From this point through to disarmament in 2001 and 2002, Makeni was the RUF/AFRC headquarter for the southern part of Bombali District. An additional headquarter was also established in Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom)to oversee the expansive northern region of the district and the Mongo River crossing at Kabba Ferry. In Port Loko District, the RUF/AFRC lines started at Mange, which was the first line of defence for their positions in wharf towns on the Great Scarcies River, including Rokupr and Kambia Town (both Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District). Makeni was connected to Kambia Town by a lengthy route looping north and then west through Kamakwie and Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District). This gave RUF/AFRC forces access to the major international border crossings with Guinea. At their base in Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District), RUF/AFRC forces controlled access to the main routes Sanda Magbolontor and Dibia Chiefdoms (both in Port Loko District) into Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom (Bombali District). To the south, RUF/AFRC forces occupied Magburaka Town and positions on the main highway to Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District), which was also under RUF/AFRC control. Makeni was the heart of this RUF/AFRC defensive operation.

At the beginning of 1999, RUF/AFRC forces controlled Kamabai, a main town in the Biriwa Chiefdom, to the north east of Makeni. There are frequent mentions of RUF/AFRC forces forcing residents to vacate to provide lodgings for RUF/AFRC forces. There was also massive theft of private property and food during The RUF/AFRC encampment. RUF/AFRC forces were armed with rifles, grenades, cutlasses, bayonets, and RPGs and forced civilians to join them.

In January, numerous RUF/AFRC bases were established along the Makeni– Guinea and Makeni-Freetown highways. One RUF/AFRC base was established in Mabaibunda (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom) and another was established a base at Matako. A camp was set up in Makoth (Makari Gbanti chiefdom). Kamalo (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) was occupied in late December 1998

[359] Kaffu Bullom and Lokomassama Chiefdoms.
[360] See factual analysis for Kambia District in 1999 for further information.



and checkpoints were established in the following weeks. South of Kamalo, RUF/AFRC forces established two checkpoints in Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom).

By 10 January the RUF/AFRC had all of Sanda Loko Chiefdom under its control, in addition to the north-south road linking Makeni (Bombali Sembora Chiefdom) with Kamakwie. The RUF/AFRC command in Kamalo established a G5 committee, and announced to the town residents that it would punish any of its personnel caught inflicting violence on civilians.

In early January, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Mateboi (Sanda Tenderen Chiefdom), capturing four civilians and burning down houses that remained from their attack in May 1998. CDF forces attacked RUF/AFRC forces in Ro-Source at some point in January or February 1999 but were unsuccessful. Over 50 CDF personnel were killed by RUF/AFRC forces and buried by civilians in a mass grave at Ro-Source. RUF/AFRC forces attacked Mateboi later in January, gathering 27 civilians in the town market and shooting them dead. A woman was injured with a cutlass, but did not die and was taken to Makeni for medical treatment. Throughout Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, RUF/AFRC force used civilians to assist with "Food Finding Missions". The RUF/AFRC set up a civilian G5 committee in Mateboi to assist with the collection of contributions of 30 cups of rice and 5 litres of palm oil from every civilian in the town. Shortly after this system began, those civilians remaining began leaving for bush camps to avoid making contributions to the RUF/AFRC.

In January, a group of around 20 RUF/AFRC members set up camp in Masiba (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom) and informed the town residents that they were here to protect them from raids by other RUF/AFRC groups. Nevertheless, RUF/AFRC forces in the town beat civilians regularly. One man was beaten for 24 hours continually, and then taken by the RUF/AFRC town commander to the nearby bush. The RUF/AFRC commander executed the civilian with two gunshots in the back of his head. He was not fully dead when the RUF/AFRC commander ordered other civilians to bury him. Another young boy was beaten severely by RUF/AFRC members, who also used a bladed weapon to inscribe "RUF" on his chest. Between January and August, two other civilians were treated the same way by RUF/AFRC forces in Masiba. In August, RUF/AFRC forces tied up a civilian in Masiba and attacked him with a cutlass.

Also in January, RUF/AFRC forces set up a base and checkpoints at main entrances of the town of Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom). By then, Bombali Bana village (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) was already experiencing regular RUF/AFRC food finding missions. RUF/AFRC forces attacked the town on 26 January because of suspicions that there were CDF and Kamajor supporters among the populace. During the RUF/AFRC attack, two civilians were shot dead and another tortured to death before being transported on a wheelbarrow to the nearby village of Pamlap (Bombali Sembora Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces also burned down 25 houses.

ECOMOG's success in March and April in pushing the RUF/AFRC off the main highways in Koya Chiefdom (Port Loko District) and Yoni Chiefdom (Tonkolili District) had the effect of cutting off a major route for goods and supplies for the RUF/AFRC operations in the north. The RUF/AFRC sought to establish other sources of revenue and supply, trading and stealing from markets in Guinean border towns. At this time in the northern chiefdom of Tambakha, RUF/AFRC forces were beginning to move towards the Guinean border. RUF/AFRC forces attacked the chiefdom

headquarter town of Fintonia, on the northerly Kamakwie–Madina Oula[361] (Guinea) route on 11 January. RUF/AFRC forces were also based seen in border villages such as Sanya and Symbecki (both Tambakha Chiefdom), where they regularly sold items stolen during attacks to intermediaries who would sell them at the weekly market in the Guinean border towns of Madina Oula, Sekusoria and Lakantha. In Kambia District, RUF/AFRC forces used the Great Scaries River to access trade fairs in towns just over the Guinean border.[362] The Guinean authorities tightened border security checks on traders. In relation to the Guinean operations, RUF forces in Kamabai (Biriwa Chiefdom) attempted to conscript civilians.

By March 1999, RUF/AFRC forces had effective control over the surrounding area of Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) and proceeded to take food from its inhabitants. In Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom, food-finding missions were conducted in Kamaranka and Kambia Mapalun in April. At a meeting that occurred sometime between before peace negotiations commenced, a G5 committee of RUF/AFRC forces and civilians met to discuss food contributions to the RUF/AFRC war effort. An order was passed passed requiring civilians to contribute food to RUF/AFRC forces on a daily basis. The RUF commander officially ordered the beginning of food-finding missions around Binkolo in middle to late 1999.

Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire, which entered into force on 24 May. Full talks commenced on 25 May in the Togolese capital, leading to the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (Lomé Peace Agreement). On the same day the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed, RUF/AFRC forces in Thama Village (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) tied up, beat and executed four young boys. Residents of the village buried their corpses in a mass grave in Thama.

After the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed, the RUF/AFRC established a large training camp in Gbendembu (Gbendembu Ndowahun Chiefdom), on the Guinea-Makeni road. The Gbendembu camp replaced a camp located previously located in Kailahun District. It was set up both to bolster the RUF/AFRC ground force in Sierra Leone, and to train forces for attacks on towns in Guinea. Many civilians in Gbendembu were forced to work in the training camp preparing food for trainees. Conditions in the camp were harsh, and food was scare. To ensure they did not escape, trainees were monitored continually by RUF/AFRC security forces. RUF/AFRC "Food Finding Missions" became commonplace in villages surrounding Gbendembu, and a specific group of RUF/AFRC "Night Combatants" carried out frequent looting raids in the area overnight. This contributed to a sense of heightened terror amongst civilians in and around the town.

In August 1999, "Operation Pay Yourself" began in Magbema. This was an ongoing RUF/AFRC slogan targeting towns and villages with a looting spree, the stolen property from which served as pay for the forces. This operation lasted for 72 hours. If any civilians refused to provide RUF/AFRC forces with food or with whatever goods they sought, they were either beaten or killed. Also in August, RUF/AFRC established "G5" civilian-military liaison committees throughout

[361] In late January 1999, UNHCR established a refugee camp in Madina Oula, although Sierra Leonean refugees had been seeking safety there since 1997. AFP, 28 January 1999.
[362] See the factual analysis for Kambia District for 1999 for further information.

Safroko Limba Chiefdom. Like in other places, the G5 committee was tasked with administering the collection of daily contributions of foodstuff from the civilian population to the RUF/AFRC. Shortly after its establishment, RUF/AFRC forces were ordered to search the bush surrounding settlement to collect food for themselves.

In the southern headquarter tension was beginning to exhibit itself between RUF and AFRC commanders and ranks in Makeni (Bombali Sembora). In August, a senior RUF commander was captured and detained in Port Loko District by an AFRC splinter called the West Side Boys.[363] The West Side Boys, based in the Okra Hill Area of lower Maforki Chiefdom and Koya Chiefdom in Port Loko District eventually released the senior RUF commander, who commandeered a number of vehicles in Lunsar (Port Loko District) and Magbema and returned to Makeni. In August 1999, in Makeni's Independence Square, one of the RUF commanders shot an AFRC commander at point blank range, killing him immediately. RUF and AFRC members fought for control of Makeni. Following this battle, the AFRC forces left Makeni and moved into Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) led by a different commander[364]. During their withdrawal from Makeni, AFRC forces abducted civilians en route to Lunsar to carry wounded AFRC personnel.

On 22 October, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 6,000-strong peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone, to replace the previous observer mission and assist with the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. [365] The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) commenced deployment with the arrival of advance teams on 29 and 30 November;[366] 4,500 UNAMSIL were troops were present in Sierra Leone by 10 January 2000.[367]

e) Events in 2000

On 5 January, a contingent of 450 Kenyan UNAMSIL peacekeepers and military observers (MILOBS) tried to enter Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom) but was denied entry by RUF/AFRC forces on the grounds that they had not been authorised by the RUF/AFRC high command to deploy in the town. By 6 January, companies of Kenyan UNAMSIL peacekeepers had set up camp in Makeni. In January 2000, RUF/AFRC forces in Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) stoned a civilian to death after accusing him of killing an RUF/AFRC member. The civilian's body was left unburied and dragged along the road to the nearby village of Mongoreh (Safroko Limba).

In February or March 2000, diamonds were found in Kambia Makuhun (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) by residents of the village. A member of RUF/AFRC senior command oversaw the mining operation, in which abducted civilians were forced to work as miners. Those accused of stealing were given 200 lashes. Within the month, RUF/AFRC forces moved from Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) and Makeni to reinforce Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom), a village at the intersection of a route that leads to Kambia Makuhun and the Gbundema– Kamakwie highway. On 24 February, the RUF/AFRC commander in Kamakwie captured the Paramount Chief of

[363] See factual analysis for Port Loko District for further information.
[364] This information will require further clarification, since it is also mentioned in the factual analysis for Tonkolili District.
[365] UN Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999)
[366] BBC, 29 November 1999
[367] IRIN West Africa, 11 January 1999

Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom and released him after two weeks when each household in the chiefdom had contributed 5,000 Leones to the RUF/AFRC. Other RUF/AFRC forces entered Kamaranka, and held a town meeting to announce that they planned to use AK-47 machineguns to chase a chicken belonging to a local lady. A young boys was shot in the leg during the chase. Later in year in Kamaranka, three RUF/AFRC members raped a women in the Kamaranka Police Station.

On 2 or 3 May, the Kenyan contingent of UNAMSIL stationed in Makeni came under attack from RUF/AFRC positions in the town. A number of British UN Military Observers were also deployed with the Kenyans. An RUF brigadier entered the Kenyan base, assaulted a Bangladeshi Major and with a group of other RUF forces abducted an unknown number of Kenyan peacekeepers. One Kenyan peacekeeper was shot dead at point blank range by an RUF/AFRC member. As the RUF brigadier tried to take a Kenyan officer, gunfire broke out between the two groups.[368] RUF/AFRC forces in Makeni celebrated the attack on the peacekeepers. On 5 May 2000, 208 members of UNAMSIL's Zambian contingent were disarmed and captured en route to Makeni by RUF/AFRC forces based in Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom, Port Loko District). RUF forces returned to Foredugu and Makeni with vehicles, communication sets, weapons and uniforms confiscated from the peacekeepers. The RUF/AFRC high command in Makeni encircled the Zambians partly to delay their advance so other RUF/AFRC forces could prevent a UNAMSIL helicopter from reaching the Kenyan contingent in Makeni. The Zambian captives were taken from Makeni to Kailahun District.[369] Kenyan UNAMSIL broke out of Makeni on or around 11 May, and headed to UN outposts in Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and to Kabala (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District), which was held by the "loyal" SLA. Kenyan UNAMSIL soldiers were attacked by RUF/AFRC snipers in Panlap, a village on the highway to Kabala. On or around 12 May, UK forces airlifted four UN MILOBs from Magburaka following their escape from Makeni.[370]

The RUF/AFRC had captured around 500 UNAMSIL peacekeeper since the beginning of May, prompting a crisis for the peacekeeping mission. On 8 May, the UK military commenced "Operation Palliser", deploying to Sierra Leone the *HMS Ocean* and other vessels with around 800 soldiers from the Parachute Regiment.[371] UK forces secured the Freetown area and commenced re-training the SLA in June.[372] Between 8 and 14 May, RUF/AFRC forces unsuccessfully tried to occupy Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) in a bid to move into the Western Area. Other towns in Port Loko District, including Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) also came under attack from RUF/AFRC forces.[373] By 28 May, following the series of events outlined below, UNAMSIL announced that virtually all the peacekeepers had been released by the RUF. In June RUF/AFRC and SLA forces fought for control of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District), a key town in the RUF/AFRC's defensive arc around Makeni. RUF/AFRC secured the town by 21 June.

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[368] BBC Online News, 11 May 2000 (13:14 GMT 14:14 UK).
[369] See the factually analysis for Kailahun District in 2000 for further information.
[370] BBC Online News, 12 May 2000 (15:37 GMT 16:37 UK).
[371] On 24 May, soldiers from the 42 Commando Royal Marines replaced the paratroopers.
[372] See the factual analysis for the Western Area in 2000 for further information.
[373] See the factual analysis for Port Loko Disrict in 2000 for further information.

Between May and July 2000, helicopter gunships began flying over the Makeni and towns along the main highway nearby Makeni, such as Binkolo (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) and Masungbo (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom). In early May, a gunship attacked Binkolo, destroying two civilian residences. On seeing the gunship RUF/AFRC forces would run from their positions and seek cover in the surrounding bush. On 9 May, the gunship attacked RUF/AFRC positions on the Masungbo-Makeni highway. On 29 May, a helicopter gunship dropped leaflets[374] over Makeni. RUF/AFRC forces in Makeni Lorry Park attacked the helicopter. Five civilians were killed in the engagement, although it is not possible to say which side was responsible. The explosions could be heard in Binkolo, some 10 km from Makeni. On 7 July, a gunship flew over Binkolo, hovered and then left. On 29 July, the gunship returned to Makeni, and attacked RUF/AFRC positions killing at least one civilian and damaging three houses. Similar attacks by gunship were made in Kambia District, becoming more intense after 26 May 2000. Gunship attacks are also noted around this time in Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District).

Between August and October, RUF/AFRC commanders requested youths in Kamaranka (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) and Bombali Bana (Safroko Limba Chiefdom) to be trained at the RUF/AFRC camp in Gbendembu. By this time, nearly two battalions of RUF/AFRC combatants had been trained at Gbendembu and deployed on missions in Guinea.

In the morning of 3 September 2000, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Guinean town of Madina Oula. The RUF/AFRC had been concentrating forces in Fintonia (Tambakha Chiefdom) in the weeks before the attack, and conscription with Tambakha Chiefdom had greatly increased. RUF/AFRC forces attacked Guinean forces there but were forced to withdraw after three days when Guinean forces were reinforced. On their return to Fintonia on or around 7 September, RUF/AFRC forces held a town meeting and accused the civilian residents of providing information to the Guinean forces. As punishment, RUF/AFRC force burned down 15 houses in the town. Shortly after the attack on Madina Oula (Guinea), RUF/AFRC forces moved from Kambia District and attacked the Guinean border town of Pamelap.[375]

In response to RUF/AFRC encroachments, Guinea forces adopted a "Hot Pursuit" policy, in which RUF bases inside Sierra Leone along the Guinean–Sierra Leonean border were attacked in addition to the pursuit of RUF/AFRC forces inside Guinea. Guinean armed forces also moved their security checks three miles inside the territory of Sierra Leone. The RUF/AFRC unit based in Sanya (Tambakha Chiefdom) came under pressure from the new Guinean security policy and moved their base to a location nearby Sekusoria (Tambakha Chiefdom), a town on the border with Guinea. In early October, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Sekusoria but Guinean forces learned of these plans in advance and reinforcements arrived in the town in advance of the attack. In the weeks following the attack on Madina Oula, Guinean Forces attacked Tukukuray. The villages of Sanya and Somathai were attacked as well by Guinean forces and vigilanties. On 10 October, RUF/AFRC forces from Kambia District again attacked the Guinean town of Pamelap.

[374] Leaflets dropped from Government of Sierra Leone helicopter gunships in Kambia stated that their next sortie would not be with leaflets, but Gatling machine guns, 57mm rockets, 23mm guns and 30mm grenades.
[375] See the factual analysis for Kambia District in 2000 for further information.

In late September, RUF/AFRC forces raided Thama (Gbanti Kamaranka Chiefdom) and went house-to-house looking for valuable items. Seventeen civilians were abducted and forced to carry the stolen items to Makeni, a journey of over 40 miles.

f) Events in 2001

On 3 January, the RUF high command met with the UNAMSIL force commander in Magburaka.[376] In January, the RUF/AFRC agreed with UNAMSIL to open the stretch of highway connecting Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko Distrcit) and Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Makeni Town. On 31 January and 13 February, the UNAMSIL Core Contact Group met with the RUF/AFRC command in Makeni Town. At the latter meeting the RUF/AFRC returned 56 weapons, some communications equipment, and nine vehicles seized from UNAMSIL since deployment.[377] On 16 February, a Bangladeshi UNAMSIL unit conducted a long-range patrol to Makeni from Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), passing through 16 RUF/AFRC checkpoint en route. The patrol met with the RUF brigadier in Makeni.[378] Patrols continued throughout February, also moving from Ro-Gberray (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) through Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Makeni. On 14 March, around 240 Nigerian UNAMSIL soldier commenced deployment to Lunsar,[379] increasing to 776 by 23 March 2001.[380] On 17 April, Nigerian UNAMSIL soldiers moved from Lunsar and commenced deployment to Makeni[381] On 25 May, RUF/AFRC forces released 591 child combatants to UNAMSIL in Makeni.[382]

On 24 September, disarmament commenced in Bombali District. UNAMSIL established reception centres in Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom), Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom)[383] and in Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom) in late October.[384] On 15 November, 150 Sierra Leone Police deployed to Makeni.[385]

3. Conclusion

** TO BE DRAFTED ON COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS FOR THE NORTHERN PROVINCE**

b. Kambia District

1. Introduction

Kambia District is located in the north-west of Sierra Leone. The Republic of Guinea runs along the entire northern boundary of Kambia District, with the Atlantic Ocean lying to the west. Port Loko District is to the south of Kambia District and Bombali District is found to the east.

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376 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 3 January 2001
377 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 13 February 2001
378 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 16 February 2001
379 UNAMSIL Press Release, 14 March 2001 and IRINWA, 16 March 2001
380 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 23 March 2001
381 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 17 April 2001.
382 UNASMIL Press Briefing, 29 May 2001.
383 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 25 September 2001.
384 OCHA, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 16 Oct - 05 Nov 2001
385 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 16 November 2001.

There are seven chiefdoms in Kambia District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter Town
Bramaia	Kukuna
Gbinleh Dixon	Tawaya
Samu	Kychom
Magbema	Kambia (District Headquarter)
Mambolo	Mambolo
Masungbala	Kawulia
Tonko Lima	Madina

The bulk of Kambia District is situated between the Little Scarcies River and The Great Scarcies River. The Great Scarcies River[386] initially forms the border between Sierra Leone and the Republic of Guinea before running south through Kambia District into the Atlantic Ocean near Kassirie (Samu Chiefdom). Gbinleh Dixon and Samu Chiefdoms are located on the north bank of the Great Scarcies River, forming the boundaries with Magbema, Mambolo and Bramaia Chiefdoms. Traders from Guinea and Sierra Leone transport goods to Freetown along the Great Scarcies River, passing through the wharf towns of Rosinor (Samu Chiefdom), Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom) and Kassirie (Samu Chiefdom). The Great Scarcies also passes nearby the district headquarter town of Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom).

There are four key land routes in Kambia District. The first runs north from Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) through Mange (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom), where it continues north across the Great Scarcies River to the Guinean border at Pamelap (Gbinleh Dixon Chiefdom). From there, the highway leads to Conakry, the capital city of Guinea. This route passes over a long road bridge at Mange, which was held by the RUF/AFRC for most of the period spanning August 1997 to March 2001. The second important route runs from Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom (Port Loko District) into Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom) and then directly to Kambia Town. This route can also be used to by-pass the road bridge at Mange and rejoin the Mange-Kambia highway at Sendugu Junction, just south of Kambia Town. The third route runs from Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District). This route allows movement between the large town of Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom, Bombali District) and locations in Kambia District. The final key land route also runs from Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) through Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) northwards to the Guinean border.

Between 1991 and 1995, Kambia District was not directly affected by the conflict. At the end of January 1995, the RUF extended their operations northwards into Kambia District from Port Loko District. The RUF did not attempt to hold any territory in Kambia District in 1995, but attacked the district headquarter town of Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom), killing 20 people. The force was heavily armed, carrying AK-47 machine guns, RPGs, small arms and grenades, as well as an array of bladed weapons; there would be little change in this configuration throughout the conflict. RUF forces abducted a large number of children and other civilians and also kidnapped seven Italian nuns to

[386] Called the Kolente River in Guinea.

draw international attention to the RUF movement. The attack on Kambia Town was viewed as a demonstration of the ability of the RUF to strike throughout Sierra Leone. The inadequate response and poor discipline of the SLA led to a sharp deterioration in civil-military relations in Kambia District.

RUF forces returned to Kambia District in February 1996, concentrating on securing land and river routes between northern Bombali District and Kambia District. Shortly before the Parliamentary and Presidential elections on 26 February 1996, RUF forces staged a number of attacks on towns in the District, killing civilians and stealing civilian property. RUF forces attacked two key points on the road linking Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). The town of Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom), just north of Madina on the road to Guinea, was also attacked. In addition, they attacked a wharf town and crossing on the Little Scarcies River near Kabbah Ferry (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District), enabling seaward river access to Sanda Magbolontor and BKM Chiefdoms in Port Loko District and Mambolo and Magbema Chiefdoms in Kambia District. RUF/AFRC forces also attacked Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), a large wharf town and economic centre on the Great Scarcies River. From May until November, Guinean forces moved into Sierra Leone and established a base at Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). In cooperation with local guides, Guinean forces patrolled the roads around the border with Guinea to prevent RUF infiltration. The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF leadership signed the Abidjan Peace Accord on 30 November 1996. The resulting ceasefire held firm in Kambia District until May 1997.

In May 1997 the RUF resumed hostilities, moving from Bombali District to attack Madina (Bramaia Chiefdom), stealing property from the town's Catholic Mission. On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a successful coup and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC); soon after, the AFRC leadership joined with the RUF. The RUF/AFRC immediately established a brigade headquarter for Kambia District in the village of Yibaya (Tonka Limba Chiefdom). As the year progressed, the RUF/AFRC moved into Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom) and established a training camp at Kamba (Magbema Chiefdom). At this time, there was an escalation in the mistreatment of civilians. During attacks on villages, murder, rape and abduction were commonplace. Many civilians were forced to carry stolen property. News of high profile and brutal killings spread through the District, prompting many civilians to cooperate with the RUF/AFRC and take on roles as porters or administrators in order to protect themselves from the consequences of non-cooperation.

Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Kambia and Rokupr (both Magbema Chiefdom). During the attacks, they looted extensively, as well as killing and abducting civilians. The RUF/AFRC brigade headquarters remained in Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) and a series of intense raids were staged on nearby towns and villages across September and October 1998. A number of civilians were killed and mutilated in barbaric ways by RUF/AFRC forces; others had one or more limbs amputated by RUF/AFRC members. Guinean forces strengthened their deployment on the border with Sierra Leone and commenced artillery bombardment of suspected RUF/AFRC bases. RUF/AFRC forces occupied another point on the Great Scarcies River and, in addition to taxing road and river traders, began imposing a high weekly tax on the houses in RUF/AFRC occupied areas. The Great Scarcies



River took on increasing logistical importance to the RUF/AFRC; since CDF and ECOMOG forces fortified Port Loko District, control of points of the river allowed RUF/AFRC forces to generate significant revenue by taxing traders. In addition, it allowed supplies to be transported to other RUF/AFRC bases inland. At this time, a series of hard punishments were administered by the RUF/AFRC command to RUF/AFRC members that were caught committing violent acts against civilians. However, the effectiveness of these disciplinary measures is overshadowed by a pattern of escalating violence towards against the civilian population. Cruel and high profile punishment of civilians and RUF/AFRC members created an atmosphere of terror that was reinforced by the hunt for "rebel collaborators" in the aftermath of successful Guinean attacks on various villages.

In February and March 1999, after the RUF/AFRC had failed in its bid to capture Freetown, RUF/AFRC forces occupied towns across Kambia District, including Kambia Town and Rokupr (both Magbema Chiefdom). Guinean forces in Kambia Town retreated to positions outside the town and engaged RUF/AFRC forces throughout March for full control over the town. Guinean artillery inflicted huge damage on civilian residences in the town. The wharf town of Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom) and Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) were also both occupied. Uncharacteristically, RUF/AFRC forces entered Rokupr and Mambolo without firing a shot, wearing white strips of cloth tied around their heads. While civilians welcomed their arrival, the peace did not last long, as RUF/AFRC forces began taxing the civilian population and abducting young men to join their movement. The RUF/AFRC now had full control over all the main wharfs on the Great Scarcies River and began appointing civilian chairpersons and secretaries to administer an extensive system of collecting house taxation and food "contributions" from the civilian population. The consolidation of control over Kambia District was part of a general RUF/AFRC strategy to secure Makeni and encircle Port Loko Town. Bases in Port Loko District at Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom) complimented the RUF/AFRC hold over the Mange Bridge, rendering the main northern route to Makeni and inland unusable. In mid 1999, the RUF/AFRC extended activity to Kassirie (Samu Chiefdom) and began moving into Guinea by night to rob traders. Guinean forces started the artillery bombardment of upstream traffic on the Great Scarcies River, resulting in many unidentified corpses floating past the downstream wharfs. Guinean forces also started using long-range patrols and helicopter gunships to secure the border area.

In 2000, the RUF/AFRC moved their brigade headquarters to Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom). In April, UNAMSIL commenced long-range patrols into Kambia District. RUF/AFRC forces disarmed a company of Nigerian UNAMSIL peacekeepers in May 2000, releasing them after a few days. Guinean forces intensified their bombardment of towns where RUF/AFRC forces were stationed, resulting in many civilian deaths. RUF/AFRC forces took up positions on the Guinean border and late in the year attacked towns inside Guinean territory. The Guinean bombardment continued into 2001. In the first months of 2001, the RUF/AFRC opened up the highway between the towns of Port Loko and Kambia, allowing UNAMSIL to patrol parts of the District. In May, RUF/AFRC forces commenced disarmament in Kambia District at UNAMSIL-run centres in Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) and Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom). The SLA also returned to the District in May and by August 2001, disarmament was complete across the District.

2. Factual Analysis

a) Events in 1995



From the Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), RUF forces pushed into Port Loko District during the first three weeks of January 1995, focussing on the road network linking the towns of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District), Foredugu and Kamasundo (both Buya Romende Chiefdom, Port Loko District). RUF forces then moved into Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom (Port Loko District), which borders Kambia District, where they attacked villages on the main road through the chiefdom and also attacked Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom, Port Loko District) before moving into Kambia District. Despite the deployment of SLA forces in the District headquarter town of Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom), RUF forces entered Kambia District on 23 January 1995, advancing towards Barmoi[387] (Masungbala Chiefdom), 10 miles from Kambia Town near the border with Port Loko District.

At dawn on 25 January 1995, RUF forces attacked Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom). The attack came from the direction of Kolenten Secondary School and lasted for around four hours. The RUF forces did not face any resistance from SLA forces stationed in the town and killed about 20 civilians and a policeman. Around 300 civilians were rounded-up at the Long Communication Pole part of town and screened by RUF forces. Since they were unable to control 300 people, the majority were released, with 70 civilians remaining in RUF custody. Three young boys who escaped abduction were caught by RUF forces in Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom (Port Loko District) and publicly tortured to death. During the attack, RUF forces entered the hospital compound and abducted around 50 schoolchildren[388] and seven expatriate nuns from the Rome-based order of the Xaverian Missionary Society of Mary, who were operating a dispensary. RUF forces paraded the nuns and around 100 other civilian residents around the town for three hours before moving south to an unknown destination, possibly Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom, Port Loko District).[389]

Around five hours after the attack, two truckloads of SLA forces arrived in Kambia Town. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) stated that over 24,000 civilians had fled into Guinea immediately after the 25 January RUF attack on Kambia Town.[390] In the wake of the attack, both local youths and the SLA stole civilian property.

On 31 January 1995, the RUF leader requested the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to act as an intermediary between the RUF and the NPRC concerning the release of the seven nuns.[391] On 13 February, the RUF leader made a number of demands on the Italian Ambassador to Sierra Leone for the release of the nuns, namely the provision of medicine, a satellite phone and a generator.[392] RUF forces finally released the nuns onto the Lunsar-Makeni highway on 21 March 1995, their demands remaining unmet.[393]

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387 Also spelt Gbamoye.
388 AFP, 27 February 1995 reports that parents of around 50 children abducted by the RUF on 25 January 1995 appealed to international agencies for assistance in securing their release.
389 All details of kidnap from AFP, 26 January 1995.
390 Facts on File World News Digest, 23 February 1996 quoting UNHCR 31 January 1996.
391 AFP, 31 January 1995.
392 AFP, 13 February 1995.
393 Xinhua, 21 March 1995 and AFP, 22 March 1995.

Kambia District was quiet for the remainder of 1995, although rumours about new RUF attacks persisted throughout the District. The RUF moved into the Western Area by April 1995 and attacked Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) in June 1995.

b) Events in 1996

January and February 1996 were extremely tense politically, with ongoing disagreements between the NPRC, the SLA and the RUF concerning the elections scheduled for 26 February. In mid-January, the NPRC leader was overthrown by his deputy and fled to Guinea. Throughout this time, the RUF concentrated on securing land and river routes between northern Bombali District and Kambia District. First, RUF forces attacked two key points on the road linking Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) and the headquarter town of Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). Second, RUF forces attacked key wharfs on the Little Scarcies River near Kabbah Ferry (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District),[394] allowing seaward river access to Sanda Magbolontor and BKM Chiefdoms in Port Loko District and Mambolo and Magbema Chiefdoms in Kambia District. RUF/AFRC forces also attacked Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), a large wharf town and economic centre on the Great Scarcies River.

On 31 January 1996, staff of the Catholic Mission in Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) intercepted a radio message that RUF forces were planning to attack Madina the following day at 08.00. The Paramount Chief was contacted immediately and a town meeting was held at the Court Barrie in Madina. On 1 February 1996, RUF forces entered Kambia District using the route from Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) that runs up the centre of the District. The RUF forces attacked Madina Town between 06.00 and 08.00, meeting no resistance. Seventeen houses were burnt down, one man was killed and two other men were forced to carry items the RUF forces stole during the assault on the township. After the attack, the RUF forces returned to the Kamakwie area, possibly to their camp at Masonkorie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom, Bombali District) for a meeting with another RUF group that in the meantime had attacked Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom).

In the morning of 20 February 1996 an RUF force numbering around 300 targeted Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), using Makatic Section as entry point to the town. Rokupr, which is divided into the town proper and the large, economically important Rice Research Station, is less than 13 miles due south of the District headquarter town of Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom). As with the attack on Kambia, SLA forces were inadequately equipped and numbered too few to resist the RUF offensive. During the attack, RUF forces killed a popular Islamic cleric who had identified one of the RUF members. An unknown number of people were abducted but released the same day. RUF members looted around 250 houses, burnt down eight houses and stole rice; the Rice Research Station was also severely looted.

On 23 February 1996, peace talks between the RUF and the NPRC leadership commenced in Abidjan, the commercial and administrative centre of Cote d'Ivoire. Between 23 and 26 February 1996, RUF forces attacked Kamakwie (Sanda Loko Chiefdom, Bombali District), at the eastern end of the road axis from Madina and Kukuna. On 25 February, RUF forces attacked Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom). During the attack, the RUF forces burnt down between 30 and 50 houses and looted extensively. The brother of a prominent politician was shot dead by RUF forces and an old woman

[394] See factual analysis Bombali District in 1996 for further information.

and a baby were burnt to death in one of the houses. From Kukuna, RUF forces went to Makindota (Tonko Limba Chiefdom), moving to their base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District) on 28 February 1996.

Three months later, in May 1996, Guinean forces set up a base in Madina (Magbema Chiefdom), where they stayed for about six months, working together with a locally mobilised civil defence,[395] as RUF forces began moving towards the northern part of the District along the Guinean border. During this period, Guinean forces patrolled all around the Madina - Kukuna route.

The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF leadership signed the Abidjan Peace Accord on 30 November 1996. This provided for the immediate and total cessation of hostilities.[396]

c) Events in 1997

A small RUF force again attacked Madina on 18 May 1997. Using a red Toyota Hi-Lux stolen in the prior attack on Madina, they took medicine, clothes, generators and furniture from the Catholic Mission. The stolen property was taken to the main road leading to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) and then to the Ro-Source base (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District). RUF forces attacked Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) on the same day.

On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a successful coup and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC); soon after, the AFRC leadership joined with the RUF. Shortly after the coup, RUF forces based in Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District) moved on to Tonko Limba Chiefdom to establish a base in Yibaya,[397] a village in the centre of the chiefdom less than 10 miles from the international border with the Republic of Guinea. The RUF established another base south of Yibaya at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District). Yibaya was the first seat of the joint RUF/AFRC command in Kambia District. There were few attacks on civilians in the area surrounding Yibaya, primarily for fear for provoking Guinean forces to return to Madina. Yibaya would be the launch point for attacks on the main towns in Kambia District.

Shortly before the signing of the Conakry Peace Plan on 23 October 1997, around 500 RUF/AFRC members under the command of a senior member of the RUF/AFRC leadership carried out "Operation Stay in Madina" (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). A young man was appointed by the RUF/AFRC as Town Chief and was put in control of revenue-generating activities. This led to a general escalation of ill-treatment of the civilian population by the RUF/AFRC forces in the villages surrounding Madina. RUF/AFRC forces stole civilian property, beat civilians, raped women and forced young and strong men to carry stolen items. The RUF/AFRC forces established a "Combat Camp" in Kamba (Masungbala Chiefdom), where many important commanders came to deploy their forces all over Kambia District. RUF/AFRC forces also established a checkpoint four miles south of Madina at Nuemeya Mabande village to screen road traffic through the "Mene Curve" route from Port Loko to Kambia.

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395 The affiliation of these civil defence people, if any, is unknown.

396 See factual analysis for the Western Area in 1996 for further information.

397 Also spelt Yibaia.



In Kamba, an unknown number of members of the Dina Ba Yeh Sor[398] religious group were accused by the RUF/AFRC commander of stealing 15 gallons of palm oil from the nearby village of Banka Makunloh (Masumgbala Chiefdom). They were stripped, tied up and beaten unconscious[399] by four members of an RUF Small Boy Unit. The captives were then swung "like a hammock" and thrown away. News of this incident quickly spread through Masungbala and Tonka Limba Chiefdoms, prompting many civilians to cooperate with the RUF/AFRC, taking on roles such as load carriers and public relations officers for fear of the consequences of non-cooperation.

d) Events in 1998

Between 6 and 12 February 1998, ECOMOG forces entered Freetown and removed the RUF/AFRC forces from the bulk of the Western Area. In March 1998, ECOMOG commenced provincial operations: in brief, within four days of commencement, ECOMOG forces had taken control of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District), Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom, Bombali District), Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and locations in Koinadugu District. ECOMOG then moved into Kono District, taking full control of Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District) in early April 1998, by which time they had also moved as far east as Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District).

RUF forces moved from their base at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Kambia District, advancing into Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom) on 12 February 1998. In Barmoi, RUF/AFRC forces burnt down eight houses, abducted 50 civilians and forced them to carry stolen property. Another RUF/AFRC commander was left in charge in Barmoi and the former commander moved on to attack Kambia Town on 14 February 1998. In Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom), the RUF/AFRC forces killed eight men, stole a large amount of property and burnt down a large number of houses. On 19 February 1998, the same force simultaneously assaulted Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) and Mange (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District), overcoming ECOMOG forces deployed in Mange and pushing them back into BKM Chiefdom.[400]

Guinean ECOMOG forces deployed from the Republic of Guinea to Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) at some point in late February or early March 1998.[401] On 23 February, youths in Kambia Town captured and burnt alive two RUF members in retaliation for an attack on Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom), where RUF/AFRC forces had disrupted the town market. Another two captives were handed over to the Guinean forces.[402]

At this time, RUF/AFRC forces were already based in Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom). On 8 April 1998, an important conference occurred between many commanders in Madina. It was during this meeting that the AFRC High Command planned the operation "Stay in Kambia", but the plan was later executed on 11 February 1999. Following the conference, the RUF/AFRC field commander gathered the town residents together and asked them for support. He also stated that civilians should report to him any incidences of violence committed by RUF/AFRC members; any

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398 Little is known about this group.

399 The RUF/AFRC commander specified that the accused should be beaten until they were in "free engine".

400 See factual analysis for Port Loko District in 1998 for further information.

401 AFP, 16 March 1998.

402 AFP, 23 February 1998.



RUF/AFRC members caught carrying out such activities would be shot on sight. On 15 April, the RUF/AFRC commander executed two RUF/AFRC child combatants who had reportedly raped a woman in the village of Gboray Laya (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). The two corpses were buried in a single grave behind the Madina town market. After this event, RUF/AFRC forces tied up a Sierra Leone police officer, placed him in the boot of a car and left it in the sun; he was later released.

Residents of Banka Makunloh (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) who had crossed into Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom (Port Loko District) requested[403] the Gbethi Society to provide them with security. On 24 August 1998, Gbethis (CDF) from Port Loko District attacked RUF/AFRC forces stationed at Katherie[404] (Tonka Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District), killing an RUF/AFRC captain. RUF/AFRC forces retaliated by capturing and decapitating 15 residents of Katherie, subsequently placing their severed heads on poles at the town entrance points. During the attack, three civilians had their hands and ears amputated by RUF/AFRC forces. Others, including a three year-old baby, were wounded when RUF/AFRC members attacked them with bladed weapons.

From 12 September to early October 1998, the RUF/AFRC command based in Madina focused activity on Tonko Limba Chiefdom, attacking the villages of Yibaya, Kathantinah, Kakula, Kamabala, Kasengeta, Kabasa, Kamasasa, Katimbo and Kakonteh. During the attacks on Yibaya, Kathantinah and Kakula, RUF/AFRC forces killed 16 civilians. These three villages were occupied by Guinean ECOMOG forces on or around 16 September 1998.[405]

In Kamabala (Tonka Limba Chiefdom) RUF/AFRC forces, who had earlier infiltrated the town disguised as IDPs, mistreated and killed eight people. RUF/AFRC forces impaled the son of a prominent elder on a sharpened pole, and bayoneted another woman in the right leg for refusing to pay them money. RUF/AFRC forces burnt down all the grass houses in the village before heading into the bush to collect money from village residents who had fled the attack. In Kakonteh (Tonka Limba Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces cut a finger off a young mother and injured her with blows to the head from a cutlass when she stopped them from decapitating her baby.[406] An unknown number of others were killed during the attack and all the houses but one were burnt. In Kangawala (Tonka Limba Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces abducted, raped and then released a number of women. In Katimbo (Tonka Limba Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces injured a man with blows to the head from a machete and amputated a hand each from two other civilians. In early October 1998, a land dispute broke out between the villages of Yibaya and Kakula (both Tonka Limba Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces stationed in Yibaya assisted residents to occupy the disputed land, meeting resistance from the people of Kakula; in the resulting battle, 16 people were killed.

On 28 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces staged a surprise attack on Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom). Guinean ECOMOG forces stationed in Kukuna engaged the RUF/AFRC forces and, receiving reinforcements, repelled the RUF/AFRC from the town. RUF/AFRC forces killed 13 civilians, around seven of whom died from blood loss following the amputation of one or more

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403 It is reported that the Gbethis accepted money for this service.

404 Also known as Malikia Katherie.

405 AFP, 16 September 1998.

406 The woman and her child were both taken to the government hospital in Kambia.

limbs.[407] RUF/AFRC forces abducted 10 civilians, and burnt down around 60 houses. Much of the public infrastructure, including the Court Barrie and health facilities, were also destroyed during the battle. Following the attack, it is reported in general terms that Guinean ECOMOG began hunting for RUF/AFRC collaborators.

In the light of this attack, in the final months of 1998, Guinean forces decided to launch artillery attacks on RUF/AFRC positions in Sella Limba Chiefdom (Bombali District). After 22 October, Guinean ECOMOG deployed 3,000 troops along the border with Sierra Leone, and a further 1,000 into Kambia District, including Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom).[408]

From October onwards, RUF/AFRC forces moved toward the south-west of the District, occupying Rosinor (Samu Chiefdom), a small town situated along the banks of the Great Scarcies River. Rosinor is also a key trading and transit point from where produce is taken to Guinea for sale. RUF/AFRC forces entered the town along the river from the direction of Rokupr. They first fired into the air to frighten the town residents and then stole property from the wharf area of Rosinor. RUF/AFRC forces frequently made such raids, forcing civilians to hide their belongings in the bush surrounding the town. In December, RUF/AFRC forces requested the traditional authorities of Rosinor to find them accommodation in the town and eventually occupied two large houses. RUF/AFRC forces taxed each resident of Rosinor two cups of rice and Le 2,000.[409] Those defaulting were locked up in a cell, or had essential household items like cooking utensils and pots taken away until they paid. RUF/AFRC forces established two checkpoints in Rosinor, one at the wharf and another at Yomkeleya (Samu Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC members below 15 years of age patrolled the wharf area and taxed alighting boats a sum of between Le 10,000 and Le 20,000 depending on their destination. RUF/AFRC forces stole bags of rice and other property from traders passing through the Rosinor stretch of the river while those at the Yomkeleya checkpoint collected money from vehicles entering the town. More junior RUF/AFRC members took each day's stolen property for collection at the house of the RUF/AFRC commanding officers. The RUF/AFRC command in Rosinor established a guardhouse where RUF/AFRC members caught committing serious crimes[410] would be beaten and imprisoned for a few days without rations.

At the end of 1998, a substantial number of the RUF/AFRC forces deployed in Kambia District headed to Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to support the attack on Makeni and then the assault on Freetown. The Madina brigade was moved to Makeni, leaving behind a skeleton force in Madina.

e) Events in 1999

RUF/AFRC forces invaded Freetown between 6 and 20 January. In preparation for the 6 January invasion of Greater Freetown, RUF/AFRC force staged preliminary attacks in late December on

[407] Amputation detail only. All Africa News, 30 September 1998.

[408] BBC, 25 October 1998.

[409] As a very rough guide, one million leones is approximately equivalent to 500 USD. This should be placed in the context of Sierra Leone's position at the bottom of the Human Development Index: between 1991 and 2000, 57% of the population lived on less than 1 USD (2.000 SLL) per day and 74.5% lived on less than 2 USD (4.000 SLL) per day: see UNDP Human Development Report 2003, http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_SLE.html, last visited on 30 December 2003.

[410] It is not specified what constituted a serious crime.

towns in Port Loko District and the Western Area, including Port Loko Town, Ro-Gberray (both Maforki Chiefdom), Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), Masiaka, Songo (both Koya Chiefdom), Newton (Koya RD, Western Area) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). Also in late December, the towns of Makeni (Bombali Sebora, Bombali District) and Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) were occupied by the RUF/AFRC. ECOMOG forces pushed the RUF/AFRC back from Freetown to Waterloo, where they remained in force until at least 25 February 1999. RUF/AFRC forces retained control over the arterial routes from the Western Area running through Port Loko District throughout this time. During January, Kambia District remained a key destination for IDPs and humanitarian organisations continued to ship relief supplies to Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom). Throughout February, the RUF/AFRC occupied all the key towns in Kambia District and imposed an extensive system of house, traffic and trade taxation in those areas.

On 5 February, an RUF/AFRC member at Rosinor (Samu Chiefdom) beat and tortured a well-known riverboat captain by making knife cuts on his back and dripping rum onto the wounds.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) on 11 February 1999, engaging Guinean ECOMOG forces at a checkpoint along the route. The RUF/AFRC established a base in Kambia Town, where they remained until late May 2001. Many of the town's residents and those of nearby villages towards Guinea, passing through Gbinleh Dixon Chiefdom towards the Pamelap border crossing. On entering Kambia Town, RUF/AFRC forces targeted prominent SLPP supporters and organisers in the town; they also burnt down many houses and stole property. Guinean ECOMOG forces established checkpoints near Kambia Town and at the bridge over the Great Scarcies River, intermittently firing artillery at RUF/AFRC positions in the town. The primary result of these bombardments was the destruction of civilian residences and other property.

RUF/AFRC forces informed those remaining in Kambia Town that they would not inflict havoc on the civilians in the town, as they may have heard from others. This reassured people, who began resettling in the towns and villages in the area. However, the RUF/AFRC forces soon started harassing people, asking them constantly for food and restricting their movement. To move from one point to another, people had to buy a "passport" from the RUF/AFRC forces, which initially cost Le 500 and later rose to Le 1,000. The rate of killing was not as high as the previous years and people were now mainly killed when they refused or were unable to give food or money. For example, in Kambia Town, a fisherman who came back from the sea without fish was killed by a member of the RUF/AFRC forces.

RUF/AFRC forces also attacked Mambolo Town (Mambolo Chiefdom), on the south bank of the Great Scarcies River, on 11 and 12 February. RUF/AFRC forces killed three civilians and raped one woman in front of her husband. They also looted shops and abducted civilians to carry the stolen property as they left the town towards Kamba, a village near Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom). Around this time, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Seed Multiplication Project near Mambolo, destroying much of the machinery and stealing around 5,000 bushels of rice, which they transported to Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) and sold to traders.

Also on 11 February, RUF/AFRC forces entered Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) searching for food items and valuable property. This mission was code-named "Operation Feed Yourself" and had not

been designed to include the killing of civilians or the destruction of property. Two days later, RUF/AFRC forces retuned to Kukuna from the direction of Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces shot dead two civilians with mental health problems and raped a number of young women. A large amount of property was stolen. As a result of these actions, civilians fled from Kukuna to Guinea. While maintaining Madina as their Brigade headquarter, at some point after 13 February the RUF/AFRC deployed a force of between 20 and 50 in number to Kukuna.[411]

RUF/AFRC forces entered Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) on 25 February 1999 from the direction of Royanka and Kambia Town. Their entrance was unusual in that RUF/AFRC forces had tied pieces of white cloth around their heads and claimed to be seeking peace. Between Ahmaddiuua Muslim Secondary School and the wharf area of Rokupr, the town residents organised a procession to welcome the RUF/AFRC forces. The RUF/AFRC commander addressed a crowd in the Wongbo Hall, promising that any of his forces caught inflicting violence on civilians would be punished. By the beginning of March, however, the RUF/AFRC had commenced conscripting youths of the town into the RUF/AFRC and taking them to a training camp they had established at the nearby village of Kamba (Magbema Chiefdom).[412] Residents of villages near Kamba were ordered to register with the RUF/AFRC command at Kamba, which meant that the village had to present at least Le 200,000 and a large amount of food and livestock to the RUF/AFRC command. With the exception of Rokupr Town,[413] RUF/AFRC forces imposed a monthly tax of Le 1,000 per house in all villages in Magbema Chiefdom. RUF/AFRC forces publicly molested or confiscated the property of those who failed to pay the house tax.

At the beginning of March 1999, RUF/AFRC forces returned to Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom), and established a base in the town. As they had done in Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) on 25 February, RUF/AFRC forces entered the town peacefully, singing and dancing and claiming to want peace. Nevertheless, RUF/AFRC members stripped those civilians that joined the dance of quality clothing and jewellery. RUF/AFRC forces quickly occupied a number of houses in the town and established checkpoints at the Mambolo Wharf and on the Mange (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Mateite (Mambolo Chiefdom) Highway. To assist them with the administration of the town, the RUF/AFRC command also appointed numerous chairpersons and secretaries from among the town's residents. While in Mambolo, the RUF/AFRC stole civilian building materials and started rebuilding the Mambolo Jetty, constructing a number of roundabouts on which they painted the faces of the RUF/AFRC leadership.

Guinean ECOMOG forces counter-attacked RUF/AFRC forces in Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) between 12 and 18 March, seizing parts of the town.[414] The attacks were in response to reports that RUF/AFRC forces had taken control of a customs point on the border at Gbalamya (Gbinleh Dixon Chiefdom) and had advanced on the town of Pamelap, just across the border from Kambia Town.[415]

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411 The command of the detachment in Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) rotated a number of times between 1999 and 2001.

412 Kamba is about 8 miles north east of Rokupr, across the Mange-Kambia highway.

413 The reason for this exception is unknown.

414 AFP, 18 March 1999.

415 African News Service, 12 March 1999.



Beginning in March, many RUF/AFRC came to Rosinor (Samu Chiefdom) from Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom), Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom, Bombali District) and other towns on the Great Scarcies River. They travelled northwards upriver, crossing the Guinean border and heading by night to the town of Dagagbay, the site of an important trade fair, where they robbed Guinean traders, killing those that tried to resist. At least until June, RUF/AFRC forces continued to come to Rosinor. The Guinean Government decided to strengthen its deployment of forces in towns like Bubuya, Koya and Funkdeh just within Sierra Leonean territory. Despite regular patrols and engagement with RUF/AFRC units at Rosinor, Guinean forces did not prevent RUF/AFRC forces from harassing civilians and stealing property. Indeed, the Guinean forces often turned back civilian river traders, suspecting them to be RUF/AFRC members. In general terms, whenever Guinean forces detected an RUF/AFRC unit travelling up river into Guinea, artillery fire would be brought to bear on the Great Scarcies River between Rosinor and Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom);many unidentified corpses were subsequently found floating in the river

On 16 May 1999, RUF/AFRC forces entered Kassirie (Samu Chiefdom) by motorboat from Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom). Kassirie is located at the mouth of the Great Scarcies River and, like other towns further upriver including Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom), Rokupr, Kambia (both Magbema Chiefdom) and Rosinor (Samu Chiefdom), is an important transit and trade route between Sierra Leone and Guinea. To frighten residents, RUF/AFRC forces fired in the air with AK-47s while going house-to-house kicking down doors and stealing property. A motorbike belonging to the local police post was also taken. The stolen property was loaded onto the motorbikes and taken to the RUF/AFRC base at Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces also attacked on Mapotolon (Samu Chiefdom), about 10 miles from Kassirie, where they captured two men.

In mid-May 1999, RUF/AFRC forces returning from missions in Port Loko District[416] captured six men from Rokamba (Masungbala Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC brigade commander later personally executed the six captives at Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom).

Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire, which entered into force on 24 May. Full talks commenced on 25 May in the Togolese capital, leading to the signing of the Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (Lomé Peace Agreement).

The second RUF/AFRC attack on Kassirie (Samu Chiefdom) occurred during the ceasefire period, in the evening of 11 June 1999. RUF/AFRC forces stole civilian property during the attack. Senior members of the RUF/AFRC command addressed the residents of Kassirie, informing them that they would punish any RUF/AFRC member who killed or stole. Shortly after this, the RUF/AFRC command in Kassirie appointed a civilian Chairperson to act as an intermediary, administering the collection of a monthly contribution to the RUF/AFRC from the civilian population. In early July, a helicopter gunship bombarded Kassirie, killing two civilians. On 16 July 1999, Guinean ECOMOG forces acting on information passed to them by residents of the town successfully ambushed

[416] The RUF/AFRC Madina Brigade was involved in planning attacks in Koya Chiefdom (Port Loko District) at this time.

RUF/AFRC forces entering Kassirie. ECOMOG forces killed at least three members of the RUF/AFRC and captured a number of others. RUF/AFRC forces retaliated in the following days and burnt down over 100 houses in Kassirie.

Following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, the RUF/AFRC began requiring the inhabitants of villages throughout Tonka Limba Chiefdom to pay money and feed the RUF/AFRC forces. On market day in Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom), which occurs every Friday, RUF/AFRC forces levied Le 500 and three cups of rice or oil from each house; those who defaulted were ill-treated. For example, at Kasuroh village, just north of Madina, RUF/AFRC forces broke the leg of an old man who refused to let them take his livestock. In Mapotolon (Samu Chiefdom), local youths responded to this ill-treatment by killing a number of RUF/AFRC members in the village. The RUF/AFRC forces in Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) launched a heavy attack on Mapotolon in retaliation, surrounding the village and burning down every residence.

On 22 October, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 6,000-strong peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone, to replace the previous observer mission and assist with the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. [417] The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) commenced deployment with the arrival of advance teams on 29 and 30 November;[418] 4,500 UNAMSIL were troops were present in Sierra Leone by 10 January 2000.[419]

f) Events in 2000

In late April, UNAMSIL commenced long-range patrols in Kambia District, particularly around the border areas. UNAMSIL plans to continue deployments into Kambia District were interrupted when the RUF/AFRC disarmed and detained around 300 UNAMSIL peacekeepers in different locations across Sierra Leone. In early May 2000, RUF/AFRC forces disarmed a 100 strong Nigerian UNAMSIL contingent near Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom). They were released in Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom) a few days later.

The RUF/AFRC moved the Kambia Brigade headquarters to Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) at some point in early 2000. On 26 May 2000, a Sierra Leone Government helicopter gunship bombarded Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), killing three people and wounding two others. Shortly before this, around late March or early April 2000, the same gunship had dropped leaflets telling the RUF to surrender and disarm to UNAMSIL, warning that the next time it would be bombs,[420] not leaflets. This practice was also carried out in Bombali and Tonkolili Districts. RUF/AFRC forces would shoot at civilians attempting to take one of the leaflets. After 26 May 2000, the helicopter gunship came regularly, which resulted in civilian deaths in Rokupr, Kambia Town (both Magbema Chiefdom) and Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom). This continued until June 2000, when the Guinean forces bombarded Rokupr on numerous occasions, killing up to 17 civilians.

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[417] UN Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999).
[418] BBC Online News, 29 November 1999.
[419] IRIN West Africa, 11 January 1999.
[420] The leaflets refer specifically to Gatling machine guns, 57mm rockets, 23mm guns and 30mm grenades, accompanied by a picture of a Mi-24 "Hind" helicopter gunship.



In June 2000, RUF/AFRC forces harassed civilians in Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom). On 15 June, a member of the RUF/AFRC started beating any civilians who would not hand over their bicycles to him. Three days later, a man who had defaulted on a daily payment to the RUF/AFRC was beaten 300 times with an axe handle by RUF/AFRC members. He passed out and was then detained in a large box before being released.

Guinean forces started reinforcing the border areas and continued to bombard RUF/AFRC positions in Kambia District. The RUF/AFRC also established a "Combat Camp" at Gbalamuya (Gbinleh Dixon) using forces redeployed from Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom), Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom), Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Makeni (Bombali Sebora Chiefdom, Bombali District). On 6 or 8 September 2000, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Pamelap on the border in Guinea, stealing property and forcing people to carry the items back to Kambia Town and Madina. Two well-known Italian Xavarian missionary priests were also abducted at Pamelap and taken to Madina, where they were allowed by the RUF/AFRC command to continue their work. They were released at Kamalo (Sanda Loko Chiefdom, Bombali District), although the RUF/AFRC Kambia Brigade command was not informed, leading to a house-to-house search of Madina and surrounding villages, and a wave of arrests of RUF/AFRC officers. Those arrested were taken to Kamakwie, where they were severely beaten with canes with razor blades embedded in them.

The RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Pamelap on 10 October 2000.[421] Guinean forces reacted to the RUF/AFRC military activities in the Guinean towns of Pamelap, Moola and Tassin by bombarding all the towns along the Great Scarcies River from Pamelap and Madina Woula, Kassirie, Rosinor (both Samu Chiefdom), Rokupr, Kambia (both Magbema Chiefdom), Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom) and some locations in Gbinleh Dixon Chiefdom. Sustained periods of bombardment of these locations continued throughout October, as did. RUF/AFRC attacks within Guinean territory. During those attacks, RUF/AFRC forces killed or abducted many civilians and burnt down many houses. The entire Kambia District remained firmly under RUF/AFRC control.

In November 2000, many civilians fled Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom) to nearby villages, fearing the consequences of being unable to continue paying money to the RUF/AFRC forces, who became concerned as there were progressively fewer civilians to provide them with food. RUF/AFRC forces sent a civilian chairperson to order people to return to Rokupr, otherwise RUF/AFRC forces would start amputating their limbs, as a result of which many people travelled to Freetown by boat.

Throughout 2000, Gbethis (CDF) were based in BKM Chiefdom (Port Loko District), on the south bank of the Little Scarcies River. Intermittently, they came into Kambia District and engaged RUF/AFRC positions. Their presence was thus a threat for the RUF/AFRC forces, who on one occasion learnt that the Gbethis had crossed the river. They therefore went to Mapolon (Masungbala Chiefdom) to confront the Gbethis and a battle took place, during which over 100 people, including civilians, RUF forces and Gbethis were killed.

g) Events in 2001

[421] BBC Online News, 10 October 2000 (17:51 GMT 18:51 UK).



Guinean infantry and airborne operations against RUF/AFRC positions in Kambia District continued into 2001. The RUF command in Kambia District commenced regular "contact group" meetings with representatives of UNAMSIL. On 3 January, the RUF leader met with UNAMSIL force commander and invited UNAMSIL to deploy to Kambia District.[422] On 12 January 2001, the RUF opened the road between Mange (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) [423]. The road bridge over the Little Scarcies River would not be open until 22 March 2001 since it had been damaged significantly.[424] On 25 February, the first formal UNAMSIL-RUF Contact Group meeting was held in Mange (BKM Chiefdom, Port Loko District). In early March, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees commenced negotiations with the RUF command and the Government of Guinea to create a demilitarised "humanitarian corridor" running from Forecariah through Pamelap and then Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) to Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District).[425] This would go some way to enable the secure passage of hundreds of thousands of refugees from Guinea to Sierra Leone.

On 22 March, the UNAMSIL force commander visited Rokupr and Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom) following the reopening of the bridge at Mange.[426] As a result of this , UNAMSIL had expanded its patrols to cover Mange, Kambia and Rokupr by 30 March.[427] In April, UNAMSIL gained access to Mambolo (Mambolo Chiefdom). At the ECOWAS-sponsored six monthly ceasefire review meeting held in Abuja, Nigeria, on 2 May, the RUF leadership agreed to withdraw from Kambia District by 30 May.[428] Disarmament plans for Kambia and Port Loko Districts were also agreed upon in Abuja. Following this, UNAMSIL gained access to the towns of Madina (Tonka Limba Chiefdom) and Kukuna (Bramaia Chiefdom).

On 18 May, UNAMSIL opened a disarmament centre at Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom).[429] A disarmament centre was also opened at the Court Barrie in Madina (Bramaia Chiefdom). On the same day, a Guinean helicopter gunship briefly bombarded Rokupr. The following day, the President of Sierra Leone and the United Nations Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Sierra Leone travelled to Conakry to discuss the bombardment with the Guinean authorities, who said that their attack was "unfortunate" and was a consequence of a "communication gap".[430] On 29 and 30 May, the 11th Battalion of the SLA and 30 SSD members deployed to Kambia Town.[431] On 10 August 2001, a committee comprising representatives of the RUF, UNAMSIL and the Government of Sierra Leone declared disarmament complete in Kambia District.[432]

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422 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 5 January 2001.
423 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 12 January 2001.
424 UNAMSIL Press Release, 22 March 2001.
425 UN Security Council Press Release SC/7029, 8 March 2001.
426 UNAMSIL Press Release, 22 March 2001.
427 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 3 April 2001.
428 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 4 May 2001.
429 UNAMSIL Press Release, 19 May 2001.
430 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 22 May 2001.
431 BBC Online News, 30 May 2001 (05:37 GMT 06:37 UK) and UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 1 June 2001.
432 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 14 August 2001.



3. Conclusion

** TO BE DRAFTED ON COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS FOR THE NORTHERN PROVINCE**

c. Koinadugu District

1. Introduction

Koinadugu District is located in the northwest of Sierra Leone. It shares a border with Guinea to the north and east, with Kono and Tonkolili Districts to the south and with Bombali District to the west. The town of Kabala is the Headquarter Town of Koinadugu District. There are eleven Chiefdoms in Koinadugu District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter Town
Dembelia Sinkunia	Sinkunia
Diang	Kondembaia
Follosaba Dembelia	Musaia
Mambolo (Kasunko)	Fadugu
Mongo	Mongo Bendugu
Neini	Yiffin
Neya	Krubola
Sengbe	Yogomaia
Sulima	Falaba
Wara Wara Bafodia	Bafodia
Wara Wara Yagala	Gbawuria

[geographical overview and summary of factual analysis to be drafted pending incorporation of comments from resource persons]

2. Factual Analysis

a) Events in 1992

On 29 April 1992, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), led by Valentine Strasser and elements of the SLA, overthrew the government of the All Party Congress.

In the first half of 1992, Fadugu town (Mambolo) experienced an influx of civilians from Makeni town (Makari Gbanti, Bombali) and Kono District. On 2 May 1992 a local civilian militia was formed in Fadugu town (Mambolo). For this militia, local blacksmiths manufactured single-barrel shotguns known as "Chaka Bulla." Others were armed with sticks through which nails were driven, metal bars, axes and cutlasses. Reports indicate that the Government of Sierra Leone was setting up and recruiting for a civilian militia called the "Donsos," the headquarter of which was Koidu town (Gbense, Kono District). An unknown number of civilian militia from Mambolo chiefdom joined the Donsos.

In mid 1992 the SLA started reinforcing their positions in the eastern Chiefdoms of Neya and Mongo in the towns of Kumba Wullen Balia and Tumonia.[433] In July 1992, in Mongo Bendugu

[433] This town could be Tomania, Sengbe Chiefdom.

(Mongo), the Paramount Chief of Mongo met with a 12-man SLA unit and informed them that there was no problem with security in the entire chiefdom.

Between July and October 1992, SLA senior staff members visited all 11 chiefdoms in Koinadugu, urging local leaders to gather local hunters into a civilian defence movement. Paramount Chiefs recall receiving letters from the NPRC government echoing this request. At about the same time civilian militia started to be formed in various chiefdoms and were gathered to be trained by the SLA in the tactics of guerrilla warfare and ambushes in the headquarter town of Kabala, Wara Wara Yagala chiefdom. They were named the Tamoboros. They were to be used to fight alongside the SLA and SSD. The Tamaboros were operating under the political leadership of the then NPRC Minister of Defence, Mr. Komba Kambo. The field commander of the Tamaboros was Pa. Khanko Modi Samura, of Ghaya town in Sulima chiefdom. Local commanders were selected from the five tribes of Koinadugu, namely the Yalunka, Kuranko, Limba, Fullah and Madingo. In August 1992, 450 "Tamaboros" were deployed to confront RUF forces in Kono and Kailahun districts in the months following. It is likely that the bulk of deployment to Kono followed the RUF attacks on Koidu (Kono District) from 22-23 October 1992 onwards.

Recruitment to the Tamaboros continued through November and December 1992. In late November 1992, a member of the Sierra Leone Police entered the town of Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) with a message for the Section Chief from the Neini Paramount Chief ordering him to gather all hunters in the section and send them to Yiffin town within 7 days. Later, on 23 December 1992, 43 hunters left the town of Firiwa (Neini Chiefdom) for the town of Yiffin, further south in the Neini Chiefdom.

In September 1992, SLA forces were sent the headquarter town of every chiefdom in Koinadugu District. In September, at the SLA base in Yarawadu (or Yarawadugu, Neya Chiefdom), SLA troops detained a Guinean man suspected of being a member of the RUF. The hands and feet of the man were bound together behind his back, and he was suspended on a lateral stick, his head facing towards the ground. Within 24 hours the man had died. SLA forces ordered villagers of Yarawadu to bury the body, and blocked all roads out of the town until this was done.

For two weeks in November 1992, townspeople of Yiffin (Neini Chiefdom) saw large and continuous convoys of civilians travelling through the town. There were few vehicles. Those in the convoy said they were moving from Kono because of RUF attacks.

Across 1992 SLA forces were stationed on the border of Neya chiefdom with the Kono Chiefdoms of Toli, Lei and Sandor. There were SLA bases in the villages of Yarawadu and Durukoro to the extreme south-east, and in Kurubonla (Neya), Mansofinia (or Mansofenia, in Neya Chiefdom) on the main motorable road crossing the north of the chiefdom. The SLA soldiers were little paid or even unpaid for months, so there were some incidents of looting.

b) Events in 1993

In early 1993 there was a meeting in Yifin (Neini), between NPRC officials and the Chiefs to form a militia to help the NPRC government to fight the RUF. Following this, in 1993 the Tamaboros started to be deployed. Their effectiveness became a threat at government level where they were

perceived as a potential alternative source of power and therefore the then Minister of Defence Paul Nyuma prompted their dissolution.

In 1993 Tamaboros, moved to combat RUF forces in Kono District. The first battle took place in Sewafe River, in Kono District.

In June 1993, a group of SLA entered the village of Kumba Wullen Balia (Neya), abducted three people and took them to Tagbadu where they had to catch some animals to be slaughtered for food. The SLA forces left, releasing the people they had abducted.

On 15 September 1993 at a meeting in the community centre in Kabala town (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom) the Tamaboros were officially disbanded. Tamboros were given a half a sack of rice and some kerosene. The Paramount Chiefs were given a wall clock and a radio each.

c) Events in 1994

In March 1994 civilians fleeing Kono District started to arrive in the southern chiefdom of Neya, in the towns of Mansofinia and Kurubonla.

Following an attack on Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) on 1 November 1994, RUF forces moved eastwards along the main road through Bendugu (Sambaia Bendugu Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) towards Diang chiefdom and the town of Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom). This first group would attack Kabala by 7 November. A second RUF group would leave Mansofinia on 8 November and arrive in Alikalia by 11 November.

Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) was attacked by RUF forces moving from Bendugu (Sambaia Bendugu Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) between 1 and 5 November 1994. Two SLA soldiers organised local hunters, who were ordered by the Section Chief to gather their weapons, to move towards Bendugu (Sambaia Bendugu Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and ambush the advancing RUF forces. Two miles from Alikalia, this group engaged a large number of RUF forces, but were repelled by superior firepower and dispersed into the surrounding bush. RUF forces attacked Alikalia shortly after, burning 68 houses. Two members of the RUF forces were killed in the attack.

On 5 November 1994, a meeting was held in the southern town of Mansofinia (Neya Chiefdom) between RUF commanders during which an attack on Kabala Town was planned. This group would move north towards Kabala on 8 November.

Also on Saturday 5 November 1994 convoys of civilians moving from Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) passed through the town of Kondembaia (Diang Chiefdom) moving towards Kabala. Residents were informed that RUF were advancing on the town. SLA forces stationed in Kondembaia used long-range weapons to check the RUF advance, forcing a retreat to the town of Badala town on the Seli river, some 6 miles from Kondembaia. RUF forces had entered Badala earlier in the day, and had informed residents that they were safe, before commencing their attack. SLA forces moved towards Badala and blocked the bridge of over the Seli River, both halting the northward movement of RUF forces and preventing civilians from moving towards Kondembaia. Two hundred people were killed when RUF forces burned down the house they were in. The number of civilian deaths was high

because it was the Saturday market day (called "Lumor" locally). SLA troops were ultimately dislodged from the bridge.

Early on 6 November 1994 RUF forces departed Badala, and moved across the Seli river northwards towards Kabala, bypassing the town of Kondembaia, to where the SLA had retreated. They attacked a number of villages within a 10km area to the immediate south of Kabala. Surkurela (Dieng Chiefdom) and Kamadugu Sokurela (Neini Chiefdom) were attacked. RUF forces arrived in Fasowaya (or Fasawaia, Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom) early on 7 November and cooked a large amount of food. RUF forces were in three groups around the Fasawaya area. The first group was on a patch of farmland called Maworona, the second on the farm of Madam Fatmata Roko, and the third at a location called Centre Bolt's Garden.

In the afternoon of 7 November 1994, RUF forces moved from their Fasowaya encampment and attacked Kabala. Shortly before the attack, residents of Kabala recall hearing an announcement over the radio informing them that the SLA were about to test their AK47 rifles, and therefore nobody should worry. There was limited resistance from the small SLA contingent stationed in the town. Reports indicate that Guinean and Nigerian troops were also present. They would be reinforced on 11 November by SLA forces retreating from Kono District. During the attack, RUF forces killed a prominent former Tamaboro leader, beating him severely with metal bars before cutting his throat. At least four other civilians were killed by RUF forces. In addition to burning over 100 residences, RUF forces looted and destroyed public buildings, including the Police Barracks, the District Office, the District Council Hall and the hospital. Twenty civilians were abducted to carry stolen property. RUF forces also destroyed the businesses of many civilians thought to have been Tamaboros. Fleeing the battle much of the Kabala people fled the town of Kabala heading northeast towards Fadugu and Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) and also towards the town of Tomania (Mongo Chiefdom).

Following the attack, RUF forces left Kabala in the morning of 8 November 1994, moving directly southwards through the villages of Yisimaia (Sengbe Chiefdom), Fasawaya (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom) and Kamadugu Sokurela (Neini Chiefdom). In Fasawaya, 18 civilians were abducted to carry looted property. They continued southwards off the main motorable road, moving through Singbini (Neini Chiefdom) before veering westwards towards the town of Foria (Diang Chiefdom). A further 18 civilians were abducted in Singbina. Reports indicate that this RUF group, active in Diang chiefdom prior to the 7 November attack on Kabala, abducted over 3000 civilians.

By 10 November 1994, the RUF forces responsible for the attack on Kabala on 7 November reached Dondoya (Diang Chiefdom). Instead of taking the main motorable road from Foria (which continued south towards Alikalia and Yiffin) RUF forces headed to Darakuru (Diang). Darakuru is one of the main gold mining areas in Sierra Leone. RUF forces camped in Darakuru until 13 November 1994, during which time they received 300 ounces of gold from the residents of the village in return for not attacking Darakuru. This group of RUF moved into Tonkolili District.

RUF forces departed Mansofinia (Neya Chiefdom) on 8 November, moving to Yiffin on 9 November 1994. Before entering Alikalia on 9 November, RUF forces overpowered armed significant resistance from local militia. Eleven civilians and four local militia were killed by RUF

forces during this attack. Reports suggest that this second RUF group may have joined the RUF forces moving southwards towards Darakuru following the 7 November attack on Kabala.

d) Events in 1995

Throughout 1995, RUF and SLA activity was concentrated in the Neya chiefdom, to the extreme southeast of Koinadugu District. Across 1995, the RUF would push their line of operation westwards towards Freetown, staging large attacks on Moyamba Port Loko, Mile 91, Songo and Waterloo attacking Waterloo town in mid 1995. The RUF's presence in Koinadugu in 1995 was primarily a spillover from the war in Kono, where food supplies were running short.

"Food finding" missions were launched by both RUF and SLA forces around the towns of Mansofenia and Kurobonla, both on the main motorable road through Neya chiefdom. During RUF "Food finding" missions, there were incidents of rape and other violence against civilians, but nowhere near the intensity of the attacks in Neya, Neini and Diang chiefdoms in late 1994. In August 1995, a 50 civilian militia were mobilised in the south of Diang chiefdom.[434]

On 16 February 1995, RUF forces arrived in Mansofinia (also Mansofenia, Neya) and requested to be fed and lodged by the villagers, who obliged. On 17 February, they abducted five villagers and moved to the village of Kamaya (Neya Chiefdom), arriving at towards midnight. Following a search of the village, RUF forces opened fire, rounding up the population of the village and performed a search of every residence. Early in the morning of 18 February, RUF forces had found and taken 15 five gallon tanks of palm oil, four bags of husk rice, two bags of husk groundnut, two bags of salt and one full bag of beans. On 19 February, villagers from Kamaya were ordered by the town chief to carry the stolen food items back to Mansofenia through Henekuma village (Neini Chiefdom). In Henekuma, more food items were stolen from villagers and two men were abducted to carry thm. On 20 February, the convoy returned to Mansofenia.

On 22 February 1995, RUF forces based in Mansofenia divided into two groups and also divided the property that had been taken the previous days. The first unit moved to nearby Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom). The second unit headed south towards Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District).

As a consequence of these incidents, the SLA were redeployed in the Southeastern chiefdom of Neya in the towns of Gberawalia and Kumba Wullen Balia. A number of incidents of looting by SLA forces are reporting between February and March 1995.

In February 1995, SLA forces entered the village of Nelikoro (also Nerekolo III, Neya chiefdom). Twenty civilian men were arrested and questioned about the location of livestock nearby the village. A farmer was tied up and forced to watch as his wife was raped by 5 members of the SLA. SLA forces then took some livestock and abducted an unknown number of Nelikoro residents to transport the livestock to Gberewaya (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District).

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[434] There is one report of an attack on Kabala, taken from a key person from another District, which is not corroborated by any record taken in Kabala town or in Koinadugu District, therefore it does not appear to be reliable.

In March 1995, SLA forces entered Kumba Wullen Balia. They abducted at least 5 civilians and took them to nearby Yirandu (Neya Chiefdom) where they were forced to kill and butcher a cow, and carry another cow suspended upside-down by its legs on a stick over their shoulders. Marching towards Mansofenia (Neya Chiefdom), SLA forces captured a further 5 civilians to assist with carrying the cow. On their arrival in Mansofenia (Neya Chiefdom), the civilians were locked in a building without food or water until the following day.

RUF forces came from Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom) to Mansofinia in May 1995 before moving to Seredu (Neya Chiefdom). In Seredu, they entered the town firing in the air, and arrested 10 women and 8 men. Many villagers fled into the surrounding bush. All 10 women were raped and then forced to fetch water and cook for the RUF forces. The men were forced to fetch firewood and palm wine. RUF forces also took palm oil, rice and poultry from farms in the surrounfing area. After five days, they returned to Yiraia, abducting 25 villagers from Seredu to carry property stolen in the previous days

In August 1995, reports reached the villages of Foria, Yanqulia, Soria and Kumunkaia (Diang Chiefdom) of renewed RUF activity in Yiffin town (Neini Chiefdom) and Neya chiefdom. All four villages are on the same road, running north to Kabala from Kono. Fifty hunters were mobilised, with only five single barrel guns between them.

Food finding missions by RUF units along the Mansofenia – Kurubonla road (Neya Chiefdom) continued into November and December 1995. RUF forces entered the town of Mansofinia on 13 October 1995 and took food items. The next day they also entered the villages of Kurubonla and Worokoro (Neya Chiefdom), searching for livestock. In December RUF forces again entered Mansofinia (Neya Chiefdom) and Daboroma, near Kurobonla. In Mansofinia they abducted 20 men and forced them to carry the loads to Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District) and also to Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom).

e) Events in 1996

In general, there RUF forces carried out raids in Neya Chiefdom and attacks on Foria and Aliakalia in Diang chiefom. There were frequent patrols from the town of Kurubonla into Mongo and Neya Chiefdoms. Food finding raids were carried out from Kaiyai (Sandor Chiefdom). The RUF forces had total freedom of movement throughout Neya chiefdom. RUF activity concentrated entirely in the southern chiefdoms, the most intense attack being on Foraya (Diang Chiefdom).

No incidences were recorded in first half of 1996. The first record of resumed RUF activities was a meeting in Kurubonla (Neya Chiefdom). On 13 June 1996, RUF forces commanded by three different commanders met in Kurubonla (Neya Chiefdom). A decision was made to split into two groups: one to go north to Bendugu (Mongo Chiefdom) and the other to head south to Mansadu, Kono District. Both groups claimed to be looking for a senior SLA officer. On 15 June 1996, the northern group headed towards Bengdugu (Mongo Chiefdom), staying in the village of Kamaron (Mongo Chiefdom), returning to Kuribonla (Neya Chiefdom) on 18 June. On 19 June, they departed Kurubonla for Koidu. During this mission, there were no reports of any violent incidents. The Chiefs of both Kamaron (Mongo Chiefdom) and Kuribonla (Neya Chiefdom) cooperated with the RUF forces, ordering villagers to provide food when requested by the RUF.

On 15 August 1996, RUF forces attacked Foraya (Diang Chiefdom) from Nyamulnya, (Diang Chiefdom) at the south end of the town.[435] Foraya is on the main northern road to Kabala, between the towns of Alikalia and Kondembaia, both attacked heavily by RUF forces in 1994 prior to their attack on Kabala on 7 November. With five shotguns, civil militia mobilised in August 1995 managed to repel the RUF assault and capture three members of the RUF, who were taken to ECOMOG forces present in Alikalia. ECOMOG forces gave three AK47 rifles in exchange for the RUF prisoners. The fate of the prisoners is unknown.

The RUF forces moved from Kurabonla along the main towards Masadu (Mongo Chiefdom) on 15 September. In the evening they attacked the villages of Madine, Kumba Wullen Balia and Masandu. In Madine, two houses were burnt down, one man was shot dead, 10 men arrested and property was taken.

On 5 November 1996, RUF forces attacked Alikalia (Neini) RUF forces looted property, burnt houses and killed 13 civilians. RUF forces also raped an unknown number of women.

On 26 November, armed RUF forces arrived in Kurubonla from Kaiamy (Sandor Chiefdom) from Kono and stayed overnight in the village. The town chief provided them with food. On 27 November 1996, they moved south eastwards through the villages of Marilia (Neya Chiefdom) and Toria (Neya Chiefdom). In Toria, the village was surrounded and all the houses searched. Food items were taken and 25 villagers were abducted to carry the load back to Kurobonla, where the Chief offered the commander one cow for the safe return of the Toria abductees.[436] From Kurobonla, the RUF unit moved to Mansofenia, where the 25 abductees from Toria were released. The Unit continued towards Kayia (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District).

In December 1996,[437] RUF forces attacked Mansofinia where they arrested 20 young men and forced them to carry loads of property to Kaiyma, in Kono district.

On 12 December 1996, RUF forces attacked Foraya (Diang Chiefdom) from the village of Kulanko (Neini Chiefdom) using heavy machine guns, mortars and RPGs. ECOMOG forces, SLA and local militia engaged the RUF, but were repelled and retreated from the town northwards towards Badala, a crossing point over the Seli river. RUF forces killed one SLA soldier and captured one Nigerian ECOMOG soldier, about whom there is no further information.

f) Events in 1997[438]

In April 1997, RUF forces established a base in Serekolia (Mongo Chiefdom). Then they moved on to attack Dolar[439] and moved south to Kurubonla (Neya chiefdom. The ECOMOG forces occupied Kabala and moved on to Koinadugu, Sengbe chiefdom, searching for RUF forces.

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435 It is possible that this incident took place at a hill called Gbakan, but this is not marked on the maps and requires further clarification.

436 It is not clear from the record whether this offer was accepted.

437 More clarification is required from the records on the date, specifically when during December this happened.

438 The records contain contradictory information on what happened in Koinadugu District in 1997. This whole section therefore requires further clarification, including verification through open source research.

In May 1997, RUF forces left Sengbe chiefdom towards a bordering chiefdom, apparently escaping from the advance of ECOMOG troops. Chasing the RUF forces the ECOMOG troops attacked Gberefeh (Sengbe Chiefdom) and Dolar[440] to unseat the RUF/AFRC bases. During this month, CDF captured some members of the RUF and took them to the ECOMOG base in Mongo chiefdom.[441] The RUF/AFRC forces counterattacked in Serekolia and Gberefeh where they engaged in a battle against the Tamaboros.

There were RUF/AFRC bases in Sereya (Mongo Chiefdom), whose presence caused people to flee to Guinea.[442]

In meantime, in the south eastern chiefdom of Neya, RUF forces attacked a number of towns, including Kurubonla, Porpon and Henekum, and set bases in Yiraia, Bendu, Kulia, Kumba Wullen Balia, Nerekoro, Mansofinia, Yarawalu and Konkowaboro. In these places they continued looting, killing and abducting people to carry their loads.[443]

In June 1997, senior RUF/AFRC commanders were based in Koinadugu town (Sengbe Chiefdom), where their men captured 80 young men, they raped women and girls in the bush and they killed 98 people. Then they moved on to Dankawali.[444]

In June RUF/AFRC forces coming from Mongo and Neya Chiefdoms, went to Freetown, passing through the towns of Kurubonla and Mansofinia. In Mansofinia RUF/AFRC formed the G 5, mixed units of RUF forces and civilians who were charged with various administrative functions, and stayed in the district.[445]

In July 1997, RUF/AFRC forces occupied the eastern part of the District in Neya, Mongo and Sengbe chiefdoms, attacked many towns and villages and they planned the attack on Kabala town, at the time a stronghold of ECOMOG and CDF. The battle took place on 27 July 1997.[446]

On 17 September 1997, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Kabala. The RUF forces did not meet any resistance from SLA and many people were killed. The next day the SLA, who had apparently delayed fighting the RUF forces for strategic reasons, started firing on their position killing many RUF forces and their commander, who was subsequently buried in one of the main mass graves.

On 19 September 1997, an RUF commando group left Mansofinia and headed to Kulero. On the way, they attacked Sumaworia and Sondordu (both in Neya Chiefdom). In Sumaworia, they abducted everyone in the town, including men, women and children. The women were then taken

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439 The location of this town is not clear, although it is likely to be either Mongo or Sengbe Chiefdom.
440 The location of this town is not clear, although it is likely to be either Mongo or Sengbe Chiefdom.
441 More information is required from the records about the location of the ECOMOG base in this chiefdom.
442 More information is required from the records on this matter.
443 More detail is required from the records on these incidents.
444 This requires more detail, in particular whether all of these incidents took place on one day or over the month of June.
445 More information is required from the records here about the "G5" system.
446 More detail is required from the records about this battle and these incidents.

into empty houses and raped, while their husbands were forced to watch. Similar incidents took place in Sondordu. During that month a group, coming from Kumba Wullen Balia, attacked Kilimendu and Mansadu.

The RUF/AFRC forces operated in Neya chiefdom until the end of September 1997 in the towns of Kurubonla, Sangabania, Kamaron and Bumbunkoro, where they abducted everybody and forced men and women to work for them. During the night, women were raped all over the town.[447]

In October one AFRC group attacked the towns of Koromandor and Kumba Wullen Balia. During the same month in Sengbe chiefdom a fight took place between two senior RUF/AFRC commanders, as a result of which one left the chiefdom. In November 1997, the RUF forces went from Makeni to Fadugu, Mangolo chiefdom, while in the first half of December another group of RUF forces attacked Kondodalema, Sangbania and Kurubonla in Neya Chiefdom.

RUF forces attacked Mansonia (Neya Chiefdom) on 26 December 1996, where they held a meeting and asked the people for food. On this occasion, they beat people and raped women. After four days they left the town forcing men and women to carry the loot to Kurubonla, where five vehicles came to collect them and left to Safaru in Kono district.[448]

In December 1997, AFRC, RUF and G5 were based in Sengbe chiefdom where they took property, abducted and beat people. The people were forced to cook, wash their cloths and build guard-posts. They were also sent in search of food. Many people would be flogged, especially when the RUF forces had casualties in a battle. RUF forces destroyed roads and bridges.[449]

g) Events in 1998

Intense RUF/AFRC activity and food finding missions staged from the two towns of Mansofenia and Kurobonla on the main motor road though Neya chiefdom continued. Following ECOMOG intervention, "Operation Pay Yourself", during which RUF forces stole property in many different locations at the same time, was reported across Neini, Diang, Sebeneh chiefdoms.

In early January, a 20-man RUF/AFRC unit entered the village of Kumba Wullen Baia. In nearby Bola Mamburia, RUF forces temporarily detained 15 people and took property from their premises. A man and his son were shot dead for refusing to carry loads of property. The unit left Kumba Wullen Baia for the RUF base at Mansofenia.

At some point before 5 January 1998, a 50-man RUF/AFRC unit entered Kuronbonla (Neya Chiefdom), describing their mission to the town Chief, as a "routine patrol". On 5 January, they left Kuronbonla heading southeast towards Yarawadugu (Neya Chiefdom), a border town with both the Republic of Guinea and Toli chiefdom (Kono District). On their arrival in Yarawadugu, RUF/AFRC forces sealed off the roads, fired shots in the air and went house-to-house removing the occupants and taking them into the streets. The Section Chief offered the RUF/AFRC forces some livestock to feed them for the duration of their stay.

[447] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.
[448] More detail is required from the records about this attack.
[449] More detail is required from the records about this attack.

Around midday on 12 January, RUF forces used a machete to cut off four fingers from the right hand of the Section Chief. An unknown number of civilians in the town were whipped and beaten by RUF forces, who looted extensively. Twenty-six men and 15 women, all civilians, were forced to carry the looted property. RUF forces burned down four houses before departing Yarawadugu.

Between 12 and 13 January 1998, this RUF unit returned to Kurubonla from Yarawadugu passing through the villages of Tilikoro, Fasombnuya, Sandia, Tenkeya, Toroya and Marliya. In Tilikoro, two men were caught and their property taken away. In Fasonbnuya, three men were caught, and property including radios, casette tapes and a gun was taken. Five houses were also burned down. Many houses in other towns were also burnt down, including 10 in Sandia, two in Tenkeya, 10 in Toraya and 6 in Marliya. On 13 January, the unit arrived in Kurubonla, whereupon the people who had been abducted to carry stolen property on the patrol were released. A truck from the RUF base at Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom) was provided to carry the 50 man unit back to Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District).

On 15 January 1998, RUF forces burned a total of 11 houses in the villages of Dunamara, Fandala and Henekuma (all Neya Chiefdom) en route from Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District) to Mansofenia (Neya Chiefdom). In Mansofenia, RUF forces began to burn houses. Villagers report begin surprised, having been informed earlier by one of the RUF commanders that Mansofenia was an RUF base. That RUF commander shot dead another RUF commander with a pistol.[450]

In February 1998, the combined forces of the ARFC and the RUF were driven out of Freetown by the Nigerian-led ECOMOG intervention force.

After 14 February 1998, a 1000-man RUF/AFRC unit known as "Junta One" arrived in Fadugu (Mambolo HQ town) and proceeded to attack many surrounding villages as part of "Operation Pay Yourself". Attacks were made upon Kagbasia, Kafogo, Kassasie, Thankorosidia, Madina, Kasandakoro, Kakayo and Kamanda.[451]

On 15 February 1998, ECOMOG forces entered Fadugu town forcing ARFC/RUF forces to retreat towards Kabala. Fadugu town became the focus point for surrenders by RUF/AFRC forces present in the surrounding villages, as a result of which ECOMOG set up a screening process.[452] At least two killings of surrendered RUF/AFRC forces by ECOMOG soldiers are recorded. ECOMOG cooperated with the CDF to set up a town defence plan that included civilians.

CDF forces had made the main route between Magburaka and Koidu impassable to retreating RUF/AFRC forces, so the main route used was through Bumbuna (Kalansogoia, Tonkolili) and Bendugu (Sambaia Bendugu, Tonkolili) into Neini chiefdom. After 14 February 1998, a large convoy of RUF/AFRC vehicles moved through the towns of Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) and Yiffin (Neini Chiefdom) through towards Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District). In both Alikalia and Yiffin,

[450] More detail is required from the records on this.
[451] More detail is required from the records on these attacks.
[452] More detail is required from the records on the screening process.

until early March 1998, there are reports of continual harassment of civilians and their property being taken by RUF/AFRC forces as part of "Operation Pay Yourself".

Throughout March and April 1998 in Sebeneh chiefdom, the number of RUF/AFRC forces present grew. There are also reports of continual looting of civilian property and expropriation of dwellings to house RUF/AFRC forces and their families. Civilians in Kalkoia (Sengbeh Chiefdom) report seeing small ECOMOG patrols shortly after the arrival of the main ECOMOG 2nd Battalion reached Kabala in early March. Shortly after ECOMOG arrived in Kabala, RUF/AFRC forces occupied the town of Serekolia (Mongo Chiefdom).

After 13 March 1998, ECOMOG forces commanded by entered the town of Alikalia from the north. A company of ECOMOG forces remained in Alikalia, whilst a platoon was dispatched to Yiffin town (Neini Chiefdom), in pursuit of RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG met little resistance on entering Yiffin. In both Yiffin and Alikalia, ECOMOG forces and Section Chiefs accepted the surrender of unknown numbers of RUF/AFRC forces, who were issued with documents identifying them and then sent to Kabala or Makeni for further questioning by ECOMOG.

Immediately after entering both Yiffin and Alikalia, ECOMOG met with the Section Chiefs and requested that hunters be gathered together to assist ECOMOG troops. In Alikalia, 50 hunters were rapidly assembled and registered at the ECOMOG base. ECOMOG firstly provided training to those who registered in how to use an AK-47 rifle, and secondly ordered those trained to search the bush around Alikalia town for RUF/AFRC forces.

By 14 March 1998, ECOMOG troops had deployed to the northern town of Sinkunia (Dembelia Sinkunia Chiefdom) to the North of Kabala. Civilians in nearby Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) report arresting and tying up a local ARFC leader and handing him over to ECOMOG forces in Sinkunia. After 14 March 1998, ECOMOG forces arrived in Falaba town.

On 26 March 1998, an RUF/AFRC unit attacked the town of Kosaba in the Republic of Guinea, bordering Mondo chiefdom The previous day this unit abducted 40 civilian men in Kamaron and Kiridu (both in Mongo Chiefdom) to guide them through to Kosaba. Two civilians were killed during the attack. RUF/AFRC forces took items like foam mattresses, guns, radios and foodstuffs from Kosaba. The abductees were forced to carry the looted property back to the RUF/AFRC base in Mansofenia.

On 28 March 1998, ECOMOG forces stationed in Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) received reports of an RUF/AFRC buildup to the south of the town. A young boy reported that RUF/AFRC forces had captured his friend and killed him as a ritual sacrifice. An ECOMOG armoured car fired from Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) in the direction of Alia (Alieya Chiefdom) village. In the early hours of the morning on 29 March, RUF/AFRC forces responded and attacked Falaba town with heavy machine guns and RPGs, killing 18 civilians, looting and burning down over 50 houses. ECOMOG withdrew to their pre-existing position in Sinkunia. Falaba was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces again on 3 April, thereby securing RUF/AFRC control of Falaba until the arrival of Guinean troops in late May 1998. The Guinean contingent remained until late November 1998.

On 30 March 1998, ECOMOG in Alkalia received reports from civilians of a large concentration of ARFC/RUF forces around Worombaia in the southern tip of Neini chiefdom, bordering with Tonkolili District. ECOMOG forces based in the town and 40 local hunters were dispatched by ECOMOG from Alikalia. Failing to locate RUF/AFRC forces, they returned to Alikalia in early April 1998.

In early April 1998, a contingent of Guinean ECOMOG troops attacked Serekolia town (Mongo), entering from the direction of Kabala. Residents report seeing 13 trucks, an unknown number of ground troops and a helicopter gunship. RUF/AFRC forces retreated from Serekolia towards Kurobonla. ECOMOG moved through Serekolia, and established a base in the nearby town of Mongo Bendugu (Mongo). There are also reports that shortly after moving from Serekolia, RUF/AFRC forces established a base in the town of Seria (Mongo Chiefdom), close to Mongo Bendugu, and on the main road southwards to the other RUF/ARFC bases in Neya chiefdom.[453]

On 11 April 1998, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces arrived in the village of Mansofenia (Neya Chiefdom). They had more than 20 Honda motorcycles and a large and a varied amount of weaponry including RPGs, LMGs, AK-47s, shotguns, mortars, grenades and bladed weapons. The town was sealed off by RUF/AFRC forces. On 13 April, a large meeting of civilians and all military forces was convened. The RUF/AFRC forces were divided into five groups, to be based at Mansofenia, Yiriaia, Kurobonla (Neya Chiefdom), Mansodugu (Mongo Chiefdom) and Alikalia (Diang Chiefdom). On 20 April, some of the RUF/AFRC forces moved towards Kurobonla, and a much smaller group moved to Mandodugu. The Alikalia and Mansofenia groups remained in Mansofenia.

Late morning on 27 April 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Yiffin from the easterly directions of Krutor and Konombaia village (both in Nieni Chiefdom).[454] ECOMOG forces were ambushed with an RPG whilst setting up defences and retreated from Yiffin. The ECOMOG commander informed the Section Chief that the town should be evacuated because they were unable to defend against the RUF/AFRC attack. Many civilians fled the town into the nearby bush. RUF troops had red material tied around their heads and AFRC had white pieces tied around their heads. The house of the Town Chief was destroyed with an RPG. The chief was shot in the mouth but escaped to Alikalia. A number of the RUF/AFRC forces wore uniforms similar to that of ECOMOG and informed civilians that they should head to the centre of town where they would be protected. RUF/AFRC forces gathered between 200 and 300 people in a barn, firing into the building before setting it on fire. Later that afternoon, RUF/AFRC forces left Yiffin in the direction of Alikalia. On 28 April 1998, returning civilians buried over 200 dead civilians in a mass grave in Yiffin. Two ECOMOG forces were also killed in the attack, after which Yiffin was left undefended.

Around midday on 28 April 1998, RUF/AFRC troops attacked Alikalia. ECOMOG forces and hunters (specifically, two hunters and one ECOMOG soldier) were at that time dug into trenches, having been warned of the attack by civilians escaping the RUF/AFRC attack on Yiffin on 27 April. They exchanged fire for about four hours, before repelling the RUF/AFRC attack. On 29 April 1998, the ECOMOG platoon arrived in Alikalia from Yiffin.

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[453] More information is required from the records on this base and whether it in fact existed.

[454] It is likely this groups moved from Mansofenia but further clarification is required from the records on this.



In early May, RUF/AFRC forces stationed in Mansofenia established a form of cooperation with civilians. Under the threat of their property being taken, civilians were ordered to provide a certain amount of livestock, palm oil, salt, groundnuts and other food items to support RUF/AFRC forces. Men from the village were to provide firewood and women were to deliver water and cook for RUF/AFRC forces.

In early May 1998, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces (possibly moving from Kurobonla to the south) attacked and occupied the town of Gberefeh (either Mongo or Segbeneh Chiefdom), at the beginning of a motorable road leading to Serekoilia town (Mongo Chiefdom). Local hunters engaged them, but ran short of ammunition and were driven into the bush. During the attack, RUF/ARFC forces set fire to a 10-wheel truck full of agricultural machinery and burnt down all the houses in the villages. Only the town mosque was left untouched. Two trucks of ECOMOG forces from the Guinean ECOMOG base in Mongo Bendugu were sent towards Gbefereh to engage the RUF/AFRC forces, but returned to Mongo Bendugu without having dislodged the RUF/AFRC forces from Gberefeh.

In the following days, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the villages of Dambafayi and Farama. In Farama, RUF/ARFC forces burned down all the houses, and killed a prominent town chief. There are reports that RUF/AFRC then stationed themselves in Serekolia town.

On 5 May 1998, RUF/AFRC forces entered the town of Tomania (Mongo Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC commanders met with the local chief and elders, informing them that they intended to attack the town of Dankawali (Sengbe Chiefdom). Between 8 and 10 May 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Dankawali. Three Nigerian ECOMOG forces and eight civilians were killed during the attack. Civilians fleeing the attack moved eastwards to Tomania.

On 6 May 1998, the town of Badala, a crossing point over the Seli river, was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces from the direction of Dalakuru. RUF/AFRC forces amputated both hands of one man and disfigured the lips, nose, eyes and forehead of another.

On 9 May 1998, Kondembaia town was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces. Both hands of two men were amputated and seven girls were raped by RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG forces retreated to Fadugu town (Mabolo Chiefdom), to the north. Kondembaia was attacked again on 22 May from the direction of Diang Sokurela. Eleven people were killed in the attack and an unknown number of people had both hands amputated.

On 10 May, RUF/AFRC forces attacked ECOMOG forces stationed in Alikalia from the direction of Kulankor and Firawa in the north of Neini chiefdom. ECOMOG forces engaged the RUF/AFRC attack, which ceased after about 2 hours. Local militia were ordered by an ECOMOG commander to remove all undergrowth within a 300 metre perimeter around Alikalia. More trenches were dug, and for three weeks local militia and ECOMOG forces were placed on 24 hour-guard around the town.



By the early morning of 22 May 1998, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces attacking from the RUF base at Koinadugu village (Sengbe Chiefdom) had captured the town of Fadugu (Mambolo Chiefdom). The 40-man ECOMOG unit was briefly driven from town. One CDF member was shot dead and his body cut up by RUF forces. Eleven civilians were killed in the attack and an unknown number of houses were burned down. On the same day, by 1000, ECOMOG reinforcements from Kabala arrived, but were ambushed in Kafogo village, nearby Fadugu. On 23 May, ECOMOG, SSD and CDF forces attacked Fadugu with the assistance of air support. RUF/AFRC forces retreated towards Kabala. ECOMOG forces immediately performed a house-to-house search of Fadugu, during which civilian property was taken.
On 2 June 1998, RUF/AFRC forces entered Yiffin (Neini Chiefdom), under heavy rainfall. Using cutlasses, they tore the corrugated zinc roofing from an unknown number of houses, claiming they were "repairing" the properties. RUF/AFRC forces remained in Yiffin until the next day, singing songs and harassing civilians throughout the night.

On 3 June 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kondembaiai (Diang). In this attack, RUF/AFRC forces cut off the limbs of an unknown number of children between the ages of three and five. The RUF/AFRC forces searched every house in town, with the exception of the mosque and the Roman Catholic church.

On 6 June 1998, RUF/AFRC forces coming from the direction of Yiffin and Kulankor (both in Diang Chiefdom) attacked Alikalia town. ECOMOG and local militia repelled the RUF/AFRC attack by midday on 7 June 1998. RUF/AFRC forces killed three civilian men in the bush nearby Alikalia and one woman was shot in the stomach while attempting to escape. On 9 June 1998, ECOMOG commanders in Alikali ordered a unit of 40 local militia to travel to Firawa (Diang Chiefdom), to establish the whereabouts of the RUF/AFRC forces that attacked Alikalia. On the road to Firawa, this unit stopped at Kulanakor and learned from residents that the RUF/AFRC forces had moved to Gbefereh (Senebeh Chiefdom) in search of livestock. On their return to Alikalia, on 10 June, ECOMOG ordered the local militia to return to the trenches, where they stayed until 17 June before being allowed to freely move around the town.

On 30 June and 10 July 1998, soldiers of the SLA 1st Battalion moved through Alikalia towards Yiffin, dislodging the RUF/AFRC forces, on way to engage RUF at Kayima (Kono District). ECOMOG in Alikalia were informed by the commander that SLA forces would remain in Yiffin as an advance defence for Alikalia. One company of SLA forces remained in Yiffin, whilst the remainder advanced to attack RUF/AFRC positions in Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District).

At the end of June 1998, Alikalia, Yiffin and Kabala were out of the control of the RUF/AFRC. On 24 June, the CDF was officially formed in Diang chiefdom.

In early July 1998, RUF/AFRC forces established combat bases in the villages of Koinadugu and Yamadugu (both in Sengbe Chiefdom).

Before 26 July 1998, reports reached the town of Firawa (Neini Chiefdom), immediately south of Koinadugu and Yamadugu (Sebeneh Chiefdom), that RUF/AFRC forces were gathered in the village of Banda Karafaia (Neini Chiefdom). On 26 July 1998, CDF forces laid an ambush for

RUF/AFRC forces on the road into Firawa. After 2 hours, CDF retreated into the town, informing residents that they should hide in the bush. RUF/AFRC forces entered the empty town, burning down 20 houses and killing one civilian. They remained in Firawa until 28 July, until they moved westwards towards the town of Foria (Diang Chiefdom)

In the evening of 27 or 28 July 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked and occupied Kabala town from the direction of Makeni. They were armed with AA guns, RPGs, mortars and other weapons and arrived in about 30 vehicles including Toyota land cruisers, Land Rovers and Mercedes Benz cars. While RUF/AFRC forces looted private property, there are no reports of violent incidents or burning of houses. Nigerian and Guinean ECOMOG troops stationed in Kabala secured their defensive positions and remained in town until they were reinforced. The occupation lasted until the evening of either 1 or 2 August, when RUF/AFRC forces were driven from Kabala by ECOMOG forces and the SLA 2nd Battalion.[455]

Retreating from Kabala, RUF/AFRC forces settled in towns and villages on the arterial road leading eastwards from Kabala through Sebeneh chiefdom. These included Yamadugu, Koinadugu and Kalkoia (Sebeneh Chiefdom). Another unit moved further south, arriving in the town of Gberefeh (Sebeneh Chiefdom).

In the early hours of 11 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Fadugu (Mangolo Chiefdom) in an operation called "Operation Die." They were armed with RPGs, AK-58s and AK-47 machine guns. RUF/AFRC forces came through the Madingotown area of Fadugu, avoiding the ECOMOG checkpoint on the road from Kafogo and Kabala. ECOMOG forces engaged the RUF/AFRC forces but were unable to repel the attack. The Paramount Chief of Mambolo was shot dead at his home by RUF forces, who afterwards set fire to his corpse. Sixty-eight houses were burned down and eight civilians were killed, two of them being set on fire. The RUF/AFRC forces moved from the town later in the day on 12 September. The attack was primarily to loot ECOMOG ammunition dumps in the town.

On 18 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village of Karia (Diang Chiefdom) from the direction of Darakaru, in gold-rich area of Diang chiefdom. RUF/AFRC forces burned 36 houses and abducted 10 civilians. One hundred SLA soldiers were deployed to Karia at the request of the chiefdom elders.

On 23 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces left Kuronbonla (Neya Chiefdom) for the town of Kamaron (Mongo Chiefdom), arriving in the early evening. Twenty-five men and 15 women were detained by RUF forces in a church in the town. RUF/AFRC forces entered every house in the town and took property, including food items, livestock and domestic goods. The stolen property was loaded onto trucks and driven to Kuronbonla. Fifteen houses were burnt when the RUF/AFRC forces left Kamaron the next day.

On 8 October 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) from Firawa (Neini Chiefdom) in the north. Although CDF and ECOMOG resisted the attack, RUF/AFRC burned

[455] Clarification is required from the records about the exact dates these incidents took place.

down over 20 houses along their retreat route. CDF and ECOMOG forces pursued the RUF/AFRC unit over 2 miles out of Alikalia towards Firawa.

On 16 October 1998, RUF/AFRC forces moved from Kuronbonla (Neya Chiefdom) and destroyed the bridges over the Bafin and Bagbe rivers along the main road through Mongo chiefdom. This was to prevent ECOMOG forces stationed in Mongo Bendugu (Mongo Chiefdom) from entering the Neya chiefdom, and putting pressure on the RUF/AFRC bases in Kuronbonla and Mansofenia. At the Bagbe crossing point, they destroyed the concrete on both ends of one of the main support rails, causing the wooden slats that made up the bridges to fall into the river. The bridges were rendered impassable to vehicles.

On 28 October 1998, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces from Kurobonla attacked the ECOMOG base at Mongo Bendugu. Since they had earlier destroyed both bridges over the main road, the attack was carried out on foot. Two RUF/AFRC forces were sent into Mongo Bendugu to surrender to ECOMOG, distracting their attention away from the main attack, which came along the southern road from Seria. RUF/AFRC forces killed over 20 civilians and three ECOMOG soldiers. ECOMOG retreated from the town to an unknown location, leaving behind arms and ammunition. RUF/AFRC forces took possession of this weaponry, in addition to looting livestock and domestic goods from civilian residences. An unknown number of civilians were captured and forced to carry the stolen property over 30 miles to Kurobonla.[456]

Between 1 and 7 November 1998, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Alikalia. They were repelled by combined ECOMOG and CDF forces who, having received warning from a local farmer, engaged the RUF/AFRC attack a mile out of Alikalia. On 2 November 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kamarantak (Diang Chiefdom). SLA forces based in the village repelled the attack.

On 11 November 1998, RUF/AFRC forces entered the town of Musaia (Follosaba Dembelia Chiefdom) and occupied the town for the day. An unknown number of civilians were beaten with iron bars, sticks and belts. An unknown number of civilians were tied up and left in the sun.

Early on 28 November, SLA forces retreated from Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District) through Yiffin, to Alikalia. Their commander reported to the ECOMOG commander that his unit had been ordered to move to Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) to defend the hydroelectric plant from attack.

On 8 December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Alikalia, meeting resistance from ECOMOG and local CDF. The engagement continued throughout the night. Around midday on 9 December 1998, the ECOMOG Commander ordered ECOMOG to retreat, because they had expended all their ammunition, so they retreated towards Makeni. The ECOMOG Commander further informed the CDF that this was a "brigade attack", so CDF forces retreated into the surrounding bush. RUF/AFRC forces burned down over 200 houses and discovered a large amount of ammunition buried beneath the former ECOMOG headquarters.

[456] There are reports at this time of in-fighting within the RUF, which requires further information.

Following the RUF/AFRC capture of Alikalia, Neini chiefdom was divided into two operational regions by RUF/AFRC. The towns of Alikalia and Firawa came under the control of the RUF/AFRC Brigade Headquarters at Gberefeh (Mongo to Sebeneh Chiefdoms). The towns of Banda Karafaia, Yiffin, Sumbaria and Drutor came under the control of the Brigade Headquarters at Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom, Kono District). Committees of civilian intermediaries were appointed in all these towns, their role being to ensure the provision of foodstuff, manpower and other material needs of RUF/AFRC forces. These intermediaries were known collectively as "G-5" and were expected to cooperate fully with both resident RUF/AFRC units and new units entering and leaving town. In Yiffin (Neini Chiefdom), for example, the G5 were ordered to provide to the RUF/AFRC Kayima Brigade the sum of 800 cups of rice each month, in addition to 20 cups each day for the Commander. In Alikalia, G5 were to provide 900 cups of rice and 600 cups of beans to RUF/AFRC Brigade Headquarters at Gberefeh.

The capture of all the major towns in Diang, Neini and Neya chiefdoms refocused RUF/AFRC strategy away from bush fighting and raiding, towards occupation and consolidation of control. Patrols were send into the bush to encourage civilians to return to the towns.

h) Events in 1999

The RUF commander in Yiffin held a meeting informing the population that the RUF/AFRC had taken over the government and that President Kabbah had fled to Guinea. In February 1999, he ordered "G5" to gather the people from the bushes and these civilians were forced to work in a government farm for them. During this month of time civilians were subject to violence, tortures and forced labour, women were taken from them and raped, all huts burnt down. Another unit of RUF/AFRC was active in the Mambolo chiefdom and attacked towns and villages among which Madina, Dugbongbon, Kakarima and Fadugu. Around 10 January RUF/AFRC forces raided Kabala and went back to Fadugu.[457]

On 12 January a group of RUF/AFRC forces reinforced Kumba Wullen Balia (Neya Chiefdom) from Kono District. The leaders of those forces were saying that they wanted to join the fighters at Makeni to launch an attack on Guinea, but ECOMOG and SLA were based in Kabala, blocking the most convenient route Guinea.

Around 15 and 20 January 1999, a very large RUF/AFRC force comprised of different units led by different commanders on their way to Freetown stopped in Fadugu, Mambolo chiefdom causing the population to retreat to the surrounding bush.[458]

On 28 January in Fadugu (Mambolo Chiefdom) there was a battle between SLA forces and ECOMOG against RUF/AFRC forces.[459]

In February 1999, AFRC forces attacked Tomania (Sengbe Chiefdom) and then they skirted northwards on the main road avoiding Kabala, via Serekolia (Mongo Chiefdom), Gbenikoro (Sengbe Chiefdom), Fadugu (Mambolo Chiefdom), towards Makeni town. During this expedition, they were

[457] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.
[458] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.
[459] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.

ambushed by CDF forces. In Tomania, they captured all the women and took them to a flat rock behind the town where they were sexually abused. They also abducted men and women to carry their looted foodstuff to Serekolia.[460]

Another RUF/AFRC unit was active in Wara Wara Bafodia chiefdom, where attacks were made on Magbgbe, Bafodia and Kakonsio. In Bafodia town, the RUF commanders gathered the population and divided it into three groups. One group remained in Bafodia, the second was deported to another village, possibly Katawuyia, and the third to Kakoyia After five days the RUF forces left for Kamawie.[461]

From 15 to 20 February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces passing through Fadugu (Mambolo) on the way to Freetown, arrested civilians, captured them and killed some of them. Seventy houses were burnt down and women, both young and old, were sexual abused.[462]

On 16 February 1998, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces attacked Bafodia (Wara Wara Bafodia Chiefdom), where they spent the day. During the attack, the RUF/AFRC forces amputated the limbs of four civilians, including children under five years of age, and they raped five women. Two of the amputees died. They also took property and abducted five people to carry the loads.

Between March and April 1999, a battle went on in Gbenekoro and Fogo, (Diang Chiefdom) between RUF forces and CDF forces. Towards mid-April, in Bafodia (Wara Wara Bafodia Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces entered the town and introduced themselves as "SLA loyal forces" to the residents. After extorting money from them for three days, some of the RUF/AFRC forces left Katawuyia (Diang Chiefdom).[463]

In Mambolo chiefdom, on 16 March 1999, RUF/AFRC forces were present in the villages of Kamandai and Kamajmbo.[464]

On 28 April 1999, a high-command meeting was held in Firawa (Neini Chiefdom) to organise the RUF convention. A number of important commanders were present at the meeting, during which time property was taken from people in the town, who were also forced to undertake tasks for the RUF.[465]

At the beginning of May in Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom), the RUF commander was replaced, after which the forces executed a looting operation known as "JAJA".[466] The joined RUF/AFRC forces made preparations for an attack on Kabala. They attacked the town from different direction in Mambolo Chiefdom from the southwest and from the northwest through Yagala, but were repelled by SLA forces.

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460 More detail is required from the records on these incidents.
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On 18 July 1999, the RUF/AFRC forces attacked the gold-rich mining area of Binkokoh (Diang Chiefdom). In Foraya, the RUF forces killed 3 people, looted the whole village, demanded gold and abducted some young boys and girls to carry the stolen property.[467] On 3 August, the RUF/AFRC forces moved from Binkokoh to attack Barakan and Dalakuru (Diang Chiefdom), which are also gold-mining areas. While in Dalakuru, the RUF/AFRC forces raped a woman.

In September 1999 the CDF attacked the RUF/AFRC position in Dondoya (Diang Chiefdom). In the southern Neya chiefdom, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the towns of Dalawullay-feh, Bendu III and Yarawadu.

On 3 September RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kafogo and Fadugu, (Mambolo), where they, given their great number, overwhelmed the ECOMOG, CDF, SSD and SLA checkpoints and entered Fadugu carrying sophisticated weapons like RPG, AK47, AK58, G3 and AA guns. In Fadugu, the RUF forces burnt 80 houses, took all the property they could find, abducted some girls and boys to use them as forced labour and killed some people.

On 17 September 1999 in Diang chiefdom there were several attacks by RUF/AFRC forces, based in Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom). The RUF forces attacked Kombonkalia and Nyawulenya (both in Diang Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC forces were resisted by an organised group of youth[468] in Nyawulenai (Diang chiefdom), therefore the town was totally burnt down while Kombonkalia (Diang Chiefdom) was spared because did not put up any resistance. The same day the CDF, based in Faraya, attacked RUF/AFRC positions in Dondonya (Diang Chiefdom).

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In October 1999, CDF-Kamajors coming from Kono district attacked Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom), an important RUF/AFRC base. The CDF took property and burnt down the town, but the RUF commander was not captured. Consequently, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the nearby town of Henekuma (Diang Chiefdom), where 27 civilians were killed, property was taken and the town was described as being completely destroyed.

On 16 and 19 October 1999, RUF/AFRC forces planned an attack on Kabala. They entered Fadugu (Mambolo Chiefdom) and looted all the surrounding villages in Mambolo chiefdom. Following this, they moved on to Kabala, but failed to occupy the town. The group was reorganized in Fadugu and moved towards Freetown. In the following days many locations in the chiefdom were looted by RUF/AFRC forces.[469]

In November 1999, in Bafodia (Wara Wara Bafodia Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces engaged SLA forces. The RUF/AFRC forces were driven from the town and SLA forces subsequently left for Kabala. On 3 November 1999, one senior AFRC commander, coming through Folosaba Dembeia

[467] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.

[468] More information is required from the records on this group, including who they were organised by and how old they were.

[469] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.



Chiefdom via Musaia compound, attacked Kamasigie and then continued towards Kamakwie. In Neini chiefdom people were abducted and taken to mines in the Kono district.[470]

In December 1999 news arrived that an important RUF commander had been captured in Koidu town, Kono district. On 22 December, Kenyans troops from UNAMSIL (KENBATT) in transit from Makeni to Kabala were attacked by RUF forces in Fadugu, but nevertheless managed to reach Kabala.

i) Events in 2000[471]

During 2000, the RUF/AFRC forces attempted to take control Kabala many times, but SLA and ECOMOG forces stationed in the town managed to hold it under their control. At the beginning of 2000, the SLA forces were also based in Makakura (Mambolo Chiefdom).

Deportation of civilians by RUF forces to the mining areas continued. For example, in January, RUF forces gathered the citizens of Kurubonla and Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom) to find people to be taken to work in Kono mines. Following this, they sent some civilians they had located to Kono district.

In February the UNAMSIL KENBATT coming from Makeni to Kabala were attacked by RUF/AFRC in Fadugu. The Kenyan troops were again able to reach Kabala.

On 16 February 2000, the RUF forces withdrew from Alikalia moving around the northern circuit road, avoiding Kabala, to Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) and then Senkunia (Mongo Chiefdom). In Falaba and Senkunia, RUF forces conducted food-finding missions, during which property was taken and civilians were abducted. In Firawa (Diang Chiefdom) RUF forces gathered 400 civilians to carrying items the RUF forces had stolen to Kono district.

On 10 March 2000, knowing that RUF/AFRC forces would be holding a meeting in Kurubonla (Neya Chiefdom), a Guinean helicopter gunship attacked the town. On 24 March, medical personnel from an unknown organisation visited Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom) to carry out a program of immunisation but the RUF/AFRC Commander refused them entry and seized their vaccination kits. In April 2000, RUF forces moved to Ganya and Sinkunia (Mongo) from Alikalia, the headquarter town of RUF/AFRC.

In May 2000, RUF forces were redeployed thoughout Mongo chiefdom. They passed through Gbenikoro (Diang Chiefdom), Korifaia (Neini Chiefdom) and Morofindu before establishing bases in Gbenikoro, Gberefeh (Senebeh or Mongo Chiefdom) and Serekoro (Mongo Chiefdom). In Yalunka, there was an engagement between RUF and CDF forces. Also in Feraya (Neini Chiefdom) RUF forces gathered civilians together for a meeting, following which many people fled to Serekolia (Mongo Chiefdom).

In June 2000, CDF attacked Kanikoro (Diang Chiefdom), where they took civilian property.

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[470] More detail is required from the records on these incidents.

[471] In general, more detail is required from the records on events that occurred in 2000.



Also in June 2000, RUF forces attacked several towns in Neya chiefdom, including Porpon, where they killed 25 people and burnt down 70 houses, taking property such as rice, corn, groundnut, guns, which were later transported to Yiraia. The RUF forces then attacked Tenkeya, killing four people, burning 15 houses and taking property. This unit also attacked Maraliya, killing two people, burning down 12 houses and taking all the property in the town. They then attacked Yarandor, Kekowafeh, Bondofeh, Bunbania and Terero II, in all of which houses were burnt down and all the property was taken away. Many villages in Sandoh chiefdom were burnt down like Farandala, Dunamaro, Waldu, Kayima and Teleya.[472]

In July CDF-Kamajors attacked the RIUF/AFRC base at Yiraia (Neya Chiefdom) and Sumbaraya. The RUF commander managed to escape capture, but the Kamajors killed his mother, sister and nephew. The body of the RUF commander's mother was left hung on a stick above the road entering in the town. The town was completely burnt down, all fruit-trees were cut down and also the old zinc from the houses were punctured with nails to prevent their use as roofing. All the stolen property gathered from other villages were taken away by the Kamajors.[473]

In Firawa (Nieni Chiefdom) RUF/AFRC forces captured about 400 young civilian men to be taken to Kono district for mining.

In August 2000, RUF/AFRC forces left Alikalia to surrender either to UNAMSIL or to ECOMOG troops in Kabala.[474] On 14 August a group of RUF/AFRC forces from Kono and Kailahum district passed through Alikalia on their way to attack Kabala. The town of Kabala was attacked on 17 August 2000, where they fought a battle against the SLA and CDF based in the town.

During this month, RUF forces regularly tried to attack Kabala, but were repelled by SLA forces. After the attack on Kabala, at the end of the month, RUF forces stormed Wara Wara Bafodia chiefdom attacking towns and villages such as Kapongo, Kassaye and Gbentu.

On 26 September 2000 Sinkunia (Dembelia Sinkuria Chiefdom) and Falaba (Sulima Chiefdom) were attacked by CDF, who beat people and took most of people's belongings.[475] In retaliation for these attacks, on 3 October 2000, RUF forces mobilized their troops and launched an attack on Falaba and Sinkunia and took over the towns and burnt them down and left, abducting 50 civilians including women and children.

In October 2000, RUF/AFRC forces entered Fadugu town (Mambolo Chiefdom), where a fight without casualties took place. Two days later, another group reached them.

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[472] It is possible that these events took place in 1998. Further clarification is required from the records on when these events took place.

[473] Clarification is required from the records on who took the property initially, the RUF or the CDF, and what happened to it after the CDF took it away.

[474] More information is required from the records about the surrender, including how it came about and to whom they surrendered.

[475] It is not clear from the records whether the people being beaten were RUF or civilians. Clarification is required from the records on this.



On 12 October, an unknown group of civilians with guns entered Musaia, (Follosaba Dembelia). They held a meeting with villagers who appreciated their intention to fight against government soldiers. At night, they started to fight and a battle took place. One house was burnt, people abducted and torture, and women and children were raped and property was taken.[476]

In November 2000, the RUF/AFRC forces were based in Alikalia (Neini Chiefdom). They launched several attacks on towns such as Kalkoia, Koinodug, Dankwalie and Falaba. In the same month, RUF forces moved from Badala and Alikalia to Falaba and Firawa. During December 2000, there was a fight among some of the AFRC and RUF forces. The group of RUF forces moved from Alikalia (Diang) to Yiffin, (Neini). In December in Firawa, operations geared for the ceasefire commenced.

j) Events in 2001[477]

During 2001, military activities started to decrease. Probably without a specific plan to seize power, the RUF forces tried to hold a fairly strong grip on the provinces to achieve a good bargaining power in eventual peace negotiations. The RUF groups went around in the district looting livestock and foodstuffs. In 2001, the disarmament process commenced under the supervision of UNAMSIL forces and despite a few sporadic incidents of fighting, mostly between the CDF and the RUF, fighting ceased.

Early in January 2001, RUF forces retreated from Alikalia moved to Kono district. However, they returned on 10 January 2001 from Kono to Firawa (Nieni Chiefdom) via Falaba (Serulia Chiefdom) and Gbindi. On their way they engaged in a battle against CDF. On 14 January, UNAMSIL troops visited the town of Alikalia and gathered the RUF leaders, taking them to Kabala for disarmament. On 26 March 2001, CDF-Kamajors arrived in Alikalia. On 4 July 2001 a group arrived in Alikalia, declared themselves RUF fighters and requested food from the civilians. The next morning they left to Gberefeh (Senebeh, or Mongo Chiefdom). This group, together with another based in Gberefeh attacked CDF positions in Sereya (Mongo Chiefdom). In Sereya they found a list of people registered with the Kamajors and they killed, wounded or amputated them all. Then they moved back to Gberefeh, where a MP loyal to Foday Sankoh ordered them to disarm. Guns were packed and taken to Alikalia. There, the RUF forces faced a serious attack from the Kamajors and were defeated, all properties taken away from them. They, then, left and went to Kabala where they pleaded to be reintegrated into civil society. On 16 August 2001 UNAMSIL troops arrived in Alikalia to overview the disarmament.

In February 2001, the RUF/AFRC forces based in Gberefeh (Senebeh or Mongo Chiefdom) organized a farewell party, packed all the property they had taken throughout the conflict and left to Alikalia to be finally demobilized and reintegrated into society. The trip took five days and when they arrived in Alikalia, CDF-Kamajors and UN troops entered the town forcing the RUF forces to disarm. This episode caused them to flee the town leaving behind all that they had looted from civilians since the beginning of the war in 1991.

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[476] More detail is required from the records on this incident, in particular on who the "civilians with guns" were (or were likely to be) and who did the raping, beating and burning.

[477] In general, more detail is required from the records on events that occurred in 2001.

In March 2001, RUF/AFRC forces came from Kono district to Nieni chiefdom in search of food and they looted every house, then the RUF forces conveyed the looted properties to Kayima (Kono District). A similar incident took place in May 2001 in Firawa (Neini Chiefdom), with RUF forces coming from Sinkunia (Dembelia Sinkuria Chiefdom).

RUF/AFRC forces returned to Sinkunia on 15 June 2001, while another group, on the same day, went to Alikalia and held a meeting with G5 and the village chiefs announcing the end of the war and the beginning of disarmament and asking for people's political support to the RUF, soon to be transformed into a political party.

On 24 August 2001 RUF/AFRC went from Falaba, Sulima chiefdom to Kabala to submit to disarmament. This was the last group of RUF/AFRC forces to disarm in the District.

In November, CDF from the whole district went to Alikalia for disarmament. In December 2001, Kamajors led by Mohamed Mansaray fought a battle against RUF forces, shortly after UNAMSIL troops arrived, prompting disarmament.

This was the final episode of the decade long war in Koinadugu District.

3. Conclusion

[to be drafted pending incorporation of comments from resource persons]

d. Port Loko District

1. Introduction

Port Loko District is located in the north-west of Sierra Leone. It is bordered by the Western Area, Moyamba District and Tonkolili District to the south, Bombali District to the east and Kambia District to the north. To the west lies the Atlantic Ocean.

There are 11 chiefdoms in Port Loko District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter Town
Bureh Kasseh Makonte (BKM)	Mange
Buya Romende	Foredugu
Dibia	Gbinti
Loko Massama	Petifu
Kaffu Bullom	Mahera
Koya	Songo
Maforki	Port Loko
Marampa	Lunsar
Masimera	Masimera
Sanda Magbolontor	Sendugu
Tinkatupa Makama Safroko (TMS)	Malekuray

A high quality, asphalted highway runs from the Western Area to Songo and Mile 38, passing through the densely forested Okra Hills area to Masiaka (all Koya Chiefdom). At Masiaka, the highway splits into two and the quality of the road declines sharply into intermittent stretches of soil track, unsealed road and broken asphalt. Seen from another perspective, all main routes from inland Sierra Leone converge on Masiaka, making it difficult to overstate the town's strategic significance. The road continuing east from Masiaka leads through Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) to Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and on to both Kabala and Kono Districts. The major routes to the Eastern and Southern Provinces converge on the Masiaka–Mile 91 length of road. The northern fork runs across the Rokel Creek to Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), from where both the District headquarter town of Port Loko (Maforki Chiefdom) and Lunsar Town (Marampa Chiefdom) can be reached.

The Masiaka–Ro-Gberray–Port Loko axis continues north through BKM Chiefdom across the long road bridge over the Little Scaries River at Mange, continuing into Kambia District and the Republic of Guinea. This is the only major road crossing over the Little Scaries River and handles the majority of road traffic between Conakry and Freetown, making it a considerable strategic and economic asset to whoever controls it. Moving west from Port Loko Town, the highway continues directly to Lungi, the coastal location of Freetown International Airport. Although there is an airstrip at Hastings (Waterloo RD, Western Area), Freetown International Airport is the principal airport in Sierra Leone. From Freetown to Lungi is approximately four hours by road; across the Freetown Estuary, the helicopter ride is less than 10 minutes. The Masiaka–Ro-Gberray–Lunsar axis continues through Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) towards Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District), the political and administrative centre of the Northern Province.

A secondary road network connects the chiefdom headquarter towns of Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom), Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom) and Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom). It is joined in Dibia and Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdoms by roads leading into Sanda Tendaren and Libeisaygahun Chiefdoms (both Bombali District), which bypass Makeni and re-join the arterial route to Kabala (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District).

Port Loko District was not affected directly by the conflict before 1995. In January 1995, RUF activity was focused in the four eastern chiefdoms of Port Loko District, bordering Bombali and Tonkolili Districts. RUF activity in early January concentrated on pressuring the two towns of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom), both on the arterial route between Freetown and Makeni. SLA forces were driven from Foredugu and Lunsar was under pressure for the whole of 1995. RUF activity in these areas followed from the extension of RUF forces into the western chiefdoms of Tonkolili District in late 1994. This was marked by a large attack on Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) in late December 1994 and RUF dominance of Malal Mara Chiefdom (Tonkolili District), in which the RUF established a brigade headquarters in the Kaitkant Hills. From here, RUF forces staged attacks on towns in both the north, moving into Kambia District, and the south of Port Loko District, facilitating their movement into the Western Area by May 1995. In June, RUF forces staged a large-scale assault on the District headquarter of Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom). RUF forces also attacked Mile 38 and Masiaka (both Koya Chiefdom) in June, in addition to staging ambushes on the main roads. The triangle formed by



Lunsar, Port Loko and Masiaka has been the crucible of the conflict in Port Loko District.

Following this, RUF activity in the District diminished significantly, with only a few ambushes and small attacks reported from July through to the end of the year. RUF attacks routinely included killings, torture and the abduction of large numbers of civilians to use as forced labour. Additionally, RUF forces routinely stole civilian property and burned civilian residences to the ground. In 1996, RUF forces continued to attack Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and staged ambushes on the highway north of the town. Generally, however, 1996 was a quiet year in Port Loko District. Elections were held in February, marking the end of four years of military rule and a peace agreement was struck between the elected government and the RUF in Abidjan in November 1996. At least until May 1997, the ceasefire provided for in the Abidjan Peace Accord appears to have been generally observed in Port Loko District. In May 1997, the AFRC – who were soon joined by the RUF – overthrew the elected government and found itself in a tense standoff with Nigerian forces stationed in country. Following armed confrontations with the AFRC that resulted in large numbers of civilian deaths, Nigerian forces took over the international airport at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom), occupying Lungi and surrounding villages. Combined RUF/AFRC forces launched an operation to steal large amounts of civilian property in Masimera Chiefdom, calling it "From your hand to my hand; from your pocket to my pocket." RUF forces also attacked CDF positions at Mange and Barmoi Junction (BKM Chiefdom) and established a camp at Bainkoro, near the Little Scaries River between Sanda Magbolontor and Dibia Chiefdoms. The Little Scaries River, bisecting Sanda Magbolontor and BKM Chiefdoms, took on increasing significance at this time; running inland, it passes through the north of Bombali District.

ECOMOG was formally deployed in Sierra Leone in August 1997 and began training civil militia groups in Port Loko District in cooperation with traditional authorities. ECOMOG deployed in Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) and assisted the CDF in securing BKM Chiefdom. CDF forces deployed along the northern route to Mange and the route from Port Loko, through Kagbantama, to Barmoi Junction. The CDF also deployed along the south bank of the Little Scaries River in BKM Chiefdom, creating a defensive arc around the north of Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom).

In February 1998, ECOMOG intervened militarily against the RUF/AFRC, driving them out of Freetown. As a result, RUF/AFRC forces commenced "Operation Pay Yourself" in Port Loko District, stealing extensively from civilian settlements along their line of retreat through Mile 38, Masiaka (both Koya Chiefdom) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) towards Makeni. RUF/AFRC forces also attacked towns in the northern chiefdoms of Port Loko District. In March 1998, ECOMOG commenced provincial operations, moving from Port Loko Town, taking control of Masiaka and forcing the RUF/AFRC out of Lunsar, where they had killed civilians and destroyed much of the infrastructure. RUF/AFRC forces scattered throughout the eastern chiefdoms of Port Loko District, raiding villages for food. In April, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Masimera Chiefdom and commenced the amputation of limbs from civilians amid attacks of astounding ferocity. In September, the RUF/AFRC again began surrounding Port Loko Town, staging attacks in BKM, TMS and Maforki Chiefdoms. Assisted by the CDF, ECOMOG held onto the stretch of road between Port Loko and Mange (BKM Chiefdom).



In December 1998, RUF/AFRC intensified attacks on ECOMOG and pushed south into Koya Chiefdom, again attacking Masiaka and Songo. A large RUF/AFRC force attacked Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) between 28 December 1998 and 3 January 1999. By the time Port Loko was attacked, the RUF/AFRC had broken out of Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District) and Kailahun Districts and had taken every major town from ECOMOG en route to Freetown along the northern axis roads. The RUF/AFRC push towards the Western Area was along the main highway through Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), Masiaka and Songo to Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). For the first three months of 1999, the Masiaka area was occupied by RUF/AFRC forces and was under constant attack from the CDF. In March, Gbethis hunted down suspected "collaborators", torturing and summarily executing significant numbers of the people they caught. Those villages that did not actively support the Gbethis were targeted and looted, their inhabitants subjected to torture or simply killed. Lunsar remained under the control of the RUF/AFRC.

Peace negotiations between the RUF and the elected government resulted in the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999. Subsequently, there were tensions between the RUF and the AFRC, resulting in clashes between the two, but not a complete severing of their alliance.

In early January 2000, UNAMSIL moved into positions throughout Port Loko District. A single Nigerian battalion was based at Freetown International Airport at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) and a second covered Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom), Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), securing both the towns and the main highways. RUF/AFRC forces attacked many villages throughout the eastern and northern chiefdoms of Port Loko District, stealing food and property. In May 2000, the RUF/AFRC provoked a crisis by holding hostage over 200 UNAMSIL personnel at Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom). They also provoked the UK to send paratroops to Freetown and commence training the SLA. The SLA secured Masiaka in April 2000, but the RUF repeatedly attacked Port Loko Town from many different approaches. The RUF/AFRC also remained in control of Lunsar, despite SLA attempts to recover the town in June 2000. Attacks on civilian settlements across Port Loko District continued, although UNAMSIL maintained a "horseshoe" of security between Songo, Masiaka, Ro-Gberray (Maforki Chiefdom) and Port Loko Town.

An RUF/AFRC splinter group formed in October 1998 in the Okra Hills, an area spanning the lower part of Maforki Chiefdom, crossing southwards over the Rokel Creek into Koya Chiefdom towards the township of Magbeni and onto the stretch of highway between Mile 38 and Masiaka (all Koya Chiefdom). The West Side Boys, as they later became known, were formed primarily of ex-SLA forces that had aligned with the AFRC coup. They conducted an intense series of "hit and run" missions on settlements in this area, routinely killing and raping civilians and stealing civilian property and food. They abducted hundreds of civilians, inscribing "West Side Boys" on their bodies and executing them in retaliation for battlefield losses. On the highways within the Okra Hills area, they ambushed civilian and military traffic. At various points, the West Side Boys changed sides, allying with the RUF/AFRC during the 1999 Freetown invasion and then with the SLA in defending Masiaka from the RUF/AFRC in May 2000. The West Side Boys earned international notoriety for taking foreigners hostage, a tactic that resulted in their complete defeat by UK paratroops in September 2000.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1995

RUF activity in Port Loko District in 1995 began in early January in Buya Romende Chiefdom. Between 1 and 5 January 1995, RUF forces moved from their base in the Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara Chiefdom, Tonkolili District on the boundary with Marampa Chiefdom to the south of Buya Romende Chiefdom) and attacked the villages of Mabettor and Royana, where they burnt down an unknown number of houses.

RUF forces numbering around 500 attacked the headquarter town of Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) early in the morning of 2 January 1995. Foredugu is located on the main highway leading east to Makeni and south-west to Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom). Residents fled into the nearby bush on hearing heavy machine gun fire. SLA forces stationed in Foredugu were unable to repel the RUF attack. The surrounding villages of Robis Junction, Romende, Makinkiba, Handalai, Paiteful Junction and Gbomru (all Buya Romende Chiefdom) were also attacked. During these attacks RUF forces burnt down eight houses in Mabettor, five in Royana and 42 in Foredugu. RUF forces also killed nine people, mostly with guns, amputated a man's hand with an axe and abducted an unknown number of people.

From then until 5 January 1995, RUF forces moved north from Foredugu and attacked Rogberen Gberen, a settlement in the far north of Buya Romende Chiefdom. Hundreds of civilians were killed during this attack. The RUF forces established a camp at Rogberen Gberen and used abducted civilians to dig trenches. From Rogberen Gberen, RUF forces staged an attack on Mabureh village (Buya Romende Chiefdom), where they decapitated the Section Chief and a prominent businessmen. Before returning to their camp, RUF forces burnt down at least 50 houses and stole a lot of civilian property.

On 15 January 1995, around 45 RUF members moved towards the headquarter town of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, in the north-west on the boundary with Masimera Chiefdom). They came from the south of the chiefdom through the villages of Rokatic and Robom Limba. Before reaching Lunsar, they were repelled by SLA forces stationed in the town.[478] The RUF exerted continuous pressure on Lunsar, staging numerous attacks on unknown dates between January and July 1995. On 16 February, the NPRC announced that it had commenced heavy bombardment of a medium-sized "rebel base" in the Lunsar area.[479]

The RUF delivered a letter[480] to the residents of Kantia (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) towards the end of January 1995, announcing their intention to use the road passing through Kantia as a route to attack Kambia, the District headquarter town of Kambia District. The people of the town resolved to attack the RUF forces if they pursued this course of action. Consequently, male members of the Gbamgbani traditional society formed a local militia and established a checkpoint on the roads entering the village. A day after delivering the letter, RUF forces attacked Kantia. A local man confronted the RUF as they tried to pass the checkpoint; the RUF members tortured and killed him

[478] This detail is reported by the key person as occurring on 1 January 1994, but cross-checking during analysis makes it clear that this refers to an RUF attack on Lunsar on or around 15 January 1995.
[479] Xinhua, 16 February 1995.
[480] There are many reports of the RUF leaving letters on the road for villagers to find.

with his own cutlass. On entering the village, RUF forces sought out the Local Court Chairman at his home and beat him to death with pestles[481] and sticks. The RUF forces remained in Kantia for at least a day before moving south to Kanokie village (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom), arriving there in the late evening. At Kanokie, the RUF forces divided and entered the village in two groups, taking palm wine from civilians and shooting dead a 12-year-old boy who was carrying a cutlass. The RUF commanding officer issued an order to the villagers stressing that anyone caught fleeing the village would also be shot. The RUF forces stayed overnight in Kanokie, leaving for Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District) before dawn the following morning. RUF forces looped southwest from Kanokie arriving in Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom, Kambia District) on 23 January 1991, before moving north to attack Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District) on 25 January 1995.

Around 21 January 1995, RUF forces coming from Bombali District passed through Dibia Chiefdom on the way to Safroko Section in the north of TMS Chiefdom. From Safroko Section (TMS Chiefdom), RUF forces moved through Rogbakai (six miles south-east of Maron), Rotombo, Maron and Roctolan along the road north towards the headquarter town of Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom). At this time, around 20 members of the SLA were stationed in Gbinti. In Gbinti, between 21 and 23 January 1995, RUF forces killed a number of people, burnt down at least 70 houses with petrol bombs, stole property and abducted civilians, including around 23 school children. After about four hours in Gbinti, during which there was fighting between the SLA and RUF forces, the RUF forces left with the people they had abducted and moved south to Roctolan (TMS Chiefdom).

RUF forces again attacked Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) between 3 and 5 March 1995, killing 12 SLA members in an ambush on the outskirts of the town.[482] In response to this attack, the Government of Sierra Leone closed sections of the Makeni–Freetown highway to traffic as SLA forces combed the bush for RUF forces.[483].

Through intense activity in Ribbi, Bumpe and Kaiyanga Chiefdoms (Moyamba District)[484] immediately south of Port Loko District, the RUF were able to attack the town of Songo (Koya Chiefdom) by 7 April 1995. Songo is a located on the boundary between Port Loko District and the Western Area, just south of the main asphalt highway leading to Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) and the ring road around the Freetown peninsular into Freetown itself.

In the morning of 7 April 1995, about 100 RUF members, some in full military fatigues and others in casual dress, launched an attack with artillery and heavy machine gun fire on Songo. The attack came from the west end of the town, near the Roman Catholic Primary School, and was met with no

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[481] Club-shaped implements used for fine-pounding wheat and other granular foods in mortars.
[482] AP, 6 March 1995.
[483] Xinhua, 7 March 1995.
[484] On 15 March 1995, RUF forces attacked Bradford (Ribbi Chiefdom, Moyamba District). On 17 March, RUF forces took control of Rotifunk (Bumpe Chiefdom, Moyamba District) and Moyamba (Kaiyamba Chiefdom, Moyamba District). On 18 March, RUF forces clashed with SLA forces for control of the strategic Mabang Bridge over the Ribbi River. On 20 March, SLA forces counter-attacked the RUF at Bradford, but this did not halt the RUF westward movement and their crossing the Ribbi River to access Songo (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District).

resistance from SLA forces. Despite a build-up of SLA troops in Songo (Koya Chiefdom) in early April, those SLA forces previously stationed in Songo had withdrawn to nearby Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom) before the RUF assault of 7 April.[485] News that the SLA had captured RUF members in Mabang (Ribbi Chiefdom, Moyamba District) and Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom) had caused the majority of Songo's residents to flee the town, moving west into Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) and south into Ribbi Chiefdom (Moyamba District). Despite this, during their attack on Songo, RUF forces killed 20 people, including an unknown number of women and children. The Songo Police station was also looted and destroyed. On 8 April 1995, SLA forces counter-attacked, pushing RUF forces out of Songo and retaking control of the town. While this RUF group was displaced from Songo, attacks in the agricultural area around Newton (Koya RD, Western Area) intensified.[486]

On 10 May 1995, the RUF forces again attacked Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom) from Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom. During this attack, the RUF forces burnt houses and killed civilians, in particular members of the youth movement, as a result of which the youth movement was destroyed. Between 14 and 18 May, RUF forces established a base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District), bordering Sanda Magbolontor and Dibia Chiefdoms in Port Loko District.

From the beginning of June 1995, there were rumours of an imminent attack on Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom). Consequently, many inhabitants left the town, moving to nearby villages and to Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom), the coastal location of Sierra Leone's international airport. On 7 June 1995, some RUF forces crossed the Lunsar-Makeni highway towards Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom), which is approximately 15 km from Port Loko. In Port Loko Town, members of the Civic Development Unit, an organisation primarily formed to clean roads and collect rubbish, started working with the SLA to increase security in the town. An SLA commanding officer responsible for Port Loko called a town meeting in the Court Barrie, where he reassured the population that the town was well protected.

Nevertheless, in the evening of 8 June 1995, the RUF attacked the Port Loko along two lines of advance. The first RUF group arrived from the north-east, moving through Burreh Section (BKM Chiefdom), attacking Port Loko Town in the early evening. The second group, numbering 150, arrived some hours later from the east having travelled the Malekuray road through TMS Chiefdom. Their advance along this route, which begins at Kamasundu Junction, makes it likely that this RUF group had a camp at Rogberen-Gberen or Kamasundu (both Buya Romende Chiefdom), from where attacks on the areas on the North-South axis between Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom) and Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) had been commonplace since January 1995.

The RUF group moving through TMS Chiefdom attacked a number of villages. In Robenkia (TMS Chiefdom), RUF forces shot dead a young civilian man wearing combat fatigue-style trousers and poured acid on another young man who was caught trying to escape. On 8 June, 30 SLA members in two 4x4 vehicles arrived in Malekuray village (TMS Chiefdom). The SLA commanding officer met with community leaders, requesting that they provide him with early warning when the RUF arrived in the town. During the meeting, residents overheard information passed to the SLA commanding

[485] SLA forces had concentrated in Mile 38 following a successful ouster of the RUF from the town on 28 March 1995.

[486] See Western Area analysis for 1995.

officer by radio informing him that the RUF had already bypassed the town and had arrived in Robat (TMS Chiefdom), to the west of Malekuray. The SLA moved from Malekuray and engaged the RUF near Robat, as a result of which three SLA members were killed and the remaining group were forced to retreat into the bush. The RUF forces then moved west from Robat over the road bridge to Romaka, through the villages of Ropolon, Rotombo, Tawa, Rolal I and II and then into Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) by the late evening.

During their attack on Port Loko Town, RUF forces killed an unknown number of people, burnt down around 30 houses and abducted up to 200 people, predominantly children. RUF forces ceased their attack in the early hours of 9 May, retreating in two directions when the SLA was reinforced.

One group of RUF retreated to Kamalo (BKM Chiefdom), on the boundary with Maforki Chiefdom, where they established a temporary base, killing a number of people and burning down some houses. Two days later, on 11 June 1995, SLA forces held a meeting in Port Loko with the Town Chief and some senior military officers who had come from Freetown. On 14 June 1995, Guinean forces deployed under the Mano River Union arrived in Port Loko Town. Using heavy artillery, they shelled the RUF base at Kamalo, forcing their withdrawal north towards Romeni (BKM Chiefdom), where the RUF forces put around 16 people abducted in Port Loko Town into a house and set fire to it. The following day, they made a ritual sacrifice and left Romeni northward along the main road. Three days later, on 18 June 1995, the RUF forces attacked Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom). After burning houses and stealing property in Gbinti, RUF forces moved to their base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District).

Another group of RUF forces retreated from Port Loko Town towards Rokatimpi (TMS Chiefdom) on 9 June, avoiding the main highways as they moved south towards Moyamba District. On 10 June, they went to Rosent (TMS Chiefdom), close to the boundary with Maforki Chiefdom. They stayed in Rosent for around 12 days, raiding the surrounding villages. From 16 to 20 June, Guinean forces based in Port Loko Town also fired long-range weapons towards Rosent. At the end of this period of heavy bombing, RUF forces moved in two groups from Rosent, dispersing throughout Tinkatupu Section (TMS Chiefdom) to avoid artillery barrages. One group fanned out through Romaka and the other group fanned out around Masangban and Worreh (all TMS Chiefdom). The two groups rejoined in Robat, near Rosent (but closer to the boundary with Maforki Chiefdom), where they abducted an unknown number of men and women. They then moved to Maranka, where they abducted more people before moving to Malekuray by 20 June. Here, RUF forces carried out a house-to-house search, destroying what private property they could find, defecating in houses and ruining food items like rice and palm oil. On the night of 20 June, RUF forces danced and fired into the air before leaving on 21 June, abducting at least six people. They moved south through Marforay and Mafira, resting close to Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) before attacking and driving the SLA forces out of the town. On the same day, RUF forces crossed the Rokel River south of Lunsar and continued to Masimera (Marampa Chiefdom). The RUF continued south into Yoni Chiefdom (Tonkolili District), before moving to Rotifunk (Bumpe Chiefdom, Moyamba District) by 23 June.

RUF activity near the junction town of Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) continued as their forces retreated from Port Loko. On 16 June 1995, the RUF forces again attacked Masiaka and were repelled by the

SLA forces stationed there. This pattern was repeated on 18 June 1995 and again at other times during 1995.

Between 10 and 16 June 1995, RUF forces coming from the north-eastern part of Masiaka went to Mansumana, where they attacked the town and surrounding villages, including Masherry-Potho, which is nine miles from Mile 38 (all Koya Chiefdom). At this time, the RUF forces were searching for food. In the following days, there were more RUF attacks on Mile 38, after which they were driven out of the area by SLA forces coming from the western part of Mile 38 along the Freetown Highway.

RUF forces attacked both Masiaka and Mile 38 (both Koya Chiefdom) on 18 June, but were repelled by SLA forces. Fifteen civilians were killed in Mile 38. On 20 June, RUF forces ambushed SLA forces near Mile 38. On 22 June, RUF forces cut off the main highway near Mile 38 at two points by setting fire to large trailers and setting up a defensive position around their skeletons. On or around 28 June 1995, SLA forces again attacked Mile 38 with support from a Sierra Leone Armed Forces Alpha Jet, which bombarded the town. During this attack, a large number of civilians and members of the SLA were killed, houses burnt down and vehicles destroyed.

At this time, ambushes and fighting along this road were common, as a result of which the SLA forces mounted checkpoints along the road. In July 1995, the SLA set up a checkpoint at Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), controlling traffic moving north along the arterial road from Masiaka and Mile 38 towards Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom), Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and other inland northern towns such as Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Kabala (Wara Wara Yagala Chiefdom, Koinadugu District). Harassment of civilians by SLA and other government security personnel intensified at this checkpoint following the RUF assault on Port Loko Town. On 9 September 1995, RUF forces ambushed SLA forces on the highway at Karrfay (Buya Romende Chiefdom) killing two; one of whom was buried in Foredugu and the other was left on the highway. RUF forces took the property that was in the SLA truck and forced civilians to carry it for them. On 11 September 1995, seven Guinean soldiers travelling to Makeni in a military vehicle were killed in an RUF ambush on the east-west road between Foredugu and Madina (Buya Romende Chiefdom).[487] RUF forces took the weapons and ammunition from the military vehicle before setting fire to it.[488]

Towards the end of 1995, the RUF launched numerous attacks on Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), but were again repelled by the SLA forces based there. At this time, there were no fatalities in Lunsar, but RUF forces killed people in surrounding villages in Marampa and Buya Romende Chiefdoms, including Pan House, Marampa, Rogbele and Foredugu. In December 1995, the RUF forces were successful in dislodging the SLA forces. The RUF forces entered Lunsar and killed four people, raped an unknown number of women, abducted 10 people and burnt down 55 houses, although they did not occupy Lunsar at this time and left soon afterwards.

b) Events in 1996

[487] AP, 15 September 1995.
[488] Xinhua 15 September 1995.

During 1996, Sanda Magbolontor and Dibia Chiefdoms were free from RUF activity. Although the RUF maintained a base at Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District), bordering both chiefdoms, from there they concentrated on attacking towns in Bombali District;[489] the RUF forces were also focusing on attacking towns in Kambia District in the run up to the 26 February elections. Koya Chiefdom, bordering the Western Area, was also free from RUF activity. Throughout the year, unspecified civil militia were deployed in Kasseh Section (BKM Chiefdom), which to a large extent prevented RUF infiltration throughout BKM Chiefdom.

In January 1996, an RUF force entered the north of TMS Chiefdom from Libeisaygahun Chiefdom (Bombali District). These forces passed through a number of towns, where they captured up to 300 civilians, in particular from Futa and Madina in the centre of the chiefdom. The RUF forces then moved to a hill called Fantima Hill, on the boundary with Buya Romende Chiefdom close to Makola Valley, in a forest called Kagberen-Gberem. TMS Chiefdom would remain mostly quiet from then until February 1998.

On 5 February 1996, RUF forces stole and destroyed two vehicles near Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom). They moved east from the direction of Robis (Buya Romende Chiefdom) along the Makeni Highway. Consequently, civilians mobilised themselves into a civil militia armed with cutlasses and launched an attack on the RUF forces but were repelled when the RUF forces open fire with machine guns. In March 1996, Guinean or Nigerian forces stationed in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) arrived in Foredugu, where civil militia joined them. It should be noted that throughout the year, the RUF forces continued to launch attacks on Lunsar.

On 26 February 1996, Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in Sierra Leone. There are no reports of harassment of civilians prior to the election in Port Loko District. During March and April, RUF forces based in Masimera (Marampa Chiefdom) went south to Rokatic, where they took property and abducted some people; this would continue intermittently until the end of 1997.

NPRC-initiated peace talks commenced with the RUF in February, resulting in a ceasefire in May 1996. On 30 November 1996, the Abidjan Peace Accord was signed between the leadership of the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone, providing for the immediate and total cessation of hostilities. In November and December 1996, the Nigerian forces were deployed in Port Loko Town.

c) Events in 1997

During 1997, RUF/AFRC attacks appear to have taken place mainly on ECOMOG and Government positions, although very few incidents are reported. It is likely that RUF/AFRC forces were scattered all over the eastern chiefdoms of Port Loko District and were engaged solely in food-finding missions. At least until May 1997, the ceasefire provided for in the Abidjan Peace Accord appears to have been generally observed in Port Loko District.

However, there were exceptions. In April 1997, Kanokie (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) was raided by RUF forces, who spent a few hours in the town and stole various food items and livestock. Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom) was attacked on 20 May 1997 and 22 RUF members were seized by the

[489] See the analysis for Bombali District, 1996.



SLA.[490] Residents of Gbinti began to participate more actively in civil defence initiatives as a result of this attack. In May 1997, prior to the coup, RUF forces attacked Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) from the Kantia–Sendugu road. In Sendugu, the RUF forces initiated a house-to-house search. At this time, at least one person was killed and several people were abducted, including the Chief Imam and a well-known teacher.

On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a coup d'etat and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC released an SLA officer from Pademba Road Prison, installing him as their leader and as Head of State in June. This prompted an intense standoff between the Nigerian forces stationed in Sierra Leone and the AFRC, which requested the RUF to join with it.

In the evening of 26 May, a large number of jubilant RUF forces entered Mile 38 and the nearby villages of Massherri-Potho and Masankara (all Koya Chiefdom), on the main highway towards the Western Area. They surrounded the village at the main junction and forced all the residents onto the streets to sing songs. This lasted throughout the night. In Rosint Buya (Buya Romende Chiefdom), after the coup of 25 May, RUF/AFRC forces lived alongside civilians. They stole property and forced civilians to carry their property and carry out domestic work like fetching water and pounding rice. People refusing to carry their load were beaten and one man from Rosint Buya was shot dead. It is also reported in general terms that children were conscripted into the ranks of the RUF/AFRC and girls were used for sexual purposes.

Freetown's position as a key logistic point for ECOMOG in Liberia meant that Nigerian forces had maintained a near continuous presence at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) since 1990. In the days following the coup, Nigerian forces concentrated in the Western Area as their main base at Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD, Western Area) was reinforced. On 3 June, RUF/AFRC forces captured a number of Nigerian forces at Lungi after their abortive attempt to take full control of Freetown International Airport. Between 5 and 9 June, Nigerian forces regained full control of Freetown International Airport during an operation supported by heavy artillery from the Nigerian 231st Field Artillery Regiment. Nigerian and RUF/AFRC forces intermittently traded machine gun and mortar fire across 10 and 11 June,[491] which left at least 5 people dead.

The standoff continued throughout 1997. On 9 July, there was a resurgence of heavy mortar fire between Nigerian and RUF/AFRC forces.[492] The Nigerians sought to push RUF/AFRC forces back from the Lungi area and RUF/AFRC forces sought to prevent the pro-government FM 98.1 Radio Democracy broadcasting from inside the Nigerian perimeter. News reports show that 10 members of the Nigerian forces and 60 civilians were killed during this action.[493] RUF/AFRC forces substantially looted villages around the International Airport during their assault on Nigerian positions in the airport. Significant exchanges of fire in the airport area occurred on 29 July; 10, 13, 14 and 23 August; 22 September; and 9 October. On or around 4 September, around 11 members of the Nigerian forces were killed when their vehicle ran over a landmine on the road near between

[490] AFP, 20 May 1997.
[491] Xinhua, 11 June 1997.
[492] AFP, 9 July 1997.
[493] AFP, 13 July 1997.

Lungi and Port Loko Town. On 22 November at Tagrin (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom), Nigerian forces released 28 RUF/AFRC prisoners of war captured at various points since 2 June.

After the coup, RUF/AFRC forces scattered throughout Masimera Chiefdom introduced a system of theft they called, "From your hand to my hand; from your pocket to my pocket", which encouraged the recruitment of more civilians into the CDF. Following this, CDF and ECOMOG were deployed together in Mange (BKM Chiefdom) and ECOMOG forces were also deployed near Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), from where roads lead to Koya and Masimera Chiefdoms. However, "loyal SLA soldiers" [494] fighting alongside ECOMOG were not trusted and, accordingly, were given only light weapons. During this period, RUF/AFRC forces were engaged mainly in food-finding missions, during which villages were looted.

RUF/AFRC forces coming from Kambia District attacked Barmoi Junction and Mange (BKM Chiefdom) after September 1997. Little resistance was offered by the Gbethis deployed at Mange, where RUF/AFRC forces burnt down 18 houses and stole property.

At the same time, Guinean troops deployed at the crossing-point over the Little Scaries River at Madina (Tonko Limba Chiefdom, Kambia District) put severe pressure on the RUF/AFRC forces based in Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District). After July 1997, RUF/AFRC forces moved from Ro-Source to a new base in Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom), on the Mabole River between the chiefdoms of Sanda Magbolontor and Dibia (Port Loko District), just north of Gbinti. RUF/AFRC forces used canoes to cross the river and stage food-finding raids on nearby villages. Pressure was mounted on the RUF/AFRC base at Bainkoro by both ECOMOG and CDF; deployed over the river from Bainkoro, these forces were able to use artillery on the RUF/AFRC base. The RUF/AFRC retreated from Bainkoro in September 1997, reportedly moving north towards Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom, Kambia District).

From 27 August, Nigerian forces stationed in Sierra Leone were formally deployed as ECOMOG under the authority of ECOWAS. In August, ECOMOG forces were deployed in Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) and began encouraging the enlisting of youths into the CDF from that time. Chiefdom authorities were requested to send men to Port Loko Town for initiation. In BKM Chiefdom, for example, ECOMOG trained 250 men from Makonte Section, merging this force with other men trained in Bureh and Kasseh Sections. The CDF command in BKM Chiefdom was based in Mange.

d) Events in 1998

After the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown on 12 February 1998, the intensity of the war escalated in Port Loko District.[495] Atrocities were committed throughout the District, especially during the first months of the year. Throughout 1998, RUF/AFRC forces deployed and took positions in all the chiefdoms and main towns of the District surrounding Maforki Chiefdom.

[494] Meaning SLA not affiliated with the RUF/AFRC.

[495] This section and the following sections on 1999-2001 do not include any incidents involving the West Side Boys, which have been dealt with in a separate section at the end of this chapter. This has been done for reasons of clarity and simplicity, since the West Side Boys operated in a limited area according to a pattern that was clearly identifiable and repeated throughout 1998-2001.

Starting in September 1998, the movement of troops in BKM, TMS, Masimera and Marampa Chiefdoms and the abduction of many civilians for recruitment demonstrate that RUF/AFRC forces were preparing an attack on Port Loko Town and were also probably already en route to Freetown. The chain of events accelerated in September 1998 and at the end of the year, Port Loko Town fell to the persistent RUF/AFRC attacks.

After the coup and throughout 1997 and 1998, RUF/AFRC forces were present in Masimera and Marampa Chiefdoms; it is reported that none of the 373 villages of Masimera Chiefdom were left without those forces entering or attacking them during this period. When RUF/AFRC forces attacked or entered a town or village, they burnt, stole, raped, killed and captured a number of people, forcing some to carry their loads. After the merger of the RUF forces with the AFRC forces, important bases were operated in the south of Tonkolili District (Yoni, Malal Mara and Kholifa Mabang Chiefdoms), at the south-east boundary of Port Loko District.

After ECOMOG commenced operations to remove the RUF/AFRC from Freetown on 6 February 1998, many RUF/AFRC forces regrouped in Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom) at the border with Dibia and Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdoms. From there, some deployed through Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bombali District). On 12 February 1998, an RUF/AFRC unit called Brigade Advance left Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom) for Barmoi (Masungbala Chiefdom, Kambia District), where they burnt down eight houses and abducted 50 civilians, who were forced to carry stolen property. On 14 February, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District), where they killed eight civilians, took property and burnt down an unknown number of houses. On 19 February, RUF/AFRC forces launched simultaneous attacks from Kambia Town on the towns of Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District) and Mange (BKM Chiefdom). CDF and ECOMOG forces based in Mange were overpowered by the RUF/AFRC forces and retreated to their headquarters in Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom). Six people were killed, 62 houses were burnt down and an unspecified number of people were abducted by the RUF/AFRC during the attack on Mange (BKM Chiefdom). The same day, RUF/AFRC forces returned to their base at Bainkoro. A Guinean ECOMOG contingent equipped with armoured tanks and accompanied by members of the CDF left Port Loko Town and moved on Bainkoro, but was repelled by RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG established a temporary base in Kabatha (Maforki Chiefdom), a key junction approximately five miles from Port Loko Town.

On 21 February, RUF forces left Bainkoro for Kasseh Section (both BKM Chiefdom). They attacked the villages of Rokon and Robath Kantakathe, where they encountered resistance from the Gbethis. RUF/AFRC forces were driven from the town and pursued by the Gbethis from Kasseh Section (BKM) to a village called Magbankitha in Malekuray Section (TMS Chiefdom). The CDF Commander in Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) called for air support from Nigerian ECOMOG, who bombarded RUF/AFRC positions, forcing them to retreat to an unknown location.

During the same period, in early 1998, RUF/AFRC forces were retreating from Freetown along the Freetown–Masiaka Highway through Koya Chiefdom. The general retreat north moved towards Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District), where



RUF/AFRC troops began arriving on or around 14 February. That day or the next, RUF/AFRC forces[496] attacked Masherry-Potho and Mile 38 (both Koya Chiefdom). In both locations, RUF/AFRC forces conducted house-to-house searches, forcing civilians to carry the stolen property. They chased civilians into the bush, flogged those they caught and killed those who refused to give information about the location of their possessions. In Masherry-Potho, around 25 civilians were killed during the RUF/AFRC attack; at least three civilians were also mutilated. RUF/AFRC forces amputated the left hand of a man abducted from Masherry-Potho to carry stolen property when it became obvious he was unable to carry the load. RUF/AFRC forces dug deep trenches across the Freetown–Masiaka Highway, presumably to hold up ECOMOG movement out of the Western Area. Following this, they retreated north towards Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), burning all the houses along their route. Many civilians were abducted and forced to carry stolen property. A man from Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom) had both hands amputated by RUF/AFRC forces when he attempted to escape. He was left at the village of Ro-Lal (Koya Chiefdom) and instructed to inform President Kabbah that the RUF/AFRC would return to Freetown.

RUF/AFRC forces were seen in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and the surrounding villages between 14 February and 1 March 1998. ECOMOG military intelligence received reports that the RUF/AFRC were taking up strong defensive positions in Lunsar.[497] During this time, RUF/AFRC forces launched "Operation Pay Yourself," which in essence was a widespread looting spree. RUF/AFRC forces established checkpoints in the Delco Compound, Mabesseneh and Tainratha areas of Lunsar and stripped passers-by of all valuable and tradable items. On 15 February, RUF/AFRC forces kidnapped three missionaries and two foreign aid workers from the Mabeseneh Hospital in Lunsar.[498] They were taken to Camp Charlie, near Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), before being released in Masiaka on 27 February. RUF/AFRC forces stole civilian property, burned down many residences in Lunsar and killed and decapitated an unknown number of civilians, forcing other civilians to bury the corpses. The Catholic Mission, Murialdo Vocational Institute, the Sierra Leone Primary School, the Sierra Leone Muslim Brotherhood Primary School and other institutions in Lunsar were severely vandalised.

In the early evening of 1 March 1998, troops from the ECOMOG 24th Infantry Brigade entered Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) from Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom). They engaged RUF/AFRC snipers en route at Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom) and exchanged fire with RUF/AFRC forces for about an hour as they entered Lunsar. Apart from that, ECOMOG met no resistance from RUF/AFRC forces in Lunsar.[499] From Lunsar, ECOMOG forces staged an attack on Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District), taking hold of the town on 3 March 1998. Two days earlier, on 1 March, around 400 RUF/AFRC members surrendered to Guinean ECOMOG at Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom).[500]

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[496] Some of these forces were dressed in full combat fatigues, while others wore camouflage t-shirts with red handkerchiefs tied around their heads.
[497] R..A. Adeshina, pp.36-8.
[498] AFP, 15 February 1998.
[499] R.A. Adeshina, pp.36-38.
[500] AFP, 1 March 1998



In March 1998, RUF/AFRC activities resumed in TMS Chiefdom, although the three sections were concerned at different times: Tinkatupa and Safroko Sections as early as April and May and Makama Section in December. Tinkatupa Section is sandwiched between Safroko Section to the north and Makama Section to the south. In early March, Gbethis (CDF) deployed at Masangban, Rogbanneh, Romamboi and Robaka, all in Tinkatupa Section. Shortly after their arrival, Gbethi members started harassing civilians for contributions of money and food. It is also reported in general terms that during this period, Gbethis raped women and flogged men.

After Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) had come under the control of ECOMOG from around 1 March, RUF/AFRC forces were dispersed throughout Buya Romende Chiefdom. They settled in numerous locations including Buya, Ro-Sint Buya, Foredugu, Gbonsama and Massenebe (all Buya Romende Chiefdom). At this time, RUF/AFRC activity in the chiefdom focussed on Jar-Jar operations, which involved the formation of squads dedicated to the widespread robbery of civilian property, both for subsistence and enrichment. Squads of around 150 RUF/AFRC members roved around villages in the chiefdom on a daily basis taking food and valuables, flogging people and forcing civilians to carry stolen property to RUF/AFRC camps.

Between 17 and 19 April, around 300 RUF/AFRC forces moved from a camp called "Kenema"[501] in Libeisaygahun Chiefdom (Bombali District) to TMS Chiefdom. They established a base at Maboko in the Safroko Section (TMS Chiefdom), from where they raided surrounding villages between 19 April and 5 May. It is reported in general terms that during these raids, RUF/AFRC force regularly killed civilians and abducted others to carry stolen property. On 25 April, an ECOMOG platoon and an unknown number of Gbethis deployed from Lunsar to Sendugu (TMS Chiefdom), close to the RUF position at Maboko. An ECOMOG soldier on a motorbike driven by a civilian sped through Maboko and then called for air support. An ECOMOG jet bombed this location and another location in Maron (TMS Chiefdom); this second bombardment killed four civilians. Another civilian was killed during a subsequent ECOMOG air bombardment of a nearby village called Petifu. ECOMOG deployed to Maron and Sendugu but despite this, the RUF/AFRC continued to operate from Maboko.

On a Friday[502] in April 1998, a series of killings took place in the village of Rosint (Masimera Chiefdom). In the late afternoon, sporadic gunshots were heard all over the village. Three different groups of RUF/AFRC forces entered the village from different directions. The group from Masimera Town (Marampa Chiefdom) were a "Born Naked" unit, because they only wore underwear and sandals. The Mile 91 group – self-styled "Death Squad", commanded by a Liberian – were dressed in mixed civilian-military attire. The Royeben group dressed in full military fatigues.[503] The groups had apparently decided to determine who stayed in Rosint by gambling on the sex of an

[501] Most likely on the road from the Batkanu/Ro-Source area. In April 1998, RUF/AFRC forces, driven by ECOMOG from Makeni and Kamakwie started targeting and occupying towns situated on the east-west road from Karina (Biriwa Chiefdom, Bombali District) to Batkanu (Lebeisaygahun Chiefdom, Bombali District). Westwards movement into TMS, Dibia and Buya Romende Chiefdoms (Port Loko District) logically extends this pattern of attacks.

[502] Dating this incident at either 3, 10, 17 or 24 April 1998.

[503] This unit may have been comprised primarily of ex-SLA.

unborn baby. Therefore, RUF/AFRC forces gathered 18 civilians under a tree close to the entrance of the village. These RUF/AFRC forces executed a pregnant woman by cutting through her lower abdomen and removing the foetus from her uterus. As the baby was female, the Royeben group withdrew from the village into the nearby bush; they had earlier gambled that the baby was a boy.

The remaining RUF/AFRC forces made preparations to amputate limbs from village residents, bringing a cutlass and an axe over to a log near the village mosque. RUF/AFRC members forced a woman to lay her hand across the log and, after a count of three, amputated her hands. RUF/AFRC personnel attacked her daughter with a machete and a female RUF/AFRC member cut her granddaughter in half. The left foot of an 8-month old baby was amputated and her mother was decapitated with a cutlass. RUF/AFRC members put the severed head on a pole near the village primary school. Another man was also decapitated with a long cutlass for being unable to provide the RUF/AFRC with five sheep. The RUF/AFRC forces punctuated the killing and amputation with song and dance. Thirteen civilians were detained overnight in a house under the threat of death.

Very early the following morning, RUF/AFRC members forced the detainees to pray at the mosque and then cook for them. The RUF/AFRC forces then resumed amputations, cutting the wrist of a women six times before succeeding in amputating her hand, then shooting her dead after she managed to escape; they forced the other abductees to laugh loudly. Following this, RUF/AFRC forces amputated the left hand of a woman. Her nephew was held down by four RUF/AFRC members and decapitated. The woman managed to escape into the bush, arriving three days later at Mabesseneh Hospital in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) where she received emergency treatment. Staff at the hospital reported that at least seven others from Masimera Chiefdom had arrived in Lunsar with amputated limbs.

In March or April 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Makaytay (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC commander announced his intention to establish a permanent base in their chiefdom. RUF/AFRC members used a sharp knife to amputate the left ear of a pregnant woman, before sending her to Sendugu. Residents of Gbaneloko (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) gave her assistance in getting to the Sendugu Health Centre, where she related her story to residents. In mid March, RUF/AFRC forces entered Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom), firing machine guns for around two hours. A large number of civilians were abducted; one of the captives, a pregnant woman, was killed later on the roadside. Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom), a few miles south of Sendugu, subsequently came under attack by the RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG forces deployed in Dibia Chiefdom retreated to Kagbantama (BKM Chiefdom), on the road between Barmoi Junction (BKM Chiefdom) and Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom). Many civilians displaced due to the RUF/AFRC attack on Sendugu fled to Kabantama. ECOMOG advanced on Gbinti a week later, following reinforcements arriving from Port Loko Town.

Between 3 and 5 May, RUF/AFRC forces resumed activity in TMS Chiefdom, killing the Regent Chief of Makasi (TMS Chiefdom) by machete blows to the head and an elder of the village. Around 12 houses were also burned during the attack. At Rogbanthi and Ro-Gberray (both Maforki Chiefdom), houses were burnt and people were abducted. At Masengeh, where many civilians had sought safety from RUF/AFRC attacks in the area, two civilians were killed and all 30 houses in the village were burnt down. ECOMOG strengthened their Maboko position in Safroko Section (TMS

Chiefdom), with a 50-strong unit remaining in place until October 1998. During this period, members of ECOMOG killed a well-respected elder, frequently beat and harassed civilians and killed and ate their livestock and other food. Additionally, ECOMOG forces raped at least three women while in Maron (TMS Chiefdom). In October, ECOMOG were replaced by around 30 ECOMOG-trained Gbethis (CDF) from Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom). These forces remained in Maron until February 1999. During this period, Gbethis decapitated a businessman suspected of being an RUF/AFRC spy, dancing the severed head around the village, harassed civilians and confiscated their livestock.

Around 400 heavily armed RUF/AFRC forces with six vehicles moved from the Lunsar area between 17 and 18 May, engaging engaged Gbethis (CDF) stationed in Robaka (TMS Chiefdom). The Gbethis were driven from the town and sustained heavy casualties, including three deaths. RUF/AFRC forces burned 13 houses during the attack. From Robaka, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Masangban, Futa and Gbanah (all TMS Chiefdom), burning over 60 houses in total. Throughout June, RUF/AFRC forces carried out food-finding missions to the villages of Masu, Gbonah, Gbanneh, Kalangba and Rosent (all TMS Chiefdom).

On 4 June 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Masimera village (Marampa Chiefdom), killing four civilians and burning down 300 residences; an unknown number of civilians drowned fleeing the RUF/AFRC attack.[504] Beginning in August 1998, rumours of imminent RUF/AFRC attacks spread throughout Maforki Chiefdom. Seven vehicles were stolen during RUF/AFRC ambushes on the highway between Rokel Bridge and Port Loko Town.

RUF/AFRC forces established a temporary base at Kathente (BKM Chiefdom) in late August or early September 1998, from which they used canoes to cross Little Scaries River and raid many surrounding and nearby villages. During this period, Konika (BKM Chiefdom) was attacked and at least two civilians were killed. RUF/AFRC forces killed one civilian with a bladed weapon and amputated the forelimbs from a young mother. At Small Kambia village (BKM Chiefdom), the RUF/AFRC forces burnt down an unknown number of houses but no deaths were reported.

Very early on 6 September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kagbantama (Kasseh Section, BKM Chiefdom), likely attacking from a temporary base in Kathente, rather than from their established base at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom), or Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces entered the village and mounted a heavy machine gun high up in a tree at the entrance the village. RUF/AFRC forces cut the throats of three young men, killing them. They stripped the zinc roofing from six houses, put bullet holes in other roofing and burned down a further 18 houses. Medical supplies and a large power generator were stolen from the hospital. Leaving Kagbantama, RUF/AFRC forces headed to their permanent base at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom). En route, they burnt and stole from civilian residences in the villages of Ma-Umaro, Marenka, Mayisna, Mahera and Tasso (all BKM Chiefdom). At this time, Gbethis (CDF) were not deployed in the Kasseh Section of BKM Chiefdom, although they were deployed to Kagbantama following the 6 September attack.

A 150-strong RUF/AFRC group attacked ECOMOG between 28 and 30 September at the key Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), killing 16 civilians and leaving over 30 wounded. ECOMOG

[504] AFP, 4 June 1998.

forces suffered four fatalities and 16 wounded, forcing their retreat to Port Loko Town on 2 October. Following ECOMOG's retreat, the highway was closed to civilian traffic, severely restricting the movement and livelihoods of inhabitants of Maforki Chiefdom, by cutting off the main overland route from Port Loko Town both to Freetown and inland. In the months of November and December 1998, several attacks were launched on villages in Maforki Chiefdom. For example, in November 1998, at Ro-Gbesseh, a village hosting displaced persons, over 20 men were abducted, people were killed and some houses were burnt. At Ro-Gberray Junction in early December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces looked for able-bodied men to join their movement, capturing over 10 men for this purpose. Also in December 1998, an unknown number of civilian corpses were found in Makokbo, Ma-Purseh, Ma- Barrkay and Ro-Gbil (all Maforki Chiefdom).

During the last three months of 1998, RUF/AFRC forces using the Kambia–Port Loko route through Mange in BKM Chiefdom moved in the direction of TMS Chiefdom, burning down villages along that route (located mainly in Maforki Chiefdom). RUF/AFRC forces put continuous pressure on the Mange Bridge. Gradually, RUF/AFRC forces moved to cut off and encircle Port Loko Town in preparation for the large-scale assault on the town that would occur on 28 December 1998. Aside from Mayoyisor, which was burnt to the ground, many villages including Rogbonko, Kabatha, Malal, Konta, Kalie and Mathineh were also attacked. At Mathineh, an unknown number of civilians were locked in a house, which was then set on fire. RUF/AFRC forces reached TMS Chiefdom in late November and set fire to villages, including Maramba and Robat, where all the houses except the mosque were burnt down.

Bureh Section (BKM Chiefdom) and its main and strategic town, Mange, were attacked for the second time in October 1998. Between 7 and 11 October, CDF and RUF/AFRC forces fought for control of the long road bridge over the Little Scaries River at Mange;[505] the CDF eventually took control. After this attack, RUF/AFRC forces spread to most of the villages in Bureh Section. "Loyal"[506] SLA forces and the CDF,[507] including Kamajors, were also deployed in Bureh Section. However, the combined RUF/AFRC forces eventually took control of the town of Mange, burnt some houses, took property and abducted young men and women. They also opened a recruitment centre for abductees and sent other abductees to Kambia Town (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District), which at this time was a major RUF/AFRC headquarters. People were also tortured and some civilians had their limbs amputated. RUF/AFRC forces then spread out to other villages in Bureh Section and began occupying villages in Makonteh Section. In November 1998, RUF/AFRC forces executed a group of CDF and threw their bodies into the river. At this time, Mange Hospital, which was receiving medicine from a Red Cross Helicopter, was used to treat wounded RUF/AFRC forces. SLA forces made several attempts to dislodge the fighters from Mange but were unable to cross the strategic bridge across Little Scaries River.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked Masimera Town (Marampa Chiefdom) in early December 1998. During this attack, many school children were abducted, women were raped and people were mutilated and killed. One group of armed men, dressed in military fatigue, pretended to be Government soldiers

[505] 11 October 1998, BBC Online News.

[506] That is, those members of the SLA who had not joined the AFRC but remained under the command of the elected President.

[507] The CDF 14th Battalion. Detail only from All Africa News, 9 December 1998, "No Rebels at Gberay Bridge".

coming to protect Masimera Town and came to Royeben village, where they asked for men to assist them. Ten men were provided and all of them left for Masimera, where they arrived late at night. The civilians were then ordered to return back home to their village, but were captured by a second group dressed similarly to the group that had come to Royeben. All of the civilians but one escaped and the group went to Masimera; on their arrival, the whole town was in flames. The next day, two people were killed with cutlasses for refusing to chase a fowl. Other villages around Masimera Town were burnt down, including Mapelise and Rosent. Four people were killed with cutlasses, among them a woman who had previously been raped many times by numerous members of the RUF/AFRC.

RUF/AFRC forces again moved on Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) throughout late November and December 1998. During the first attack, on 27 November 1998, the RUF/AFRC forces passed through Foredugu at night and attacked the town, but were repelled by ECOMOG forces. On their way back to Foredugu and Robis Junction (Buya Romende Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces captured and killed a pro-Government soldier

In early December 1998, the RUF/AFRC were positioned in Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom), on the main route through TMS Chiefdom, which they had used as a staging point for their first bid to capture Port Loko Town in June 1995. In Malekuray, they fired their weapons for some time and bayoneted a civilian. After this, the RUF/AFRC forces set fire to the town and left for the next village, Maforay (TMS Chiefdom), where they burnt some houses. They continued on towards Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), to reach a base at Masokoma, known as "Combat Camp".

Between 1 and 4 December, Nigerian jets bombarded RUF/AFRC positions near Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), killing at least 70 RUF/AFRC members.[508] Following this, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Lunsar before dawn on 5 December 1998 from the direction of Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) and Kumrabai (Marampa Chiefdom). A small company of ECOMOG and CDF forces managed to ambush RUF/AFRC forces at nearby Mamara but did not prevent RUF/AFRC forces from entering Lunsar. ECOMOG reinforcements arrived from Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and attacked RUF/AFRC with RPGs, mortar and heavy machine gun fire from an armoured vehicle. During the attack, three members of ECOMOG and an unknown number of civilians were killed. RUF/AFRC forces took large amounts of property and abducted an unknown number of civilians to carry the load. In addition, they managed to loot the ECOMOG battalion headquarters, stealing a number of new radio sets and ECOMOG uniforms, in addition to rifles and ammunition.[509]

It is unclear whether or not RUF/AFRC forces took full control over Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) in mid-December, but they certainly remained in the immediate area. It is clear that on 8 December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Magbenthan and Mamusa, (both Marampa Chiefdom) on the highway between Lunsar and Ro-Gberray, burning all the houses. ECOMOG units displaced from fighting in other districts began arriving in Lunsar for redeployment after 15 December.[510]

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[508] AFP, 3 December 1998.
[509] R.A. Adeshina, pp 130-2 *ff.*
[510] R.A. Adeshina, pp 130-2 *ff.*

RUF/AFRC forces began pushing south into Koya Chiefdom and on 7 December they assaulted Masiaka[511] and Magbontoso, a village further west along the highway near Mile 38. RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Masiaka between 14 and 16 December.[512] During this attack, RUF/AFRC forces were coming from three different areas with the main aim of dislodging the Guinean forces and to take their arms and ammunition. The RUF/AFRC forces burnt one armoured tank, some houses and the Guinean ECOMOG HQ, but were unable to seize any weapons. After a battle that night, which left over 20 civilians dead, the Guinean forces were able to repel the RUF/AFRC forces who, while leaving, abducted many civilians, including school children.

On 21 and 22 December, RUF/AFRC forces bypassed Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) and attacked the towns of Songo (Koya RD, Western Area) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). On 23 December, RUF/AFRC forces attacked and occupied Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). On 25 December, following a month long campaign of gradual encirclement, RUF/AFRC forces assaulted Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District), forcing ECOMOG to retreat northwards to Kamakwie (Sella Limba Chiefdom, Bomali District), which itself fell to the RUF/AFRC on 30 December. The main road to Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Masiaka was left was left undefended as Guinean troops withdraw from Masiaka to defend Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) from an RUF/AFRC attack on or around 26 December 1998.

Gbethis (CDF) from Mile 91 came to Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) to reinforce the CDF and ECOMOG forces based in the town. Between 28 and 30 December 1998, very large numbers of heavily-armed RUF/AFRC forces converged on Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), midway between Port Loko Town and Lunsar. On 30 December, Nigerian ECOMOG retreated in full from Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), leaving the town in the hand of RUF/AFRC forces.[513] RUF/AFRC forces then staged a major assault on Port Loko Town. RUF/AFRC units moved from Kambia Town and Rokupr (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District), Mange (BKM Chiefdom) and Macoba (just north of Mange), but also from Ro-Source (Sanda Tendaren Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District).

In the late morning of 30 December, RUF/AFRC forces entered Port Loko Town and engaged the joint Nigerian and Guinean ECOMOG contingent positioned at the Falaba Primary School. During the attack on Port Loko Town, civilians were killed, including the Paramount Chief, women were raped and houses were looted. RUF/AFRC forces eventually captured the eastern part of the town, called old Port Loko, and fought for the control of the whole town. However, the bombing of RUF/AFRC positions from the air strengthened ECOMOG resistance. On 3 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces left the town using the same route to the east along which they had advanced. It is highly likely that the bulk of these forces moved into the Western Area in preparation for the 6 January assault on Freetown. In the wake of the RUF/AFRC retreat from Port Loko, ECOMOG and CDF groups stole a large amount of civilian property.

e) Events in 1999

[511] A strategic location where the main Freetown highway divides into two highways, one leading to Port Loko Town and the other to Mile 91.

[512] First date from record, later date from AFP, 16 December 1998

[513] BBC and AFP, 30 December 1998.

RUF/AFRC forces invaded Freetown between 6 and 20 January. As noted, there were preliminary attacks in late December on the towns of Port Loko, Ro-Gberray, Lunsar, Masiaka, Songo, Newton and Waterloo in preparation for the 6 January invasion. ECOMOG forces pushed the RUF/AFRC back to Waterloo, where they remained in force until at least 25 February 1999. RUF/AFRC forces retained control over the arterial routes from Western Area running through Port Loko District throughout this time.

RUF/AFRC forces occupied Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) following ECOMOG's retreat on 26 December. Following the general retreat of RUF/AFRC forces from Greater Freetown (Western Area) towards Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) after 20 January, RUF/AFRC forces began building up in Masiaka. During the occupation of Masiaka, CDF forces surrounded the town and exerted constant pressure on the RUF/AFRC. Between 18 and 24 January there was a tense standoff between the two forces, resulting in a stalemate. After 24 January, RUF/AFRC units began occupying villages near Masiaka to increase the security of their Masiaka position and to break the deadlock with the CDF. Between 24 January and 15 February, at Ma-Kanry village (Koya Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces killed an unknown number of civilians, alleged to be hostile "collaborators". On 15 March, a RUF/AFRC splinter group called the West Side Boys[514] exchanged gunfire with regular RUF/AFRC forces based in Masiaka. This skirmish was reportedly caused by disputes about the division of stolen property. On 3 April, ECOMOG Alfa Jets commenced fly-passes over Masiaka and nearby villages. RUF/AFRC forces reportedly rounded up civilians, placed them on the town streets and started using bladed weapons to carve the initials "RUF" on the civilian captives. On 17 April, Nigerian forces backed up by air support advanced on Masiaka, capturing the town on or around 29 April 1999. Withdrawing RUF/AFRC forces burnt down around 300 residences.

RUF/AFRC forces also occupied the town of Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) between 14 January and 22 April 1999. Mile 91 is about 30 miles east of Masiaka along the main highway on the first main road junction leading south to Bo and Kenema. As at Masiaka, RUF/AFRC forces were beaten back by a heavy ECOMOG assault. RUF forces established a sub-office responsible for monitoring military activities in the Maforki area at Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom). In March 1999, RUF/AFRC activities resumed at Konta (Maforki Chiefdom), where an old woman, a man and a young girl pounding cassava leaves were given 100 lashes each by RUF/AFRC personnel. In April, three women from Masubah (Maforki Chiefdom) were taken away and raped by 15 men.

The Gbethis (CDF) strengthened their positions in Port Loko District during early 1999, particularly in the areas bordering Dibia Chiefdom and the RUF/AFRC base at Bainkoro (BKM Chiefdom). These positions would present an obstacle to activity spreading from RUF/AFRC-held territory in Sanda Tendaren and Libeisaygahun Chiefdoms (both Bombali District) bordering Dibia Chiefdom. Following appeals from the Regent Chief to the Paramount Chief of Port Loko Town, members of the Gbethi Society were sent to secure Kasseh Section (BKM Chiefdom) in February 1999. At first, these men had only shotguns, machetes and sticks. During a patrol on 3 February near Romeni, just north-east of Port Loko Town (both Maforki Chiefdom), the Gbethis captured an ex-SLA soldier suspected of being an RUF commander. They decapitated him and danced his severed head around

[514] For more information about the West Side Boys, see below.

Port Loko Town, demanding money and chanting, "Die dae, die nor dae. Rebel dae for die, die dae for rebel", meaning: "Death does not exist, death is for rebels and rebels are meant to die".

In March 1999, the CDF established a recruitment base at Kagbantama (BKM Chiefdom) and a training camp at Makomp, just north of Port Loko Town. Kagbantama is on the main road leading from Port Loko Town to Gbinti and Sendugu, the headquarter towns of Dibia and Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdoms respectively. ECOMOG had retreated from Dibia Chiefdom to Kagbantama in March 1998. At the Makomp camp, recruits to the CDF were instructed in the use of supernatural charms and clothes that could allegedly render them bullet-proof. Additionally, they were trained in the use and maintenance of a rifle. The main task of the CDF in Kasseh was to secure the east bank of the Little Scaries River, preventing southward RUF/AFRC infiltration from upstream towns like Bainkoro and other locations in Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom. After 18 February, SLA units deployed to Kasseh Section (BKM) but were driven from the section by civilians, following incidents of looting and poor discipline. In late March or early April, Gbethis at Makomp ambushed three SLA members who had been issued written permission to pass from CDF command in Port Loko Town. A CDF commanding officer cut one of the SLA members in half from head to pelvis. He was arrested by the CDF authorities, but returned to his unit after only two days of detention.

The traditional authorities of Safroko Section (TMS Chiefdom) turned down a request from the CDF in BKM Chiefdom in late March 1999 to establish a Gbethi Society. Consequently, Gbethis from Kagbantama (Kasseh Section, BKM Chiefdom) began to harass residents of Safroko Section (TMS Chiefdom) throughout March and April. For example, in March 1999, a CDF group came to Rosar (Safroko Section, TMS Chiefdom) and captured a civilian they accused of being a "rebel". Gbethis brought him back to Kagbantama, where they tied him up and dripped melted plastic on his body. On 5 April, Gbethis from Kagbantama retuned to Rosar, following a general report that the inhabitants were "all rebels". Gbethis formed a firing squad, lined 27 men into two rows and shot them dead. The next day, 6 April 1999, Gbethis from Kagbantama again attacked Rosar. During the attack they raped an unknown number of women, stole property and burnt down 45 houses in the village, leaving only the mosque standing. At Maron village (TMS Chiefdom) on 8 April, Gbethis killed a blind man and threatened to kill the Section Chief and elders because they had refused to join the Gbethi Society. The Gbethis consequently accepted Le 400,000 and some food items in satisfaction. On 9 April in Makapr (TMS Chiefdom), near Maron, Gbethis from Dibia Chiefdom shot a civilian man twice and amputated one of his hands. They also took property and burnt down seven houses. On 23 April, at Mafonkay (TMS Chiefdom), Gbethis shot dead two elders and a child. At Makili, they killed one man, raped two women and burnt houses, after having taken property from inside. These Gbethis came from Kagbantama but also from Kareneh (Dibia Chiefdom), following the orders of a commander who was moving from section to section, initiating people into the Gbethi Society.

By the end of March 1999, RUF/AFRC activities resumed in Makama Section (TMS Chiefdom). At this time, an RUF/AFRC patrol from "Combat Camp" arrived in Malekuray and announced to residents that their commander wanted to make peace with them and the nearby villages of Mafengbeh, Robenkia and Makaneh. For acceding to this localised "peace treaty", the village elders would be given a "clearance paper", which they were ordered to display should any RUF/AFRC

forces threaten the village or its residents. In return, the population had to contribute money and food to the RUF/AFRC. This arrangement was called "G5" and had been in operation in other areas of Sierra Leone held by the RUF/AFRC since at least December 1997. In brief, it provided the RUF/AFRC with a more rational, less strenuous way of extracting resources from the civilian population. On 13 April 1999, those residents of Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom) who returned to their chiefdom in accordance the terms agreed in the "peace treaty" met some Gbethis at Maforay (TMS Chiefdom), who killed two civilians. Shortly after, the CDF commander and over 100 Gbethis came to Malekuray. For making this deal with the RUF/AFRC, the CDF commander for the area threatened to kill all the inhabitants of Malekuray and use their bodies as roadblocks. The Section Chief, Imams, the headman and 10 elders were abducted and taken away to the CDF base. The Regent Chief of Masu eventually negotiated the release of those abducted, in return for which residents of Malekuray and surrounding villages would give the CDF food, livestock and Le 200,000. On 14 April, however, around 30 armed RUF/AFRC members from Combat Camp came to Malekuray. The "clearance paper" proved to be worthless. The RUF/AFRC forces shot dead five civilians; four other civilians were killed in the town, one wounded severely with a machete. Other people sustained knife wounds but survived. The RUF/AFRC forces said the attack was in retaliation for the village's support for the Gbethis. Caught between the RUF/AFRC and the Gbethis, most of the inhabitants left Malekuray for the bush or bigger towns.

Following the release of the RUF leader from Government custody on 15 April 1999, it was announced over radio that former SLA soldiers who had joined the AFRC regime should surrender to the United Nations Military Observers (UN MILOBS) for re-engagement. This resulted in in-fighting between RUF and AFRC forces. Nevertheless, disarmament started in November 1999.

On 7 May 1999, RUF/AFRC forces again attacked Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom), reportedly on a food-finding mission. They moved through the villages of Maimera, Makamasa and Badara, killing 13 people in total and burning 10 houses. The large build-up and coordination exhibited in the RUF's earlier assaults on Port Loko Town was not present in this attack. The Malian ECOMOG contingent resisted the RUF/AFRC attack, incurring 7 fatalities and 11 casualties; at least 20 RUF/AFRC members were killed during the attack. Few houses were looted during the attack and an unknown number of civilians were killed. By 7 May, Ro-Gberray (Maforki Chiefdom) was reportedly accessible to humanitarian organisations, having been cleared of RUF/AFRC by ECOMOG.[515] On 13 and 14 May, Songo and Mile 38 (both Koya Chiefdom) were attacked by RUF/AFRC forces.[516]

Despite the ongoing peace negotiations, RUF/AFRC forces continued to attack civilian settlements in Masimera Chiefdom. For example, after 20 June 1999 a chiefdom Police Officer was killed in his garden in Masimera. In nearby Mathilie, RUF/AFRC forces amputated the limb of a civilian man. In Makonton, RUF/AFRC members amputated a woman's limb; another woman was shot dead for refusing to have sexual intercourse with one of the RUF commanders. In mid-1999, Lunsar remained under RUF occupation. Following infighting between AFRC and RUF forces in Makeni (Makari Gbanti, Bombali District), AFRC forces decamped to Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), but shortly after were chased out by RUF forces.

[515] UN HACU, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 1 - 17 May 1999.
[516] *Ibid.*

Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire, which entered into force on 24 May. Full talks commenced on 25 May, leading to the signing of the Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (Lomé Peace Agreement). Following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, a demobilisation centre was opened at the Lungi Military Barracks (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) and in early November a centre opened near Port Loko Town. By 30 November, around 500 RUF personnel had registered as ex-combatants.[517]

Throughout 1999, RUF/AFRC forces in Bureh Section (BKM Chiefdom) killed an unknown number of civilians suspected of being "spies" or Government forces. After the ceasefire on 24 May 1999, ECOMOG and UNOMSIL MILOBS were deployed to Government-held and RUF/AFRC-held areas in Bureh Section (BKM Chiefdom), including Mange and Mile 18. These foreign forces engaged in routine patrols, but were unable to access Makonteh Section because of the poor quality of the bridges and the difficulties imposed by the rainy season. RUF forces violated the ceasefire, often during food-finding raids; they looted villages like Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) and abducted people to carry the stolen property.

On 22 October, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 6,000-strong peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone, to replace the previous observer mission and assist with the implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement. [518] The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) commenced deployment with the arrival of advance teams on 29 and 30 November;[519] 4,500 UNAMSIL were troops were present in Sierra Leone by 10 January 2000.[520]

From October through to the end of 1999, a few isolated but brutal incidents are reported in Port Loko District. One Sunday in late October, RUF/AFRC forces in Magbankay (Masimera Chiefdom) killed a civilian man as a rite foreseeing their "peaceful stay" in the chiefdom. After he was killed, his genitals, tongue and eyes were removed from his body. These body parts were given to a virgin girl, who buried them near a small stream following a ceremony in Masimera Town. In another incident in Masimera, girls and women abducted in various villages near the Rokel River were raped, taken to a nearby bank of the river and shot dead.

In November, tensions between the RUF and the remnants of the AFRC led to a series of clashes in Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom). By 2 November, Lunsar was reportedly under the sole occupation of the RUF. This was part of a wider RUF operation that established their dominance over Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District).[521] On 8 November, a number of ex-AFRC who had entered the demobilisation process in at a centre in Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) rioted at a nearby market over the delayed award of financial incentives to disarm.[522] In addition to demanding food, clothing and medical supplies from

[517] IRIN West Africa, 30 November 1999.
[518] UN Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999).
[519] BBC, 29 November 1999
[520] IRIN West Africa, 11 January 1999.
[521] IRIN West Africa, 2 November, quoting ECOMOG sources.
[522] BBC, 9 November 1999; IRIN West Africa, 10 November 1999.



local traders, they looted numerous civilian residences.[523] A number of small skirmishes were reported between ECOMOG and demobilised ex-AFRC in mid December.[524] On 22 December, ECOMOG reported that its forces had shot dead three ex-AFRC members in the village of Matank (Marampa Chiefdom), near Lunsar.

f) Events in 2000

In early January, UNAMSIL moved into positions throughout Port Loko District. A single Nigerian battalion was based at Freetown International Airport at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) and a second covered Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom), Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), securing the towns and the main highways. A Battalion of Kenyan troops was sent to secure Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Magburaka (Kholida Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). Nigerian forces deployed under ECOMOG would remain in county to provide additional back up to the incoming UNAMSIL forces.[525] Zambian UNAMSIL forces commenced deployment to Sierra Leone, arriving in Lungi between 21 and 26 April coming to a full strength of 775 by 2 May 2000.[526]

Disarmament began in November 1999 in Port Loko District, but after some months, some combatants still in the bush refused to disarm and continued attacking villages in 2000 and 2001. During 1999 and 2000, RUF/AFRC forces camped at Foredugu Junction (Buya Romende Chiefdom), just north-east of Lunsar on the main highway from Makeni, at that point under firm RUF occupation until at least February 2001.

Between January and July 2000, RUF/AFRC forces had free movement along the main north-south highway running through Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom and consequently through the towns of Sendugu (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom) and Gbinti (Buya Romende Chiefdom). From Gbinti, the RUF could move freely south through Kamasundo (Dibia Chiefdom) to Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom); this would allow RUF forces to stage attacks on Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom), Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Ro-Gberray (Maforki Chiefdom).

RUF/AFRC forces coming from Makeni in January 2000 headed to Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom), abducting two people at Maron (TMS Chiefdom). They then proceeded to Gbinti, where they engaged Gbethis (CDF). The Gbethis were defeated and the RUF/AFRC forces stole property, burnt an unknown number of houses and advanced into Kambia District. In March 2000, RUF/AFRC forces entered Sendugu along the main north-south route through Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom towards Bombali District. They were around 120 in number, equipped with AK47s, hand grenades, cutlasses and knives. This RUF/AFRC Company carried out another series of looting operations dubbed "Operation Pay Yourself", camping for two weeks in Sendugu and stealing from the surrounding villages. At Rorange, they shot a woman who did not want to give them her bag of milled rice. The following day, Gbethis from Barmoi Junction (BKM Chiefdom) attacked Sendugu, forcing RUF/AFRC forces to retreat north-east.

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523 UN HACU, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 7 - 20 Nov 1999.
524 *Ibid.*
525 UN OCHA, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 5 - 16 Jan 2000.
526 IRIN West Africa, 21 April 2000, 26 April 2000 and 2 May 2000.



In May 2000, the commander of both the RUF and AFRC forces in the Sendugu area ordered that any member caught trying to abscond and enter a DDR program would be shot on sight. That same month, near Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), RUF forces intercepted a convoy composed of civilians and RUF/AFRC members seeking to disarm. All the passengers were killed, including the RUF/AFRC members, who were accused of trying to join the DDR program in Port Loko. Consequently, civilians believed that most of the RUF/AFRC forces living in Maforki and Marampa Chiefdoms would not disarm.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked Thombo (Maforki Chiefdom) in May 2000, killing civilians and members of the CDF. At Rothawa, armed men dressed only in trousers killed a civilian and took property. RUF/AFRC forces also attacked Ro-Lal, where one civilian was killed and two houses were burnt down.

On 5 May 2000, 208 members of UNAMSIL's Zambian contingent were disarmed and captured by RUF forces based at Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom). RUF forces returned to Foredugu with vehicles, communication sets, weapons and uniforms stolen from the peacekeepers. By 28 May, following the series of events outlined below, UNAMSIL announced that virtually all the peacekeepers had been released by the RUF. On 8 May, the UK commenced "Operation Palliser", deploying to Sierra Leone the *HMS Ocean* and around 800 paratroopers from the Parachute Regiment.[527] Initially, UK forces secured the airport and Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom) and commenced the evacuation of UK nationals and other expatriates.

Between 8 and 14 May, RUF forces unsuccessfully attempted to gain control of Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom). At that time, Masiaka was defended by an unknown number of AFRC "loyalists"[528] who had split from the RUF at the end of 1999 and realigned themselves with the elected government, in addition to regular SLA and CDF forces.[529] A contingent of Guinean UNAMSIL had withdrawn from the town.

RUF troops attacked SLA forces stationed in Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom) on 12 May 2000 with heavy machine gun and RPG fire. On 15 May, they advanced west towards Port Loko Town, where 500 RUF forces attacked the town in the early evening of 16 May 2000; Nigerian and SLA forces engaged the RUF, forcing their retreat soon after. During the attack, one member of the Nigerian forces was killed and six members of the SLA and five members of the Nigerian forces were injured.[530]

On the morning of 17 May, the RUF leader was captured travelling in a civilian vehicle in Freetown. The UK Secretary of Defence stated to the BBC that Sankoh was being held in "protective custody" by UK forces.[531] Also on 17 May, RUF forces attacked UK positions 6 miles east of the International Airport at Lungi. Repelling the attack, UK paratroops killed three RUF members.[532]

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527 On 24 May, members of the 42 Commando Royal Marines replaced the paratroopers.
528 BBC Online News, 10 May 2000.
529 BBC Online News, 10 May 2000.
530 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 17 May 2000.
531 BBC Online News, 17 May 2000 (18:03 GMT 19:03 UK).
532 BBC Online News, 17 May 2000.

On 18 May, Jordanian UNAMSIL peacekeepers were deployed at Masiaka and further north at Rokel Bridge.

Although this UNAMSIL action pushed the RUF/AFRC north, with subsequent attacks focussing on Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom), the RUF still maintained pressure on Port Loko Town, regularly staging probing attacks on SLA and UNAMSIL positions in the town area and arterial roads after 16 May. On 20 and 23 May, RUF forces engaged SLA forces in the Port Loko Town area from the Lungi Road. In the evening of 28 May, they again attacked from the direction of Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom), briefly penetrating the town centre. On 1 and 4 June, RUF forces staged evening attacks on Port Loko Town from Bureh Section (BKM Chiefdom); during the 4 June attack, an RPG fired by RUF forces killed one civilian and injured six. On 12 June, RUF forces attacking Port Loko Town killed a CDF member. On 22 June, a Sierra Leone Government helicopter gunship inflicted casualties on the RUF during an attack on Port Loko Town.

On 24 May, RUF forces ambushed an SLA truck near Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), killing four members of the SLA and two foreign journalists.[533] On 1 and 2 June, combat troops from the Indian UNAMSIL contingent took up positions around Ro-Gberray Junction, taking full control of it by 5 June.[534] The same day, the RUF staged a major attack on Ro-Gberray lasting 12 hours, during which three Nigerian peacekeepers, five civilians and 23 RUF members were killed. Also on 5 June, a 12-strong RUF squad led by a former SLA member attacked the village of Romonukeh (Maforki Chiefdom), burning six houses and abducting one civilian man.

Between 1 and 21 June, SLA[535] and RUF fought for control of Lunsar (Marampa). After 8 June, Lunsar was reportedly under the control of the SLA, which repelled an RUF counter-attack on 13 June with the assistance of the West Side Boys.[536] The RUF retook Lunsar on 21 June 2000,[537] remaining in control of the town until 14 March 2001 when, on the invitation of the RUF, UNAMSIL deployed in the town.[538]

Two RUF attacks are reported in Makama Section (TMS) during 2000. On 29 June, 50 SLA members who had deployed to Malekuray (TMS) in March 2000 retreated, at which time RUF forces killed an old man. During the second attack on Malekuray, on 30 July, RUF forces were repelled by CDF forces and no casualties are reported. Both attacks came from the direction of Kambia–Makama, east along the road from Malekuray.

Before 10 July 2000, RUF/AFRC forces entered Kanokie (Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom), some of them shouting "people of Kanokie, don't be afraid, we are on transit to Sendugu, your village is not our target". They left the village with no reported incidents of violence. From 10 to 13 July 2000, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Sendugu, burning down 11 residences and abducting an unknown

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533 BBC Online News, 25 May 2000 (06:55 GMT 07:55 UK).
534 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 5 June 2000.
535 It is unclear whether UNAMSIL troops assisted in the defence of Lunsar on these dates.
536 See below for more detailed information on the West Side Boys.
537 BBC Online News, 21 June 2000 (17:57 GMT 18:57).
538 UNAMSIL Press Release, 14 March 2001.

number of civilians. A few weeks after this attack, youths and elderly men formed the Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom CDF to increase security throughout the chiefdom.

RUF attacks on Port Loko Town continued between July and September 2000, with small-scale attacks on 2 and 11 July from the Lungi road. RUF forces attacked Port Loko on 2 and 20 August using the Malekuray (TMS) road and again on 27 August using the Lungi route. In August 2000, the RUF leadership formed peacekeeping committees in Buya Romende, Marampa and Masimera Chiefdoms, possibly to boost their credibility ahead of the talks with UNAMSIL that would take place in 2001.

On 20 August 2000, a small number of RUF forces attacked Massembeh (Maforki Chiefdom), killing two civilians and injuring two others. On 2 September at Yankasa (Maforki Chiefdom), four people were killed and 10 injured, including a pregnant woman. Two civilian girls were captured and the village was looted. RUF forces again attacked Port Loko Town on 1 September. One RUF group killed 20 SLA near Kabatha, while the SLA and UNAMSIL repelled without casualties a second RUF group that moved into Port Loko Town along the Lungi road. On 10 September, the RUF staged a final attack on Port Loko Town along the Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom) road, sustaining at least 50 fatalities and a high number of causalities. RUF forces withdrew to Makeni through TMS Chiefdom to Kamasundo (Dibia Chiefdom), killing one person at Robombo and raping women at Maron. They proceeded to Gbinti (Dibia Chiefdom) and onwards to Batkanu (Libeisaygahun Chiefdom, Bombali District). For the remainder of September and throughout October, no events of significance are reported.

RUF forces from Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) entered the villages of Bainkoro and Robaku in Tinkatupa Section (TMS Chiefdom) soon after 10 November 2000. They abducted three civilian men to use as guides. The group travelled to Makapr, shooting and injuring a civilian woman. Moving to Lunsar, they stole livestock and food items. At Magberi, RUF forces burnt down eight houses. Around 45 SLA forces stationed in Malekuray (TMS Chiefdom) engaged this RUF group near Masangban, recovering some of the stolen property.

g) Events in 2001

The RUF allowed UNAMSIL access to two important roads in Port Loko District on 12 January 2001. First, the RUF opened the stretch of highway connecting Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom) and Foredugu (Buya Romende Chiefdom) to Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District). Second, the RUF opened the road between Mange (BKM Chiefdom) and Kambia (Magbema Chiefdom, Kambia District),[539] although the road bridge over the Little Scaries River would not be open until 22 March 2001.[540] The following day, the UNAMSIL Force Commander met with representatives of the RUF in Lunsar to discuss the humanitarian situation and the deployment of UNAMSIL to Lunsar.[541] On 25 February, the first formal UNAMSIL-RUF Contact Group meeting was held in Mange (BKM). On 14 March, around 240 Nigerian UNAMSIL troops commenced deployment to Lunsar,[542] increasing to 776 by 23 March 2001.[543]

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[539] UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 12 January 2001

[540] UNAMSIL Press Release, 22 March 2001

[541] UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 15 January 2001

[542] UNAMSIL Press Release, 14 March 2001 and IRINWA, 16 March 2001

In Maforki Chiefdom, there were many incidents of RUF forces stripping corrugated zinc roofing from civilian residences. For example, in February 2001, some houses were unroofed at Rogbath, Robis, Masokor, Mathera, Rothudekun, Makambisa and Babara. In March, houses including the mosque were unroofed at Taindukum, Mabala, Rokoreh and Roforoad, all located in the lower part of Maforki Chiefdom. Similar operations were undertaken in April and June. During this period, there appears to have been no further theft, burning or killing.

Between 18 and 29 May, UNAMSIL opened a disarmament camp at Kabatha Junction near Port Loko.[544] On 14 June, disarmament commenced in Lunsar. On 10 August, UNAMSIL, the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone issued a joint communiqué stating that disarmament was completed in throughout Port Loko District.[545]

Nevertheless, as disarmament proceeded, there were a number of violent incidents. In May 2001, a group of over 200 well-armed RUF fighters with vehicles seized from UNAMSIL peacekeepers at Makeni fought with the Gbethis (CDF) at Roctolon (TMS Chiefdom), killing some civilians and some Gbethis. The RUF forces then passed through Patifu, where they killed one man, and through Maron, where they stole civilian property before returning to Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District). In June 2001, RUF forces entered to Rosar and Maron, moving through Kagbantama (BKM Chiefdom). At Maron (TMS Chiefdom), they captured women, who were later raped, and went to Lunsar. On 21 October 2001, RUF members coming from the Lunsar area attacked the village of Maron in Safroko Section (TMS). This is the final recorded event of the conflict in Port Loko District.

h) The "West Side Boys": Okra Hills, Maforki and Koya Chiefdoms, 1998-2000

The Okra Hills is a densely forested geographical area between Makambisa and Gberibana in the lower part of Maforki Chiefdom, crossing southwards over the Rokel Creek into Koya Chiefdom towards the township of Magbeni and onto the stretch of highway between Mile 38 and Masiaka. Between 15 October 1998 and mid-2001, this area was subjected to patterns of attacks by an RUF/AFRC splinter group comprising mainly ex-SLA AFRC members. The forces involved from 1998 onwards share a common thread of leadership and following the RUF/AFRC general retreat from Freetown, they re-branded themselves the "West Side Boys", although there was no substantive change in their composition. Accordingly, the group shall be referred to as the West Side Boys throughout this section.

Between 15 October and 29 December 1998, the West Side Boys attacked over 30 villages in the geographical area between Gberibana and Makambisa in the lower part of Maforki Chiefdom, bordered by the Rokel Creek to the south.[546] There is little to distinguish any of these attacks from

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543 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 23 March 2001

544 UNAMSIL Press Release, 29 May 2001

545 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 14 August 2001

546 The following villages were attacked on the following days: Gberebana, Rofurawa, Gbontho-Yama on 15 October; Mabala, Magbenthen, Rokoreh and Mapolie on 17, 21, 27 and 31 October respectively; Mamiekanuh, Robis, Kalukeh, Robala on or around 3 November; Rofindu and Roseinti on 7 November; Masawrie on 10 November; Gbonkomayer and Mathule on 15 November; Pethunr on 29 November; Rokoith and Robemeh on 1

one another. The attacks were all launched from camps near Foredugu and Magbeni (both Koya Chiefdom), in the dense jungle and bush of the Okra Hills area, adjacent to the stretch of the main highway running between Mile 38 and Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom). Following these attacks, the West Side Boys forces did not remain in the villages. Throughout, the West Side Boys were directed by one of only three commanding officers and no settlement was attacked twice during this period. The settlements were undefended by SLA, ECOMOG or CDF forces, yet the West Side Boys commenced each attack by laying down heavy machine gun fire into the village. Routinely, the West Side Boys inflicted serious damage on civilian residences and stole substantial amounts of personal property, livestock and food items from civilians. The West Side Boys forces killed a total of 16 people in 33 attacks, with two instances where civilians were killed by hanging. Members of the West Side Boys raped over 20 civilian women. In total, around 80 civilians, the vast majority being male, were abducted during the series of attacks.

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It is not possible to say that the West Side Boys did not fall under the command of the RUF/AFRC. However, the overall pattern of RUF/AFRC activity in Port Loko District between 15 October and 29 December 1998 suggests that the actions of the West Side Boys were only loosely connected with the RUF/AFRC's overall strategy. RUF/AFRC activity in other areas of Port Loko District was focussed on pressurising Port Loko Town and Ro-Gberray Junction (both Maforki Chiefdom), in preparation for the unsuspected RUF/AFRC breakout from Kono in December 1998 and the eventual invasion of the Western Area in early January 1999. As of September 1998, the RUF/AFRC forces occupied Mange Town (BKM Chiefdom), to the north of Port Loko Town, and controlled Sanda Magbolontor Chiefdom, with access to the highway from Sendugu through Gbinti and Kamasundo (both Dibia Chiefdom) to Foredugu. By September 1998, RUF/AFRC attacked the key junction at Ro-Gberray (Maforki), intermittently cutting off Port Loko from road traffic from the capital. In early December, RUF/AFRC forces pushed south into Koya Chiefdom, attacking Masiaka and Magbontoso, a village further west along the highway, near Mile 38; AFRC forces again attacked Masiaka between 14 and 16 December. The West Side Boys do not appear to have taken part in these initial assaults, although they did have a presence in Masiaka until March 1999.

On 21 and 22 December, RUF/AFRC forces bypassed Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) and attacked the towns of Songo (Koya RD, Western Area) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area). Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom) was occupied by RUF/AFRC forces following ECOMOG's retreat on 26 December. Between 28 and 30 December 1998, very large numbers of heavily-armed RUF/AFRC forces converged on Ro-Gberray Junction (Maforki Chiefdom), midway between Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) and Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom). On 30 December, Nigerian ECOMOG retreated in full from Lunsar, leaving the town in the hands of the RUF/AFRC forces.[547] On 30 December, RUF/AFRC forces assaulted Port Loko Town. Again, the principal officers of the West Side Boys are not implicated directly in these attacks.

In the Okra Hills area itself, on 30 December, the dense pattern of hit-and-run attacks that had characterised the presence of the West Side Boys in late 1998 ceased entirely. After 22 December 1998, principal officers of the West Side Boys are identified as having taken part in attacks on

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December; Rokonther, Robamblaie and Tiama on 7 December ;Magbangbara, Madora, Masebeh, Makeleh and Masemur on 13 December; and Magbontho, Madegbar and Robarreh on 29 December.

[547] BBC and AFP, 30 December 1998.

Waterloo, Hastings, Joe Town and Tombo (all Waterloo RD, Western Area) during the preliminary RUF/AFRC advance into the Western Area. It is not possible to confirm whether the West Side Boys also took part in the 6 January 1999 RUF/AFRC assault in Freetown.

By 20 January 1999, ECOMOG had regained control of the bulk of the Freetown metropolitan area, and by 25 February had driven RUF/AFRC forces from Waterloo (Waterloo RD, Western Area) After 25 January, RUF/AFRC and West Side Boys forces occupying Masiaka were under pressure from the CDF. Although the RUF/AFRC would not be pushed out of Masiaka until 29 April, the West Side Boys left the town on 15 March 1999.

In March, the West Side Boys attacked and captured the village of Magbeni and established a camp there. On 7 March, a week before their withdrawal from Masiaka, the West Side Boys attacked Gberibana and resumed their intense hit-and-run attacks in lower Maforki Chiefdom. From Magbeni, they made frequent attacks on traffic on civilian traffic between Mile 38 and Masiaka.

On 9 March, West Side Boys attacked Rufura; two days later, they attacked Magbangbara, and engaged Gbethis (CDF) defending the village, killing four of them. The West Side Boys[548] attacked Masuba, south of Rokel Creek on 15 March 1999. Civilians fled to the nearby bushes and villages, but over 10 inhabitants were killed, including three children who drowned in the Rokel River while trying to escape. The West Side Boys harassed civilians who had fled to the bush, beat them and took their property. Civilians who were captured were forced to carry the loads to the West Side Boys' base. One man was told to have sex with his mother and when he refused, he was shot dead. In Masuba, the 56 houses of the village were burnt down. On the same day, West Side Boys attacked Laminaya and Romaforay. On 25 March, they attacked Romaforama and Mabassy.

In April 1999, around 20 civilians were killed publicly at their base in Gberibana in reprisal for an earlier CDF attack on a West Side Boys patrol at Magbanbara, which had left five members of the West Side Boys dead. In the forest nearby their base, there was a specific place where the West Side Boys would kill abductees, especially those who did not follow their orders. Some captured civilians also had the words "West Side Boys" inscribed on their backs. That same month, an attack took place at Maghailma[549] in the late afternoon, during which 16 people were killed. The following day, they locked 73 people they had abducted from surrounding villages in a house, which they then set on fire.

In the evening of 17 May 1999, the West Side Boys fired on an ECOMOG vehicle patrolling the Mile 38–Masiaka highway. ECOMOG forces exchanged fire with the West Side Boys for about 2 hours until they ran out of ammunition and returned to Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom). Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire that entered into force on 24 May.

As peace talks continued in June 1999, a large number of civilians were burnt alive in their houses at Man'arrmah by the West Side Boys. Other villages attacked in June and July include Mathera, Rothuidekum, Makambisa, Makorobolie, Kasankor, Mekensebeh and Rotaindekun. At Mabonie on

[548] Some were dressed in military uniforms while others were dressed in civilian attire.
[549] The month is not specified, but this happened after the attack on Masimera Town in December 1998.

20 July 1999, the West Side Boys burnt down the entire village, raped girls, killed around 10 people and took food items. The peace talks led to the signing of the Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (the Lomé Peace Agreement).[550]

On 4 August 1999, the West Side Boys kidnapped a group of around 40 UNOMSIL, ECOMOG and civil society workers who had entered the Okra Hills area to negotiate the release of some 200 children being held by the West Side Boys. The group included the Bishop of Makeni and five UK officers serving as military observers in UNOMSIL.[551] The kidnap met with immediate condemnation from the United Nations Secretary-General[552] and a UK-led negotiation team was dispatched to Sierra Leone. Around half of the hostages were released on 9 August and the remainder released the following day; around 200 women and children were also released.[553] The group reportedly said to negotiators that they were loyal to the AFRC, comprised of primarily ex-SLA and their key demand was the release from RUF custody of the AFRC leader. They did not refer to themselves as the "West Side Boys". A foreign journalist told the BBC that there were no RUF members present.[554]

Aside from this kidnapping, few attacks are noted between mid-July and December 1999. This corresponds with a sharp drop in the general levels of violence throughout Port Loko District. Additionally, disarmament centres had opened in Port Loko and Lungi. On 15 July 1999 the West Side Boys attacked Mekensebeh village and killed a civilian by hanging her. On the same day, they attacked Rotaindekun, killing four men and raping four girls. On 7 November 1999 they attacked Royabah and Marikor. One month later, the West Side Boys attacked Gbereh Thuraka, Mapoyen and Ropoyen, stealing civilian property, livestock and food items. Most of the civilians fled towards Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom) and sought refuge in an IDP camp. Although attacks on villages became less frequent, the West Side Boys mounted many checkpoints along the main highway between Mile 28 and Masiaka, attacking both civilian and military traffic. Between 7 December and May 2000 there are no reported incidents of attacks on villages in the Okra Hills area.

Following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a larger peacekeeping mission, the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), which replaced UNOMSIL. In May 2000, the RUF took hostage over 200 UNAMSIL soldiers at Foredugu, prompting a serious challenge to the peace process. The RUF again moved on Masiaka and Port Loko Town, failing to take control of either town. Between 1 and 21 June 2000, the West Side Boys fought alongside the SLA in (unsuccessfully) defending Lunsar from the RUF attack.[555]

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[550] The full text is available at http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierra_leone_07071999_toc.html.
[551] BBC Online News, 5 August 1999 (23:12 GMT 00:12 UK).
[552] UN Press Release, 5 August 1999, SG/SM/7089, AFR/162.
[553] IRIN West Africa, 10 August 1999, quoting the Sierra Leone Information Minister.
[554] BBC Online News, 6 August 1999 (07:23 GMT 08:23 UK).
[555] OCHA Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 16-25 Jun 2000.

On or around 9 July 2000, State radio broadcast a message from the Government of Sierra Leone issuing an ultimatum to the West Side Boys to disarm to UNAMSIL by 16.00 on 11 July.[556] UNAMSIL military observers entered into negotiations with the West Side Boys to facilitate disarmament. However, on 11 July, UNAMSIL military observers in Masiaka reported that no West Side Boys had disarmed;[557] nine days later the situation still remained the same.[558] Before dawn on 22 July 2000, UNAMSIL carried out "Operation Thunderbolt". This operation, which focused on the Okra Hills area,[559] successfully cleared the roadblocks mounted by the West Side Boys on the main highways between Freetown and Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom). UNAMSIL strengthened patrols along the highways through the Okra Hills following "Operation Thunderbolt". After this operation, UNAMSIL reported that 40 West Side Boys had surrendered to the UNAMSIL Jordanian contingent for disarmament, bringing the total number of West Side Boys in the DDR program to 80.[560] By 9 August, around 200 had joined the DDR program.[561] Nevertheless, vehicle hijackings and attacks on civilians along the Mile 38–Masiaka highway continued throughout this period.

Sporadic attacks in the Okra Hills area continued into 2000. Although the pattern follows the same formulaic style of attacks adopted by the West Side Boys in 1998, it is not certain that the West Side Boys carried out these attacks. At Masoka in June 2000, armed men in combat uniform and civilian dress entered the town firing their weapons, took palm oil and rice and burnt down three houses. At Matheperr, in the early morning, armed men killed one man, burnt two houses and moved around noon to Rothyah, where they burnt down three houses, captured two boys and took property. At Magbamgbara, armed men burnt down five houses but met SLA forces and five of the armed attackers were killed. On 7 July 2000, armed men attacked three villages, burning two houses at Robis; capturing two men and burning five houses at Ro-Mafomara; and burning seven houses at Rogbath. In August 2000, armed men attacked Magbembeh, burning down four houses and capturing three women. At Brebana, three houses were burnt, property was taken and one pregnant woman killed.

On 27 August 2000, the West Side Boys captured 11 soldiers from the UK Royal Irish Regiment engaged with the Short Term Training Team near Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and an SLA liaison officer. The patrol had taken an unauthorised deviation to visit Magbeni.[562] On 29 August, a senior UK officer met with the leader of the West Side Boys, as a result of which the West Side Boys released five of the captives two days later. The leader of the West Side Boys called the BBC on a satellite phone and demanded their reintegration in the government army, the release of their supporters from jail and a review of the Lomé Peace Agreement; all these demands were immediately rejected by the Government of Sierra Leone.[563] On 6 September, the UK deployed paratroops from 1st Battalion of the Parachute Regiment.

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556 IRIN West Africa, 10 July 2000.
557 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 11 July 2000.
558 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 20 July 2000.
559 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 24 July 2000.
560 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 28 July 2000.
561 Numbers taken from interceding UNAMSIL Press Briefings.
562 Information revealed by a Ministry of Defence inquiry into the events: see BBC Online News, 14 September 2000 (20:45 GMT 21:45 UK).
563 BBC Online News, 31 August 2000 (19:59 GMT 20:59 UK)

At dawn on 25 September, UK Special Forces and Paratroops executed "Operation Barrass". Arriving by helicopter gunships and transport, they attacked the West Side Boys' camps at Gberibana (Maforki Chiefdom) and Magbeni, on either side of the Rokel Creek, rescuing the remaining hostages, killing 25 West Side Boys and incurring one fatality.[564] The UK forces captured 18 West Side Boys, including the majority of the group's leadership. Over 30 West Side Boys who had abducted around 15 civilians to use as human shields were captured by Jordanian UNAMSIL.[565] The town of Magbeni was deserted for three weeks because of the smell of human remains found in the surrounding bush.

Following "Operation Barrass" the total number and rate of entry of West Side Boys into the DDR program increased. By 15 September, UNAMSIL had registered 294 members of the West Side Boys at the DDR camp in Lungi. By 20 September, this figure had reached 371.

During 2001, attacks in the Okra Hills area were primarily made by demobilised former members of every faction looking for items to sell. Between 10 February and 11 June 2001, demobilised West Side Boys stole the corrugated zinc roofing from civilian residences in numerous villages.[566] No further attacks by the West Side Boy are reported.

3. Conclusion

** TO BE DRAFTED ON COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS FOR THE NORTHERN PROVINCE**

e. Tonkolili District

1. Introduction

Tonkolili is one of the five Districts of the Northern Province, together with Bombali, Koinadugu, Port Loko and Kambia Districts. It is bordered on the north and east by Koinadugu District and on the south-east by Kono District. Kenema, Bo and Moyamba Districts compose its southern border, from east to west. To the north-west is Port Loko District and to the north is Bombali District. Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom) is its headquarter town.

There are 11 chiefdoms in Tonkolili District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Gbokolenken	Yele
Kafe Simira	Mabonto
Kalansogoia	Bumbuna
Kholifa Mabang	Mabang
Kholifa Rowalla	Magburaka
Konike Barina	Makali
Konike Sanda	Masingbi
Malal Mara	Rochin

564 BBC Online News, 10 September 2000 (20:51 GMT 21:51 UK)

565 UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 11 September 2000

566 In sequence, these are: Rogbath, Robis, Masokor, Mathera, Rothhdekum, Makambisa, Babara, Taindenkum, Rokoreh, Roforoad, Roseitn, Masawuri, Robala, Roseint, Gbpothoyama, Mapolie, Thekeyeh, Makoyeh, Matikor, Laminaya, Robouloh, Mayefura and Mamiekanuh.

Sambaia Bendugu	Bendugu
Tane	Matotaka
Yoni	Yonibana

Its central position in the country would lead Tonkolili District to be affected by the conflict both from the Southern and Northern Districts. The main Sierra Leonean highway linking Freetown to Kono runs for a large part through Tonkolili District. An other major road, which runs through Tonkolili District link Freetown to Bo District and beyond, Kenema District. Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom), Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom), Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom) and Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom), all located on the main highway are the main towns of the District and their control would be a steady objective for the different fighting factions throughout the country.

Two major hilly areas are to be found in the District. Malal Mara Hills referred as Kaitkant Hills in the north-east of the country, at the border with Port Loko District and Kangari Hills in the south of the District, bordering Bo District. Those two areas are located at strategic positions, as they allow control of a wide region covering different Districts.

Tonkolili District is a gold mining area and gold can be found in almost every chiefdom, except Malal Mara, Kholifa Mabang and Yoni Chiefdoms in the south of the District.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1993

Following the continuous influx of civilians fleeing the fighting in Kono District, civilians in Tonkolili District considered forming civilian militias in the chiefdoms. Their purpose would be to increase security in the chiefdoms by monitoring the movement of people.

In July 1993, the Paramount Chief of Kalansogoia Chiefdom[567] organised a meeting of five elders from each of the 62 villages in the chiefdom. During this meeting, it was agreed to form a youth group in each village. This group would establish simple checkpoints across roads using a bush-stick gate, patrolling day and night to screen people coming into the villages. This was aimed at preventing RUF forces from infiltrating the chiefdom, at least from the main roads.

In September 1993, the youths who were organised in this way were officially called Civil Defence Units (CDU). The units, armed only with cutlasses and sticks, were answerable to the Paramount Chief and would refer cases where they were unwilling to let a traveller past a checkpoint to the Town Chief. Strict rules applied in the villages concerning the lodging of strangers. Anybody who lodged an outsider without referring first to the Town Chief was fined Le 10,000. This money was used to buy basic equipment like torches and batteries for the CDUs.

b) Events in 1994

Throughout 1994, RUF forces pushed west along the main road from Kono to the towns of Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom) and Makeni (Bombali District). Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom) was the watershed of RUF attacks on this town in April and May. However, the RUF made the

[567] Kalansogoia Chiefdom is to be found in the north of Tonkolili District, sharing border with Koinadugu District on the east and north and Bombali District on the west. Bumbuna, surrounded by hills, is the headquarter town.

highway severely hazardous for traffic due to the continuous ambushing of civilian travellers and convoys and likely began establishing a foothold in the Kangari Hills at this time.[568] Between October and December, RUF forces pushed further west, establishing a brigade headquarter in the Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara Chiefdom), from where they assaulted the strategic towns of Mile 91 and Yonibana. From this location, the RUF pushed into the Western Area and Port Loko in 1995. Tensions between civilians and the SLA were exacerbated by the formation of Civil Defence Units in the District as well as the stealing of civilian property, the looting of civilian premises and the extortion of money and property at checkpoints by the SLA, reportedly due to poor discipline.

In February 1994, news of an attack on Bendugu (the headquarter town of Sambaia Bendugu Chiefdom) reached the headquarter town of Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom).[569] In March 1994, RUF forces were spotted in the bush of Konike Barina Chiefdom. On or after 25 March, two miners arrived in the headquarter town of Makali and related that while they were at Mondema, RUF forces had come out of the bush and stolen their bailing machine[570] before returning to the bush.

People fleeing from Masingbi, the headquarter town of Konike Sanda Chiefdom (sharing a border on the west with Konike Barina Chiefdom and on the east with Kono District) reached Makali on 1 April 1994 with the news that Masingbi had been attacked. Many residents of Makali fled into the surrounding bush. Two days later, on 3 April, 200 members of the SLA from Makeni (the headquarter town of Bombali District) arrived in Makali, encouraging people to come out of the bush. They requested inhabitants to assist them by cooking and providing them with Le 100,000 to buy food from Magburaka.

On 9 April, RUF forces launched an attack on Makali from the direction of Makong, on the edge of the Kangari Hills, south-west of Makali. Earlier in the day, SLA forces had split into four groups and moved into the bush surrounding Makali, but were unable to repel the RUF attack. During the attack, a substantial part of the town was burnt down. Civilians returning to the town following the attack found many bodies in the town, including that of a policeman and a driver. On 11 April, 60 SLA forces moved from Makeni to secure Makali.

SLA forces arrived by helicopter in April at the SDA Primary School playfield in the headquarter town of Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom), in the centre of the District on the highway that leads directly to Kono.[571] Shortly after their arrival, the SLA forces moved out of the town to an unknown location. On 12 and 13 April, many civilians fleeing from Masingbi and Makali reached Matotoka, together with some SLA forces who were fleeing Makali. On 14 April, many of the residents of Matotoka left the town, which prompted the Paramount Chief and government officers to travel to Kabala (Koinadugu District) to request that local hunters from the north (known as Tamaboros[572])

[568] The Kangari Hills are located in the south of Tonkolili District across two chiefdoms and expand in the north of Bo District. The base was probably established in Konike Barina Chiefdom.
[569] To the north-east of Tonkolili, bordering Koinadugu District.
[570] A device used to pump water from pits during excavation for minerals.
[571] Thus, from Magburaka, to go to Kono on the highway, vehicles passed trough Matotoka (Tane), then Makali (Konike Barina Chiefdom) and then through Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom) before reaching Kono District.
[572] In early 1994, the Tamaboros who had been assisting the SLA in Kono District since 1993 went back to their District of origin, Koinadugu District. Those Tamaboros were believed to have very strong mystical powers.



provide security for the chiefdom. An unknown number of Tamaboros settled in the headquarter town on 3 May 1994, provided with machine guns and Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs) from the Ministry of Defence.

After 20 May 1994, 175 civilians from Mamurie and Makong villages gathered at Rowaka (Konike Barina Chiefdom). They intended to hunt for food at Rosimbec,[573] in the Mamure Section of Konike Barina Chiefdom, in the forested area 5 km south-west of Makali. The SLA commander at Makali had warned them that civilians should avoid this forest area, since RUF forces were suspected to be there; the earlier attack on Makali had come from this direction. As they approached Rosimbec, the civilians, some of whom were armed with cutlasses, met men in uniform whom they believed to be SLA forces. Although the armed men told the civilians they were SLA forces here to escort the group to Rosimbec, they turned out to be members of the RUF. They told the civilians to drop their cutlasses and go into some houses, which they then locked. The RUF forces killed all 170 captured civilians one after the other, stacking some of the bodies like bundles of wood and dumping others in a ditch. The bodies were later discovered by an SLA patrol sent to look for the missing civilians.

Makali was attacked for the second time in May 1994. After an intense gun battle, SLA forces drove away the RUF forces, with no reported casualties. On 3 June 1994, RUF forces attacked Mapakie, which is located near Matotoka. Tamaboros moved there to engage RUF forces. In the bush, they encountered men in military uniforms but did not attack them, believing them to be SLA personnel. On 11 July, an unknown number of RUF forces in full military dress attacked Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom). SLA and Tamaboro forces drove the RUF from the town, killing a female RUF member during the attack. After a short time and a quarrel with SLA forces about the weapons that the Government had provided them, the Tamaboros left the chiefdom.

The highway linking Koidu (Kono District) to Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom), passing through Konike Sanda, Konike Barina, Tane and Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdoms, was the scene of many ambushes during the conflict. For example, in mid-June 1994, a convoy of about 125 trucks left Magburaka and took the highway through Makaku to Kono. They were escorted by an SLA armoured vehicle and an unknown number of SLA members dispersed through the vehicles comprising the convoy. After 5:30 pm, as the convoy passed through Mamuri (Tane Chiefdom) and approached Rowaka (Konike Barina Chiefdom), it fell into an ambush, with RUF forces firing heavily on the convoy. The trucks attempted to turn back, but instead crashed into each other. Some people jumped out from the trucks. Many people were killed during that ambush, including the driver of a truck and two female passengers. The RUF forces ordered them out of the truck; two boys who tried to escape were shot and died. Passengers were asked to form a line and were searched for anything of value. Ten trucks were destroyed, although most were simply searched and luggage and other items were taken. A one month-old baby was taken from its mother and thrown into the bush because an RUF member said he was making too much noise. One man who had been wounded in the attack started crying for help. One of the RUF members offered assistance, but instead shot him three times. Passengers were then captured and told to carry the load the RUF forces had gathered from the vehicles back to Rosimbec, where 170 civilians had been killed one month earlier.

[573] Also called Simbek.

On the initiative of the elders of the chiefdoms of Yoni and Kholifa Mabang, a 1000-strong Civil Defence Unit composed of youths was formed in June 1994. Members of the Poro, Bundo, Ojeh and Koffo secret societies were involved in setting up these CDUs. The same principles as those applied in Kalansogoia Chiefdom were employed: CDUs would control the main roads through the chiefdoms and check the identity of the people passing through. They conducted house-to-house searches at night, screening residences for strangers and levying a Le 20,000 fine on the house if they discovered someone who had not been reported to the town authorities. If CDU personnel had any concerns about a traveller, they would refer the matter to the town elders, who could order further screening by the SLP. The person would be escorted to the Police Station at Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom). CDUs were based in the areas immediately surrounding the towns of Mile 91 and Yonibana, but patrolled the smaller villages in the two chiefdoms.

In 1994, mistrust between civilians and SLA forces deployed to protect the chiefdoms came to a head. This mistrust was due to two beliefs widely held by the public. First, that some SLA forces at this time had defected from the army and joined the RUF. Second, that RUF forces in military fatigues often pretended to be SLA forces in order to attack villages by surprise. One incident that occurred in late June 1994 highlights the negative attitude civilians had towards the SLA forces at this time. Armed men claiming to be SLA were arrested by members of the CDU at Kumrabai Matuku (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) and brought to the Mile 91 Police Station for interrogation. Interrogators concluded that these armed men were genuine SLA members from Bo, which was reportedly confirmed by the SLA commander officer in Bo Town. The two SLA members remained in the chiefdom and installed two checkpoints at Mile 91, one on the road leading to Bo and the other on the road leading to Magburaka. Reports suggest that this was the sole SLA presence in Mile 91 until July.

A week later, in July 1994, two trucks loaded with SLA forces arrived in Mile 91 from Bo Town. After visiting the Paramount Chief at the nearby chiefdom headquarter of Yonibana, they returned to Mile 91. There, they reinforced the checkpoints established and operated by their colleagues. Nevertheless, the arrival of the SLA forces in Yonibana frightened some of the inhabitants of the town, who fled to the south of the chiefdom. At the checkpoints, SLA members started to take civilian property. In August 1994, the SLA commander came from Bo to try to resolve the matter. It was agreed with the elders that the community would feed the soldiers, with each household at Mile 91 giving the SLA forces Le 500 and two cups of rice per week.

In August 1994,[574] armed men dressed in camouflage and country clothes decorated with charms and talismans and who identified themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to redeem the country, attacked Yele from a southern direction. Yele is in the south of Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, near the border with Valunia Chiefdom (Bo District) and Kamajei Chiefdom (Moyamba District). At the time of the attack, internally displaced persons (IDPs) were living in the area. The few SLA forces who were in the town at the time pulled out, overpowered and outnumbered. The RUF forces burnt the hospital and abducted young boys.

[574] Although this information was reported as taking place in 1993, it is likely that it happened in 1994, since RUF forces were pushed back to the Liberian border around the middle of 1993 and the description of the attack coincides with an attack reported in open sources in August 1994: AFP, 29 August 1994.

During the final days of October 1994, RUF forces[575] attacked the headquarter town of Mabonto (Kafe Simira Chiefdom, to the north of the District). During this attack many houses were destroyed, property was stolen and one member of a CDU was killed. They spent the night in the town before heading north-east to the headquarter town of Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom). Bumbuna was attacked in the late morning on 1 November 1994 by hundreds of armed men. As civilians escaped into the surrounding bush, the RUF spent the whole day burning and looting the town. Returning from the bush, civilians counted 193 houses burnt and found the bodies of four civilians.

On 2 November 1994, SLA forces deployed from Teko Barracks in Makeni (Makani Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and repelled the RUF forces from Bumbuna. RUF forces moved east towards Sambaia Bendugu Chiefdom, abducting civilians to carry the property looted from the town. The following day, RUF forces entered Sangonie, a village located four and a half miles from Bumbuna, with 15 people they had abducted from Bumbuna. They then passed by Kegbema Junction, where they captured more civilians. This large RUF force headed to Koinadugu District and attacked towns along the route to the District headquarter town of Kabala on 7 November 1994.

The RUF launched another wave of attacks in Yoni, Kholifa Mabang and Malal Mara Chiefdoms,[576] to the west of the District in December 1994. Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom) is a strategic location on an intersection between the roads going to Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District), Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom) and Taiama (Kori Chiefdom, Moyamba District).

On 22 December 1994, rumours reached civilians in Yoni Chiefdom that RUF forces had crossed the Yele River.[577] Early in the morning of the following day, 23 December, armed men in military camouflage uniforms and others in black t-shirts with red headbands entered Mafolatha (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom, near the boundary with Yoni Chiefdom). The armed men gathered the inhabitants in the Court Barrie, introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" and said that they were on their way to attack Mile 91. The commander of the groups also said that if they were to encounter resistance in Mile 91, they would return to Mafolatha.

In the morning of 23 December 1994, this RUF group attacked Mile 91 along the main roads from Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom) and Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District). RUF forces killed three civilians and burnt down eight houses during the attack on Mile 91; they initially captured the town, but were displaced shortly afterwards when SLA forces regrouped and counter-attacked. Driven from Mile 91, RUF forces left the town in a northerly direction towards Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom, which is to the north-east of Yoni Chiefdom. SLA forces also moved out of the town, after kicking in the doors of many civilian residences and stealing civilian property. Shortly after this attack, other SLA forces coming from Bo Town[578] were deployed at Mile 91.

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[575] These forces were dressed mainly in mixed casual attire, although some wore full military uniforms.
[576] Yoni and Malal Mara Chiefdoms share a boundary with Port Loko District.
[577] Yele River is probably the name given to the river that flows south of Yele Town, in the south of Gbokolenken Chiefdom, which shares a boundary with Moyamba and Bo Districts.
[578] An SLA Brigade was deployed in Bo Town.



The RUF forces moved back to Mafolatha with the stolen property and the civilians they had captured at Mile 91. On 26 and 27 December 1994, the RUF group settled at Makelleh, three miles from Mafolatha in Yoni Chiefdom. Before leaving the town, they burnt down around 100 houses and abducted an unknown number of young men, women and children. On 27 December 1994, some houses were also burnt at Mafolatha.

On their way to their base at Kaitkant Hills (Malal Mara Chiefdom), RUF forces entered many villages, burning, looting and raping. On 28 December, 16 houses were burnt and property was taken in Mabariwa, three miles east of Mafolatha. On the same day, Marokie village was attacked; 14 houses burnt down and property, including livestock, was taken. They stayed for two days (28 and 29 December) at nearby Rochain, where multiple RUF members raped three young mothers in the front of the village inhabitants, who they had gathered at the Court Barrie. Before leaving, RUF forces burnt down 30 houses, stole property and abducted an unknown number of people to carry their loads. In addition, an unknown number of young boys and girls all below the age of 18 were abducted to be trained as fighters.

During the final days of December, RUF forces launched an attack on Rokanrr (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), in the north of the chiefdom near Malal Mara Chiefdom. The RUF commander told the people that they should show them the way to go to Kaitkant Hills, as it was the first time they were using that road. In Rokanrr, RUF forces tied a village elder to a tree and shot him in the head for having questioned the commander about what kind of contribution the farmers of the village could give to the revolution, given they were not combatants but merely farmers. Before leaving the village, RUF forces burnt eight houses and abducted six people. On their way to the Kaitkant Hills base, the RUF forces killed eight captives who had protested that the loads on their heads were too heavy to bear.

The small Malal Mara Chiefdom is comprised mainly of woodland. The Rokel River, coming from Port Loko District, bisects the chiefdom north to south. The Kaitkant Hills are located in the west of the chiefdom at the boundary with Marampa Chiefdom (Port Loko District). The Kaitkant Hills are a strategic location, surrounded by thick forest, from which Port Loko, Bombali and Tonkolili Districts can be easily reached. Following the attack on Mile 91 and the influx of fleeing people coming from Yoni and Kholifa Mabang Chiefdoms, tension increased in Malal Mara Chiefdom. The Paramount Chief sent messages to the eight sections of the chiefdom for the youths to organise themselves.

During the last days of December and following their attack on Mile 91, RUF forces dispersed and attacked many villages in the different sections of Malal Mara Chiefdom. On 27 December 1994, four armed men entered Ropollon village, followed shortly after by a large group of armed men accompanied by children and women. Inhabitants were chased from their homes, as a result of which most of them fled to the bush. Those who were found in the village were instantly killed. An unknown number of young men coming from Rochin (Malal Mara Chiefdom) were confined in a house and beaten to death by RUF members with clubs, machetes and sticks. When they returned from the bush, civilians discovered bodies bearing wounds inflicted by bladed weapons. Most of the dead were identified as displaced persons from Mile 91. Civilians buried 19 bodies in a mass grave at the side of the Islamic prayer ground. Two other people were buried in single graves.



In the evening of 27 December, RUF forces reached the headquarter town of Rochin (Malal Mara Chiefdom). After gathering inhabitants at the Court Barrie, RUF forces killed an unknown number of them with bladed weapons. On 29 December 1994, seven civilians from Rokimbie (located in the northwest of the chiefdom, within the Kaitkant Hills), including a pregnant woman, were taken to Rochin and locked in a room. While in the room, the captured civilians could hear the forces debating on whether they should be killed. They opened the room and asked the captives to go out one after another, attacking them with cutlasses; only one person survived. RUF forces visited Ropollon village again on 30 December 1994 and 2 and 4 January 1995, burning houses on each visit. During their final visit, on 4 January 1995, RUF forces told people to vacate the chiefdom, as the RUF were now "the owners" of it. On hearing this, many people left the area.

c) Events in 1995

In the first months of 1995, Malal Mara Chiefdom, especially Matanka Section in the west of the chiefdom within the Kaitkant Hills area, continued to suffer attacks from RUF forces coming from their base at Kaitkant Hills. This base was said to be the 3rd Brigade camp of the RUF and was used to control the Freetown–Bo highway, to cut off the supply of food and other items to the routes leading to the three Provinces and to spread into Port Loko District. The hills were also used to store the property that RUF forces took from villages and during ambushes.

In January 1995, RUF forces attacked many villages in Matanka Section, killing many people and un-roofing houses for the zinc before burning them down. At Robina, RUF forces killed many civilians, who were then buried in a mass grave in the backyard of a civilian's house. Because many civilians decided to reside permanently in the bush, rather than return to their villages, RUF forces started trailing them in the bush. Those captured were used as forced labour, either to construct houses or as porters.

In February 1995 RUF forces based at the Kaitkant Hills again assaulted Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom. On 2 February 1995, in the late evening, RUF forces entered Mafolatha. The RUF commander told the gathered inhabitants that they had come to conscript young people to the "armed struggle". The following day, multiple RUF members raped two young mothers and a member of a Small Boy Unit raped another girl under 18. Thirty people were abducted and conscripted into the RUF. Inscriptions were carved onto their bodies with razor blades, or they were branded with hot irons.

Relations were deteriorating between the SLA forces and the residents of Mile 91 and Yonibana. SLA members, who had been deployed to Mile 91 in January 1995 to replace those who were moved to Ma-Sesay village on the main Freetown–Mile 91 highway, were operating the checkpoints; these checkpoints were opened to traffic entering and leaving the town only once a day, at 8:00 am. Civilians were used by the SLA forces to find food in the surrounding villages. During the night, it was common practice for SLA forces to break into civilian houses to find food. Civilians were also sometimes used to carry the food to Mile 91 for the SLA forces. This harassment was concentrated across February and March, which is the main harvest time for rice, groundnuts and maize.

Another RUF unit entered Gbagbai, near Mafolatha (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) on 2 February 1995. RUF forces shot one man in the head and two people had two of their fingers amputated.



They raped four women and abducted between 25 and 30 young people below the age of 18 to carry stolen property and livestock. RUF forces then headed for Masiprr (Yoni Chiefdom), where they stayed until 4 February. Seventeen houses belonging to civilians who were "insufficiently supportive" of the RUF were burnt. Five women were raped and many children under 18 were abducted for conscription into the RUF. The headman of the village was stripped naked and was given 24 lashes; on-looking children were told to clap. Before they left, RUF forces took cattle from the town, after which they left to go towards Malal Mara Chiefdom.

In March 1995, RUF forces crossed the Rokel River and entered Magbondo, north of Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom. Magbondo was very difficult for people to leave, because it is located near the river and is a swamp area. The RUF commander addressed the gathered inhabitants and told them they had information that SLA forces had planned to attack them at Kaitkant Hills and to use Magbondo as a launching point. Consequently, a group of RUF forces would now be stationed at Magbondo while the rest of the forces would head for Mile 91. Before leaving, three houses were burnt, six girls below 15 were abducted to be conscripted and one was raped. The headman was deposed and one of the RUF commanding officers was appointed as Town Chief. Two days later, the RUF commander returned with a new group of RUF forces. Shortly after, he went to Rokankrr, south of Magbondo, both to prepare an offensive on Mile 91 and to intercept SLA forces said to be heading there in preparation for an attack on the Kaitkant Hills.

RUF forces attacked Mile 91 between 15 and 28 March, taking property and abducting civilians to carry the load to their Kaitkant base. There are no reports of killings or destruction of property at this time.[579] After the attack on Mile 91, SLA forces withdrew from the town to an unknown location, leaving the town undefended. It is also likely that the CDUs in Mile 91 and Yonibana were disbanded in March 1995 because they had proved ineffective in increasing security in the area. However, in April 1995, SLA forces were again stationed at Camp Charlie in the outskirts of Mile 91.

Between 13[580] and 20 March 1995, four military trucks loaded with SLA forces came to Matanka Section (Malal Mara Chiefdom) to dislodge RUF forces from Kaitkant Hills.[581] After a first unsuccessful attempt the RUF forces evacuated the base in the last week of March following heavy bombardments from a helicopter and a Guinean military jet. Those forces scattered in lower Yoni Chiefdom, where they began attacking villages. During these attacks, property was taken and people were captured to carry the loads, but no civilians were killed. RUF forces then moved into the thick forest in lower Yoni Chiefdom, at the boundary with Moyamba District.[582]

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[579] At the time of the attack, SLA forces were still deployed in Mile 91.

[580] AFP, 13 March 1995.

[581] It was stated that SLA forces came with some members of Executive Outcomes, the South African private military company, and that one of them was killed during the attack. At this time, however, Executive Outcomes, was not yet in operation in the country so this is probably a reference to the Ghurkas, who were briefly contracted by the Sierra Leonean Government prior to the arrival of Executive Outcomes.

[582] During the same period, RUF forces on their way to Freetown in Moyamba District were stopped in Bradford (Ribbi Chiefdom, Moyamba District)) and moved back to Rotifunk (Bumpe Chiefdom, Moyamba District), from where they moved northwards to open a new base, called "camp Fol Fol", in an area at the junction between Bumpe, Ribbi, Kongbora Chiefdoms (Moyamba District) and Yoni Chiefdom.

Throughout March and April 1995, the RUF moved west through Tonkolili District, putting pressure on the Western Area.[583] On 22 June, around 150 RUF members retreating from the 8 June assault on Port Loko Town (Maforki Chiefdom, Port Loko District) entered Mathoir (Yoni Chiefdom). Here they barricaded a road and ambushed an SLA patrol they heard coming, destroying the SLA vehicles. It is unclear whether they inflicted any casualties on the SLA. They then moved South to Roroks[584] and then onto Makondu (both Yoni Chiefdom) and finally into the town of Rotifunk (Bumpe Chiefdom, Moyamba District).

In October 1995, RUF forces entered Rokankrr (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), mainly to fetch food but also to accuse the people of having collaborated with pro-Government forces. The RUF forces said that the next time they suspected any collaboration, the civilians would "pay the price". People were required to give them food, as Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom is a substantial rice-producing territory. One man who refused to let RUF forces inside his house to take his property was tied up and beaten to death. Two women were raped, four young men abducted and seven houses burnt down.

RUF forces coming from Yoni Chiefdom in December 1995 entered Mafolatha (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) and surrounded the town. The sounds of heavy gunfire and Rocket Propel Grenades (RPGs) could be heard throughout the town. The RUF commander explained that they had come to find food. Every house in the village was searched and property stolen; some houses were burnt down. RUF forces stayed there for two days, during which time they shot one man dead and raped an unknown number of women. An unknown number of children were abducted for conscription into the RUF. Other civilians were abducted to carry the stolen property.

Two days later, the same RUF group arrived in Rochain Kamandawo (Yoni Chiefdom). RUF members caught four men trying to escape, branding them "Government Spies" before shooting them. At Mananie, the entire village was looted; even the doors and windows were taken from houses. Two women were raped and others were abducted for use for sexual purposes. Children under the age of 15 were abducted and able-bodied men were captured to carry the stolen property. Following this, the RUF forces moved east to their base in the Kangari Hills (Konike Barina Chiefdom), in the south of the District.

On 31 December 1995, RUF forces coming from Mafolatha attacked the village of Matuku 1, four miles east of Mafolatha. Three girls were raped and over 20 young men were abducted. The RUF forces burnt down 8 houses and took the contents of two trailers loaded with assorted goods. After encountering and giving chase to SLA forces based at the nearby Ferry Junction (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), RUF forces returned to Matuku 1. When people came back to the village after the forces had eventually left, they saw the letters "RUF" and other things carved into the walls of the houses.

d) Events in 1996

In January 1996, civil militia known as the Gbethis mobilised in the Mabang area (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) and staged raids on villages in the Mara Section of Malal Mara Chiefdom, taking civilian property.

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583 See events in 1995 in the Western Area.

584 Also called Roruks.



RUF forces staged a series of raids in the area around Kumrabai Junction[585] in January 1996. Early in January 1996, RUF forces who, in late December 1995, had been in the Mafolatha area (in the extreme south of Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) continued their search for food in the area. The nearby villages of Matuku 2 and Kumrabai Junction were attacked on 5 January 1996. During these attacks, houses were searched for rice, some women were raped, young people were abducted to be conscripted and others were abducted to carry the loads.

On 10 January 1996, the same RUF forces entered Magbonto (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) three miles from Kumrabai Junction, north of the highway leading to Magburaka. The purpose of their visit was twofold: to search for food and to terrorise civilians by asking whether they wanted "peace before elections or elections before peace." The Section Chief of Mabang Section, who was at Magbonto at the time, pleaded with the RUF commander to return the cattle that the forces had taken. The Section Chief was captured and killed at Magbass Sugar Complex (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom). Another man was also killed in the village. Six houses were burnt, six children under the age of 15 were abducted and women were taken to be used for sexual purposes. Before leaving the town, the RUF forces promised that they would come back before the general elections, which were due to be held on 26 February 1996.

These same RUF forces re-entered Magbonto on 23 February 1996. The commander again asked the people whether they were supporting the election process. People answered they wanted peace before elections, fearing the reaction of the RUF forces. While the meeting was going on, a truck loaded with SLA forces entered the town; no fighting took place, which led people to think that the SLA were working in concert with the RUF. RUF forces also looted the town for food; they tortured and shot dead a man who asked how they could provide food when their town had been looted by the RUF on several occasions. Before leaving, RUF forces burnt four houses and abducted two women and eight boys under the age of 15. On leaving the village, RUF forces killed one boy as a warning to anyone who might challenge their authority.

Also in January, a group of RUF forces came to Rokankrr and asked the inhabitants the same question about elections. The RUF commander threatened that they would kill everyone in the town if they voted in the upcoming elections. RUF forces repeated this activity in Marunie (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), eight miles from Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom).

The group that had attacked the Mafolatha area in December 1995 returned to Mafolatha from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom in February 1996, to look for food and for a three-day meeting. Commanders coming from different directions arrived in the town and held a meeting to decide on the action to take if the Government of Sierra Leone decided to go ahead with the elections. People from Mafolatha and the neighbouring villages were warned not to vote and threatened with death if they did. At Matuku 2, over 100 young boys were abducted and boys under the age of 15 were abducted to be conscripted.

585 Also called Kumarabai-Mamila, it is located at the crossroads leading to Yele (Gbonkolenken Chiefdom) and to Magburaka.



Two days before the elections, on 24 February 1996, heavily-armed RUF forces came back to Mafolatha to summon people to support peace before elections. The RUF group then headed for Magburaka, arriving there on 26 February, the day of elections. SLA forces were deployed on the roads leading to the town, but no counter-attack was made. RUF forces composed of about 200 members entered the town in the late afternoon, moved around for the rest of the night, captured civilians, including children, raped girls and killed civilians they found hiding in the bush. Before leaving, the RUF forces took property, which they made young boys carry. After the attack and after the RUF forces had left for an unknown direction, only a few SLA forces were found on the ground.

After the election process, RUF activities decreased in the District, except for Malal Mara, Kholifa Mabang and Yoni Chiefdoms. At this time, local hunter societies began to be organised in chiefdoms throughout the District, namely the Gbethis in the south and the Kamajors in the south-east;[586] the Kapras would emerge in the north-east only in 1997. Following frequent attacks by the RUF and harassment by SLA forces, elders from the Kholifa Mabang, Yoni and Malal Mara Chiefdoms set up a civil militia called the Gbethi Society in February 1996.[587] Composed of local hunters and youths who were organised to perform defence operations for the security of the chiefdoms, some Gbethis were armed with locally-made shotguns, but most possessed only machetes, cutlasses and other bladed weapons. Gbethies dressed country clothes known as "rook", wore charms and talismans around their necks and had two overall commanders, one representing Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom and one representing Yoni Chiefdom; Malal Mara Chiefdom did not have any commander.

The Gbethis conducted day and night patrols and house-to-house searches for any people who were not inhabitants of a particular locality, who were termed "strangers." Civilians were warned to give notice to the Gbethis of any stranger and if they failed to do so, they would be fined Le 20,000. Gbethis operated checkpoints together with SLA forces at Mile 91. However, in June 1996, a fight broke out between SLA forces and Gbethis, allegedly over property taken from civilians by SLA forces. The Gbethis said that the SLA forces had failed to give them their share. After this, the Gbethis were in charge of Mile 91 while the SLA forces remained at the nearby Camp Charlie SLA base.[588] Although this arrangement persisted, some Gbethis returning from a patrol along the highway entered a skirmish with SLA forces, during which two Gbethis were killed. Reinforcements for the SLA forces came from Bo Town to Mile 91 and the chiefdom elders organised a meeting with them to try to smooth the relationship between the two forces. However, the meeting was a failure because the commander of the SLA forces accused the Gbethis of laying ambushes for SLA forces, as a result of which the situation became tense, culminating in a fight between the Gbethis and SLA forces. Six Gbethis and their commanders were killed during this encounter and SLA forces also suffered some fatalities. Overpowered and outnumbered by the SLA forces, the Gbethis retreated from Mile 91 to Mabang (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom).

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586 Kamajors would start to be very active in 1997 in Gbonkolenken and Tane Chiefdoms.

587 In June 1994, these chiefdoms established a 1000-strong civil militia called the Civil Defence Unit to provide security for Mile 91 and Yonibana. It appears that chiefdom authorities abandoned this particular initiative in March 1995, following attacks across the chiefdoms by RUF forces.

588 Camp Charlie is located in the outskirts of Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom).



On 9 March, the SLA announced 2 infantry brigades, supported by Nigerian and Guinean artillery units, had staged successful raids on RUF bases in the Kangari Hills. It was reported that over 30 RUF members were killed during the attacks.[589]

In the aftermath of the presidential elections, a ceasefire was signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF in March 1996 and negotiations for the signing of a peace agreement began. Shortly after, however, RUF forces inflicted serious physical violence on civilians in and around Magburaka.[590] Remnants of RUF forces carried out raids in villages, looking for food, which led civilians to find refuge in an IDP camp; around this period, over 14,000 persons had found refuge at camps in Magburaka and Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom).[591]

In mid October, Gbethis entered Rokanrr (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) with the intention to deploy throughout the Section. The commander of the Gbethis told inhabitants of the town that it was their responsibility to feed the Gbethis, as they were fighting for the people of the town. A man was then accused of being an RUF member after pointing out that this request would impose even more hardship on the civilians. He was tied up and beaten, but later released.

In the early evening on or around 20 October 1996, the headquarter town of Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom) was attacked for the second time; the attack lasted for a few hours. In collaboration with Executive Outcomes, SLA forces stationed at Bumbuna repelled the RUF forces.[592] The RUF forces retreated along their line of advance to Kegbema 1, south of Bumbuna. In Kegbema 1, RUF forces killed the Town Chief and five other people. They also burned down 9 houses. The Italian workers were evacuated to Freetown. Executive Outcomes remained at Bumbuna to secure the Hydro Electricity Project Buildings from RUF attack and provide training for the SLA troops stationed there.[593]

Civilians from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom were asked by SLA officials to leave the chiefdom in November 1996 and settle in a camp in the west end of Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom).[594] A Kamajor representative from Konike Sanda Chiefdom visited this camp and called the men to join the Kamajor Society. Those who volunteered went with him to be trained. Kamajor members were issued with rules to abide by. For example, female Kamajors should not leave their heads uncovered,

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[589] AFP, 9 March 1996. This attack did not, however, totally dislodge the RUF forces from this base.

[590] Open sources revealed that four women who refused to have sexual intercourse with RUF members had their vaginas and rectum sewed with fishing line while four men also had their rectum sewed, two men had their mouths clamped with padlock and one woman had her vagina clamped with a padlock: The Independent (London), 5 May 1996, quoting Amnesty International.

[591] AFP, 5 July 1996.

[592] Executive Outcomes was a private military company contracted in 1995 by the Sierra Leonean Government to assist the SLA in repelling the RUF forces, mainly by giving military training to SLA forces. They deployed mainly in Kono District.

[593] It is interesting to note that during their stay in the country, Executive Outcomes were hired by mining companies in Kono and Moyamba Districts to provide security in the mining sites.

[594] See Inter Press Service, 2 January 1997 for more on this IDP camp.

should not pound grain with a mortar and pestle after 18.00 and civilians should not sit on mortars.[595]

On or around 19 November 1996, Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom (in the north of Kenema District) followed RUF forces to their stronghold called "Booloko".[596] Booloko Camp was a very large camp that was divided into four different sections labelled "Tenneh Ground", "Combat Camp", "Sullay Ground" and "Command Post." Tenneh and Sullay Grounds were named after a hero or heroine of the RUF. Civilians and non-combatant RUF were not allowed in Combat Camp. Command Post hosted RUF who were planning offensives. Other Kamajors from Kenema District joined the Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom, attacked the camp and killed 100 RUF members, sustaining some minor injuries themselves. A large quantity of weapons and ammunition were captured from the camp; one captured RUF commando was taken to serve as a firearms training instructor.

The peace negotiations, which started in the aftermath of the elections, reached their conclusion on 30 November 1996 with the signing of a Peace Agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF in Abidjan, Ivory Coast. Violations of this agreement were, however, rapidly reported.[597]

e) Events in 1997

In January 1997, renegade RUF forces went on the rampage, attacking and burning villages during food-finding missions.[598]

In early 1997, a civil militia known as the Kapras was formed in Kafe Simira Chiefdom in the north of the District. Kapras wore brown country clothes called "rook" and were armed with single-barrel guns, cutlasses and sticks. They established and operated checkpoints all over the chiefdom. People in Kafe Simira Chiefdom assisted the Kapras by giving money or food. The chiefdom was quiet during that period, except for one RUF attack, when forces burnt a vehicle near the chiefdom headquarter town of Mabonto and then went to Nenekoro, in the east of the chiefdom, where they burnt down the village and killed over 20 people. Those people were buried in front of their houses, as the civilians who buried them were frightened to go to the cemetery that was in the bush.

Throughout 1997, relations between local militias and SLA forces were tense.[599] On 7 March, Kamajor militia clashed with the SLA in Matatoka (Tane Chiefdom), killing 12 SLA members[600] from the SLA's Rapid Deployment Force. On 23 April 1997, Gbethis intercepted SLA forces who

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[595] It is unclear from the records whether these rules were also imposed on the civilian population in areas secured by the Kamajors.

[596] Booloko probably refers to the name of the camp the RUF forces had firmly established in the Kangari Hills, despite SLA attempts to dislodge them. It seems that "Booloko" is a generic term and was mentioned with different spellings in other Districts.

[597] Since the signing of the Peace Agreement, around 15 civilians were killed by RUF forces during food-finding missions in Tane and Yoni Chiefdoms: Sierra Leone Bi-Monthly Information, 19 November - 16 December 1996.

[598] AFP, 26 January 1997.

[599] The kind of relationships the SLA forces had with members of the CDF was a result of the relationship they had with the various CDUs.

[600] Xinhua, 7 March 1997.

were on their way to Lower Yoni at Yonibana (Yoni Chiefdom). After a battle, the Gbethis were overpowered and withdrew. SLA forces then broke into houses and shops, from which they took a lot of property, and forced civilians to carry the load to Mile 91 and Camp Charlie.[601]

In one incident in early 1997, Kamajors from Kholifa Rowalla, Tane and Gbonkolenken Chiefdoms who were looking for RUF forces in the Tane Chiefdom took possession of various items, including guns, they had found in the bushes. This did not please the SLA forces and in May, they attacked Kamajors who were conducting a night patrol along Bo Road. In the same month, SLA forces dressed themselves in Kamajor attire and allegedly burnt the civilian residential camp near Matotoka; as a result of that attack, civilians fled the area.

In the middle of April, following the Abidjan Peace Agreement, around 50 malnourished RUF members who had been based for almost three years in the Kangari Hills surrendered in Magburaka and demobilised.[602] On 6 May 1997, Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom (Kenema District) went back to "Booloko", the RUF base. During this attack, three members of the RUF forces were killed and 30 were captured and brought to Gorama Mende Chiefdom. These captured men were encouraged to give information about the camp; their response was described as "fruitful". On 24 May 1997, the Kamajors went to the RUF defence headquarters in the Kangari Hills. Thirty-eight RUF members were captured, including their commanders, and an unspecified number were killed. The Kamajors took a large number of weapons and ammunition back to Bo along with the captured RUF members. Those captured RUF members were still in Bo when the military coup took place the following day.

On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a coup d'état and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC released over 700 people from the Pademba Road Prison, including their leader, who was formally sworn in on 17 June 1997 as Head of State.[603] After the coup, the CDF were asked to disarm by the AFRC forces.[604] Gbethis from the upper part of Yoni Chiefdom and from Kholifa Mabang and Malal Mara Chiefdoms acceded to this request, but the Gbethis from the lower part of Yoni Chiefdom refused to surrender. Instead, they joined with Kamajors from the South and attacked Camp Charlie, but were beaten; some of them were killed during the battle. Following this attack on Camp Charlie, the Gbethis were given a deadline to surrender.

Following an order allegedly from the AFRC leader, the RUF commander announced that looting should stop and that any civilians or RUF/AFRC members caught looting would "face the consequences". These consequences became clear when three civilians were killed in the town square of Mile 91 for stealing property belonging to other civilians. In a separate incident, a civilian was also shot dead in the square for stealing a foam mattress belonging to another person.

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601 While open sources (Sierra Leone Bi-Monthly Information (OCHA) 15 April - 12 May 1997) mentioned Kapras clashing with SLA forces in Mile 91 on April 1997, there is no information in our records about Kapras activities in the chiefdom; only Kamajors and Gbethis are mentioned in this regard.

602 Inter Press Service, 16 April 1997.

603 Xinhua, 17 June 1997.

604 The AFRC Chairman made an announcement over the radio that CDF members should lay down their arms and register at the nearest police station.



In May or June, Kamajors from Gbonkolenken and Tane Chiefdoms held a meeting at Yele, a junction town in the far south of Gbonkolenken Chiefdom. They decided to cut off the highway leading into Kono District, thereby preventing food from getting to the RUF in that District. On May 10 Kamajors units moved into to Tane Chiefdom and blocked the highway between Magburaka and Matotoka, at the place where the Pampana River crosses the highway. SLA forces tried to dislodge the Kamajors from their position so that they could reopen the highway, but were unsuccessful. The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone eventually persuaded the Kamajors to clear the road. A Kamajor Society was also formed in Konike Barina Chiefdom in 1997.

In July 1997, as the deadline for the Gbethis to surrender expired in Yoni Chiefdom, RUF/AFRC forces began house-to-house searches or screening patrols for Gbethis, using civilians who were familiar with the surroundings. As a result of this screening process, suspects were molested by the RUF/AFRC forces, publicly flogged with their hands tied behind their backs, forced to do frog jumps[605] or to lie on their backs and look at the sun. In addition, the RUF/AFRC forces passed decrees applicable to both civilians and RUF/AFRC members. Night curfews were imposed and contraveners were fined Le 5,000; those who did not pay the fine were severely flogged. RUF/AFRC forces also used civilians during their food-finding missions and forced civilians to do menial tasks in their homes. In October, RUF/AFRC forces coming from the direction of Bo District brought various items, including Honda motorbikes, cars, bicycles and accessories they had stolen and sold them to civilians at Mile 91. They also established small-scale businesses such as hawking and barrow boys. As they moved freely from Mile 91 to Magburaka, Port Loko and Makeni, they would bring back stolen items to Mile 91 to sell them. They further explained to the population that they were stealing because they were not paid and that in any case, civilians should support them and share their food with them, since they had come to save the civilians. These business transactions were, however, sometimes marred by violence and were not conducted fairly; on more than one occasion, RUF/AFRC members required people to pay for the same goods twice. Stealing in the Mile 91 area was described as being as its peak around this period.

RUF/AFRC units with different responsibilities were put in place, including the Military Police and the Task Force. The Military Police were responsible for investigating matters related to the sale and purchase of items. However, if a civilian and an RUF/AFRC member had a quarrel or a disagreement, only the RUF/AFRC member would be allowed to explain their version of what happened.[606]

Sometime after the coup in 1997, RUF/AFRC forces settled in Magburaka. Civilians were harassed, women and girls were raped and children were abducted and forced to join the RUF/AFRC movement. Kamajors coming from the eastern part of the chiefdom attacked the town early in the morning, but were overpowered by the RUF/AFRC forces and retreated in the same direction from which they had come. In the afternoon, a member of the AFRC called together the civilians who

[605] To "frog jump" or to "pump" is done by first holding on to the earlobes with two hands – the left hand holding the right ear lobe and vice versa– after which the person is required to jump up and down continuously on their haunches. This form of punishment was both physically and psychologically painful, because it is a punishment meted out mostly to children and it is considered shameful for an adult to be made to "pump".
[606] See below for the role of the Task Force.

had fled during the attack. At that time, some women were raped, some civilians were beaten, property was taken and captured Kamajors were executed and thrown into water wells and latrine pits. In the afternoon of the same day, the same AFRC member launched "Operation Pay Yourself", according to which the RUF/AFRC forces were free to take property belonging to civilians.[607]

One event that took place in Malal Mara Chiefdom after RUF forces had established a base at Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) in June 1997 highlights the structures that RUF forces put in place to obtain food. Malal Mara Chiefdom is a strategic position, as it is the starting point of the road that links up with the road from Magburaka to Makeni through Bombali District. RUF forces were sent to Manewa Section, in the north of Malal Mara Chiefdom, to open a Task Force office to raise funds for their base at Makeni. To achieve this, civilians were required to pay taxes. Furthermore, whenever the base at Makeni needed something, this would be communicated to the Task Force units, who would contact their local administrative heads, who in turn would demand contributions from civilians. The collection of money and property was accompanied by harassment in an attempt to get the items quickly. This process lasted until 1999.

Despite the Peace Plan signed between the AFRC leader and the Government of Sierra Leone in Conakry, Guinea on October 1997,[608] RUF/AFRC violations were still reported in the District and RUF/AFRC forces embarked on upgrading the airstrip at Magburaka into a "fully-fledged airport for the illegal importation of arms and other supplies."[609]

In December 1997, RUF/AFRC forces from Yoni Chiefdom realised that civilians were hiding their properties in the bush. An announcement was made that any civilian caught concealing property would be punished and the property would be taken.

That same month, Kamajors[610] unsuccessfully attacked Mafolatha (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom). This attack aimed at dislodging the RUF/AFRC forces from the town, considered as a springboard for Mile 91 and its environs. There were no reported casualties.[611]

f) Events in 1998

In early 1998, stealing carried out by RUF/AFRC forces continued in the District. In February, retreating RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown en route to Kono District using the Freetown–Kono highway passed by different chiefdoms in the District. On their way to Kono District, they launched the "Operation Pay Yourself", according to which RUF/AFRC forces would take food and other items from civilians to last them through their retreat. In addition, in February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces coming from different areas arrived in Mile 91. "Operation Pay Yourself" was also launched there and villages and towns in the chiefdom were looted, mainly for food although there were two secondary school girls were raped at this time. RUF/AFRC forces, however, avoided the lower part

[607] This kind of operation, namely, massive stealing would be widely carried out in 1998 by RUF/AFRC forces retreating from Freetown and would reach unprecedented levels during that period.
[608] During this meeting, it was agreed that RUF/AFRC forces would hand over power to the Sierra Leonean President on 22 April 1998.
[609] Sierra Leone Situation Report (OCHA), 20 December 1997 - 20 January 1998.
[610] They were described as a faction of the CDF speaking Mende.
[611] No more information was available on this attack.

of Yoni Chiefdom since it was a CDF stronghold. While they were advancing to Kono, some RUF/AFRC forces were attacked by Kamajors in Tane Chiefdom. However, the RUF/AFRC forces managed to repel the attack, killing eight Kamajors and wounding many others. Nevertheless, during this time, it appeared to civilians that there was no command structure within the forces and the RUF commander who was familiar to everyone was not around.

RUF/AFRC forces arriving in Magburaka by truck, Honda motorbikes and cars in late February also carried out "Operation Pay Yourself" in the town,[612] which had a lot of traders and many vehicles. In the early evening, some RUF/AFRC members saw a girl in the street and called to her, but she ran away. They followed her to her house. Her father came out and the RUF/AFRC members threatened to kill him if he did not give them his daughter. After begging them, the father told them to do what they had to do, for he had no alternative. One of the RUF/AFRC members then shot him in his left foot, cut off two of his toes and left. In another incident, RUF/AFRC forces met a man in the street, asked him about his money and followed him to his house. When the forces asked him why he did not have any money, he replied that the war had put him "back to square one". The RUF/AFRC forces shot at his house with an RPG, killing the man, who was inside at the time. The family of the dead man reported the case to one of the commanders, who later identified and shot the member who had killed the man. During the night, many girls were raped and some were taken to Kono District. RUF/AFRC forces burnt 50 houses in the town and executed Kamajors they had captured; their bodies were thrown in water wells or latrine pits.

On 5 March, ECOMOG forces entered Magburaka and its environs. Youths were asked to point out any RUF/AFRC member or collaborator and those suspected were detained at Magburaka's Local Prison. As ECOMOG left for Makeni,[613] RUF/AFRC forces attacked the town before dawn on the following day, 6 March 1998, from the western part of the chiefdom. The RUF/AFRC forces burnt down 25 houses; some civilians were in their houses when they were set on fire and were burnt alive. Many others were killed and many women were raped and some were taken to be used for sexual purposes. Young people were forced to carry the property the RUF/AFRC forces had stolen as they left the town before daybreak towards the south of the chiefdom. ECOMOG then returned to Magburaka and threatened the civilians, accusing them of allowing RUF/AFRC forces to stay in their chiefdom. Property was taken by ECOMOG forces and it is also reported that civilians' wives were forced to have sexual relations with some ECOMOG members.[614] At this time, ECOMOG forces also deployed at many checkpoints along the Magburaka–Kono highway.[615]

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[612] From February to June, the number of civilians wounded or mutilated and arriving in Magburaka hospital increased considerably: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (UNOCHA), 1 - 22 May 1998 and 9 June - 6 July 1998.

[613] Following the intervention in Freetown in February 1998, a new ECOMOG Brigade – 24 Infantry Brigade – was designed for the expansion of its activities in the Provinces. After they had recaptured Lunsar (Port Loko District), ECOMOG forces headed for Makeni, where it was reported ousted RUF/AFRC forces had established their new base: Brig. Gen. R. A. Adeshina: *The Reversed Victory: Story of Nigerian Military Intervention in Sierra Leone*, Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc, pp 29 and 39. That could explain why ECOMOG forces did not stay in Magburaka that day. Accordingly, these ECOMOG forces did not belong to the same group who deployed in Bo and Mile 91.

[614] No more information was available on this incident.

[615] They notably deployed in Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom) on 6 April: Adeshina, op. cit., p 70.



Kamajors[616] launched an attack on RUF positions on 5 March at Magbass village and Magbass Sugar complex, located in Mamuntha Section in the south of Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom. The head of the Kamajors held a stick wrapped in black and red cloth.[617] After the RUF forces sustained heavy casualties, their commander ordered his forces to withdraw towards Magburaka.[618] The Kamajors who had defeated the RUF forces began breaking into the factory and houses in the village, taking property and removing the zinc roof of the factory. They arrested 50 civilians who were hiding and asked them why they were supporting the RUF forces. The civilians were neither killed nor beaten, but were forced to carry the stolen property to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom. When they arrived in the Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, they were released and returned to Mamuntha Section.

Around 17 March, heavily-armed RUF forces[619] returned to retake their position in the south of Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom. At a village called Makorie, they launched the Operation "No Bush Shaking", which meant they would shoot in the direction of any grass that was moving, on the assumption that people were hiding there. At Makoray, they burnt down four houses and killed three civilians. At Maiekonko, they burnt all 15 houses in the village because they could not find any people there. On the same day, they went to Mayatha, dividing themselves into three groups to attack the village. Some Kamajors were captured, killed and cut into pieces. The next morning, RUF forces called people for prayers but nobody came, as they knew that this was a tactic used by RUF forces to gather civilians and kill them. In the afternoon, the RUF forces left the village, burning down 18 houses, and went back to Magburaka.

ECOMOG forces coming from Bo,[620] together with Kamajors from the southern Province, came to Mile 91 in March 1998. By then, the retreating RUF/AFRC forces had already left the town, heading further north. Many civilians fled with the retreating forces, allegedly frightened of being chased and treated as collaborators, since Kamajors considered that civilians in the upper part of Yoni Chiefdom and in Kholifa Mabang and Malal Mara Chiefdoms were all collaborators. Screening processes were organised by ECOMOG and Kamajors for the purposes of identifying collaborators. As a result of this screening process, ECOMOG forces killed six civilians in March. In addition to people, houses were screened and if any of the items found there led ECOMOG and the Kamajors to suspect that the house had in one way or another hosted members of the RUF/AFRC forces, the house was burnt down and the property was confiscated; up to 98 houses were burnt during this process.

Kamajors assisted by ECOMOG forces also organised patrols in the villages surrounding Mile 91 to search for "rebel collaborators". These patrols were accompanied by destruction of property, mostly done by Kamajors. For example, in Yonibana, 45 houses were burnt; 40 houses were burnt in Mawor; and 45 were burnt in Gaindema. ECOMOG forces and Kamajors also allegedly took civilians' property, which was then conveyed to Bo Town. Following these incidents, Gbethis from

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616 The Kamajors were equipped with cutlasses, axes and sticks and few of them had AK47s and RPGs.
617 Red symbolised blood and black symbolised death.
618 This RUF/AFRC defeat was explained by civilians through the intervention of the mystical power of the Kamajors who were believed to be able to stop the guns of the enemy.
619 These RUF forces were fully equipped with a lot of RPG, AK47s, G3 and mortar bombs.
620 Those ECOMOG forces had arrived to Bo town from Kenema Town around 20-22 February 1998.

lower Yoni Chiefdom decided to confront the Kamajors, but ECOMOG forces managed to contain them and then charged them with ensuring the security of lower Yoni Chiefdom.[621]

In April, some units of the RUF/AFRC forces were still in Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom. In one incident, a suckling woman who had given birth two weeks previously was raped after her husband refused to give his food to some members of the RUF/AFRC forces. Furthermore, the husband was given 36 lashes and was ordered to eat his own excrement. The following month, RUF/AFRC forces burnt down the houses that remained standing in Mafolatha when civilians refused to give them food. On or around 13 April, RUF/AFRC forces[622] arrived at Bolyin (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), a village in the Mabang Section that was used as a hideout by civilians. They convened a meeting in the Court Barrie and explained that the purpose of their visit was to ask CDF (Gbethis) deployed in the area to join them to fight the CDF (Kamajors) in Bo District.[623] The CDF refused to join them and the two groups battled for two hours. The CDF eventually overpowered the RUF/AFRC forces, who left the town, taking away food and domestic animals and burning down four houses.

Around this period, Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom), on the highway to Koidu (Kono District), hosted thousands of IDPs fleeing battles between ECOMOG and RUF/AFRC forces in Kono District.[624]

On 1 June, ECOMOG forces at Mile 91 announced that civilians who were in the bushes could come back in their houses, with priority being given to women. Following this announcement, women arrived at Mile 91 and were taken to the Caritas building, where they were accommodated for the night. During that night, four of them were raped by Kamajors. It is reported that at this time, ECOMOG forces were unable to control the Kamajors, who had their own command structure. Later in June, men were allowed to resettle back at Mile 91 and were thoroughly screened at checkpoints operated by ECOMOG forces and Kamajors. In July 1998, a suspected "rebel" was apprehended by Gbethis and taken to ECOMOG forces at Mile 91, where he was killed.

In June, CDF from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom came to Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom and liberated Mafolatha, Makelleh (Yoni Chiefdom) and the surrounding villages from RUF/AFRC presence. Since then, no further RUF/AFRC attack was sustained in this area.

Kamajors from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom went to Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom on 5 December and entered Mabom, around 10 miles south of Magburaka. They dislodged the RUF/AFRC forces who were there and, before returning to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, went on rampage, breaking into civilians' houses and abducting some young men and women. They took food, furniture like bed mattresses and building materials, burnt 15 houses and headed for another village called Masoria, where they asked civilians to point out the houses where RUF/AFRC forces used to live. They went in the houses identified by the civilians and searched for arms and ammunition. As they did not know how to operate the weapons they found – mortar bombs and anti-aircraft guns – they burnt

[621] It should be recalled that tension had existed between the Gbethis and the Kamajors since 1997.
[622] Some of those forces were carrying AK47s and RPGs while others were equipped with cutlasses and sticks.
[623] At this time, Kamajors and ECOMOG forces had driven RUF/AFRC forces out of Bo District.
[624] Inter Press Service, 8 July 1998.

them before returning to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, where they set up more checkpoints. People coming from Magburaka and crossing the border to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom were often arrested, tied with ropes called "FM"[625] or detained in a cage where cattle slept, suspected of being a "rebel" collaborator. People who were found to be collaborators were killed, allegedly in the forest between Tane and Gbonkolenken Chiefdoms, near a stream called Nasi.

In late December, an important movement of troops were to be seen in different chiefdoms of the District. One group of armed men and women, around 300 in number, dressed in mixed military uniforms entered Mabonto (Kafe Simira Chiefdom) in December 1998. They came in a big green military truck with a foreign military plate, which was identified as belonging to ECOMOG forces deployed in Teko Barracks (Bombali District). The troops identified themselves as "Government troops" coming to protect civilians from the advancing "rebels". They then asked the inhabitants to cook for them and civilians realised that these troops were actually RUF/AFRC forces in disguise; most of them were speaking Liberian dialects and Mende.[626] After one week, the whole town was controlled with checkpoints and civilians were required to have a pass if they wanted to leave the town. The next day, some of the RUF forces moved towards Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom). During their stay in Mabonto, the RUF forces instituted a Court and the most common crimes prosecuted in that court were rape and stealing. Three RUF/AFRC members were executed for these crimes.[627]

Kalansogoia Chiefdom was the scene of many ambushes and attacks carried out by RUF/AFRC forces. The Hydro Compound at Bumbuna was under construction and was therefore of interest, because there were lorries, fuel and other similar items. Thus six attacks were led by RUF/AFRC forces on the town. On 14 December, two ECOMOG members on patrol along the Bumbuna-Bendugu (Sambaia Chiefdom) road fell in an ambush staged by RUF/AFRC forces and were killed.

On 21 December 1998, a large number of armed men in dirty uniforms came from Kono District to Tane Chiefdom, telling people they were tired of fighting and they were no longer going to the bush.[628] Some of these troops went towards Magburaka and Makeni while others stayed in Tane Chiefdom, following civilians into the bush in search of food or what was called Jar Jar, which means taking things from civilians by force. Small girls were taken as their "wives" and young men were abducted to carry their loads. They sent messages to civilians to come out of the bush as they said they were no longer fighting civilians or Kamajors, only ECOMOG forces. Following this, some Kamajors started to surrender. Twenty of them came and as nothing happened, more and more Kamajors came out, up to 80 in number. Those Kamajors who did not surrender went to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom. Many civilians went also to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, at this time a Kamajor stronghold, after the armed men had taken half of their property at gunpoint.[629]

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[625] FM means "frequency modulation", for it was believed that once tied with this rope, which had two sticks on its edges used to tighten the rope around people's limbs, people began to speak.
[626] Around this time, it was believed that combatants from Liberia, allegedly supported by the Liberian President, were taking part in the hostilities in Sierra Leone.
[627] No more information was available on these incidents.
[628] RUF/AFRC forces retook control of Koidu (Kono District headquarter) on 20 December.
[629] No more information was available on these incidents.



Three days after the attack on Koidu Town, the headquarters of Kono District, hundreds of RUF/AFRC forces reached Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom, entering Magburaka Town on 23 December.[630] Previously, the RUF Battle Field Commander had been interviewed on the BBC and declared they would enter Freetown by road. While in Magburaka, the RUF/AFRC forces raped and killed people. For example, on 26 December, a boy working in a garage was threatened with death if he could not repair the Honda that some RUF/AFRC members had brought him the night before. As he became more and more distressed, the boy attempted to run away and was shot by the forces. The same forces pushed their Honda and asked another boy to help them. The boy was then left to hide at the corner of a house and, as he thought the fighters had left, he moved along the street. The RUF forces shot in the air and called out to the boy. When he turned around, the RUF forces shot him in the head. The same night, some members of the RUF/AFRC went to Bathmorie, near Magburaka, and attacked a house, thinking they would find girls. As there were none, they took a young boy to lead them to a house where they could find girls. The boy went to a house and told the girls to vacate the place quietly. When he came back to the RUF/AFRC members, he told them there was no girls there. The members went to the house to check what the boy had said and no girls were to be found. They then started hitting the boy on his back with their G3 guns, they then shot at his feet and shot him another time, killing him. At this time, the RUF commander told civilians that the RUF/AFRC forces would attack Freetown and many civilians were abducted for use in the fighting forces.[631]

g) Events in 1999

Around 1 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces entered Kumrabai Junction (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom) from the direction of Magburaka, en route to Mile 91. On their way, some of the RUF/AFRC forces were left at Kumrabai Station, Matuku 1 and Matuku 2. The relationship between the RUF/AFRC forces and the CDF was allegedly cordial and a civilian was appointed as an intermediary between the two groups. Two days later, however, other RUF/AFRC forces coming from Waterloo passed through Kumrabai Junction and headed to Ferry Junction, the crossing point at the boundary between Kholifa Mabang and Gbonkolenken Chiefdoms, asking what was the mileage to the headquarter town of Yele (Gbonkolenken Chiefdom). They started firing at CDF forces, who returned fire. This group of RUF/AFRC then moved to Magburaka.

Following this encounter, about 500 CDF members from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom attacked Robis, Kumrabai Junction and Ferry Junction and took property. They killed three people at Robis, four at Ferry Junction, and eight at Kumrabai Junction; raped four women; and abducted 15 boys under the age of 15, possibly for recruitment into the fighting forces.[632]

On 14 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces who had attacked Magburaka at the end of 1998 entered Mile 91 and overcame the Kamajors and ECOMOG forces, who retreated south in the direction of Bo District. The RUF/AFRC forces appealed to the civilians not to run away, as they were not their focus, which was the ECOMOG and Kamajors forces. For three days, however, a lot of property

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[630] No battles with ECOMOG forces were reported. It seems that after they came back to the town in March 1998, ECOMOG forces did not stay the whole year, although it could not be ascertained when they left the town. RUF/AFRC forces would hold the town until 2002.

[631] Makeni (Bombali District) was attacked around 27 December 1998.

[632] No more information was available on these incidents.

was taken, before the RUF commander gave the order for it to stop. This attack on Mile 91 is believed to have taken place to cut off the highway that leads to Freetown, which had been invaded on 6 January and was still at least partly still under RUF/AFRC occupation.[633]

The RUF/AFRC forces began operating checkpoints at strategic locations around the town and thoroughly screened people coming in to identify any possible CDF member. Civilians coming from Lower Yoni were closely checked, as their area was hosting Gbethis and Kamajors from the Southern Province. Small Boys Units were used to confiscate property from civilians, which was then handed over to their superior officers. RUF/AFRC forces carried out food-finding missions in the surrounding villages and civilians were used to carry the food to Mile 91.

On 28 January 1999, not long after the killing of the two ECOMOG forces during a patrol in late 1998, SLA forces deployed at Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom), establishing a brigade headquarter. On their arrival, the SLA forces dug trenches around the town and laid down landmines, escorting civilians to avoid them stepping on the mines. Bumbuna was a point of passage for RUF/AFRC forces coming from Kono District using the Kayima Road (Koinadugu District). RUF/AFRC forces coming westwards from the direction of Magburaka and Mabonto launched many attacks on Bumbuna; the fiercest one took place on 15 February 1999, between 7:00 pm and 7:00 am. RUF/AFRC forces were unsuccessful in dislodging the SLA and instead occupied all the villages along the border between Kalansogoia and Kafe Simira Chiefdoms,[634] chasing civilians in their hideouts for food and cattle and burning down houses in the villages. The aim of these attacks was mainly to capture the SLA arms and ammunition.

The presence of the SLA forces in Bumbuna brought some relief to the population. As the highway leading to Magburaka was under RUF/AFRC control, thereby preventing lorries from bringing food, the only way to secure food was for the civilians of Kalansogoia Chiefdom to go to Kabala (Koinadugu District), which was 76 miles away.[635] As a result, civilians were mainly living on the food rations that were airlifted by helicopter from Freetown for the SLA forces. The commander in charge of the SLA forces was allegedly very strict with the forces under his command so that they would treat civilians cordially.

Throughout 1999 and 2000, the whole area surrounding Bumbuna up to Magburaka was under RUF/AFRC control. RUF/AFRC forces operated checkpoints on the Magburaka-Kono highway, issuing and asking civilians for travelling documents called "passes", which cost Le 500 and were valid for 72 hours. No other documents but these passes were accepted as valid travelling documents. People who produced "Government documents", namely documents issued by State Institutions, were arrested and detained, accused of being one of "Tejan Kabbah's people", namely a supporter of the Government.

By January 1999, almost half of the civilians from Tane Chiefdom had fled to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, where the Kamajors were very active. Kamajors from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, together with those who came from Tane Chiefdom, decided to attack the RUF/AFRC forces stationed in

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[633] See the events for the Western Area, 1999.

[634] Kajida, Kabaray, Kasikoro and Yibai were thus occupied at this time.

[635] It took civilians three to four days to reach Kabala.

Tane Chiefdom. In March, after some of the RUF/AFRC forces stationed in Tane Chiefdom had crossed the border to Madina (Gbonkolenken Chiefdom) and had killed one Kamajor during a fight, the Kamajors decided to cross the border between the two chiefdoms and attack positions in Tane Chiefdom. Both factions crossed the border many times, attacking each other in Yele and Matotoka. As a result, Tane Chiefdom was seriously damaged as many houses were burnt down. In April 1999 and following an RUF/AFRC attack on Yele that had left 10 houses burnt down, Kamajors went to Matotoka and burnt 50 houses, including the Paramount Chief's compound. On their way back to Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, they set more houses on fire in Makenikoray (Tane Chiefdom). When they saw flames in Matotoka, RUF/AFRC forces burnt the remaining houses, thinking they were Kamajors' houses because they had been left standing by the Kamajors.

In March 1999, Kamajors together with Gbethis coming from Lower Yoni went to Mile 91 to attack the RUF/AFRC forces. A fierce battle took place at Yonibana but the CDF had to retreat, as some of them were killed during the attack. Following this attack, RUF/AFRC forces looted houses at Yonibana and forced civilians to carry the load to Mile 91.

Another attack was launched on Mile 91 in the middle of April 1999 by combined forces of Kamajors, Gbethis, ECOMOG and SLA. There was a lot of shooting during what was described as the heaviest attack on Mile 91 since the war started. The RUF/AFRC forces were forced to withdraw to the direction of Magburaka.[636] After the attack, the bodies of 10 civilians, including four women, were found in the town. Thirty houses had also been burnt down. In addition, cases of rape were reported, although civilians were unable to ascertain with certainty the identity of the perpetrators.[637] This control of Mile 91 enabled ECOMOG and Kamajors forces to reopen the highway to Bo Town, although the portion of the highway between Masiaka (Port Loko District) and Mile 91 was still considered insecure.[638]

Subsequently, Mile 91 saw an influx of civilians coming from Makeni, Magburaka and other areas in the north that had fallen under the control of RUF/AFRC forces. These displaced people had no choice but to occupy destroyed dwellings, which they tried to fix.

Between March and May, following constant pressure from SLA forces and the CDF, a senior RUF commander issued an order to all RUF/AFRC commanders that all the young men in Makeni and Magburaka should be abducted and trained as fighters. The ground commander in Magburaka called his sub commanders to go and capture the young men of the town. Many young men fled in to the bush while this operation, which lasted two weeks, was carried out. On 10 March 1999, about 100 young men were captured and locked in the Train Store of Agriculture in Magburaka. These young men were then sent for training by vehicle to Burkina, which was the code name for Kailahun. After two weeks, the young men who were caught were fined Le 50,000 and, if they could not pay, were given 300 lashes as a punishment for hiding while the "recruitment" was being carried out. One month later, sometime in April 1999, RUF/AFRC forces in Magburaka faced a food shortage and

[636] In May, serious fighting was reported in the area of Magburaka: IRIN West Africa, 24 May 1999.
[637] It could not be ascertained whether those acts were committed by the RUF/AFRC forces or by the combined forces of ECOMOG, Kamajors and SLA.
[638] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (UNOCHA), April 1999. Since March 1999, Bo District had been under Kamajor and ECOMOG control.

started attacking villages to take their food. During these attacks, young girls were also taken to become the "wives" of the RUF/AFRC forces.

Throughout the year, CDF forces from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom were also very active in Kholifa Mabang and Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdoms. It is reported that a lot of destruction was carried out in the villages, where property was taken, women raped and people accused of being collaborators or sympathisers of the RUF/AFRC forces were tortured. Killings of people suspected of being "rebels" or collaborators were carried out in the CDF base at Mamilla Gbla.

In one incident in March, three members of a group of Kamajors from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom who were attempting to attack Magburaka Town were shot dead by RUF/AFRC forces, who then sprinkled petrol on the bodies and set fire to them. As they retreated, the other Kamajors shot dead a man they had called out to but who had run into the bush.

In April 1999, following civilians' complaints about the flogging of civilians with up to 200 lashes, the rape of young girls and the killing of civilians, the commander in charge of the RUF/AFRC forces in Manewa Section (Malal Mara Chiefdom) was replaced by another senior RUF/AFRC commander. The new commander extended the RUF/AFRC's activities towards the north to Kiampkakolo Section, to the west to Mara Section and to the south, to Massathelel Section, deploying in the major villages of the sections. A senior AFRC commander imposed that everybody in the villages should register at the military police task force; any civilian that was not registered would be considered to be a spy for the elected Government. Furthermore, civilians were responsible for feeding the troops. Routine checks were carried out in the villages and if any person who was on the registration list were missing, the local authorities appointed by the RUF/AFRC would be beaten and fined. The movement of petty traders coming from other chiefdoms was controlled by the military police, who would search everybody and confiscate anything they wanted; anyone who complained about this was flogged. Some youths from the villages were used to carry items stolen during the looting activities called Jar Jar. Those who were unable to carry the load or who were sick during the journey were shot dead. Some of the youths who were forced to carry the load were cooperative and were promoted to the rank of small unit leaders and later on to local commanders, which enticed many youths in the villages into joining the movement. The use of the youths enabled thus the RUF/AFRC forces to have access to all the hideouts, where they stole food and other domestic items.

After a ceasefire was signed in May 1999, the negotiations between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone reached their conclusion in the signing of a Peace Agreement in Lomé, Togo. Some relief was brought to the people of Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom at this time.[639]

Starting in the middle of the year, after the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, RUF/AFRC forces from Magburaka on food-finding missions were attacked by Kamajors from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom. For example, following one food-finding mission where RUF/AFRC forces arrested and beat civilians for failing to give them rice, Kamajors moved from Gbonkolenken Chiefdom and blocked the highway at Pampana Bridge in Tane Chiefdom at the boundary with Kholifa Rowalla

[639] Although this assertion is not accompanied with details, it gives an idea on the activities in the chiefdom at this stage.

Chiefdom. It is reported that the matter was referred to the RUF High Command, who ordered that the Kamajors be dislodged using an anti-aircraft machinegun.[640] The Kamajors could not resist the attack, during which 20 CDF members were killed and most of them run away. The RUF/AFRC forces threw the bodies into the Pampana River. However, they managed to capture two Kamajors, who were stripped naked and had ropes tied to their backs; these ropes were then also tied behind the lorry that was carrying the anti-aircraft machine gun. When they arrived at Magburaka, the two Kamajors were dead, their bodies severely mutilated; the RUF/AFRC forces later burnt their remains.[641]

In October 1999, Gbethis attacked villages in Malal Mara Chiefdom, targeting both the RUF/AFRC positions and civilians. Cases of looting, rape and killing of civilians were reported. Young people were forced to carry the stolen property and since it was the harvest season, civilians were taken to their farms to carry out the work of harvesting.[642]

In early October, tension between RUF/AFRC forces[643] escalated and an in-fight arose in Makeni (Bombali District) between RUF forces on one hand and AFRC forces on the other hand. A senior RUF commander came from Magburaka to attack AFRC forces based in Makeni. It seems that the RUF forces were first not able to dislodge the AFRC members and withdrew from Makeni to Magburaka, where they were allegedly attacked the next day from the "Old Town" section of the town. The fighting lasted for two days. Eventually, in late October, RUF forces from Magburaka and backed up with forces coming from Kailahun District dislodged the AFRC forces from Makeni and occupied the town.[644]

On 22 October, the UN Security Council established a 6,000-strong UN peacekeeping force for Sierra Leone in support of the Lomé Peace Agreement. According to the resolution, the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) would be deployed throughout the country.[645] However, the first batch of UN peacekeepers from the Kenyan contingent were denied access to Magburaka by local RUF commanders, although the peacekeepers were carrying letters of authority from the RUF leader.[646]

At some point in 1999, RUF forces came back to settle at Makali (Konike Barina Chiefdom) and asked the CDF to come and join them, which some CDF members did. Junior RUF members were sent on food-finding missions; later, however, they asked civilians to feed them before they began

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[640] The person tasked with carrying out this assignment would later become Foday Sankoh's bodyguard.

[641] In October, the situation around Magburaka and Matotoka (Tane Chiefdom) was still insecure, as civilians were forced to give food to the Paramount Chief who in turn gave the food to RUF/AFRC forces. RUF/AFRC forces also went directly to the civilians to take food: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (OCHA), 3 - 9 October 1999.

[642] No more information was available on these incidents.

[643] Following the retreat from Freetown in February 1998, the relationship between the RUF and the AFRC forces was often tense, culminating on some occasions in infighting: for more information, see the analyses for Bombali and Kono Districts.

[644] It is alleged that this infighting was of a personal nature, because the senior RUF commander who originated from Makeni did not tolerate that the AFRC senior commander in charge of Makeni looted his home town.

[645] The number of peacekeepers would increase over the subsequent months.

[646] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (OCHA) 6 - 19 December 1999.

looting and using children to work for them, in particular to go on food-finding missions. People reported the matter to senior RUF commanders, who then came to the town and advised the civilians to make a war committee, which they did. Later on, the RUF leader came and declared that the war was over.[647]

In the middle of November, RUF forces reopened to a certain extent the Magburaka-Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom), which at that time was still under their control. Vehicles that had been stolen by RUF members were driven along this highway as commercial transport; the vehicles were generally driven by civilians under the control of RUF members. However, potential passengers were frightened to board these vehicles and continued to use bush paths on foot.

h) Events in 2000

In January, United Nations Military Observers (MILOBs) started patrolling in the Northern Province and in particular in Magburaka.[648] By the middle of the month, the deployment of UN peacekeepers was near completion.[649] During this period, it was hoped that the disarmament camp would be open soon in Magburaka so that the disarmament process could properly start.[650]

In mid January 2000, one of the well known RUF commanders was shuttling between Malal Mara Chiefdom, Makeni and Magburaka, which led the people of Malal Mara Chiefdom to think he had other assignments elsewhere. At the end of the month, another group of RUF forces arrived, headed by a different commander. During the same period, more youths joined the Gbethi Society in the chiefdom.

RUF/AFRC forces from Magburaka spent much of January and February in most of the areas in the chiefdom where Kamajors had been, then went through the western part of the chiefdom to attack Mile 91. On their way, they abducted many young men in Magburaka to carry their arms and arrived at Kumrabai Junction, where they met strong resistance from the Kamajors and had to withdraw. On their way back, they passed by Masoko, where they asked civilians to show them where the Kamajors were. Despite one boy telling them there were no Kamajors in the village, the RUF/AFRC forces burnt down 10 houses and killed three civilians whom they suspected of being Kamajors. They then passed by Mayossoh, where they burnt 13 houses, and Robinkie, where they burnt down 11 houses together with the factory.

A Guinean Battalion of United Nations peacekeepers deployed in Mile 91 around March. During the same period, the DDR camp was still under construction in Magburaka.[651] The situation in

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[647] By the end of the year, the RUF leader and the former AFRC Chairman went to the Provinces to engage the disarmament process.

[648] IRIN West Africa, 6 January 2000.

[649] IRIN West Africa, 11 January 2000. One Kenyan Battalion was deployed in Magburaka and Makeni.

[650] On 20 October 1999, the Sierra Leone President had officially launched the start of the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) program during a ceremony at Wilberforce Barracks in Freetown. The start of the DDR program had been briefly delayed as it was originally planned to take place within six weeks of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999.

[651] IRIN West Africa, 17 March 2000.

Tonkolili District, however, was tense and deteriorated rapidly. In April 2000, RUF forces asked the UN peacekeepers to dismantle the reception centre[652] for combatants in Magburaka.[653]

Around 2 May 2000, the RUF/AFRC regional commander for the Northern Province came to Magburaka and ordered the ground commander that all the members under his command should take up arms to attack the UN peacekeeping forces in their areas of deployment, which were the Arabic College along the highway and the Water Works Campus.[654] The regional commander also declared that any RUF member failing to take up arms would be killed immediately. The ground commander for Magburaka mobilised his men and launched a first attack on the UN peacekeepers deployed at Water Works Campus. The fight lasted for three hours and, later, a gunship came to rescue the peacekeepers based at the Arabic College, who were then able to escape towards Mile 91.

However, the situation was more complicated for those based at Water Works Campus as they were surrounded by RUF/AFRC forces. The situation became extremely difficult as they run out of food and water. After an attempt to negotiate with the RUF/AFRC forces through the intermediary of the Paramount Chief had failed, they regrouped in their armoured vehicles and left their camp using the Makeni road through the Rokel River Bridge to Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom),[655] where SLA forces were deployed.[656] On their way, one of their armoured cars had an accident and two peacekeepers died. In Magburaka, RUF forces also destroyed the DDR camp.

Shortly after the demonstration outside the house of the RUF leader in Freetown in May 2000,[657] RUF/AFRC forces from Malal Mara Chiefdom crossed the Rokel River and went to Magbondo (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom), where they burnt down eight houses and took food. They moved on the same day to Rokankrr (south of Magbonto), where they took property, burnt houses and told the people they would "pay the price" for the death of their leader, as they thought he was dead following the public demonstration. The CDF who were allegedly there left the town, as they were insufficiently armed to confront the RUF/AFRC forces. The commander ordered his men to go on the rampage: they burnt nine houses, abducted eight women, raped three and took 20 young men for recruitment and to carry the stolen property to the RUF/AFRC base in Malal Mara Chiefdom.[658]

In May 2000, a Government gunship flew over Magburaka and fired on the Central Market, killing five civilians. The gunship went on to fire also on the Adams Hotel, which was the RUF

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[652] The reception centre is the first place where combatants were to go to disarm: they were to register and to give their weapons in there before being orientated in the DDR camp.

[653] According to UNAMSIL, the RUF forces on the ground asked for the dismantlement because they had not been informed about this centre by their leader: IRIN West Africa, 26 April 2000.

[654] These attacks coincided with the final departure from the country of the ECOMOG. BBC Online News Archive 3 May 2001. These attacks against were nation-wide, for similar actions took place at the same time in Bombali, Kambia and Kailahun Districts. Unsuccessful attacks on Mile 91 and Camp Charlie (Yoni Chiefdom) may also have taken place.

[655] Reports for Mabonto, located on the highway between Magburaka and Bumbuna confirmed that UN peacekeepers passed by the town in armoured vehicles towards Bumbuna.

[656] Around 10 May, Kenyans UN peacekeepers arrived in Kabala (Koinadugu District). IRIN West Africa 11 May 2000.

[657] See the analysis on the Western Area for 2000.

[658] No more information was available on these incidents.

headquarters in the town. However, many civilians were near the hotel and some fatalities were reported. Furthermore, as also happened in Kambia District, the gunship dropped leaflets intended for the RUF/AFRC forces, which explained that this time, the Government forces had come with minor weapons but if they had to come a second time, they would destroy the entire area.[659] As a result of these leaflets, many people left the area and went to Mile 91, where there was an IDP camp hosting thousands of people. On the way to Mile 91, which is 35 miles from Magburaka, some civilians died from starvation while others were killed by Guinean forces, who considered people coming from Magburaka to be RUF/AFRC members. In the IDP camp, a diarrhoea epidemic started and as a result, children and adults died, before Médecins sans Frontières came into the camp to control the disease.[660]

During that same month, a lot of vehicles and armoured cars came during the night to Makali (Konike Barina Chiefdom) with about 150 Zambian peacekeepers, who had been captured by RUF/AFRC forces in Bombali District. The UN peacekeepers were packed in a storeroom under a two-storey building. Most of the RUF/AFRC forces guarding these peacekeepers appeared to be under the age of 15. After four days, two senior RUF commanders came one night, loaded these Zambians onto a truck and took them away. Civilians were told that they were taken to Burkina, which was a codename for Kailahun.[661]

RUF/AFRC forces had occupied the headquarter town of Mabonto (Kafe Simira Chiefdom) since 1999. Civilians were still harassed, mainly for food, and some basic structures were put in place. Civilians were forced to give away their food and other items and a G5 committee[662] was established. A system of passes was established and civilians had to pay Le 500 for these passes, which enabled them to cross at checkpoints. Furthermore, mining villages in the chiefdom were asked to contribute 200 carat of gold dust every month or to pay the equivalent money if there was no gold dust. Allegedly in May, a senior RUF commander based in Magburaka came to Mabonto to oust one of the commanding officers posted there, who then moved towards Makeni with his forces. On one occasion, one member was killed by firing squad for raping a civilian. During the same period, a Government Jet bombed one house at Mabonto, injuring some civilians.[663]

Many battles took place at Tonkolili Village, on the boundary between the Kalansogoia and Kafe Simira Chiefdoms. RUF forces killed during those skirmishes with SLA forces from Bumbuna were buried in mass graves in the village. Other attacks were carried out in the area, like Thamsoberic, where some civilians were killed. Some acts directed towards civilians were still reported. For example, one man at Makama, north of Mabonto had his food taken away and his son was killed because he refused to tap palm wine for the RUF/AFRC forces. Every night, houses were searched for food and girls. One man was shot as he pleaded with some members not to cut the stomach of a pregnant woman to find out the sex of the baby.

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[659] The Government dropped such leaflets in various locations across the Northern Province.

[660] Since fighting resumed in the Northern Province, Mile 91 hosted thousands of IDPs. For example, in early June, 22,000 IDPs had found refuge in Mile 91. This was the greatest concentration of IDPs in the north: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (OCHA), 6-10 June 2000.

[661] No further information was available on this incident.

[662] Members of those G5 committees were appointed by the RUF/AFRC forces.

[663] No further information was available on these incidents.

In June, RUF/AFRC forces coming from Malal Mara Chiefdom came again to Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom, to a village called Marunia. They held a meeting in the village, the purpose of which was to enquire about the deployment of SLA forces, since they wanted to attack the highway. It is reported that those RUF/AFRC forces were furious because their leader had been arrested.[664] At this time, the RUF/AFRC forces burnt eight houses, raped four women and abducted 40 young men to be used in the fighting forces. While RUF/AFRC forces were taking property in the village, one man refused them entry into his house. The matter was reported to the RUF commander, who ordered his men to kill anybody who would challenge his authority. Before they left the town, RUF/AFRC forces tortured and killed 20 people and mutilated the hands of two others. The 40 young men who had been abducted were forced to carry the stolen property.

The security situation in the Mile 91 area was delicate, for the influx of civilians did not allow the UN peacekeepers to control the area properly. As RUF/AFRC forces were approaching the area in June, the UN decided to strengthen the number of peacekeepers deployed in Mile 91.[665] On 23 June, a group of heavily-armed RUF/AFRC forces equipped with armoured cars seized from peacekeepers came from Magburaka to Kumrabai Junction, after burning the remaining houses at Robis and Ferry Junction. These forces were planning to attack Mile 91 and at Kumrabai Junction, they killed eight people. The Gbethis passed information about this plan to the UN peacekeepers, who sent a helicopter gunship to Kumrabai Junction. However, they mistakenly bombed a village called Mamanso Kabla, hitting four houses and killing six people. This attack led the RUF/AFRC to move back to Kumrabai Junction, where they killed four people, and then to Mamilla Gba, a CDF base, where they burnt seven houses, killed five people, took property and abducted 10 boys below the age of 15 for recruitment into the fighting forces. They later on moved to Mathinka Bana, near Mamilla Gba, where they killed 18 civilians and dumped the bodies into an old water well. Most of the people who were killed were IDPs from Magburaka and Makeni. The RUF/AFRC forces left and crossed the River Rokel, in the north of the chiefdom.[666] In late June, a convoy of UN peacekeepers were ambushed near Mile 91 by RUF/AFRC forces. One of them died and four others were wounded.[667]

Between June and July, RUF/AFRC forces from Malal Mara Chiefdom tried to find common ground with the Gbethis in the chiefdom in order to avoid any confrontation. After a first attempt in June, both factions agreed in July on the establishment of a system by which each faction should not cross for any reason to the other faction's area. A buffer zone was thus created and the areas of each faction were separated by the Rokel River, although it did not prevent civilians from moving from one area to the other, either to meet relatives or to undertake business activities. It therefore seems that the RUF/AFRC forces concluded this deal with the Gbethis to be able to have total

664 The RUF leader was arrested shortly after the events of 8 May, when his bodyguards opened fire on the crowd that had gathered to demonstrate outside his house.
665 UNAMSIL press briefing, 23 June 2000 and IRIN West Africa. 26 June 2000.
666 During a UNAMSIL press briefing on 28 June, the UNAMSIL Force Commander who had made an air tour in the area disclosed that he did not see any burnt village.
667 BBC Online News Archives, 1 July 2000. During this period, the area between Masiaka (Kowa Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Mile 91 was under constant RUF/AFRC threat and attack. Masiaka was attacked on 3 June 2000: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report (OCHA), 26 June - 9 July 2000.

control over the civilians in one area.[668] Contributions required from civilians continued unabated and new forms of contributions were put in place. Civilians from one village were forced to push a truck loaded with stolen items to another village, where the lorry would be taken over by civilians from the second village. This continued until civilians reached the main road that links Magburaka to Makeni. The RUF commander in Malal Mara Chiefdom also planned to attack CDF in Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom and for this purpose, ordered civilians from Marokie, Manewa and Mamama to construct boats to cross the Rokel River.[669] Youths were actively trained for this planned attack, while acts of violence against civilians continued. Women were raped, more property was stolen and more dues were levied on the civilians to feed and equip the RUF/AFRC members. This attack was not carried out and in January 2001, a new commander was put in charge of Malal Mara Chiefdom; he did not behave as his predecessor had and neither imposed harassment on civilians nor tolerated it in this forces, who were punished if they behaved this way.

In August, an Indian contingent of UN peacekeepers replaced the Guinean contingent at Mile 91. Around this period, the situation in Yoni Chiefdom as well as in the Magburaka area appeared to be rather calm and little information was reported for the remaining months of 2000. UN peacekeepers encouraged the free movement of basic items like condiments, especially in RUF-controlled areas, for they told the civilians that if they could not obtain those items, the RUF forces may attack them. Sometimes after this deployment, a member of the RUF/AFRC was sent to Mile 91 to inform UNAMSIL that they were ready for peace. The member was intercepted by Gbethis, who brought him to the commander of the UN peacekeepers. A Gbethi was sent to Magburaka to convey a message about peace process.

However, the situation in Bumbuna (Kalansogoia Chiefdom) was alarming at this time, as thousands of civilians reached the SLA-controlled town in early August. Those civilians had fled the RUF/AFRC attacks and the Government bombing in Magburaka and Makeni (Bombali District) in May and June and had lived in the bush before reaching Bumbuna. Over the subsequent months, the humanitarian situation would deteriorate: civilians from surrounding villages that were under RUF control continued to arrive in Bumbuna, where food could only be supplied by air.[670]

The Lomé Peace Agreement was reactivated on 10 November in Abuja, Nigeria, where the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone signed a ceasefire agreement. The main provision of this agreement was the disarmament of the RUF forces and the deployment of UNAMSIL forces in RUF-held areas. On 8 December 2000, a meeting gathering RUF officers,[671] SLA forces, Gbethis, Kamajors and UN peacekeepers was held at Ferry Junction (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom). The RUF engaged to reopen all the roads in the RUF-controlled areas, to hand over all the remaining United Nations' equipment seized in May, to allow UNAMSIL deployment in RUF-controlled areas and to allow access to humanitarian assistance.[672]

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668 For civilians, the RUF commander revealed "his true colour" after the agreement with the Gbethis.

669 During the rainy season, the main rivers in Sierra Leone cannot be crossed by foot.

670 See among others, Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Reports (OCHA) 25 July - 07 August 2000, 28 August - 18 September 2000 and 28 October -13 November 2000, UNAMSIL press briefing, 4 October 2000.

671 The records only mention RUF, not AFRC or "Juntas". The UNAMSIL delegation comprised six officials and was led by the Force Commander while the RUF delegation comprised 14 members and was led by the RUF interim leader: UNAMSIL press briefing, 8 December 2000.

672 *Idem.*



In December 2000, the RUF regional commander for the Northern Province came to Mabonto (Kafe Simira Chiefdom) with over 200 armed men and women. At this time, the relation with civilians was bad as 10 cases of the rape of girls aged between 12 and 15 were reported. The RUF senior officer settled this problem and a G5 committee was set up; one of its roles was to collect rice and money for the forces. However, looting was still carried out by both the RUF and CDF forces. Youths were forced to carry the rice to the RUF/AFRC forces' houses while women were forced to pound the rice and to fetch water. The situation in the town continued to get worse as the most basic cooking and food items were becoming scarcer. Civilians were also forced to rehabilitate the road that lead to Mansoberie and Maranda, both of which are located in a mining area.

On 4 May 2001, a meeting to review the ceasefire signed on 10 November 2000 was convened between the RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone, UN representatives and the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, again in Abuja, Nigeria. On 15 May, the Government and the RUF agreed that accelerated and simultaneous disarmament of the RUF and CDF would be done District by District and that meetings would be held[673] for them to decide which districts would follow after this program began in Port Loko and Kambia Districts.[674]

As a sign the peace process was progressing, the different fighting factions organised football matches in July. The first match was played at Magima (Kholifa Mabang Chiefdom). That same month, five RUF members came to Camp Charlie and had a meeting with the UN peacekeepers.[675] However, a few skirmishes were still reported and on one occasion, on 5 September, RUF forces prevented SLA forces from bringing supplies to Bumbuna. Nevertheless, a supply convoy escorted by UN peacekeepers was able to reach Bumbuna on 26 September and go further to reach Kabala on 3 October.[676]

During the sixth meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR on 11 October, the parties agreed to have accelerated disarmament in Tonkolili District simultaneously with Pujehun District from 1 to 14 November.[677] The DDR camp was located at the Mathora Government Girls' Secondary School.[678] On 13 November, the UNAMSIL Force Commander witnessed the final phase of the disarmament[679] and 2,911 combatants had disarmed in the District by 20 November.[680]

3. Conclusion

To be drafted

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673 Further to this meeting, tripartite meetings of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration would be held every month.

674 UNAMSIL press briefing, 3 July 2001.

675 No more information was available on this meeting. It seems that this forum was organised to discuss the peace process and the disarmament program.

676 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 1 - 30 September 2001.

677 UNAMSIL press briefing, 12 October 2001.

678 UNAMSIL press briefing, 2 November 2001.

679 UNAMSIL press briefing, 16 November 2001.

680 Of these, 1,534 were RUF combatants and 1,377 were CDF combatants: UNAMSIL press briefing, 20 November 2001.

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NO PEACE WITHOUT JUSTICE



D. Eastern Province

a. Kailahun District

1. Introduction

Kailahun District is one of the three Districts in the Eastern Province of the Republic of Sierra Leone. It has a strategic position due to the fact that it shares borders with the Republics of Liberia on the east and Guinea on the northeast. It is also bordered by Kono District on the northwest and Kenema District on the west. Its headquarter town, Kailahun Town, is located in Luawa Chiefdom, in the north of the District a few miles from the Parrot Beak, the Guinean area that advances into Sierra Leone. This area would be greatly affected by the conflict, originally because it hosted thousands of refuges and later as it became the theatre of RUF cross-border attacks.

There are fourteen chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Dia	Baiwala
Jawie	Daru
Kissi Kama	Dea
Kissi Teng	Kangama
Kissi Tongi	Buedu
Luawa	Kailahun
Malema	Jojoima
Mandu	Mobai
Njaluahun	Segbwema
Peje Bongre	Manowa
Peje West	Bunumbu
Penguia	Sandaru
Upper Bambara	Pendembu
Yawei	Bandajuma

The geographical position of Kailahun District made it a strategic location for the entry of RUF/NPFL forces from Liberia into Sierra Leone. The District occupies about half of the border area between the two countries and is connected with the diamond-rich District of Kono. This made it possible for the forces to access funds easily through the sale of produce, diamonds and gold, with which they procured weapons and other logistics for the forces. It is therefore not surprising that the District was at least partially occupied throughout the whole period of the conflict. Two main roads allow penetration into the District from Liberia: in the north of the District through Kissi Teng Chiefdom and in the centre through Upper Bambara Chiefdom.

Kailahun District, particularly in the north and east, is composed of dense jungle, which affected the fighting in the District. Furthermore, the road that links Kenema Town to Kailahun Town, trough the main towns of Segbwema, Daru and Pendembu, is virtually impassable during the peak of the rainy season from July to August. The Moa River, which finds its source in the ocean in Pujehun District, flows in Kailahun District from the southwest to the north. The control of the few bridges spanning this river would be of the utmost importance, as is illustrated by the case of Daru (Jawei Chiefdom), where the town is separated from the SLA Moa Barracks by a bridge.



Aside from its mining activities, the wealth of the District comes mainly from the harvest of cash crops like cocoa and coffee. From the beginning of the conflict, the presence of the RUF in the District and their control over those resources would have dramatic economic consequences for the whole country.

The ten or more years of conflict that took place in Sierra Leone first started in the border towns of this District in 1991. The fighting forces coming from Liberia entered through border villages both in Upper Bambara and Kissi Tongi Chiefdoms. Initially, Sierra Leoneans and most of the outside world regarded these attacks not as the start of a conflict as such but more as cross-border raids by the Liberian forces waging war in Liberia. However, these two incursions into Sierra Leone – together with a third one that took place shortly after in Pujehun District – were the starting point of a systematic occurrence of several events leading to a large-scale conflict that spread throughout the country and lasted for over a decade.

The District was affected by the conflict through three discernable phases. The first one, which ran from March 1991 to the end of 1993, was characterised by the progression of RUF/NPFL forces into the District and their direct confrontation with SLA forces based mainly at the Moa Barracks in Daru (Jawei Chiefdom). RUF/NPFL forces would follow the same pattern when attacking and entering a village: they would gather the civilians in the Court Barrie and hold a meeting, introducing themselves as "freedom fighters" and deposing and replacing local authorities. Their arrival and stay was accompanied by the infliction of physical and mental violence on the people of the village, the killing of some people, in particular relatives of civilians working for the Government, as well as the abduction of members of the population, including children, for use as forced labour, as fighters, as cooks and as "wives". RUF/NPFL forces also engaged in widespread theft and property destruction, notably the burning of houses. Some members, mainly belonging to the NPFL, engaged in massive rounds of killing, raping and cannibalism, which led to infighting between the RUF and the NPFL forces. Throughout this first phase, SLA forces engaged the RUF/NPFL forces in their various positions and by the end of 1993 to the beginning of 1994, they had confined the RUF forces to the extreme east of the District. These military victories over the RUF/NPFL forces were accompanied with violence against civilians, in particular against alleged RUF/NPFL members or "collaborators". Screening centres were established for this purpose.

The second phase of the conflict encompassed 1994 to May 1997 and is characterised by a change in the RUF tactics. By 1994, most of the fighters were belonging to the RUF as the NPFL had withdrawn to Liberia. The RUF engaged in guerrilla warfare, took control of the bush, began to regain control of the areas previously under SLA control and raided villages. In 1996, Kamajors emerged in the District and, together with the SLA, defeated the RUF in some areas of the District. Although the Abidjan Peace Agreement was signed on 30 November 1996, fighting between the RUF on one side and the SLA and Kamajors on the other side resumed in early 1997.

During the third phase, which ran from May 1997 to the completion of the disarmament process in January 2002, RUF forces came out of the bush and merged with the AFRC regime. Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces retreated to Kailahun District, where they established a War Office, the administrative headquarter of the forces. Around

this time, more men were initiated into the Kamajor society. ECOMOG forces deployed in the District and engaged the forces on land and by air. Assisted by Kamajors, they obtained victories over RUF/AFRC positions but were unable to take over their main strongholds. RUF/AFRC forces continued attacking villages and ECOMOG positions; following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999, disagreement between senior RUF members emerged over the disarmament process. RUF opposition to this process reached its peak in May 2000 with the abduction of UN peacekeepers. Throughout 2000 and early 2001, RUF/AFRC forces were still active in the District and engaged in cross-border raids into Guinea.

It should be borne in mind that unlike other Districts, the information available for Kailahun District was often chaotic and incomplete, especially for the period following 1994, partly due to the massive displacement of the population. Indeed, from the start of the conflict, a lot of inhabitants of this District fled to neighbouring countries (Guinea, Liberia) and did not come back for years, while others, although they stayed in the District, regularly moved from one chiefdom to another, fleeing attacks. The figures of the rate of internally displaced people in the District throughout the conflict was very high; indeed, OCHA reports show that Kailahun District was one of the most affected Districts in terms of internally displaced people (IDP).[681] Furthermore, as Kailahun District was the only District to have always been controlled to varying degrees by RUF/NPFL, RUF and, later, RUF/AFRC forces, people who stayed were forced to live with them for such a long time that single events are often blurred in more general information.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1991

On 23 March 1991, the first group of RUF/NPFL forces from Liberia entered through the border town of Bomaru (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) in the central part of Kailahun District and proceeded further south. A second group crossed the border with Liberia on 27 March 1991, entering the border town of Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) in the north-eastern part of the District. These forces opened two distinct entry points into the District and would join up at Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) in April.

The forces that launched these two flanks were composed by a majority of National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL) members,[682] a fighting force that had been challenging the Liberian Government since 1989, together with about 230 Revolutionary United Front (RUF) members trained in Liberia[683] at Camp Namna.[684] The Sierra Leoneans within the movement who were trained in Liberia were called "Vanguards", as opposed to the new recruits who were called "junior commandos".

Those attacks surprised civilians, who thought this incursion would not last long and was only a cross-border raid form the forces fighting in Liberia who were in search of food. Hundreds of these

[681] OCHA Sierra Leone Encyclopedia: http://www.humanitarianinfo.org/slis.

[682] It is estimated that at the time of the first attacks, those NPFL forces were roughly 5,000 in number.

[683] In 1989, the NPFL emerged in Liberia under the leadership of Charles Taylor and began an uprising against the Government of the then President Samuel Doe. In 1990, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent a peacekeeping force to Liberia and the President, Samuel Doe, was killed by a splinter group of the NPFL. The Economic Community of West African States Cease Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces deployed a battalion near Freetown at the International Airport in Lungi as a rear base for their forces in Liberia.

[684] For more information on those fighting forces, see section [X].

civilians fled their villages both within the territory of Sierra Leone and outside its borders into Liberia.

The first group attacked the border town of Bomaru (south-east of Upper Bambara Chiefdom), which had little military manpower in terms of Sierra Leone Army (SLA) forces deployed along the Liberian border. The RUF/NPFL forces[685] killed eight civilians and three SLA members as they captured the town. The SLA forces were overpowered and left the town, heading for the Moa Barracks[686] in Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), the most important SLA deployment in Kailahun District. On 25 March, the RUF/NPFL forces proceeded further south to attack the towns of Baiwala and Sakiema (Dia Chiefdom). The RUF/NPFL forces entered Baiwala coming from two distinct directions: some forces passed through Seinga, a town located close to the border with Liberia, while others came from Bomaru. They encountered stiff resistance from the SLA forces, but eventually, as had happened at Bomaru, the SLA retreated and the RUF/NPFL forces were able to take control of the town. At Baiwala, the RUF/NPFL forces set some houses on fire, raped young girls[687] and killed people whom they considered to be important personalities, on the accusation that they were "APC people". Breaking down doors using the butts of guns and then looting the houses was also common, as forces were looking for money and other items they needed, although the forces presented their actions as a way to make sure there was no enemy hiding in the houses. They also wrote the letters "RUF" on the walls of some houses. Following this attack, civilians packed their belongings and headed for Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), as the SLA base appeared to be safer.

At Sakiema (Dia Chiefdom), some civilians who had escaped from Baiwala found a brief respite in the bush, thinking that the forces would only use the main road as their announced goal was to go to Freetown. However, they were discovered by RUF/NPFL forces, brought to the town, put under gunpoint and ordered not to move, or they would be shot. The RUF/NPFL forces gathered some civilians at the Court Barrie and asked them whether there was any of "Momoh's soldiers"[688] in the town. When the civilians answered that the SLA forces were at Daru, the RUF/NPFL forces stated they would kill all of them if they found any SLA member or heard any weapons being fired. The commander told the civilians that from now on everything in the town belonged to the "RUF Government", dismissed the Town Chief and appointed a Town Commander together with a Town Mother. Civilians in the town were forced to contribute to the "revolutionary effort" by providing the forces with food as well as going in search of food and processing palm oil. When food was not available, RUF/NPFL forces would tie up the appointed Town Commander and beat him. The RUF/NPFL forces also introduced a set of laws, which were explained to the inhabitants by the RUF commander. One of these laws was that any civilian captured by RUF forces should not attempt to leave the area under their control for areas controlled by SLA forces. Civilians were also told to go to the bush and bring back to the town their relatives who were in hiding; the RUF

[685] These forces were comprised of Liberian mercenaries speaking Liberian languages like Mano, Pele and Gio, while others were Sierra Leoneans, speaking the Mende, Temne and Krio languages. They wore country clothes, carried talismans and other charms and had red bandanas tied around their heads.

[686] The Moa Barracks are strategically located at the entrance of Daru on the road to Kenema town and to access it from the north-east, one has to cross the Moa River. It would be a RUF/NPFL target throughout 1991 and beyond.

[687] Their ages could not be ascertained from the records.

[688] The President of Sierra Leone was at that time J. S. Momoh and accordingly, this term refers to SLA forces.

commander stressed that anybody caught in the bush would be considered as an enemy and, accordingly, would be killed.

From these towns located in Dia Chiefdom, RUF/NPFL forces advanced westwards to the headquarter town of Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom). This town was captured on 11 April as the SLA forces had apparently left the town earlier. The RUF/NPFL forces entered the town with an armoured tank they had captured from the SLA forces. As most of the civilians were indoors, the forces banged on the doors to make people come out of their houses, threatening to kill them or to burn their house. Most civilians, including children, were imprisoned in the town mosque. The Chiefdom Speaker, a regular policeman and a court clerk were killed. The fighting forces introduced themselves as the "Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone" and explained that they had come as "freedom fighters" to free the country from APC oppression. During the time of their stay in the town, they passed a strict rule that no one was allowed to call on the name of God or to pray; anyone caught violating this law would be tortured and killed. Furthermore, all property was declared to be owned by the "Revolution". Some of the RUF/NPFL forces began raping women and young girls. They also took property of the people in the town. During the following days (12 and 13 April), a lot of other civilians were killed. On 13 April 1991, the Paramount Chief of Mandu Chiefdom was brought from Levuma (north of the chiefdom) to Mobai and killed two days later. He was the first Paramount Chief to be killed by the RUF/NPFL forces. The killing of the Chief caused the civilians to lose confidence in the revolution, as the RUF/NPFL presented and called themselves. Similarly to what happened in the other towns, civilians were told to bring their relatives out of the bushes. For example, on 23 April, six people who had left their hiding places in the bush and came back to the town were accused of being spies and were killed. This incident was later reported to the RUF leader when he came to visit his troops in May.

Although the exact dates could not be ascertained, towns located in Jawie Chiefdom were attacked and captured at around the same time between April and June, including Benduma (Jawie Chiefdom), a town close to Daru. In order to counteract any attempt by the SLA forces based in Daru to recapture the town, the RUF/NPFL forces also established a defence base at Baiima (Mandu Chiefdom) on the road leading from Daru to the east and the north of the District. Another defensive position was established at Potoru (Jawie Chiefdom), where there is a bypass bush road leading to Benduma. Some of the RUF/NPFL forces settled at Kuiva (Jawie Chiefdom), which is on the main highway to Daru, and at Patama, a small village on the road leading to Daru via Bombohun (Jawie Chiefdom). When they entered Benduma, the RUF/NPFL forces gathered the civilians in the centre of the town and forced them to kill their animals and to cook for them. Some civilians who managed to escape the town went to Daru to pass on the information about the attack to the SLA forces. During that time, Guinean troops came to reinforce the SLA forces based at the Moa Barracks at Daru.[689] Shortly after their arrival, those Guinean forces succeeded in repelling the RUF/NPFL forces from Benduma by using mortar bombs, although neither the Guinean forces nor the SLA forces then deployed at Benduma. The repelled RUF/NPFL forces went to Gbiima (Jawie Chiefdom), which was already under their control.

[689] As early as 1991, foreign troops, namely Guineans and Nigerians, fought alongside the SLA, pursuant to bilateral treaties between their respective states and Sierra Leone.

The RUF/NPFL forces entered the chiefdom headquarter of Jojoima (Malema Chiefdom, south of Mandu Chiefdom) on 12 April 1991. Before the attack, Jojoima was overcrowded with civilians fleeing the areas under RUF/NPFL control and chiefs in the town had received letters from the RUF that they would come to the town on 12 April. In the town, the forces met with a rich farmer and asked him for money. The forces then apparently left the town for some days before returning on 19 April 1991. When they came back, they killed the renowned master farmer and his wife together with many other civilians. The forces also stole property, raped young girls aged between 14 and 20, whom they made their "wives" and conscripted children. Young men were forced to carry loads for them, mainly to Liberia, and they would be killed if they failed to do so. From Jojoima, they raided the surrounding villages, forcing civilians to lead them on these raids. At Sembehun village, for example, they stole one diamond dealer's land cruiser.

On 15 April, the RUF/NPFL forces entered Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) from the direction of Bomaru in the south of the chiefdom, firing gunshots as they entered. As they did in the other towns, the RUF/NPFL forces gathered the civilians in the Court Barrie, introduced themselves as "freedom fighters", explained that the town was now under the "RUF Government" and asked the civilians whether there were any SLA forces or police officers in the town. Civilians were subjected to severe harassment, their property was taken and they were beaten, raped and killed. For example, an RUF member shot two boys because they did not obey a command he had given them. Several other killings were done during the two weeks they remained in the town. One civilian was asked to show the direction to Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom) to one young RUF/NPFL member, who then rode a bicycle to Kailahun Town (17 miles north east from Pendembu) to tell the other front who had entered through Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) and who had reached Kailahun Town to meet the south flank at Pendembu. Shortly after, still in April, RUF/NPFL forces from Kailahun Town came to join the other group at Pendembu.

The second group mentioned at the beginning of this chapter had entered the country in the northernmost part of the District in order to establish a base at Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) on 27 March 1991. They also came from Liberia and killed a first army officer at a customs town called Beidu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom). On the same day, they reached Koindu, a strategic international commercial market centre close to the borders with Liberia and Guinea and located on the highway that leads to Kailahun Town. During this wave of attacks, this group captured all the main towns on the highway. Koindu was renamed "Kuwait" by the forces due to the valuables that it had and for two days they killed people, stole their property and burnt down houses. At this point, civilians began leaving the town and went to Guinea or inland seeking rescue. It is reported that these fighters called themselves "freedom fighters", claiming to be fighting in order to liberate Sierra Leone.

On 29 March, some RUF/NPFL forces advanced into Kissi Kama Chiefdom (west of Kissi Teng Chiefdom). At Dia (Kissi Kama Chiefdom), one Fullah[690] businessman was killed. At Njaah in April, RUF/NPFL forces entered the town firing indiscriminately. They killed one SLA member who had retreated from Koindu, beheaded him and displayed his head on top of a big stone to the civilians

[690] The Fullah are an ethnic group living mainly in the north and east of the country who were targeted, together with civilians originating from Lebanon, by the RUF/NPFL forces, who believed they were the cause of inequality among Sierra Leonean citizens.

they captured in the village. They gathered the civilians, explained they were "freedom fighters" and appointed a Town Commander. Those communications were made with the assistance of an interpreter, as the commander was Liberian.

On 1 April 1991, two trucks loaded with SLA forces headed for Koindu through Kangama (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) to launch an attack on the RUF/NPFL forces.[691] The first battle between the two forces took place the same day at Dambo, a town on the main highway close to Koindu, in Kissi Kama Chiefdom (west of Kissi Teng Chiefdom). The RUF/NPFL forces overpowered the SLA forces, who had to retreat to Kangama. Dozens of SLA forces were killed during this battle. They were further dislodged from Kangama after several unsuccessful attempts to repel the RUF/NPFL forces from Koindu. Some of the retreating SLA forces arriving at Kangama created panic among the civilian population as, similarly to what was happening in the southern part of the District, the SLA forces were quickly overpowered and did not put up strong resistance to the invading forces. Some of these SLA forces were reported to take off their uniforms, hide their weapons and flee to Guinea with the thousands of civilians who were on their way. Other SLA forces withdrew to the chiefdom headquarter of Buedu (south of Kissi Teng Chiefdom).

RUF/NPFL forces captured Kangama on 6 April 1991. While in the town, RUF/NPFL forces began inflicting violence on civilians and their property. The house of the Paramount Chief was burnt down and his property taken away. The RUF/NPFL conscripted young boys and girls, whose age is unclear,[692] who were then trained and given arms and ammunition. Cases of sexual violence were reported and in one instance, an old woman from Liberia who had found refuge in the town was raped by one of the RUF/NPFL commanders; her body was later found in the bush. The first man to be killed in the town was a Fullah businessman. Seven people were also killed by the RUF/NPFL commander allegedly for having close links with SLA forces or because they had once been in the SLA; their bodies were subsequently burnt.

In the evening hours of 10 April 1991, the RUF/NPFL forces armed with sophisticated weapons like Rocket Propelled Grenades (RPGs), AK47, AK58 and other guns launched an attack on Buedu. At this time, SLA forces had withdrawn from Koindu and large numbers of civilians had started to flee to Guinea. The next day, the SLA forces retreated to Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom) after losing three men in the battle. The RUF/NPFL forces shot and killed seven civilians and burnt down public buildings and some private houses.

On 13 April, RUF forces entered the District headquarter, Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom), in the north of the District. RUF/NPFL forces on their way to Kailahun Town killed the Town Chief at Sandeya (Luawa Chiefdom). From this date on, Kailahun Town would be nicknamed "Burkina Faso". The RUF/NPFL forces entered the town from the two main roads heading east towards Buedu and Koindu.[693] From Kailahun Town, the RUF/NPFL forces spread across Luawa

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691 Those SLA forces probably came from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) to reinforce SLA forces based at Koindu. However, according to one source, those SLA forces at Koindu were new recruits who were still undergoing training.

692 In the Sierra Leone context, the term "young people" could refer to anyone up to their mid to late thirties, but probably does not include people under 15.

693 No information concerning the fatalities for Kailahun Town was reported.

Chiefdom. At Sandeya on 20 April, for example, RUF/NPFL forces told civilians to go to Kailahun Town, where they were lined up and given rice the forces had stolen from shops to take back to their villages. However, one man who had brought rice to his family, who were hiding in the bush, and who came back to ask for more rice was accused of giving rice to hidden SLA forces and was shot dead. Another civilian was also killed that day near the town clinic, accused by the forces of stealing some drugs. Civilians then returned to their various villages but without their youths, as young men and girls, including children, were kept by the forces to be trained at a training base opened in Kailahun Town shortly after the RUF had taken control of the town. Those who tried to escape were killed. Since its inception, the RUF movement was organised and had an internal structure; one RUF commander, occupying the "G5" position, was in charge of opening new training bases as their territory gains progressed and as they moved further inland. It should be noted that this massive opening of training bases did not prevent the establishment of smaller ones, often at the war front by the commander in charge of the area.

During the three months following their entry into Sierra Leone, the RUF/NPFL forces were stealing, raping and abducting people and training those abductees for battle. Many women were abducted to be slaves, their heads shaved so that they could be easily identified and could not run away. Abductees who tried to escape were beheaded by RUF/NPFL forces and their heads were put on sticks at checkpoints as a warning to others.

During the first months of the conflict, most of the commanders were members of the NPFL and therefore spoke a different dialect than that spoken by Sierra Leoneans. Civilians were frightened of these forces and they did not dare to tell them they could not understand what they were being asked, although some people were killed for answering the "wrong way". For example, on 27 April 1991, on the highway that leads to Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom), two men who had come to Pendembu to buy salt were interrogated at a checkpoint. As they could not understand the Liberian English spoken by the NPFL forces in charge of the checkpoint, they were mistaken for spies. The NPFL commander told the two men to step back six feet from them and shot them with an AK47. Their bodies were then decapitated and their heads put on sticks to frighten other people.

The leader of the RUF came from Liberia to visit his troops at Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), Sakeima (Dia Chiefdom) and Baiwala (Dia Chiefdom) in late April or early May 1991. He visited his troops at Mobai, where he presented himself to the civilians as the leader of the revolution, claiming that they were fighting to remove the incumbent APC regime from power and stating that he would fight until he reached Freetown. He further promised the civilians that he would bring facilities such as free education and free medical care to the people of Sierra Leone and that equal rights would be given to all Sierra Leoneans. On this occasion, the Public Relations Officer appointed by the RUF/NPFL forces at Mobai explained to the RUF leader that his members were killing people for no good reason, with reference to the six people killed on 23 April. However, although the RUF leader told the civilians that he had not instructed his men to kill civilians, this statement sounded false to the civilians who did not believe in his sincerity.

From Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) SLA forces recaptured Benduma (Jawie Chiefdom), forcing the RUF/NPFL forces to retreat to Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom) and its environs where they forcefully conscripted young men and women into their movement. The RUF/NPFL forces established a

training base at Baiwala to train young men and women whom they called "junior commandos".[694] At first, RUF/NPFL forces appealed to the civilians to join them voluntarily, which some did, but as their number was not sufficient, they started arresting young men and women. At Baiwala and Sakiema (Dia Chiefdom) for example, young men and women were lined up and anybody who tried to refuse joining the forces was seriously beaten, some being instructed to roll on the ground while RUF/NPFL forces fired in the air or close to the person on the ground, killing some of them. In the process of recruiting junior commandos, the girls were used as sex slaves and some were trained as junior commandos. This prompted a lot of young men and women to flee into the bush. In several cases the forces opened fire on the civilians in the bush and food and many other items were taken from them.

The RUF/NPFL forces extended their attacks to other villages in Luawa and Kissi Tongi Chiefdoms, crossed the Moa River that divides the District in two and advanced on Peje Bongre, Peje West, Penguia and Yawei Chiefdoms. At Dawa, a border town in Kissi Tongi Chiefdom, RUF/NPFL killed nine civilians on 15 April. Some of the bodies were cut into pieces and cooked for the forces to eat that day. During the same attack, some houses were burnt down. Dawa became important for the RUF/NPFL forces, as it was located on one of their supply routes. On 17 April, RUF/NPFL forces attacked Kodu Bendu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom), firing indiscriminately and killing civilians. Some civilians, including children under 15 years old, were abducted to join the forces.[695]

Between 18 and 27 April, RUF/NPFL forces captured Manowa (Peje Bongre Chiefdom), the first chiefdom headquarter encountered after crossing the Moa River. During their attack on the town, they killed some civilians and burnt some houses.[696] Peje West Chiefdom (west of Peje Bongre Chiefdom, bordered on the west by Malegohun Chiefdom in Kenema District) was also affected during the same period.[697]

On 1 May, the G2 commander[698] in Kailahun Town ordered general looting as his men needed to eat and goats and sheep were taken away. During that process, vehicles were also taken away. Some women were raped, civilians killed, houses burnt and men trying to oppose the RUF/NPFL actions were severely beaten. Shortly afterwards, another RUF commander in charge of the Bandajuma Sinneh area (Luawa Chiefdom) declared that those stealing, raping and killing actions should stop and any commando involved in such actions would be killed in the presence of the civilians. Therefore, on 27 May, one commando who raped two women who had gone in the bush to fetch firewood was taken to Bandajuma and killed by the commander, who expressly stated that this kind of action should stop. However, this incident did not please other RUF/NPFL forces and soon after, another group invaded and burnt down Bandajuma and Sandeya, killing four people.

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[694] One report mentions that this training base was opened in May but this needs to be carefully considered, as there is no exact date for the information preceding the opening of the training base.

[695] For both of these attacks, reports mentioned that the fighting forces came from Liberia. However, it could not be ascertained with certainty whether this meant that those forces were coming directly from Liberia when they launched those attacks or whether this was a general reference to the RUF/NPFL forces who had originally entered Sierra Leone from Liberia.

[696] No further details could be obtained on this attack.

[697] RUF/NPFL forces reached this chiefdom between April and May.

[698] See section [X] for a description of the hierarchy within the RUF forces.

On 4 May 1991 RUF/NPFL forces entered Tangabu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom), led by a Liberian commander. This commander killed one man in the village as he said that since he started fighting in Liberia, he kills one person per day. By this time, RUF/NPFL forces had already spread to the Kissi Chiefdoms (Kissi Kama, Kissi Teng and Kissi Tongi) and Luawa Chiefdom. The commander gave orders to his forces to rape young girls in the village; old women were forced to pound rice and go fishing. Six of the members raped a 10 year-old girl on 8 July 1991, who later died from her wounds. Around this time, the RUF leader also visited his troops at Buedu, where he outlined to the civilian population the aims and objectives of his revolution. According to him, the main target was to eliminate the APC regime and its followers and, further, to liberate Sierra Leoneans from mental slavery and other acts imposed on them by the APC government. By June 1991, Kissi Teng Chiefdom was already under the control of the RUF/NPFL forces.

The RUF/NPFL also opened a training base at a small village called Bayama, three miles from Tangabu town. The training base was located at the school and young boys were forced to join the training; those who refused were tied up and imprisoned.[699]

In early May, RUF/NPFL forces reached Yawei Chiefdom, in the northeast of the District,[700] remaining there until the end of the year. From there, they patrolled the surrounding villages, such as Massayema in the south of the chiefdom and Ngeblama in the centre of the chiefdom, west of the chiefdom headquarter of Bandajuma. When they first arrived, most notably at Baraka, they introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to redeem Sierra Leoneans from the tyranny of the APC regime. This statement inspired some civilians who had indeed suffered from the APC regime to welcome the arrival of the forces and some voluntarily joined them; this happened not only in this chiefdom but in many other chiefdoms as well. However, as soon as people heard or witnessed the first killing or other acts of violence committed against the population, most of them withdrew their initial confidence in the RUF movement.

Thirty RUF/NPFL members entered Woloma (Penguia Chiefdom) in mid May and forced civilians to gather in the Court Barrie, hitting some old men and women in the head with the butts of their guns. They stayed in the town for two days before 20 of them headed for surrounding villages together with some young men and women from Woloma. In the nearby villages, as they could not find young men and women, they beat elderly people, hoping that those people would ask their children to come out of their hiding places, as a result of which two of the elderly people were killed. A week later, they went to Sengema, a small village near Woloma, where the commander killed two boys and drank their blood. The RUF/NPFL forces were leaving Woloma on a daily basis to search for food, money and young people to conscript in the surrounding villages, returning to Woloma in the evening. At Sengema, young men and women were trained for three hours a day on how to use their weapons. In mid June, this group was reinforced by a group of 50 men coming from Kailahun Town. The commander of this new group immediately requested a "black goat", referring to human beings killed and eaten by the RUF/NPFL forces. Two days later, as a punishment for the escape of two civilians, the RUF/NPFL forces killed four people by cutting their throats, drank their blood and cooked and ate parts of their bodies. Among the RUF/NPFL forces, this practice was mostly

[699] It seems that the term "imprisonment" used to report this event refers to the action of locking a civilian up somewhere. No more information could be obtained on this event.

[700] Yawei Chiefdom is bordered on the north by Gbane Chiefdom (Kono District).

carried out by the NPFL members. About two weeks later, SLA forces launched a successful attack on the town and repelled the RUF/NPFL forces. However, a large number of well-armed RUF/NPFL forces later returned, overpowered the few SLA who were in the town and recaptured it. The raids in the neighbouring villages started again.[701]

One of the main missions given by the NPFL leader to his forces who entered Sierra Leone was to capture and dislodge the SLA forces from the Moa Barracks at Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), in order to deprive SLA and Economic Community of West African States Cease Fire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces based in Sierra Leone of one of their most strategic locations and, consequently, to restrict ECOMOG activity in Liberia.[702] However, it appears that after the initial attacks on Sierra Leone territory, NPFL forces lost this objective for a while and were more engaged in stealing property and inflicting violence on civilians as is demonstrated by the events described above.

After a first unsuccessful RUF/NPFL attack on Daru Town, the forces that led the attack had to retreat to Baiima (Mandu Chiefdom) and SLA forces based at Moa barracks were reinforced by Guinean forces. A lot of food items were stolen during the retreat and brought to RUF/NPFL bases at Mobai and Baiima, where many civilians accused of being government collaborators were killed. SLA forces began launching canon and dragon missiles on RUF/NPFL positions at Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom) and beyond, at Baiima. Some of the rockets hit private dwellings and in one incident at Baiima, some civilians were killed and others wounded when a rocket hit their house. In June, the RUF/NPFL forces led by a well-known NPFL commander regrouped their forces from different positions in Mandu and Dia Chiefdom at Baiima (Mandu Chiefdom) from where they launched their attack on the Moa Barracks. This attack was not successful as they were repelled by the SLA and Guinean forces. During this attack, the NPFL commander was killed on the bridge that separates the barracks from the town.[703]

Following this general attack, the RUF/NPFL forces would launch many more attacks, sometimes using bypass roads such as the one through Malema Village (Jawie Chiefdom) without managing to capture the Moa Barracks. At this time, Mandu Chiefdom (east of Jawie Chiefdoms) and some villages and towns of Jawie Chiefdom such as Kutoma, Bombohun and Benduma were under RUF/NPFL control. Those three villages were used as informants' places to pass on information to the RUF/NPFL strongholds in Gbiima, Moiba and Mandu (Mandu Chiefdom), where the RUF/NPFL had retreated after the unsuccessful attack on the Moa Barracks. The RUF/NPFL forces lost a lot of their members during these continuous attacks and a lot of civilians were killed. In December, at Gbaama, a village close to Moa Barracks, the RUF/NPFL forces killed 62 civilians, who were later buried by SLA forces from the Moa Barracks.

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[701] The exact dates of these events could not be obtained from the records or from open source materials.

[702] It has to be remembered that at the time of the March attacks, Sierra Leone territory (Lungi Airport) was used by the ECOMOG forces as a base to fight the NPFL forces in Liberia.

[703] It appeared that this commander was killed by one of his colleagues, another NPFL commander, who at the time was a battalion commander.

In Macca Kpakpeibu (Yawei Chiefdom)[704] on 21 July, a group of 110 RUF/NPFL[705] members entered the town with heavy firing and assembled the 60 inhabitants, including children, in the Court Barrie. Some civilians were told to bury the 20 people the RUF/NPFL had killed so they dug a big pit, put the bodies in it and covered it over. This group made daily patrols of the surrounding villages, capturing civilians who were then sent to Kailahun Town or Geima (Luawa Chiefdom) to be trained or used to work for the forces by carrying loads. On one occasion, those RUF/NPFL forces gathered 800 civilians and sent them to Geima to work in farms. During their stay, they sexually assaulted women, including the elderly. In mid August, some SLA forces from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) came to the village and repelled the RUF/NPFL forces from the village, as at the time of this attack, the SLA were 200 in number while the RUF forces were only 30. The SLA did not, however, stay in the village and instead went back to Daru.[706]

During the harvest season, civilians from Senguma (Penguia Chiefdom) were forced to work for RUF/NPFL forces and had to carry the produce of the harvest on their heads to Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom). Fifty RUF/NPFL members entered Baraka on 10 May and stayed in the village for some months, raiding the surrounding area in search for food. During their raids, they always took civilians with them to carry the property they would take.

On 10 October, RUF/NPFL forces attacked Levoma (Yawei Chiefdom), gathered the civilians and appointed some to carry the property they had just taken to the chiefdom headquarter of Manowa (Peje Bongre Chiefdom, south-east of Yawei Chiefdom), which was used by the RUF/NPFL as their route to Camp Zogoda[707] in Geima. One of the civilians who could not carry the load that was allocated to him, as it was too heavy, was severely beaten. Other civilians were told to bury the people the RUF/NPFL forces had killed in the village, among them an old woman, who was killed in her house, as she was unable to run.

For two months between October and December, the RUF/NPFL forces transferred their base from Kailahun Town to Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), which was also their headquarters.[708]

Following the retreat after the attack on Moa Barracks in late June, NPFL forces who had established strong positions on the east side of the Moa River embarked on massive looting, raping and killing of civilians, together with acts of cannibalism. These practices were carried out by NPFL forces at the end of 1991, throughout 1992 and part of 1993 and not the RUF forces. Different

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704 This town is located on the road that links Bandajuma, Yawei Chiefdom headquarter (and further north, Kono District) to Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom) and Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) in the south of Kailahun District.

705 The two forces were dressed differently as the NPFL members were dressed in "Ronko", namely country clothes, while the RUF members were wearing civilian attire with red bandanas tied around their heads. Some of the NPFL members were from Burkina Faso.

706 It is possible that this attack took place in August 1992.

707 This means 'land of freedom'.

708 Pendembu would remain their headquarter throughout 1992 and part of 1993.

rounds of practices called 'Tap' were accomplished throughout this period, starting with Tap 20 in late 1991.[709]

RUF vanguards and junior commandos, inferior in number - even if by October 1991, almost 2,000 new recruits had already been trained – were unable to prevent or protest against those NPFL practices. However, in October 1991, the RUF leader welcomed the idea of an RUF commander opening a jungle base unknown to the NPFL forces. This hidden base was opened near a village called Gborworbugao, about 16 miles from Kailahun Town and about 150 new recruits (captured civilians) began to receive training in conventional and guerrilla warfare.

b) Events in 1992

In January 1992, the RUF leader visited his troops at Baraka (Yawei Chiefdom) where he had a meeting with the troops and the civilians. He explained to the civilians the objectives of his movement and later instructed the troops to be always on the offensive. Also in January, a new base was opened at Jborbu Gao (south of Luawa Chiefdom) but was never used.

On 3 January 1992, RUF/NPFL forces based in Tangabu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) killed four men from Luawa Chiefdom who had entered Tangabu without passes; their bodies were burnt and thrown into the bush. They further explained that any civilian found not staying in the area where they lived would be killed. Later, in April, a woman was killed for having more than one lover. At the beginning of June 1992, the first boys who had been trained at this base were sent to the warfront, leading and showing routes to the RUF/NPFL forces and also assisting them in identifying the civilians who used to hold any position within the APC regime. Thus, in this area composed of the three Kissi Chiefdoms, the RUF/NPFL forces had control and no fighting with SLA forces was reported. However, internal fighting arose between forces from the RUF and those from the NPFL, which marked the start of a split between the two factions, leading to the withdrawal of the NPFL forces from Sierra Leone.

A reinforcement group entered from Liberia in February 1992 through the border town of Batwoma (Luawa Chiefdom), south of Kailahun Town. This group held a meeting with the civilians at Ngebgema (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) at which they informed them about the aims and objectives of their movement. They stated that the town was now under their control and chose a private dwelling to host their office. The commander in charge of this group asked one of the civilians to point out all the APC government personnel such as police officers, SLA members, civil servants and foreigners, including the Lebanese.[710] However, as Ngebgema was a small village, none of those categories of persons were to be found in the village. The movement of civilians was restricted and none of them was allowed to leave the village without a pass signed by the commander.

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[709] It should be noted that the information from the records is rather confusing on the identification of those groups as the different groups and the dates of those events are mixed. What is clear, however, is that there was no difference between those different groups with respect to the type of violence they committed against civilians.

[710] Despite many living in Sierra Leone for generations, the Lebanese – who make up the majority of businessmen in the country – are more often than not unable to obtain Sierra Leonean citizenship and are therefore referred to and treated as foreigners.

In early March 1992, the RUF leader visited this group at Ngebgema, the civilians having been gathered at the Court Barrie for the occasion, and he mentioned that about 15,000 men and women had now been trained to fight in Sierra Leone. The RUF leader explained how the APC regime was a corrupt one and how it had toured the country giving privileges to foreigners, especially businessman, rather than to Sierra Leoneans. He made it clear that civilians were no longer under the authority of the APC government but under RUF control, that every civilian had to obey RUF commanders in their controlled areas and that whatever was obtained by his RUF forces at the war front was for them, as they were not paid. He concluded his statement by saying that all young girls and boys had to join the movement for their country. The commander of the group therefore forced young boys and girls to join the RUF to be trained, to serve as carriers or, for the girls, to become "wives".[711] It is interesting to note that the RUF appointed teachers to educate the children they had abducted, allegedly as part of their will to be and to behave as a new rulers of Sierra Leone.

In March, an NPFL member coming to fight the SLA troops at Daru entered Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom), where he killed a civilian as a human sacrifice for his upcoming battle.[712] At Manowa (Peje Bongre Chiefdom), RUF/NPFL forces made another human sacrifice. The forces had captured a large group of civilians from various towns and villages and gathered them in the town. One out of every ten people was killed as a ritual sacrifice and their bodies were thrown into the river.

In an attempt to repel the NPFL forces out of Sierra Leone, some RUF vanguards decided to use the services of the Poro society,[713] a male secret society at Mende Buima (Peje Bongre Chiefdom), which was full of NPFL forces using it as an assembly area in Kailahun District. The principle of this society is that when the poro devil is outside, whether day or night, only the initiated or recognised of the society are allowed outside to take part or join the group in the ceremony. This society therefore would arrest the NPFL forces since they were not members of it. However, a woman went to tell the RUF/NPFL forces about this secret society, which annoyed them and, in retaliation, the NPFL forces killed 100 civilians and burnt 200 houses.

Furthermore, around the same time, the NPFL forces discovered the existence of the hidden RUF base opened late in 1991 and a lot of RUF vanguards and junior commandos were arrested and taken to Camp Namna in Liberia.[714] Some of the top vanguards were jailed for three to four months as a result of this operation. A lot of RUF junior commandos were killed by NPFL forces while others went into hiding in the bush. The ones kept in custody in Liberia were released after the RUF leader intervened on their behalf with the NPFL leader.

In the north of the District, a combined force of SLA and local militia (Donsos from Kono District) attacked RUF/NPFL forces, recapturing towns and villages under RUF/NPFL control, including

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711 The age of those recruits was not specified.

712 No more details on the circumstances surrounding this killing could be obtained.

713 The Poro society and its equivalent for women, the Bondo society, are Mende societies where the initiation process gives social identities to its members. Those societies are based on common beliefs about the living, the dead and the gods.

714 This camp is located in the Lofa County.

Sandaru (Penguia Chiefdom).[715] While at Sandaru, the SLA forces destroyed and took property and beat and killed people.[716] The troops also succeeded in driving the RUF/NPFL forces out of the Luawa Chiefdom, except for the town of Geima.

SLA military successes were however reported, including a few successful attacks for at least the first half of 1992. In February, SLA forces attacked and retook towns and villages in Penguia Chiefdom, including Senguma. They stayed in the area for four months, patrolling the area but also inflicting violence on civilians[717] and taking civilians' property, as a result of which some of the civilians went to Guinea. However, RUF/NPRL retook the area as they were advancing further north. SLA and Guinean forces from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) also made some attempts to repel RUF/NPFL forces from Mandu Chiefdom and to capture Mobai, Baiima, Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom) and Baiwala (Dia Chiefdom). Two fronts were launched, one going to Kuiva and the other one moving towards Baiima. However, both groups were defeated and had to retreat back to Daru. The RUF/NPFL position at Kangama (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) was also attacked and captured for a short while, although the forces subsequently regrouped and recaptured the town. During their stay, the SLA forces forced the civilians to break down all the houses that were close to the bush and to uproot all the coffee and cocoa plantation. The zinc taken from the houses was used to make fences around swamps. The SLA forces also recaptured other towns in Kissi Teng Chiefdom, such as Tangabu.

By mid 1992 the RUF/NPFL forces in the North had conquered the major towns and established bases. An important base was Baraka (Yawei Chiefdom), which was a strategic town on the way to Kono District. Later on Baraka and Geima (Luawa Chiefdom) were among the RUF/NPFL forces' strongest holds in the North. In particular, Geima was also an important training camp. Even towns like Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom) and Segbwema came under attack, although they were not captured.

One morning in April 1992, RUF/NPFL forces[718] led by a Liberian commander launched an offensive on the chiefdom headquarter of Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom). As they entered the town, people panicked and started fleeing to the bush. The combined forces put some people in a house and set the house on fire. They then assembled the remaining civilians in the Court Barrie and killed one pregnant woman who refused to join them. The forces used the town as a base from where they patrolled the surrounding villages in search of food and other items. During their stay, 10 school-going girls (classes 4 to 6) were raped. Bunumbu at this time was the front line as it also allowed for further advances into Kenema District, particularly into the diamond area located at Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District).

In Malema Chiefdom in the south of the District, SLA forces encouraged the formation of vigilantes, composed of young people who were given basic training, to assist the troops in prosecuting the war in the District. Most of the chiefdoms were contributing funds called "war efforts", as well as willingly giving their brothers and their young people to be trained. The successes

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[715] Those local hunters were very active in the south-east of Kono District, in particular in Soa and Fiama Chiefdoms.

[716] No more information could be obtained on this incident.

[717] No specific incidents were reported for this period.

[718] These forces were dressed in military combat red t-shirts with palm fronds tied around their foreheads.

of the SLA, however, did not last long. At this time, Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) was under constant RUF/NPFL attack. The only areas the SLA forces controlled were Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom) and parts of Mandu, Jawie and Malema Chiefdoms. Following the overthrow of the President of Sierra Leone by the SLA on 26 April 1992, SLA forces began more intensive attacks on the RUF/NPFL forces, defeating a large number of them. However, at that time, they did not succeed in removing the RUF/NPFL forces completely from the various areas and their actions were more of a sporadic nature, killing and torturing captured RUF/NPFL members. Furthermore, their behaviour towards civilians began to deteriorate as SLA forces on patrol started to take away civilians' property, such as domestic animals and household items.

Civilians coming from areas under the control of RUF/NPFL forces were taken to the Moa Barracks in Daru for screening purposes; a lot of civilians were killed during this process, accused of being "rebels" or "rebel collaborators". As an example, one young man from Yawei Chiefdom was arrested by SLA forces patrolling the chiefdom and was killed in the Moa Barracks. Later on, a committee made up of the elders from the 14 chiefdoms of the District was formed so that they might identify the civilians brought to the barracks and avoid the killing of innocent civilians.

The RUF/NPFL forces continued their persistent attacks on towns and villages in both the northern and central chiefdoms of the District, including the Moa Barracks.

The "Tap 20" group, consisting of the Gio-speaking tribe of Liberia (NPFL) was active in Kissi Kama, Kissi Teng, Penguia and Luawa Chiefdoms. Their local commander gave an order to his troops that all civilians captured should be killed because for him they were "without blood", i.e. less than human. This group frequently engaged in cannibalism in these chiefdoms. In Penguia Chiefdom in May, members of Tap 20 killed and ate people selected due to their larger size. Furthermore, they often engaged in sexual assaults against women, who were raped by many men at one time.

In Ngiehun (Luawa Chiefdom), NPFL forces dropped hot melted plastic into people's eyes. Furthermore, one of the "sentences" they carried out was to put human beings in a large cooking pot with red palm oil; this kind of sentence was imposed when, for example, they thought a civilian was not obeying their commands. In Kissi Teng Chiefdom, the members of this group used to kill people and eat their flesh; babies were usually pounded in mortar to provide the type of food they liked. On 30 June 1992, a man was killed in the chiefdom and his body eaten.[719] This caused many civilians to flee to neighbouring Liberia.

The Tap 20 group was replaced by another group of NPFL members called Tap 40 during the last months of 1992. At this time, most of the top ranking NPFL commanders were recalled to Liberia by their leader as they were encountering serious attacks in Liberia from a fighting force called the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO). The Tap 40 group also killed many civilians and often cooked and ate their flesh. One such incident happened in the Kissi Kama Chiefdom on 9 October 1992, when two civilians caught escaping were killed, cooked and eaten.[720] Another incident of cannibalism was reported about a civilian caught trying to escape from the

[719] The conditions surrounding this killing could not be ascertained.
[720] No more details could be obtained on this bit of information.

RUF/NPFL forces in Fobu (Luawa Chiefdom) on 5 October 1992. A man caught crossing the Guinean border was stripped naked and later killed; most of his body parts were cooked and eaten by some NPFL members. Again around this time, some RUF junior commandos were killed and eaten by those NPFL forces. There appeared to be two main reasons for these practices. First, it was simply a way to get food. Second, the forces believed that when they ate human flesh, they obtained the strength of the person they were eating; accordingly, they would first eat young, healthy, good looking men. Eating enemies was also practiced. However, reports mention that persons of any age and any gender were also eaten, including children. Indeed, in some places in the District like Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), Mende Buima (Peje Bongre Chiefdom), Kuiva and Baiima (both in Mandu Chiefdom), NPFL forces were living in separate compounds from RUF forces where they practiced cannibalism.

In Nyadahun Bambabu in March-April, the NPFL forces were the only ones living in this town. When they went on patrol, they abducted people to carry stolen goods back to their town. Upon returning to the village they then killed and ate the people they had abducted. When these NPFL forces were withdrawn from Sierra Leone to fight the advancing ULIMO forces in Liberia, the RUF forces sent to this town found a very large cauldron with three legs set up in the town mosque. These pots were usually used to cook food for large numbers of people when it was harvest time. However in this case the cauldron had been used to cook people for the NPFL forces. All around the cauldron on the floor of the mosque were the dismembered skeletal remains, including the skulls, of around 40 to 50 people. Each of these persons had been shot in the head.

In the south of the District, SLA forces were more successful in containing the RUF/NPFL forces, due to the presence of the ULIMO troops[721] in Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom) and the Guinean troops in Daru (Jawie Chiefdom). However, on 25 December 1992, RUF/NPFL forces identified by civilians as being the 'Tap 20'[722] group launched an attack on Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom), coming from the chiefdom headquarter of Manowa (Peje Bongre Chiefdom), the other road going to Segbwema and passing by Daru (Jawie Chiefdom). They entered the town through the hospital, where they beheaded one doctor after he had given them some drinks and money, hoping this would make them leave without killing him. Many drugs were taken away from the hospital and some people were captured. For seven hours, this group battled with SLA and ULIMO forces before being eventually repelled. Shortly after this incident, Guinean forces based at Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) came to Segbwema.

Civilians escaping RUF/NPFL attacks in Yawei Chiefdom tried to find refuge in Gbane Chiefdom (Kono District) located to the north of their chiefdom. Some of those fleeing civilians were thoroughly screened by SLA forces at the chiefdom headquarter of Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom, Kono District). A young man, accused of being a "rebel collaborator" was doused with petrol by the SLA forces, who then set fire to him and let him burn. Furthermore, some animosity was prevailing between Kailahun civilians, who were mainly Mende, and Kono inhabitants. Furthermore, as the RUF/NPFL forces entered Sierra Leone through Kailahun District, civilians coming from this area were viewed as suspicious and were not welcome.

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[721] This fighting faction, which emerged and fought the NPFL in Liberia, also fought on Sierra Leonean territory, alongside the SLA.

[722] It is more likely that this group was actually Tap 40, who replaced the Tap 20 group in late 1992.

At Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom), RUF forces established an execution centre for the whole District. At this centre, alleged criminals were killed and buried in mass graves. The centre was maintained throughout the war period.[723] From December until March 1993, an RUF training base was opened at Manowa (Peje Bongre Chiefdom).[724]

In December 1992, an Eastern Region Civil Defence Committee comprised of representatives from the three Districts of the Eastern Province – Kono, Kenema and Kailahun – and from Freetown was formed in a bid to assist the SLA forces.[725] "Well-meaning" Sierra Leoneans were to register for the Committee and to fulfil the work of vigilantes for the SLA.

c) Events in 1993

In early 1993, some RUF forces that were repelled by SLA forces from Pujehun District[726] briefly joined the RUF forces in Kailahun District, passing through the Golan Forest at the border between Kenema District and Liberia. Furthermore, as ULIMO forces were active and inflicted serious losses on NPFL forces in Liberia, the supply route for arms and ammunition and other items for the RUF/NPFL forces in Sierra Leone through Vaahun (Liberia) and Bomaru (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) was cut off, leaving the RUF forces unable to resist the SLA and Guinean forces.

Following the setting up of a Civil Defence Committee in 1992, local hunters began fighting with SLA forces, notably in Jawie Chiefdom. At this time, however, no formal initiation as such was taking place. Rather the "renowned man" who was behind the establishment of the Committee played the role of a catalyst or organiser for the local hunters.

On 18 March 1993, the RUF/NPFL attacked Bandajuma (Yawei Chiefdom) from their base in Baiima. Seventy-eight RUF/NPFL members were killed; eight civilians and four SLA members were wounded. The RUF/NPFL forces were, however, repelled by the SLA forces.

Throughout 1993 and part of 1994,[727] an RUF training base was operational at Dia (Kissi Kama Chiefdom). Furthermore, following the retreat from Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District) in January 1993, RUF forces established their headquarters at Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom).

In April 1993, some RUF commanders discovered that some RUF members together with civilians from Ngiehun (Luawa Chiefdom) had talks with SLA forces to arrange for the arrest of the RUF leader. When they learnt this, RUF forces went to Ngiehun, surrounded the town and killed an unspecified number of civilians. One of the practices they carried out at this time was to pour boiling palm oil in the ears of the men and in the vaginas of the women so that they would

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723 No more details could be obtained on this centre.

724 This base would be transferred for one month only in early 1993 to Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom, Kono District).

725 BBC, 22 December 1992.

726 In December 1992 and early 1993, RUF forces launched an offensive on Pujehun District but were soon defeated by the SLA forces, assisted by ULIMO and Guinean forces.

727 This base was operational until SLA forces repelled the RUF forces and confined them in Kissi Teng Chiefdom.

acknowledge the planned plot against their leader. Among the people killed were one prominent businessman and his family, two teachers and two well-known women.[728]

The SLA forces proceeded to capture Kailahun Town and also captured other towns, such as Baiima, Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom), Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) and Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom), probably in April. The RUF/NPFL retreated first to Dia Chiefdom, east of Mandu Chiefdom, but as SLA forces also advanced into Dia Chiefdom and recaptured the headquarter town of Baiwala, RUF/NPFL forces withdrew from the rest of Dia Chiefdom.[729] During this retreat, similarly to other Districts, notably Kenema District, retreating RUF forces frightened the civilians by telling them that if they stayed, they would be considered to be "rebel" collaborators by the SLA forces, as a result of which many civilians fled with the RUF forces. Thus, on 6 May 1993, Baiwala (Dia Chiefdom) and Bomaru (south of Upper Bambara Chiefdom, a few miles from Baiwala) were captured by SLA forces. Some SLA forces went to Vaahun, a Liberian town eight miles from Bomaru along on the motorable road used by RUF forces to enter Sierra Leone, to exhort the civilians who had found refuge there to resettle in Dia and Mandu Chiefdoms.

SLA screening bases were operational throughout Kailahun District, including in Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) and in Daru (Jawie Chiefdom). Civilians who returned from Vaahun were taken to Daru to check whether they were RUF members or collaborators. Following interviews in these screening bases, those people who had been appointed to any position by the RUF/NPFL forces were kept in custody and sometimes killed. In May, the SLA forces succeeded in completely repelling the RUF forces from Jawie Chiefdom.[730]

In the same wave of counter attacks in which they recaptured Mandu and Dia Chiefdoms, SLA forces proceeded further north and recaptured Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) in May as well as towns in Luawa, Penguia and Yawei Chiefdoms. SLA forces occupied Ngiehun, a town located on the main road between Pendembu and Kailahun Town, and entered Kailahun Town with heavy firepower in September. From Luawa, they moved on to Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom).[731] In Penguia Chiefdom, SLA forces encouraged civilians to come out of the bushes and to resettle. Following the SLA capture of these towns, an announcement was made on the radio that all civilians and RUF members in the bush should come out and that RUF members should surrender. SLA force also went on "mopping up" operations in the bush searching for RUF forces; civilians who were discovered were sent to the screening process.

During the same period, the SLA commander gave orders to demolish houses in Mandu Chiefdom. Most houses within the chiefdom were then unroofed, including a hospital building. Civilians were forced to work for the SLA forces, mainly to brush the roads and to cut down foliage around the towns to prevent RUF forces from taking them by surprise.

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[728] Although the precise number of fatalities could not be ascertained, it appears that a lot of people were killed during this incident.

[729] No figures on the fatalities during these attacks could be obtained.

[730] This chiefdom would be free of RUF incursion throughout the following years, until the AFRC coup where RUF forces came out of the bush and merged with AFRC forces.

[731] No detail could be obtained on those attacks.

The same SLA group that had recaptured Mandu and Dia Chiefdoms in April and May launched an attack on RUF/NPFL positions at Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) in June 1993. SLA forces entered the town by using the main motorable road from Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom, west of Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) and battled with RUF/NPFL forces before the latter fled the town, retreating back to Liberia and to the border town of Dawa (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom). While retreating, they shot and killed some civilians at Dawa, raped some women and captured youths. Some civilians were also killed during the battle. After the recapture of the town, the commander in charge of the SLA forces exhorted the civilians to tell their children who had been conscripted into the RUF to come out of the bush and settle peacefully in the town. However, one night, the commander ordered that 27 of those RUF members who had come out of the bush be killed and the 27 young men[732] were tortured to death by the SLA forces. This incident created panic among the civilians and some of them left Buedu for the neighbouring countries of Liberia and Guinea. The SLA troops further successfully recaptured Koindu[733] (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) and pushed the RUF/NPFL forces back into Liberia, while some escaped to Kono District. Thus by 1993, SLA forces, together with ULIMO and Guinean forces had confined the RUF forces to the extreme east of the District, in the north of Kissi Teng Chiefdom.

Tap 40 was also active in 1993, notably in Kissi Teng Chiefdom.[734] One of their commanders used to kill people by cutting into their flesh until they died, including a refugee from Liberia who failed or refused to bring palm wine for the NPFL commanders. On 21 January 1993, a woman was killed and her body cooked and eaten in Tangabu Town. Members of Tap 40 raped young girls and forced boys to carry their loads from Tangabu to Liberia. In Kangama, a woman in her fifties coming from Liberia in February was raped by many of those NPFL members; she later died in March as a result and her body was thrown into a big pit near Kangama. In April, three men previously appointed as Town Commanders in three different villages were killed for failing to provide food to the commanders. On 3 February at Mano Sewalu (Kissi Kama Chiefdom) there was a fierce battle between RUF and Tap 40, as a result of which many civilians escaped into the bush. Many other civilians were killed together with some of the RUF fighters, their bodies thrown into a pit. In Kissi Teng Chiefdom, a senior RUF officer gave the order to RUF junior commandos to hunt and kill NPFL forces. Accordingly, NPFL forces left Sierra Leone between February and May and, while retreating, burnt down many houses and killed civilians. Furthermore, it is interesting to note that in August 1993 an internal fight occurred within the RUF between two of the most senior officers belonging to two different tribes, the Mendes (from the East and South) accusing the Temnes (i.e. the RUF leader's tribe) of destroying their land.[735]

In a bid to win the support of civilians, the RUF appointed a G5 group consisting of civilians and RUF members, which served as a mediator and settled disputes between civilians and RUF forces.[736]

After losing much ground to the SLA forces, the RUF/NPFL were cut off from their supplies coming from Liberia. Furthermore, when the NPFL forces withdrew to Liberia, they took with

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[732] Their ages could not be ascertained.
[733] This probably took place in November.
[734] It is believed that they entered the chiefdom in November 1992.
[735] No more information could be obtained on this event.
[736] See section [X] for more information on the hierarchy and organisation of the RUF forces.

them all their weapons, including those captured from the SLA and Guinean forces in 1991-93. Indeed, all heavy weapons, artillery, war tanks, armoured cars, small arms and vehicles were taken to Liberia. As they could not depend on irregular supplies from Liberia or on the weapons captured from the SLA forces, the RUF forces engaged in trade and barter with Guineans and Sierra Leoneans along the border towns of the two countries, in particular in Luawa Chiefdom, which was a significant black market location. They traded mostly in agricultural products like cocoa, coffee and palm oil but also in valuable items such as tape recorders, gold and diamonds. Even members of the Guinean forces protecting the borders of Guinea were involved in the trade, as well as members of ULIMO forces. However, RUF forces did not deal directly with the Guineans but traded with their own contractors who took commissions. Any property acquired through this border trade was considered to be "Government property", i.e. belonging to the RUF movement. This system enabled RUF forces to procure weapons and other logistics. Thus, while in the bush, RUF forces forced civilians they had captured to process palm oil, cocoa and coffee they would then use to trade for arms and ammunition. Another way of raising funds was through the establishment of a tax in the District, namely requiring each town or village under their control to contribute a certain amount of products, particularly coffee and cacao, depending on the size of the village.

In the latter part of the year, with persistent attacks on SLA positions in the Kissi Teng Chiefdom, the RUF/NPFL forces succeeded in driving them from the chiefdom entirely. In addition, on 1 December 1993, the then Head of State, Capt. Strasser, declared a unilateral ceasefire. Further to this declaration, a lot of SLA forces left their positions thinking the war was over, which allowed RUF forces to redeploy in certain areas, mainly in the south of Kenema District[737] and, in 1994, in Kailahun District.

d) Events in 1994

At the end of January and following renewed RUF attacks, notably in Kenema District, the Government of Sierra Leone declared "total war" against the RUF. The Head of State engaged in a massive recruitment of SLA forces and from 3,000 men in 1991, they would reach around 12,000 in 1994.

By 1994, following the successful SLA attacks and territory gains in 1993 and the retreat of the NPFL forces, the RUF now consisted of one and a half brigades composed solely of Sierra Leoneans. These RUF forces realised that they could no longer engage the enemy in face-to-face battle or conventional warfare, due to the strength and superior firepower of SLA and foreign forces. The RUF therefore decided to engage in jungle warfare in 1994 and an Operations order on jungle or guerrilla warfare was drafted and distributed to the front line commanders. Those front line commanders were trained for two weeks in guerrilla tactics and provided with first aid and a basic stock of food supplies plus arms and ammunition before they were sent in various directions into the jungle. The commanders' individual and newly mastered skills were passed onto the squad, platoon, company and battalion levels. During the training phase, they were taught the basics of squad to battalion tactics, namely tactical deployment in diverse terrains, combined arms training, urban warfare skills, ambushes, infiltration techniques, deception operations, advanced reconnaissance and fighting patrolling.

[737] See the factual analysis for Kenema District where massive and successive attacks were launched in the southeast of the District in December 1993.

SLA forces were occupying most of the District for the first months of the year and there were some incidents of harassment of the civilian population. In one incident in Penguia Chiefdom in February 1994, an SLA member was arrested and killed on the orders of the SLA commander for having raped a 13 year-old girl. The commander made it clear to the civilians and the SLA forces that this kind of behaviour was not acceptable.

Towards the end of March and the beginning of April 1994, RUF forces started launching massive and successful attacks on SLA positions in the District.[738] A group from Liberia attacked the town of Koindu. A second group from Liberia entered the town of Gbolabu in the Upper Bambara Chiefdom. This group conscripted children in and around the township.[739] In Geima (Luawa Chiefdom), a large quantity of arms and ammunition were captured from SLA forces.

Once the RUF forces took the jungle and rapidly started to gain positions throughout the country,[740] Kailahun District, in particular the eastern part of the District, became a stronghold and was completely under RUF control. At sometime in 1994, RUF forces captured a large number of arms and ammunition from the SLA forces at Geima (Luawa Chiefdom) and SLA forces withdrew from Luawa Chiefdom. However, throughout 1994, 1995 and 1996, Mandu and Dia Chiefdoms remained under the control of SLA forces.

In May 1994, RUF forces came to the township of Sandaru (Penguia Chiefdom) from the direction of Kono District and dislodged the SLA forces based there. They informed the civilians that all of Sierra Leone was now under their control and that civilians should not hide or they would be chased and killed. They forced young boys and girls they had captured to take illicit drugs, claiming that it was new medicine meant to develop them and make them strong. RUF forces used Sandaru as a base to patrol and raid the villages in the chiefdom and came back regularly to the town with food, stolen property and more captured civilians, so that the number of their forces was greatly increased. Most of the captured women and girls were sexually assaulted, often publicly.

RUF forces were also to be found in the 'Peje' Chiefdoms, namely Peje Bongre and Peje West Chiefdoms. In one incident in August 1994, while patrolling in Peje West Chiefdom the RUF forces discovered a group of civilians in the bush, raped two suckling mothers, whom they subsequently killed. However, Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) and Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom), where a camp for displaced persons was opened, remained under SLA control, thereby blocking strategic access to the rest of the country.

The RUF were dislodged briefly from the town of Kangama (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) by joint forces of the SLA, regrouping and recapturing the town later in the year.

As RUF forces intensified their ambushes on the Freetown-Kenema highway in late 1994, life became even more difficult for civilians in Kailahun District. They lacked essential items to live and the daily number of deaths of civilians in the District and in the refugee camps in Liberia was high.

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[738] Already in January 1994, RUF forces captured an SLA base, east of Pendembu.

[739] No more information was available on these incidents.

[740] By 1995, all the Districts had come under RUF attacks.



Although RUF forces made serious gains in the country, fighting mainly in the bush and laying ambushes, it was perceived in Freetown as a "disintegrated organisation".[741] Furthermore, during the same period, a large number of SLA members were missing without grounds in war affected areas.[742]

e) Events in 1995, 1996 and 1997

Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) was fiercely attacked and recaptured from SLA forces by RUF forces in January 1995. In February 1995, RUF forces attacked Jojoima (Malema Chiefdom), which had been under SLA control since 1993.[743]

In Penguia Chiefdom, many civilians who were abducted from the surrounding towns and villages were mistreated; women were sexually abused in public by RUF forces. Those who refused to have sexual intercourse with RUF members were killed.[744]

By the end of 1995, RUF forces from nearby Periwahun launched another unsuccessful attack on Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom), where they were repelled by the SLA forces. The SLA forces were successful in repelling RUF forces' attacks on the Mandu and Dia Chiefdoms in 1995. Nevertheless, throughout 1995 and the following years, the RUF would launch attacks on these chiefdoms, occasionally controlling some areas.[745]

At the end of January 1996, prior to the elections to be held at the end of February, the one-week ceasefire declared by the RUF allowed voter registration in the District, particularly in four chiefdoms considered at that time to be unsafe, namely Jawie, Mandu, Malema and Upper Bambara.[746] Nevertheless, in RUF-controlled areas, civilians were not allowed to vote in the February General elections.[747]

In 1996, the Kamajor society, which had begun initiations in Bonthe District and developed all over the Southern Province, reached Kenema and Kailahun Districts. Similarly to other Districts where local hunters were operational, young energetic men were nominated by the Chiefs and, more often, the elders of the chiefdoms[748] to be initiated into the society. Dia Chiefdom for example, was asked to send 50 men for initiation. The appointment was done at the section level and each section was at

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741 AFP, 16 September 1994.

742 *Ibid.*

743 No details on the civilian fatalities – if any – could be obtained. It is only reported that over 20 RUF members were killed during this attack.

744 No details could be obtained on this information, either from the records or from open sources.

745 No details could be obtained on this information, either from the records or from open sources.

746 SLBS radio, a national Sierra Leone radio station, quoted the elections officer for Kailahun District: BBC, 30 January 1996.

747 The RUF-controlled areas were mainly the chiefdoms located in the east of the District, i.e. Kissi Teng, Kissi Tongi, Kissi Kama, Luawa and some parts of Penguia and Yawei Chiefdoms. No more information on what happened prior, during and following the elections could be obtained from either the records or from open source materials. In this respect it is interesting to note that the only serious incidents reported during the elections took place in Bo and Kenema Towns. While not wishing to minimise the intimidation of the voters carried out by the RUF forces prior to the elections, their scale may not have reached the levels sometimes described in the media.

748 As the Chiefs had been targeted by the RUF since the start of the war, most of them had fled while others were killed.

least initially responsible for the welfare of the men they nominated and who came back to their various areas after the initiation. In Dia Chiefdom, the Kamajors worked with the SLA forces. The Kamajors from Jawie Chiefdom, under the leadership of a well-known commander who was also operational in Kenema District, began challenging RUF positions in Njaluahun Chiefdom.

However, around this time, Kamajors began to harass civilians. In Penguia Chiefdom, for example, civilians were forced to contribute to feeding the Kamajors and if they failed to do so, all their property would be taken away and they would be beaten. A man who had just lost his wife and was about to bury her refused to go and fetch wood as requested by some Kamajors, as a result of which they beat him severely. Again in Penguia, a businessman at Palima Village had his property taken by Kamajors and had to hide in the bush for two weeks with his family.

In March 1996, a combined force of SLA and CDF (Kamajors) who came from Baiwala (Dia Chiefdom) attacked a major RUF base in Geima (Luawa Chiefdom), also called "Camp Burkina Faso". They overpowered the RUF forces and killed eight of them; 26 civilians were also killed during the attack. The RUF forces, however, recaptured the town four days later. The Kamajors also attacked another RUF base, established in Kailahun Town at the National Secondary School. The school was completely bombed down and some civilians were killed. Four days after the attack on Geima, RUF forces counter attacked the Kamajors and SLA forces, some of them being killed in the attack. Following this counter attack, SLA forces and Kamajors were repelled.[749]

Around this time, RUF forces started opening schools in the areas under their control, such as at Kangama (Kissi Teng Chiefdom). The school was not only for children but also for the civilians living in the areas under RUF control. The teachers were paid with seven cups of rice and two beer bottles of palm oil every three months.

However, unlike what happened in the South and especially in Pujehun District, following the elections and the start of the negotiations between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone, civilians originating from Kailahun District and living in displaced camps or in neighbouring countries did not return to the District.

The peace negotiations that started in February 1996 reached their conclusion in the signing of a Peace Agreement between the RUF leader and the Sierra Leonean President at Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire, on 30 November 1996. A few days before the signing of this agreement, the RUF leader had visited his troops near Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom) to talk about the peace process.[750]

Despite the signing of the peace agreement, a few incidents between Kamajors and RUF forces took place in the Segbwema area (Njaluahun Chiefdom) in early December, where some fatalities are reported on both sides. Nevertheless, it appeared that those skirmishes initiated by the RUF were motivated by their search for food.

SLA forces were still molesting civilians they suspected of being "rebels" or "rebel collaborators". On one occasion, a civilian from Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom) accused of being a "rebel" was sent to

[749] No more information could be ascertained on these events.
[750] See, for example, AFP, 25 November 1996.

Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), tied up, had pepper put in his nostrils, was hit with a bayonet and kept in a guardroom for six days before being released. He was given a clearance document that would allow him to return to Mobai.

At the beginning of 1997, the RUF forces in the south of the District came under fierce attacks by SLA forces, thus breaking the ceasefire provided in the Abidjan Peace Agreement. Their positions, notably in Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom), were attacked and they had to retreat to their base at Baiima.[751]

On 21 January 1997, Kamajors who were deployed in most previously RUF-controlled areas in the country proceeded further east in Kailahun District and retook Kailahun Town. Nevertheless, RUF forces managed to keep control in the furthest eastern area of the District in Kissi Teng, Kissi Tongi, Kissi Kama and parts of Luawa Chiefdoms. Buedu (Kissi Tongi) thereby became a headquarter base of the RUF.[752] On 20 February, Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), now under SLA control, was attacked by RUF forces who were defeated by the SLA, who were reinforced by their colleagues from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom).[753] The killings of three RUF members, one SLA member and one civilian were reported.[754] Also in February, the SLA forces rescued some children, once conscripted by the RUF but then living in the bush unaccompanied and malnourished.[755]

Due to those skirmishes in the District between the SLA, Kamajors and RUF forces, the resettlement program put in place following the Abidjan Peace Agreement was stalled in Kailahun District. The demobilisation process had not even started, as United Nations observers were unable to deploy. Around 10 May, between 20 and 60 civilians were killed during an RUF attack on the border town of Bomaru (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), highlighting once more the deterioration of the security situation in the District and the country as a whole, as many attacks were reported for the same period in the Northern Districts.[756]

Thus, shortly before the events of 25 May 1997, the RUF forces were mainly controlling the far east of Kailahun District, even if skirmishes with SLA and Kamajors were reported in other parts of the country, in the Kangari Hills (south of Tonkolili District) and in some parts of Moyamba District.

Early 1997, following the signing of the Abidjan Peace Agreement on 30 November 1996, one of the people the RUF leader had sent to Freetown to represent him during the implementation of the peace process declared himself the interim leader after the RUF leader's arrest in Nigeria.[757] This declaration was unilateral and did not obtain the support of the RUF forces. During a visit to

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751 Many press releases relate RUF statements in January condemning the Government of Sierra Leone as having "dashed aside" the Abidjan Peace Agreement: see, for example, AFP, 22 January 1997.

752 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 1-31 January 1997. This report was prepared by the Office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Sierra Leone.

753 Pendembu would be attacked again on 6 April and reports mention there were a lot of fatalities but no more details could be obtained.

754 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 1-28 February 1997. This report was prepared by the Office of the United Nations Humanitarian Coordinator in Sierra Leone

755 See, for example, AFP, 4 March 1997.

756 AFP, 15 May 1997 and Africa News, 26 May 1997.

757 Philip Palmer announced his self-proclamation in a press release on 15 March 1997.

Kailahun District in April to hold meetings with the RUF forces, this self-proclaimed interim leader, together with other RUF members, was arrested and kept in custody by some of the most senior RUF commanders.

Following the overthrow of the Government on 25 May 1997, RUF forces came out of the bush and merged with AFRC forces. In early June, one senior RUF commander moved to Kenema Town with 300 of his men.[758] Shortly after RUF forces joined the AFRC forces, some of them went to Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom) where they looted shops and stole property belonging to civilians and to the ICRC.[759] However, few incidents were reported in the District for the period covering May 1997-February 1998, when ECOMOG forces ousted the RUF/AFRC from Freetown, as attention was mostly concentrated on Freetown, where 600 RUF members from Kailahun District were believed to have joined the AFRC members.

Further to this overthrow and the merging of RUF forces with AFRC forces, Kamajors from Penguia Chiefdom took the bush or went to Guinea, fearing to be killed by the RUF/AFRC forces who were chasing them.[760] It should be recalled that shortly after the events of 25 May, the AFRC leader had ordered the members of the CDF to lay down their arms and surrender to the nearest police station to be disbanded, an order most of the Kamajors did not obey.

After May 1997, and throughout 1998 and part of 1999, civilians in Yawei and Penguia Chiefdoms suffered constant harassment by RUF/AFRC forces. During these years, RUF/AFRC forces killed, raped, tortured, amputated limbs and burnt houses down, as a result of which, many of the inhabitants fled to Guinea. At Baraka (Yawei Chiefdom) for example, the RUF/AFRC forces unroofed many houses and took property, which was brought to their various bases. Innocent civilians were accused of hating the forces and killed as a result. Many civilians fled to Liberia and Guinea.[761]

A combined force of Guinean forces, SLA and CDF attacked and dislodged the RUF/AFRC forces in the towns of Bunumbu and Manowa.

In September 1997, Kamajors from Jawie Chiefdom successfully repelled RUF/AFRC forces from different areas of the chiefdom. Shortly after, two weeks after the start of their operation in September, the entire chiefdom was under Kamajor control. During these attacks, many RUF/AFRC forces were killed by the Kamajors. However, in December and during an attack they launched on Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom), 100 Kamajors were allegedly captured by RUF/AFRC forces[762] and brought to Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom), an RUF/AFRC stronghold.

f) Events in 1998

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758 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 02 - 03 June1997 REG. NO. 97/0218

759 It was earlier mentioned that a camp for displaced people was operational in Segbwema.

760 It is reported that at the time of the May Coup, the SLA forces numbered 14,000 while the Kamajors were roughly 37,000 in number: AFP, 29 May 1997.

761 No further details are available on events during this period.

762 Xinhua News Agency, 29 December 1997.

On 8 February 1998, the President of Liberia reportedly visited RUF/AFRC forces in Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom) to meet with the field commanders. A meeting was held at the Court Barrie, where he told the forces that produce from the District, particularly cocoa and coffee, must be transported to Liberia immediately to be sold for the procurement of weapons and other logistics for the fighting forces. He also spoke about disarmament and further warned all combatants not to disarm until they heard from him in Liberia. The supply routes for arms and ammunition coming from Liberia ran through Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) and Foya (Liberia) or Bomaru (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) and Vaahun (Liberia). When they needed ammunition, RUF forces would send a large vehicle with a top senior commander carrying some diamonds to the Liberian President. On their way back to Sierra Leone, they were escorted by Liberian security officers and had documents similar to clearance papers that would allow them to reach Kailahun District without encountering any problems. From Kailahun District, the arms and ammunition were distributed and dispatched to other places. The construction of an airfield at Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) was also begun, made feasible due to the increased numbers of the RUF forces, particularly the civilians they had taken with them when they retreated from Freetown. However, due to persistent air raids conducted by ECOMOG, the construction stopped.

After being pulled out from Freetown, a lot of AFRC members went to Vaahun in Liberia through Bomaru (Upper Bambara Chiefdom) while the majority of the RUF forces took back the bush, which they were used to due to having conducted warfare there from 1994 to 1997, unlike the AFRC forces. When they left Freetown, the retreating forces could not take many things with them, which led to their searching civilians in Kailahun District and taking their property. "Operation Pay Yourself", meaning take what you need from civilians, was declared in the whole country but there is little direct information on its implementation in Kailahun District. Nevertheless, when they came back from Freetown, RUF and AFRC forces engaged in killing, raping and, above all, looting actions, which prompted a lot of civilians and especially those in Upper Bambara Chiefdom to leave their farms and to go to Liberia. However, RUF/AFRC forces captured civilians whom they forced to work, to go in search for food and to dig holes on the main road of the chiefdom to prevent ECOMOG forces from advancing with their armoured tanks.

In Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom), the then Chief Security Officer (CSO) of the RUF invited all returnees to a meeting in which he encouraged the CDF to identify themselves so they might broker peaceful co-existence with the RUF/AFRC forces in the township. Seventy-six Kamajors identified themselves to the RUF/AFRC forces in response to the appeal and the CSO told them that they were "brothers" and that they would work together to rebuild Luawa Chiefdom. However, the CSO then ordered his forces to arrest and detain the Kamajors. The CSO set up a court in which the Kamajors appeared, summary investigations were carried out by the RUF commander appointed as chairman of the court and his verdict was that they should all be released and handed over to their family who would sign for them. While this verdict appeared to be accepted, the CSO nevertheless ordered that those Kamajors should be kept in jail and their families authorised to come and visit them. This continued for few days, until two senior RUF commanders and other RUF members arrived in town. One of the senior RUF officers killed ten of the Kamajors and ordered his men to kill the other Kamajors still being held captive. Three days later, the CSO gathered people in the town and stated that those Kamajors were Government spies and had been preparing to launch an attack on the chiefdom. He ordered the burial of the bodies in two holes behind the police station.

Throughout 1998, Bunumbu (south-east of Luawa Chiefdom) was the main training base for RUF/AFRC forces.[763] This base was most likely set up in April following the establishment of the War Office at Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) as RUF forces needed more manpower.

In March 1998, CDF forces and a Nigerian contingent of ECOMOG from Kenema District came to Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) through Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom),[764] supported by alpha jets and each fighting faction led by a different commander. One civilian was killed at the centre of the market area by one of the bombs launched from the airplane. On their arrival, the CDF and ECOMOG forces engaged in battle with the RUF/AFRC forces. Civilians were killed during the crossfire and houses suspected of belonging to RUF/AFRC family members were set on fire by the Kamajors. Throughout their deployment and attacks on RUF/AFRC positions in the District, ECOMOG and CDF forces would use missiles and other long-range artillery, sometimes missing their targets and destroying property and killing civilians. In Kissi Tongi Chiefdom[765] during the course of the raids, civilians were killed and property destroyed by the bombs dropped by the ECOMOG jets.[766]

In early March, ECOMOG and CDF forces fell into an ambush two miles from Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom) while on their way to recapture Macca Kpakpeibu (Yawei Chiefdom). In this ambush, some of them were seriously injured and the ECOMOG forces lost one armoured car, which was burnt, four machine guns and a truck loaded with arms and ammunition.

The ECOMOG forces assisted the Kamajors' further advances into the District and on 12 May, launched two attacks on Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) and Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom),[767] killing over 150 RUF/AFRC supporters.[768] From there, they then proceeded to capture Kailahun Town, although their progress was slowed by the thick forest surrounding the town. Thus, by 20 May 1998, ECOMOG forces would claim to control Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom), Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), Mobai (Mandu Chiefdom), Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom), Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) and Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom).[769] However, those attacks did not free the District from RUF/AFRC presence and throughout 1998, Kailahun District would still be qualified as their stronghold in the media. Due to

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[763] In 1999, after RUF/AFRC forces captured Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District Headquarter), the training base was moved to Yengema (Kono District).

[764] In February 1998, ECOMOG forces deployed in Kenema Town (Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District) advanced further in Kenema and Kailahun Districts. On 22 March, two ECOMOG battalions left the Freetown Peninsula to reinforce the contingent already deployed at Daru and to prepare the assault on Kailahun Town: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 10 - 30 March 1998. REG. NO. 98/0031. In the same report, it was also revealed that a lot of "ex-Junta" men surrendered to ECOMOG forces. In this context, "Junta" probably refers only to the members of the AFRC and not to the RUF forces.

[765] Kissi Tongi Chiefdom would remain under RUF/AFRC control until disarmament started in 2001.

[766] The date of this (these) bombing(s) could not be ascertained.

[767] AFP, 12 May 1998.

[768] No more information could be obtained on these killings.

[769] AFP, 20 May 1998.

this intense fighting, thousands of civilians fled the area and found refuge in Liberia (Lofa County) and Guinea (Gueckedou region, Parrot Beak).[770]

After the reinstatement of the President of Sierra Leone in March 1998, more men from the District, many of whom had found refuge in Guinea, were initiated in the Kamajor society. Some from Penguia Chiefdom went to Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District) for the initiation. Kamajors from Penguia Chiefdom were successful in repelling the RUF/AFRC forces from some sections of the chiefdom as far as the Moa River (south-east of the chiefdom) but the RUF/AFRC forces regrouped and retook control of some areas previously held by Kamajors, including Sengema, Kumantandu, Sandaru, Lalehun and Bagibu. The RUF/AFRC established themselves in particular in the Nimmi Hills, an area rich in gold mines. Sengema became their base in the chiefdom, as it is located on a hill. Raping, looting and the unroofing of houses was common in 1998 and the commander in charge of the area was ordered by the Battle Field Commander not to have mercy for civilians who did not support them. On one occasion and following a meeting organised at Woroma by the RUF/AFRC commander in the chiefdom, eight men and four women accused of being supporters of the Government of Sierra Leone were killed and burnt by the RUF/AFRC forces, which led civilians once again to flee to Guinea. However, shortly afterwards in June, the commander ordered to his men to kill any civilian caught attempting to cross the Moa River or the Menni River to go to Guinea. Some civilians were therefore killed and some of them drowned in the rivers, which were swollen due to the rainy season. Furthermore, another order passed by this commander was for his men to check for tattoos on the men's bodies, as this would be proof of belonging to the Kamajor society. Besides pursuing RUF/AFRC positions, the Kamajors in Penguia Chiefdom chased and killed those they suspected of being "rebel" collaborators.[771] Kamajors from Peje West and Peje Bongre Chiefdoms were also attacking RUF/AFRC forces in their chiefdoms.

The town of Neama (south of Jawie Chiefdom, near the border with Kenema District) was considered a safe place where many civilians from the surrounding chiefdoms were seeking refuge. The town was under the command of the CDF and was an important ECOMOG and CDF base. RUF forces attacked the town and over 300 civilians were killed; it took three days to bury them in mass graves.

When the chairman of the AFRC and his government were driven out of Freetown by the ECOMOG forces, he sought temporarily refuge in Kangama town[772] (Kissi Teng Chiefdom), four miles from Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom), the headquarter of RUF/AFRC. Indeed, Buedu in 1998 became the War Office[773] and a very important centre for supply routes, smuggling of produce and diamonds and for training. All these activities became rampant throughout the year and enabled the

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[770] Between March and June, 237,000 Sierra Leoneans fled the country to Liberia and Guinea and over 50,000 IDPs were living in camps: UN News Archive, 26 June 1998. Since the ECOMOG intervention in February, it was believed that 27,000 IDPs were leaving in the Eastern Province (Kailahun, Kenema and Kono Districts) and 113,000 in the Northern Province while there were no new displacements in the Southern Province. Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 9 June – 6 July 1998. REG. NO. 98/0068.

[771] No specific incident was recalled on this information.

[772] He was seen during the same period in Kono District, en route to Kailahun District.

[773] Although ECOMOG forces claimed to have recaptured Buedu in 1998, it is clear from the records and other open source materials that the war office was open in Buedu at the latest in April 1998. Accordingly, either ECOMOG forces attacked but did not capture the town or captured the town only for a short period of time.

RUF/AFRC forces to strengthen their positions and strongholds in the entire District. The War Office was the administrative headquarters where all the operational orders were given and throughout 1998 to 2001, all the important meetings for the top ranking commanders took place there. There was only one War Office and the other headquarters were subsidiary to that office. During this time, a lot of civilians were tortured, raped, killed and conscripted into the fighting forces. Also children under 15 were conscripted,[774] as the forces were increasing their number not only to resist and fight ECOMOG and CDF forces but also in preparation for the planned attack on Freetown.[775] On one occasion that probably took place in April, the senior RUF officer in charge of the War Office at Buedu brought back about 100 machine guns from Liberia.

Kailahun Town and the Geima camp became important training bases for the RUF/AFRC.[776] RUF commanders regularly shuttled between Kono District and the rest of the deployment areas in Kailahun District and were able to procure more weapons from Liberia. Weapons were stored at Foindu (Peje Bongre Chiefdom) with the aim of engaging in simultaneous attacks on Bunumbu, Segbwema and Daru. Mamboma (Peje Bongre Chiefdom) was the identified base for the attacks. Main RUF/AFRC positions in the District included Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom) and Geima (Luawa Chiefdom).

Throughout 1998 and 1999, until peace talks started, the RUF/AFRC launched several unsuccessful attacks on the ECOMOG/CDF forces based at Daru, often surrounding the town. One of these attacks took place on 25 May 1998 but no fatalities were reported. The commander of the Kamajors admonished his men not to loot houses in Daru, but his order was defied as Kamajors engaged in much stealing in the township.[777] Furthermore, the Kamajors recruited children to be initiated into their society to fight the RUF/AFRC forces still in the east of the District.[778]

Besides their attack on Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) the RUF/AFRC forces assaulted ECOMOG and CDF positions in different places in the District, including Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom) and Benduma (Jawie Chiefdom).

During the second half of the year, ECOMOG successes in the District appeared to have come to a halt and to be hampered by the RUF/AFRC activities. In September, the ECOMOG spokesman stated that they needed at least 2,000 more troops, "real fighters, as well as logistical support" to put an end to the conflict.[779] However, massive ECOMOG air raids in the District killed a lot of RUF/AFRC members in November in Pendembu, Kuiva and Geima. Furthermore, according to

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[774] No specific dated incident could be obtained, apart from this information of a general nature.

[775] It should be recalled that when they were ousted from Freetown in February 1998, the RUF/AFRC stated that they would return.

[776] It seems that ECOMOG and CDF forces did not succeed in capturing Kailahun Town during their attack in May.

[777] No more information could be obtained on these events.

[778] According to a Kamajor field commander quoted in an IPS press release on 29 June 1998, Kamajors "have 3,000 child Kamajors... These kids are very brave on the frontline... children are unadulterated and ... they follow the laws governing the conduct of the militia like abstinence from sex, drugs and looting when in combat...We don't trust adults quite (as) much because many have breached the rules governing our militia group and so they get killed by the enemy."

[779] See, for example, AFP, 30 September 1998.

ECOMOG forces, they attacked and killed many RUF/AFRC forces in villages on the border with Liberia in November and December.

On 30 December 1998, the RUF/AFRC forces launched an attack on the combined forces of ECOMOG and CDF based in Segbwema[780] (Njaluahun Chiefdom), where they battled for over nine hours, during which a lot of civilians were killed and houses were set on fire by the RUF/AFRC forces. The RUF/AFRC forces captured the town and established a base there. Apparently this was a strategic plan by the RUF/AFRC forces to cut off ECOMOG forces based at Daru and so prevent them from undertaking any counter attack while they were heading for other Districts and the capital.[781] Furthermore, it allowed further advances towards Kenema Town (Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District), which would be attacked in early March 1999.

g) Events in 1999

In 1999, the population of Kailahun District was cut off from the reach of Kenema District despite ECOMOG deployment at Daru (Jawie Chiefdom).[782]

The strategic town of Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom) became a battlefront for the greater part of 1999. On 6 April, CDF troops from Kenema District unsuccessfully attacked the RUF/AFRC positions there, during which one RUF/AFRC member was killed.

Two days before the ceasefire provided for in the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999, a massive RUF/AFRC group attacked the Moa Barracks, Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), without being able to dislodge the ECOMOG forces who had been based there since March 1998.

On 17 July 1999, CDF forces planned an attack on an RUF/AFRC position at Daru Junction (Jawie Chiefdom). On their way, they fell into an RUF/AFRC ambush and three Kamajors were killed. The CDF forces were, however, successful in capturing Daru Junction, where they made a temporary base. RUF/AFRC forces launched an attack on this base on 29 September 1999. They succeeded in dislodging the CDF, who again launched a further attack on Segbwema, but were once again unsuccessful. During their withdrawal, a lot of Kamajors as well as civilians were killed by the RUF/AFRC forces. At this time, Pendembu, Kailahun Town and Buedu were the RUF/AFRC main bases in the District.

In August at the War Office in Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom), a senior RUF commander sent one of his subordinates to Liberia to bring back all the AFRC members to Buedu[783] so that an arrangement could be made to launch an attack on ECOMOG positions. While he was there, a

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[780] Segbwema is located on a strategic position in Kailahun District, as it allows for further advances inland towards Kenema District. It is almost a compulsory point of passage as there is only one other road to leave Kailahun District through Manowa Junction (Peje West Chiefdom). However, this road leads to Kono District while the Segbwema road leads to Kenema District and accordingly puts Freetown within much closer reach.

[781] This information has to be read in conjunction with what happened in December 1998 in Kono, Bombali, Magburaka and Tonkolili Districts and in Freetown on 6 January 1999.

[782] It could not be ascertained whether ECOMOG deployed in other towns, although it is known that from Daru, they were launching long-range missiles up to Kissi Tongi Chiefdom.

[783] Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown, while some AFRC members dispatched in the provinces, others went to Liberia.



woman came from Liberia and informed the commander that she had seen his subordinate at the ECOMOG base in Monrovia. On his return, the subordinate was arrested and tortured at Buedu until he explained the purpose of his visit to the ECOMOG base. The subordinate denied having visited the ECOMOG base in Monrovia and he further stated that if anyone had given such information about him it was false. He even went on to say that if that were true he would not have come with over 100 AFRC members to Buedu from Liberia. His defence never convinced his commander, who eventually killed him.

In mid October, RUF forces captured personnel of the World Health Organisation (WHO) who were on a vaccination mission in Segbwema. At that time, even if Segbwema was still a RUF stronghold, no major security threat was perceived, as illustrated in the report of the interagency humanitarian assessment mission that took place in the District between 29 September and 1 October. In this report, it was stated that "relief agencies can now move into [towns assessed by the team in the District] provided that prior information on their itineraries is made available to the Organisation for the Survival of Mankind (OSM) leadership", which was the humanitarian wing of the RUF, based at Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom).[784]

Also in October, the RUF leader went to Buedu (Kissi Tongi Chiefdom) to exhort his troops to disarm, accompanied by members of ECOMOG and the United Nations Observation Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL).[785] This visit was part of a general tour throughout the country. By the end of the month, however, hundreds of RUF members led by one senior RUF commander left the District and went to Makeni (Bombali District), where an internal fight, most likely of a personal nature, took place with the AFRC forces based there.[786] This event took place almost at the same time as the first UN peacekeepers arrived at Lungi, the international airport, marking the first step of their country-wide deployment.

Immediately after the RUF leader left Buedu, the Battle Field Commander and second in command to the RUF leader based at Buedu convened a meeting in Buedu and Kailahun Town to which he invited all the RUF vanguards, namely those who were trained in Liberia before the start of the conflict in 1991. At those meetings, he openly challenged the orders of the RUF leader and requested his men not to disarm to the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces they had been fighting for almost a decade.[787] He further claimed that as the Battle Field Commander, he was the only one that could order disarmament and not the RUF leader. He sent the Chief Security Officer and his bodyguard to Liberia to secure more weapons and when this officer came back, he sent him with loyal troops, mostly vanguards, to persuade the RUF members not to disarm. Furthermore, in early December, two Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) workers were abducted by RUF forces in the District, in a bid to focus the attention of the international community on the disagreement of RUF forces with the DDR process. The NGO workers were released two weeks later, unharmed.[788]

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[784] IRIN West Africa, 15 October 1999.
[785] The peacekeeping operation was established by UN Resolution 1181 on 13 July 1998 to monitor the military and security situation in the country; the UNOMSIL mission initially had a six-month term, which was extended.
[786] IRIN West Africa, 29 October 1999.
[787] He notably gave an interview to the BBC on 30 November 1999.
[788] IRIN West Africa, 16 December 1999.

The RUF men sent by the Battle Field Commander went to Pendembu, a brigade headquarter, and to Segbwema, having been requested by the Battle Field Commander to appoint new commanders in these towns that were loyal to him. At Segbwema, following the arrest of one RUF member caught trying to send a message to the RUF leader, the Battle Field Commander gave the order to arrest all the officers loyal to the RUF leader and to destroy two bridges on the way to Kono District. Those orders were never carried out as, in the meanwhile, the RUF leader ordered the arrest of those men sent by the Battle Field Commander. Those men were tied up, tortured and taken to Koakuima, the second brigade headquarter in Kono District. The RUF leader also ordered the arrest of the Battle Field Commander. However, on hearing his men had been arrested and that the RUF leader had given an order for his arrest to another senior RUF officer,[789] the Battle Field Commander fled to Liberia with his family and 200 RUF members.

On 20 December, the CDF forces launched another attack on Segbwema. They received support from the ECOMOG forces based in Daru who sent their alpha jet to bomb RUF positions. This attack was again unsuccessful, as was another one that took place on 25 December, following which the CDF forces retreated to Kenema District. Two days after this last attack, CDF from Kenema District went to Fola village (Njaluahun Chiefdom) in the hope of attacking the RUF/AFRC position in Segbwema. At Fola, ceremonies were performed to enable the troops to capture Segbwema. The CDF troops fell into an ambush close to Segbwema, where one Kamajor was killed, but they continued nevertheless and launched a fierce attack on Segbwema. During this attack, which was eventually unsuccessful for the Kamajors who went back to Kenema District, a lot of houses were destroyed during the crossfire. The CDF, however, were successful in capturing the town of Pendembu Njegbla (Njaluahun Chiefdom) and made a base there.

In late December 1999 or early January 2000, the first UNAMSIL troops - part of the Ghanaian battalion, also deployed in Bo and Kenema Towns - were sent from Freetown to Daru Barracks.

h) 2000 and 2001

The demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of the estimated 45,000 combatants in the country was slower than had been envisaged at the launch of the DDR program on 20 October 1999.[790] For Kailahun District, where the DDR camp was located at Daru, the RUF leader stated that the slow process was due to the lack of the necessary structures, namely no ceasefire committees and no logistics.[791]

In early January, the RUF commander in Makeni mobilised his fighting forces and went to Buedu to attack and arrest the RUF Battle Field Commander. However, the Battle Field Commander was nowhere to be found as he had earlier left for Liberia with his loyal troops, his bodyguards, some civilians and a lot of property, including FM radio broadcasting equipment, radio communication sets, computers, fax machines, arms and ammunition. A large number of civilians were maltreated and killed by the RUF commander who came to Buedu at this time.

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[789] This senior RUF officer was going to be the next Battle Field Commander.

[790] It should be noted that the start of the DDR program had already been delayed since it was meant to take place within six weeks of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, i.e. by 18 August 1999.

[791] IRIN West Africa, 31 January 2000.



In March 2000, the position of the RUF leader towards the DDR program changed, as far from appealing his men to disarm as he had done in late 1999, he stated that he would not order his men to disarm unless the other fighting forces simultaneously disarmed.[792] However, soon after, 2,000 UNAMSIL peacekeepers from the Indian Battalion known as INDBATT, arrived in Kailahun Town with six unarmed military observers (MILOBS).[793] Both RUF members and civilians in the town warmly welcomed this group.[794] Within a short time, the troops had proved to be very friendly to the people of the township, engaging themselves in various activities.

Some Sierra Leoneans who had found refuge in the Parrot Beak area in Guinea returned to Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) where UNAMSIL was deployed. They were registered and screened at the entry points by the CDF, the Kailahun District Development Foundation (KADDF) and an international NGO.[795]

In early April, UNAMSIL personnel engaged in speeding up the disarmament process, together with the RUF leader, a representative of the ex-AFRC leader and other personalities went to Segbwema (Njaluahun Chiefdom).[796] However, on 3 May 2000, a UN helicopter and its crew were captured by RUF forces in the District. This abduction of UN troops was not isolated, as at the same moment, UNAMSIL personnel were seized at Makeni (Bombali District) and a 23 man-unit was surrounded at Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom).[797] Although the helicopter and its crew were released shortly after, the rate of UNAMSIL forces' abduction grew, with over 300 estimated abductions by 5 May 2000.

Within Kailahun District, the UNAMSIL troops, including their commanders, were prevented from moving outside their compound in Kailahun Town following an order from the RUF's Chief Security Officer.[798] All their vehicles and all other property were taken and conveyed to Geima (Luawa Chiefdom). The Chief Security Officer also ordered the arrest of the MILOBS in Geima. All of their property was taken and they were conveyed to the District barracks in Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom) and were then brought to the UNAMSIL compound. The RUF Chief Security Officer also stopped the UN helicopter from bringing food and other logistics for the peacekeepers and instructed the Indian commander of the peacekeepers deployed at Daru to bring food for the prisoners by road. The situation of the 224 Indian peacekeepers and 11 MILOBS was similar to their colleagues at Kuiva (Mandu Chiefdom) as none of these groups was allowed free movement and were surrounded by RUF forces. They were supplied with food coming by truck from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom) but on various occasions, the RUF allowed only half of the load to be supplied or none at all. On 29 June, the UN troops from Kuiva were released and transferred to Monrovia before being airlifted to Freetown, their arms and ammunition being kept by the RUF forces.

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792 IRIN West Africa, 16 March 2000.

793 It took more than one attempt for the UNAMSIL troops to reach the town as in early March they were stopped by RUF forces on their way to the town.

794 It was not clear why the RUF forces were happy to see UNAMSIL.

795 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 11 – 31 March 2001.

796 On 3 April, nearly 22,000 combatants were disarmed, out of the total estimated 45,000 combatants, according to the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR): IRIN West Africa, 11 April 2000.

797 IRIN West Africa, 4 May 2000.

798 Others peacekeepers were also captured in May in different places across the country, in Kambia, Bombali and Tonkolili Districts.



UNAMSIL engaged in diplomatic and political negotiations for the release of its personnel but as those negotiations failed, around 15 July 2000, UNAMSIL helicopters bombarded the RUF position in Kailahun Town. The sound of those bombardments could be heard all over Luawa Chiefdom and beyond. During this aerial attack, the peacekeepers and MILOBS pulled out of Kailahun Town with their weapons, some being airlifted, the majority going on foot to Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), some unarmed but with air protection from helicopters. On their way to Pendembu, they were engaged by RUF forces who also fired at the helicopters. Two members of the UNAMSIL Indian Special Forces team and seven of the released members were injured while the RUF forces suffered heavy fatalities in Pendembu and Kailahun Town. The helicopter gunship afterwards made frequent trips to view the areas in and around Kailahun. Following this rescue events and the resulting fighting, nearly 5,000 civilians from the surrounding area fled to Daru.

Following the rescue of the UNAMSIL personnel, the disarmament process resumed at Daru (Jawie Chiefdom), one of the two operational DDR camps in the country,[799] but on a lower scale, as RUF activities were still being reported in the District. For example, although they had signed a recent agreement with the CDF forces to allow commercial trucks to use the Kenema-Daru road, in early August RUF forces captured three trucks and three taxis at Segbwema.[800]

Starting in September 2000, RUF forces were seriously engaged in cross-border attacks into Guinea, in the area known as the Parrot Beak in the east and at the border with Kambia District in the north. As a result of those attacks, Sierra Leoneans who had found refuge in Guinea returned to Sierra Leone and to Kailahun District; between February and April 2001, around 12,500 people arrived in Daru on foot.[801] In addition, some Guinean troops set up positions inside the territory of Sierra Leone to protect the Guinean border, notably in Kissi Teng Chiefdom. Furthermore, at this time Kailahun District became widely affected by the renewed hostilities in Liberia.[802]

As RUF forces still controlled areas in the District, a one-month ceasefire was signed on 10 November, known as Abuja Cease-Fire, thereby reactivating the disarmament process, which had been interrupted following the events of May 2000. Its main provision was the disarmament of the RUF forces and the deployment of UNAMSIL troops in RUF-held areas.[803]

In mid March 2001, UNAMSIL peacekeepers conducted a patrol to Kailahun Town, the first since the rescue operation the previous year. They left from Daru and on their way to Kailahun Town, passed by the RUF-held towns of Kuiva, Moiba (Mandu Chiefdom) and Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom), where they met with the RUF commanders and "secured their firm commitment towards collaboration with UNAMSIL".[804] At Kailahun Town, they met with the RUF High Command and raised issues concerning the deployment of UNAMSIL personnel, including

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799 The other camp was in Lungi (Port Loko District).
800 IRIN West Africa, 10 August 2000.
801 IRIN West Africa, 25 April 2001.
802 Since 1998, fighting resumed in Liberia with the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) fighting to overthrow the Liberian Head of State
803 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 14 November - 6 December 2000.
804 UNAMSIL press briefing, 16 March 2001.

the freedom of movement of UNAMSIL patrols and the opening of the Daru-Kailahun road. Around 19 April, UNAMSIL troops eventually deployed in some RUF-held areas and dispatched regular patrols to Kailahun Town.[805]

In early 2001, clashes between the CDF and the RUF/AFRC forces persisted along the Yawei Chiefdom bordering Gandorhun Chiefdom (Kono District). At one point in April or May, a group of CDF from Guinea[806] who had earlier captured towns in the Penguia Chiefdom proceeded to attack Manowa and Bunumbu to cut the RUF/AFRC forces off from Kono District.

A meeting between the RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone, UN representatives and the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council to review the cease-fire signed on 10 November 2000 was convened on 4 May 2001, again in Abuja, Nigeria. The main points of concern related to the acceleration of the demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of the remaining RUF forces, the release of child combatants and the freedom of movement of persons. Furthermore, during a meeting between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF on 15 May at UNAMSIL headquarters in Freetown, both parties agreed to consider the establishment of a DDR camp in Kailahun Town.[807] During the following weeks, an official disarmament ceremony including the release of children was held in the District. In October 2001, during a meeting of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), comprised of the Government of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and the RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF agreed on a schedule for the completion of the disarmament process. This accelerated disarmament was to take place in Kailahun District between 15 and 30 November 2001.[808]

Following fresh negotiations with the RUF, 170 peacekeepers from the Pakistani Battalion (PAKBATT II) were deployed in the District on 26 October; shortly after, the main body of 800 men was airlifted to the District.[809] Both in Kailahun and Kenema Districts, the disarmament, which stalled for three weeks, began in earnest around 10 December. Since the third phase of disarmament started in May 2001, the figures of the disarmament process by mid December were as follows: a total of 37,654 combatants had disarmed, among them 12,546 RUF, 24,699 CDF and 400 Others. In Kailahun, 2,936 combatants had disarmed: 1,994 RUF and 942 CDF.

The PAKBATT II contingent sensitised the RUF forces on the urgent need for peace in the country and encouraged them to disarm. The attitude of the peacekeepers made civilians and RUF members become very friendly and cooperative. However, a senior RUF commander sent instructions that the

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[805] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 01 - 19 April 2001.

[806] In late March 2001, Kamajors coming mostly from Kono District who had found refuge in Guinean refugee camps and were armed by the Guinean authorities launched simultaneous attacks in Kono District and in the north of Kailahun District. Accordingly, this action in Kailahun District has to be read in the light of the factual analysis for Kono District during this period.

[807] UNAMSIL press release, 15 May 2001.

[808] The schedule for the completion of the disarmament was agreed as follows: Koinadugu and Moyamba Districts by 22 October; Bo and Bombali Districts by 31 October; Western Area between 1-7 November; Pujehun and Tonkolili Districts between 1-15 November; and Kenema District between 15-30 November: IRIN West Africa, 12 October 2001.

[809] With the deployment in November of Nepalese peacekeepers in Moyamba District, the UNAMSIL mission reached its authorised ceiling of 17,500 troops: IRIN West Africa, 20 November 2001.



fighters of Luawa Chiefdom, indeed the whole of Kailahun District, should not disarm until the arrival of their leader. This instruction was never obeyed as even the Chief Security Officer did not stop anybody from disarming. Those who disarmed were protected and looked after of by the peacekeepers. The senior RUF commander later visited Kailahun District in early December together with the UNAMSIL force commander and the formal order for disarmament was issued.

The disarmament process successfully continued in the District until early January 2002; on 11 January 2002, senior RUF commanders symbolically turned in their weapons to the Force Commander of UNAMSIL in Kailahun District. The eighth and final tripartite meeting between UNAMSIL, the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone took place on 17 January 2002: "Both groups called for the extension of government authority throughout the country, the reintegration of fighters back into society and they supported the on-going Community Arms Collection and Destruction Programme. They appealed for the international community to continue its support to the DDR." [810]

3. Conclusion

The first batch of RUF forces, at that time fighting alongside the NPFL, entered the District through the two motorable roads that link the District to Liberia and the last RUF members were disarmed in early January 2002. Kailahun District was the only District where RUF forces, first with the NPFL, then alone and subsequently with the AFRC, established strong positions throughout the war. They were never completely repelled outside the boundaries of the District.

The first major incursion into Sierra Leone was carried out concurrently in Kailahun and Pujehun Districts, where the main roads between Liberia and Sierra Leone are located. The headquarters of the RUF/NPFL were established in Kailahun District from the beginning of the conflict and remained in the District throughout the conflict, although defensive headquarters were opened in Makeni and Kono, as the RUF/AFRC controlled these areas, making Kailahun District the RUF stronghold.

During the first years of the conflict, the RUF/NPFL forces directly engaged the SLA forces but never succeeded in dislodging them from their strategic position in Daru. These years were marked by the initial progression of the RUF/NPFL throughout the District, which was later halted by the SLA. Attacks and counter attacks from both sides made it difficult to have a clear picture of who was in control of any given area. However, the main SLA victory took place in late 1993, at which time they confined the RUF forces to the extreme east. This SLA progression led the NPRC Chairman to declare a unilateral ceasefire on 1 December 1993.

This ceasefire was soon violated, when in March 1994, RUF forces, alone this time as the NPFL had earlier withdrawn to Liberia to defend their positions in the Liberian conflict, changed their military tactic to that of guerrilla warfare and began retaking positions from the SLA. Shortly before that, in December 1993, the RUF forces had launched a massive and successful offensive in the south-east of Kenema District and by March 1994, were scattered throughout the Kenema District. In 1994 also, the south-east flank of Pujehun was clearly reopened and RUF forces spread across the District. This new development of the conflict left the three bordering Districts almost under RUF

[810] Sierra Leone: Humanitarian Situation Report 1- 31 January 2002.

control and allowed further incursions in the rest of the country. The scale of this second wave was acknowledged by the NPRC Chairman himself, who declared "total war against the rebels". By 1995, all the Districts of the country were directly affected by the RUF incursions.

From 1996 onwards, Kamajors emerged and fought the RUF and later the RUF/AFRC forces in the District. Although they retook control of some RUF-held areas, they never succeeded in taking control of the whole District.

Following the merging of the RUF with the AFRC forces, those CDF members, as in other Districts of the country, went underground before challenging the RUF/AFRC positions by late 1997 but particularly in 1998, following the ECOMOG deployment in Daru. As in 1998, Kamajors were in total control of Pujehun District and the Southern Province in general, thereby cutting off one of the supply roads from Liberia, although not the main one, which was through Koindu (Kissi Teng Chiefdom) in the north-east of Kailahun District. This strong grip over the Southern Province and especially over the Freetown-Kenema and Freetown-Pujehun highways blocked the retreating RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown, preventing them to go to Liberia through Pujehun District and forcing them to reach Kailahun District through Kono District

RUF/AFRC forces had control over certain areas of Kailahun District, mainly in the north-east of the Moa River and continued engaging the Kamajors, who at that time were assisted by ECOMOG forces. Around this time, many RUF/AFRC forces had regrouped in the District before launching their offensive on Koidu (Kono District) in December 1998. As part of this massive operation, which ended in Freetown on 6 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces retook position of Segbwema, a strategic town on the main road to Kenema District thus blocking ECOMOG at Daru.

The period following the invasion of Freetown was mainly characterised by political negotiations and reached its conclusion by the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999. Although the RUF leader exhorted his members in the District to disarm, a senior RUF officer, then Battle Field Commander and CDS categorically refused and engaged in actions to put a stop to the disarmament process. RUF forces furthermore engaged in cross border raids in the Parrot Beak in Guinea. This action was not isolated as another Guinean flank was open in Kambia District. The peace process was reactivated in November 2000 but more than one year was necessary to complete the disarmament in the District and to declare the war over in January 2002. Kailahun was amongst the last Districts to be disarmed.

b. Kenema District

1. Introduction

Kenema District is one of the three Districts composing the Eastern Province, together with Kailahun and Kono Districts. It is bordered on the north by Tonkolili District and, mainly, by Kono District, on the east by Kailahun District, on the southeast by Liberia, on the south-west by Pujehun and on the west by Bo District. Its headquarter town is Kenema Town in Nongowa Chiefdom, in the centre of the District. Kenema Town is located on the highway that goes to Koidu (Kono District Headquarter) in one direction and to Bo Town (Bo District Headquarter) and further on to Freetown in the other direction. As in the other Districts of the country, control of the highway was

of fundamental importance as it is the only way to bring necessary daily items for civilians in the District.

There are 16 chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Dama	Giema
Dodo	Dodo
Gaura	Joru
Gorama Mende	Tongi
Kandu Leppeama	Gbando
Koya	Baoma
Langrama	Ya Baima
Lower Bamabara	Panguma
Malegowun	Sembehun
Niawa	Sendumei
Nomo	Faama
Nongowa	Kenema
Simbaru	Boajibu
Small Bo	Blama
Tunkia	Gorahun
Wandor	Faala

The Moa River, which takes its source in the ocean in the south of Pujehun District, flows through the southern parts of Kenema District (Koya and Dama Chiefdoms). The Sewa River, coming from Bonthe and Bo Districts, reaches Kenema District in the central east in Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom and continues towards the north, reaching Kono District through Simbaru, Wandor and Gorama Mende Chiefdoms. On its eastern edge, at the border with Liberia, Kenema District is bordered by the Golan Forest.

After Kono District, Kenema District is one of the most important diamond mining areas of the country. The main diamond area, Tongo Field, is to be found in Lower Bambara Chiefdom, but other chiefdoms are also mainly mining areas, such as Kandu Leppeama and Gorama Mende Chiefdoms.

Kenema District was affected by the conflict through three discernible phases. During the first phase, which encompassed 1991 to the end of 1993, Kenema District was attacked by RUF/NPFL forces coming from the south and the east. This phase was marked by widespread violations committed primarily by RUF/NPFL forces, but also by SLA forces. Initially, in the south, there was little resistance put up by the SLA, who were also inflicting violence and terror on the population as part of their "screening" of the population for "rebels". However, towards the middle of 1992, the SLA regrouped and mostly drove the RUF/NPFL forces from their positions back towards Liberia. In the east, the fighting and infliction of violence and terror on the population was more intense, in part because there was a greater concentration of SLA forces due to the location of the SLA brigade headquarter in Kenema Town.

The patterns in both incursions were remarkably similar: the RUF/NPFL forces would gather the people of the villages in the Court Barrie and hold a meeting, toppling the existing authorities and setting up new power structures. Their arrival and stay was accompanied by the infliction of physical and mental violence on the people of the village, as well as the abduction of members of the population, including children, for use as workers, as fighters, as cooks and as "wives". RUF/NPFL forces also engaged in widespread theft and property destruction, notably the burning of houses, particularly when the people had fled the village prior to their arrival. Indeed, there was much internal displacement within the District as some people fled their villages ahead of the arrival of RUF/NPFL forces until mid to late 1992, when the combined SLA and ULIMO[811] forces began retaking control of the District and driving the RUF/NPFL forces out.

The second phase spanned from the end of 1993 until May 1997 with two concurrent incursions, one from the north and one from the south. This period saw the birth of the Kamajors, who were local hunters initially coming together in informal groups before coming under the wing of the CDF. The "Kamajors" began to fight the RUF, alongside the SLA. During this second phase, a lot of civilians were killed, abducted, forced to carry property and work in the diamonds mines; the number of rapes increased. The RUF also set up a number of camps throughout the District, from where they launched attacks on surrounding chiefdoms. These camps were also the sites where they brought abducted civilians and inflicted physical and mental violence on some and trained others to be fighters, including children. Atrocities were mostly carried out by RUF forces but also by SLA members who were actively engaged in mining activities and, to a lesser extent, the Kamajors.

The third and final phase of the conflict in Kenema District ran from May 1997, the date of the Coup that saw the AFRC seize power, until 2002, when the war officially ended across the country. During this time, there were still many incidents of violence against the population both by the RUF/AFRC forces and, to a lesser extent, by the Kamajors. This violence was most pronounced just after the Coup in May 1997, but continued throughout this phase, tapering off towards 2000 in the north, when disarmament began across the District.

2. Factual analysis

a) First Phase: 1991 – end of 1993

The war began in Kenema District as early as 1991, when RUF/NPFL forces entered the District in Tunkia Chiefdom, in the south, from Pujehun District and Liberia, and in the east from Kailahun District, where they entered Malegohun Chiefdom, which shares a boundary with Kailahun District.

Southern incursion

In April 1991, armed men identified as RUF/NPFL fighters (the NPFL, by their Liberian accent) entered Tunkia Chiefdom[812] in the south of the District from Pujehun District through the Golan forest and, to a limited extent, from bordering Liberia. After gathering people at the Court Barrie or

[811] This fighting faction, composed mainly of supporters of the late previous Liberian President, Samuel Doe, emerged in May 1991 to fight the NPFL, which was led by Charles Taylor.

[812] The chiefdom headquarter is Gorahun, located on the Kenema–Bo Waterside (Pujehun District) road. Gegbwema and Jao are two major towns in the chiefdom.

in a school field, these forces introduced themselves as the people's "redeemers and liberators" from the APC Government.

Coming from Makpele Chiefdom (Pujehun District) in April, RUF/NPFL forces attacked the chiefdom headquarter of Gorahun. Some of these forces had leaves tied around their wrist. This is a symbol of the Sierra Leone Peoples Party[813] (SLPP) and it is reported that this was done to gain the support of the people of Tunkia Chiefdom, since it was common knowledge that Tunkia was an SLPP stronghold. After taking control of the city, the RUF/NPFL appointed new chiefdom authorities and began looting houses. SLA forces from Kenema Town repelled them for a while but they came back shortly afterwards.

RUF/NPFL forces also entered the chiefdom from Liberia, through Tolo, and rapidly advanced into the chiefdom, harassing and molesting the population, inflicting physical violence, looting, killing and raping. When they arrived at Tolo, where RUF/NPFL forces stayed two days before proceeding further, they burnt some houses and killed civilians. At Tigbwema, RUF/NPFL forces burnt houses but did not meet the inhabitants as they had already left the town. At Mano Jeigbla, one man was shot and wounded and two young women were taken as "wives".[814]

At this time, SLA troops had recently arrived in Gegbwema, in the north of Tunkia Chiefdom, to brief the local authorities on security issues. However, when the RUF/NPFL forces approached the town and started firing, the SLA left Gegbwema, allowing RUF/NPFL forces to take control of the town without any armed opposition. One of the commanders of the RUF/NPFL forces told the people that they had come to unseat the APC Government. The day after they had arrived, chiefs from Jao (located in the centre of the chiefdom), Kamasu and the surrounding villages came to the town, unaware that the town had fallen into the hands of the RUF/NPFL, because they had previously been called upon for a meeting by the SLA Major. When they arrived, they were arrested by RUF/NPFL forces, undressed and forced to lie on the ground and look at the sky for a long time. These authorities were then told to go back to their towns, escorted by RUF/NPFL forces, and return to Gegbwema with food items.

On their arrival in Jao, one group of RUF/NPFL forces settled there due to the large number of cattle in the town. During their stay at Jao, they forced civilians to cook for them and an unknown number of women were forced to have sex with RUF/NPFL personnel. Joru, Gaura Chiefdom headquarters was attacked many times during that period but without success. In June, Guinean forces[815] who were deployed at Joru launched heavy missiles on RUF/NPFL positions in Tunkia Chiefdom. This led RUF/NPFL forces to leave the chiefdom for Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom, Pujehun District), together with some civilians.

After their departure, people started coming back out of the bush to their villages and SLA and ULIMO forces were deployed at Jao and Gegbwema. However, many people were afraid to leave

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813 At this time, the SLPP was the opposing party to the APC regime.

814 A term used by RUF/NPFL forces to denote women who they would abduct and force to perform domestic tasks and have sex with them.

815 Guinean and Nigerian forces, deployed in the country under bilateral treaties with Sierra Leone, fought alongside the SLA.

the bush, because the RUF/NPFL had told them that the SLA would kill them if they found them in places previously occupied by RUF/NPFL forces. As a result of their belief that they would be killed by the SLA, some people went to Zimmi with the RUF/NPFL forces.

Furthermore, there was also harassment of civilians by the SLA. In one incident, SLA forces assaulted a civilian from Jao, accusing him of being a "rebel", beating his head with the butt of a gun and threatening to cut his throat. An SLA commander who knew him intervened, saving his life. At that time, Jao was hosting thousands of people who had come from various villages to avoid RUF/NPFL forces. During their stay, SLA forces routinely carried out a practice known as "screening", checking that people coming to the villages were not "rebels". During the rest of the year, there were two other attacks on Gorahun where SLA forces repelled the unidentified assailants.

In July 1991, the chiefdom was attacked again at Gorahun. SLA forces fought RUF/NPFL forces before withdrawing. Subsequently, SLA forces deployed at Jao and Gegbwema also withdrew. Consequently, thousands of civilians left the chiefdom for safer havens such as Kenema Town, where they received information of attacks and the burning of villages in the chiefdom. In September, the SLA mobilised its troops, driving the majority of RUF/NPFL forces from positions in the chiefdom back to the Liberian border. After these last attacks, Tunkia Chiefdom was quiet for two years until hostilities resumed in December 1993.

Eastern incursion

In 1991, Kenema Town was an SLA brigade headquarter and the Major in charge was responsible for arms and ammunition for the war front in Kailahun District.

In May 1991, the war, which had previously been contained in Kailahun District, spilled over into Malegohun Chiefdom (north of the District, sharing a border with Kailahun District). A few days after they had taken control of Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom, Kailahun District), RUF/NPFL forces entered Ngiehun (Malegohun Chiefdom). Before their arrival, a lot of people had left, hearing terrific news such as killing of sick people to save them from suffering or killing of the most frightened ones so that they do not create fear in the others. Fighters searched the bushes to bring back civilians to the town. Following the usual pattern of gathering the village in the Court Barrie, a Town Commander, a Deputy Commander and a clerk were appointed and a committee was set up. Two men were executed and some women were taken to become their "wives".

The Town Commander conscripted manpower, swelling the ranks of the RUF/NPFL forces and enabling them to take control over other sections (the chiefdom has seven sections). After taking Konjo Buema Section, RUF/NPFL forces controlled Konjo Njagore and Konjo Yematanga Sections.

Following a disagreement with the Town Commander,[816] a local RUF commander removed all the people he had previously appointed from power. Four days later, his forces came back to the town to arrest the elders. However, the elders had left and the town was deserted, so the RUF/NPFL

[816] On hearing that the Town Commander had sent two of his men to remove chairs from the College at Bunumbu for his house, a more senior local commander followed these two men and killed them, entering Ngiehun with his men the following day.

forces burn down 19 houses. The RUF/NPFL forces who were in Ngiehun moved to Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom, Kailahun District) and intermittently patrolled the three sections in Malegohun Chiefdom that were under their control.

After these first attacks, 1992 saw RUF/NPFL activities expanding mainly in the chiefdoms of Koya, Dama and Niawa in the south of the District. Some activities were also reported in the chiefdoms of Small Bo, Gorama Mende and Lower Bambara, in the east of the District on the boundary with Bo District.

Several civilians were killed in February 1992 during SLA attacks on the headquarters of the three sections of Malegohun Chiefdom under RUF/NPFL control. SLA forces remained there, fighting to repel RUF/NPFL attacks. When SLA forces cleared Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom, Kailahun District), Ngiehun became calm and people began to return from the bush.

Gorama Mende Chiefdom is a hilly and forested chiefdom, bordered on the west by Bo District, on the north by Tonkolili District, on the east by Kono District and on the south by Wandor Chiefdom. Its location near Kono District, its forest vegetation and the wealth of its soil, in particular the diamonds, made the chiefdom ripe for bush warfare. However, like Lower Bambara and Small Bo Chiefdoms, Gorama Mende was barely affected during the first phase of the conflict. In February 1992, five armed men coming from the direction Jaiama Sewafe (Nimiyama chiefdom, Kono District) reached Punduru, a large town at the border with Nimiyama Chiefdom. Their mission appeared to be have been to carry a message informing people of the aims and objectives of the RUF/NPFL, as they stated people should not be afraid because they had come to redeem them from the oppressive ruling party. However, when they had entered the village, an old woman who threw verbal insults at the RUF/NPFL forces was shot dead.[817]

Niawa Chiefdom in the south-west of the District was attacked for the first time in 1992, [818]although the headquarter town of Sendumei was not affected. On 22 April, RUF forces[819] coming from Kandorhun (Barri Chiefdom, Pujehun District) through Langrama Chiefdom attacked Gandorhun in the south of Niawa Chiefdom. Upon entering the town, they appointed new Town Commanders for Gandorhun and its surrounding area. After going back for couple of days to Potoru (Barri Chiefdom, Pujehun District), they returned to Gandorhun, from where they launched attacks in villages in the south of the chiefdom and in the north of Langrama Chiefdom.[820] All these attacks took place in April. After this first visit in Gandorhun, RUF fighters came back to the town three days later, as they had promised they would.

At Ngolahun Vaama, civilians were killed, some houses were burnt and six girls together with five underage boys were taken away. At Gandorhun, young girls were raped and a ten year-old girl was

[817] Although no RUF presence was noted in Nimiyama Chiefdom (Kono District) in early 1992, it is possible that a pocket of RUF members coming from this direction reached Punduru.
[818] In Niawa Chiefdom, the following villages were assaulted by RUF/NPFL forces: Ngolahun Vaama, Woroma, Kponima, Kerga, Menila and Buwema.
[819] NB: On the identification of the fighters, key persons mention only the term "rebels" and RUF. No mention of NPFL. However, it is said that one of the commander was a Liberian.
[820] In Langrama Chiefdom, as well as Yebeima, which is the first village after the border, Wanjama, Menima Langrama and Marker were attacked.

killed. Her father was also threatened with death if he ever smiled any time they came back to the town. In another place, civilians were killed, some women raped and taken as their wives and few houses were burnt. In all the villages, property was taken. At Ngolahun Vaama, some houses were burnt and two people in two houses were burnt. Hearing that SLA forces were preparing to attack them, some of the RUF/NPFL forces went to Ngolahun Menila, hiding their identity, and were told that inhabitants were waiting for the SLA forces, for whom they had prepared food. Following this, RUF/NPFL forces attacked the town, inflicting physical violence on people, breaking doors and taking property. There were few killings at this time, apparently because the commander was mainly looking for the Chief to join their movement. A civilian who had been appointed the Town Commander of Gandorhun was killed during the attack, allegedly for hiding his people (civilians) whenever RUF forces came to the town. It is reported that the new Town Commander was doing what the rebels asked him to do. During his term, many young girls were raped and the stealing of food was commonplace.

Lower Bambara Chiefdom, located in the north of the District at the border with Kono District, comprising seven chiefdoms is well known for cash crops including cocoa, coffee and palm oil and, above all, for Tongo Field, its diamond area. Villages within this area such as Bomi, Gehama, Tokbombu, Tongola, Lalehun and Vandema are devoted to mining activities. Lower Bambara Chiefdom was affected to a limited extent during the first phase of the war and few incidents are reported, one around May 1992 and the other one at the end of the year. During the May attack, fighting forces wearing military uniforms and t-shirts and writing "RUF" on the walls of the houses attacked the diamond-mining town of Weima from Malegohun Chiefdom in the east. Civilians were killed and others were forced to carry loads.

Shortly after the overthrow of the APC Government, Dama Chiefdom authorities made an appeal to the Defence Minister to send SLA forces to the chiefdom. Dama shares a boundary with Jawei Chiefdom (Kailahun District). SLA and ULIMO forces were deployed to Konia, on the border with Nongowa Chiefdom and Jawei Chiefdom (Kailahun District), where they established a base. Soon after, Tawahun was attacked by RUF forces, most of them speaking Krio and coming from Jawei Chiefdom. Most of the forces were dressed in civilian attire, with some in military fatigue, as the RUF had begun to use military uniforms in 1992. During this attack, some civilians were killed, one woman's breast was cut off and a family was burnt in their house.

Around May 1992, Sahun and Sherif Jembehun were also attacked. An unknown number of civilians were killed and all the important buildings were burnt down. Also in 1992, a civilian vigilante movement started operating in the chiefdom under the command of the SLA. They were armed with axes, cutlasses and single barrel guns, sent to checkpoints and asked to shout when assailants were approaching.

However, despite the presence of SLA forces in the chiefdom, attacks were still carried out until the early days of 1993, during which RUF forces mutilated civilians, including carving "RUF" on their bodies.[821]

[821] This statement is general and unique and no more information is available on it.

In September 1992, ULIMO forces launched a powerful attack on Gandorhun (Niawa Chiefdom) and retook control of both Niawa and Langrama Chiefdoms. Almost two months later, they handed over their base to SLA forces, who were still stationed there when RUF forces attacked the chiefdoms again in March 1994.

During the end of the year, a large number of RUF/NPFL[822] forces attacked Konjo (Lower Bambara Chiefdom), but were repelled by SLA forces. A lot of civilians and RUF/NPFL forces were killed during the encounter. RUF/NPFL forces took a lot of property and the people of the nearby villages, such as Njaiagbahun and Venema, fled into the bush for several weeks. By the end of 1992, the population of Small Bo Chiefdom swelled as displaced people fleeing Barri Chiefdom (Pujehun District) sought refuge there.

An Eastern Region Civil Defence Committee, comprised of representatives from Kailahun, Kenema, Kono Districts and Freetown Peninsula was formed in December 1992, aiming at supporting the SLA by gathering "well-meaning" Sierra Leoneans, whose role would be of a vigilante nature.[823] The youths' knowledge of the terrain would be used to lead the SLA.[824]

In 1992 and 1993, ULIMO forces used Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom) as their base to fight RUF forces in other chiefdoms and were living peacefully with the population there. However, in 1992, coming back from Yibeima (Langrama chiefdom), some ULIMO members, to manifest their bravery, displayed severed male genital organs, claiming they were those of "rebels" they had killed. However, it is reported that this claim was later proved to be false and that the people who were killed were actually civilians. Although following this event, people of the chiefdom wanted them to leave, they were sent back in mid 1993 by the NPRC Government.

Koya Chiefdom, in the south of the District, was left in the hands of the RUF forces, as no SLA or ULIMO forces were stationed or deployed there. People of the chiefdom felt totally neglected. Koya would later be notorious for hosting one of the main RUF bases, Camp Zogoda, meaning "Land of Freedom."[825] Starting in May 1992 until 1994, there were massive violations committed in various villages in Koya Chiefdom, resulting in the death and abduction of hundreds of civilians. RUF forces entered the chiefdom headquarter town of Baoma in May 1992, gathered the population in the Court Barrie and opened fire, killing about two hundred people. Women are reported to have been raped "at will" and the town was set on fire before they left. The forces then proceeded to other villages and towns,[826] where they repeated the same course of action: killing dozens of civilians, raping women and looting and burning houses before leaving. They stayed in Nyadehun from June until September and then moved to Pelewama, where they occupied the town until December. In each of these towns, before killing people, they asked civilians to tell them where SLA members were. In January 1993, they crossed the Moa River and occupied Serabu and its surroundings until September 1993 before moving to Kamasu until December.

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[822] It is specified that some of the assailants were talking with Liberian dialect.
[823] BBC: 22 December 1992.
[824] Youths in the context of Sierra Leone could refer to anybody aged over 15 up to their mid to late 30s.
[825] The report does not specify in which of Sierra Leone's languages "Zogoda" has a meaning. Most likely Mende or Temne.
[826] Borgboabu, Giema, Maporma, Segbwema, Gorahun, Njaluahun, Bongor and Nyadehun.

Because SLA forces had driven almost all the RUF/NPFL forces from most of the District by the end of 1992, 1993 was relatively calm until the end of the year. The last months of 1993 mark the beginning of what can be labelled the second phase of the conflict, with the resumption of RUF/NPFL activities in Tunkia, Nomo and Gaura Chiefdoms.

b) Second Phase: End of 1993 – May 1997

This second phase started in December 1993 when RUF forces entered Nomo Chiefdom, on the border with Liberia. Those forces rapidly spread over the south of the Moa River, which flows from Pujehun District to Kailahun District through Koya and in the west of Dama chiefdom, and expanded their activities further north by crossing the river. Concurrently to this southern incursion, RUF forces entered the north of the District, attacking Lower Bambara Chiefdom.[827]

Southern incursion

During this phase, Moawama area, made up of Nomo, Gaura, Tunkia and Koya chiefdoms, was the first area to be affected. The majority of villages in these chiefdoms were devastated and most of the civilians moved to Kenema Town and further north.

On 1 December 1993, the Head of State unilaterally announced a one-month ceasefire, which allegedly led many SLA forces to leave their positions thinking the war was over. However, towards the end of December 1993, RUF/NPFL forces crossing the Mano River from Liberia attacked Nomo Chiefdom,[828] bordered on the east by Liberia. Shortly after their attack on Faama in the west of the chiefdom, RUF/NPFL forces proceeded further into the District and had reached Tunkia, Gaura and Dama Chiefdoms by early March 1994. When RUF forces attacked Faama, civilians and SLA forces who were deployed there suffered heavy losses. The SLA forces retreated, leaving a large cache of arms and ammunition in the hands of RUF forces, which would allow the RUF forces to spread all over the District. Doubts were also raised among civilians and some people were suggesting that SLA left this cache of arms on purpose.

On the following days, other towns in Nomo Chiefdom came under attack, including Kpendebu, Madina and Loawoma. During these attacks, civilians were killed and others were forced to carry stolen property, some to the border town of Dambala. At Madina, civilians gathered in the Court Barrie were forbidden to sleep in their houses for three days and were threatened to be killed if they were caught trying to escape. One young trader accused of carrying out reconnaissance for the SLA was shot dead. The town was surrounded and property was taken.

Beleibu (Tunkia Chiefdom) was attacked during the same period on Christmas Day in 1993. Some civilians were killed and half of the village was burnt down. The same day, RUF forces advanced

[827] It could not be ascertained whether the north attack derived from the south one or whether the North and the South constituted two different fronts. As no troops movement from the south-east of the District to the north (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) was recorded, it could be concluded that those two attacks constituted two different flanks. However, if those flanks were autonomous, the north attack would have come from Kailahun District where no movement of troops were recorded and where RUF forces started to gain territories on the SLA around March only, i.e. two months after the attacks on Lower Bambara Chiefdom. Furthermore, it cannot be inferred from the reports whether these forces joined at one point.

[828] Nomo has only nine villages and its headquarter town is Faama.

towards Jao (Tunkia Chiefdom). On their way, they found two Kamajors, one at Nomo Tunkia Junction and another one at Kokoru, both of whom were instantly killed. At Jao, inhabitants were gathered and forced to sit on the ground; some were stripped naked, kicked and beaten. After looting Jao, RUF forces moved to Gegbwema where they burnt the military post and some went to Tijoyeima, where they burnt some houses. Before reaching Gegbwema, they stopped at Jewahun where they looted and burnt houses. Nobody was killed, as the inhabitants had left the town before their arrival.

Also in December 1993, Gaura Chiefdom came under attack. The chiefdom headquarter of Joru, where the SLA was stationed, was the setting of many attacks and counter attacks. SLA forces from Joru fought the assailants in the chiefdom and came back to the town with the head of a man, who they claimed was an RUF fighter, hanging on the front on their vehicle. Two other members, both from Burkina Faso and fighting for the NPFL, were captured and placed in custody.[829]

SLA forces coming from Moa Barracks, Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District) recaptured Faama (Nomo Chiefdom) from the RUF, who launched another unsuccessful attack in mid January 1994. Some civilians who had previously returned to Faama were trapped by RUF forces and killed.

At the end of January 1994, the Head of State declared "total war" against the RUF and engaged in a massive recruitment of SLA forces; from 3,000 men in 1991, they reached around 12,000 in 1994.

The behaviour of SLA forces towards civilians was not acceptable to some of the chiefs and other elders who had stayed in the chiefdom, who were arrested and detained to answer allegations of "collaboration". Some civilians were also regularly beaten up in Faama for allegedly convening a meeting without giving notice to the SLA.

Early 1994, RUF forces regrouped at Kokoru and bypassed Joru to attack Venima (5 miles west of Joru). They were then led by a civilian who took them to other villages, including Gboyama, Madina, Tanima and Verma, where they were hosted by the Town Chief and another local authority. ULIMO forces coming from Joru repelled the RUF forces and brought the two local authorities from Verma back to Joru, where they were stripped naked. The Town Chief allegedly faced a firing squad but he did not die, was tied up and taken into custody. The other local authority was brought to Kenema Town then to Freetown, where he was imprisoned. In April 1994, the villages of Sandaru, Nyandeyama, Mendekelema and Seifula (Gaura Chiefdom) came under RUF attack. The only actions reported concern Sandaru (north of the chiefdom), where RUF forces captured some young men, whose age could not be ascertained, to carry the property they had stolen. When they left Sandaru, RUF forces promised that they would come back at night or the next morning, returning early the following day.

On the walls of the houses at Faama (Nomo Chiefdom) and Madina, RUF forces inscribed the acronym "RUF".

[829] What happened to them after during and after their custody was not reported.



Dama Chiefdom, west of Gaura Chiefdom and where many civilians from Moawama had taken refuge at one time, came under RUF attack in 1994.[830] At Torgboru, some civilians were killed by these forces. Gbewubu and Loppa were attacked. At Loppa, an unspecified number of civilians were killed with automatic guns and others were captured. During those attacks, some of these RUF members had their faces painted so they would not be recognised, because some of them were former SLA members. Other villages including Lelema, Konnehla, Kpandebu, Korma and Konia were attacked, mainly for looting purposes and civilians were most often forced to carry the loads. The RUF forces also killed a number of people, inflicted physical violence on the population and engaged in property destruction. At Konnehla, for example, men were captured to carry stolen property and one man who became tired and unable to continue carrying the load was killed. Korma was burnt down and at Kpandebu many people were killed, either shot or beaten to death. Some civilians were told to bury the bodies. At Konia, one pregnant woman was raped and gave birth instantly after. At Mano in June, RUF forces who were dressed in combat uniforms gathered the inhabitants in the Court Barrie and requested that they stand, placing guns very close to the civilians' ears and then firing, killing one old man. The RUF also forced the people of the village to lie down on the ground and look at the sun. Three civilians were killed when they attempted to run away. As they left the village, RUF forces took away all the cattle and poultry.

According to their inhabitants, Small Bo, Niawa and Langrama Chiefdoms form a block such that events occurring throughout this phase in one of these chiefdoms have a link with what happened in another one. RUF forces reached these chiefdoms early 1994 and launched attacks on many villages throughout the year, which led the population to flee the area for displaced camps in Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District), Gerihun (Boama Chiefdom, Bo District) and Taiama (Kori chiefdom, Moyamba District).

In early March 1994, RUF forces crossed the Moa River in Koya Chiefdom and attacked Jai and Menima (Koya Chiefdom).[831] From Menima, at the border with Niawa Chiefdom, RUF forces divided into two groups, both going to Niawa chiefdom, the first one heading for Ngandorhun in the south of the chiefdom and the second one going to Bandawor at the border with Koya Chiefdom.

While on their way to Ngandorhun, the first group of RUF forces ambushed and killed a prominent local hunter with sticks and knifes. They then moved to Yibeima, in the north of Langrama Chiefdom by the Waanje River. They attacked the town for the first time on 6 March. RUF forces entered Yibeima heavily armed with AK47s, RPGs and grenades and killed three civilians; one person was killed because he was speaking a language that the fighters could not understand. The RUF forces then returned back to Ngandorhun after making a promise to Yibeima inhabitants that they would come back on 8 March, which they did.[832]

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[830] The months when the reported attacks took place could not be ascertained. Furthermore, although no precise example was reported, it was however stated that the same kind of attacks also happened in 1995.

[831] The fact that many reports mention this date adds to the confusion concerning Koya chiefdom as according to the report for Koya, RUF forces had crossed the Moa River, before March 1994. Furthermore, the group that came to Niawa and Langrama Chiefdoms in March 1994 was different from the one allegedly in Koya Chiefdom.

[832] No details were given for this second attack and fatalities – if any – are not specified.

They then moved to Woyema (Langrama Chiefdom), where they made a base from which they could attack the surrounding villages. Their intention in Woyema appeared to be to capture the Section Chief, but as he was nowhere to be found, six houses were burnt, 10 men and women captured and one civilian, a carpenter, was killed. They also entered Menima (Langrama Chiefdom), where they killed two civilians, raped three women, burnt some houses and captured civilians. They then returned to Woyema and killed one Muslim leader because he was praying day and night for his village not to be attacked. While in Woyema, people were forced to do community work like brushing the area and preparing the rice farms. Window frames and doors were used as cooking wood. From Woyema, RUF forces launched attacks on Small Bo Chiefdom.

The second group that headed for Bandawor, at the border with Koya Chiefdom, used a bush footpath through Nyandehun, where they killed three civilians, raped some women and burnt some houses. Sendumei was attacked on 4 March 1994 early in the morning, when residents heard a heavy exchange of fire with SLA forces. During this attack, civilians were killed and girls were raped. The heavily armed RUF forces entered Bandawor in the afternoon, set the town on fire and gathered civilians under a tree near the main street that leads to Small Bo Chiefdom. A few armed men guarded the gathered civilians while others went into the town, raped, looted and killed nine civilians.

In the forest of Bandawor (Koya Chiefdom), the RUF forces built a camp they named Camp Zogoda. This camp was a strong base, where the RUF leader allegedly stayed in 1994. An airfield was also established between Menima and Jai (both located in Koya Chiefdom). The RUF forces used this camp to launch attacks on Small Bo Chiefdom and they also laid ambushes on the Bo-Kenema highway, despite vehicles being escorted by SLA vehicles, and on the roads going through rural areas. Many civilians were killed during these attacks, property was taken and vehicles burnt.[833] Serious doubts were raised among the population as to the identity of those assailants.

One of these ambushes, which took place in April 1994 at a hilly position close to Joru (Gaura Chiefdom) called Kwalekpehun, is illustrative of how RUF forces were operating at that time. RUF forces hiding in the bush used RPGs to attack convoys of passenger vehicles that were escorted by SLA forces. The commander ordered the passengers to lie down on the ground and an exchange of fire followed, during which three civilians were killed. When the firing stopped, the civilians boarded and no sooner had the vehicle ascended the hill than firing from the bush resumed. During this second attack, the SLA members left the convoy to get some reinforcements from Joru. Some civilians were killed, some injured and others were captured, pushed out of the vehicle and beaten with the butts of rifles. In the bush where they were taken, they met other civilians. All the passengers were searched for anything valuable or of interest to the forces. Two young men believed to be Fullah traders were shot at a close range. One died instantly and had his stomach cut open. One of the captives was asked to take the names of all the captured civilians who were allocated different jobs like conveying the wounded fighters to Gegbwema, carting the goods looted from the vehicles or taking the armour boxes. Another example occurred in March 1994, when an ambush was laid between Blama and Lungima, a town two and half miles from Blama. A trailer carrying load of rice was looted and the 350 bags of rice taken away. In another incident on 14 March 1994, one

[833] Since June 1994 in particular, the Bo-Kenema highway came under repeated ambushes, putting pressure on Kenema Town: Inter Press Service, 10 August 1994

driver was killed while driving his vehicle from Bo to Kenema. Stolen property and captured civilians were taken to Camp Zogoda.

Blama, the headquarter town of Small Bo Chiefdom, is located at a strategic crossroad to Kenema Town, Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, Bo District) and Potoru (Barri Chiefdom, Pujehun District). On their way to Blama Chiefdom, RUF forces passed by Topanda Ngovokpan, Kpatema and Yawuema. Between March and April, they attacked Blama six times. At this time, SLA forces were deployed at Blama, some ULIMO members were patrolling in villages and civilians from the surrounding villages had deserted their homes to come to Blama, the headquarter town. Vigilante groups[834] controlling checkpoints in Small Bo Chiefdom were monitoring the movement of people entering and leaving the chiefdom and reporting persons suspected of being "rebel" collaborators or spies to the head of the vigilante unit, who in turn reported to the SLA Commanding Officer in Blama. On 5 March 1994, a man suspected of being an RUF spy was apprehended at Blama, taken to the Police Station and shot dead in public by a member of the military police. On 6 March, another man was captured in Blama and taken to the Police Station. He denied being a collaborator and declared that RUF forces had planned to attack the town. The man was not killed but left in the cell and the information was passed on to Kenema SLA Brigade Headquarter with a request for reinforcements, but none was sent.

Despite repeated efforts,[835] RUF forces were unable to capture Blama but established a base at Yawuema, from where they raided surrounding villages, leaving civilians caught between RUF activities and SLA activities at Blama. SLA forces were using the Blama men to carry property they had stolen to Kenema Town and were forcing women to marry them. Civilians were also punished for minor reasons, such as failing to carry out work assigned to them by an SLA member. Punishments ranged from beatings to detention in a guardroom for a day or two without food. Curfews were also declared, particularly when the SLA was going on "looting missions", with civilians forced to stay in their houses from 5.00 p.m. until 11.00 a.m. the following morning. Furthermore, life for Small Bo inhabitants was made even more difficult due to the continuous ambushes laid on the Bo-Kenema highway, rendering the highway unusable for trucks and thus depriving them of necessary daily items.

In April 1994, civilians returning to Tunkia Chiefdom assembled mainly in Jao and Gegbwema where ULIMO forces were deployed. It is believed that around 15,000 civilians regrouped at Jao and around 30,000 at Gegbwema at that time. However, ULIMO forces were committing violent acts against civilians, ranging from harassment, such as asking people to go indoors during the day without any reason, to detaining or shooting dead those who ignored their orders. ULIMO forces would also draw up lists of alleged "rebels" for execution, such as seven young men from Mani village who were executed in front of their parents, accused of being "rebels". At Jao, in May, ULIMO forces gathered 15 civilians, explaining they were to be sacrificed for them to win the war and also for the death of one of their colleagues. One civilian was killed at close range, while the remaining 14 people were saved through the intervention of the Section Chief.[836] In another

[834] These vigilante groups were equipped with clubs, spears, single barrel guns and slings.
[835] RUF forces reportedly attacked Blama six times between March and April.
[836] It seems that the reason given by the ULIMO forces was untrue, as it appeared instead to have been a way to obtain palm oil from civilians.

incident, ULIMO forces brought inhabitants from Giewahun to Jao, executed four of them and killed three Imams. ULIMO forces based at Gegbwema displayed the same behaviour; for example, 12 young men from Damawuro, branded "rebels" or collaborators, were arrested and executed, as were seven men from Tolobu. During this period, people were living in very poor conditions and lacked food because the only vehicles that could drive on the roads were ULIMO vehicles.

Gaura Chiefdom was also the scene of the death of civilians killed by ULIMO forces. After an attack on Sandaru in 1994 and following the death of a ULIMO commander, another ULIMO commander from Joru decided to take reprisal for this death and bombed the prison, leading to the death of all the inmates. All these inmates were coming from a small village outside Joru. In another incident in May 1994, a ULIMO member was ordered to take an RUF member captured during an attack on Joru (Gaura Chiefdom) and "bath" him, meaning to execute him.

Around July, Tilorma (Tunkia Chiefdom) came under RUF attack at dawn while some people were praying at the mosque. Some people were put in one house that was set on fire. This latest development urged many civilians out of the 45,000 residing at Jao and Gegbwema to leave the chiefdom and to head for Kenema Town. On their way to Kenema at the bank of the Moa River in Dama Chiefdom, civilians heard that the RUF forces were on their back, which urged them to cross the bridge. This panicked and disorganised movement of people resulted in the death of many civilians, who drowned in the river.

These attacks on the Moawama area (Nomo, Gaura, Tunkia and Koya Chiefdoms) left the civilians in total disarray. Most of them fled into the bush for safety and the behaviour of the SLA forces, who put up little or no resistance to the RUF forces, increased their doubt as to their loyalty to the Government. It was also believed that some of the SLA forces had completely defected and joined the RUF. This disarray was further enhanced by the fact that when escaping RUF advance, civilians also had to look out for SLA forces who often shot on sight anybody coming from the direction of a place hold by RUF forces, as they were suspected of being a "rebel". Indeed, SLA forces from Dama Chiefdom were instructed to kill anybody coming from Tunkia, Nomo or Gaura Chiefdoms as civilians from those chiefdoms were considered to be "rebels" or were believed to have made their children join the RUF forces.

Throughout 1994 and 1995, those chiefdoms were under sporadic raids, mainly for looting purposes carried out by armed men whose identity could not be ascertained with certainty, for people suspected SLA forces to be responsible for some of these raids. Young men and girls continued to be abducted. During these raids, houses were looted and burnt and people killed, although most of the civilians had fled the villages. Intermittent raids carried out by RUF forces took place throughout 1995 on Sandaru, north of Gaura Chiefdom. During these raids, people were taken to carry the stolen property.

In April 1995, ambushes took place on the Kenema-Dama road, mainly to take food from Dama farmers who were bringing their produce for sale in Kenema. In one incident, a young boy who escaped the ambush explained that four of them who attempted to escape had their throat slit as deterrence to others who might plan to escape.

The few people who stayed in the chiefdoms hid in the bushes and built huts called "sorquehun". Armed men believed to be both RUF fighters and SLA forces who were in the chiefdoms were creating havoc, often going into the bush to find the hiding places and to loot them. People were forced to carry out tasks for the RUF forces and some were killed. The death of one Imam at Gondama (Tunkia Chiefdom) shocked people, as he was well known for being "brilliant and brave". At Damawulo (Tunkia Chiefdom), one man who refused to join the RUF movement was killed. At Jeneh, a prominent chiefdom elder was also killed by RUF forces. Even the civilians who had earlier fled the chiefdoms were coming back regularly to get news and to find food. Those who were caught by RUF forces were often killed, alleged to be spies[837] for SLA forces.

At Gorahun (Tunkia Chiefdom) where SLA forces were stationed, civilians were harassed and intimidated, obliged to contribute to the feeding of the SLA. Civilians also had to pay the SLA a "landing fee" to be allowed to sell extra food items.

Northern incursion

Similarly to what happened in the Moawoma area, RUF fighters attacked all the chiefdoms in the north of Kenema District in early 1994.[838]

On 30 January 1994, RUF fighters attacked Tongo (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) from Peyama. Throughout this second phase, Peyama was an RUF stronghold whereas Tongo became the SLA base. Following this attack, the RUF forces scattered all over Lower Bambara Chiefdom and launched attacks on Malegohun and Nongowa Chiefdoms, often coming in high numbers. In January 1994, Peyama and Tongo were attacked. Before coming to Peyama, RUF forces had earlier sent a letter to the inhabitants warning them they would attack their village. When the village was attacked, the identity of the assailants was not clear for people as they were wearing military uniforms. However, no doubt remained after the RUF fighters identified themselves by writing inscriptions on the walls.

After Peyama, RUF forces moved on to Tongo, where they were repelled by SLA forces. During that battle, a lot of civilians were killed and property was stolen. The precise identity of the forces responsible was unclear, as both were wearing the same attire. From Tongo, RUF forces went to Lalehun, where they abducted hundreds of adults and children, forcing some to carry loads, and burnt down a lot of houses. In February, RUF forces attacked Ghana and killed almost everybody; later on, they moved to Talamah, where they killed a lot of civilians and burnt few houses. At, Talamah, they also wrote on the walls on the houses inscriptions to identify themselves.

Largo (Nongowa Chiefdom, south of Lower Bambara Chiefdom) was attacked early one morning in February 1994 by heavily armed RUF forces. People were killed and houses looted and burnt. It is reported that one of the commanders vowed to kill any living thing he saw in the town. On the same day, Mano Junction, a strategic town and major business centre at the crossroad leading to Kailahun, Tongo and Kenema, was attacked; civilians were killed and massive looting was carried out before

[837] Note that at this stage, it is not possible to explain with certainty what happened in Koya Chiefdom.

[838] However, it cannot be ascertained whether the attacks on most of the chiefdoms located in the North of the District were carried out by the group that had attacked Lower Bambara Chiefdom or by the Southern group who had entered Nomo Chiefdom.

some houses were burnt. Villages on the Mano Junction – Kailahun Road, mainly located in the Lower Bambara Chiefdom, were attacked during the same period, including Talia, Bo Ngeiya and Kangama. At Talia, some civilians were killed and at Bo Ngeiya, the Town Chief and other civilians captured by the forces were ordered to lie on the ground and their throats were cut, because they were accused of supporting the Kamajors and Government forces.

RUF forces coming from different directions attacked Panguma, the chiefdom headquarters town in the west of the chiefdom, at the border with Dodo Chiefdom. They captured some civilians and put them in one house, which they set fire to, killing all the people inside. Around 80 civilians were killed during that attack on 12 March 1994, including an Irish priest and a Dutch doctor, together with his wife and daughter. Houses in the town were destroyed and looted as well as the hospital, where drugs worth millions of Leones[839] were stolen. Again in March, Talamah was attacked and RUF forces fought the SLA. During the indiscriminate firing by both forces, many civilians were killed. At Kornia Kpindima, in late March, a large number of RUF fighters coming from Foindu and Yombuma killed some civilians, looted and burnt houses and forced many civilians to carry the loads. During a second attack on this town in April 1994, the Town Speaker and his family were captured, molested and tortured; the Town Speaker was later killed at Yombuma.

RUF forces attacked Koi town (Nongowa Chiefdom) early one morning in mid 1994, reportedly to terrorise the inhabitants, whom they accused of supporting the Kamajors. They fired indiscriminately and many civilians were killed and others were wounded. The town was looted and people were forced to carry the stolen property to Peyama.

Jormu Town (in the east of Nongowa chiefdom) was attacked three times in 1994, the first being on 28 March in the early hours of the morning by RUF forces coming from Peyama. During this attack, which resulted in looting and the abduction of many people to carry the loads, civilians suspected there was collaboration between SLA forces based there at that time and RUF forces because both factions were firing into the air, rather than at each other.

Soon after, Combema was attacked and burnt down. Some civilians were killed and a man was seriously wounded in his arm. RUF forces, who sketched a map of Sierra Leone showing areas under their control on the blackboard of the primary school, did not stay long. Before leaving, they took nearly all of the food and other valuable items in the village, forcing people to carry those items to Jormu.

Jormu was attacked for the second time few months later and RUF forces fired indiscriminately at civilians, who were running here and there, dazed and confused, killing dozens. Many houses were burnt and massive looting was carried out, with people of the town being forced to carry the stolen property. As the RUF forces left the town, they painted graffiti and writings on the walls, naming some of their commandos.

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[839] As a very rough guide, one million leones is approximately equivalent to 500 USD. This should be placed in the context of Sierra Leone's position at the bottom of the Human Development Index: between 1991 and 2000, 57% of the population lived on less than 1 USD (2.000 SLL) per day and 74.5% lived on less than 2 USD (4.000 SLL) per day: see UNDP Human Development Report 2003, http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_SLE.html, last visited on 30 December 2003.



SLA forces based in Tongo Field also carried out massive looting and harassed large numbers of civilians suspected of being collaborators. Civilians were also forced to work for the SLA at mining sites and many people were shot at these sites. Girls and women were raped and Chiefs and community leaders were molested and tortured, suspected of being "rebel" collaborators or sympathisers. SLA also sent messages to civilians who had earlier deserted the area to come back to the town. Checkpoints were mounted and were used to take away money and valuable items from civilians intimidated with guns and daggers. This situation remained the same under the authority of successive commanders. Besides these activities, SLA forces also undertook ambushes.[840]

Thus, at that time, civilians were under the pressure of both RUF and SLA forces, even if from time to time there was fighting between the two factions. Relief came in mid 1994 when a group of local hunters from Malegohun Chiefdom (east of Lower Bambara Chiefdom) established bases in Lower Bambara Chiefdom. They fought RUF forces but sustained heavy losses. At the beginning, these local hunters worked directly with the SLA forces but were later on disarmed by SLA forces.[841]

The third attack on Jormu (Nongowa Chiefdom) took place during the last months of 1994, apparently mainly for the purposes of obtaining food. Civilians were abducted and taken to the nearby village of Saami, where they were forced to harvest the rice fields. Shortly after this third attack, RUF forces searching for "pro-Government", i.e. SLA, forces attacked Vaahun Town. A door-to-door search operation was carried out and people were gathered in the centre of the village. One young man suspected of being a Kamajor was shot in the Court Barrie in front of all the villagers, who were told by the commander to clap for him and laugh.

At Potehun (Nongowa Chiefdom), people were killed and many were taken away to work in the diamond fields. The continuous attacks on Jormu and its environs drove the inhabitants out of their villages. Sanguahun, Nyandeyama, Nekabu, Baoya, Damawulo, Guabu and Ngeyawamie were attacked during the last months of the year but few civilians were to be found. Most of these villages were burnt and RUF forces coming from Saami started looking for people in the bushes to increase the number of workers for the harvest.

Kenema Town was attacked on Christmas Day in 1994. A high number of heavily armed RUF forces[842] from Camp Zogoda launched the attack from the south-eastern part of the city, known as "Reservation side". The battle lasted for eight days but SLA forces were unable to protect the town, although a financial contribution to help them had been asked and obtained from the inhabitants. During this attack, which lasted several days, many civilians were killed and a lot of young boys and girls were abducted. Among those killed was a prominent lawyer, whose death struck people as far away as Freetown. However, up to now, doubts still remain about the identity of those who killed him.

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[840] This information was related in such general terms and no specific example can be given.
[841] These events happened in 1994 and probably 1995. See above, note 165.
[842] It is believed they were 400 in number.

Throughout 1994 and 1995, villages all over Lower Bambara[843] came under persistent attacks. In all the attacks, people were routinely molested, tortured, killed, forced to carry stolen property and forced to join the RUF. Girls and women were raped and many houses were looted and burnt. In December 1994, RUF forces coming from Peyama killed fourteen civilians and two SLA members. People were slaughtered with knives and some of their bodies were put in pots. At Lowoma (Lower Bambara Chiefdom), also in December 1994, some houses were burnt, some civilians taken away and a few others were killed. Those who were killed were thrown into water cells, which became contaminated and caused diseases. During 1995, schools, clinics, mosques and churches throughout the chiefdom were unroofed.

In February 1995, RUF forces attacked the mining town of Kpava (Nongowa Chiefdom), asking whether any Kamajors or SLA forces were in town. Following indiscriminate shooting, around 15 civilians were killed. The town was then looted and some civilians forced to carry the load to Peyama, the main RUF base in Lower Bambara Chiefdom. People who were caught trying to escape faced severe beatings with sticks and car tyres until they died and very young girls were routinely raped.

Government forces based in Lower Bambara Chiefdom ambushed a lorry between Ngiehun and Lalehun in May 1995. During this attack, 14 civilians, mainly businessmen, were killed. Civilians from Lalehun were forced to take the bodies and bury them in a mass grave in Lalehun. The following month, some women of Kenema Town decided to go and plead with RUF forces stationed at Tabulay Junction. On their arrival, RUF forces opened fire and many of the women died on the spot. Others sustained bullet wounds or were taken to the RUF base and raped.

In November 1995, local hunters equipped with short guns, cutlasses and knives coming from Kenema Town attacked RUF positions in Lower Bambara Chiefdom,[844] repelling RUF forces who, while retreating, burnt down some villages. Civilians who had earlier fled to the bush started to come back to their villages. These local hunters at this time were not undertaking initiation as such and reporting to a man called a prominent Doctor.[845]

Throughout 1995 and 1996, RUF forces were coming sporadically to Nongowa Chiefdom. Fewer incidents are reported, possibly due to the fact that many people were living in the bushes and that many villages were already destroyed. During this period, RUF forces used to bypass Jormu where Kamajors and SLA forces were based, launching raids on villages out of their reach like Kpalu and Konabu.

On Election Day in February 1996, RUF forces singing "RUF says no election" attacked Kenema Town early in the morning. Among the people killed on that day was a final year student at Fourah Bay College. On the same day, the RUF launched systematic attacks on towns and villages in Dama Chiefdom, as they did not want the election to take place. An unspecified number of people were

[843] These villages include Torpombu, Foindu, Kamboma, Komende, Bumpe, Kornia, Sahaha and Jagor.
[844] These positions were located at Kornia Kpindima, Foindu, Kamboma, Largo and Kombuy.
[845] Initiation of Kamajors did not take place in Kenema District before 1996. However, these local hunters, as in other places in the country, were organising themselves to protect their chiefdoms, mainly equipped with bladed weapons and local guns. The registration process will require further clarification.

killed on that day. In some instances, the RUF forces attacking villages on that day were dressed in military fatigues. Nevertheless, despite these incidents, the elections went on as planned.[846]

After the 1996 elections, more SLA forces came to Foindu, Kamboma, Largo and Bendu Junction (Lower Bambara Chiefdom). At checkpoints, civilians without a written document called a "pass" were not allowed to continue their journey. They were often molested and detained for long periods of time. In another incident, in June 1996, the SLA forced a lot of civilians to brush the area near Peyama. As Peyama was a RUF base, many civilians fell into an RUF ambush and were killed.

The North-west of the District

Coming from Lower Bambara Chiefdom through Dodo Chiefdom, RUF forces reached Simbaru Chiefdom in February 1994; Wandor and Kandu Leppeama Chiefdoms were affected shortly after. These chiefdoms will be examined together as it appears that the same RUF commander was in charge of the RUF forces operational in these chiefdoms. As for Gorama Mende Chiefdom, the northernmost chiefdom of the District, it is likely that RUF forces who reached it came from two different directions and the actions of one group may be linked with what happened in Kandu Leppeama, Simbaru and Wandor Chiefdoms (south of Gorama Mende Chiefdom) while the other actions that affected mainly Punduru (north-east of the chiefdom), were directed from Kono District.

In February 1994, an RUF group called "Tay Go" entered Simbaru Chiefdom and rapidly established a camp under the Lomie Hill they called Joe Bush.[847] Before establishing their camp, RUF forces attacked Goma. They entered the town with sporadic firing while people were fleeing. The RUF forces stayed for three days in the town and abducted some civilians. The civilians who came out of the bush after the attack counted 15 bodies. The houses were unroofed and young men were forced to carry the stolen property, including food, poultry and personal items such as radios, recorders and clothes to a site that became an RUF camp. Before leaving, they set the town on fire, burning down all the approximately 123 houses of the town.

Shortly afterwards, the first group was reinforced by a second group called "Death Squad", which also came from Lower Bambara Chiefdom. On their way to Simbaru Chiefdom, this second group passed by Dodo Chiefdom, east of Simbaru Chiefdom. At Guala (Dodo Chiefdom), they shot and killed nine civilians and burnt 18 people alive. After spending two days in the town, they continued towards Simbaru Chiefdom and reached the Hydro Electricity Power Dam, located in Simbaru Chiefdom at the border with Dodo Chiefdom. They vandalised the dam and killed civilians who stayed with the Security Police who were stationed there. Civilians who went to the dam afterwards counted 16 bodies, including women and children. Eight civilians were also mutilated and four young boys, allegedly below the age of 15, had melted plastic dripped into their eyes while they were being interrogated by the RUF forces.

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[846] It is interesting to note that very few reports mention RUF disturbances on Election Day. Furthermore, besides Kenema Town (Nongowa Chiefdom), the other area affected was Dama Chiefdom, to be found south of Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema Town being located nearby the border with Dama Chiefdom.

[847] Joe Bush was a generic name given to training bases, like "Camp Lion" in other places. Other camps called Camp Joe Bush were to be found at other places in Kenema District.

The RUF used Camp Joe Bush as a training camp and as a permanent base to attack the whole of Simbaru Chiefdom and the surrounding chiefdoms. Civilians who had been captured were taken to the camp, where they were subjected to physical and mental violence. One example of this was called "Gunproof society". During the course of this action, captives were first forced to dig deep pits and to collect over 150 different kinds of leaves from the bush, where they had been escorted for this purpose. Captives were then obliged to lie down in the pit, where they were covered with the sticks and boiled leaves they had collected, which were then set alight for the captives to be smoked. After this, civilians were forced to wash themselves with the water in which the leaves had been boiled. They were then covered with burnt oil on their whole body and forced to sit for hours under the sun. Following this, RUF members shot them to prove they were "gunproof", as a result of which many people died. In addition, people who had been captured and brought to the camp were shot dead and their flesh cooked by women captives.

From this camp, RUF forces started attacking villages, systematically molesting, torturing, killing, raping and abducting people and looting and burning houses. The scale of these acts was very high. The following incidents describe the actions carried out during this period.

The first village to be attacked from the camp was Lomabu (Simbaru Chiefdom), where RUF forces killed 13 people, set the village on fire and captured some men and women. They then divided into groups to visit the whole chiefdom, coming back after the attacks to their camp with stolen property and captured civilians. Patrol groups undertaking these actions in various villages were given descriptive names such as "Operation No Mercy" and "Operation Fire".

At Borboru, a section headquarter in Simbaru Chiefdom, people fled as the RUF entered the town, firing their weapons. Those people who were caught were either captured or killed; this attack resulted in the death of 27 civilians, including children. The village was massively looted and civilians were forced to carry the stolen property, which included animals, clothes and zinc, back to the camp. The RUF forces remained in Gbangeima for nine weeks, during which time they mutilated civilians, raped women and girls, burnt people alive, skinned people alive and ate the flesh of their victims. Top commanders were given the most beautiful girls and the other women who had been caught were distributed among the junior commandos. Two young girls were buried alive as a sacrifice at the river bank. People were forced to work and cook for them. At the entrance and exit points of the town, they mounted checkpoints at which they displayed human heads. At one point, they started burning furniture instead of gathering wood and moved all the captives to the camp. Before leaving, they set the village on fire, destroying almost all the houses. People who managed to escape from the camp later found the village destroyed and over 40 bodies lying on the ground.

Deima Town (Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom, south of Simbaru Chiefdom) was attacked many times during this period, as it was a diamond rich area. In March 1994, the RUF group called "Tay Go", wearing combat attire and red berets, attacked Deima, killing 20 civilians on the spot and abducting many young girls. The heavily armed RUF forces attacked and raided many villages in the chiefdom. The RUF group then settled for a while at Bouajabu, from where they attacked other villages. At Bouajabu, 15 people were captured and forced to carry stolen property. At Jenneh, many civilians drowned in a deep stream as they tried to escape an oncoming RUF attack, of which they had been warned by an inhabitant of the village. RUF forces stayed in Jenneh for three days, killing civilians

and raping girls. When they entered the town, the RUF forces met a student from Milton Margai College with his aunt. Accusing him of being a SLA member, RUF forces dragged him away, beat him, wrapped him in rice bags and a bed mat and set fire to the mat. His aunt was then taken away and sexually assaulted by more than one member of the RUF. She was taken with them, forced to cook for them and they said that she was now their "Mammy Queen", forcing her to have sex with them. This woman managed to escape later during a fight between the RUF group and SLA forces that took place at Gbando.

Other villages in Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom - such as Motorma, Banda and Leppeama - also came under attack in March 1994. Civilians were killed and houses were burnt down. At the headquarter town of Gbando, one young man from Levuma who had been sent by the acting Paramount Chief to report on what was happening in the surrounding villages saw members of a fighting force wearing combat uniforms and identifying themselves as RUF forces. Many houses in the town were on fire and bodies were lying in the backyards of some houses, while other inhabitants who were in houses that were on fire were crying.

RUF forces raided other villages in Simbaru Chiefdom before reaching the chiefdom headquarter of Boajibu. During those raids, they vandalised and took everything they came across, including cattle and poultry, and took away civilians to carry what they had just taken. At Tawalun, they looted extensively, including domestic animals, burnt down the village, captured 19 strong young men to carry the load, killed two civilians with machetes and threw three people into a burning house. At Kpetema, where they arrived in the evening hours, they entered the village with heavy fire and captured eight men to carry their load. At Peyeila, a village of 98 family houses, they vandalised the houses and took all the property they found, including household items, cash, money, clothes and cattle. They captured civilians to bring all the items to Camp Joe Bush, set the whole village on fire and mutilated seven civilians, namely three women, a three year old girl and three young men. One woman who was six months pregnant had her belly cut open to settle an argument the RUF forces were having about the sex of the baby she carried.

On 17 March 1994, the same group launched an attack on Simbaru Chiefdom headquarters, Boajibu, known to be a business centre for the neighbouring chiefdoms and containing the offices of many dealers in diamonds and gold. Before entering the town, they laid ambushes on all the entrances. Seven hundred and sixty-nine civilians were captured and divided into four groups, each of which was to be given a section of the town to burn down. Each day civilians were killed; they were burnt alive, dropped in boiling water, shot or had melted plastic dripped into their eyes. The bodies of their victims were cooked and eaten; this human flesh was called Yanimi. Many people were mutilated and dozens of women and girls were often raped by numerous RUF members. Relief came from SLA forces from Komboya Chiefdom (Bo District) who attacked the town after 17 days of RUF occupation, repelling the RUF forces. SLA forces then returned to their base in Bo District.

RUF forces began a looting spree on 29 March 1994 at Konta (Gorama Mende Chiefdom), a town known for its business transactions.[848] RUF forces entered the town at dusk with heavy firing and, as

[848] The direction the RUF forces came from cannot be ascertained with certainty. As Konta is located at a nodal point on a road coming from the south (Wandor Chiefdom), it is likely that those forces came from Wandor Chiefdom. However, information collected for Wandor Chiefdom does not mention any troops movement late

civilians had already fled, undertook systematic looting and burning of the houses. Two people were killed: one man, described as insane, who did not leave the town was stabbed to death because RUF forces were suspicious that he did not leave and an old man was burnt alive in a house the RUF forces had set on fire. Those RUF forces then continued their looting spree in the surrounding villages and captured civilians were forced to carry the stolen property on their heads. At Palima, five civilians were killed and 20 houses left in ashes. The RUF forces went back to Konta, where they killed and ate domestic animals.

Three days later, the RUF forces left for Modema, which is on the road that leads to Tonkolili District, in the north of Gorama Mende Chiefdom. On their way to Modema, RUF forces burnt many houses: five houses at Gbandi, six at Kortuhun, three huts at Fulawahun and 20 at Kenyema. At the Kenyema Bridge, one civilian who was wearing a t-shirt with a NPRC logo was stabbed to death. Another civilian was captured at the bridge and joined the captives. Modema, a periodical market centre located in an area producing coffee and cocoa, was attacked on 1 April 1994. During this attack, all the public buildings were burnt down and one civilian caught trying to flee was killed. Houses were also burnt down in the surrounding villages. The RUF forces left Modema for the road leading to Masingbi (Konike Sanda Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). SLA forces came to Modema late April, unsuccessfully pursued the RUF forces, stayed in the town for some days and looted what was left before leaving.

In April 1994, RUF forces entered the north-east of Gorama Mende Chiefdom. At this time, vigilante groups[849] composed of local hunters and volunteered civilians trained in basic military tactics were active in the chiefdom. Those vigilante groups were to serve as local observers assisting the SLA forces and were sometimes used for reconnaissance (RECE). One of those vigilante groups had its first encounter in April 1994 when, hearing that RUF forces coming from Nimiyama Chiefdom (Kono District) were near Punduru, they ambushed those RUF forces in Kemuya forest, killing one of them and injuring others. Following this incident, RUF forces entered Kemuya and killed five civilians, including women and children, and burnt 10 houses. On their way back to their base in Nimiyama Chiefdom, those RUF forces went through Ngorgbedehun, on the east bank of the Sewa River, where they raided the houses and burnt down two of them.

On 8 May 1994, SLA forces came back to Modema (Gorama Mende Chiefdom), claiming they had been deployed to protect civilians. They taxed the people of the town and on 9 June they left, allegedly for another military assignment. Three days after they had left, Modema was attacked but the inhabitants could not tell whether the assailants were RUF or SLA forces. During this attack, five people were killed and the armed men located the civilians in their hiding places, beat them and took their property.

The situation prevailing in Simbaru Chiefdom also affected Wandor Chiefdom, north of Simbaru Chiefdom. Beginning in June 1994, small groups of RUF forces were coming from Simbaru

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March 1994, only in May 1994. It could nonetheless be deduced that the troops who passed by (and only bypassed) Wandor Chiefdom in May 1994 are the same as the one who attacked Konta (Gorama Mende Chiefdom) and that one of these two dates is not completely exact.

[849] These vigilante groups were equipped with traditional weapons like swords, lances, knives and short guns (local hunters).

Chiefdom, initially at least led by the same commander who had been leading the "Tay Go" group. Before these regular visits of small groups, hundreds of RUF forces passed by the chiefdom in May 1994, en route to open a new base further north, killing two people as they passed through Gendema. In June 1994, RUF forces coming from Boajibu (Simbaru Chiefdom) arrested the Town Chief and killed him in a nearby village, on the basis that the inhabitants did not feed them well. His wife was raped and the RUF forces took two young girls away with them as they moved from village to village to take food. In December, on a food-finding mission, they went to Kpangbaru, where they mutilated a man they identified as being a vigilante. While he was still alive, his stomach was slit open and his organs removed and eaten.

At one point (reports vary between June 1994 and the end of 1995), SLA forces were based at Boajibu (Simbaru Chiefdom). When they arrived, they asked people to come out of the bushes and those who did not were later forced to come out. Civilians were forced to stay indoors from 5.00 pm until 9.30 am. Every morning, civilians were dispatched to bring food for the SLA forces in the chiefdom, which later extended to neighbouring chiefdoms when food supplies in Simbaru Chiefdom were exhausted. SLA forces were patrolling in Simbaru Chiefdom and the neighbouring chiefdoms, bringing with them civilians used to carry properties they would loot. Civilians were forced to work for SLA forces, mainly to mine diamonds for them; villages were raided to bring manpower for this purpose. Civilians were also forced to do farm work. Orders were given to shoot any civilian caught trying to steal gems. In one incident, civilians fleeing RUF attacks in Kono District and coming to Boajibu were arrested and detained for two days. Three of them were then shot to death and civilians were told to tie their feet together and to "throw them away". Civilians were beaten if they failed to give food to the SLA forces. Orders were passed that civilians had to divide their food in two parts, one part for them and one for their commander. Civilians were harassed for their property and SLA forces were searching for civilians in their "sorquehun". During one of these searches, some SLA members fell into a RUF ambush. In reprisal, SLA forces killed two young civilians accused of being responsible for the death of their colleagues. They cut their throats, slit their stomachs, cut out their organs and cooked them. During all this period, many women and girls were raped and anyone who denied a request from an SLA member was severely beaten. Similar actions continued under successive commanders.

Punduru (in the north-east of Gorama Mende Chiefdom) was attacked in October 1994 by RUF forces on a looting spree. Over 250 men entered the town wearing red headbands, about 50 of them unarmed, one of whom was a Lebanese businessman captured in Nimiyama Chiefdom (Kono District). The heavy firing frightened civilians and vigilantes, who all fled the town. The RUF forces then started hunting for people and property, raiding the whole town. They killed 10 civilians, mainly people who could not escape, including the elderly and young children. Other civilians they found were not killed but used as manpower to carry the stolen property. However, one man who was told to carry property taken from the pharmacy and who refused was beaten to death with a bladed weapon. Before leaving the town for their base with their captives, the RUF forces set fire to the mosque, the health centre, the primary school and two churches.[850] However, some of the local hunters managed to encounter the RUF forces at the border with Nimiyama Chiefdom (Kono District). RUF forces, heavily laden with stolen property, were not able to put up strong resistance and fled, leaving most of the stolen property behind and enabling most of the captives to flee.

[850] Punduru would not come under other RUF attack until 1997.



Another group of RUF forces[851] reached Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom in August 1995[852] and inflicted a lot of violence on both person and property as the following examples highlight. At Levuma, RUF forces killed civilians, sexually assaulted women, burnt some houses and captured civilians to carry their load. At Jenneh, they killed five civilians and tortured others. The RUF forces also killed 16 civilians, burnt 45 houses, amputated the limbs of seven civilians, raped four girls and took other women from their husbands at Gbando, the chiefdom headquarter. Deima, a diamond rich town, was attacked not only during this wave of attacks but also many more times throughout the following months as RUF forces, although not based there, sporadically entered the chiefdom on raids.[853] Following these attacks, local authorities addressed the Government, expressing their deep need to have some SLA forces stationed in their chiefdom. However, the SLA forces who were sent as a result of this request also began harassing civilians and taking their property.

Due to SLA attacks in 1995, RUF forces mounted serious assaults in Wandor Chiefdom. At Gendema, civilians were assembled and nine of them were locked up in a room after three had been killed. The nine men in the room were taken out one after the other and beaten to death. The RUF forces did not use bullets, both to save ammunition and to avoid alerting SLA forces based at Boajibu (Simbaru Chiefdom). RUF forces later proceeded to one of their main bases, called "Bokurr", in Valunia chiefdom (Bo District).

Tongi, the headquarter town of Gorama Mende Chiefdom, was overrun by RUF forces in March 1995. Over 500 well-armed RUF forces entered the town, coming from the north of the chiefdom,[854] gathered people in the Court Barrie and declared that the town was now an "RUF entity". New authorities were appointed, including a Town Commander, a Town Mother and a clerk. The Town Commander was charged with taxing the inhabitants and gathering food for the RUF. Youths were ordered to unroof houses and to use the zinc to build a camp called Joe Bush[855] in the forest near the town. During the time of the building of the camp, two civilians were beaten to death, as they did not obey the RUF order to unroof and transport some zinc.[856] Young men and children were captured and trained in the camp on guerrilla warfare throughout 1995 and 1996.[857]

Local hunters in Simbaru Chiefdom decided to organise themselves and provide assistance to SLA forces, mainly by showing them routes within the chiefdom. At this time, proper initiation was not taking place; rather it was an informal gathering of men above 20 years who then presented themselves to the SLA. This movement also took place in Wandor Chiefdom, where a meeting with local hunters from neighbouring chiefdoms was organised.

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[851] It was not the 'Tay Go' group.

[852] This event could have taken place in 1994.

[853] These continuous attacks on Deima resulted to the death of a lot of civilians, the number of casualties per attack being however not ascertained.

[854] The report mentions that they came from the direction of Mondema, north of Tongi (Gorama Mende Chiefdom) and accordingly those RUF forces came either from Tonkolili or from Kono Districts.

[855] Joe Bush was a generic name given to training bases, like "Camp Lion" in other places. Other camps called Camp Joe Bush were to be found at other places in Kenema District.

[856] These two civilians could not carry out the task RUF ordered them to do, as they were ill.

[857] The camp would later on be attacked by Kamajors.

In October 1995, at Gombu (Wandor Chiefdom), RUF forces killed 17 civilians and razed the village to the ground by setting houses on fire. Women and girls were sexually abused and civilians were taken away, forced to show the RUF forces routes by which they might avoid local hunters. At Falla the next day, one civilian who cheered, thinking those forces coming to the village were SLA forces, was killed and dismembered with a bladed weapon, his body parts scattered all over the town. Another man who was requested to cook for them and took the meat for himself was also killed and his stomach cut open. On that same night, Falla was set on fire.

The SLA presence in Simbaru Chiefdom did not prevent RUF forces attacking villages. On 25 December 1995, as RUF forces attacked Boajibu for the second time, SLA forces fled the town. During this attack, the newly initiated Bondo society girls were captured, the few houses left standing after the first burning were burnt and nine men were killed. The entire town was destroyed, including all the buildings except two mosques and a school. The RUF forces did not stay in the town and around one week later, civilians and SLA forces came back to the town. SLA forces went back to patrolling Simbaru Chiefdom and the neighbouring chiefdoms, where they took away what was left after RUF attacks, unroofing houses and removing their doors and windows shutters. They forced civilians to go with them to carry those items back to Boajibu.

In January 1996, RUF forces came back in Wandor Chiefdom and this time engaged people to join them, organising meetings and appointing Towns Commanders. Those who refused to join were considered as enemies. According to one of the RUF commanders, they would not kill anybody if people followed orders. However, shortly after, their behaviour changed and elders where punished; one was strung up inside the Court Barrie and seriously flogged. Those civilians who had to cooperate with RUF forces were later denounced to SLA forces in Simbaru Chiefdom and, everyday, some were punished with lashes while others were fined.

In 1996, both local hunters and SLA forces attacked Camp Joe Bush in Simbaru Chiefdom and destroyed it. The bodies of many civilians were found almost fully decomposed in the deserted camp, most of them victims of the "Gunproof society" practice. From the documents found in the camp, it became clear that this camp was going to be developed as the main RUF base for the eight neighbouring chiefdoms. The interrogation of the captives revealed that RUF forces were coming from different chiefdoms all over the District. They revealed the way they were treated in the camp: they were forced to work all day long without proper food, continuously beaten or molested; women were constantly raped, often raped by multiple attackers and many of them died from those rapes; bodies were not buried but were thrown in the bushes or in streams; any time RUF forces left the camp to attack a village, they forced captives to go with them, forcing them to the frontline, to carry the property they would take; any civilian who was tired and could no longer sustain the weight of the load was either beaten to death or shot; and young boys and girls under 15 were trained to become combatants. Babies who were born in the camp were well treated, as they were viewed as future combatants. When they entered the camp, Kamajors took automatic rifles and machine guns, hiding these weapons from the SLA forces. Following the capture of the camp, RUF forces attacked Boajibu many times, trying to get back the documents they had lost.

Following this successive attack, the Kamajors of Simbaru Chiefdom established five bases in the chiefdom at Fonima, Gbonjeima, Goma, Boajibu and Njagbwema. They routinely led SLA forces on patrol. To buy the cartridges for their single barrel guns, they used to tax male civilians while women were requested to contribute with rice. As Kamajor control in the chiefdom grew stronger, civilians started coming back in the chiefdom.

The collaboration between the SLA and local hunters did not last long, as SLA forces started molesting and, at times, disarming those local hunters. At Boajibu, the new SLA commander who arrived in April stated that "two captains cannot drive one ship at the same time", meaning that SLA forces did not need another armed group to defend the country. SLA behaviour towards civilians became worse when the new commander arrived. Incidents of rapes, sexual harassment and forceful marriages became common practice at this time. SLA forces forced civilians to work in mines and to dig up diamonds for them. SLA forces guarding the mining areas were told by their commander to injure or kill any civilian caught trying to steal a gem. That mining activity went on throughout 1996 until early 1997, when SLA forces left the area and the Kamajors arrived. Civilians were also forced to engage in large-scale farming under the surveillance of SLA forces. Civilians worked all day and went back home in the evening without being fed. On one occasion while they were searching for civilians in the bush to take away their property, SLA forces fell into an RUF ambush and one of them was killed. The SLA commander in Boajibu accused two local hunters from Wandor Chiefdom of being responsible for the killing of this SLA member. The two local hunters had to lie down on the street and were killed, having their throats cut with a dagger. The junior SLA members then removed the organs, cut the fleshy parts of the bodies, cooked and ate them.

In December 1996, the SLA commander ordered the Bondo society heads to initiate girls into the society. At first, the heads refused, as they stated that on hearing that the initiation was going to take place, RUF forces would attack them, especially since RUF forces were constantly attacking the chiefdom headquarter of Boajibu. Nevertheless, the SLA commander forced them to perform the initiation on 23 December. In the morning of 25 December, RUF forces attacked Boajibu; the SLA forces fled and left the inhabitants, including the new Bondo initiates, in the hands of RUF forces. The RUF forces caught the new initiates with their superiors, called Soweis, and sexually assaulted the girls who had been initiated only two days previously. Furthermore, they killed nine civilians, including young married women and children. A lot of buildings were also burnt down.

The Kamajors - 1996

In 1996, on hearing that Kamajor societies were being established in Bo and Bonthe Districts, elders and Chiefs in the various chiefdoms of Kenema District started nominating their own men for initiation as Kamajors, which took place in Kenema Town. The first batches of those initiates returned to their chiefdoms in the middle of 1996 and deployed at key entry points to the towns and villages. Most of the men nominated by the elders to join the society were in displaced camps, as was almost all the population of the chiefdoms.

Events in Dama Chiefdom highlight that in 1996, the welfare of the local hunters, now regrouped under the CDF, was transferred to the Government and each chiefdom authority was required to appoint a chief Kamajor to act as chiefdom coordinator for the CDF in the chiefdom. Battalion

commanders and commanding officers were also appointed.[858] The conditions for initiation, as applied at least during the early stage of the Kamajors, were as follows:[859]

- Men must be above 18 years.
- Men must join the Kamajor society voluntary and append their signature.
- Those men must be recommended to the Paramount Chief by a Town Chief or Section Chief.
- Those men must willingly contribute condiments to the Kamajors.

In some chiefdoms, such as Gorama Mende Chiefdom, men who wished to be initiated as CDF members had to pay a fee ranging from Le 15,000 to Le 25,000. Once the money was paid, a date was set and the men who were going to be initiated were to come dressed in a "war ronko", which is a type of country cloth.

RUF forces were in control of Langrama, Niawa and Small Bo Chiefdoms until 1996 when the first Kamajors coming back from their initiation and started fighting. In June 1996, local authorities from the three chiefdoms decided to form their own society. A Section Chief from Niawa Chiefdom encouraged people living in the displaced camps to be initiated. The first arrangements combined Small Bo, Niawa, Langurama (Kenema District), Wunde (Bo District), Wunde and Barri (Pujehun District) Chiefdoms; this group was known as the Wanjei Defence Committee. However, this initial arrangement did not last as the group as there were complications due to the fact that it was composed of chiefdoms from different Districts. It was therefore decided that the initiation for the Kamajors society should be undertaken at District level. Thus, Small Bo, Niawa and Langrama Chiefdoms regrouped and became known as the Upper Wanjei Defence Committee.

After the initiation in Bo, the first group of around 200 Kamajors arrived in Small Bo Chiefdom in October 1996. With weapons provided by SLA forces and together with the SLA forces, the newly initiated Kamajors launched their first attack on RUF positions in a town located four miles west of Blama.[860] It is reported that SLA forces gave weapons to the Kamajors despite the animosity and distrust between them. During this first attack, the Kamajors did not dislodge the RUF forces but obtained their first automatic rifles (AK47s). Together with the Kamajors from Wunde Chiefdom (Bo District), they successfully attacked an RUF camp at Semabu (Small Bo Chiefdom). Kamajors continued their progression into Small Bo Chiefdom, taking weapons abandoned by the retreating RUF forces.

The Kamajors of the three chiefdoms (Small Bo, Niawa, Langruma Chiefdoms), assisted by Kamajors from Bo District (Wunde and Boama Chiefdoms, sharing the border with Kenema District) and together with SLA and ECOMOG forces, then launched attacks on Niawa Chiefdom. Using two different roads, one coming from Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, Bo District) and the other from Potoru (Barri Chiefdom, Pujehun District), the combined forces advanced on RUF camps at Kpantena Ngovokpan, Topanda and Bandawor before reaching the main camp in

[858] For more details on the structure of the CDF, see the chapter on the CDF in the Fighting Forces section of this report.

[859] These conditions were specifically reported in relation to Simbaru Chiefdom, generally applied across the whole District and, indeed, the whole Kamajor movement.

[860] The name of the place is not specified, only its location.

Bandawor forest, called Camp Zogoda. The fighting lasted several days, as a result of which the combined forces were able to dislodge the RUF from the camp. In the camp, the Kamajors found many RUF documents consisting of records of RUF activities, including, *inter alia*, records of the attacks on the Bo–Kenema Highway, how many items were stolen and how many people were captured to carry the load. In the camp, the combined forces found many captured civilians, who related how they were treated during their stay in the camp. For example, abductees who were caught trying to escape were shot dead or had the letters "RUF" inscribed on their body with hot iron. Civilians were forced to work in the camp and were given little or no food. Villages considered by the RUF as "enemy" bases were burnt down and captured civilians were used to carry boxes of ammunition on their heads for long distances. Young boys between eight and eleven were trained in the camp and sent to fight with weapons almost too big for them to carry. Some of those civilians found in the camp were brought to Blama to a camp that hosted them and the captured RUF forces were taken to the SLA Brigade Headquarter in Kenema.[861]

After the Kamajors had successfully repelled RUF forces from the three chiefdoms, civilians started to come back from displaced camps and the bush to their villages. The Kamajors who had initially all been based in Small Bo Chiefdom also returned to their various chiefdoms, namely Niawa, Langruma and Small Bo Chiefdoms. From that time, Niawa and Langruma chiefdoms did not encounter any more RUF attacks.

Newly initiated Kamajors were deployed at different locations – Deima, Levuma and Gbando – in Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom. While initially they collaborated with the SLA forces, this deteriorated as they openly disagreed with the behaviour of SLA forces towards civilians. Nevertheless, Kamajors' behaviour towards civilians was not exempt from violence either, as civilians accused of being "rebel" collaborators were chased. In one incident, two civilians who had been appointed Town Commanders at Kamboma and Koindu Villages by RUF forces and who had actively collaborated with RUF forces were killed, although it appears that these people were killed by the people of those villages, rather than the Kamajors.

In Wandor Chiefdom, strong men who were nominated by the Chiefs to be initiated in Jiama Bongor Chiefdom (Bo District) returned to the chiefdom in September 1996 and successfully repelled RUF forces. Kamajors started patrolling at the borders of the chiefdom and in order to avoid having civilians caught in crossfire during encounters with RUF/AFRC forces, Kamajors requested the civilians from surrounding villages to gather at Falla in the centre of the chiefdom. Shortly after they arrived in the chiefdom, Kamajors fought with RUF/AFRC forces who were en route to attack them at Falla[862] and succeeded in repelling them. After a second attack that took place two days later, Wandor Chiefdom did not sustain any more RUF or RUF/AFRC incursions.

In September 1996, Kamajors coming from Kenema Town repelled RUF forces from different villages in Lower Bambara Chiefdom, including Lowoma, Fowaru and Ngelaima. People who had fled to the bush started to come back to the villages. However, they were soon forced to give food to the Kamajors and those who refused were detained for hours and molested. Kamajors also deposed Chiefs and decided on private matters, punishing and fining people they found guilty. The

[861] The fate of these prisoners is not known.
[862] The fighting took place near Kamboma.

heads of some RUF members were cut off and displayed in Tongo Field. Kamajors entered Peyama, drove the RUF out and took all the stolen property back to Tongo, where they worked with SLA forces.

In November 1996, Kamajors from Nomo, Gaura and Tunkia Chiefdoms joined forces to dislodge the RUF, launching successful attacks in Nomo Chiefdom. They were first equipped with short guns, sticks, machetes and cutlasses and progressively, were provided with more sophisticated weapons, such as AK47s, taken from opponents during the attacks. Any person suspected of being a "rebel" would be killed, their heads sometimes chopped off. In January 1997, at Dambala (Nomo Chiefdom), three men were shot dead, alleged to be "rebels".

Early that same month, Kamajors came back from their initiation in Gorama Mende Chiefdom and launched their first attack on the headquarter town of Tongi. They successfully repelled the RUF forces from the town and from Camp Joe Bush. After they overran Tongi, Kamajors arrested all civilians who had held positions during the RUF's stay, threatening to kill them. However, due to the intervention of the chiefdom authorities, those people were not killed but instead were forced to pay the following fines: one bag of rice, five gallons of palm oil, two cotton cloths and Le 50,000. Kamajors also repelled RUF forces from other towns in the chiefdom such as Vengema, Modema, Keema, Jouma, Berembeh, Benduma and Nyandehun. More Kamajors were sent for initiation to strengthen their forces. Another Camp Joe Bush at Kpetema Teiyeh, in the north of the chiefdom at the border with Tonkolili District, was attacked and Kamajors drove RUF forces out of the camp. Some RUF forces were killed while most of them ran away. Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom were also active outside the boundaries of their chiefdom as they fought RUF forces in Tonkolili District.[863]

On 3 March 1997, an initiator from Bonthe District was called upon to initiate more Kamajors in Gorama Mende Chiefdom. In the same week, on hearing this information, RUF forces sent a reconnaissance (RECE) to plan an attack on the chiefdom. Kamajors did not wait for the RUF forces to come and on 10 March, attacked their base at Sullay Ground. The captured RUF forces were sent to Bo Town,[864] under the protection of the chiefdom coordinator of the Kamajors. After this last fight, Gorama Mende Chiefdom was virtually free of RUF presence, the only subsequent sightings being a few RUF forces seen on food finding missions, with no reported fatalities.

In March 1997, following an encounter between SLA forces and the CDF at Tongo (Lower Bamabara Chiefdom), the Kamajors left the town and many civilians were tortured and killed by SLA forces on the grounds that they were Kamajor supporters. Kamajors who were driven out to nearby chiefdoms regrouped and retook Tongo, driving out SLA forces and establishing a permanent base. Retreating SLA forces killed a lot of civilians on their way to Kono District in Konjo and Venema (both villages are located in Lower Bambara Chiefdom). At Tongo, the Kamajors targeted alleged SLA sympathisers; they tortured and killed many civilians on these grounds. From this base, Kamajors were soon controlling the chiefdom.

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[863] See the factual analysis for Tonkolili District.

[864] At this time, Bo Town was under SLA control.

When initiations started to take place in Kenema, local hunters from Simbaru Chiefdom went to be initiated. On their return in March 1997, they were told that the SLA forces had left for Kenema Town. From this time on, the Kamajors were in charge of the chiefdom. In Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom, Chiefs recommended strong men to be initiated and when they came back from their initiation, they were divided into different groups to protect the chiefdom.

In March 1997, RUF forces attacked the following villages in Simbaru Chiefdom, setting houses on fire and killing civilians: Nyahu (over 60 dwellings were burnt and six people killed); Mamboma (over 60 houses burnt, four old men killed and two men mutilated); Paniniga (45 houses were burnt and nine people killed); Gawama (over 170 houses, two primary schools and a health centre were set on fire and 17 people were killed); Gereihun (over 250 houses and public buildings were set on fire, 48 people were killed and four people mutilated); Fawana, Garahun, Jagbwema, Gogbebu and Nyeyama.[865]

In May 1997, a week before the Coup, the Kamajors' Chief Initiator conducted over 300 initiations at Falla (Wandor Chiefdom) to strengthen the number of Kamajors. Others travelled to Bo District to be initiated by the Deputy Chief Initiator.

Around the same time, SLA forces attacked the Kamajor base at Kenema, chasing away the Chief Initiator. During this attack, many civilians and Kamajors and few SLA members were killed and several houses, including that of the Chief Initiator, were burnt down as well as numerous homes of Kamajors and Kamajors supporters. On seeking refuge in Konia (Dama Chiefdom), the Chief Initiator was advised by the Paramount Chief to leave, due to its proximity to Kenema Town, so he left for Bo District.

Also before the Coup in May 1997, Kamajors from Nongowa Chiefdom, on hearing that SLA forces in the Dama axis were demanding money from people at the checkpoints they were operating, went there to inquire about the matter. When they arrived, SLA forces open fire on the Kamajors, who were mainly equipped with bladed weapons and some single barrel guns. The Kamajors captured the SLA commander and hacked him to death; other SLA members were given the same treatment.

c) Third Phase: May 1997 – 2002

Following the Coup on 25 May 1997, AFRC forces asked the CDF to surrender their weapons to the nearest police station and to suspend all their activities. CDF members did not follow this request; on the contrary, although they withdrew from the battlefronts, they regrouped themselves in villages and increased their number by undertaking more initiations. During this period, young boys under 15 began joining the society. RUF/AFRC started launching attacks on Kamajor positions and vice versa.

Shortly after the coup, on 30 May 1997, it is reported in general terms that fleeing civilians were mutilated and killed by RUF/AFRC fighters at Baoma (Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom). Indeed, across the District, RUF/AFRC forces harassed and intimidated civilians, molesting them, raiding villages and taking food and other property.

[865] These incidents may have taken place after the Coup of 25 May 1997.

In the south of the District, RUF/AFRC forces established a camp called "SS Camp" at the boundary between Dama and Nongowa Chiefdoms. From there, they raided all the surrounding villages. Besides looking for food, the main purpose of these raids was to find Kamajors. Many villages were suspected of hosting Kamajors preparing to launch attack on RUF/AFRC positions. RUF/AFRC attacks were also perceived by the population as reprisal to punish the population for failing to support them. Thus, men were stripped naked and RUF/AFRC forces searched for any marks on their bodies indicating they belonged to the Kamajor society, killing those on whose bodies they found such marks. However, not to have any marks did not prevent civilians from being killed, since people were killed on suspicion of being Kamajors or Kamajor collaborators in the absence of such a mark. This practice of undressing men to search for any mark was also carried out in the SS Camp by the Moa River.

Niawa and Langruma Chiefdoms were not attacked by RUF/AFRC forces after the Coup, unlike Small Bo Chiefdom, where SLA forces had been stationed before the Coup.[866] Shortly after the Coup, the commander in charge of the ex-SLA forces in the chiefdom announced that Kamajors should disarm to them as instructed by the high command in Freetown. RUF/AFRC forces launched an attack on Kamajor positions, from which the Kamajors were controlling part of the Bo-Kenema highway in the chiefdom and in Blama in August 1997. In both locations, the Kamajors were overpowered and fled. During this attack, RUF/AFRC forces burnt houses in Blama. Another battle between the two forces took place in Joyomei, a town six miles south of Blama. The town was burnt down, although the force responsible for this burning remains unknown, with Kamajors blaming the RUF/AFRC and vice versa.

During the RUF/AFRC stay in Kenema Town, girls were raped, houses were looted continuously and civilians were harassed for food and other items. Most commonly, alleged Kamajors or alleged SLPP[867] or Kamajor supporters were arrested, detained, beaten and/or killed and their houses looted and burnt.[868] In one incident, a man riding his bicycle on the road to Kenema was brought to the town by RUF/AFRC members and killed in front of the Sierratel Building; his stomach was cut open and his intestines tied across the road as a barricade. Civilians in the town were beaten to death if they were caught listening to the BBC.

In Small Bo Chiefdom, people who were considered to be Kamajor collaborators were severely beaten or killed. RUF/AFRC forces made civilians look for food for them and the pressure on civilians was intensified as RUF/AFRC forces in Small Bo Chiefdom had stopped receiving food and other items from their main base in Kenema. The RUF/AFRC forces believed that civilians were sending information to Kamajors who had gone in the bushes; any food found with civilians was taken away on the grounds that the food would be sent to Kamajors. Furthermore, RUF/AFRC forces used to organise groups of civilians and took them to the bush to look for food. Whatever the quantity of food brought back, it was divided into four parts, one for the forces' High Command, one for the lower ranks, one for the civilian administration and one for the civilians who had brought the food.

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[866] Accordingly, the SLA base transformed into an RUF/AFRC base.

[867] Since February 1996, the SLPP party has been the ruling party of Sierra Leone.

[868] No details were gathered for this period but this assertion, although general, was common in the information gathered for Nongowa Chiefdom and beyond the boundaries of the chiefdom.

Civilians in the chiefdom engaged in mining activities in villages located in the north of the chiefdom, namely in Yorvuhun, Victoria, Komoli, Limeh and Nyagbe Bo. They received food from businessmen from Kenema Town who encouraged the mining. Because of this food supply and because the movement of civilians towards these villages was perceived as sabotage,[869] RUF/AFRC forces established a base at Victoria in the north of the chiefdom, mainly to seize the food and non food items they needed from civilians and to monitor the movement of Kamajors in other chiefdoms located further north. However, RUF/AFRC forces soon also engaged in mining activities.

RUF/AFRC forces were making regular visits to Dama Chiefdom to look for CDF members and to request food from civilians. At Gofor in July 1997, they killed three civilians with automatic rifles and at Bandembu, on the same day, civilians suspected of being CDF supporters were killed. Each time they entered villages, RUF/AFRC asked civilians to locate CDF members, threatening to kill them. Houses and property belonging to suspected CDF supporters were looted and burnt down and some alleged Kamajor collaborators were tortured to death. Also in July, RUF/AFRC forces entering Kpandebu through the east killed 25 civilians, mostly men, and inflicted physical violence on others, whom they alleged to be Kamajor supporters. The following month, RUF/AFRC forces coming from Joru (Gaura Chiefdom) attacked Konia, Gboyama and Manor on the same day and killed an unknown number of civilians in those villages. During this wave of attacks, other villages including Sebehun and Kbakah were also raided and 10 civilians were killed.[870]

The Kamajors regrouped and began attacking RUF/AFRC forces, often by laying ambushes. Captured RUF/AFRC members were killed, frequently on the spot. Across Kenema District, civilians suspected of being a member of the RUF/AFRC forces or a member of their family or a collaborator were killed. For example, at Konia (Dama Chiefdom) in August 1997, one man was shot dead and another was beaten for two days, both on the grounds that they were "not on the side of the CDF".

During the second half of the year, RUF/AFRC forces reached Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom, where there were some incidents of violence inflicted on civilians. At Deima, they killed civilians for their money and property, tortured some who refused to give them their valuables and raped some girls. At Jenneh also, some people were killed. The acting Paramount Chief residing at Levuma was arrested in November 1997 as he had dismantled the checkpoints some RUF/AFRC forces had made in the town.[871]

Throughout the third phase of the conflict, diamond-rich Lower Bambara Chiefdom was the scene of numerous attacks and counter-attacks between RUF/AFRC forces and Kamajors, as a result of which there were many civilian fatalities. In August 1997, RUF/AFRC forces launched attacks on numerous villages including Torkpombu, Buime, Laehun, Kpandebu, Lowoma, Fowaru, Ngeleima, most of them diamond mining villages or towns. Coming from Kenema Town, these heavily armed

[869] This movement of civilians was indeed perceived by RUF/AFRC forces as indicating that civilians had received information of imminent attacks from Kamajors and accordingly civilians were considered as fleeing the area.
[870] It could not be ascertained in which village those 10 civilians were killed.
[871] The acting Paramount Chief subsequently managed to escape into the bush.

forces fired indiscriminately in the villages as they passed by, shouting the following slogan, called Cyburg: "We don't talk, the barrels talk". During these attacks, many civilians were killed and many houses were burnt. As a result of these attacks, the CDF were driven out of the chiefdom. RUF/AFRC engaged in mining activities almost everywhere, digging plantations without the consent of their owners. If the owners resisted these activities, they were seriously beaten. Civilians were forced to work in the mines and many people died at these sites.

In August also, RUF/AFRC forces planned to attack Punduru, a Kamajor base in the north-east of Gorama Mende Chiefdom. On their way to Punduru, they had an encounter with Kamajors at Bandabu and one of their members was killed during the battle. It is believed that this incident outraged the RUF/AFRC forces and on 30 August, around 700 heavily armed[872] RUF/AFRC members launched a fierce attack on Punduru. During this attack, four Kamajors and 28 civilians were killed.[873] RUF/AFRC forces were however repelled and moved to Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom, Kono District) before burning the whole town and capturing some girls and young boys.

The following month, the Kamajors ambushed a military convoy in Lower Bambara Chiefdom and 20 members of the RUF/AFRC forces were killed and arms and ammunition were seized. In September 1997, Kamajors in Nomo Chiefdom launched an attack on RUF/AFRC forces' positions in Tunkia and Gaura Chiefdoms. Two RUF/AFRC members were captured and their heads chopped off. Any person suspected of being a RUF/AFRC member was killed such as those two men from Joru (Gaura Chiefdom) who were shot in their stomachs while entering Nomo.

That same month, CDF members came to the Court Barrie in Konia and asked the Paramount Chief of Dama where he had put the money he received from RUF/AFRC forces. Denying that he had received such money, the Paramount Chief was arrested, tied up with his hammock, taken away and killed in another village. Later, one man who tried to escape was shot on sight by a CDF member. The CDF commander stated that he was the new Paramount Chief.

In October 1997, the mountain village of Basara (Nongowa Chiefdom) came under RUF/AFRC attack, as it was suspected of being a Kamajor stronghold. The village was surrounded in the early hours of the day and forces opened fire on the civilians. Five civilians were killed during the firing and 15 were put in a hut and burnt alive when the hut was set on fire. In November 1997, the same scenario took place in another mountain village called Masao. Over 10 people were shot dead, while 10 others were forced into a house, which was then set on fire.

Kamajors started regrouping in October 1997 in Dodo Chiefdom and in Panguma (Lower Bambara Chiefdom). Jormu Kefabu (Nongowa Chiefdom) became a CDF stronghold and RUF/AFRC forces made several unsuccessful attempts, mainly in the mountain villages, to drive the Kamajors out. In December 1997, the mountain village of Bambawa (Nongowa Chiefdom), which was believed to be a Kamajor training base, was attacked and burnt and one person was killed. Also in December,

[872] The RUF/AFRC forces were dressed in combat fatigues with red berets and armed with machine guns, an anti-aircraft gun mounted on a Hilux van, RPGs and automatic rifles.

[873] It is worth noting that throughout this time, the more the Kamajors attacked the RUF/AFRC forces, the more the RUF/AFRC forces were harassing civilians.

RUF/AFRC forces encountered Kamajors at Combema and about 40 of them were killed by Kamajors.

In November 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Gorahun (Tunkia Chiefdom), seizing the two roads leading to the town. In this attacks, 55 people were killed at close range. After this attack, the chiefdom did not experience further RUF/AFRC attacks.

The following month, the Kamajor commander on the ground in Nomo Chiefdom received a letter from the Kamajor High Command instructing all Kamajors in all chiefdoms to launch Operation "Black December". The purpose of this operation was to restrict the movement of the RUF/AFRC forces by regaining control of the highways. Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom took part in this operation on the Kono-Makeni highway. During the same month, at Dambala, a suspected "rebel" was decapitated and his blood drunk by a Kamajor.

"Operation Black December"[874] did not take place in Lower Bambara Chiefdom in December 1997. However, a fierce attack was launched on Tongo Field in January 1998, when Kamajors entered the chiefdom from two fronts, namely the east from Malegohun Chiefdom and the west from Dodo Chiefdom. Although few details were obtained on this operation, it was stated more than once that during this attack, many civilians lost their lives. Furthermore, following this attack, both fighting forces attacked villages believed to be under the control of the other force, killing civilians and burning houses. Hanga (Nongowa Chiefdom) was also attacked in January by RUF/AFRC forces. Twelve members of the same family and other inhabitants were shot dead and more than 10 houses were burnt down. Some people were forced to carry looted items for the RUF/AFRC forces, who also attacked other villages along the road from Mano Junction to Kenema Town, including Ngelehun, Kpanderu and Bambawa.[875]

In January 1998, RUF/AFRC forces based in Joru (Gaura Chiefdom) decided to sweep away the Kamajors deployed along the entire route leading to Bo Waterside, on the Liberian border in Pujehun District.[876] Before starting their operation, they sent a letter to the Kamajors to inform them on their plans. On their way, they burnt down many villages[877] and succeeded in driving the Kamajors away. At Jao (Tunkia Chiefdom), over 40 houses were burnt and at Kamasu, 15 houses were burnt. At Gegbwema, where they spent the night, they burnt down all the houses except the mosque and the Court Barrie.

Kamajors from Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom, together with some from Simbaru and Dodo Chiefdoms, planned to launch attacks on RUF/AFRC positions in Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom. However, on 5 January 1998, when they arrived at these positions, RUF/AFRC forces had already

[874] This operation, declared by CDF High Command, was implemented across the country in the areas where Kamajors were active, in a bid to take control of RUF/AFRC positions. As part of this operation, all the highways and roads were blocked, in order to prevent RUF/AFRC forces from attacking civilians. It is believed that this Operation was launched following the AFRC statement that it would not hand over power to the President of Sierra Leone on 22 April 1998, as planned in the Conakry Peace Plan signed on 23 October 1997.

[875] As for the casualties in those villages, it is merely reported that houses were burnt but it cannot be ascertained whether all the villages had houses burnt.

[876] This road passes by Tunkia Chiefdom.

[877] Tilorma, Taninahun, Sokola, Sefula and Damawulo were also burnt down.

left the area. Kamajors from Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom then controlled the chiefdom, although there were reports of harassment of the civilian population. At Deima, for example, one Kamajor arrested seven civilians and put them in a wooden box which he then locked because they failed to give him food. The matter was reported to the commander at Levuma, who ordered their release.

In January also, the Paramount Chief of Nomo Chiefdom, together with other prominent people, including a prominent doctor and a businessman, were arrested by RUF/AFRC fighters in Kenema Town. They were arrested at the time of a fierce battle between RUF/AFRC forces in the outskirts of Kenema and were accused of supporting Kamajors. They were beaten with sticks with their hands tied behind their backs. One of them is believed to have died in detention although his body was never found. The mutilated body of another was found with 35 others in a mass grave at the outskirts of the town. Some of those arrested were however released.[878]

At Konjo (Dama Chiefdom) in early 1998, a pregnant woman was raped by member(s) of the RUF/AFRC forces and gave birth shortly after. During the same attack, civilians were punished[879] or killed, suspected of being SLPP and Kamajor supporters. Some houses were also put down.

When they withdrew from Kenema in January 1998,[880] over 10 RUF/AFRC members and their families who took the Nomo Chiefdom road to go to Liberia were shot dead by some Kamajors in Nomo Chiefdom while crossing the river that borders Sierra Leone and Guinea in a canoe. Due to the shooting of the canoe, it sank, which resulted in the drowning of a suckling mother and her baby with other people. At Faama (Nomo Chiefdom), Kamajors shot dead an unknown number of "rebel sympathisers".

As Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom) was a stronghold of RUF/AFRC forces, Kamajors from Dodo and Kandu Leppeama Chiefdoms on the one hand and from Niawa Chiefdom, Wunde Chiefdom (Bo District) and Jiama Bongor Chiefdom (Bo District) on the other hand started operations to dislodge RUF/AFRC forces from Small Bo Chiefdom. On 31 January 1998, Kamajors from Dodo Chiefdom advanced towards Small Bo and on their way, launched a successful attack on RUF/AFRC forces based at Levuma (Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom). Kamajors from Dodo Chiefdom, with those from Kandu Leppeama Chiefdom, advanced on Blama, entering the town on 15 February 1998. However, no RUF/AFRC forces were to be found in the town as they had left earlier.

In February 1998, ECOMOG troops based in Liberia entered the District and on 18 February, together with Kamajors, reached Kenema Town. They then deployed at SS Camp, Gofor, Giema and Joru (in Dama and Gaura Chiefdoms). Indeed, after the intervention in Freetown, ECOMOG forces had positions all over the country and were working with the Kamajors. In Malegohun Chiefdom, for example, ECOMOG came to Kamajor positions with arms and ammunitions. In addition, ECOMOG requested the intervention of the Kamajors from Punduru (Gorama Mende

[878] Many reports mention that the arrest of those people and the reported killings were carried out under a direct order from a senior member of the RUF general staff.
[879] The kind of punishment inflicted could not be ascertained.
[880] Indeed, RUF/AFRC forces stayed in Kenema town throughout 1997 until late January 1998 when, fearing the imminent Kamajor/ECOMOG forces' attack, they pulled out of the town.

Chiefdom) to be an auxiliary force to liberate Kono District, providing them also with small arms and bullets.

Once in Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom), Kamajors killed people suspected of being collaborators or tied them with a special rope called FM,[881] beat them and locked them up. Civilians were gathered in the centre of the town for "screening" purposes. Two police officers were killed, while another police officer and his wife received serious cuts on their necks but did not die. Other police officers managed to escape to a nearby village and to the ECOMOG base in Kenema Town. One man, alleged to be the Small Bo CDF chairman who stayed in Blama while RUF/AFRC were occupying the town, was killed for failing to supply ammunition to the Kamajors at one time when they had planned to attack the RUF/AFRC forces in Blama. Because of failing to supply the ammunition, he was considered to be a "saboteur". The entire town was looted by Kamajors, who also established "Kangaroo Courts"[882] presided over by Commanding Officers.

When they entered Kenema Town, ECOMOG forces and Kamajors with machetes and guns killed many people who they suspected of being "rebels" or "collaborators".[883] Some civilians were burnt alive with old tyres for supporting the RUF/AFRC forces. Those killings were a common sight in the streets of Kenema. In many parts of the town, the charred remains of bodies were seen. Many members of the SSD (Special Security Division) were killed and their bodies scattered all over the Kenema Police Barracks, some of which were set on fire by civilians.

Between January and March 1998, as they were fighting and repelling RUF/AFRC forces, Kamajors targeted alleged members of the retreating forces, their families and those who they considered to be collaborators. Those people, who in reality were mainly civilians, were tortured and killed. It is reported that a group of Kamajors called Yamotor based at Talamah and Lalehun were eating the bodies of the retreating forces and civilians accused of collaboration. Houses believed to have been occupied by RUF/AFRC fighters or by alleged collaborators were unroofed.

After the deployment of ECOMOG and Kamajors all over the District, a few RUF/AFRC incursion were still reported but on a lower scale. A CDF Office was established in Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom) for the purpose of issuing passes to monitor the movement of people. Kamajors initially based in Small Bo Chiefdom but coming from the neighbouring Niawa and Langrama Chiefdoms went back to their chiefdoms. In March, civilians started returning to their villages.

However, unlike what happened in most of the chiefdoms, especially in the south of the District, the situation prevailing in Lower Bambara Chiefdom after ECOMOG deployed in the District still consisted of fighting and attacks between RUF/AFRC forces and the CDF, which continued until disarmament started in December 2001.

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[881] This rope has two sticks on its edges; "FM" means "frequency modulation", as it was believed that once tied with this rope, civilians began to talk.

[882] In reality, these courts were simply place where Kamajors were sitting down and issuing sentences, without following any laws.

[883] No further details are available on these incidents.



In the south of Kenema District, RUF/AFRC forces, alleged to come from Joijoma (Kailahun District) attacked Jewahun (Tunkia Chiefdom) in April 1998, where they burnt down the village before proceeding further to Gegbwema, where they burnt the houses that remained standing. These forces were later repelled by ECOMOG troops. The following month, RUF/AFRC forces believed to come from Malema Chiefdom (Kailahun District) attacked Madina, Kwadima – where three people were killed - and Kpandebu in Nomo Chiefdom. It is interesting to note that these forces had disguised themselves as Kamajors, thus taking the civilians by surprise.

In December 1998, when RUF/AFRC forces had regained control of major towns in the country, Kamajors from Gorama Mende Chiefdom were able to defend and retain control of the chiefdom, to the extent that this chiefdom served as a safe corridor for retreating ECOMOG forces from Kono District.

At the beginning of the following year, fighting again resumed in Kenema District. In January 1999, heavily armed RUF/AFRC forces repelled Kamajors from Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom), killing many civilians and Kamajors. Towns like Kpandebu, Lalehun, Bumpeh, Semewabu or Njaigbema were under persistent attacks from Kamajors who had in their ranks young boys under 13, who were forced to hold guns and were trained only for short periods of time.

The RUF/AFRC forces abducted many civilians from their villages and forced them to work in mining sites, beating or killing those who refused. Civilians living in these areas were harassed and intimidated at gunpoint by RUF/AFRC members, who constantly stole property and abducted girls and women and used them for sexual purposes. A lot of Kamajor collaborators were killed during this period. Private houses believed to have diamonds under their foundations were dug up, especially in Kpandebu, Torkpombu, Tongola and Bomie.

In early 1999, between January and February, Small Bo Chiefdom saw an influx of people coming from a camp in Kenema Town, following threats of RUF/AFRC attacks on the Town.

In February 1999, an event that took place in Gorama Mende Chiefdom gives an insight on the CDF internal structure. On 9 February, the Kamajor membership of the chiefdom passed a "no confidence" vote on the chiefdom coordinator for his misuse of their rations from the CDF headquarter in Kenema Town. As a result, a new coordinator was appointed. This new coordinator was requested by the Kono authorities to initiate able young men from Kono to help them liberate Kono District.[884] Five hundred men came to Jagbema for initiation. As they heard about this initiation, well-armed RUF/AFRC forces came early in the morning to Jagbema sometime in March or April, overran the Kamajors base, killed about 20 civilians and burnt down 45 houses, including the house of the CDF coordinator and a school. Twenty-five Kamajors sustained injuries and 10 civilians were taken away as load carriers. The Kamajor coordinator mobilised his men and they went to trace the RUF/AFRC forces, intercepting them at Laboya. During the encounter, 30 members of the RUF/AFRC were killed and the Kamajors liberated all the captured civilians.

At around the same time, heavily armed RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kenema Town. Some ECOMOG forces, Kamajors and civilians were killed but ECOMOG and Kamajor forces

[884] At this time indeed, Kono District was under RUF/AFRC control.

regrouped and repelled them. On their way back to Kailahun District, those RUF/AFRC forces were ambushed by ECOMOG forces at Mano Junction; many of them died in that ambush.

Many incidents relate the destruction of numerous buildings, private and public, in 1999 in Lower Bambara Chiefdom. Ngiehun market was burnt down as RUF/AFRC forces entering the town firing with the belief that Kamajors were residing there. The Roman Catholic Primary School was unroofed as were other schools in Tongo. Zinc from these roofs was used to build booths for the forces and furniture was used as firewood for cooking. Most of the buildings of the National Diamond Mining Company quarters were also destroyed.

RUF/AFRC forces during this period were terrorising the population, who saw this period as "chaos". During their stay in Tongo Field, the RUF/AFRC were recruiting young boys between 10 and 12 years of age; these child soldiers were carrying out most of the atrocities and many of them were intimidating their parents. However, by October 1999, the security situation however improved in the Tongo Field area (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) and commercial activities resumed,[885] with civilians resettling in their villages.[886]

The situation in Koya Chiefdom was still unusual during this period. Due to the total absence of SLA forces throughout the previous years, RUF forces had established firm control of the chiefdom and most of the civilians who had not fled were conscripted into the movement. The first forces to fight RUF/AFRC forces were Kamajors from Pujehun District in 1999. Koya Chiefdom had its own Kamajors only in 2001 after men went to Kenema to be initiated.

On 20 October 1999, the Sierra Leone President officially launched the commencement of the Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR) program during a ceremony at Wilberforce Barracks in Freetown.[887] A DDR camp was opened in Kenema Town to disarm CDF members, while RUF members were to disarm at Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District).[888] The DDR process started on a low scale and on 4 November, the first day of the program, no CDF member turned out. The initial deadline of 15 December set for the completion of the program was not met and as of 23 January 2000, only 13,100 combatants had disarmed out of an estimated 45,000 total combatants.[889]

Nevertheless, after the DDR process began, the situation started to normalise in the District and in early January 2000, the roads linking Kenema Town to Kailahun Town in the east and Kenema Town to Koidu in the north were formally reopened by the RUF.[890] As part of their country campaign to sensitise members of the fighting factions on disarmament, the RUF leader, the Deputy

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[885] IRIN West Africa, 1 January 1999.

[886] The number of IDPs in the District dropped from 63,319 at the end of October to 47,199 one month later. IRIN West Africa, 14 December 1999.

[887] The start of the DDR program as it was originally planned to take place within six weeks of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999.

[888] During this first phase of disarmament, DDR camps were also opened in Port Loko Town, Bo Town, Moyamba Town, and Daru (Kailahun District), the security situation in Bombali, Koinadugu, and Tonkolili remaining too unsettled.

[889] IRIN West Africa, 31 October 1999.

[890] IRIN West Africa, 5 January 2000.

Defence Minister, the CDF National Coordinator and some members of ECOMOG visited Kenema Town and Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) during the first week of January 2000.[891] In the same month, peacekeepers from the Ghanaian battalion attached to the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) were sent to Kenema Town. On 15 March 2000, around 3,500 CDF members arrived at the DDR centre at Kenema; this was surprising, as the RUF did not reciprocate in Kailahun District.[892]

However, the DDR process did not bring an end to the fighting in the District. On 28 March 2000, RUF forces numbering 3.500 returned to Fomaya (Gorama Mende Chiefdom),[893] all dressed in t-shirts with an "RUF" inscription on the back. They set the town on fire and killed over 300 civilians.

Thus by May 2000, RUF forces were still controlling some parts of the District, especially the mining areas and were engaged in mining activities in Tongo Field. In early June 2000, RUF troop movements were recorded in the area, as forces regrouped at Tongo Field, causing tension in the area.[894] By late July, between 3,000 and 3,500 civilians were reported fleeing the area, probably following the recent clashes between RUF and SLA forces[895] and the rescue operation to free over 200 UN peacekeepers confined to their compound in Kailahun Town by RUF forces since May 2000 carried out by UNAMSIL troops between Kailahun Town and Pendembu (Upper Bambara Chiefdom, Kailahun District).[896] In October 2000, around half of the RUF forces based in Tongo Field moved north and engaged in the cross-border attacks on Guinea that intensified in September 2000. A meeting between UNAMSIL personnel and the RUF based in Tongo took place on 29 January 2001 at Panguma (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) to discuss the opening of the road linking Kenema to Tongo,[897] although it is not clear whether the road was reopened after this meeting.

On 10 November 2000, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF signed a ceasefire at Abuja, Nigeria, reactivating the disarmament process, which had come to a halt since May 2000 and the capture of UN peacekeepers.[898] Its main provision was the disarmament of the RUF forces and the deployment of UNAMSIL troops in RUF-held areas. However, it would however take one more year for those provisions to be implemented, as the following events highlight.

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[891] IRIN West Africa, 10 January 2000.
[892] IRIN West Africa, 15 March 2000.
[893] RUF/AFRC had already attacked this town in 1999.
[894] UNAMSIL press briefing, 1 June 2000. Furthermore, this event has to be read in conjunction with what happened in May in other parts of the country, where nearly 300 UN peacekeepers were captured by RUF/AFRC forces, thereby stalling the DDR process. In July, UNAMSIL called the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF to sign a ceasefire: UNAMSIL press briefing, 7 July 2000.
[895] IRIN West Africa, 20. July 2001. No details could be obtained on the clashes between the RUF and the SLA in the Tongo field area. However, in the Sierra Leone Humanitarian Report 25 July – 07 August, it is reported that gunship attacks on the market place in Tongo killed 14 civilians, although the gunship responsible for this attack was not confirmed. An SLA gunship also targeted RUF forces at Torpombu (Lower Bambara Chiefdom), shelling and killing civilians.
[896] This rescue operation was designed.
[897] UNAMSIL press briefing, 31 January 2001.
[898] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 28 October - 13 November 2000.



At the end of 2000 and the beginning of 2001, Kamajors mounted checkpoints at Largo, at the border with Nongowa chiefdom, and harassed civilians travelling between Kenema Town and Tongo Field. Money and valuable items were taken away from civilians and alleged collaborators were detained and tied up with ropes.

Although six chiefdoms in the District were still considered to be unsafe for resettlement by the Government of Sierra Leone in March 2001,[899] about 100 UN peacekeepers from the Zambian battalion made a long range patrol in Tongo (Lower Bambara Chiefdom) on 10 April. These peacekeepers met with the RUF commander of the area, asking for their collaboration to allow UNAMSIL deployment in the area.[900] However, fighting between Kamajors and RUF forces resumed around 19 April, although fatalities – if any – could not be ascertained. This fighting, which once again prompted hundreds of civilians to flee the area[901] was seen as a step back in the ongoing disarmament process and UN deployment.

On 4 May 2001, a meeting between the RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone, UN representatives and the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council to review the ceasefire signed on 10 November 2000 was convened, again in Abuja, Nigeria.[902] The main points of concern were, among others, related to the acceleration of the demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration of the remnants of the RUF forces, the release of child combatants and the freedom of movement of persons. Mention was also made of the violation of the ceasefire that took place the previous month in Tongo and Kono District. According to UNAMSIL investigations the fighting was provoked by movements of the Civil Defence Force (CDF) perceived as being menacing by the RUF forces.

As a proof of their commitment to the ceasefire, which was renewed in May, and to the provisions contained in the ceasefire agreement, RUF forces handed over 131 child combatants to UNAMSIL during a brief ceremony in Tongo on 22 June.[903] In mid September, 300 UN peacekeepers from the Zambian contingent deployed in the area.[904] This first deployment was strengthened within a week, putting the number of UNAMSIL forces deployed in Tongo field to a battalion.

In October 2001, during a meeting of the Joint committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), comprising of the Government of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and RUF, the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF agreed on a schedule for the completion of the disarmament process and this accelerated disarmament was to take place in Kenema District between 15 and 30 November.[905] Since May 2001, 20,284 combatants from the various fighting

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899 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 11 March - 31 March 2001.
900 UNAMSIL press briefing, 10 April 2001.
901 BBC Online News Archive, 21 April 2001; IRIN West Africa, 23 April 2001.
902 Further to this meeting, tripartite meetings of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration would be held every month and one would take place in Kenema Town on 10 August 2001.
903 IRIN West Africa, 25 June 2001.
904 IRIN West Africa, 17 September 2001.
905 The schedule for the completion of the disarmament was agreed as follows: Koinadugu and Moyamba Districts: by 22 October; Bo and Bombali Districts: by 31 October; Western Area: between 1-7 November; Pujehun and Tonkolili Districts: between 1-15 November and Kailahun District: between 15-30 November: IRIN West Africa, 12 October 2001.

forces had disarmed.[906] However, the deadline set in the agreement was not met as RUF forces showed unwillingness to disarm outside Tongo Field,[907] were unhappy with some issues of a political nature[908] and due to some logistical problems, which halted the process. Nevertheless, disarmament started early December at a low pace for RUF forces. This process was fostered by the visit on 14 December of the RUF Interim Leader and the Force Commander of the UNAMSIL in Tongo where they urged remaining RUF forces to complete disarmament.[909]

Disarmament was therefore complete early January; in Tongo, it was completed on 5 January, one day after the visit of the Acting Force Commander of the UNAMSIL and the Deputy Chief of Mission.[910] As part of the events that took place in various areas across the country to symbolically mark the end of the DDR process, a ceremony was held in Kenema Town on 21 January 2002 in the presence of the President of Sierra Leone, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Force Commander of UNAMSIL. This ceremony concluded by the burning of weapons.[911]

3. Conclusion

Although it shares a boundary with Liberia on its eastern edge, Kenema District was mainly affected by RUF/NPFL incursions coming from the neighbouring Districts of Pujehun, Kailahun and Kono during the first phase of the war, which spanned from 1991 to the end of 1993. This period was marked by the incursion of the RUF/NPFL forces in three different flanks (north-west, north-east and, mainly, south-east). As in Pujehun District, those forces were repelled out of the District in the middle of 1991 by the SLA, who were assisted by foreign troops. During the subsequent months of this first phase, RUF/NPFL forces launched only sporadic actions in the District. Youths and local hunters mobilised themselves and, armed with stick, cutlasses and some shotguns, assisted the SLA in defending the boundaries of their chiefdoms, filling the role of vigilantes. Around this time, SLA forces were deeply engaged in repelling the RUF forces from Kailahun District and in late 1993, confined them to the extreme east of Kailahun District, which led the NPRC Chairman to declare a unilateral ceasefire on 1 December 1993.

Taking advantage of this ceasefire, RUF forces regrouped and launched a massive operation from Liberia in the south-east of Kenema District, using secondary roads and bush paths. This attack clearly marked the beginning of the second phase and by early 1994, RUF forces were scattered across all the chiefdoms of the District and were engaged in mining activities in the north of the District. Around the same time, RUF forces began regaining territory in Kailahun District and were also spreading through Pujehun District, making all the Districts adjoining Liberia under RUF control. This progression did not stop there, as RUF forces advanced further inland and by 1995, were present in all the Districts of the country. The SLA, whose number increased greatly in 1994, was not able to stop this rapid RUF progression, carried out using bush paths and guerrilla warfare

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[906] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 01 - 15 October 2001.

[907] There was one DDR camp in Kenema District, one in Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District) and one in Kailahun Town.

[908] Those issues included the outcome of the National Consultative Conference, the continued detention of their leader and the time taken to complete registration of the RUF as a political party: IRIN West Africa, 7 December 2001.

[909] UNAMSIL press briefing, 14 December 2001.

[910] UNAMSIL press briefing, 7 January 2002.

[911] UNAMSIL press briefing, 21 January 2002.

tactics. RUF forces established important training camps in Kenema District and the main camp for the whole Southern Province and, to a limited extent, for the Eastern Province was established in the south-west of the District. From this camp, RUF forces attacked the neighbouring chiefdoms in Kenema and Bo Districts, staged ambushes on the Bo-Kenema highway and brought back hundreds of abducted civilians and stolen properties from these attacks.

These two phases were accompanied by great violence against civilians, carried out mainly by the RUF/NPFL and RUF forces but also by the SLA forces. The first acts of the RUF were to depose and replace local authorities. During their stay, they inflicted physical and mental violence, killed, sexually assaulted and abducted many civilians. Civilians' property was also widely taken away and houses were burnt down. In addition, the SLA forces also harassed civilians for food but above all chased "rebel" collaborators, whom they killed. Starting in 1994, their behaviour towards civilians deteriorated and civilians began to have doubts about their loyalty to the Government and their efficiency to fight the war, as they also engaged in killing, raping and stealing of property, although on a lower scale than the RUF forces.

However, starting in 1996, Kamajors began to fight alongside SLA forces and to occupy areas previously under RUF control, including the main camps of the District. In this regard, the pattern of actions in the District followed the patterns in the Southern Province, where Kamajors started imposing important defeats on the RUF, considerably minimising and reducing the RUF's strength and their control of the area.

However, following the Coup in May 1997 and the merging of the RUF with the AFRC regime, the RUF/AFRC forces began to push the Kamajors to withdraw from their positions. Nevertheless, the CDF regrouped, operating underground, and by September 1997 began defeating the RUF/AFRC, as was happening concurrently in the Districts of the Southern Province. During their stay in the District, RUF/AFRC forces imposed great harms on civilians, inflicting physical and mental violence, killing, raping and abducting, in particular to work in the mining areas. They also systematically stole civilians' property and burnt down many buildings. They also engaged in a widespread hunt for Kamajors collaborators, killing anybody they found whom they suspected of being a collaborator or Kamajor member.

In early 1998, following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in January 1998, the Kamajors, assisted by ECOMOG forces deployed in Kenema Town and repelled most of the RUF/AFRC out of the District. Their stay in the District was accompanied by strict controls on the movement of the population through the establishment of checkpoints and the harassment of civilians, which ranged from requests for food and other items to more violent actions, including physical violence and killing, in particular of alleged RUF and "Junta" collaborators.

However, unlike what happened in the Southern Province, the Kamajors were unable to gain control of the whole District, as fighting for the control of the mining area of Tongo Field continued throughout 1998, 1999 and the first part of 2000. In this regard, the pattern of actions in the north of the District was more similar to the way Kailahun District and, in particular, the mining District of Kono were affected, despite the opening of disarmament centres in Kailahun Town and Daru (Kailahun District). Indeed, after the Lomé Peace Agreement in July 1999, RUF/AFRC forces

clearly concentrated their attacks and offensives on the mining areas of the country and, later, on Guinean territory, giving a new dimension to the Sierra Leonean conflict.

Reactivated in November 2000, the disarmament process required one more year before being declared complete in January 2002. Kenema, and Kailahun Districts, were the two last Districts to be disarmed.

c. Kono District

1. Introduction

Kono District is located in the Eastern Province, together with Kailahun and Kenema Districts. It is bordered in the east by the Republic of Guinea and Koinadugu District, which also borders it in the north. In the south-east, the borders of Tonkolili District and Kono District meet for a few miles, with Kenema and Kailahun Districts forming its southern border.

Koidu, a diamond rich town, is Kono District's headquarter town. It is located almost in the centre of the District and is the starting and ending point of Sierra Leone's main highway, which links Koidu to Freetown, passing through Magburaka (headquarter town of Tonkolili District) and Makeni (headquarter town of Bombali District). Two other highways are of importance in the District, as they would allow the penetration of the District by the fighting forces from the southern Districts. One leaves Koidu, passing through Tankoro and Gbane Chiefdom before entering Kailahun District. The other one leaves Koidu, reaching Kenema Town through Nimikoro and Gorama Kono Chiefdoms in Kono District and Lower Bambara Chiefdom, a diamond mining area in Kenema District. An alternative to these two roads to reach the south-east is the road that leaves Koidu and goes through the east of the District.

There are 14 chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Fiama	Jagbwema
Gbane	Gandorhun
Gbane Kandor	Koardu
Gbense	Koidu
Gorama Kono	Kangama
Kamara	Tombodu
Lei	Saiama
Mafindor	Kamiendor
Nimikoro	Jaiama
Nimiyama	Jaiama Sewafe
Sandor	Kayima
Soa	Kainkordu
Tankoro	Baiama
Toli	Kondewakor

Kono District is the most diamond rich District of Sierra Leone and the wealth of its soil meant that the District was the stage of severe fighting and violations against civilians throughout the war, from its inception in 1991 until late 2001. The main mining areas[912] are to be found in the centre and west of the District, in Kamara (Tombodu area), Sandor (in the south of the chiefdom), Nimikoro, Nimiyama, Gbense and Tankoro Chiefdoms.

As in the other Districts of the Eastern Province, Kono District was affected by the conflict through three discernable phases. The first one encompassed 1991 to 1993. During these years, RUF/NPFL forces entered the District in the south-east through Kailahun District. Their first incursion in 1991 was limited to the two chiefdoms bordering Kailahun District and was rapidly halted by SLA forces deployed at Gbense, Sandor, Mafindor and Gbane Kandor Chiefdoms, the latter two of which share a border with Guinea. Local hunters known as Donsos began organising themselves in various chiefdoms, supported and encouraged by the local authorities. RUF/NPFL forces made successive attempts to re enter the District in 1992; by mid 1992, they had succeeded in establishing positions in Gbane Soa Chiefdom, from where they moved towards Koidu. By late 1992, Koidu was under RUF/NPFL control. SLA forces, assisted by local hunters coming from Koinadugu District, repelled the RUF/NPFL forces in early January and strengthened their bases in the east of the District. By mid 1993, the District was virtually free of any RUF/NPFL presence. This first phase was characterised by widespread violations committed primarily by RUF/NPFL forces, but also by SLA forces.

The second phase ran from 1994 to 1997. In 1994, RUF forces launched incursions in the south-east of the country and progressively advanced into the District. Koidu was attacked for the second time in April 1995, RUF forces taking advantage of the fact the SLA on the ground was more occupied in mining than in defending the District. This attack on Koidu led many civilians to leave the area, as the RUF forces began to span out in the surrounding chiefdoms. The District was recaptured around May/June by SLA forces, newly trained by Executive Outcomes, the mercenary company in Sierra Leone under contract with the Government. The SLA, local hunters and Executive Outcomes dislodged the RUF forces from most of their positions and subsequent RUF attacks were carried out by remnants RUF members. The presence of Executive Outcomes in the District brought some relief to the population, as it also engaged in disciplining the SLA and prevented SLA members from undertaking illegal mining. During this period, RUF forces raided some villages in the south-east of the country.

As Executive Outcomes prevented the RUF from having access to Kono and, accordingly, to its diamonds, the RUF posed as condition for the signing of a peace agreement that Executive Outcomes leave the country. This condition was included into the text of the Abidjan Peace Agreement signed between the Government and the RUF on 30 November 1996. Two months later, Executive Outcomes pulled out of the District. After the military coup in May 1997, RUF forces came out of the bush and merged with the AFRC regime. Few incidents were reported for this period, as most of the RUF/AFRC activities were concentrated on mining. In fact, mining became more organised under the command of the RUF, who declared all mining areas to be their property. However, harassment of civilians increased and cases of physical violence, killing, rape and abductions were reported.

[912] Besides diamonds, kimberlite mineral and gold are also mined.

The third and final phase began in early 1998, following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown and the retreat of RUF/AFRC forces and concluded in August 2001, when the disarmament was declared complete in the District. This period is characterised by a substantial increase of violations committed by RUF/AFRC forces. Repelled from Freetown, RUF/AFRC forces arrived in Koidu in late February/early March and rapidly spread across the whole District. ECOMOG forces assisted by CDF members recaptured Koidu and other main towns on the highway in April 1998, sending RUF/AFRC forces into the bush, from where they continued to carry out "Operation No Living Thing". Hundreds of civilians were wounded, mutilated, killed, raped and abducted as part of this operation between February and May/June. During the second half of the year, the level of violations decreased, as the RUF/AFRC forces were more occupied with building huts to withstand the rainy season. At that time, most of the civilians had fled to Guinea and of those who stayed in the District, a lot of them were abducted to be trained in the training base RUF/AFRC forces had opened in Lei Chiefdom in the east of the District or to be used as workers in the mining areas in the west of the District. In December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces launched a massive operation and recaptured Koidu from ECOMOG forces. Throughout 1999 and 2000 and despite the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999, RUF/AFRC forces accelerated their mining activities in the west of the District, where every single parcel of land was mined. A training base known as "Camp Lion" was opened in Yengema (Nimikoro Chiefdom), where hundreds of abductees from the Northern Province were brought for training. RUF/AFRC forces also continued their operations in the east of the District, in preparation for attacks onto the Guinean territory. Most of the RUF/AFRC raids during this period were carried out to search for food and above all to get more manpower, i.e. to abduct more people. Violations on civilians were still reported, in particular on those who were abducted. During those years, CDF forces launched attacks on RUF/AFRC positions, mainly in Sandor Chiefdom, in the north of the District and in the east, at the border with Guinea. These operations would continue until the completion of disarmament and the brokering of a deal to stop the illegal mining activities at the end of 2001.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1991

As a result of the attack on Pendembu[913] (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kailahun District), security personnel and the chiefdom authorities in Gbane Chiefdom, in the south of Kono District, called a meeting in April to discuss preventive measures. It was agreed during this meeting that towns and villages from the chiefdom should provide local hunters, known as Donsos and energetic youths for training, following which 200 men were trained by the Sierra Leone Police and the Special Security Division (SSD) with the support of the Paramount Chief of Gbane. At around this time, people from Kailahun District fleeing from RUF attacks, especially from Yawei Chiefdom, moved to Gbane Chiefdom and settled in the villages around Gandorhun and Koidu Buma towards the south of the chiefdom near the boundary with Kenema District. Before the war began affecting Kono District, SLA forces were deployed in Mafindor Chiefdom, at the border with Guinea. However, shortly after the attack on Gandorhun, they went to Gbane Chiefdom to join the troops posted there. The few forces who stayed in Mafindor Chiefdom were withdrawn in 1992 to Manjama, the SLA base in Soa Chiefdom in the south-east of Kono District.

[913] Pendembu is located on the road that enters Gbane chiefdom from Kailahun District.



On 5 June 1991, Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces wearing American flag bandanas on their heads and armed with AK47s entered Koidu Buma (Gbane Chiefdom) through Yawei Chiefdom (Kailahun District). Gbane Chiefdom was the main entry point into diamond-rich Kono District, due to the highway that links Koidu with Gandorhun and Bunumbu (Peje West Chiefdom, Kailahun District). At Koindu Buma, they shot and killed a man who was trying to escape and searched houses for any valuable items, including food. Civilians were asked whether there were any Sierra Leone Army (SLA) forces in the town[914] and the RUF forces promised they would kill any SLA member they came across.

They did not stay long in Koidu Buma, soon moving onto Gandorhun, their target being the SLA forces. At this time, Gandorhun was, after Koidu Town, the biggest SLA deployment in Kono District. They were led to Gandorhun by a civilian they had recently conscripted, who showed them a bypass route. The RUF forces entered the town around 03.00 a.m. with sporadic firing, armed with AK47s, RPGs, grenades and knifes. In Gandorhun, they killed three people (two shot and one burnt to death) and captured others, among them the brother of a prominent Lebanese businessman and his two daughters.[915] A van belonging to a civilian was taken away and used to carry property stolen from the town to Kailahun District. Most of the population fled to other chiefdoms.

A few days later, on 8 June, a combined force of Sierra Leone Police, SLA, SSD and Donsos forces repelled the RUF, who went back to Kailahun District. However, two of these RUF members got lost in the forest and, after going without food for a few days, went to a farm to ask for food; youths at the farm went to Gandorhun to tell the SLA about the two men. SLA forces then captured the two RUF members and brought them to Koidu, where they were publicly tortured before being killed. Shortly after the attack on Gandorhun, SLA forces were sent from Freetown to Koidu Town and were deployed in the area under attack. RUF forces launched another attack on 9 June, but were repelled by SLA, SSD and Donsos.

During their stay in the chiefdom, those forces (SLA, SSD and Donsos) inflicted violence on civilians they accused of collaborating with RUF forces. In one instance, some people accused of being collaborators had rags and rubber placed around their necks, which were then set on fire, killing those people. This served as a signal for the population that they should not cooperate with the RUF in any way.[916]

As early as 1991, local hunters[917] known as Donsos were to be found in Mafindor, Gbane, and Soa Chiefdoms in the south of the District, at the border with Guinea and Kailahun District. Those

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[914] The RUF forces who entered the town referred to SLA forces as "Momoh's soldiers", from the name of the then Head of State.

[915] It is not clear from the records whether the two girls were the daughters of the prominent businessman or the daughters of his brother.

[916] The date of this event cannot be determined with certainty and may have taken place in 1992.

[917] Different groups of traditional hunters organised themselves throughout Sierra Leone to fight the advancing RUF/NPFL and, later, RUF forces in the country. They were originally equipped solely with bladed weapons and long guns. Those local hunters had different names, according to the tribe to which they belonged: Donsos in Kono District; Tamaboros in Koinadugu District; Kapras in Tonkolili District; Gbethies in Port Loko District and, to a lesser extent, Kambia District; and Kamajors in the Southern and Eastern Province (Moyamba, Bonthe, Bo,

from Mafindor were often sent to Sukudu, in the south of Soa Chiefdom near the Guinean border. During the second half of 1991, Donsos started organising themselves in Sandor Chiefdom, in the north of Kono District at the boundary with Koinadugu District. In late 1991, some Donsos came to the chiefdom headquarters of Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom) to be trained by SLA forces on guerrilla tactics, military manoeuvres and staging ambushes. At that time, the SLA military headquarters were in Ngaya. As the war intensified at the boundary between Kono and Kailahun Districts, SLA forces together with Donsos or vigilantes were deployed in strategic towns such as Yormandu and Tefeya (Sandor Chiefdom), at the border with Gbense Chiefdom. Yormandu is a strategic town as it is located over the Bafi River and had one of the longest bridges in Kono District. It is worth noting that at this time, only a few SLA forces were deployed with many local hunters, also called vigilantes, more of whom were trained later on. However, at that time, SLA forces continually told civilians that they were neglected by the Government, whose support for the local hunters extended only to the supply of ammunition.

In late 1991, the Paramount Chief of Mafindor Chiefdom and "important"[918] Kono Authorities gathered the population in Kainkordu, the headquarter town of Soa Chiefdom. They asked for the youths and the local hunters, the Donsos, to organise themselves into a Civil Defence Unit (CDU). The youths and local hunters did so and began to organise the security of the town and the chiefdom, mainly by establishing checkpoints in the headquarter town. It is interesting to note that this meeting and the formation of vigilantes and organisation of Donsos was directly encouraged by the State authorities and also took place in other villages and towns in Soa chiefdom. At this early stage of the existence of Donsos, an embryonic administrative structure was established to assist the hunters on the ground. Thus, the 14 chiefdoms of Kono District were taxed (Le 1,000 per house) and the money was sent to the CDU headquarters in Koidu. Donsos and youths then received this money to buy torches and other simple logistical equipment to assist with their function as watchmen. At this time also, the SLA deployed one Battalion at Manjama (Soa Chiefdom), which became a strong base. Youths, Donsos and SLA forces were working together, the youths and Donsos being of a great help to the SLA as they were more familiar with the local terrain.

On hearing of RUF attacks on Sukudu and Konjo (Soa Chiefdom) in December 1991, a convoy of nearly 150 SLA members together with 19 youths went there to retake the towns. However on their arrival, no RUF forces were to be found. In Sukudu, they found five dead civilians with bullet wounds and 27 houses totally burnt.[919] The fact that those youths joined the SLA forces to go and confront RUF forces was rather unusual at that time, as their main function was to operate checkpoints and to undertake patrols. Indeed, when they came back from this mission, their leader forwarded the information to their headquarters in Koidu. On receiving the information, CDU headquarters in Koidu sent two packets of shotgun cartridges. As cross-border raids were reported at the boundary with Kailahun District, the Paramount Chief of Soa exhorted the Donsos and vigilantes to advance towards the border to guard all the routes. The Youths' leader did not favour

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Pujehun, Kenema and Kailahun Districts). In 1996, those local hunters would be organised under a national structure known as the Civil Defence Forces (CDF).

[918] This delegation consisted of the then Member of Parliament for Kono North East, Soa Chiefdom Paramount Chief, Kono Senior District Officer, All People's Congress (APC) Secretary General, the Overall commander of Tankoro Chiefdom Police Station and others.

[919] The reports make no mention of any casualties in Konjo or in any of villages that were attacked on the way.

this, as they lacked weapons, and a meeting was convened in Koidu to decide on what action to take.[920] A few days later, other villages at the boundary with Kailahun District, including Maa and Workor, were also attacked, people were killed and houses burnt.[921] Civilians in these villages reported that the forces who attacked them were speaking Krio, Liberian and other languages; accordingly, they identified those forces as RUF from Sierra Leone, NPFL forces from Liberia and mercenaries from Burkina Faso. At around the same time, some youths based at Levuma (Soa Chiefdom, on the border with Kailahun District) captured a man they alleged to be a RUF collaborator. This man was brought to Manjama, where the SLA commander ordered him to be shot.

b) Events in 1992

In January 1992, RUF forces were to be found in the boundary villages between Yawei Chiefdom (Kailahun District) and Gbane Chiefdom, as well as in Gandorhun and its environs. After the attack on Gandorhun in 1991, the RUF forces had retreated to their base in Kailahun District.[922] This was the start of a series of battles between RUF forces and the combined forces of the SLA, SSD and Donsos. At that time, the combined forces killed some people suspected of being "rebel" collaborators, including by putting a tyre around the neck of suspects and setting fire to it.

At this time, local hunters from Sandor Chiefdom were sent to the south of the District where the RUF/NPFL forces were advancing. In February 1992, a military base was set up in Mboama (Gbane Chiefdom) and 30 SLA members together with 47 Donsos were deployed there.

A meeting gathering the young men of Nimikoro Chiefdom was summoned by the Chiefdom Speaker and an SLA officer in April 1992 at the chiefdom headquarters of Jaiama. The purpose of this meeting was to organise the young men into vigilante groups that could assist the SLA in defending the chiefdom from RUF/NPFL attacks. A lot of young men volunteered and received some training from the SLA.

A fierce battle took place in May 1992 in Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom), where the RUF forces were repelled from the chiefdom. The fighting continued sporadically and, shortly after, the RUF/NPFL managed to overpower the combined forces and establish their first permanent base in Kono District, which was used to attack the surrounding villages. The RUF/NPFL forces attacked Sidu (Gbane Chiefdom), at the boundary with Tankoro Chiefdom, in May. Donsos from Baiama (Tankoro Chiefdom), eight miles from Sidu, informed the SLA forces deployed in Koidu of the advancing RUF/NPFL forces. The SLA therefore deployed in Baiama and Woama (Tankoro Chiefdom), where a battle took place between RUF/NPFL and SLA/Donsos. During these attacks, civilians were killed, property was taken and civilians were forced to carry the stolen property.[923] RUF/NPFL were bypassing the government forces in Woama to attack villages in Tankoro

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[920] Although there were no details about this meeting, it can be inferred that it was convened at the CDU headquarters. The result of this meeting could be the reinforcement of SLA forces to Manjama and the registration of armed Donsos in early 1992.

[921] The vigilantes found three dead civilian males in Maa and two burnt houses in Workor.

[922] During this time, RUF/NPFL forces had different bases in Kailahun District, the main one being in Kailahun Town (Luawa Chiefdom, Kailahun District).

[923] No more information was available on these events.

Chiefdom, up to nearby Koidu. During these attacks, captured SLA forces and Donsos were killed, often after physical violence was inflicted on them.[924]

In October 1992, the RUF/NPFL forces finally drove the SLA forces from their base in Woama and established a second RUF/NPFL base there. This opened access to Koidu for the RUF/NPFL forces, since Woama is located on the Gandorhun-Koidu highway. The attack on Woama created panic among civilians in Koidu, who started to leave the town. SLA forces mounted checkpoints in Koidu to search the fleeing population for arms and suspected "rebels". For example, a prominent Tankoro Chiefdom authority was arrested at one of these checkpoints, suspected of being a "rebel" because he had in his briefcase a traditional dress like the one worn by local hunters. He was publicly tortured and beheaded in the main central area of Koidu.

Advancing RUF/NPFL forces captured an armoured car on 22 October 1992 from the SLA forces at Wordu, three miles south of Koidu. The RUF/NPFL forces burnt the car and a lot of SLA forces were killed. Some of the civilians who were fleeing the RUF/NPFL advance on Koidu drowned in the surrounding rivers, which had swollen following heavy rains. On 23 October 1992, RUF/NPFL forces launched an attack on Koidu from Woama. The following day, SLA forces together with some local hunters launched a counter attack on the town and repelled the RUF/NPFL forces. After this battle, the bodies of many civilians were left lying on the streets of the town, apparently caught in the crossfire as they tried to escape the fighting.[925] Houses were burnt and many civilians were abducted by RUF/NPFL forces, among them a foreign worker. In early December, RUF/NPFL forces attacked the town for the second time from the same direction and repelled the SLA forces as far as Yormandu (Sandor Chiefdom).[926] The RUF/NPFL forces also repelled the SLA forces deployed at Bumpe (Nimikoro Chiefdom), located on the Kono-Makeni highway, up to Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom), which is near the Sewa River. In Bumpe junction, one civilian, a Limba by tribe, was shot dead by the RUF/NPFL commander who also ordered that the wife of the man be killed.

The fall of Koidu to the RUF/NPFL forces was interpreted against the Kono tribe and especially against the Paramount Chiefs, who became the target of SLA forces. Shortly after the attack on the town, a car arrived in Koidu carrying the wife of the Fiama Paramount Chief, who was in the boot of the car with his hands tied behind his back, his eyes swollen. When they recognised the Paramount Chief, civilians fled the area, fearful of being recognised by the Paramount Chief, which they believed could cause problems for them with SLA forces. The Paramount Chief was then taken to Tekko Barracks in Makeni (Bombali District); his death was subsequently confirmed. The Tombodu SLA forces later released his wife, after she had been raped by an unspecified number of SLA members. Some reports mention that the Paramount Chief was arrested because he failed to cooperate with SLA forces while another mentions that the Paramount Chief might have been arrested on the allegation that he had been found performing some ritual after the successful advance of RUF forces. Other Paramount Chiefs and other authorities from the District were

[924] During that time, it was alleged that SLA forces sometime abandoned their positions at the battlefront to go to Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom) to meet their relatives or to mine.

[925] This was inferred from the belongings found lying next to the bodies and needs to be clarified.

[926] It cannot be determined with certainty whether the bodies of civilians were found on the streets after the first or the second attack.

arrested and sent to Pademba Road prison in Freetown on the grounds they had aided and abetted the capture of Kono District by RUF forces.

By the end of 1992, RUF/NPFL forces were therefore controlling a vast area of Kono District, including the main roads leading to Koidu.[927] During their stay in Koidu, RUF/NPFL forces patrolled the surrounding villages in search of local hunters or pockets of SLA forces. During these patrols, the RUF/NPFL forces killed civilians, took property and abducted several civilians, taking them to Koidu to work for the RUF/NPFL forces. At Baiama, for example, about 60 men and women, including a prominent Kono authority, were taken away.

In a bid to repel the RUF/NPFL forces out of Koidu, an air campaign was undertaken, with the assistance of Nigerian Alpha Jets.[928]

When Koidu fell into the hands of the RUF/NPFL forces, most of its inhabitants left the town for Sandor Chiefdom, known to be an agricultural chiefdom full of hunters ready to defend their land. Those people coming to Sandor Chiefdom were searched at checkpoints by the SLA forces and the local hunters. During these searches, SLA forces or local hunters took whatever property they desired. Any civilians who resisted were molested and risked being termed as "rebel" collaborators, for which they could be killed. In addition, some civilians were killed for their money;[929] SLA forces and local hunters harassed businessmen in particular. At this time, Yormandu town, in the south of Sandor Chiefdom on the boundary with Kamara Chiefdom, was overcrowded with displaced people and many people were not able to sleep in houses, staying instead in the church, the mosque and the Court Barrie. Food, water and medical facilities rapidly became scarce and cholera broke out at Yormandu and Kayima, the chiefdom headquarter located in the north-west of the chiefdom, taking the lives of many people.

Another crowd of civilians left Koidu after it had been recaptured by RUF forces and headed through Nimikoro Chiefdom for Kangama (Gorama Kono Chiefdom in the south of the District). On their way to Kangama, they had to pass through many checkpoints controlled by local hunters. At Moinmadu (Nimikoro Chiefdom), they fell into an RUF/NPFL attack. In the early hours of the morning, a RUF member disguised as an Imam called the people for prayer.[930] Shortly after, the people who had gathered in the Mosque were surrounded by RUF/NPFL forces, who fired heavily in the air, capturing those in the mosque and other civilians in the town. Three civilians and a local hunter were killed in front of the Mosque and three men and a woman sustained serious injuries. Some young girls[931] were publicly raped. Two houses alleged to belong to the Kamajor commander of the area were burnt down. The people who had been captured were gathered in the Court Barrie and those who had food were forced to give it to the RUF/NPFL forces, who also accompanied

[927] It is interesting to note that these attacks on Koidu went virtually unreported in the media.

[928] Inter Press Service, 18 December 1992. Since the middle of 1991, foreign troops, including Nigerians and Guineans forces were fighting alongside the SLA, further to bilateral agreements signed between Sierra Leone and Guinea and between Sierra Leone and Nigeria.

[929] This information is reported in general terms and does not specify the exact location of every occurrence.

[930] Kono District is predominantly Muslim and according to the Islam, a Muslim is bound to pray five times a day. Each of the five periods for prayers is preceded by a call, known as adhaan. The early morning prayer may be offered any time within two hours after dawn.

[931] Although the exact age is not reported, it is mentioned that they were under age.

other civilians to fetch water and food from elsewhere. During this, some civilians managed to escape, which led the commander to punish his forces who had gone to the bush with the civilians by lashing them and locking them in a veranda near the Court Barrie. After three days, the RUF/NPFL forces together with their captives took a bush path towards Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom, south east of Nimikoro Chiefdom), which at that time was one of their strongholds. On their way, local hunters attacked the convoy and successfully overran the RUF/NPFL forces. The civilians who had been with the RUF/NPFL forces were then brought to Tikonko in the north of Gorama Kono Chiefdom.

As Donsos from Sandor Chiefdom needed logistics, food, medicine and ammunition, a mass meeting was summoned at the chiefdom headquarters of Kayima probably in late October to provide assistance to the hunters. At the meeting, it was agreed that each taxpayer should contribute Le 500[932] and a few cups of rice every month.

In November 1992, hunters from Tefeyah (Sandor Chiefdom) spread the news that a man was killed by uniformed men believed to be "rebels", who took his money and diamonds. It was, however, later said that these uniformed men were not "rebels" but SLA forces, who did this because they had heard a few days earlier that the man had diamonds. Supporting this theory, it was said that it was highly unlikely that RUF forces would come to a big town like Tefeyah to kill only one person.

A convoy of an unspecified number of armed and unarmed men, women and children – namely RUF/NPFL forces and their captives – coming from the direction of Koidu arrived in Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom) in late November. They stayed in the town for only one hour, killing some people, breaking doors, gathering anything that was of interest for them and abducting some civilians before heading through Manjama (Soa Chiefdom) to Sandaru, the RUF/NPFL base in Penguia Chiefdom (Kailahun District). This road, which links Koidu with Kainkordu and Penguia Chiefdom (Kailahun District), was often used by RUF forces in search of food. Also in Soa chiefdom, on 8 December, an RUF commander escorted by some men arrived in the chiefdom headquarter of Kainkordu. On his arrival, he explained that his movement, the RUF, had come to put an end to the APC regime and that it now controlled the whole of Kailahun, Kono and Pujehun Districts, as well as part of Kenema District.[933] He further said that the people from Soa Chiefdom should join the movement and celebrate the presence of their "new government". He mounted green pieces of material on top of a high pole as a symbol that this was now RUF-controlled territory and appointed men and women as the new authorities of the chiefdom.

The mobilisation of youths and local hunters was reinforced and structured by the creation of Eastern Region Civil Defence Committee, aiming at mobilising "well-meaning Sierra Leoneans" to

[932] This should be placed in the context of Sierra Leone's position at the bottom of the Human Development Index: between 1991 and 2000, 57% of the population lived on less than 1 USD (2.000 SLL) per day and 74.5% lived on less than 2 USD (4.000 SLL) per day: see UNDP Human Development Report 2003, http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_SLE.html, last visited on 30 December 2003.

[933] The loss of Kono and Kailahun Districts to the hands of the RUF/NPFL forces had a significant impact on the economy, as most of Sierra Leone's income came from the production of cash crops in Kailahun District and the mining activities in Kono District. Following the capture of Koidu by the RUF/NPFL forces, the National Diamond Mining Co. ceased its operations: Mining Annual Review, 1 July 1993.

fight alongside the SLA. This committee was composed of representatives of Kenema, Kailahun and Kono Districts, with some from Freetown.[934]

c) Events in 1993

In January, SLA forces coming from Freetown were deployed at Sewafe Bridge (Nimiyama Chiefdom) and merged with another group who had retreated from Koidu. Those SLA forces recaptured Sewafe town and advanced further on the Koidu highway together with local hunters known as Tamaboros from Koinadugu, Guinean forces and ULIMO-K members. They launched different attacks in Nimikoro, Nimiyama and Tankoro Chiefdoms, successfully driving out RUF forces from the areas previously under their control. Koidu was retaken in the same wave of attacks, on 22 January.[935] SLA forces from the Moa Barracks in Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District) also took control of Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom).

Those combined forces were heavily armed with tanks, armoured personnel carriers, AA guns and AK47s. They made several deployments in the area, including Koidu, and started patrolling villages and towns around Koidu in search of "rebels" and "rebel" collaborators, which led to the killing of many civilians accused of being "rebel" collaborators or sympathisers. The commanding officer[936] ordered all the civilians living in the areas formerly under RUF/NPFL control to move to Ngor Town, which is located after the Sewa Bridge in Mimiyama Chiefdom, where the first displaced camp was opened for the people of Kono.[937] Shortly after, SLA forces engaged in massive looting, as civilians had left their homes.

After the first group of Tamaboros[938] arrived in January 1993, a second group came in July. The Donsos also stepped up their presence and were active in Yormandu (Sandor Chiefdom) and Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom) in January, in Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) between March and August and at the border between Soa Chiefdom and Kailahun District and in Kangama (Gorama Kono) in December.

In early 1993, Kono authorities complained to the Government about looting and harassment by SLA forces during the previous month, so the Government sent a new SLA commander to Kono District. Following his arrival, the SLA forces based in Koidu started issuing passes for civilians relocated in the IDP camp who wished to visit their homes to check their belongings. Nigerian forces arrived in Koidu, while some SLA and Guinean forces moved to attack RUF/NPFL positions in Kailahun District. The Nigerian forces encouraged civilians to return and resettle in their villages. SLA and Nigerian troops were based in different strategic towns like Yengema, near the Kono-Makeni highway in Nimikoro Chiefdom; Tombodu, a diamond-rich town in Kamara

934 BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 22 December 1992.
935 No information was obtained on the casualties sustained during those attacks.
936 It cannot be inferred from the information collected whether this commanding officer was controlling all the combined forces, or just the SLA forces or the Guinean troops.
937 Around the same period, other camps for internally displaced persons (IDPs) were operational in the country, notably in Gondama (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District), where thousands of civilians from Pujehun District found refuge.
938 Local hunters from Koinadugu.

Chiefdom; and Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom), where they encouraged civilians to mine for diamonds.[939] Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) was a commercial centre and was the arrival and departure point for passenger helicopters flying to and from Freetown. Thus, by the end of 1993, most of the civilians who had earlier left the chiefdom came back to Kamara Chiefdom, as it was free of RUF presence.

However, those SLA forces killed an unspecified number of civilians suspecting of being RUF members or sympathisers. Those executions took place at Bendu II, where the bodies were dumped in a mass grave. In separate incident, another group of SLA members, who had replaced those who had arrested the Paramount Chief of Fiama, arrested a civilian and shot him twice without giving reasons. His body was left on the ground and a few civilians buried him afterwards. Also at Tombodu, Tamaboros coming from Koinadugu District to help the SLA forces drive the RUF out of the country undertook massive screening of civilians. As part of this process, in March,[940] 2,000 civilians were gathered in the Court Barrie to be screened by the Tamaboros, headed by a woman dressed in traditional hunter attire. Some members of the SLA were also gathered at the Court Barrie. The woman conducted the screening through her mirror, which allegedly allowed her to assess whether a person was a "genuine civilian" or a "rebel". Those who were identified as "rebels" were either killed or sent to Pademba Road Prison in Freetown. After the screening process, civilians were given a pass that allowed them to move freely in the chiefdom and beyond without fearing of being molested or suspected of being a "rebel". People commonly gave the nickname "Unmolested" to this pass, which was issued by SLA officers.

Some Kono elites came together and formed an organisation called Koeyor, the primary objective of which was to restore dignity to the people of Kono. Together with the Kono Students Union, they pleaded for the release of the Kono Paramount Chiefs and other authorities who had been detained by the NPRC regime.

RUF forces were active in the eastern chiefdoms in the District during the first half of 1993, which was marked by incidents of killing and the destruction of property. For example, in Sukudu, at the beginning of the year, a prominent farmer had both of his arms chopped off. RUF forces tied a letter around his neck telling the then Head of State, Captain Strasser, that they were "still in control". In Kundima (Soa Chiefdom), five elderly people were killed in January by RUF forces. Their bodies showed machete wounds and one woman appeared to have had her head smashed on a rock. In February, RUF forces also attacked Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom). Returning civilians later discovered 40 houses that had been completely burnt down and 27 bodies, which they buried in a dug out toilet in the southern part of the town. At that time, RUF forces also attacked Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom) for the second time, although there were no reported casualties.

SLA harassment of civilians was also reported in Mafindor and Gbane Kandor Chiefdoms. For example, cattle belonging to a civilian was taken and killed for food for the SLA forces. In Koardu (Gbane Kandor Chiefdom), civilians were locked up in the SLA guardroom and beaten if they complained about the behaviour of the SLA forces. Similar acts took place in Dunamaor (Gbane Kandor Chiefdom), where SLA forces entered the village, firing their weapons. As they began to

[939] It cannot however be inferred from the records whether the civilians were mining for the Nigerian and SLA forces or for themselves, with the encouragement of those forces.

[940] This screening process probably continued in April and May and is also reported in Koinadugu District.

take people's poultry, one SLA member asked a man to give them his torch as well, which he refused to do. This refusal was not taken well by the SLA forces, who chased the man into the bushes. As he was hiding in the bushes, they took property from his house and assembled all the women and men of the village to punish them in order to find out where the man was hiding.[941] The matter was later settled as the man's sister gave the SLA forces some money, some cups of rice and a chicken.

In addition, acts of physical violence, torture and killing of suspected "rebel" collaborators also took place. In May 1993, SLA forces were looking for two civilians whom they suspected of being "rebel" collaborators. As the nephew of one of those two wanted men was alleged to be on his way to warn his uncle, SLA forces arrested him in Gbamandufao (Gbane Kandor Chiefdom). His head was shaved with a piece of broken bottle and he was told to eat his hair, which had been mixed with sand. He then was hit with a bayonet before being brought to Koardu, where more violence was inflicted on him. He was then brought to Manjama (Soa Chiefdom) to ascertain whether he was a "rebel", where he was eventually killed. Another suspected "rebel" collaborator in Koardu (Gbane Kandor Chiefdom) was tied up, made to lie down in the sun and was severely beaten. In Ndanbadu, in September, a man was severely beaten then brought to Koardu, where he was locked in a guardroom because he had asked why the SLA members were taking people's cattle.

In the meantime, the Donsos were trying to resist to RUF attacks. In June, they deployed alongside the border with Kailahun District. In mid 1993, SLA forces were deployed in Soa Chiefdom and for the rest of the year, the area was almost free of RUF attacks.

Following rumours of an approaching RUF attack on Kangama (Gorama Kono Chiefdom) and its environs in October 1993, a meeting was summoned in the town in early December. The purpose of this meeting was to motivate the youths of the chiefdom to be initiated into the Kamajors society and to take up arms.[942] After this meeting, between 100 and 200 youths registered to join the society. In mid December, 150 of these youths came back to the town with a gallon of palm oil and 10 cups of rice each for logistic support. They were then taken to a place called Jagbwema Kamba to be initiated into the Kamajors society. The initiator was also the initiator for Gorama Mende and Lower Bambara Chiefdoms (Kenema District). The initiates stayed in the bush for three weeks before returning to Kangama Town in early January 1994.

Following successful SLA attacks on RUF positions in Kailahun District in late 1993, Kono District was declared safe and IDPs from Ngor camp were repatriated to Koidu by the Government with the help of some Non-Governmental Organisations.[943]

Around the same period, the SLA had recaptured most of the RUF positions in Kailahun and Pujehun Districts, which led the NPRC Chairman to declare a unilateral ceasefire on 1 December

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[941] The type and duration of punishment they received were not specified.

[942] No Kamajor initiation had, however yet take place in the country, not even in the Southern Province, from where it originated. Accordingly, this information about the Kamajors may simply mean that youths and local hunters gathered, as they did in Kenema District, but were not initiated by an initiator as such.

[943] In September, the NPRC Secretary General announced that the situation in Kono was calm and civilians could go back to their villages without hindrance: BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 9 September 1993.

1993. This ceasefire was however largely violated, as RUF forces launched a massive operation in Kenema District in late December.

d) Events in 1994[944]

By the end of January and following the renewal of hostilities in the Eastern Province and in Pujehun District, the NPRC Chairman declared "total war" against the RUF.

In early 1994, returning chiefs created the Kono Council of Paramount Chiefs, chaired by the Paramount Chief of Mafindor Chiefdom, with the consent of the NPRC Commanding Officer Secretariat in Kono.[945]

RUF forces were reported to be in Baiama, in the south of Tankoro Chiefdom, in early 1994, where they burnt houses and raped girls. In March, they reached Levuma, a village of 70 houses south of Tankoro Chiefdom, near the border with Gorama Kono Chiefdom, where 70 people where shot and killed. This action was allegedly undertaken in reprisal for the local hunters attacking RUF positions and for the civilians' lack of support for the RUF movement. The Gorama Kono Kamajors subsequently launched an attack on Levuma and, after retaking control of the town, buried the corpses of the 70 victims in a mass grave in town, since burying them outside the town ran the risk of an encounter with RUF forces. During the RUF counter attack on Foindu (Gorama Kono Chiefdom, at the border with Tankoro Chiefdom), 10 houses were burnt, five people were killed, girls were raped and people were abducted. Others were wounded with cutlasses, including the Section Chief of Tankoro Chiefdom.

By April, the Tamaboros who had helped the SLA repelling the RUF/NPFL forces out of Koidu in January 1993 moved back to the Northern Province, their region of origin, to fight the RUF advance.[946]

In May, more local hunters were gathered in Gorama Kono Chiefdom,[947] thereby enabling them to retake Foindu from the RUF. Other towns in Gorama Kono were also the site of fighting between Kamajor and RUF forces. As rumours spread about an attack on Kangama, the main Kamajor base for the whole chiefdom, up to 124 more youths were initiated into the Kamajor society. The anticipated attack on Kangama took place in September 1994 and after the Kamajors succeeded in countering the RUF forces, the chiefdom was free from RUF incursions until 1995. In order to ensure security, the Kamajors laid constant ambushes on the four entry points from neighbouring chiefdoms, namely at Nimiyama, Nimikoro, Tankoro and Gbane Chiefdoms.

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[944] It should be noted that the information for 1994, 1995 and to a certain extent 1996 is sometimes confused and inconsistent. The information related in this report for this period was thoroughly crosschecked, notably in correlation with what happened in other places at the same time, but although there can be no doubt on the actual occurrence of the events, the exact date of those events cannot be ascertained with any certainty.

[945] The main aim of the traditional authorities was to defend their District but no more information could be obtained on its precise role. It, however highlights how local authorities organised themselves to defend their land against RUF incursions.

[946] Inter Press Service, 21 April 1994.

[947] This gathering of local hunters at that time did not encompass initiation as such. Initiation ceremonies would not be performed in the Eastern Province before 1996.

In 1994, the taking of property was common by all factions, including RUF forces, SLA forces and Donsos, and businessmen were common targets. For example, at Yormandu, on a Friday market day, an SLA member killed a businessman for his money, approximately 4,000 to 5,000 US dollars. At Mansundu, another businessman was killed and his money was taken.

The Donsos were active in Sandor Chiefdom and were sometimes attacked by RUF forces during small-scale operations. In mid 1994, RUF forces entered Yormandu, where they killed one police officer and abducted the Donsos deputy chief's daughter. By the end of the year, 2,000 hunters were registered in Sandor Chiefdom.[948]

SLA forces were harsh with civilians they suspected of abiding or collaborating with the RUF, which led to disunity between civilians and the SLA. Civilians were also harassed without being suspected of being a RUF member and, in particular in diamond-rich Kamara Chiefdom, acts of violence and molestation were inflicted on civilians by SLA forces engaged in illegal mining, who used and took civilians' properties and abducted women to be their "wives". The smuggling of diamonds was at its peak during this period. At the same time, some civilian members of the NPRC regime organised themselves in a group called "Convoy" and engaged in mining activities, molesting any authority or landowner who stood in their way.[949] A lot of small mining companies sprang up in this way.

In addition, SLA forces sometimes disguised themselves as RUF forces and attacked villages. For example, in Yorkordu (Sandor Chiefdom), located near the Bafin River, seven SLA members took property from the village before falling into a hunters' ambush. These attacks suspected to be carried out by SLA members pretending to be RUF forces led to disunity between local hunters and SLA forces and at Bakidu, SLA forces pretending to be RUF and who came to attack towns along the river were drowned by Donsos. Around the same time, between Mansundu and Worko (Sandor Chiefdom), RUF forces killed four SLA members, cut off their heads and displayed them on sticks.

A fierce RUF attack took place during that year in Yatandoe (Fiama Chiefdom).[950] RUF forces, who were believed to have come from different directions, attacked the town with heavy firepower. During the course of their stay in the town, houses were burnt, people killed and women raped. A specific event was the chopping off of the two arms of one SLA member. Some civilians were abducted and taken to Kailahun. Civilians who sought refuge in the bush were chased by the RUF forces, who shot and killed some of them, looted and set on fire the huts built in the bush, known as "mansion". People from Fiama Chiefdom stayed in the bush until Executive Outcomes came to Kono District in 1995.

SLA forces remained in Mafindor and Gbane Kandor Chiefdoms, which were virtually free of RUF activity. However, SLA harassment of civilians, which was common during previous years, continued throughout 1994. In February, SLA forces requested the civilians from Sangema (Gbane

[948] The reported information concerning Sandor Chiefdom was confused and did not allow us to expand our analysis on this chiefdom. Although it is likely that the information reported above did take place in 1994, it may have taken place at a different date and no more information was available on these events.
[949] These civilians were called the "blue eye boys" and the nature of their relations with the NPRC regime it is not clear from the records. These mining activities were also carried out in 1995.
[950] The date was not specified for this incident.

Kandor Chiefdom) to come to Koardu to brush the roads. As they did not get the message early enough and accordingly did not show up on time for the work, the civilians were gathered in Sangema and made to sit on the ground. As one of the civilians tried to reach a compromise with the SLA forces, he was hit with a weapon on his head. The SLA forces present in the village also took goats and poultry. The matter was reported to the SLA officer in charge in Manjama, who ordered the arrest of the SLA members involved.[951] Another incident relates the fate of one woman in Marrah (Mafindor Chiefdom) in March, who was beaten and kicked by a member of the SLA, who accused her of having planned to sabotage the NPRC regime.

From November 1994, SLA forces were no longer based in Mafindor Chiefdom, although they were still patrolling the chiefdom. In Soa Chiefdom, SLA forces were still deployed in Manjama. Also in Soa Chiefdom, a jet bombardment was heard between Kongomadu and Theyor, which was believed to have been ECOMOG forces missing an RUF position.

f) Events in 1995

During this year, SLA forces were occupied with mining activities, leaving the security of the District to the under-equipped Donsos. During the first months of the year, the RUF forces succeeded in capturing major towns, including Koidu, in the wealthy west of the District, before being repelled in May and June by the combined forces of SLA, Executive Outcomes and local hunters.

In early 1995, RUF forces attacked Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom), advancing within a week on Woama (Tankoro Chiefdom) and then on Motema (Nimikoro Chiefdom). In this way, they approached Koidu town, which created panic among the inhabitants. In Motema, six police officers were killed, as well as a prominent Chief. The retreating SLA forces settled in Kamara and Sandor Chiefdoms, harassing civilians and taking their property.

RUF forces took advantage of the fact that SLA forces were more occupied with mining activities than with protecting the District borders. It has been suggested that junior SLA forces embarked on mining because they were suffering in their areas of deployment, as they did not receive much support from the Government and their officers were enriching themselves by mining diamonds. Furthermore, the attack on Motema, which is located on the Koidu-Makeni highway, created an increase in prices and a shortage of essential items in Koidu town, as the highway was no longer accessible.

In late April 1995, RUF forces launched their attack on Koidu. At this time, confusion arose in the mind of civilians about the identity of the fighting forces in control of the town. The RUF forces successfully captured one part of the bridge but the identification of the forces occupying the other part was unclear. Civilians thought that they may either be "loyal soldiers", namely SLA members fighting for the Government, or they may be "sobels".[952] This attack is referred to as "the second attack", "phase II", or "5:05" by civilians from Koidu. Unlike the first attack, which took place in late 1992, RUF forces used heavy calibre weapons such as mortar bombs, RPGs and LMGs. During

[951] The SLA members in question were not arrested.

[952] This term refers to either SLA members who joined the RUF movement but who still used their SLA uniforms, so people thought they were fighting for the Government, or SLA members who, although they did not join the RUF as such, were acting as if they were "rebels", adopting the same behaviours.

the attack, a lot of civilians were killed and RUF forces took property from hundreds of houses and abducted many people, either to work in the mines or to carry their loads. Shortly after, RUF forces took control of the whole town.

After the attack on Koidu, RUF forces fanned out and attacked many more places, which soon fell under their control. During these attacks, people were ill-treated and killed and property was taken or destroyed, including houses. For example, RUF forces who were on their way to Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) cut off a woman's nose. Shortly afterwards, RUF forces attacked Tombodu. After the attack, inhabitants who returned to pack some belongings saw three houses burnt down and two bodies, although the actual levels of destruction and killing were likely to be much higher. Baiama (Tankoro Chiefdom headquarter, in the south of the chiefdom) was attacked and all the houses were burnt down. Some young women and men were abducted and taken to Koidu, which was at this time under RUF control. The abducted men were forced to carry the stolen property. RUF forces also proceeded further north and attacked Yormandu, south of Sandor Chiefdom, following the local hunters up to Bandu, three miles south-east of Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom headquarters).[953]

The April attack on Koidu led to a massive exodus of the population towards Kamara Chiefdom and towards the villages of Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom) and Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom). In Jagbwema, fleeing civilians met with armed men in new uniforms, which led them to think they were SLA forces coming to recapture Koidu. However, shortly after their arrival, one of these armed men shot a civilian in the chest for asking them who they were. These armed men took personal effects and money from the civilians and burnt down one prominent businessman's house. While in their hiding place in the bush, fleeing people in Soa Chiefdom heard on the BBC "Focus on Africa" Program that "white men had come to Koidu".[954] RUF forces used Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom) as their base to lead ambushes in the area, during which some civilians were tortured and raped.[955]

During the same period, people suspected of being "rebel collaborators" were arrested and imprisoned by SLA forces. The NPRC regime imprisoned a lot of authorities they accused of collaboration with RUF forces at Pademba Road Prison in Freetown. At this time, further doubts were raised about the identity of the fighting forces carrying out certain actions, because it was reported that some SLA members organised road ambushes, attacking vehicles for their merchandise and specifically targeting businessmen, taking their belongings and, sometimes, killing them.

Between May and June 1995, a combined force of SLA, ULIMO-K and the CDU advanced from Sewa Bridge (Nimiyama Chiefdom) to recapture Koidu. On their way, they stopped for one week in Bumpe (Nimikoro Chiefdom), waiting for reinforcements from Executive Outcomes.[956] Executive

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953 The casualties for all these attacks are however not reported.

954 This refers to the coming of Executive Outcomes, a mercenary company from South Africa.

955 This information was related in general terms and does not specify the precise location of the events nor the exact date.

956 The precise dates of the coming of Executive Outcomes in the District could not be inferred from the records. However, it was crosschecked and corroborated with open sources that Koidu was recaptured by these combined forces in June.

Outcomes arrived in the same month after having completed their first military encounter in Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and advanced from Bumpe junction to recapture Koidu. RUF forces attacked those forces at Bumpe but were defeated and 17 of them were killed.[957] By the end of June 1995, Executive Outcomes, together with SLA forces, had removed the RUF forces from Sewa Bridge, Yormandu, Tombodu Chiefdom, Koidu and villages surrounding Koidu.[958] They moved towards Koidu from three different directions, encountering little resistance from RUF forces as they had superior firepower.
Executive Outcomes organised meetings in some chiefdom headquarters, encouraged hunters to organise themselves, gave them military training, especially on how to operate weapons, and supplied them with logistics,[959] shotguns and eight round automatic rifles, which did not please the SLA forces. Executive Outcomes went on patrol with Donsos, due to their knowledge of the territory, seldom taking SLA members with them. They also encouraged civilians to participate in their own security as watchmen, notably during a general meeting in Koidu that gathered thousands of civilians together. During a meeting at Tombodu, Executive Outcomes demonstrated to the people how they could participate in the security network, using a "Spider Web" diagram. The Kono District Defence Committee[960] was reorganised and, as the Executive Outcome commander wished to involve the Kono people in the maintenance of security in the District, the Kono Consultative Committee (KCC) was formed. The KCC, besides the Kono District Defence Committee, embraced all facets of the Kono community. The initial meeting of the KCC took place in August, in the presence of 12 Paramount Chiefs,[961] which was followed by regular meetings to discuss security questions.

Donsos, the local hunters, entered Yormandu in July and at this time, Sandor Chiefdom was divided into different zones, each of them placed under the command of a different hunter. Donsos, focused on liberating their chiefdoms, did not rely on SLA forces because of their impression that those SLA forces were quick to run away during RUF attacks.

People began returning to Koidu but due to the scarcity of food, they had to search for food in the surrounding villages. As they did so, they ran into pockets of RUF forces who, when driven out from Koidu, relocated mainly at Potema Camp, Baiama (Tankoro Chiefdom) and Bandafarda Camp, near Motema (Nimikoro Chiefdom). During these encounters, a large number of people were abducted and some were killed or mutilated.[962]

Probably in the middle of August, RUF forces coming from the Tongo route[963] attacked Njaiama, headquarter town of Nimikoro Chiefdom and burnt the residence of the Chiefdom Speaker and the Court Barrie. They were repelled by SLA forces, assisted by local hunters. The SLA commander advised the residents of the town to stay indoors whenever there was a RUF attack on the town.

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957 AFP, 28 June 1995.
958 Officially, Executive Outcomes had been engaged solely to train the SLA on military tactics but many reports for Kono District recounted that they came to the District to help repelling the RUF forces.
959 This training took place at District Office Barracks at Koidu and, after their training, the Donsos returned to their chiefdoms.
960 See the developments on this point in the year 1994
961 Kono District has 14 chiefdoms.
962 No details could be obtained on this incident.
963 Tongo is located in Lower Bambara Chiefdom (Kenema District). The road leading Tongo to Koidu passes by Gorama Kono Chiefdom, south of Nimikoro Chiefdom.

One week later, gunshots from the direction of Njala, a very big town a few miles away, were heard in Njaiama. Indeed, RUF forces, dressed in military uniforms, attacked Njala around 28 August. During this attack, over 50 people were killed and several houses burnt down. The RUF forces then moved on to Njaiama, where over 90 people where killed and houses were burnt. During these RUF attacks on Njala and Njaiama, many civilians were wounded and several more went missing, presumably captured by the RUF forces, although some were later discovered dead in the bushes. SLA forces who had pulled out of the town at the time of the attack regrouped and assisted by local hunters and Executive Outcomes, recaptured the town: A house-to-house search was carried out to bury the dead, who numbered 97 in total, spread over six different locations in the town.[964]

SLA forces came from time to time to Mafindor Chiefdom during the first half of the year, often harassing civilians. For example, one group of SLA forces regularly carried out raids to confiscate civilian property, on one occasion beating the Chief of Sandia village. These actions ceased during the second half of the year, when the rainy season made the roads impassable. In Lei Chiefdom, which is a rich cattle-grazing area, SLA forces killed cattle belonging to civilians and forced the civilians to carry the meat to Koidu; similar events also took place in 1996. For example, in one incident which took place in the chiefdom headquarter of Saiama, some SLA members killed six cows in a pen and required the caretakers of the pen to bring the meat to Koidu. When two of them refused, they were severely beaten by the SLA forces and forced to take the meat to Koidu as previously requested. This incident was reported to the Paramount Chief of Lei, who explained to the owner of the cows that he was not the first to report such matters. As a result, the Paramount Chief had already complained to the Colonel in charge of the SLA in Koidu, who had assured him that he had taken all necessary steps to stop SLA members doing such things. The Colonel had also told the Paramount Chief that he would alert the Military Police around the chiefdom to arrest any SLA member coming to the chiefdom without an official reason.[965] Nevertheless, similar actions continued even after the complaints of the Paramount Chief and the reassurances from the SLA Colonel.

In Soa Chiefdom, during the months of July to September, RUF forces believed to come from Kailahun District attacked different villages, mainly on a "hit and run" basis, searching for food and targeting villages with master farms. At this time, Donsos were active in Kainkordu and along the border villages, so RUF forces came in small groups and did not undertake sustained attacks. Rather, they would enter a village, take property and leave straightaway, as they were afraid of the Donsos based in some villages. During these raids, people were wounded, killed and forced to carry stolen property. These types of attacks took place in Bongema, Kuandor and Kainkordu. In Kainkordu, for example, one house was burnt and men and women were abducted to carry the property stolen in the village. One of these abductees was later shot dead outside Kainkordu.

In late 1995, Executive Outcomes, SLA and local hunters launched a massive attack on RUF positions at Woama and Baiama (Tankoro Chiefdom), where the RUF forces had their main camp in Potema. Donsos were able to provide Executive Outcomes with information and directions on

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[964] Some blamed the SLA for these attacks on Njala and Njaiama, as they were frustrated in their mining activities by Executive Outcomes: Inter Press Service, 6 September 1995.

[965] It cannot, however, be inferred from the reports whether Military Police did arrest any SLA member or took any other kind of action.

RUF positions, following which local hunters were deployed at Baiama and SLA forces at Woama. After a last unsuccessful RUF attempt[966] to attack Koidu where RUF forces bypassed SLA forces at Woama and were stopped at Woardu by Executive Outcomes, those chiefdoms located in the centre and the west of the District became relatively quiet. It is interesting to note that during some encounters between Executive Outcomes and the RUF, some of the RUF members who were killed were identified as ex-SLA, through the SLA identity cards found on their bodies.

f) Events in 1996

Executive Outcome mercenaries controlled illicit mining in Kono District, their presence minimising the ill treatment of civilians by SLA forces. They reprimanded undisciplined SLA forces and in one incident, killed 72 SLA members, described as "sobels",[967] at Kaneya in the outskirts of Koidu. Executive Outcomes patrolled together with Donsos who also continued to man checkpoints. For these reasons, their presence contributed to the stability of the security situation in Kono District and, to an extent, offset the economic consequences for the District of the incessant RUF ambushes on the Kono–Makeni Highway.

Around this time, it was alleged that Executive Outcomes was given a concession on the Tankoro Kimberlite mining site. The mercenary company was brought to the area by Branch Energy Ltd, a British company that secured a mining lease in the area and said it would hire its own security force. It was therefore believed that Executive Outcomes was taking a cut in the mining activities.[968]

At the border with Guinea and Kailahun District, Sandor Chiefdom was mainly protected by the Donsos and not by Executive Outcomes. This chiefdom was free from RUF incursions throughout 1996.

In Lei Chiefdom, SLA harassment of civilians continued, including sexual assault. At one point in 1996, some civilians came to Senehun, located on the highway going to the chiefdom headquarters of Saiama, to mourn the death of the town chief. Some SLA members asked some of them for a goat and as they explained that they had already given their only goat to some other SLA forces the day before, they were told that they should replace the goat with a woman. The civilians explained that there was no unmarried woman in the town. However, the SLA forces came across a young woman who had also came to the village on hearing of the death of the town chief. They took her away and, as she told them she was not married, they threatened the civilians with beatings as they lied to them about there being no unmarried women in the town. The woman was raped by the four SLA members during the night and then released, so the SLA members could avoid being disciplined by their commander. The incident was reported to a senior SLA commander but no action was taken.[969]

In Gbane Chiefdom, RUF forces intimated voters on Election Day in an effort to prevent them from voting by sporadically firing their weapons. After the elections, some people fled the chiefdom,

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[966] This event took place between late December 1995 and early 1996.

[967] See earlier note 42 for an explanation of this term.

[968] See The Mining Journal, 8 March 1996 and Inter Press Service, 11 March 1996. Around September 1996, Executive Outcomes would also be contracted by Sieromco, a company mining Bauxite in Moyamba District.

[969] The month of the occurrence of the incident could not be ascertained.

fearing the warning given by the RUF that they would amputate the hands of those who had voted for the newly-elected President, Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.[970] Furthermore, people in Kono heard that in some parts of the country under RUF control, especially in Kailahun District, people's hands were cut off and their mouths padlocked as a punishment for having voted.

After the elections, SLA forces were deployed all around the country in strategic positions, except some parts of Kailahun District. One battalion was deployed in Gbongbokoro (Soa Chiefdom), which is on the Guinean border and is a crossing point to one of Guinea's most prominent market centres called Gueckedou. However, dissent began to ferment within the SLA forces for not being treated by the Government with the respect and the honour they deserved, while hunters (Kamajors and Donsos) were respected by the Government. For example, in August 1996, armed men believed to be SLA forces attacked Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom) and killed the treasury clerk, allegedly because the SLA forces held the treasury clerk responsible for bad reports against them being sent from the chiefdom authorities. Compounding their dissatisfaction, the President's address to the nation at the national Stadium in Freetown after the signing of the Abidjan Peace Agreement did not please the SLA forces, especially when he made particular mention of the Kamajors for the very outstanding job they did to put an end to the war.

RUF forces attacked Kangama (Gorama Kono) in October 1996, entering the town with heavy firing. They killed one woman and shot two other people in their hips, who were later taken for treatment to Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District). The RUF forces took all the property they could find in the town and abducted two boys to carry the load for them to their base, allegedly at Peyama (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District). One Friday in the same month, a meeting was summoned at the Court Barrie as information reached Kangama authorities about the Kamajor initiation that was taking place in Kenema District.[971] It was agreed that young men should be initiated to protect the chiefdom and a message was conveyed to the Paramount Chief of Gorama Kono Chiefdom, who was at that time in Koidu, to put in place modalities for the initiation. His chiefdom speaker made the shuttle between Koidu and Kangama to organise the initiation. Money was borrowed from a produce buying agent in Koidu for the initiation and 30 energetic men were selected by the elders. The 30 young newly initiated Kamajors were then provided with single and double barrel guns and deployed in different part of the town.

Also in October 1996, RUF forces attacked Bamba (Soa Chiefdom) and burnt down 32 houses. They then headed to Sukudu, south of Soa Chiefdom, where they captured people, including children, and forced them to carry heavy loads to an unknown location. SLA forces based at Yigbeda (Soa Chiefdom) advanced to Sukudu and some of their members deployed there. Two weeks later, still in October, RUF forces attacked the town of Kongonani, six miles from Sukudu, where they killed civilians, including men, women and children, before being repelled by SLA forces, who had came from Sukudu on hearing the sounds of gunfire. Before retreating, RUF forces abducted some civilians and brought them to Kailahun District. Stolen property was also transported to Liberia by boat, crossing the river bordering Sierra Leone and Liberia. While a

[970] By the end of the year, Gbane Chiefdom was a "no-go" area, as the fighting factions were hunting each other across the chiefdom, leading civilians to flee the area.

[971] This information backs up the previous assertions that no Kamajor initiations as such took place in Gorama Kono Chiefdom in late 1993 and early 1994.

meeting was in progress in Sukudu with SLA forces and local authorities in December, RUF forces again attacked Sukudu and killed the Section Chief of Sawa Fiama Section. SLA forces retreated to Yigbeda but later, still in December, they came back to Sukudu and warned civilians that they were planting mini-landmines along the road RUF forces were using to attack Soa Chiefdom, which caused the death of some of the RUF forces and allegedly led to the ceasing of attacks on villages in the chiefdom.

The Abidjan Peace Accord, signed on 30 November 1996, stated that the war was ended with immediate effect. It required that Executive Outcomes leave the country by early 1997, which they did,[972] and also required the disarmament of the fighting forces.[973] However, Kono people made a very strong appeal to the Government not to stop their contract with Executive Outcomes, as they ensured security for Kono District.

In the aftermath of the Abidjan Accord, the then Vice President conducted a confidence building tour in the provinces to disband the CDF. In late December,[974] the Vice President of Sierra Leone visited Kono District and held a meeting in Koidu with Kono stakeholders, where he officially disbanded the CDF and required the Donsos to lay down their arms and return to their farming activities, as the Government had entered into a ceasefire agreement with the RUF. Any Donsos who failed to disarm would be detained. Many people who attended the meeting left the hall before the closure of the meeting to show their disapproval with the Vice President's statement. On the evening of that same day, the Deputy Defence Minister came to Koidu and organised a meeting at the Donsos office to encourage the Donsos to stay intact as RUF forces could not be trusted, including giving money as his own contribution for the Christmas celebration. Nevertheless, the Vice President's visit had, to all intents and purposes, paralysed further Donsos' activities.

g) Events in 1997[975]

In March 1997 in Gorama Kono Chiefdom, RUF forces attacked Kangama, a CDF stronghold located at the border with Tankoro Chiefdom, but were repelled. The RUF apparently wanted to capture Kangama as a transit point to block the Kamajors in Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District),[976] who had strong links with the Kamajors in Kangama.

In May 1997, news of the Coup reached Kono on its very first day through the BBC's "Focus on Africa" Program. After the Coup, the RUF came out of the bush, often looking malnourished, and together with AFRC mainly spent the year taking people's property, in particular making constant

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[972] AFP, 30 January 1997.

[973] Article 12 of the Agreement stated that the Government shall use all its endeavours, consistent with its treaty obligations, to repatriate other foreign troops (i.e., the Nigerians and the Guineans) no later than three months after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group or six months after the signing of the Peace Agreement, whichever is earlier. Article 12 also stated that Executive Outcomes shall be withdrawn within five weeks of the deployment of the NMG: Sierra Leone Bi-Monthly Information Report No.11, 19 November - 16 December 1996.

[974] This visit could have taken place early January 1997.

[975] Little information was reported for 1997, as most of the RUF/AFRC activities were concentrated in Freetown and RUF activities now together with AFRC resumed progressively and were mainly focused on the mining areas.

[976] It has to be remembered that the control of Tongo Field was of the utmost importance for RUF forces as it is the most important diamond area in Kenema District.

demands for livestock. Furthermore, shortly after the Coup, the individual plot system was abandoned and all mining areas were declared to belong to the RUF/AFRC forces, who appointed "Mines Monitoring Officials" to supervise their mining activities.[977]

Throughout 1997, RUF/AFRC forces undertook patrols in various places across the District. For example, Gbane Kandor Chiefdom was under the constant patrols of AFRC members. RUF/AFRC forces regularly patrolled Soa Chiefdom, except Kainkordu, which was a Kamajor stronghold.

RUF/AFRC forces established checkpoints in Koidu town[978] and also conducted raids at mining sites, beating and killing civilians and seizing gravel from civilians, looking for diamonds.[979] The SLPP Secretariat was occupied by the RUF/AFRC forces and used as their own administrative secretariat. A few weeks after the establishment of this secretariat, some RUF/AFRC forces arrested a man, brought him to the secretariat and shot him dead, accusing him of being a Kamajor because he was wearing country clothes, the traditional attire of the Kamajors. A member of the RUF/AFRC forces cut off both his hands. In Kamara Chiefdom, RUF/AFRC forces also established checkpoints at the entry and exit points of Tombodu. They confiscated any items of value or of interest to them from people passing through the checkpoints. Also at this time, alleged CDF collaborators were executed.[980]

In Fiama chiefdom, RUF/AFRC harassment of civilians was initially minimal, as they only took food and only miners were harassed by RUF/AFRC forces for their diamond-containing gravel. However, shortly after, civilians were arrested and forced to wash the gravel for the combined forces. Furthermore, RUF/AFRC started visiting towns and villages where they took away food and people's personal effects, including jewellery and money. In June, RUF/AFRC forces from Yegeda attacked Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom). No wounding or fatalities were reported, but property including livestock, food items, clothes and medicine were taken. One month later, RUF/AFRC forces came back to Jagbwema from Koidu with two jeeps, opened fire and took items of the same nature as the previous month.

RUF/AFRC forces harassed authorities throughout the District, because they were suspected of being sympathisers with the Kabbah Government. For example, when news reached the RUF/AFRC forces in Koidu that a Paramount Chief had encouraged the reactivation of the CDF in his chiefdom, some forces were sent to capture him. He was not there, but his compound was looted and the Town Chief and one other young man were arrested, beaten and taken to Manjama, the RUF/AFRC military base in Soa Chiefdom. After this, panicked civilians fled to Guinea. In November and December, property was taken from the remaining civilians on a full-scale basis. The taking of property by RUF/AFRC forces took place in other areas, including Gbane and Gbane

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[977] See below in 1998 for details on the mining operations.

[978] Koidu town had previously been under the control of SLA forces and Executive Outcomes. However, by early 1997, Executive Outcomes had left and when the Coup happened, SLA positions turned into AFRC positions, which were then reinforced by RUF forces.

[979] This information was related in general terms and no further details were available.

[980] This information was related in general terms and no further details were available.

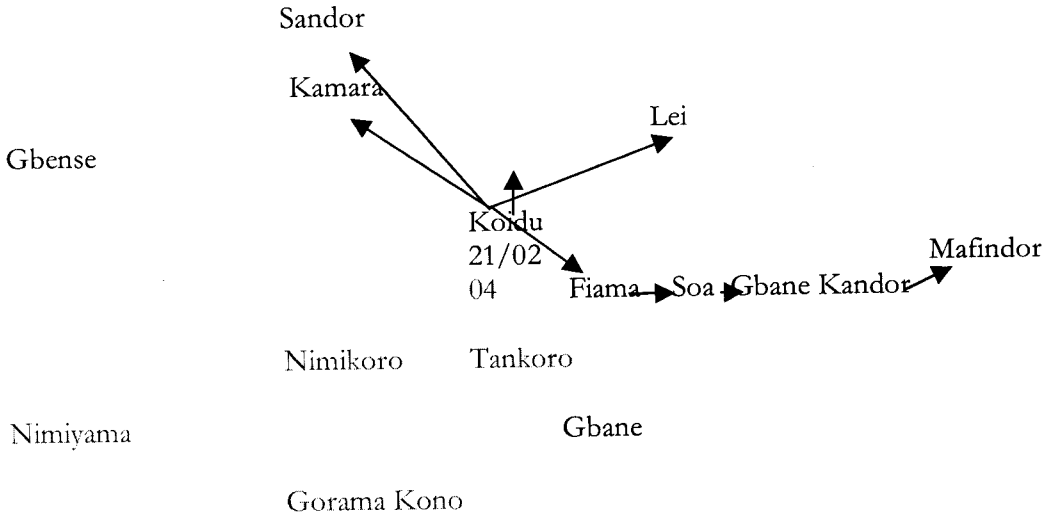


Kandor Chiefdoms, where Koardu Town (Gbane Kandor Chiefdom) was visited many times, mainly for livestock.

RUF/AFRC forces came again to Kangama (Gorama Kono Chiefdom) in June, taking advantage of the fact that the Kamajors had deserted their checkpoints during the night. Many civilians were captured, massive looting was carried out, houses were set on fire and civilians were forced to carry the stolen property to the RUF/AFRC base in Senehun (Tankoro Chiefdom). In August, the CDF launched a successful offensive on the RUF base in Senehun, as a result of which Gorama Kono Chiefdom was free of attacks for the rest of the year.

In Lei Chiefdom, two civilians accused of sabotage in Kombayende were shot to death on the orders of a member of the RUF/AFRC. In the same town, a woman was beaten with a bayonet and killed by a member of the AFRC for refusing to give him palm oil. There were also two separate incidences of rape in Lei Chiefdom, one in October when a woman was raped by three RUF/AFRC members in Kenema and one in December, when four members of the RUF/AFRC went to Senehun, requested a house in which to sleep and raped a woman.

h) Events in February - June 1998



Legend:
ECOMOG deployment
→ RUF/AFRC forces deployment

From January to February, violence against civilians and attacks on civilian property were rampant. An AFRC member shot and killed a young boy near the Koidu Central Mosque after the boy had helped him push his motorbike up the hill. Two days before ECOMOG drove the RUF/AFRC forces out of Freetown, a group of RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Branch Energy Lodge and Warehouse in Koidu and stole items valued at over hundreds of millions of Leones. On 12 February, "Operation pay yourself" was launched, according to which looting and confiscation of property were encouraged and almost all the shops in Koidu were looted. This operation lasted for a couple of days. Shortly after, the RUF/AFRC forces decided to undertake another looting operation, which they named "Operation House to House Search". In reaction to these operations, the youths mobilised and attacked the RUF/AFRC forces, succeeding in capturing some weapons. In addition, civilians launched their own operation, "Burn soldiers", where RUF/AFRC forces were chased in their hideouts and rubber tyres were placed around their necks and set on fire. All of these successive operations took place before retreating RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown arrived in Kono District.

CDF members from Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom) and Njaiama Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom) came to help maintain the security of Koidu and its environs. Youths surrendered the weapons they had captured from the RUF/AFRC forces to the CDF. ECOMOG forces were expected to arrive on 21 February, through the Yengema heliport. In Koidu, suspected collaborators of the RUF/AFRC forces were summarily executed by the CDF.

However, on 21 February, an RUF/AFRC convoy of 150 vehicles, which had been repelled from Freetown and had regrouped in Makeni, launched an attack on Koidu Town, entering the town

along the Makeni-Magburaka highway. Using light artillery as opposed to the poor logistics available to the Kamajors, the RUF/AFRC forces overpowered them during the day. The Kamajors had no choice but to retreat, mainly to Manjama and Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom). Accordingly, Koidu Town and its environs fell under the total control of the RUF/AFRC forces. The burning of the town began. Abduction, rape and looting were rampant in Koidu and in all the surrounding villages. As a result of this, civilians fled the town and its environs, leaving Koidu and Woardu almost like ghost towns.[981]

When they pulled out of Freetown, the RUF indicated that it was again in charge of the operations. RUF forces began issuing orders to AFRC members and to arrest and kill those who refused to carry out the orders. In the Provinces, the AFRC forces were outnumbered and some of them surrendered to ECOMOG forces. A senior RUF officer, probably RUF Battle Group Commander at that time, was renown for killing many AFRC members when RUF/AFRC forces were in Koidu. On one occasion, he ordered 15 AFRC members to go and destroy a bridge on the highway. As one of them refused to go for he was unarmed, he was shot and killed by this senior officer.

The capture of Koidu town was the prelude to RUF/AFRC forces spreading all over the District. No chiefdom was left untouched after February and the violence intensified after the news that President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah had been restored to power on 10 March 1998, especially when Operation "Kill all living things" was declared. The scale of violations committed was in particular very high between February and May/June, reaching unprecedented levels. What happened during this period (February –May/June) will be outlined below according to the different areas in which things were happening, rather than chronologically, due to the high level of activity in all areas of the District, although it should be borne in mind that these events happened concurrently.

West (Kamara, Gbense, Nimiyama, Nimikoro and Tankoro Chiefdoms)

Villages in Gbense Chiefdom were attacked and in late February, many civilians fled the town of Yardu, to the north of Koidu, where a well-known Reverend was killed.

On 17 March, over 30 RUF/AFRC forces discovered some people in their hiding place near Kuandor (Kamara Chiefdom). The commander, a Liberian, asked the people to cook for them. Afterwards, he decided to go to another area but two of his men asked him if they could to take with them the girls who were among the civilians. The commander apparently gave permission, as the two girls, aged 13 and 14, were taken away by these forces. On 21 March, the National Chairman of the SLPP who was considered as a father for the whole District, relocated to a hiding place outside Wordu village a few miles from Koidu. He was later discovered, stripped, beaten and tied up before being shot dead by six men belonging to the RUF/AFRC forces. A young girl who was under his guardianship was raped and taken to be the "wife" of their commander. Before leaving, the six men took one boy to carry the property they had just stolen. In Wordu, four young

[981] It is not totally clear when RUF/AFRC entered Koidu, as the attack may have taken place in early March 1998 (Chicago Tribune, 17 March 1998). Furthermore, information from Koinadugu District tends to suggest that RUF/AFRC forces reached Koidu from Koinadugu District. The poor conditions of the road network in Koinadugu District, compared to the good quality of the highway, which leads Makeni (Bombali District) to Koidu, through Magburaka (Tonkolili District), however suggest that the bulk of the RUF/AFRC forces reached Koidu from Makeni.



girls in their teens were captured by six RUF/AFRC men. After being ordered to cook, both the girls and some young men were severely beaten.

CDF members continued to confront RUF/AFRC forces and around 23 March, claimed to have recaptured Njaiama Sewafe and the Sewa Bridge (Nimiyama Chiefdom). In addition, they claimed to have rescued hundreds of civilians caught behind RUF/AFRC lines.[982]

Killings, indiscriminate amputations, the gorging out of eyes, the dropping of burning plastic into the eyes and the disembowelling of pregnant women were common practice in Koidu at that time. In April, six civilians were captured by RUF/AFRC forces in Yardu village (Gbense Chiefdom) and were frog-marched to Koidu Town. One of the commanders shot one of the captives six times in the legs. As the captive could not walk any more, the commander ordered his men to execute him. When they reached Koidu Town, they met a group of ULIMO members[983] who demanded that the captured men be divided and one group be assigned to them (ULIMO). After a confrontation between the RUF/AFRC forces and the ULIMO forces, the captured men were finally taken to the RUF commander's residence. One of the captured men was suspected of being a Donsos and was severely beaten, had his hands braced and was locked up with other civilians in a toilet being used as a cell. All of the men were subsequently released.

In April, the rate of killing, rape and mutilation increased as the RUF/AFRC forces had launched "Operation No Living Thing". Kamara Chiefdom, a diamond-rich area northwest of Koidu, was particularly affected at this time.

AFRC/RUF forces were in the bush in Kamara and Tankoro Chiefdoms and the high number of reports for this area reveal the intensity of the violence inflicted on civilians. There were many instances of killing, acts of rape, amputation and burning of houses. One RUF commander was notorious for the amputation of several hands and legs. He ordered the abduction of a large number of people in a mining area, two to three miles away from Tombodu, and ordered the amputations according to description called 'long sleeve' or 'short sleeve'. In another encounter, the same commander and his men conducted an intense raid, during which they all raped one woman and lacerated her vagina. Other incidents include shooting civilians during raids or patrols. Another RUF commander in the area conducted a raid, which resulted in the abduction of several men, women and children, who were locked a house, which was then set on fire.

At Yardu (Gbense Chiefdom) in early April, the RUF/AFRC commander ordered that three people be killed. Among those killed was an ex-worker at the Koidu Electricity House. Civilians were ordered to bury the bodies on 10 April 1998.

As news arrived that ECOMOG troops were advancing in the District and were based near Koidu, at Koakuima, two convoys of civilians, including men, women and children, moved from Yardu to

[982] BBC Online News Archive, 23 March 1998.

[983] Although ULIMO forces were officially disbanded in 1997, following the presidential elections in Liberia, it was alleged and stated by the ECOMOG commander in Sierra Leone that members of ULIMO-K were fighting alongside the RUF/AFRC forces: AFP, 21 April 1998. Some of these members would be arrested by ECOMOG forces and detained at the Pademba Road Prison in Freetown: Inter Press Service, 29 April 1998.

Motema town, eight miles south of Koidu Town on 22 and 24 April, arriving safely at their destination.

During this period, RUF/AFRC forces were continuously running from village to village, killing, raping and amputating people and burning villages, so that most of the civilians fled for the bush. One resident of Kuandor, who was returning to the town with some other people, ran into seven members of the RUF/AFRC forces, five of them carrying AK47s and two armed with cutlasses; one of them identified himself as trained fighter from Burkina Faso. The civilians were taken to Kuandor village and were asked to give the RUF/AFRC forces money and rice, which they did not have. The forces stripped one man to his underwear, laid him flat on the ground and beat him with a cutlass, which left marks on his back. They then poured some palm wine on his head and body, tied him up firmly and planned to take him out of the town later to kill him. Another civilian who was captured started crying and was hit hard on the head with a cutlass. One of the forces came back to the civilian who was tied up and told him since the civilians did not know his name, he would write it on his back with a razor blade, but was stopped from doing so by another member of the forces. All the RUF members and the civilians then moved on and RUF forces abducted more people in the nearby village. One of the RUF members suggested that they should leave the civilians behind, meaning they should be killed. However, the commander of the group allowed the two men from Kuandor to return to their town.[984]

In another incident that took place in April, 11 RUF/AFRC forces carrying guns and cutlasses captured three boys[985] who were going to Peyima (Kamara Chiefdom) to get salt and other items to bring back to their relatives, who were living in huts (also known as mansions) in the bush. The boys were forced to take the RUF/AFRC members to the mansions. The members covered the three boys with palm leaves, set fire to them and told the three boys to show them where all the property was kept, or they would stay in the fire until they were completely burnt. The boys showed them where the belongings were and the RUF/AFRC forces left the place taking with them the items they found. Before they left, they beat the three boys.

Also in April, in the village of Gbaima (Kamara Chiefdom), a group of RUF/AFRC members went to a farm near the village and asked the farmer to give them rice and palm oil. As the farmer only had rice to give, the RUF/AFRC members pierced his feet, passed a rope through the hole thus created and tied him up firmly. They then set fire to the palm fruits and threw the farmer into the fire. The man died nine days later. Violence was also inflicted on the other five inhabitants of the farm when the RUF/AFRC forces set fire to an empty five-gallon container and dropped the melting rubber on the five people until the container had burnt completely.

During the same month, two civilians who left Gbaima to go to Tombodu to check the condition of their houses ran into seven RUF/AFRC members, who tied their hands and told them to show them the way where they came from. As they approached Gbaima, the armed men opened fire on the civilians they met in the village, killing one old man, whose stomach was cut open and whose intestines were tied on a stick. Another boy whose age was not specified was also cut with a bladed weapon. The RUF/AFRC forces then conducted a house-to-house search and the two civilians they

[984] What happened to the remaining abductees was not specified.
[985] The age of the three boys could not be ascertained from the records.



had previously arrested were ordered to gather all the food items they had taken. Before leaving for Tombodu, the RUF/AFRC forces set all the houses of the village on fire. On their way to Tombodu, the seven RUF/AFRC forces and two abducted civilians passed by the village of Wordu, where one of the armed men went to a house where a blind man was living. When he came back to his colleagues, he told them he had "finished" the man. Two boys they met on their way to Tombodu were also forced to join them. When they arrived at Tombodu, the civilians saw a body with its stomach cut open lying on the street that led the RUF/AFRC forces' headquarters. When they arrived at the headquarters, which was full of a variety of types of weapons including rifles, light artillery and bladed weapons, the commander ordered his men to tie the civilians (who were by then 14 in number), and lay them on the ground, one person on top of another. A mattress was then put on top of them and lit. One of the civilians, who kicked the mattress away as it started to burn him, was hit severely with a machete by the commander. The commander also accused him of being one of the youths who had burnt RUF/AFRC forces in February and hit his right hand with a machete, although it was not chopped off. When they saw this, the other civilians tried to escape and started running but were killed when the commander ordered his men to shoot them.

During this period, RUF/AFRC forces would burn part of the town of Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) each time an ECOMOG jet plane flew overhead. On one occasion, over 50 civilians, men, women and children were locked up in a house at Yusufuya Road and the house was set on fire. Cells in the headquarters were used to detain civilians, men and women, some of whom were later killed. The commander used a mined out crater near the lorry park in Tombodu to dump bodies of the people killed in the town.

In another incident, a man from Gbondu village (upper part of Kamara Chiefdom) was captured by some RUF/AFRC forces, who forced him to carry their load to a village in Sandor Chiefdom. Once the load was carried, the civilian was told to go back to his town. As he was returning, he met with another group of RUF/AFRC forces who cut off one of his hands. The man reached Gbondu and shortly after, the population decided to leave the village to go to Koakuima, where ECOMOG was stationed.

Around this period, a District Emergency Task Force was created by civilians who had returned to their villages. This Task Force was mandated to assess the destruction of their villages and to help the local population. Each chiefdom was represented in the Task Force.[986]

ECOMOG had arrived in Njaiama Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom) in early April 1998.[987] While their arrival was characterised by tensions with members of the CDF from Kono District, since ECOMOG came with some members of the CDF from Punduru (Gorama Mende Chiefdom, in the north of Kenema District), the advancing ECOMOG troops were welcomed. While in Njaiama

[986] AFP, 16 and 17 June 1998.

[987] Following the intervention in Freetown, further inland operations were carried out by the specially designed 24th ECOMOG Brigade Infantry: Brig. Gen. R. A. Adeshina: *The Reversed Victory: Story of Nigerian Military Intervention in Sierra Leone*, Heinemann Educational Books (Nigeria) Plc., p 29. Members of this brigade deployed in the country and after capturing Makeni in March 1998, they proceeded further North to Kono District and arrived in Njaiama Sewafe around 11 April, where they met their colleagues already deployed since early April. It appears that the first batch of ECOMOG forces who deployed in Njaiama Sewafe waited for troops from the 24th Brigade Infantry before advancing further to Koidu.



Sewafe, the ECOMOG Commander-in-Chief paid them a visit and gave the order to advance on Koidu Town. Thus, a combined troop of ECOMOG and Donsos moved to Koidu on 12 April on foot through the jungle, encountering an RUF/AFRC attack at Yigbeda, during which many ECOMOG members were killed. Nevertheless, they continued their journey and within one day, captured Yengema, Motema and Small Lebanon[988] (all located on the highway), after having battled for a few hours with some RUF/AFRC forces. The 5th Battalion was then deployed at Motema. The ECOMOG and CDF forces launched their first attack on Koidu Town but were repelled by RUF/AFRC forces and went back to Small Lebanon. However, ECOMOG and CDF forces launched a second attack and were able to overpower the RUF/AFRC forces, who fled the town.[989] ECOMOG forces also deployed at Koakuima where, as mentioned earlier, many civilians from the surrounding chiefdoms had come to find refuge, as the ECOMOG presence appeared to represent greater safety.[990]

RUF/AFRC forces continued to stage ambushes and around 14 April, three buses carrying ECOMOG reinforcements and CDF members fell in one of those ambushes near Yigbeda (Nimikoro Chiefdom). Some ECOMOG members were killed, others wounded and two BBC reporters were killed while trying to find refuge in the bush. The buses were later met by some of the ECOMOG forces of the 24th Brigade infantry en route to Makeni and from there to Freetown to brief the Task Force Commander. Those ECOMOG forces loaded their dead and the wounded colleagues onto the truck and continued their journey to Makeni. Shortly after, they fell in another RUF/AFRC ambush but managed to escape the ambush without any fatalities and made their way to Njaiama Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom).[991]

CDF forces equipped with arms and ammunition given to them by ECOMOG troops stationed at Njaiama Sewafe attacked Yardu (Gbense Chiefdom) in April and overcame the RUF/AFRC forces. Many RUF/AFRC members were killed during that attack, while two died by drowning into the river. In late April, ECOMOG forces in the District received reinforcements, who deployed along the Njaiama Sewafe-Koidu highway, where they faced some ambushes staged by some RUF/AFRC forces. Assisted by an air campaign, they cleared the highway and reopened it in early May.[992]

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988 Small Lebanon is a town south of Koidu.

989 It is not totally clear whether ECOMOG forces launched one or two attacks on Koidu before capturing it. In any case, these actions were carried out within a short period of time. RUF/AFRC forces, before retreating from the town, inflicting heavy casualties on civilians, killing some and burning houses. It was alleged that around 2.000 civilians were held hostages by the RUF/AFRC forces, in readiness for the expected ECOMOG attack. Inter Press Service, 16 April 1998.

990 However, unlike the people who had escaped Gbense Chiefdom for Koakuima, those who had found refuge in Sandor Chiefdom and the CDF, who had also decided to move to Koakuima, fell into the hands of RUF/AFRC forces in Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) and a lot of them were killed while others had their limbs amputated.

991 Adeshina, *op cit*, pp 62-3; see also Associated Press Worldstream, 18 April 1998.

992 Former members of the AFRC regime who had surrendered were part of this deployment, re-trained and incorporated by ECOMOG: Adeshina, *op cit*, pp 66-7. This deployment of former AFRC members frightened the population, who suspected they may still be loyal to the ousted AFRC leader: AFP, 16 June 1998.

A Nigerian contingent of ECOMOG was also sent to Torgbombu, an important town in Gorama Kono Chiefdom.[993] They came with heavy artillery including Alpha Jets, tanks, mortar bombs and helicopter gunships; shortly after their deployment at Torgbombu, they attacked RUF/AFRC positions and deployed in Jaiama and Bumpe (Nimikoro Chiefdom) together with members of the CDF. The ECOMOG forces encouraged people to come out of their hiding places, so civilians started to come back to the headquarter town of Jaiama.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked ECOMOG positions at Jaiama (Nimikoro chiefdom), where they were repelled, and at Motema, where they were also repelled, but not before they had killed 24 civilians in a house situated near the national Petroleum Station at the Motema Junction along the main Freetown highway.[994] Those 24 civilians were later buried in one mass grave by the house of a retired senior superintendent of the Sierra Leone Police. Several attempts were also made by the combined RUF/AFRC forces to attack ECOMOG forces based at Koakuima but they all failed.

On 10 June, two days after the announcement over the radio of the death of the Nigerian President, RUF/AFRC forces made an attempt to attack Koidu, at that time under ECOMOG control. Although this attempt continued until the end of the month, the RUF/AFRC forces did not succeed in recapturing the town.[995]

North-west (Sandor Chiefdom)

After taking Koidu in late February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces arrived in Sandor Chiefdom and organised themselves into different groups, namely food finding groups and mining groups. A lot of stolen property came to Sandor from Koidu, as Sandor Chiefdom was a commercial centre. In this chiefdom, they were based in Yormandu, Tefeya and Kayima, from where they controlled various chiefdoms in Koinadugu District.

AFRC/RUF forces were engaged in large-scale mining in the south of Sandor Chiefdom, in towns including Yormandu, Tefeya, Bakidu, Woidala and Bendu. The RUF/AFRC forces needed people to work in the mines and to find food, so a lot of civilians were abducted for these purposes. Many people who were captured were divided into groups, namely tripping, extraction and washing, and forced to work in the mines all day long. Mining workers were flogged, killed or burnt to death. Sick or tired workers were either killed or driven away after a severe beating or flogging. Mining workers caught stealing diamonds were burnt to death using a five-gallon container for carrying petrol or palm wine or oil. Physical violence, mutilation and killing were rampant. At Tefeya and Sandeya for example, RUF/AFRC forces killed civilians and amputated the ears and hands of others.[996] Promotion was given to RUF/AFRC members according to the results of their missions. As an example, when members, often child soldiers, were asked to burn houses and they burnt more than they had been told to, they were given rank promotion.

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[993] It seems that this contingent of ECOMOG came from Kenema while the other one who deployed in towns alongside the highway that leads to Koidu came from Freetown. It is likely that those deployments took place at the same time.

[994] The attack on Jaima took place shortly after ECOMOG deployed whereas the one on Motema must have taken place weeks later.

[995] Adeshina, *op cit*, pp 89-93.

[996] AFP, 17 April 1998.



All over the chiefdom, RUF/AFRC forces began killing people in the bush, mainly for food as their stores began to run out in April. "Where is the salt, where is the Maggi, where is the pepper" were common questions asked of civilians, who would be killed if they were unable to provide the RUF/AFRC forces with those items. For example, in Kayima area at a place called Nakor, six people were killed for refusing to give food and other items. During the same period, in Kayima area, 13 people were put in a farm, which was then set on fire.[997]

In April, an internal dispute arose between RUF/AFRC forces at Yormandu and some went to Tegbadu, three miles east of Yormandu.[998]

As they needed civilians to undertake various activities, the RUF/AFRC forces devised different ways to bring civilians out of the bushes. On one occasion, RUF/AFRC forces sent the message to the bush, in particular nearby Yiffin (Koinadugu District) where civilians from Sandor Chiefdom had fled earlier, that a former NPRC Defence Minister and son of Kayima had come to Kayima and had called people to come out of the bushes.[999] On another occasion in May, one civilian leaving the bush around Masundu and heading for Guinea with his family felt into a RUF/AFRC ambush. The RUF/AFRC forces took them back to Masundu and the commander told him that if he would bring people out of the bushes, he would be appointed Town Chief or Town Commander. This man persuaded some other people to come out of the bushes and they started to brush the town and to repair damaged houses. A civilian was appointed at the G5 position. RUF/AFRC forces would then come regularly to the town to ask for food. Civilians were not killed but were forced to produce the requested items and to work for the RUF/AFRC forces. To refuse to work would lead to flogging. It appeared that Masundu was one of the first towns to be rebuilt in Sandor Chiefdom. This situation continued throughout 1998 and 1999 until Donsos came to fight the RUF/AFRC forces.[1000]

However, this collaboration was not mirrored in other areas of the chiefdom, where women were raped and taken as RUF/AFRC "wives". Young girls were raped in front of their parents and were subsequently captured to carry loads. In April, one man was killed after he begged for mercy for his daughter, who was being raped in front of him.[1001]

At Yormandu, the burning of five-gallon containers to drip the melted plastic onto civilians was rampant. People were flogged up to 200, 300 and even 400 lashes all over their body, mainly when they refused to work, or said they were tired, or were caught stealing minor things. However, people caught stealing diamonds had a separate treatment and were burnt to death using a five-gallon container. In one specific incident that took place at Yormandu, one man who stole a diamond,

997 The precise location of this event was not specified in the records.

998 No further information on the reason of the dispute but also stated in general terms, it illustrates, as other similar incidents in Kono District and in other Districts that following the retreat from Freetown, internal fight appeared inside the combined RUF/AFRC forces.

999 This information revealed to be false but anyway, did not have the expected results.

1000 When they came to Masundu, probably in 2000, the hunters called together some civilians and molested a lot of them, accusing them of having collaborated with the RUF/AFRC forces.

1001 No detail on the location of this incident could be obtained from the records.



called "Government property", was stripped naked and had melted rubber dropped on his body until he died.

As a result of these atrocities, civilians fled in large numbers to Yiffin (Koinadugu District), which saw a massive influx of people starting in late April. Indeed, throughout 1998, civilians were going on and off in the bush, to Guinea and to Koinadugu District.

Members of the CDF, together with a large number of SLA forces,[1002] equipped with arms and ammunition provided through the ECOMOG helicopter fought RUF/AFRC forces in Sandor Chiefdom. As a result, sometime in June, RUF/AFRC forces retreated to Koinadugu District. Other groups of hunters under the command of different commanders were active in the north and north-east of the chiefdom. RUF/AFRC forces, however, regularly attacked those SLA and CDF forces, often by using ambushes. In fact, ambushes were widely practiced by RUF/AFRC forces, particularly after SLA forces together with CDF members attacked them. In mid 1998, a group of between 30 to 35 civilians fell into an RUF/AFRC ambush three miles south of Kayima. Eighteen of them were beaten to death at the Yormandu Kayima and Tefeya Junction, as it was said that RUF/AFRC forces did not want to alert SLA forces by using their guns. The remaining civilians were taken to Baudu, the first town after Kayima on the road to Yormandu, where six of them were killed. The remaining people were taken away and their fate remains unknown.

Gbane Chiefdom

In Gbane Chiefdom, RUF/AFRC forces forced civilians to work for them, mining diamond and gold and harvesting cash crops like coffee and cocoa, which the RUF/AFRC forces were using to get arms and ammunitions.[1003] By the end of March, the chiefdom was virtually empty, as people fled the villages to go to the bush and to Guinea.

South-east (Fiama, Soa, Gbane Kandor and Mafindor Chiefdoms)

When RUF/AFRC forces dislodged CDF forces from Koidu in February 1998, these CDF forces retreated mainly to Kainkordu and Manjama in Soa Chiefdom. Shortly after, RUF/AFRC forces launched attacks on Fiama and Soa Chiefdoms, in particular in those areas where the CDF forces were concentrated. Indeed, in Soa Chiefdom, Donsos had six bases[1004] in the chiefdom, their headquarters being in Kainkordu.

On 11 March 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the headquarter town of Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC forces, coming from Koidu in military and civilian jeeps, entered the town firing indiscriminately. More than 70 houses were burnt and the town was massively looted. During the night, the RUF/AFRC forces abducted three people, including the Town Chief, who were all later killed; on 12 March 1998, the same group also killed the Town Chief of Gbetema. On 24 March 1998, RUF/AFRC forces coming from Jagbwema attacked Yeanoh, shooting and killing many people.

1002 The report mentions that the SLA forces were composed of 846 men.

1003 The records talk about the cash crops being swapped for arms and ammunitions without giving details as to where this exchange was taking place, whether it was taking place at the Guinean border.

1004 The Donsos had 100 men deployed at Kainkordu, 25 at Kuandor, 25 at Fuero, 25 at Sukudu, 50 at Manjama and 15 at Medu.



When they heard that the Kamajors and Donsos were in Soa Chiefdom, at Gbanmandu, north of the chiefdom headquarter of Kainkordu, the RUF/AFRC forces moved to Soa Chiefdom. On their way to Kainkordu, this group of RUF/AFRC forces fought with another group of RUF/AFRC forces, each of them thinking they were fighting with CDF forces. A number of the forces were killed during that encounter, but later, both groups[1005] joined forces to advance on Kainkordu. In Kainkordu, the RUF/AFRC forces fought with the CDF forces and both fighting factions suffered heavy fatalities, with no reported civilian fatalities. The RUF/AFRC forces then headed for Manjama, two miles from Kainkordu, where many civilians were killed. Those two attacks on Kainkordu and Manjama created panic among the civilians and a lot of them decided to flee for Guinea. This panic was intensified by the rumour that the route through Kainkordu was being used by some RUF/AFRC forces going to Liberia[1006] through Kailahun.

The same RUF/AFRC forces then proceeded further east towards Gbane Kandor Chiefdom and, on 27 March, launched simultaneous attacks on Bendu, Gbangbandor, Dugbor, Gbaidu, Dunamao and Koardu (all in Gbane Kandor Chiefdom). During this wave of attacks, several civilians, including men, women and children, were abducted, women were sexually abused and many houses were looted and burnt down. In Gbangbandor, for example, one woman was sexually assaulted and beaten to death. These attacks made the civilians leave the chiefdom for Guinea. However, in order to find food, civilians returned from time to time to the chiefdom and an unspecified number of civilians were abducted or killed. Donsos from Mafindor Chiefdom to the east of Gbane Kandor Chiefdom regrouped to try to stop the RUF/AFRC advance and agreed that the three sections of the chiefdom should each contribute one cow that would be sold in Guinea in order to buy ammunition there.[1007]

RUF/AFRC forces continued further east and on 18 May 1998 attacked villages on the road leading to the headquarter town of Kamiendor (Mafindor Chiefdom). The RUF/AFRC forces burnt many houses at Densenbadu, Fandu, Gbenkoro, Kamiendor Kormadu, Sandia and Gbendema, where the CDF base was also burnt down. At Fandu and Gbendema, an unspecified number of civilians were abducted. Following these attacks, the RUF/AFRC forces returned towards Koidu and the dislodged Donsos from Soa and Mafindor Chiefdoms went to Guinea.

Lei Chiefdom (east of the District, at the border with Guinea)

In February 1998, a convoy of RUF/AFRC forces with 18 vehicles and three trucks full of arms and ammunition arrived in Lei Chiefdom, in the east of Kono District. The RUF/AFRC forces attacked towns including Yarawadu, Wanjama, Senehun and Kenema before some of the senior commanders departed, leaving the bulk of the forces stationed at Konbayendeh, in the centre of the chiefdom on the road that leads to the headquarter town of Saima. At Senehun, located in the same section as

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[1005] While one group was coming from Koidu Town (and then Jagbwema in Fiama Chiefdom), the other group came from Pendembu, Kailahun District.

[1006] It is reported that the rumour also said that Johnny Paul Koroma was among those forces. Other reports mention that as early as February, RUF/AFRC forces passed through Soa to reach Kailahun. Furthermore, this information has to be read in conjunction with the developments of Lei Chiefdom, where it was reported that Johnny Paul Koroma arrived in March and then left the Chiefdom, leaving behind him some troops.

[1007] It is not specified who these Donsos bought their cartridges from in Guinea.

Kissitown, RUF/AFRC forces killed four civilians coming out of the bush, including two children. One of the adults was killed with a bayonet.

While in Konbayendeh, the RUF/AFRC forces started raiding surrounding villages, indiscriminately killing and mutilating people and burning houses, as a result of which people left their villages to go to the bush. However, the RUF/AFRC forces also started chasing the civilians in the bush. In one incident that took place in a bush around Kissitown, over 20 members of the RUF/AFRC, all in military uniforms, found around 70 civilians in their hiding place, gathered them all and started killing them, shooting some and mutilating others with machetes. Realising that those RUF/AFRC forces were going to kill them all, the remaining nine civilians decided to run away. The RUF/AFRC forces opened fire, killing five. Before leaving, the RUF/AFRC forces took 11 girls with them.

In Kissitown, RUF/AFRC forces established a training camp for abducted civilians, called "Superman Camp". Civilians were trained, given weapons and sent out to different parts of the chiefdom and the District. Some senior members of the RUF/AFRC forces had once earlier warned their forces in Lei Chiefdom not to kill civilians but once they are captured, to bring them to the camp for them to be trained so that the number of their forces would increase, in anticipation of their planned attack on Freetown. On one occasion, 30 civilians who were abducted and trained for one week in the camp were sent to Boroma town, north of Kombayende, with 15 "old" RUF/AFRC forces, for it was reported that civilians were in this area. One young boy who was hiding in a garden threw a grenade at the RUF/AFRC forces who had come to the town. However, the young boy was captured and cut into seven different pieces; 13 other people were also killed. On their way back to the camp, the RUF/AFRC forces captured 100 civilians who were on their way to Guinea. Eighty of them were sent to Koidu for mining, some who tried to escape were killed and two women were amputated when they refused to have sexual intercourse with two of the RUF/AFRC members.

In March, inhabitants of Kenema, a town located in the east of the chiefdom, shouted "welcome back to Sierra Leone", referring to the news of the restoration to power of the President, when they saw a plane flying over their town. A few hours later, they saw civilians coming in the village with bundles on their heads, which led them to go in the bush. Shortly after, they heard gunshots from different directions in the village and saw the whole village being set on fire by RUF/AFRC forces. Other villages on the highway that leads to Siama, the headquarter town, were also set on fire. At Kombayende, five people were killed and two were amputated. On the same day, the RUF/AFRC forces proceeded further north to Kundundu in the north of the chiefdom, where eight people were shot dead and two had their legs amputated with an axe. Among the eight people who died, one had his tongue cut out with a knife. Another man was hit to death with a bayonet.

On 10 March, RUF/AFRC forces came back to Senehun, set fire to the houses that had not been burnt earlier and captured six people, one of them suspected of being a Kamajor commander. Three of those captives were killed with an AK47, one was beaten to death while another one had a blue rope tied around his neck and was dragged along the ground until he died. The sixth captive, who was suspected of being a Kamajor commander, was told by the RUF/AFRC commander that he was not yet dead because they did not know yet the kind of punishment they would give him. From Senehun, they went to Kenema, where they shot dead seven people before entering the town and



captured a young man who tried to hide in a garden. One of the RUF/AFRC members was asked by the others to take a big stone and to smash the hands of the young captured man. Before leaving for another village called Samie, they burnt the remaining houses.[1008] At Samie, a man was shot three times in the head with an AK47 because he could not give the RUF/AFRC forces the location of the hiding place for the people of the village. The RUF/AFRC forces also poured petrol they found in the village on two thatch houses and set them on fire. The fire spread to other thatch houses and, eventually, 11 of them burnt down. As it was getting dark, the RUF/AFRC forces, together with the last captive they had, went back to Kombayende.[1009]

After President Kabbah's restoration to power in March 1998, two points for killing people called "commaflag" were established in Kombayende, a commercial town. One of these points was located at the centre of the town and the other one on Mambo Bridge, the last bridge leading to Kissitown in the west. On one occasion,[1010] the RUF/AFRC force commander who had established the commaflag system sent some members to arrest civilians in and around the town to check whether they were supporters of Tejan Kabbah Government. Thirty-one people were brought to the commaflag site. The commander addressed the captured people and told them that Lei Chiefdom was criticising their action, the proof being that people had fled to the bush. The commander called on one of his members, who had recently been promoted to Captain because he "knew how to kill people", to kill those who had been brought to the commaflag site. On that day, 10 of the captured people were shot before the operation was halted because it was getting dark. The remaining people were locked up in a room and brought back to the site the next morning. One of the captured men was given an AK47 and told to fire at one of the other captives. He did so and after one shot, the man died. Then, the commander gave the gun to another captive, but he needed three shots to kill another of the captives, so the commander told him that he had "failed the exam" and shot him. This operation continued until only eight of the captives had survived by "passing the test". They were then recognised as Junta II[1011] and were forced to kill people at the commaflag points. In another killing that took place at a commaflag point, three out of eight people who had been abducted and sent to the Superman Camp at Kissitown for training were arrested as they were trying to escape. The abductees were brought to Kombayende and killed at the Mambo Bridge commaflag, after which their bodies were thrown under the bridge.

When the commander in charge of Kombayende sent some of his men in search of food, those RUF/AFRC forces found nine people themselves were looking for food for their families. As the nine people did not answer the question of the commander of the group who asked them where he could find other civilians, the commander took the G3 rifle that was on his back and fired at two of the civilians, breaking their legs. As the people still refused to say anything, the commander killed the two wounded civilians. As the remaining seven civilians still refused to reveal where other people could be found, the commander amputated their hands with a rusty cutlass that the RUF/AFRC

1008 It is highly likely that this event is related to the one described above when RUF/AFRC forces came to Kenema after people welcomed back the President.

1009 On the way back, an unidentified fighting faction opened fire on them, which allowed the captive to escape.

1010 Although the date was not specified, it can be inferred from the record that this event happened between March and June.

1011 Junta II refers to these people who were enrolled in the RUF/AFRC forces following the retreat from Freetown.



forces had found in the village. The RUF/AFRC forces then went to Soama, a few miles from the chiefdom headquarter of Siama, where they killed one man who refused to join them.

Rumours of imminent attacks in Guinea were rampant. However, no attack within the Guinean territory was reported for 1998 (nor 1999). It appeared that RUF/AFRC forces would have launched attacks on the Guinean territory earlier had they been larger in number, which they were unable to achieve since most of the civilians had already fled to refugee camps in Guinea.

On 8 April, RUF/AFRC forces moved from Kundundu and headed for Koidu Town. On their way, they passed by Kenema, where they hit an old man on his neck and his back with a bladed weapon for failing to take them to any civilian hiding places, as a result of which he died.[1012] Two other people were shot and killed at Kenema on that day. Before leaving for Koidu, the RUF/AFRC forces looted the village.

In April, seven men captured by RUF/AFRC forces in military uniforms in Sandor Chiefdom were taken to the Njai stream that separates Sandor and Lei Chiefdoms. Six of the men were tied with a blue plastic rope and were shot in the head. A heavy stone was then tied to each of them and they were thrown into the stream. The seventh person was not killed; the commander of the RUF/AFRC forces declared that he was not going to kill this person, because he was a Christian, as the commander himself was. Rather, the commander ordered one of his men to mutilate the man's 10 fingers, as a result of which his left hand was broken.

RUF/AFRC forces returned to Kundundu towards the end of the month in search of food and civilians. Some of the people they found in the bush were killed while others were taken away for manpower. On 1 May, in the bush around Kenema, RUF/AFRC forces captured civilians, killing two men with a bayonet, one of them being the Town Regent Chief. Those who were captured were told to form two lines, one for men and one for women and children. The commander told his men to choose a woman each for the night, himself selecting a girl who was 14 years old. Three women who refused to go with the armed men were stripped naked and sexually abused with gun barrels before being killed. RUF/AFRC forces settled temporarily in Kundundu.

At Faokor in the south of the chiefdom during the same period, RUF/AFRC forces beat to death a blacksmith allegedly because he was a Kamajor, because they had found two empty cartridge shells in his forge. Twenty-one people were also killed that day, one of them being beaten unconscious and burnt to ashes.

RUF/AFRC forces attacked Gbonkongbor a few miles from the Guinean border in the northeast of the chiefdom with heavy firing in May, during which eight civilians were killed and many people fled. The RUF/AFRC forces then sent young men to bring back the cattle and ordered six women to cook for them. After eating, they left the village with the six women and able-bodied men. On 8 June, another village near the Guinean border was attacked. Some civilians, including men and women, were captured while others were put in a house and burnt.

[1012] This incident is reported in another record to have taken place when RUF/AFRC reached Lei in February. As this information could not be reconciled, it has to be assumed that this event took place between February and April.



i) Events in the second half of 1998

Between June and the end of the year, very few incidents are reported.[1013] At this time, most of the people of Kono District had fled to Guinea[1014] or into the bush and a lot of them were forced to work for the RUF/AFRC forces in the mining areas.

In September 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom) and its environs. They raided the town and other villages, including civilian hiding places. Many civilians, including women and children, were killed and abducted during those attacks and Jagbwema was set on fire. As heavy bombardment could be heard, it was assumed that RPGs were used during those attacks, although it has since been revealed that RUF/AFRC forces had a tactic to produce sounds which are similar to those made by RPGs.[1015] The Donsos went moved to that area to fight the RUF/AFRC forces and after firing few gunshots to test the strength of the Donsos, the RUF/AFRC forces intensified the shooting. As a result of the heavy shelling from both parties, 32 houses were burnt down.

Around the end of October, RUF/AFRC forces attacked and killed civilians at Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom) before being engaged by ECOMOG and CDF forces, which left 83 RUF/AFRC members dead. This attack on Tombodu took place in the aftermath of the passing of a death sentence on the RUF leader for treason.[1016]

On 5 November, RUF/AFRC forces reached Hindimi (Lei Chiefdom), where they found 62 people who had returned from Guinea to harvest their crops. The civilians were separated by gender and told to give the RUF/AFRC forces the produce of the harvest. As they were reluctant, the two first people of the line were shot and killed, which prompted the civilians to give them the 216 bags of rice they had harvested. Women were forced to cook for the RUF/AFRC forces. The following day, the RUF/AFRC forces left the village together with captives who were forced to carry the bags of rice; those bags they were unable to take, as there were not sufficient people to carry them, were burnt. When they arrived in Kombayende, the men were separated from the women; this was the last time they saw each other. The men were later taken to Koidu for mining. After mining during the day, they were locked in a container at night.

On 20 December 1998, a fierce attack was launched on Koidu by RUF/AFRC forces, who were able to dislodge the ECOMOG forces based there. This attack came from the bush and was planned from different directions. Prior to this attack, RUF/AFRC forces had regrouped in Buedu (Kailahun District), which was an RUF stronghold throughout the war, and moved with three to four battalions to Kono. RUF/AFRC forces were already in Kono District and another group of RUF/AFRC forces were deployed at Njaiama Sewafe (Nimiyama Chiefdom) to set an ambush for

1013 This period corresponds to the rainy season, during which heavy rains often paralyse movement. In Sierra Leone, the rainy season runs mostly from May to August.

1014 By April, around 90,000 civilians had crossed the border to Guinea since the start of the ECOMOG offensive against the RUF/AFRC in Kono and Kailahun Districts: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 16 - 30 April 1998.

1015 RUF/AFRC forces used empty five-gallon containers, with their lids on, which they hit with a stick to emulate the sound of RPG fire.

1016 AFP, 26 October 1998.



the retreating ECOMOG forces. Four days prior to this attack, RUF/AFRC forces had attacked Small Lebanon and dislodged ECOMOG forces; ECOMOG troops based at Koakuima, Motema and Bumpe were also dislodged. In Koidu and Koakuima, RUF/AFRC forces killed many ECOMOG and CDF forces, as well as civilians.[1017] At Koakuima, the retreating ECOMOG forces left behind them a lot of arms and ammunition, which were captured by the RUF/AFRC forces. Retreating ECOMOG forces fell in the ambush staged by RUF/AFRC forces at Njaiama Sewafe and suffered heavy casualties.

RUF/AFRC forces then attacked the last ECOMOG battalion in the District, namely the 197th Battalion redeployed in Njaiama (Nimikoro Chiefdom).[1018] After a fierce battle, ECOMOG repelled the RUF/AFRC forces and asked for reinforcements from Bo. However, the ECOMOG commander was instead advised to withdraw his troops from Njaiama. On 30 December, the ECOMOG commander left Nimikoro Chiefdom with CDF members and thousands of civilians, as ECOMOG did not want to leave the civilians in the hands of the RUF/AFRC forces. They took the road to Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District) in the south of Kono District. On their way, they fell into two ambushes laid by RUF/AFRC forces. After the first ambush, ECOMOG forces led the convoy, which allowed the RUF/AFRC forces to abduct hundreds of civilians from the rear end of the convoy during the second ambush.

Prior to this attack on Koidu, a number of troop movements were noted in the surrounding areas in Sandor Chiefdom and in Koinadugu District. In fact, in late November, RUF/AFRC forces retook control of Sandor Chiefdom and civilians at Yiffin (Koinadugu District) observed many ECOMOG forces retreating from Kono District.

At Yormandu, some RUF/AFRC forces told the civilians that were their captives that they would continue the fight until Freetown and that they got the necessary logistics, arms and ammunition from Kailahun District. Indeed, this attack on Koidu was the catalyst for the RUF/AFRC forces to proceed further south, capturing more towns in the District and the country[1019] and to enter Freetown on 6 January 1999,[1020] using civilians from Gbane to carry their arms and ammunition.

Following the attack on Koidu, civilians and hunters decided to leave Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom) for Yiffin and Alikalia (Koinadugu District). However, they fell into an RUF/AFRC ambush on 28 December and a lot of them were captured. Over 170 of those captured were taken to Yiffin. One of the captured hunters was given a letter that requested the hunters to come out of the bush and join the RUF/AFRC forces. He was also told that if he did not convince the hunters to join them, he would be killed. The man saved his life by explaining that he only knew people in Kayima

[1017] It cannot be inferred from the reports whether these forces were killed within the course of the battle or after being captured.

[1018] Prior to this wave of attacks, this battalion was deployed at Njala and Wanjama (Nimikoro Chiefdom). When the ECOMOG position at Bumpe fell into the hands of the RUF/AFRC forces, the decision was taken to establish a blocking position at Njaiama, on the highway that leaves Bumpe to the south of the District: Adeshina, *op cit*, p 128.

[1019] See the general overview and the analysis for Kailahun, Tonkolili, Bombali and Port Loko Districts and the Western Area.

[1020] See the factual analysis for Tonkolili, Makeni and Port Loko District and the Western Area.

(Sandor Chiefdom). Some of the RUF/AFRC forces together with their captives thus headed for Kayima and on their way, four of the captives were killed for their belongings at Gbenekoro.[1021]

j) Events in 1999

On 1 January 1999, the RUF/AFRC forces that had killed four captives at Gbenekoro proceeded towards Kayima (Sandor Chiefdom), together with their remaining captives. On their way, the captives saw the body of somebody they knew and they learnt he was killed because he answered rudely to the RUF/AFRC forces. The captives were told to take orders from a child commander and were reminded that their lives were of no value for them. When they arrived at the RUF/AFRC forces' commander's compound, they saw one Fullah[1022] man being killed for refusing to give up his sheep. They were introduced to the RUF/AFRC commander as his "slaves and servants" and were forced to do petty jobs, mainly going on food finding missions for the commander. A man was appointed to the G5 position, to look after the civilians' affairs/interests. A Formation Assembly was set up where every morning, civilians were told to pray and announcements for the rest of the day were made. The establishment of these G5 committees not only took place in Kono, but also in other Districts, as a means of rationalising the use of civilians by making them participate in administrative matters. Civilians appointed to such positions could hardly refuse the appointment, because a refusal would soon be followed by a severe flogging. In Sandor Chiefdom, civilians were required to follow rules imposed on them by the RUF/AFRC forces, which included no raping, no taking of civilian's property and no stealing ("Jar Jar").[1023]

However, the establishment of such committees and the rationalisation of the use of civilians did not stop the harassment and violence continued to be committed against civilians. At Kayima, for example, sometime after the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, civilians presented complaints to the top commander in charge at Koakuima. When they came from this meeting, they were threatened and were punished with flogging and being forced to go on food finding missions. The commander at Koakuima sent some RUF/AFRC members to investigate the matter, although the results and consequences of this investigation are unknown. Furthermore, five civilians were killed and burnt to ashes in a bush near Neakor, west of Kayima. Following this incident and a complaint made by a relative of one of the civilians killed, the commander at Kayima recalled that no one should kill civilian and if such a crime was committed, it should be reported to the G5.

On 10 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Punduru, a CDF stronghold in Nimiyama Chiefdom that was overcrowded with civilians. During this attack, both civilians and CDF were killed and their property was damaged.

From February 1999, hunters came in and out of Sandor Chiefdom from Guinea and made their permanent base in Fanema, near the border with Guinea, progressing towards the north of the chiefdom and retaking some areas from the RUF/AFRC forces. They were obtaining coffee and cocoa from the population in support for their activities, selling these items to the Guineans to buy

[1021] It could not be ascertained whether this place is to be found in Koinadugu or in Kono District.
[1022] The Fullah are a tribe to be found in the north of the country and in Guinea. They would be particular targets of the RUF and, later, the RUF/AFRC during the war, as they were often healthy, earning money by raising and selling cattle.
[1023] More details are required from the records on the G5 committees.

ammunition or food. In one incident, RUF/AFRC forces came to Fanema looking for a famous hunter. They took all his belongings and brought his relatives back to Kayima, where they were molested, beaten and tied up before being released.

The abduction rate increased as people were used as diamond miners and were conscripted into the RUF/AFRC forces. At this time, Koakuima was the base for the RUF/AFRC 2nd Brigade and hosted the main office for the mining operations; it was also was the base for the Overall Mining Commander, who was assisted by a Deputy Mining Commander. Mining officers were appointed at the various mining sites. Every week, mining officers were to bring the diamonds collected at the sites to the Deputy Commander, who crosschecked them before handing them over to the Overall Mining Commander. However, diamonds over 5 carats were to be brought to the Overall Mining Commander at Koakuima as soon as they were discovered, without waiting for the weekly shipment. Every week, the diamonds were sent from Koakuima to Kailahun, from where they were sent to Liberia. Some private mining, mainly carried out for diamond dealers, was authorised by the Overall Mining Commander at the cost of Le 5,000 per week. However, diamonds over 5 carats were to be given to the Overall Mining Commander, as they were considered to be the property of the RUF.[1024]

At this time, the District was divided into operational areas under the command of a commanding officer. The training base established in Bunumbu (Luawa Chiefdom, Kailahun District) since 1998 and known as "Camp Lion" was transferred around January to Yengema (Nimikoro Chiefdom), as the centre of RUF/AFRC actions had moved to the north-west. On one occasion, six abductees, six adults and one child of a Small Boys Unit (SBU) escaped from the training base and tried to reach Koinadugu District but were caught and brought back to the base. The RUF Senior Officer in Charge of the Brigade Headquarters in Koakuima ordered these escapees to be killed. The six adults were shot and killed while the fate of the child soldier remains unknown. Hundreds of abductees from the Northern Province were sent to Yengema but as their number increased and as food supplies were not sufficient, the base was moved for three months to Gbendembu (Bombali District) before coming back to Yengema. Recruits were organised into platoons and young children as young as 10 were conscripted into Small Boy Units (SBUs).

A lot of beating, killing and rapes took place at the camp during the time of its operation. One practice carried out in the camp was called Halaka.[1025] A big circle, the size of a tennis court, was drawn on the ground with a smaller inner circle. The area between the two circles was full of obstacles such as barbed wires, drums and blocks. Recruits were to enter in this area and to find the exit located far from the entry, while the instructors located in the inner circle were beating them with sticks. Many civilians died from this practice.

In Lei Chiefdom, the rate of violations committed in 1998 continued and was very high after January 1999. Civilians were abducted to be trained as combatants, especially for the purpose of the upcoming attacks on Guinea. The commander in charge of Kombayende regularly sent his men to capture civilians to be trained as Junta II. A team went to Kissitown, where Superman Camp was

[1024] These diamonds were considered as "government property" as the RUF was considering itself as a government.
[1025] This term allegedly comes from Libya.



located, but as they could not find anybody in the town, they went to the bush. There, they eventually found 160 people, who they brought to Kissitown for scrutiny.

Following those continuous developments, CDF members mobilised themselves; some of them were sent back to Guinea to bring back shotguns and they attacked the RUF/AFRC forces at Kissitown. After a three-hour battle, 15 civilians had lost their lives and the RUF/AFRC forces left the town with the civilians they had earlier abducted. Strengthened by this success, the CDF established a base at Gborgborma and successfully attacked the RUF/AFRC forces at Samie,[1026] where the RUF/AFRC forces fled the town leaving behind them most of their weapons. A few days after the CDF attack on Samie, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the chiefdom headquarter of Saiama, where they killed almost all the civilians they found in the town. After this attack on Saiama, the RUF/AFRC forces headed back for their base at Kombayende. On their way, they passed through a village called Kutima, where they found three bodies. As they continued their journey, they met three women who told them that men in military fatigues had attacked Kutima. The three women were then taken with the group, who used them as a shield anytime they entered a town. At Bomboro, some RUF/AFRC forces found one young woman with her baby. As she was caught trying to escape, they accused her of being a supporter of the President. They told her to throw her baby in a thatch house they had set on fire, warning her that she would be thrown in the fire as well if she did not do what they asked her to do. After she had thrown her baby into the burning house and she was asked to join the RUF/AFRC forces, she tried to escape and was shot in the head. The RUF/AFRC forces also attacked the CDF base at Gborgborma and dislodged the CDF members who went back to Guinea.

Teams put together to search for civilians, also called "Safari team" by the RUF, continued to be sent. On one occasion, a team came back with only 15 civilians. Three of them were women and were allocated to the RUF/AFRC forces who did not have any woman. Among the 12 other captives, three who tried to escape were brought to the commaflag located on the Mamba Bridge and were shot, their bodies thrown under the bridge. In another incident and after orders coming from Koidu told commanders in the different posts to conscript more civilians for planned attacks on Guinea, 152 civilians were captured in the bush and taken to Kombayende for scrutiny before being sent to Superman Camp. The able men and women were sent to Kissitown while the old people where brought to the commaflag in the centre of the town, at Baoya Road. All 21 of them were killed by the member of the RUF/AFRC who had been promoted to Captain because he knew how to kill. Their bodies were thrown in a very big hole previously dug by RUF/AFRC forces for this purpose. This was a common scenario, which was repeated many times.

In March 1999, an internal fight arose between RUF/AFRC forces as a group coming from Koidu entered Kombayende (Lei Chiefdom) with heavy firing. The members stationed in Kombayende fired in return. Sixteen civilians died during that fighting and 22 were seriously injured.[1027] Around this period, the identification of combatants was difficult but it is alleged that some AFRC members were integrated within the RUF movement and were briefed on the ideology of the movement. The senior officer in charge of the Brigade headquarters in Koakuima, who was also the Overall Mining Commander, was one of the most senior RUF members; most of the senior AFRC commanders

[1026] This village could also be Soama.

[1027] It could not be ascertained what happened after this incident between the two RUF/AFRC groups.

were deployed in the Northern Province, in Kabala (Koinadugu District) and Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District).[1028]

On different occasions, civilians with amputated limbs arrived in refugee camps in Guinea and explained they had been attacked by RUF/AFRC forces in Lei Chiefdom. For example, one civilian had his left hand amputated when he was in Gbordu, a village nine miles from Siama. RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village and killed five people. The man who had his limb chopped off was accused of being a Kamajor and after he was amputated, he was given a message by the RUF/AFRC commander to deliver to the Kamajors and civilians living in Guinea that they should expect the coming of RUF/AFRC forces soon. On another occasion, one man was mutilated at Gborgborma; the RUF/AFRC forces who had amputated his limb told him that whoever was captured in this village would be treated as a Kamajor because the village used to be a Kamajor base.

Sometime before the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord, RUF/AFRC forces attacked a number of towns and villages in Kamara Chiefdom, including Sukudu and Peyima, killing many civilians and burning many houses. Over 200 civilians, including men, women and children, were abducted and the strongest men were used for mining. There was a food shortage at that time and what little food was available was taken by the RUF/AFRC forces. Civilians were relying mainly on roots (gari) and boiled bananas to survive. Several civilians, particularly those working in the mines, died from starvation. The same working conditions described earlier in 1998 prevailed and the same kind of corporal punishments were applied. Among others, one practice, which caused the death of 10 men in Tombodu (Tankoro Chiefdom), was called "hanging solar on the civilians", which meant beating someone to death. Civilians caught trying to smuggle or steal diamonds were tortured or killed. It is believed that hundreds of men, women and children were killed during this period.

RUF/AFRC were occupying Fiama Chiefdom, setting ambushes for Donsos and civilians. Towns in Fiama Chiefdom, including Sandekor, Koakor, Waima, Njardu, Darkadu and Gbematambadu, were attacked and burnt down during 1999. Sometimes, the burning of different villages took place on the same day and at other times, RUF/AFRC forces decided to burn a certain number of houses per day. Rice barns were also set on fire after being looted.

RUF/AFRC forces were in control of Gbane Kandor and Mafindor Chiefdoms, which were virtually empty, as civilians had fled to the bush or to Guinea. However, people who fled came back to their chiefdoms from time to time in search of food. Attacks on villages are reported occasionally. For example, in April, as civilians were moving regularly between the bush around Sindadu, in the northeast of Gbane Kandor Chiefdom, and Guinea for food, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the village and shot the hands of one civilian. In May, while searching food, RUF/AFRC forces from

[1028] Furthermore, unlike for Port Loko DDR, where ex-AFRC members disarmed as such, the DDR centre opened in Kono District received RUF and CDF members but no ex-AFRC members, which tend to reinforce our assumption that AFRC members who were in Kono District after the invasion of Freetown were incorporated within the RUF. However, as the distinction between the forces was difficult for civilians, we would continue referring to RUF/AFRC forces in the subsequent developments. Relations between RUF and AFRC forces were not totally sour, for in 1999, an AFRC member was appointed as personal bodyguard to the RUF leader when he was released from Prison.



Mafindor Chiefdom shot a hunter who was captured in his house at Dengenyma. The hunter was caught by surprise in his house, his shotgun leaning on the wall.

During that period, Donsos forces reorganised in Guinea and launched an attack on the RUF/AFRC forces at Kamiendor (Mafindor Chiefdom). Both sides suffered fatalities, but the loss of men did not prevent the CDF from continuing to launch attacks, as a result of which they recaptured different villages in Gbane Kandor Chiefdom. Donsos freed some civilians that had been held captive by the RUF/AFRC forces and sent them to Guinea.

Following these attacks and the significant gains the Donsos were making, RUF/AFRC forces called for peace talks, which took place in July[1029] at Manjama (Soa Chiefdom). Over 3,000 civilians also attended the meeting. This meeting led to a ceasefire agreement, with the fighting factions agreeing that both civilians and combatants should move freely and that Manjama should serve as a buffer zone. For the purposes of freedom of movement, passes were issued to the civilians by the fighting forces. In August 1999, the RUF/AFRC forces even asked that joint security forces be formed to patrol the border area. It has been suggested that this system gave the RUF/AFRC forces the opportunity to bring their looted property to Manjama and to exchange it for other necessary items brought from Guinea by the Donsos. However in September, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Donsos positions, retaking all the areas the Donsos had held for the previous few months. The RUF/AFRC forces expanded their attacks beyond the borders of Sierra Leone, launching one attack at Gueckedou, one of the busiest commercial centres in Guinea.

After the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999, the rate of violations decreased, even if molestation and other violations were still committed by RUF/AFRC forces, fearing that they would no longer be able to use civilians to carry out their mining activities and food finding operations. After July, it is reported that civilians were appointed to a G5 committee to look after civilian affairs in Kamara Chiefdom.[1030]

The fighting with the RUF/AFRC forces in Sandor Chiefdom continued until the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999. However, the cessation of hostilities was only temporary and fighting resumed in 2000.

During the second half of the year, a mining area was opened by the RUF under the directive of the Overall Mining Commander near the bridge between Tombodu and Bundu II (Kamara Chiefdom). Many civilians were captured from across the whole District and forced to work in the mines. The captured civilians were working with barely any food or water and people were beaten or killed if they complained of hunger or thirst. On one occasion, three young men who defied instructions were killed, allegedly on the order of the Overall Mining Commander. On another occasion, 50 men were brought from Kainkordu (Soa Chiefdom) to mine and it is believed that almost all of them died during the course of the mining.[1031] Even foundations of houses were broken for the purposes of mining for diamonds.

[1029] This first meeting may have taken place in August, as reports mention both July and August for the date of this meeting.

[1030] Clarification is required from the records on the dates.

[1031] It is believed that 95% of them died.



In Sandor Chiefdom, different RUF/AFRC camps, known as Joe Bush, were operating and many violations were committed at those camps. At Tegbadu, four miles north of Yormandu where RUF/AFRC forces were still engaged mining, there was a "killing field". Nearby Tabema, on the Kayima Tefeyah highway, a camp also called "P.C. Ground" was infamous for the sexual violence inflicted on civilians. Many girls were raped and kept in the camp for sexual purposes. These women and girls were often sexually assaulted by more than one RUF/AFRC member at a time while some were taken and assigned to only one man.

On 20 October 1999, the Sierra Leone President officially launched the started of the Demobilisation, disarmament and reintegration (DDR) program during a ceremony at Wilberforce Barracks in Freetown.[1032]

In November 1999, near Jagbwema (Fiama chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces, who already had over 130 abducted civilians with them, captured an unspecified number of people. Those abductees were told to fetch water, firewood and food; one of them was given the responsibility to settle minor disputes among civilians. After three weeks, all the abductees were taken to Kailahun District, passing through Gandorhun (Gbane Chiefdom). Most of the journey was undertaken at night and civilians were not allowed to rest on their own volition. In Kailahun, there were over 1.000 members of the RUF/AFRC forces and a lot of abductees. Some of them were required to farm for the RUF/AFRC forces while others became teachers.

In December 1999, hunters who had found refuge in Guinea tried another time to repel the RUF/AFRC forces from Lei Chiefdom. With the support of local authorities also living in the refugee camps, they crossed the river that separates Sierra Leone and Guinea on 18 December, launched different attacks on RUF/AFRC positions and at Kombayende, they managed to inflict heavy casualties on the RUF/AFRC side and to chase out the remaining forces. However, eight days later, RUF/AFRC forces came back and this time, the CDF members were not able to withstand the heavy firing and had to retreat to Guinea. The CDF members who were captured were either killed or mutilated and given letters promising that they (RUF/AFRC forces) would chase them into Guinea.

k) Events in 2000 to 2001

Throughout 2000 and the large part of 2001, mining activities were carried out in Koidu Town and in Plant No. 11, a mining area located between Koidu Town and Tombodu (Kamara Chiefdom). In Koidu Town, a place called Kaisambo was mined for the Overall Mining Commander. An unspecified number of houses in Koidu town had their foundations broken so that they could be mined. At Plant No. 11, more than 500 people were abducted and forced to mine and push caterpillars whenever they broke down.

On 14 January, the RUF leader, the Deputy Defence Minister and the ECOMOG Force Commander visited Koidu, as part of a country tour aiming at sensitising the combatants on the

[1032] The start of the DDR program was originally planned to take place within six weeks of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999.



DDR process.[1033] Military Observers began conducting regular patrol missions in the District, although UN peacekeepers had not yet been able to deploy in the District.[1034] However, the situation in the country worsened and United Nations peacekeepers captured in Makeni in early May 2000 were brought to Plant No. 11 (Kamara Chiefdom).[1035]

It was widely believed that the control by the Government of Kono District would mark the end of the conflict[1036] and talks were initiated between the President of Sierra Leone and the RUF to end the conflict, which faced a new development in May with the abduction of the UN peacekeepers, as mentioned, and the arrest and detention of the RUF leader in Freetown.[1037]

Inhabitants of the District, however, began again crossing the Melie River, which separates the District from Guinea, fleeing RUF harassment.[1038]Around the same period, RUF/AFRC forces began attacking the Guinean territory from different fronts.[1039]

The peace talks, which started in late May 2000 in order to reactivate the Lomé Peace Agreement found a conclusion in Abuja on 10 November with the signing of a ceasefire between the Government and the RUF forces. UNAMSIL was given the mission to monitor this ceasefire.[1040] However, in December 2000, civilians who had found refuge in a Guinean camp near the border with Lei Chiefdom saw thousands of civilians with bundles on their heads, who explained them that they had been attacked by "rebels" during their sleep.[1041] The following day, another group of refugees within the territory of Guinea confirmed that the "rebels" had come to Guinea. The next morning, trucks full of RUF/AFRC forces dressed in military uniforms arrived at the place where all these refugees were at this time and announced through a microphone that they had not come to kill them but to take them back to Sierra Leone. Their commander told the civilians that they wanted peace and as a proof of their commitment to the peace process, they have come to take Sierra Leoneans back to Sierra Leone. Over 20,000 refugees were thus taken back to Sierra Leone while the RUF forces continued their attacks in Guinea. The trip to Lei Chiefdom lasted roughly 10 days and when they arrived at Kombayende (Lei Chiefdom), the civilians were allocated to different towns within the chiefdom.

1033 Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 5 - 16 January 2000.

1034 IRIN West Africa, 12 April 2000. On 22 October 1999, the UN Security Council had adopted Resolution 1270 approving the deployment of 6,000 armed peacekeepers alongside the 260 unarmed military observers. Their number would increase over the subsequent months.

1035 This group of UN peacekeepers was composed of 208 Zambians: IRIN West Africa, 8 May 2000. Around the same period, peacekeepers were also abducted in Kailahun District.

1036 In early June, the Deputy Defence Minister called for an offensive military operation in the District: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report: 1-2 June 2000.

1037 The RUF leader was arrested in Freetown in May, after his bodyguards had shot and killed civilians gathered for a demonstration in front of his house in Freetown on 8 May 2000.

1038 IRIN West Africa, 23 August 2000.

1039 Attacks on the Guinean territory were also launched from Kambia and Kailahun Districts.

1040 UNAMSIL press briefing, 27 November 2000. Paragraph 4 of this Ceasefire Agreement stated "both parties agree that UNAMSIL shall have full liberty to deploy its troops and other personnel throughout Sierra Leone including the diamond-producing areas in the discharge of its responsibilities, when UNAMSIL is satisfied that the ceasefire is observed by all the parties."

1041 In addition, during this period, the training base at Yengema (Nimikoro Chiefdom) was still open.

At Kundundu, the returnees were forced to work for the RUF/AFRC forces and were told to plant cannabis seeds. A woman accused of performing witchcraft was stripped naked and shot six times. In another incident that took place at Yawandor, 22 miles from the headquarter town of Saiama, following the killing of two RUF/AFRC members and the wife of another member by civilians, 17 civilians were killed on the order of the commander based at Kombayende, so that the RUF/AFRC forces based at Yawandor could restore their authority. At Kombayende, the commander in charge was the same person who had established the commaflags in 1998.

During this time, RUF/AFRC forces continued to commit acts of violence against civilians. On one occasion, four RUF members raped a 42-year-old woman until she died. When the civilians took the matter to the commander in charge, he replied to them that the RUF never made complaints about the men they had lost during the war so the civilians should not complain. Two days after that incident, a suckling mother was raped and her child was taken away from her. A man accused of stealing was stripped naked and the commander ordered some of his men to set fire to an empty five gallon container and to drip the burning rubber onto the man. The man died three days later. Furthermore, some civilians were taken and sent to Koidu for mining.

In January 2001,[1042] fighting between RUF/AFRC forces and hunters intensified in the upper part of Sandor Chiefdom. However, UN personnel and commanders together with the Paramount Chief of Sandor arrived in Kayima by helicopter to exhort both factions to disarm. The RUF/AFRC forces who spoke with those authorities responded positively and stated they were ready to disarm.[1043] However, about one month after this visit, fighting intensified north of Kayima[1044] and as they were retreating south, RUF/AFRC forces burnt the remaining houses in the villages. After a battle at Yaryah, three miles north of Kayima, the RUF/AFRC forces decided to leave the chiefdom and headed for Koidu.

In Fiama Chiefdom, in March 2001, one man on his way to Jegbwema met civilians who told him that 50 men had been abducted and used to work for the RUF/AFRC forces at Jegbwema. Women were used to cook and for sexual purposes, as a result of which some of them became pregnant and had children. Sometimes, the captured civilians were beaten at night and put in containers used as cells by the RUF/AFRC forces. One man brought from the Guinean border was suspected of being a Kamajor and was beaten for three days by RUF/AFRC forces at Jagbwema before he died on the fourth day. At Gbekor, a man met more than 12 young girls below the age of 18 who were with the RUF/AFRC forces as their "wives". As he was wondering whether these girls were with the RUF/AFRC forces for their stolen property and money, he discovered that most of them had been abducted and were afraid to go back to their parents for fear of being called "rebels" or being maltreated.

Three days after they had arrived in Kombayende, 150 men who had just come back were taken by the commander to go to Guinea with some RUF members to carry the stolen property they had in Guinea. Shortly after, the Guinean Minister of Defence and some senior military officers came to the border with Sierra Leone to find members of the Kamajors to help Guinea repel the RUF

[1042] Although this event was described as taking place in 2000, it probably took place in 2001.
[1043] This visit probably took place during the second half of 2000.
[1044] The CDF members fighting were those coming from the north of the Chiefdom.



beyond the Guinean border. The Kamajors told the Guinean authorities that they could not fight without the approval of the Sierra Leone Government, as they were under the control of the Sierra Leone Government. Two weeks later, the Guinean authorities came back, told the Kamajors that they had communicated with the Sierra Leone authorities, who approved their request. Kamajors were then equipped with arms and ammunition from the Guinean authorities.

Following this, on 23 March 2001, a group of 200 Donsos and Kamajors who had regrouped and were fully armed[1045] launched simultaneous attacks on RUF/AFRC positions in Kono District through three different flanks: Gbangbokoro[1046] in Soa Chiefdom (Kamajors/Donsos), Kamiendor in Mafindor Chiefdom (Donsos) and Kailahun District (Kamajors). Communication sets allowed the three groups to launch attacks simultaneously and to communicate any developments.

The group that headed to Kamiendor drove out the RUF/AFRC forces before separating into two groups, one going to Kombayende and the other using the Kondewakoro flank and working in concert. These two sub groups regrouped later on in Fiama Chiefdom. From Kamiendor, the group heading to Kombayende dislodged RUF/AFRC forces from Sindudu, which is located on the border between Gbane Kandor and Mafiendor Chiefdoms. As the commander in charge of the RUF forces in Kombayende noticed the advance of the CDF, he sent for reinforcements to Koidu, which was still under RUF/AFRC control. The reinforcement was composed of senior RUF commanders, who moved to Kombayende armed with anti-aircraft machine guns, RPGs, automatic rifles and other weapons seized from the UN peacekeepers. When they entered the town, the CDF forces opened fire and killed 32 of them. After a fierce battle, the RUF/AFRC retreated back to Koidu, as most of their senior commanders had been killed. The CDF chased them up to Jagbwema (Niama Chiefdom), where a battle took place. The RUF/AFRC then retreated to Maiyor, which is on the highway linking Jagbwema to Koidu.

In late April, the Acting Force Commander of UNAMSIL made a visit to Koidu to assess the situation on the ground, following RUF complaints about attacks carried out by CDF members backed up by Guineans.[1047] The CDF prepared themselves to go to Koidu, but in the meanwhile,[1048] in May, trucks full of UN peacekeepers came to the CDF deployment to advise them not to make any further assault on RUF/AFRC positions and to observe the cease-fire.[1049] The CDF told the peacekeepers that they would only observe the cease-fire after they had seen their Paramount Chiefs. About one week later, Paramount Chiefs and senior UN officials came by helicopter to meet the CDF and the Paramount Chiefs told the CDF that they did not want the Government to accuse the people of Kono of destroying the peace process. This meeting caused the CDF to desist from launching any more attacks and to stay in Maiyor until disarmament[1050] took place.

[1045] Reports mention that these CDF forces had heavy artillery like tanks and that a ferry was built across the Meli River that separates Mafiendor Chiefdom and Guinea to facilitate the movement of the CDF.

[1046] Gbangbokoro is on the border with Guinea.

[1047] UNAMSIL press briefing, 26 April 2001.

[1048] It is alleged that a member of the RUF General Staff went to Makeni to find the UN Bangladeshi contingent to ask them to come to Kono to resolve the situation.

[1049] UN peacekeepers from Tonkolili and Kailahun Districts carried out two-day patrol missions in early May prior to the establishment of a permanent patrol presence patrol in Koidu in late May: UNAMSIL press briefings, 6 May 2001, 11 May 2001 and 22 May 2001.

[1050] The other CDF group that entered Kono District through Soa Chiefdom met this group at Jagbwema.



On 4 May 2001, a meeting was convened between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone[1051] to review the ceasefire signed in Abuja in November 2000 and which was violated, mainly in Kono District.[1052] Further to this meeting, it was decided to introduce phases of disarmament, in order to accelerate its process.

Also in May, UNAMSIL force Commander and Deputy Force Commander visited the RUF forces at Koidu and the CDF members at Kombayende (Lei Chiefdom) and Jagbwema (Fiama Chiefdom), to witness the implementation of the cessation of hostilities agreement, signed by the RUF and the CDF on 15 May.[1053] This cessation of hostilities and the start of the DDR program made the atmosphere extremely tense and many officials made visits in the District to ensure the process ran smoothly.[1054]

During the second meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR held at Magburaka on 2 June, the parties agreed to conduct the DDR process simultaneously in Bonthe and Kono Districts in July 2001, leaving time for the DDR facilities to be built in Yengema (Nimikoro Chiefdom). The estimated numbers of combatants to be disarmed were 1,500 combatants for the CDF and 2,500 for the RUF.[1055]

Disarmament started on 1 July at a very slow pace and was intermittently halted. Different reasons were put forward to explain the stalling of the process, including the suspicion of both the CDF and the RUF forces against each other, the UN travel ban on the RUF's Political and Peace Council Chairman and, above all, tensions resulting from the mining activities.[1056] To speed up the disarmament process, UN Officials met directly with the commanders of both fighting factions on the ground, rather than with the political leaders[1057] and during the third meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR on 17 July, the parties agreed that the checkpoints established by the RUF and CDF forces be dismantled and a moratorium on mining activities be implemented.[1058] Nevertheless, skirmishes between RUF and CDF were still reported for June and July.[1059] By the end of July, two companies of the UN Bangladeshi contingent were deployed at Koidu and 500 Pakistani UN peacekeepers were based at Yengema.[1060]

1051 This meeting was the second meeting of the Committee of Six of the ECOWAS Mediation and Security Council, the United Nations, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front: UNAMSIL press briefing, 3 May 2001.

1052 Further to the meeting in May 2001, those parties would hold monthly tripartite meetings under the Joint Committee on DDR.

1053 UNAMSIL press briefings, 17 May 2001, 24 May 2001

1054 On 25 and 26 May 2001, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, accompanied by the UNAMSIL Force Commander and Deputy Force Commander and a Government delegation, including the Deputy Defence Minister met with representatives of the CDF and RUF in Koidu: UNAMSIL press briefing, 28 May 2001.

1055 UNAMSIL press briefing, 5 June 2001.

1056 UNAMSIL press briefing, 6 July 2001 and 13 July 2001.

1057 IRIN West Africa, 12 July 2001.

1058 IRIN West Africa, 20 July 2001; UNAMSIL press briefing, 20 July 2001.

1059 IRIN West Africa, 24 July 2001.

1060 UNAMSIL press briefing, 24 July 2001.



The initial target date of 28 July for the completion of the disarmament process was not met and the process was extended, as pockets of RUF forces were still not disarmed in the District. By 17 August, the disarmament for Kono District was complete and the figures of the combatants who had gone through the process were higher than originally expected, mainly for RUF members came from Koinadugu District to Kono District to disarm.[1061]

The completion of the disarmament in Kono District brought relief to the whole country, as it meant the war was really over. As a mark of the importance of this achievement for the country, the Sierra Leonean President, the Nigerian President and the Chairman of the ECOWAS went to Kono on 3 September, to witness the official end of the disarmament process.[1062]

RUF forces, however, continued to mine in the Koidu area, including indiscriminate mining carried out in the centre of the township. Some incidents of violence against civilians are reported during that period.[1063] In one incident, one civilian went back to Koidu from Freetown to assess the level of destruction of his property. As he reached his house, he met 20 people busy mining the soil underneath his house. When he asked them to stop, one commander at the site told his boys to arrest him and tie him up. He ordered four of his men to hang four solars on the man as he had interrupted the mining activities, which means that four people will beat the person. On another occasion, the Overall Mining Commander ordered civilians to be arrested, so that they could wash gravel at mining areas. One of these civilians was accused of stealing a diamond and when a young RUF member reported that the man had swallowed the diamond, the Overall Mining Commander ordered his men to hang ten solars on the man. After the beating, the man admitted he had taken a diamond but had swallowed it. The Overall Mining Commander ordered his men to kill the man and get the diamond out of the stomach. However, nothing was found in the stomach of the dead man, which made the Overall Mining Commander say that the boy who made the report let him kill a man for no just cause. As a result, the Overall Mining Commander shot the young member three times in the chest, killing him.

This situation of continuous mining activities angered the residents of Koidu. They reported the matter to UNAMSIL, who explained that it would be solved in due time. Nevertheless, on 18 December 2001, residents from Koidu took slings and machetes to fight the RUF/AFRC forces. A lot of the residents then left the District for other Districts (Bombali and Tonkolili) as they believed some of the RUF/AFRC forces would never give up the privileges they got from the mining areas, namely control on the mineral wealth and taxes levied on traders. Following this mass exodus of the population, a meeting took place[1064] in Makeni at the headquarters of the UN Nigerian contingent with leaders of the RUF forces and a delegation from Kono authorities. On 27 December, an important delegation composed of Northern Paramount Chiefs, the UNAMSIL Acting Force

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1061 UNAMSIL press briefing, 14 August 2001. As of 31 August 2001, 5,634 combatants had disarmed in the District, 3,623 being RUF members and 2,011 CDF members: UNAMSIL press briefing, 14 August 2001 and Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 09 - 31 August 2001.

1062 IRIN West Africa, 3 September 2001.

1063 In its Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 09 - 31 August 2001, the UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), based on information from Sierra Leone Web reports, reported on the ongoing use of child labour by the RUF for mining activities.

1064 It is alleged that this meeting took place to clear the rumour that the incident of the previous day was carried out on tribal lines on the pretext that Temnes, Limbas and Mendes were being killed in Kono.



Commander, officers of the Sierra Leone Police and other people arrived in Koidu and summoned a meeting of stakeholders at the UNAMSIL headquarters. An agreement to put an end to the RUF mining activities in the District was signed and apparently implemented.

3. Conclusion

As with the two other Districts of the Eastern Province, Kono District was affected by the conflict since 1991 until the disarmament was declared complete in 2001. This 11-year conflict transformed the face of the District, which suffered heavily in terms of casualties, displacement of population and destruction of dwellings.

The District was first attacked in 1991 by RUF/NPFL forces coming from Kailahun District but those attacks were limited to the south-east, at the border with Kailahun District. During the following year, RUF/NPFL intensified their incursions into the District and progressively expanded their positions to attack Koidu, the headquarter town, by the end of 1992. SLA forces repelled the RUF/NPFL forces from Koidu at the beginning of 1993 and continued their "mopping up" operations throughout the year. By the middle of the year, they had dislodged the RUF/NPFL forces from their main positions in the District. Around the same period, SLA forces had confined the RUF/NPFL forces to the extreme east of Kailahun District, which led Sierra Leoneans to think the war was over and the NPRC Chairman to unilaterally declare a ceasefire.

In late December, however, RUF forces launched a massive operation in the south of Kenema District. This operation clearly marked a new phase of the conflict, during which RUF forces spread across the whole country, using guerrilla warfare tactics. RUF forces re-entered Kono District in 1994 and gradually gained territory on SLA forces, whose number had considerably increased over 1994 but whose actions aimed at repelling the RUF forces had proved wholly ineffective. By April 1995, RUF forces captured Koidu Town for the second time, inflicting high casualties on civilians and destroying and vandalising the town. From Koidu, RUF forces spanned out mainly in the diamond areas around Koidu. Their progression in the District and their mining activities were stalled around May/June by the SLA assisted by CDF forces and, above all, by Executive Outcomes, the South African mercenary company in Sierra Leone under contract with the Government. The RUF forces were rapidly driven out of their positions and throughout the rest of the year and 1996, were mainly confined to the south-east of the District, while Executive Outcomes controlled most of the remainder of the District.

Following the withdrawal of Executive Outcomes by the end of January 1997, the Kono population was left in the hands of the RUF forces, in particular following their merging with the AFRC forces. RUF/AFRC forces, although mainly concentrated around Koidu, patrolled the chiefdoms, harassing civilians for food items and abducting civilians who were then forced to work at the mine sites for the RUF/AFRC forces. As the harassment and physical violence against civilians increased, youths and CDF members fought the RUF/AFRC forces in Koidu and recaptured the town early 1998.

Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown, RUF/AFRC forces retreated into the Provinces and reached Kono District in late February 1998. They rapidly retook Kono and spread across the whole District, carrying out the "Operation No Living Thing". The rate of physical violence, mutilation, rape, killing, abductions for conscription, use as forced labour or for sexual purpose and



the destruction of property reached unprecedented levels. This period, running from February to May/June, was characterised as the "reign of terror". Although RUF/AFRC forces were also deployed across the Northern Province, where they carried out the same actions, Kono District suffered the most from this "Operation No Living Thing", as RUF/AFRC forces clearly concentrated their operations on the main mining area. ECOMOG operations continued in the Provinces and by April 1998, ECOMOG forces had reached Kono District and recaptured the towns previously under RUF/AFRC control. RUF/AFRC forces continued their actions from the bush and abducted more civilians to conscript and train them in the new camp they had opened in the east of the District or to use them in the mining sites.

Violence began decreasing by June 1998. Around this period, hundreds of thousands of civilians had fled the District and RUF/AFRC forces were mainly engaged in large-scale mining operations. In late December, however, the RUF/AFRC regrouped and launched a massive operation on Koidu and other main towns in the west of the District, dislodging the ECOMOG forces from all their positions. The capture of Kono was the first step of a wider action, which reached its conclusion in the invasion of Freetown in January 1999.

Following the invasion of Freetown in January 1999, negotiations started between the Sierra Leonean President and the RUF leader in order to put an end to the conflict: A ceasefire was signed in May and a Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999. This agreement did not end the conflict, as RUF/AFRC expanded their positions in the Northern Province and continued to be present in Kono District. RUF/AFRC forces pursued their mining activities in the District and violence was still inflicted on civilians. Local hunters in the north and the east of the District increased their attacks on RUF/AFRC forces but were often defeated. From 1999, however, the conflict got a new face, as it appeared RUF/AFRC forces planned to launch attacks onto the Guinean territory.

The number of civilians abducted and trained, in particular in "superman camp" in the east of the District clearly indicated that RUF/AFRC forces were preparing attacks onto the Guinean territory. Attacks on Guinea were launched in May 2000 and reached their peak in September. These attacks onto the Guinean territory were not isolated, for Guinea was also attacked from Kailahun and Kambia Districts.

In 2001, the CDF, backed up by Guinean authorities, engaged and defeated the RUF forces in the east of the country. They were halted in their progression through the intervention of Kono authorities and UN officials, in a bid to enforce the ceasefire renewed in Abuja. The disarmament process began shortly afterwards, an agreement to end illegal mining was reached and the war was officially over in the District by the end of 2001.



E. Southern Province

a. Bo District

1. Introduction

Bo District is one of the four Districts composing the Southern Province together with Pujehun, Bonthe and Moyamba Districts. Its headquarter town, Bo Town, lies in its centre in Kakua Chiefdom. It is strategically located at a nodal crossroad, from which roads extend into the District in four directions.

Bordered on the east by Kenema District and in the south by Pujehun District, almost all the incursions would come from this direction following an east-west pattern. Its northern chiefdom, Valunia, shares a boundary with the central District of Tonkolili. Moyamba District on the north and Bonthe District on the south constitute its western edge.

There are 15 chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Badjia	Ngelehun
Bagbe	Ngarlu
Bagbo	Jimi
Baoma	Baoma
Bumpeh	Bumpeh
Gbo	Gbo
Jiama Bongor	Telu
Kakua	Bo
Komboya	Njala
Lugbu	Sumbuya
Niawa Lenga	Nengbema
Selenga	Dambala
Tikonko	Tikonko
Valunia	Mongere
Wunde	Gboyama

Two roads leading to Bo Town allow its penetration from Pujehun Town, the principal road passing by Wunde Chiefdom and the secondary road passing by Bagbo Chiefdom. It was the secondary road that would find favour with the RUF/NPFL forces, who entered the District from Pujehun District in 1991. The main road in the District is the highway that links Freetown with Kenema Town. This feature would influence the conduct of the conflict, as it would be the setting of many ambushes and checkpoints. The relatively large number of roads accessible by vehicle would allow further RUF advances inland towards the Districts of Moyamba and Bonthe, even if the headquarter town, Bo Town on the Freetown-Kenema highway, would not be captured by RUF forces.

The Sewa River that flows from the south-west to the east, following one-third of the border with Kenema District, divides the District in two and would be the natural separation between the chiefdoms affected by the conflict during its first years.



As Bo Town is the second largest city in Sierra Leone, trading and business are among the main activities of the District, as well as mining, particularly diamond mining in Jiama Bongor, Baoma, Tikonko and Lugbu Chiefdoms and cash crops such as rice, cocoa, coffee and palm oil. The mining production has however to be considered in the context of the whole country and in this regard, the production of the District comes rather far behind Kono District and the North of Kenema District.

The absence of external borders would make the District a safer haven for the inhabitants of Pujehun District, at least during the first years of the conflict, and different camps, often made of bush sticks and mud and hosting thousands of internally displaced persons (IDPs) from others Districts, would be built in Bo District. Gondama (in the south of Kakua Chiefdom), at the junction between different chiefdoms, would host such a camp and would be severely affected during the conflict. Koribondo would be a strategic town during the conflict, due to its location at a crossroad between two strategic roads, the first running west-east and linking Bonthe District to Kenema District and the second running south-north and linking Pujehun District to Bo Town.

The main ethnic group is the Mende, renowned, among other things, for the importance of the traditional hunters in the society. Accordingly, the initiation of Kamajors, which had started in the Southern District of Bonthe, soon spread throughout Bo District, which would become a Kamajor stronghold.

Three different phases of the conflict can be clearly identified in Bo District. The first phase encompassed 1991 to 1993 and was characterised by the spreading of the RUF/NPFL forces from Pujehun District. However, only a few chiefdoms closest to Pujehun District were affected at this time, namely Bagbo, Lugbu, Jiama Bongor and Tikonko Chiefdoms. RUF/NPFL forces followed the same pattern when entering a village: they would gather people in the centre of the village, introduce themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to redeem them from the APC regime; some members would stay in the villages while others would proceed further. Physical violence, killing, abductions, the taking of property - especially food - and the burning of houses were reported from the very first incursion. Starting in June 1991, the SLA forces based in Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) and assisted by foreign troops contained these first attacks, repelled the RUF/NPFL forces from the District and patrolled in the areas previously under RUF/NPFL control, chasing "rebel" collaborators and encouraging the formation of vigilante groups. RUF/NPFL forces would later make sporadic raids in the District but did not settle in the District during this first stage.

The second phase spanned from 1994 to 1995, during which time the RUF had spread throughout the entire District. This phase saw the beginning of the organisation of youths and local hunters fighting alongside the SLA, although no formal initiations took place at this time. By the middle of 1995, SLA forces had retaken control of a large area south of Bo Town, although RUF forces still made repeated incursions and attacks, mainly in the chiefdoms on the east bank of the Sewa River and along the border with Kenema District. During this second phase, a lot of civilians were maltreated, killed, raped and abducted, a lot of houses were burnt, especially along the Kenema border, and property was taken away. These incidents were carried out mostly by RUF forces but by SLA forces as well. During this stage, the Freetown-Bo-Kenema highway was the setting of many ambushes, though the precise identity of the faction responsible could not always be ascertained.

The final phase ran from late 1995 to the end of the war, during which time the Kamajors were formally initiated and spread across the District. Although they initially fought alongside the SLA, their collaboration soon deteriorated and was almost nonexistent by the time of the Coup in May 1997. Fighting between those forces were reported and some SLA forces were suspected of collaborating with the RUF. The Kamajors nonetheless gained control of almost all the previous RUF strongholds in the District and during the AFRC regime, RUF/AFRC forces were only based in Koribondo and Bo Town. Following the ECOMOG deployment in the District in late February-early March 1998, no further RUF/AFRC incursion were reported, the District remaining under the Kamajors control who however harassed civilians, chasing, inflicting physical violence and killing people they suspected of being "Junta" and RUF collaborators.

2. Factual Analysis

a) Phase I: 1991 – 1993

RUF/NPFL forces entered the District in April 1991 through Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District) in the south-west of Bo District. These forces arrived first in Bagbo Chiefdom, where they scattered throughout April, May and June. They reached Lugbu Chiefdom in June, where they stayed for some months before being repelled by SLA forces.

On or around 24 April 1991, RUF/NPFL forces coming from the RUF base in Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District) known as "Kuwait" arrived in the headquarter town of Jimi (in the east of Bagbo Chiefdom), 42 miles south-west of Bo. The RUF/NPFL forces fired their weapons[1065] and gathered the people of the town for a meeting in the Court Barrie. At this meeting, they identified themselves as fighters from Liberia, trained in Burkina Faso and fighting for their leader to liberate the people of Sierra Leone. The RUF/NPFL forces gave the people of the village palm fronds as symbols of the revolution[1066] and warned them that if they ran, they would be deemed an "enemy" and shot. They took all the Paramount Chief's belongings, including his car, claiming he was an "APC chief". While there are no reported fatalities, they abducted the Paramount Chief's staff and recruited some 82 people, including young children.[1067]

The RUF/NPFL forces remained in Jimi for approximately one week, after which the forces split into three groups. One group remained in Jimi and the second group headed north west towards Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom). On the way, at Mani Junction (Bagbo Chiefdom), this group split into two, with one group continuing on their way to Sumbuya and another group heading south for Bum Chiefdom in Bonthe District. The third group headed north-east in a push towards Niagorihun, passing successively through Limba and Levuma. Niagorihun occupies the strategic position of junction town on the road leading to Sumbuya, the commercial centre and headquarter town of Lugbu Chiefdom, and the road coming from Jimi, from where movement between the north-east to the south-west could be controlled.

[1065] The RUF/NPFL forces were armed with mortar bombs, AK47 rifles, Berettas, LMG, GPMG and grenades.

[1066] Palm fronds and leaves were considered to be a symbol of the SLPP (Sierra Leone People' Party), the opponent to the then APC regime of J.S. Momoh. Reports from Kenema also mentioned RUF/NPFL forces coming to the District with palm leaves round their wrists.

[1067] No mention is made of what happened to the staff of the Chief nor whether they were included in the 82 people abducted at this time.



The second group, who went to Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom), stopped at Mani Junction in Momajoe on the way, where they encamped all the civilians at Lavekee compound and conscripted 85 boys and girls. In their address to the people, they made it clear that nobody should run in their presence or they would be classed as an "enemy" and would be shot on sight. Furthermore, the RUF/NPFL stated that they came more for the Fullahs and the Lebanese, who - according to them - contributed to the suffering of the masses.[1068] Thus, one Fullah businessman was tied to a stick and people were told to guard him until their return, under threat of indiscriminate killing in the area if anyone let him go.

Before leaving, they warned the population to have livestock ready for them when they passed through on their way back. They then split into two groups and left, one group going towards Bonthe District and the other continuing on their way to Sumbuya. Near Sumbuya, one young man was shot because he started running away when he saw the forces coming. One Lebanese businessman was killed at the wharf, another one was shot dead for refusing to open his store and four Lebanese people were abducted. The RUF/NPFL commander ordered his forces to take property from the town, including hundreds of bags of rice, many bags of onions, sugar and other items, including vehicles. All the property was taken back to Jimi by the young boys and girls who had been abducted when they had first arrived, some of whom were taken for training.

On their way back, the RUF/NPFL forces stopped in Momajoe and brought the man who had been tied up since they left before the assembled town, at which time the commander of the RUF/NPFL forces shot and killed him. They forced some of the townspeople to bury the body, which had started to cause panic among the inhabitants. While in Momajoe, the group that had gone to Bonthe District returned with property, including motorbikes, they had taken from the rice mill at Torma (Bum Chiefdom). They then left Momajoe and went back to Jimi with the property they had taken from Sumbuya and from Torma, some of which was then taken to the RUF base called "Kuwait" in Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District).

The third group, who were heading north-east, continued along the road to Limba, passing through Manjama on the way, where they burnt down a number of houses. On their arrival in Limba, the RUF/NPFL forces gathered the people of the town for a meeting, in which they introduced themselves as trained Liberian mercenaries who had come to put down the APC regime. After this brief meeting, they continued on to Levuma, north of Limba, and later to Niagorihun Gateway, 7 miles north of Jimi, the meeting point of the main road to Sahn Malen and Sumbuya Lugbu Chiefdoms.

On 12 May 1991, SLA and the United Liberation Movement for Liberia (ULIMO) forces stationed in Koribondo (in the south of Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) were deployed to Niagorihun to prevent the RUF/NPFL forces from taking control of the town, which was successful. The RUF/NPFL forces made approximately four other attempts to take the town, returning each time to Jimi and passing through Limba on the way to Niagorihun, but each time they were repelled by the combined SLA and ULIMO forces. During the successive battles, both sides suffered heavy fatalities, including one

[1068] The Fullah are one of the ethnic groups from Sierra Leone and were a particular target, as its members were known to be wealthy businessmen.



of the RUF/NPFL commanders,[1069] and houses were burnt down as a result of the shelling.[1070] After their final attempt, they went back to Jimi and went on raiding missions in different towns in the chiefdom, taking what food they could find.

As a result of these battles, SLA and ULIMO forces based in Niagorihun began to move down the road towards Jimi, first taking control of Levuma and then moving on to Limba, where they established a base. The SLA and ULIMO forces, who were under SLA command, held a town meeting in the Court Barrie at which they established a curfew, set restrictions on people's movements and seized all the weapons in the town. During the following month, the SLA and ULIMO forces remained in Limba, from where they undertook covert reconnaissance missions to establish the extent of the RUF/NPFL strength in Jimi. They also went on food finding missions in nearby towns, which resulted in some skirmishes between SLA/ULIMO forces and RUF/NPFL forces.

On or around 16 June 1991, SLA and ULIMO forces launched a successful offensive with up to 250 troops to retake control of Jimi. During the battle in Jimi, the SLA and ULIMO forces killed six civilians who they believed to be "rebel" collaborators. RUF/NPFL forces coming from the direction of Pujehun District attempted several times to recapture Jimi but were unsuccessful. During these attempts, at least one house was burnt down as a result of the shelling, but no fatalities are reported. After they had recaptured Jimi, SLA forces maltreated civilians and hunted RUF collaborators. A number of people were killed because they were suspected of being "rebel" collaborators or because they came from "rebel-held" villages, although no investigations appear to have been held. Civilians who dealt with or hosted any RUF/NPFL forces, whether willingly or unwillingly, were tied up, beaten, made to look at the sun and, in some instances, killed.

In late June 1991, SLA forces launched a counter-attack to take control of Mano (Bagbo Chiefdom), which resulted in half of the town being occupied by the SLA forces and the other half of the town being occupied by the RUF/NPFL forces, although the exact dividing lines are not clear. Civilians in the town became the victims of both sides as each of the fighting factions accused them of aiding and abetting the other faction. Thus the SLA forces killed one boy, beat up the Town Chief and burnt down up to 45 houses. In return, the RUF/NPFL forces burnt down the remaining houses, killed 15 people and mutilated others.[1071] Around this time, RUF/NPFL forces also attacked Sonehun Gola and Mano, west of Jimi on the way to Momajoe/Mani Junction. In Sonehun Golan, RUF/NPFL forces killed 10 people and in Mano, they killed two people and burnt down four houses.

At the same time, SLA forces passed through Momajoe on the way to Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom), where they remained for around two weeks, trying to assess the extent of territory controlled by the RUF/NPFL. At the beginning of July 1991, SLA forces regained control of Momajoe/Mani Junction, and were also established in Kasseh and Sumbuya. Sumbuya was an economic and trading

[1069] It is reported that there were no civilian fatalities at this time.
[1070] It appears that the houses were not deliberately targeted, but were burnt down as an indirect result of the shelling.
[1071] The records report that the people who were mutilated were "taken to Mattru Jong or Bo for treatment", although it is not clear what this means.



centre and people were moving south of Sumbuya to buy food and other items, bringing them back to Sumbuya to trade. However, the SLA commander was uncomfortable with this movement of people, so people coming to Sumbuya from the south were considered to be "enemies" and were molested or put in cells for some days. This may in part be due to an incident that occurred on or around 10 July 1991: a military truck had an accident, which resulted in one SLA member falling off the truck and accidentally discharging his weapon. This led his companions to think they were under attack and they fired in the direction the shooting had come from, accidentally killing the soldier on the ground. The soldiers then fired at the vehicle to make their commander believe they had fallen into an ambush. Based on this report, the commander declared the zone north of Momajoe an "enemy zone" and ordered preparations for a full-scale invasion, including the order to shoot anybody they saw on sight. The following day, the invasion occurred from Golawoma to Tawamahehu, during which a lot of civilians were wounded, some of whom died in the bush due to lack of medical care.

One week later, the SLA commander required young men[1072] in the surroundings of Momajoe[1073] to register for a vigilante group. After registration, they formed vigilante groups in the various towns and were assigned tasks by the SLA, including building huts, hunting and general cleaning tasks. Punishments for coming late or failing to do assigned duties included frog jump,[1074] rolling, being forced to lie down and look at the sun and imprisonment for a number of days.

In mid July 1991, SLA forces required civilians to lead them to Golapo Junction[1075] following a RUF/NPFL incursion in Kasseh, south of Momajoe, from Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District), during which two people were killed. They met stiff resistance from the RUF/NPFL forces and one of the SLA soldiers was killed. However, all the civilians escaped safely, as a result of which the SLA commander imposed more stringent rules on how to deal with civilians. Civilians who had any connection with RUF/NPFL forces, including mothers of people abducted by the RUF, were all classed as "rebels" and were treated accordingly. For example, in Mogbon, five miles east of Momajoe, two women were killed by gunshot wound to the vagina because they cooked food for their children who had returned from the RUF/NPFL base and failed to surrender to the SLA. One man was killed because he said that the RUF/NPFL were planning to attack Momajoe. Two boys who came to Momajoe from Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District) to buy salt were suspected of being "rebel" collaborators and were forced to chew their own penises before they were shot and killed. It is estimated that during this period, up to 48 people were killed by SLA forces because they arrived in Momajoe from a direction in which RUF/NPFL forces were believed to have bases.

[1072] The ages of these people are not clear; they are variously described as "young men" and "youths", which in the Sierra Leone context could be anywhere up to mid to late thirties, but probably does not include people under 14.
[1073] The towns are reported as being Momajoe, Golawoma, Mowei, Mossamgbahuò, Nyahgorihun (all north of Mamojoe); Temgbeleh, Largo, Maniwa, Mani, Bo, Tissana, Yegelleh, Fala (all south Momajoe); and Mojemai Kpongbalia and Golapo, east of Momajoe.
[1074] To "frog jump" or to "pump" is done by first holding on to the earlobes with two hands – the left hand holding the right ear lobe and vice versa– after which the person is required to jump up and down continuously on their haunches. This form of punishment was both physically and psychologically painful, because it is a punishment meted out mostly to children and it is considered shameful for an adult to be made to "pump".
[1075] While not explicitly stated, it appears that the civilians were used to guide the SLA forces through the area rather than provide them with any sort of protection.



The District remained under the control of the SLA/ULIMO forces, who engaged the RUF/NPFL forces from all flanks, pushing them north-easterly from Sumbuya and south from Jimi through Pujehun District back into Liberia. At this time, the main SLA base was still in Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) and others had been established in Jimi, Sumbuya and Momajoe. Initially, SLA forces provided food and medicine to the civilian population, which led to good relations between them. Over time, however, civilians were forced to build camps for the SLA, were molested and flogged in public for failing to carry out the cleaning exercise and young girls were sexually harassed. A court structure was set up by the SLA and civilians were heavily fined for breaches, although it is not clear what law (if any) was applied in these courts. In November 1991, SLA forces started using civilians to mine diamonds in Niagorihun, where unidentified armed men killed 20 civilians.[1076] These events led to confusion within the population and to distrust of the SLA. At that time, civilians began to suspect that SLA soldiers were disguising themselves as RUF fighters and attacking villages.

During this time, from late 1991 to the end of 1992, the RUF/NPFL made sporadic incursions in Jimi and Limba (Bagbo Chiefdom) from Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District). They burnt seven houses in Limba and took away all the cattle in the town. One man was killed by his son in law, a member of the RUF, and his head was displayed along the road leading to Jimi. In addition, they launched some attacks in the area around Mano, in which some people were killed. However, RUF/NPFL forces did not manage to make any significant advances into Bo District and did not retake control of any territory.[1077]

Foreign troops[1078] were based in Gondama (south of Kakua Chiefdom, at the border with Tikonko and Jiama Bongor Chiefdoms) and in early 1993, an influx of civilians from Pujehun District fleeing RUF forces came to Gondama through Koribondo on the advice of SLA forces in the District. Gondama would remain safe until November 1994, when RUF forces launched a major attack on the town.

In April 1993, RUF forces entered Sembehun, a mining area in Tikonko Chiefdom. The RUF forces were not wearing combat uniforms and many people did not realise they were RUF until they begin firing their weapons. The RUF forces went through houses looking for gold and diamonds and took many goods from the market place, including clothes and shoes. They then abducted a number of people to carry the stolen property, although they were not detained and were returned to Sembehun the same evening.

In 1993, RUF forces embarked on road ambushes in Bagbo Chiefdom around Jimi, during which SLA forces and civilians suffered heavy casualties. In December 1993, during a meeting called by the SLA commander in Jimi to discuss the situation with chiefdom authorities, news broke out that a commercial vehicle had been attacked at Basaleh junction in Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District) between Jimmi Bagbo and Sahn Malen Chiefdoms.

[1076] No further information is available on this attack or who the attackers were.

[1077] No news was made available on these attacks in the chiefdom (Bagbo) and people soon forgot about them.

[1078] These troops were either Guinean or Nigerian troops, posted in Sierra Leone in furtherance to bilateral treaties with Sierra Leone.

B) Phase II: Late 1993 to 1995

From February 1994, the Freetown – Bo – Kenema highway was constantly ambushed by RUF and SLA forces, cutting off food supplies for towns like Bo and Kenema whose population was swollen by thousands of civilians seeking refuge. Convoy of trucks[1079] leaving Freetown were often ambushed.

Towards the end of 1993, RUF/NPFL forces regrouped in Malen Chiefdom (Pujehun District) and started launching heavy attacks on Bagbo Chiefdom, starting in Jimi. In addition, in October 1993, Koribondo was attacked and many civilians moved to Bo Town. As a result of this attack, the Director of the Gondama camp initiated a self-defence program, selecting youths as vigilantes to run checkpoints both day and night. By late 1993 or early 1994,[1080] SLA forces were to a large extent dislodged from Jimi, Sumbuya and Momajoe and re-established themselves in Koribondo. This SLA withdrawal gave room to the RUF/NPFL forces to go through Bagbo Chiefdom into Bonthe District, where they also pushed out the SLA forces present in Bum Chiefdom and gained access to Mattru Jong and from there the Sierra Rutile mining areas.

Most likely in early 1994,[1081] upon receiving news that the war was approaching his chiefdom, the Regent Chief of Jiama Bongor Chiefdom decided that all the towns and villages of his chiefdom should mobilise their youths to guard their villages against the assailants. The old hunters were asked to give their guns to the youths and the youths and local hunters were trained, after permission was granted from the Resident Minister of Bo. Youths and local hunters from Boama and Bagbe Chiefdoms also organised themselves in a similar fashion. By June 1994, the training was complete and 2,800 men composed of youths and local hunters were issued with arms and ammunition.[1082]

The RUF forces attacked Koribondo in March 1994, as a result of which troops on both sides were killed and one civilian was caught in the crossfire. At the time of the attack, the SLA had been sent to the town. Following the attack, a troop of Guinean soldiers came as reinforcements for the SLA forces.

In the early months of 1994, villages in different chiefdoms along the border with Kenema District were attacked by a small number of RUF forces, mainly for food finding purposes. For example, RUF forces entered Komboya Chiefdom in the north of Bo District by crossing the Sewa River from Kenema District. They arrived in a small village near the town of Gumahun, where the Trade Fair was situated. The RUF forces then entered Gumahun, apparently with the main intention of obtaining food, as they only took food items, palm oil, cattle and money. Before leaving, on the same night they entered, the RUF forces also burnt down three dwelling houses. SLA forces were stationed at that time at Njala (Komboya Chiefdom), but the RUF made their incursions before

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[1079] These convoys could be very big, comprising up to 70 vehicles.

[1080] This information has to be read in conjunction with the attacks that started in December 1993 in Kenema District.

[1081] No date is given for this meeting, but training took place in April 1994 as a result of this meeting, so it is likely these events took place in early 1994.

[1082] This gathering of youths did not entail, at this time, the process of initiation within the Kamajor society. This initiation would begin in Bo District in 1995.



there was time to deploy those forces and, in addition, it is reported that the SLA forces there were themselves harassing civilians and taking away their food and property.

In 1994, most of the road ambushes were carried out by SLA forces, especially between Niagorihun and Grima (Tikonko Chiefdom), during which civilians were killed and their property stolen. These forces were referred to as "sobels", meaning members of the SLA who had joined forces with the RUF. The loss of confidence in the SLA, which had begun towards the end of 1991, thus continued to grow stronger in 1994. People relate that wherever SLA forces deployed to protect a town or a village, that town or village would be attacked by RUF forces shortly after their arrival.[1083] In April 1994, inhabitants of Lugbu Chiefdom who no longer felt safe moved to Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) and Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom). Thus, the population of Bo Town swelled in 1994 and food became scarce.[1084]

At some time in 1993,[1085] vigilante groups were established in Wunde Chiefdom (south-east of the District, at the border with Pujehun District), led by the former Regent Chief. In April 1994, RUF forces attacked Juhun (Wunde Chiefdom) twice and each time, people were killed, some houses were burnt and people were forced to carry the stolen property to Zimmi, near the border with Liberia in Pujehun District. Local hunters from Jiama Bongor Chiefdom sent to the border between Wunde and Jiama Bongor Chiefdoms fought with RUF forces. Four civilians are reported to have been killed in that fight and two houses were burnt down.

Many villages were attacked in 1994 in Wunde Chiefdom, property was taken, houses burnt, people killed and women raped. For example, in early 1994, RUF forces attacked Kambawana, a section headquarter town with 58 dwelling houses, causing many of the inhabitants to flee into the nearby bush. RUF forces set fire to the town, completely destroying 30 houses and damaging the remaining buildings, including by shooting at them. RUF forces killed or abducted most of the people who had remained in the village, including young children, and raped the women.[1086]

In Boama Chiefdom, the youths and local hunters were mobilised in 1994 and established as a Territorial Defence Force (TDF) under the command of the chiefdom authorities in the town of Gerihun. The TDF was divided into two groups, one of which was sent to Jomu village and the other of which was sent to Kpatbu, both of which are on the border with Jaima Bongor Chiefdom. These towns were considered strategic points in the defence of Boama Chiefdom from the RUF forces fighting in Jiama Bongor Chiefdom.

Nevertheless, in May 1994, RUF forces coming from Kenema District, most likely from their base of Camp Zogoda,[1087] continuously attacked villages behind the Sewa River in Boama Chiefdom. In all these attacks, civilians were killed, women raped, houses burnt, property stolen and people

[1083] Cross reference to Bombali District, where people said the same thing.

[1084] It appeared that its population doubled in 1994, rising sharply from 450,000 inhabitants to roughly one million.

[1085] No month is given for the formation of the vigilante groups.

[1086] The bodies were left on the ground for some time, as a person who visited the village some time after this attack saw a number of skeletons lying on the streets. It is not clear when or where these skeletal remains were finally buried.

[1087] Camp Zogoda was located in Koya Chiefdom (Kenema District) and was operational throughout 1994-95 before being overrun by SLA and Kamajors in 1996. For further information, see Kenema District.

abducted, including underage children. For example, in Tugbedu, two civilians were killed and four houses were burnt; in Sandia, one pregnant woman was killed; and in Kpatobu, three young men were killed, five houses burnt and a lot of property taken. In Keigbai village, one civilian was killed, women raped, three houses burnt down, property was taken and over 200 people abducted. Also in May 1994, RUF forces coming from the direction of Mile 30 on the old Koribondo-Blama (Small Bo Chiefdom, Kenema District) highway attacked Gordi (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom), burnt five buildings, including the school, and took sheep and goats away with them. No fatalities were reported at this time.

On hearing that the chiefdom headquarter of Telu (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) had come under heavy attack in June 1994, local hunters and youths from Gbaama mobilised themselves and went to Telu. On their arrival in Telu, they discovered the 70 bodies of local hunters and youths in front of the Regent Chief's residence, which was damaged.[1088] Twenty civilians were found dead from bullet wounds. The survivors of the attack on Telu, including the Regent Chief, fled to Bo, Gerihun and other places for safety.

Similarly to the other chiefdoms at the border with Kenema District, RUF forces first entered Badjia Chiefdom in mid 1994 mainly to find food. However, these food-finding missions were also accompanied by the burning of houses and huts and the killing of civilians. In Pendebu, one old man was shot dead and one hut was set on fire. Each time they came to find food, the RUF forces were very small in number.

In August 1994, the Town Chief of Geima[1089] (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) arrived in Koribondo with two youths whose hands had been cut off. He reported that RUF forces had attacked Geima, dumped 40 civilians in wells, killed nine men, three children and eight women, burnt down 30 houses and forced people to carry their stolen property to Zimmi, which is on the border with Liberia in Pujehun District.

That same month, RUF forces again attacked Jimi and over 20 civilians were killed and up to 50 were abducted, allegedly being taken away to "Kuwait", the RUF base in Pujehun District. Another attack took place in September, during which an SLA officer was killed. After this incident, the SLA intensified their search for RUF collaborators and many civilians were killed by SLA forces on this basis, including the Town Chief. During this period, up to 190 houses in Jimi were burnt down, with the exception of the Primary and Secondary Schools; civilians were killed; and many young people were abducted. Cases of rapes are mentioned and it is reported that three girls were raped on the road between Jimi and Kanga, west of Jimi. Houses were looted and people were injured with machetes in Mano; there are also reports of amputations at this time.

At the same time, the RUF forces began attacking the towns that had been left by the SLA, particularly in Niagorehun, Sumbuya, Towamaheahun and Lower and Upper Saama in the west of Lugbu Chiefdom on the road between Sumbuya and Niagorehun. During these attacks, many civilians were killed and raped and houses were burnt down. In Sumbuya, over 100 houses were

[1088] It is not clear how the Regent Chief's house was damaged or how the local hunters were killed.
[1089] Geima is on the Koribondo–Sumbuya Highway, the main route from Kenema District to Bonthe District through Bo District.



burnt, including the residence of the Paramount Chief, and over 150 houses were burnt in Niagorehun.

In September 1994, RUF forces attacked Momajoe and its environs (Bagbo Chiefdom), meeting little resistance from the SLA forces based at Mani Junction. During this attack, one boy and one local hunter, who had been pointing his gun at the RUF forces, were killed in separate incidents. Property was taken away from people and around 20 young men were forced to carry that property to RUF bases in Malen Chiefdom.

Njala (Komboya Chiefdom in the north of Bo District), which is a hub for the flow of produce such as palm oil, rice, groundnuts, kola nuts, coffee and cacao during marketing seasons, was attacked in September 1994.[1090] Five civilians were killed and houses were looted and then burnt down. The RUF forces attacking the town came from the east, most likely along the road from Kenema District through Gumahun and Naigolehun. The RUF forces left the town the same day as they had arrived.[1091]

Also in September[1092] 1994, a large number of RUF forces, most of them dressed in plain clothes with red headbands and commanders in uniforms with steel helmets, entered the chiefdom headquarter town of Ngelehun (Badjia Chiefdom),[1093] firing heavily. Although no deaths were reported, many women and children were abducted and forced to carry stolen property. RUF forces came back later and abducted many more people. In Badjia Chiefdom, few people were killed but thousands were abducted and forced to join the RUF movement, whereupon many people fled to Gerihun (Boama Chiefdom). Progressively, the villages and towns of Badjia Chiefdom became empty, as RUF forces made various incursions and attacks throughout the chiefdom and people sought refuge in larger towns like Kenema or Bo or in the bush.

The chiefdom headquarter of Ngarlu (Bagbe Chiefdom) was also attacked by RUF forces,[1094] using a method worth describing in more detail. The RUF assailants gathered the inhabitants in the Court Barrie and asked the Town Chief to send messages around the farms calling all the people to come at once. People were forced to sit on the floor with their legs stretched out in front of them. The RUF members explained to the people that those among them who were in uniforms with helmets on were Burkina Faso fighters while those in other clothes and red headbands were RUF members.

1090 Njala is at the foot of a steep mountain on top of which there was rumoured to be a RUF establishment called Bokurr, which was a large training camp and the sometime residence of the RUF leader. Sounds of helicopters were heard over the mountain every two days during 1995, although the duration when the helicopters were flying was unspecified

1091 Indeed, at the same period, RUF forces had reached Wandor Chiefdom (Kenema District) that lies at the east of Komboya Chiefdom.

1092 Reports mention two different dates for this attack, September and December. Although open sources could not confirm the date, it is likely that this attack took place in the aftermath of the one at Njala (Komboya Chiefdom) in September.

1093 The land of Badjia and Komboya Chiefdoms was rich in food and the place was ideal as it is a hilly area, far from the main road.

1094 This event was described as happening in June 1994 but also as taking place after Njala (Komboya Chiefdom) and Ngelehun (Badjia Chiefdom) had been attacked, which took place probably in September. Accordingly, this attack was probably carried out around September.

Under heavy guard, some of them took young women and girls into a house and raped them. As these rapes were going on, the old people were separated from the youths and other RUF members searched the houses. After collecting items from the houses, they set the town on fire. One hundred and fifty youths were told to carry the things they had collected from the houses for the RUF forces. As it was time for the third Muslim prayer, they fired shots above the heads of the gathered civilians, dropped young babies and trampled on them and hit screaming children on their heads. Many young people, including children and teenagers, were abducted during this attack, most likely for recruitment purposes although their fate remains unknown. People who had escaped to the bush and returned the following morning discovered burnt houses, property missing and 25 bodies in the town and others in the nearby bushes, including adults, children and babies, whose heads had been crushed. Ten of the bodies were buried in one grave in the centre of the town, three in another one and four in a third grave.

Valunia, the northernmost chiefdom in Bo District, was first touched by the conflict in late 1994. In October, November and December, RUF forces and SLA forces were present for the first time in the three biggest towns. In early October 1994, SLA forces came by truck to the town of Baomahun, towards the north in the centre of the chiefdom, from Tekoh Barracks in Makeni (Bombali District). The SLA forces explained to the population that they had come to search for RUF forces based in Kangari Hills[1095] in Tonkolili District, from where they believed RUF forces would make an attack on Valunia Chiefdom. However on their return, very few soldiers were to be seen on the trucks. At around that time, foreigners who were operating the gold mines left the town, allegedly poisoning the food and drink in their quarters as they believed the SLA forces would be back to steal their property. Later in October 1994, SLA forces attacked Baomahun, taking a lot of property from the gold mining quarters and the town in general. The SLA forces spent some time in the quarters, drinking what was left by the expatriates who had fled earlier. Trucks loaded with food and other items were brought to Tekoh Barracks. A few days later, information reached the civilians that SLA soldiers were found dead in the forest and that wives and children of those SLA members at Tekoh Barracks were also dead, as a result of the poison the expatriates put in their food and drinks before leaving.

Due to the persistent attacks on Bagbe Chiefdom, up to 600 villagers came and settled in Gerihun (Boama Chiefdom), which also hosted displaced people from Komboya and Badjia Chiefdoms after the attacks on the headquarters towns of Njala and Ngelehun respectively. Following this influx of civilians, UNHCR established a displaced camp in Gerihun, under the protection of SLA forces and Special Security Division Police.

In November 1994, RUF forces coming from Camp Zogoda[1096] in Kenema District attacked Gerihun twice. Both times, they were repelled but promised that they would not be satisfied until Gerihun was captured. In June 1995, the RUF forces returned in large numbers, attacking the town on three sides and retaking control of both the town and the IDP camp. Over 100 displaced people were killed in the camp either by shooting or by being drowned in the Beibei River. Property was taken from booths, namely huts made from bushsticks and covered with greenery for shelter, which

[1095] The Kangari Hills are to be found mainly in Tonkolili District but also lie in Valunia Chiefdom. The RUF base, however, was located in Tonkolili District.

[1096] The camp was mentioned on the ID card found on a dead RUF member.



were then set on fire. At that time, the SLA forces asked the fleeing civilians to come to their base for protection as they had sent someone to Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom) to ask for reinforcements, although it is not clear whether reinforcements were on the way.

While up to 1,000 civilians went to the base, the whole town including the military base was soon taken over.[1097] The SLA forces withdrew to an unknown destination and more people were killed, some as a result of RPG firing by RUF forces as they entered the town. Every house in the town was searched and looted. Over 200 civilians were told to carry the stolen property to the RUF base at Camp Zogoda in Kenema District. Before leaving the town, the RUF forces set the IDP camp on fire. Among those people who had to carry the property, few came back and the rest have not been seen since. Shortly after the RUF forces left, SLA forces returned with reinforcements, firing indiscriminately. After they arrived, they made the population bury the people who had been killed by the RUF forces when they had attacked the town.

During the same period, women and children who had left Bagbe, Komboya and Badjia Chiefdoms were killed on their way to Kenema District. When they had stopped at the chiefdom headquarter of Boajibu (Simbaru Chiefdom, Kenema District) and sought shelter in a large house, RUF forces set the house on fire.[1098]

Monghere (Valunia Chiefdom), south-west of Baomahun at the junction between the road from Moamahun and the road from Bare in the north-west of the chiefdom, was attacked in November 1994. RUF forces believed to come from their base in Bokurr raided the town. They took people's property, in particular domesticated animals such as goats and sheep, before burning down nearly all the houses in the town. They abducted some people, forcing them to carry the stolen property. These people later escaped. While there were no reported fatalities, a number of people suffered gunshot wounds.

In December 1994, RUF forces attacked the town of Mandu, towards the south of Valunia Chiefdom along the road from Monghere. RUF forces set fire to all the houses in the town, took property, including food and valuables, and forced civilians to carry the property they had taken. The civilians were later released after the RUF forces had reached villages allegedly near their bases. SLA forces based at Grima junction,[1099] north of Mandu along the road to Monhere, arrived in the town after the RUF forces had left the town and some of them also took property belonging to civilians, although others assisted in putting out the fires in the town.

Another example of the attacks on Wunde Chiefdom in 1994 is the assault on Niagorehun in the south of the chiefdom, which was attacked by RUF forces in December 1994. Windows and doors of the houses were broken, houses ransacked and people forced to carry their property; people who refused were shot on the spot. Young girls were raped and young boys, most of them below 10 years

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1097 One key person said that an RUF member advised them to move from the SLA base to a safer place because the SLA forces were "fooling" people and were fighting together with the RUF.

1098 No further information could be obtained on this event, which was not mentioned in relation to Kenema District.

1099 Note that while the records refer to it as "Grima junction" and "Grima town", the UNHCR maps have it named "Geima".



old, were abducted. Many civilians were killed, such as one pregnant woman who refused to have sex with one of the fighters.

Later, towards the end of 1994 and the beginning of 1995, RUF forces came back to Bagbe Chiefdom, this time arriving from the south. Given the location of Ngarlu at a junction, RUF forces planned to establish a base there. They drove the people out of the chiefdom by burning the main towns like Madina, Gibina, Blama, Kpetewoma, Kpakoh and Mano. Prominent people were also killed, including a schoolteacher of Blama who refused to be a teacher for their forces. Some people went into hiding and others went to Bo Town or Kenema Town (Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District). Their arrival in Bo corresponded with the initiation of Kamajors starting in 1995.

Benduma (in the south of Bagbe Chiefdom) was overcrowded with civilians fleeing from the Sewa River, where RUF forces were settled; from the headquarter town of Ngarlu; and from Komboya Chiefdom. Villages in the area were surrounded by RUF forces and attacks were always imminent. In December 1994, five people were instantly shot dead by RUF forces arriving in Benduma. During the same visit, they raped women, stole property and forced young men to carry that property to the RUF base in Ngallu. Benduma was of interest as it was rich in food and animals. Benduma was also the largest town in the chiefdom, where the Paramount Chief lived.

However, the most striking wave of attacks that affected Bo District as a whole is the one that took place in December 1994 with the attack on the Gondama IDP camp, followed by attacks on the main towns in the centre of the District during the Christmas week.

In December 1994, RUF forces attacked Gondama camp, south of Kakua Chiefdom.[1100] The attack on Gondama Camp, where thousands of people from Pujehun and Bo Districts had found refuge, was a shock for the population. At the time of the attack, on 24 December 1994, only a few ECOMOG troops were posted at Gondama,[1101] where an estimated 80,000 people had sought refuge. Between 200 and 400 civilians were killed, either by drowning in the Sewa River or as a result of bullet wounds. ECOMOG troops repelled the RUF forces about one week later and the camp was transferred temporarily to Bo Town. During this time, both RUF and SLA forces raided the camp, taking property that had been left behind. In January 1995, the camp was declared safe[1102] and people were asked to come back, which they did. Nevertheless, throughout 1995 the situation was difficult, as RUF forces had blocked the main highway between Bo and Freetown, thereby cutting off a main route for the supply of food. People died on a daily basis from malnutrition and cholera broke out; some relief was provided when the route was reopened in October 1995.

[1100] It has to be noted that there is little information for Kakua, Tikonko and Bumpe Chiefdoms from 1993 to 1995, as almost all the civilians at that time were living either in the bushes or in displaced camps, such as Gondama camp. For example, the only information about Kakua Chiefdom, during this time, besides the December 1994 attacks, is that in July 1995, SLA forces and local hunters launched successful attacks on RUF forces in Kakua Chiefdom, resulting in the death of many RUF fighters.

[1101] It appears that on 22 December, the ECOMOG troops were ordered to go to Bo to provide security for a carnival that was planned, leaving only 11 soldiers in the camp.

[1102] It is not clear who declared the camp to be safe, but ECOMOG continued to provide protection at the camp, so it is possible it was ECOMOG.



After their attack on Gondama, RUF forces then moved on to make their first attack on Tikonko Town (Tikonko Chiefdom) on 25 December 1994, arriving at around 3.00 pm, killing many civilians and burning and looting many houses. At the same time, other villages in the chiefdom were also attacked. At Sengema riverside, one young man was killed and another was shot in the leg. Civilians fled in large number to Mattru on the Rail (Tikonko Chiefdom),[1103] intensifying the panic in the town.

On 26 December 1994, RUF forces attacked Mattru on the Rail (Tikonko Chiefdom) in the afternoon, mutilating civilians' arms and legs. The RUF then opened sporadic gunfire on the civilians, killing many people, looting their property and burning down their houses. They also abducted civilian youths who they conscripted into the RUF forces. In the morning before this attack, 40 fully armed men wearing military uniforms entered the town, claiming to be Government forces coming to protect Mattru on the Rail. However, when RUF forces who identified themselves to the civilians as such attacked the town, these Government forces were nowhere to be found.

Bo Town was attacked on 27 December 1994 for the first time by RUF forces passing through the New London quarter. Prior to this attack, fleeing civilians from Mattru on the Rail and Tikonko Town had told residents of Bo Town that the RUF were bent on attacking Bo Town. The authorities of the town organised youths to erect checkpoints, which were controlled by these youths as a precautionary move in the event of an RUF attack. Thus, the youths who had mobilised themselves repelled the RUF forces out of the town. Few civilians were killed, few houses burnt and few youths abducted during this attack.

Bumpeh Town (Bumpeh Chiefdom), in the far west of Bo District, was attacked three times between December 1994 and June 1995. RUF forces coming from the north of Bumpeh attacked the town for the first time in December 1994, probably during the same wave of attacks against Bo Town, Tikonko Town and Mattru on the Rail. During this attack, few houses were burnt and some property was taken. Some girls were raped and people were abducted. The Regent Chief from Mattru Jong tried to hide from the RUF forces in the Tabal River, but accidentally drowned. As had happened in Mattru on the Rail prior to the RUF attack, forces claimed to be SLA forces had come to the town, asserting they were waiting for reinforcements following the previous attacks on Tikonko, Mattru on the Rail and Bo Town. However, when the RUF forces entered the town, those forces were nowhere to be found.

The attack on these major towns in the District was perceived by the population as an indication that the RUF were now a strong force not only in the eastern and northern parts of the country but also in the Southern Province of Sierra Leone.[1104]

Gbo, Selenga and Niawa Lenga Chiefdoms, north of Kakua Chiefdom, were not affected by the war before 1995, following the wave of attacks on Gondama, Bo and Tikonko Town in December 1994.

In January 1995, RUF forces reached Gbo Chiefdom through Bumpeh Chiefdom. The first village they attacked was Nagbana, on 3 January, killing people, raping women and taking away cattle. On

[1103] As opposed to Mattru on the Jong, which is in Bonthe District.

[1104] Also during the Christmas week, Kenema Town and Magburaka (Tonkolili District headquarter) were attacked.



hearing that they were approaching the headquarter town of Baiama, the Paramount Chief reported the threat to the SLA's Bo Brigade Headquarter. However, no action was taken by the SLA to prevent the attack on Baiama, which took place on 4 January 1995. People were gathered in the Court Barrie, beaten and kicked by the RUF forces. Six people were killed, houses looted, cattle taken and over 20 houses were burnt. On the same day, Mokeilendeh was also attacked. Confusion arose in the mind of the civilians since uniformed men came to Baiama on 6 January 1995 telling people they were Government forces but, shortly after, left the town. People did not know to which government they were belonging, particularly because the RUF was now calling itself a "Government".

RUF forces attacked Baiama a second time on 8 January 1995, killed people, burnt some houses and abducted some people who were released shortly after. After the attack, SLA forces came from Bo to Baiama, after the Paramount Chief made another appeal to the SLA Brigade Commander. However, these SLA forces, who did not stay long, took all the cattle of the town.

The headquarter town of Dambala (Selenga Chiefdom), about 12 miles north of Bo Town, was also attacked in January 1995 by RUF forces coming from the direction of Negbenah, which is four miles east of Dambala. This time as well, SLA forces who were based in the town were nowhere to be found at the time of the attack. During the attack, RUF forces killed approximately three people and burnt down up to 110 houses.

In January 1995, RUF forces attacked the SLA forces based in Grima (Valunia Chiefdom) and overpowered them. Attacks on SLA positions were frequent, including on their bases in Mandu and Monghere (Valunia Chiefdom). Throughout 1995, civilians hiding in the bush were tracked down either by RUF or SLA forces. RUF forces were raiding villages and hunting civilians in the bush, mainly for food. Civilians were maltreated as RUF forces beat them, dripped melted plastic on them, raped women and, frequently, young girls, and forced people to have sexual intercourse with members of their own family. Young people were taken away and some people were killed, such as one man who was killed so the RUF forces could take his animals. Another incident concerns a young farmer who had his fingers cut off when the RUF forces discovered he had set traps to get meat.

Negbema, 16 miles from Bo Town in Niawa Lenga Chiefdom, which adjoins Selenga Chiefdom to the north-east, was also attacked in January 1995. At the time of the attack, no SLA forces or local militia were based in the town. RUF forces, as they identified themselves to the civilians,[1105] burnt down houses and abducted young boys. Another attack took place later during the year, probably in May 1995, during which the RUF forces burnt down more houses, killed some people and abducted some young girls. In August 1995, SLA forces came to protect the town. However, according to civilians, they were more thieves than liberators as they were taking away all the food from civilians.

The SLA forces took property from civilians in Valunia Chiefdom, including food items and livestock, claiming it was on orders. They also forced civilians to work for them, including requiring drivers to carry items for them. Anyone who refused would be punished, often by being verbally

[1105] It is reported that the commander of the RUF forces who identified them to the civilians was approximately 15 years old.

abused or beaten. The only secondary school, in Koyeima, was completely vandalised; the furniture, steel windows and doors were removed and, for the most part, taken to Bo Town, either to be sold or to be used by the SLA forces based there. In addition, checkpoints were set up in the town and operated both by SLA soldiers and by civilians. People were stopped at checkpoints and faced being "booked", i.e. fined, for failure to carry the correct identity cards, among other things.

Momajoe and its environs (Bagbo Chiefdom) were again attacked in January 1995 but no mention is made of casualties at this time. RUF forces deposed all the chiefs and elected new ones, although it is not clear how these elections took place. The area was divided into two operational zones, with one command post at Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom) and another post in Momajoe (Bagbo Chiefdom). Soon after their arrival, RUF forces made civilians work for them, in particular to carry property taken from one town to another town and to carry wounded RUF members back to their bases. In addition, RUF forces threw civilians out of their houses so that the forces could occupy them and forced civilians to feed them. Salt was the most expensive condiment, for which people were killed. No civilian was allowed to eat proper food, which led to the death of children from malnutrition. Any civilian refusing to obey orders from the RUF forces was killed and it is suggested that rapes also occurred around this time.[1106] RUF forces remained in control of Momajoe and its environs for around 9 months, up to the end of 1995.

In 1995, "loyal"[1107] SLA forces began attempting to dislodge RUF forces from Bagbo Chiefdom but harassed civilians, taking away all the property that was hidden in the bush.

In February 1995, Njala (Komboya Chiefdom) was attacked for the second time by RUF forces using a bypass route through Kundorma and Pelewahun rather than the route through Gumahun and Naiagolehun. SLA forces were based in Njala but were overpowered. Some civilians were killed and others were forced to carry property that was taken from the town. Those who were abducted travelled to Kpelewama (Valunia Chiefdom), where the RUF had a settlement and then moved to Kpetema, which is located near their main base, Bokurr, in Valunia Chiefdom. On their way to the base, civilians who were unable to keep up were shot dead and some women were raped. In Kpelewama, the RUF forces opened fire, killing one woman and her child before cutting her head off. After they arrived in Kpetema, all the remaining civilians were released, allegedly because RUF forces did not authorise civilians to come to their base.

During the RUF attack on Njala, the commander in charge of the SLA forces was killed by one of his subordinates, allegedly because he was a "loyal" SLA member. After the death of this commander, SLA forces relocated to Mendewa, three miles outside of Njala. From there, they occasionally returned to Njala, stealing property from the people of Njala and surrounding areas. In one incident, SLA forces came to Njala with a truck, opened fire as they entered and loaded their truck with food and non-food items. The SLA forces were at this time using the word "clearing" to refer to the taking of property in the town.

[1106] Key persons talk about marital homes being "broken up".

[1107] At this time, the key persons speak of "loyal SLA forces", who were believed to be loyal to the Government and "sobels", who were SLA forces believed to be in collusion with the RUF.

Since the SLA forces had completely left Njala, the RUF forces used this road to travel from the East to the West up to Gbaama and back. On their way, they were harassing civilians, taking food and forcing them to carry it for the RUF forces to their base at Bokurr, on top of the mountain near Njala.

Thus, starting in 1994 up to 1995, the whole of Komboya Chiefdom was affected by both RUF and SLA activities. Civilians living in the bushes in sorkoihun[1108] were chased by RUF forces for food. Civilians were also killed for various reasons during this period, including for failing to show the RUF forces where other civilians were hiding. In other incidents, a man was amputated between Bauya and Tibor, seven houses were burnt down in Tibor and four civilians were killed at Talla II.[1109]

In 1995, RUF forces coming mainly from Bumpeh and Lugbu Chiefdoms were attacking villages and sorkoihun in Tikonko Chiefdom. Property was taken, houses burnt, civilians killed and young people abducted. At Wotebehun, north of Baoma in the south-west of Tikonko Chiefdom, three men and two women were shot and killed, sheep belonging to a chief were taken away and some houses were burnt. At Yegensa, one man was killed and his body tied to a tree. At Buewama, people were killed and houses and a mosque were burnt. At Kassama, two and a half miles from Baoma, RUF forces killed two people, which the SLA forces based there made no attempt to stop. In June 1995 at Baoma, which is on the Sewa River in the south-west of Tikonko chiefdom, RUF forces entered the town from the direction of Kassama (to the north of Baoma) and stayed there for two days. RUF forces threw some people into the Sewa River, where some drowned, and killed many others.

The same scenario was repeated in many places in 1995, including Buewama, Kassama, Sembehun Tabema, Benehun, Shengema and Mano Bembehteh, which are all in the south of the chiefdom, and Dodo, Faikundor, Foidu, Samie Tabaima, which are all around Tikonko Town. In all of these attacks, many young men and women were abducted, including people who were underage. Civilians identified the assailants as RUF forces, dressed in jeans and t-shirts and some having red pieces of cloth tied around their heads.

From March to June 1995, SLA forces were deployed in Dodo (Tikonko Chiefdom). However, these forces harassed civilians, molested them, took their property and killed alleged "rebel" collaborators. On one occasion, they cut off the head of a suspected collaborator, put it on a stick and went to every house asking for some money as a sign of appreciation for their job. Tikonko Town itself was attacked for the second time in June 1995 but civilians had already fled the town. Dodo was also attacked by RUF forces in June 1995. People were shot and killed, among them the Town Chief's son, and some were seriously wounded with knives. All of Dodo, except the mosque and a few houses, was burnt.

The second attack on Bumpeh Town (Bumpeh Chiefdom) took place between March and April 1995, with the third one occurring in June. The March attack on Bumpeh was part of a massive RUF operation in the chiefdom allegedly in retaliation for the killing of RUF members by SLA forces in the Sierra Rutile Mining area in nearby Moyamba District. The attacks on different villages in the

[1108] This refers to hiding places in the bushes, also spelled "sorquehun".
[1109] No further details are available on any of these incidents.

chiefdom left over 100 civilians dead within a few days.[1110] During the third attack on Bumpeh Town, many people were abducted, at which time civilians were told that the RUF needed more people to be trained. In addition, a lot of people were killed, more people were tortured, some had their hands amputated and young girls and women were raped. Some people were burnt alive in a house.[1111]

Starting in July 1995, SLA forces regained control over the area and the surrounding chiefdom of Tikonko during a massive "mopping up" operation.[1112] During their operation in Bumpeh Town in early July 1995, SLA forces claimed to have killed a lot of RUF members but no other source of information could confirm the fatalities. However, it is clear[1113] that from July 1995, SLA forces retook control of a large area south of Bo Town, inflicting serious defeats on the RUF for the first time since the start of the second phase of the conflict.[1114]

However, SLA control over an area never guaranteed the absence of RUF attacks, which were often carried out by pockets of forces disseminated in various areas. For example, Yengema was attacked in September and 60 civilians were put in five houses that were set on fire; in addition, RUF forces killed a lot of civilians at Serabu. However, after these last attacks, Bumpeh Town and the entire chiefdom were free from an RUF presence. That same month, SLA forces who had gone to repel RUF forces in other town in the chiefdom, namely Kpakema and Serabel, returned with seven captured RUF members.[1115] These RUF members were paraded in Bo Town before they were killed and burnt in front of the NPRC Secretariat, which was witnessed by a large crowd. The bridge in Bumpeh Town divided the town in two distinct living areas, one being for the civilians and the other one for the SLA forces. Shortly after, the SLA commander exhorted civilians to come out of the bushes.

In July 1995, RUF forces coming from Simbaru Chiefdom (Kenema District) launched attacks on Badjia, Bagbe and Komboya Chiefdoms, where over 40 towns and villages were destroyed and, in total, 50 civilians were killed. The armed men who carried out the attacks were dressed in full military uniforms.

The following month, panic broke out in Gondama IDP camp (Kakua Chiefdom) as people feared another RUF attack was taking place. People were running around the camp and during the confusion, ECOMOG forces fired a heavy weapon, which resulted in the death of eight civilians. ULIMO soldiers came as reinforcements from Bo Town and on their way to Gondama, arrested two boys who they believed were former RUF members. The two boys were killed immediately, one

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[1110] AFP, 26 April 1995.

[1111] The precise figures of the casualties could not be obtained.

[1112] It was not, however, totally clear when those SLA forces first arrived in the town as there are suggestions that some SLA members were already deployed at the time of the third attack.

[1113] Amnesty International Report, "Sierra Leone – Human Rights abuses in a war against civilians – 13 September 1995".

[1114] This military victory has to be read in conjunction with the recent military training the SLA received from the Executive Outcomes, the South African mercenary company contracted by the Sierra Leonean Government. Similar "mopping up" operations were carried out in Moyamba District and, shortly after, in Bonthe District.

[1115] It seems that the SLA forces recaptured those towns.



of them having his genital organ cut off before being killed and the other one being beaten and tied up. Both were thrown into the Sewa River.

A second attack on Dambala (Selenga Chiefdom) took place in August 1995 but unlike the first one, SLA forces fought the RUF forces and repelled them. Up to 30 people, identified as "strangers" passing through the village on their way to Bo, were killed during this attack, possibly by SLA forces at checkpoints, and were buried in a mass grave. Another attack took place in the nearby village of Joru, four miles from Dambala, but this time, RUF forces did not use their weapons. Rather, they hit people on their heads with stones until they died, claiming they were doing it to save their ammunition. RUF forces also burnt down up to 20 houses during this attack.

By the middle of 1995, the situation in Bo District was divided in two: while SLA forces had retaken control of a large area in the west of the District, minimising RUF activities in that area, the large eastern area was still severely affected by RUF incursions carried out mainly from other Districts.

c) Phase III: Late 1995 to 1997 and beyond[1116]

The initiation of Kamajors began in mid to late 1995; rapidly, all the chiefdoms had their own Kamajors. They were initially armed with single barrel guns, sticks and spears.[1117] Furthermore, except in Bagbo and Lugbu Chiefdoms and a camp in Valunia Chiefdom, it should be noted that RUF forces did not have bases in Bo District where, unlike other Districts in the south, they were entering sporadically from other Districts.

In mid to late 1995, the idea of initiation came up in Bumpeh Chiefdom[1118] and people were sent to Bo Town for that purpose. After their initiation, Kamajors went back to Bumpeh Chiefdom, in the far west of Bo District, where they worked for some time hand-in-hand with SLA forces based in Bumpeh Town. While sent by the SLA commander to get some food in Nyayahun, north of Bumpeh Town, Kamajors came under fire. The identity of the men attacking the Kamajors proved to be SLA forces who had started developing a camp called "Bulkoh" with RUF forces near Nyayahun. Kamajors examining the bodies found the ID card, boots and uniform of an SLA commander who had sent them. On their return to Bumpeh, the SLA commander denied that the armed men were his men, which led the Kamajors to decide to join with more Kamajors to attack the camp.

During the second half of 1995, at the time the Kamajor initiation ceremonies were introduced in the District, towns and villages in Tikonko Chiefdom sent men to be initiated.[1119] During the first round of initiations in 1995, only people above 15 were initiated, but this changed later, although no date is specified. Tikonko Chiefdom soon came under the control of the Kamajors.

[1116] Little information was available on events in 1998 to 2001, because the District was under Kamajor control and no further RUF/AFRC attacks were reported.

[1117] It should be noted that compared to other Districts in the South, the records reveal little information on CDF activities, in particular on atrocities they may have committed. It is unclear whether this meant that fewer violations were committed or whether violations were committed and we lack information, as people are reluctant to talk on this.

[1118] The initiation ceremonies started in Bonthe District.

[1119] No more details could be obtained on the place where this initiation took place.



In late 1995, as the RUF forces were spreading throughout Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, the elders of the chiefdom sought the Regent Chief's permission to initiate people into the Kamajor society. After permission and full support was granted by the Regent Chief, one person was sent to the village of Tihun (Bonthe District) to contact the Kamajor's High Priest Initiator. On arriving in the headquarters of Tellu, the High Priest Initiator requested that the Gondama – Tellu road be brushed for security, to prevent any RUF incursion. However, one young man who had returned to his village to look for food had his left hand cut off when he came across some RUF forces at Nagbena, two miles from Tellu.

In late 1995, RUF forces left Njala Town (Komboya Chiefdom) for their main base on the mountain near Njala. Knowing that there were no SLA forces stationed in Njala at that time, RUF forces regularly used the road to travel from the east end through Gumahu and Korkortie to the west end at Gbaama and back.

As Kamajor operations were spreading in Bonthe and Pujehun Districts, dislodged RUF forces from those Districts joined their companions in Bagbo Chiefdom, primarily in Momajoe, Sumbuya and Kissahoi, 4 miles from Momajoe. In December 1995 in Kissahoi, RUF forces brought with them over 300 civilians, who had been forced to carry property for the RUF. The regrouped forces launched a massive attack on civilians in December and over 700 civilians were captured in different villages, including Momajoe, Maniwa, Mani-Bo and Tissana. All those abductees were taken to Madoko (Bagbo Chiefdom) before being divided into groups and taken to different locations in Bo and Pujehun Districts, depending on their origin. The fate of these people is as yet unknown.

Events in 1996

After 1995, most of the population had fled Bagbe Chiefdom, which is north-east of Bo Town. There were instances of RUF incursions, such as one in early 1996, when RUF forces attacked Benduma (Bagbe Chiefdom), one of the largest towns in the chiefdom where the Paramount Chief resides. The young RUF forces, who were described as "uncontrollable", started firing indiscriminately, killing a member of their own forces, whose body they cut into pieces and ate, while some drank the blood.

As in other chiefdoms, Valunia Chiefdom had its own Kamajors initiated in Bo Town by the Deputy Initiator sometime before 1996.[1120] When they returned to their chiefdom in 1996, the Kamajors successfully repelled RUF forces from their Camp Kokahun, which was near the towns of Sengina and Yamandu, close to the border with Moyamba District. The Kamajors seized arms and ammunition, including machine guns, and freed some civilians who were being held captive at the base. At that time, SLA forces were removed from the chiefdom allegedly because of controversy surrounding the fact that their attire and weapons were similar to those of the RUF forces.

In early 1996, young men of Komboya Chiefdom were initiated in Bo-Messima and came back to settle in Njala. They successfully repelled the RUF forces from the chiefdom.[1121] At this time, the hunting of alleged RUF collaborators began and those suspected were seriously beaten, tied up and

[1120] No further information is available on the exact dates.

[1121] There is little information available on how the Kamajors managed to fight off the RUF forces, including information relating to the number of battles, casualties, damage to property and so on.



forced to sit under the sun. Anybody who had stayed in the towns during RUF attacks was suspected of being a collaborator. One person, who the RUF forces had appointed Town Commander, was undressed, tied up and severely beaten before being released. Freedom of movement was restricted and passes were required from civilians before they were allowed to move from one place to another. Any civilian failing to show such a pass at checkpoints could be suspected of being a "rebel" or a "rebel" collaborator and be treated accordingly.

Kamajors from Bonthe District entered Bagbo Chiefdom through Fola, south of Momajoe, in early 1996, where they established their first base. In order to repel RUF forces still based in Momajoe, it was decided that every town should nominate four "gallant" men to be initiated. Those men, numbering up to 200 from the entire chiefdom, were taken to Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom (Bonthe District), where the Kamajor's High Priest Initiator initiated them in February 1996.

However, RUF forces were still active in the area and in April 1996, they launched attacks on a number of towns in the environs of Momajoe that the Kamajors were unable to withstand. A number of civilians were killed and others were wounded during these attacks. In a separate incident, RUF forces killed three men accused of collaboration with Kamajors in Momajoe and displayed their heads at checkpoints. Civilians continued to suffer from the RUF presence in this area by having their property taken away, being denied food, being thrown out of their houses and married women were not allowed to sleep with their husbands.

Later, but probably still in April 1996, the newly initiated Kamajors took control of Momajoe and its environs.[1122] As a result of this, RUF forces moved to Bendu (Malen Chiefdom, Pujehun District), taking a large number of civilians with them. It appears that these civilians were later rescued sometime in April 1996 by Kamajors from Pujehun District and taken to a town near Momajoe.

The Kamajors brought a large amount of stolen property they had found during their attack in Bendu with them to Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom). Probably as a result of this, RUF forces attacked Sumbuya for the third time towards the end of April 1996. It was during this attack that Sumbuya was destroyed and many houses were burnt down.

The last attacks by RUF forces on Bagbo Chiefdom took place in May 1996, in the area surrounding Momajoe, during which houses were burnt down and two people were killed in Yegelleh. After this, the Kamajors controlled Lugbu Chiefdom, in particular the Sumbuya axis, from where the roads lead up to Bumpeh Chiefdom, to Jiama Bongor Chiefdom and on to Kenema District and down through Bagbo Chiefdom to Pujehun District.

After the attack on Gerihun in 1995 in Baoma Chiefdom, adjoining Badija and Bagbe Chiefdoms to the south, RUF forces were still occupying some villages across the Sewa River from Gerihun. In some of these villages, people had to live with those forces, working for them and women were forcefully taken. As a result of this, in April 1996, 200 men were initiated into the CDF. However, their relationship with SLA forces still based in Gerihun was not friendly and problems began to arise between the two forces.[1123]

[1122] No further information is available.

[1123] No further information is available.



In April 1996, a group of well-armed people coming from the direction of Kori Chiefdom (Moyamba District) arrived in Baiama (Gbo Chiefdom). These men, whose identity is unknown, introduced themselves as SLA forces, but left the town in the evening to an unknown destination. After this, the Paramount Chief called a meeting to ask the townspeople to provide young men for initiation into the Kamajor society, which they did. A couple of weeks later, in late April 1996, the senior officer in charge of the SLA Brigade in Bo came to Baiama with 90 men, of whom 20 remained in the town and the other 70 went out on patrol. In early May 1996, unidentified uniformed men attacked Baiama and a number of houses were set on fire. The Kamajors stationed in Baiama believed the attack was perpetrated by SLA forces so there was no SLA presence in town until later in the month, when another SLA battalion was established in Baiama and began working together with the Kamajors.

Probably in early 1996,[1124] the Kamajors from Bumpeh Chiefdom attacked the RUF/SLA[1125] camp called "Bulkoh". They killed up to 200 men, presumed to be both SLA and RUF forces. Some men were shot on the ground and others were hiding in the trees, where they were shot, fell into the Tarba River and drowned. The female commander was killed, her body cut into pieces by the Kamajors and cooked in a large pot for the whole day. This was apparently done for retaliatory or revenge purposes and the woman was not subsequently eaten. Following this, Kamajors leaving the area of Bumpeh for Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom) were often caught by SLA forces and killed.

Following the attack on "Bulkoh" camp, Kamajors from Bumpeh Chiefdom moved from Bumpeh to Tikonko, where they established their base. Following an attack by the SLA forces, they went back to Bumpeh. On their way back to Bumpeh, they discovered villages that had been looted and burnt by SLA and RUF forces. In these villages, bodies were found with plastic in their eyes and some people had been amputated. At Serabu, for example, up to 300 buildings were burnt, including the hospital, and the convent and the Archbishop's compound appeared to have been looted.

The main Kamajor base in Valunia Chiefdom at that time was in Mandu, which is on the road leading from Tonkolili District south towards Selenga Chiefdom. After they successfully repelled the RUF forces from Kokahun, the Kamajor commander decided to initiate more men. To do so, he asked the seven Section Chiefs to give as many men as they could. It was at this stage that young boys, described as school-going boys under the age of 18, were also initiated. As their number increased, they planned to attack Bokurr, the main RUF base in the chiefdom. It is reported that they undertook this operation together with SLA forces. The Kamajors came back with a quantity of arms and ammunition and some property previously stolen by RUF forces. After this attack, RUF forces attacked the Kamajors in all the sections of the chiefdom; anytime there was any threat in one of the sections, Kamajors from the other sections would come to provide support.

On or around 20 June 1996 at Tellu (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom), the High Priest Initiator initiated up to 800 local hunters and youths into the Kamajor society. After the initiation, the new initiates were asked to return to their towns and villages to work for the protection of their towns and villages and for the chiefdom as a whole.

[1124] The exact date is unclear and could not be confirmed by open sources.

[1125] As mentioned earlier, this camp was reportedly composed of both RUF and SLA forces.



In July 1996, armed men attacked Tellu in large numbers, some dressed in complete military uniform and fully armed, while some were carrying two rifles, one in their hands and the other one slung across their backs. Some Kamajors were killed, as was the Fullah headman of Jiama Bongor Chiefdom. The Kamajor initiation site and some houses were burnt. Some Kamajors went to meet the advancing "rebels" - as described by civilians - and fought them near Gordie. The armed men were overpowered and the Kamajors came back with three heads, weapons and military uniforms. From what was found on the bodies, it appeared that most of them were military officers from the SLA Battalion deployed in Koribondo. The CDF National Coordinator was reported to have come to Gbaama the day after and to have left with some weapons and the military uniforms.

Thus, by the end of 1996, the whole District except Bo and Koribondo, which were controlled by SLA forces, was under CDF control. Clashes occurred many times between Kamajors and SLA forces at Koribondo and Bo Town. For example, towards the end of October 1996, fighting between those two forces took place in Bo Town and lasted several hours, leaving members of both sides and civilians dead.[1126]

Events in 1997

RUF forces launched subsequent attacks in Selenga Chiefdom in 1997 but each time, the Kamajors were successful in repelling those forces, with little killing of civilians or destruction of civilian property or houses.

In 1997, the Paramount Chief of Komboya Chiefdom, who had played an important role in bringing peace between the Kamajors and SLA forces in Bo, was invited together with some Kamajors to the Headquarter at Reservation Quarters, Bo Town. On his arrival, SLA forces opened fire, killing the Paramount Chief, some Kamajors and some civilians.

Kamajors controlled Bagbo and Lugbu Chiefdoms until the arrival of United Nations peacekeepers, during which time the Kamajors established a court system and assumed the mantle of authority from chiefs. At the same time, they were harassing the civilian population for food and suspected "rebel" collaborators were chased and killed. In addition, around this time,[1127] the Commanders told the people in Limba (Bagbo Chiefdom) that the CDF National Coordinator had told them that every town under Kamajor control should contribute three stones of diamond not less than three carats each to buy weapons.

[1126] AFP, 31 October 1996. According to the Sierra Leone Bi-Monthly Information Report No.9, "the fighting in Bo town on 30 October, 1996 erupted following the acrimonious break-up of a meeting between the Kamajors and the military at Brigade Headquarters, the purpose of which was to enable the Kamajors and the military to resolve their differences over Talama", a village west of Bo. Two days earlier, "[...] it was reported that Kamajors in Talama village tried to prevent members of the military from looting zinc roofing sheets from Njala University College, 7 miles outside Talama. In response, the military in Talama detained the Kamajors involved at the local barracks. On hearing this news other Kamajors in the area decided to converge on the barracks with a view to resolving the situation. En route, these Kamajors were ambushed by soldiers using RPG launchers and suffered casualties [...]."

[1127] This date is not clear.

In Lugbu Chiefdom, about 85% of the male were initiated, some of them becoming initiates to avoid harassment. It is worth noting that after the Kamajors had taken control of an area, some people were initiated without the intention that they would become a fighter, in which case the initiation period was shorter. The general perception of the population and people who were initiated in this manner was that becoming a member was a protective measure, since people who were not members of the Kamajors could be suspected of being a "rebel" collaborator.

By 1997, Kamajors cleared Bagbe Chiefdom of an RUF presence and it appears that the AFRC regime did not affect Bagbe Chiefdom. In Badjia[1128] and Boama Chiefdoms, the attitude of the Kamajors is described as having changed to become arrogant and disrespectful towards civilians. The Kamajors deposed the Chiefs, established their own courts and required people to give them food and money and to work in the Kamajors' farms.[1129]

Once the Kamajors obtained control of Valunia Chiefdom, they operated checkpoints, where they issued travelling passes for Le 500 per day per traveller, described by the Kamajors as a war effort for their sustenance. Anybody wanting to move within this area had to purchase and, when required, produce such a pass. People who were suspected of being a member of the SLA were subject to interrogation, in some cases brief, and were punished and sometimes killed. Non-initiated civilians were required to provide them with food, which led many young adults to join the society. The Kamajors also took property from people passing through checkpoints. In one instance, one car that was seized was handed over to the Deputy Initiator, who was residing in Kongombahun in Niawa Langa village after she had fled Bo Town.

As mentioned, most of the Chiefs were deposed and the Kamajors took over their responsibilities. Civilians disobeying their orders or complaining about their authority would be punished. People were put in cages called a "'kuliehun", which was so small that it would not reach the height of a person's knee. A common punishment inflicted was the use of FM rope, namely a nylon rope tied on two edges of a small stick around a person's hands and tightened.[1130] Thus, in December 2000, while in Bo, a man who declared on the radio that the nomination of the new Regent Chief for Wunde was not endorsed by the population was arrested by Kamajors, severely beaten for six days and threatened to be killed before being released following pressure from a human rights activist. Other opponents to this nomination were also arrested and taken to CDF headquarters in Bo, although no further information is available on what happened to them.

Fighting between the Kamajors and SLA forces began spreading from Libi Junction in Malen Chiefdom to Bathurst, south of Koribondo, in April-May 1997. In one incident, SLA soldiers were captured, although no further information is available on what happened to them after their capture.

[1128] RUF forces left Badjia Chiefdom, in the north-east of Bo District, in 1996, which then remained under the control of patrolling Kamajors. No further details are available as to under what circumstances the RUF forces departed or any acts committed by the Kamajors in the chiefdom at this time.

[1129] In addition, they tied people up and sometimes killed them, although no further details are available.

[1130] This rope was called "FM", meaning "frequency modulation", because once tied with this rope, civilians spoke or confessed.



During the AFRC regime, RUF/AFRC forces were mainly concentrated in Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom) and Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) and on the highway between Bo and Koribondo. During this period, Kamajors attacked Koribondo on several occasions[1131] and RUF/AFRC forces were driven out during the beginning of 1998.

Shortly after the Coup in May 1997, the Kamajors drove the AFRC out of Gerihun (Boama Chiefdom) and back to Bo Town. However, in June 1997, when Gerihun was attacked by RUF/AFRC forces, the Kamajors were unable to defend the town as they ran out of ammunition and up to six civilians were killed, including the Paramount Chief. Many houses were burnt down, including that of the former Vice President of Sierra Leone.

In June 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked ECOMOG troops based at Gondama twice. The first time, the combined forces were not able to challenge the heavy firepower of the ECOMOG forces. However, some refugees were killed, some by drowning in the river. During the second attack, running out of ammunition, ECOMOG forces found refuge at the Mil Camp at Gbaama. As RUF/AFRC forces were controlling all the access roads to Gbaama, the welfare of these ECOMOG members were at stake, so 11 days after the attack, the local Kamajor commander took the decision to rescue them using a helicopter. The sounds of helicopter and jet fighters were heard flying towards Gbaama and Kamajors arriving by helicopter landed on the field of the Roman Catholic School. It took them several trips to rescue all the ECOMOG forces and by the end, the school was completely damaged, apparently by the constant landing and taking off of the helicopter. In November 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the township of Mamboma, to the north of Jaiama Bongor Chiefdom along the road from Telu, but were driven out by Kamajors coming from Gbaama.

RUF/AFRC forces based at Koribondo[1132] (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom) patrolled the area and attacked Kamajor positions, killing both civilians and Kamajors. In June 1997, they attacked Bendu (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom), a Kamajor base, again killing both Kamajors and civilians and burning some houses.[1133] The practice of looting by RUF/AFRC forces was also widespread at this time. As the RUF/AFRC attacks intensified, the Kamajors of Gbaama, Tikonko and Lugbu Chiefdoms attacked the RUF/AFRC base at Koribondo but were unsuccessful.

After May 1997, the Kamajors of Gbo Chiefdom started hunting what they called "Junta collaborators" and killed some people, although it was more common for them just to punish people they suspected of having any contact with the AFRC forces, for example by tying people up and making them stay out under the sun. The Kamajors also took food from civilians. It was useless

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[1131] During an attack that took place in June, eight civilians were killed. However, it could not be ascertained how those civilians were killed: http://www.focus-on-sierra-leone.co.uk.

[1132] For the most part, from 1991 to 1997, the SLA had a base at Koribondo and controlled the town. When the Coup took place in May 1997, SLA forces became members of the AFRC and so, in general, former SLA bases became RUF/AFRC bases.

[1133] One report states that while eight Kamajors, 11 adult civilians and one child were killed, after this attack 16 bodies dressed in military uniform were found.

to report these incidents, in particular the taking of food, to the CDF commander, who would reply by saying that his men were in the right, because they came to protect people.[1134]

A major incident took place in Tikonko Town (Tikonko Chiefdom) at this time. On 10 June 1997, the Kamajor's Chiefdom Ground Commander received a letter from the High Priest Initiator with the order to gather all Kamajors in Tikonko Chiefdom at Tikonko Town for the purpose of participating in an attack on RUF/AFRC positions at Bo Town. Approximately 200 or 300 Kamajors came from all directions of the chiefdom and two days later, more arrived. During their short stay, civilians were forced to feed them. These Kamajors engaged in stopping any RUF/AFRC movement southwards by blocking successfully the Bo-Mattru Jong (Bonthe District) road.[1135]

At this time, RUF/AFRC forces began to disguise themselves as Kamajors and attack towns in Tikonko Chiefdom. People were able to identify them as RUF/AFRC forces because they had RPGs, AK47s and grenades, whereas the Kamajors were armed with single barrel guns, cutlasses, sticks and knives. One incident took place on 25 June 1997, with some men dressed in full Kamajor attire came from the direction of Bo, riding Honda motorbikes. This was confusing to the people of Tikonko, because Kamajors never rode motorbikes and, at the same time, rumours were going round that RUF/AFRC forces were heading for Tikonko Town. Shortly after the arrival of these men, the sound of RPG fire was heard in the town. RUF/AFRC forces entered the town, taking property and killing people. All those who were trapped in their houses were killed, including 11 people in one house near the market and a woman who was disembowelled. One of the Kamajors based in Tikonko Town was beaten and tortured before being killed. Many Kamajors died in the forest along Lembema Road, north of Tikonko Town. A similar incident occurred in January 1998, when RUF/AFRC forces coming from Bo went to Towama, between Bo and Tikonko towns, saying it was a Kamajor base. Four civilians were killed, up to 25 houses were burnt and property was taken away. The RUF/AFRC forces went back to Bo and stayed there until ECOMOG forces arrived.

After reports had reached the CDF National Coordinator that the Kamajor commander who had rescued the ECOMOG troops at Gondama (Kakua Chiefdom) was harassing, maiming, ill-treating and killing civilians, this commander was replaced by another one, who became commander for Jiama Bongor, Bagbe, Lugbu and Tikonko Chiefdoms. In the weeks that followed (July 1997), there was relative peace, although the Kamajors began to steal property.

RUF/AFRC forces again bombarded the ECOMOG position at Gondama on 11 October 1997; ECOMOG responded by bombing RUF/AFRC positions, using Nigerian warplanes.[1136]

[1134] It is not clear who had control of the town at this point. While it appears that the Kamajors were in control, it is also said that at this time the CDF had been disbanded and the Kamajors were operating secretly.

[1135] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 22 July - 4 August 1997. It is, however, not clear when the Kamajors attacked the town, as the reports make no mention of this (these) attack(s). However, according to the Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 23 August - 01 September 1997, fighting continued between Kamajors and RUF/AFRC forces in the south of Bo Town, which may suggest that fighting already took place previously. Furthermore, it is clear that whatever battle may have taken place in the area between the RUF/AFRC and the Kamajors, the RUF/AFRC forces were still in control of the town.

[1136] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 1 - 13 October 1997.



In December 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Kamajors at Baiama (Gbo Chiefdom). A few days later, one man and one woman who were suspected of being relatives of an AFRC member were killed at Baiama Junction and their bodies remained lying there until they decomposed.

Operation "Black December" was declared in December 1997 by the CDF High Command in a bid to take control of RUF/AFRC positions and was implemented in Boama Chiefdom. As part of this operation, all the highways and roads leading to the villages were blocked, in order to prevent RUF/AFRC forces from attacking civilians. Due to this operation, Kamajors became increasingly dependant on civilians to obtain food and medication, as the supply routes were blocked. Nevertheless, the operation also successfully prevented RUF/AFRC movement and enabled the CDF to counter-attack the RUF/AFRC forces in Gerihun.

Events in 1998

In February 1998, fighting took place between Kamajors and RUF/AFRC forces all over the Southern Province, which led to the withdrawal of the combined forces. By early 1998, the Kamajors had regained control of Boama Chiefdom until the arrival of ECOMOG forces around 20-22 February 1998.[1137]

That same month, two boys came to Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom), their hands covered in blood. They told the people of Koribondo that Kamajors had shot their hands and that they were coming to attack Koribondo; indeed, the Kamajors did attack the town on 13 February. During this attack, two AFRC soldiers and two Kamajors died. Soon after, the AFRC forces withdrew from Koribondo, following the ousting of their government from Freetown in February 1998. The attitude of the Kamajors panicked people, who decided to move to Bo Town, where houses identified as occupied by Koribondo people were harassed. This situation lasted until ECOMOG arrived in Bo Town in February or early March 1998.[1138]

Around 16-17 February, there was a major battle between RUF/AFRC and ECOMOG forces in Bo Town;[1139] hundreds of people fled the town. The town was set on fire, massively looted and bodies were left lying on the streets. RUF/AFRC forces looted three commercial banks, destroyed the telecommunications network and damaged the Bo-Kenema power facility serving the Eastern Province.[1140] Shortly after, around 20 February, ECOMOG troops based at Kenema deployed in the north and east of the town, areas previously held by Kamajors and then in the town itself, where

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[1137] Key persons recognise that some atrocities were committed by Kamajors but tried to justify them, saying that anyway, there was no law or order and that these Kamajors were not trained for war as soldiers but took arms to defend democracy. They continued by stating that since most of them were not educated, you could not expect them to observe rules and regulations governing "warriors".

[1138] It is not clear from the records when ECOMOG arrived in Bo Town. However, ECOMOG movements in the rest of the country, in particular in Port Loko, Moyamba and Tonkolili Districts, as well as their arrival date in Kenema District suggests that ECOMOG troops had to be in Bo Town by the very beginning of March at the latest. Some contingents of ECOMOG forces were however already deployed in the District at Gondama (it has to be remembered that the Gondama Camp since 1993 was placed under the protection of Nigerian troops).

[1139] Open sources revealed that on 16 February, over 10,000 well-armed Kamajors entered the town from three different directions and "several junta soldiers and their sympathisers were killed or tried on the spot and handed over to anti-junta youths for execution [...]": AAP, 17 February 1998.

[1140] AFP, 24 February 1998.

Kamajors had been fighting RUF/AFRC forces.[1141] After RUF/AFRC forces had left the town, youths were searching for RUF/AFRC members and their "collaborators", including people who were suspected of being Temne.[1142] Those suspects who were caught were killed, some hacked to death and others had tyres put around their neck, which were then set on fire.[1143] Furthermore, a committee created for processing stolen property"discovered a large docksidearea that had been used to take such goods out of the country".[1144]

On their way out of Bo Town, civilians were thoroughly searched at Kamajor checkpoints. At one checkpoint on the way to Manguama, which lies north-east of Bo Town, some civilians were stripped naked, tied up and forced to sit on the ground, suspected of being "Junta" collaborators. These people were later killed. In another incident on 17 February, civilians coming in a truck were asked to show their passes at a checkpoint at Baiama junction (Gbo Chiefdom). Those who could not produce them where put into a cell made up of sticks and were beaten.

Kamajor harassment of the civilian population, including physical violence, looting and the burning of houses, continued throughout 1998. In one instance in Baiama (Gbo Chiefdom), a woman suspected of being an AFRC member's wife was killed and her body was displayed at the checkpoint. In the villages where they had found refuge, people were harassed by Kamajors for food.

Around June 1998, a large number of Kamajors attacked Koribondo, looting and burning over 70 houses. Shortly after the town was set ablaze, the CDF National Coordinator came to Koribondo and held a meeting at the village square, at which people of the town were present. During this meeting, he allegedly thanked the Kamajors but reprimanded them from not having followed his instructions completely, as he had told the Kamajors not to spare any building except the church, hospital, mosque and the village square. It appears that this attack was partly done in retaliation for Koribondo people hosting SLA and RUF/AFRC forces. Following this incident, some ECOMOG troops arrived in Koribondo to investigate the matter and the Kamajor commander together with 20 of his forces were arrested and taken to Bo.[1145]

Kamajors went to the south of Kakua Chiefdom to villages including Baoma, Segbwema, Adala and Berehun. On three separate occasions in December 1998, they took people's possessions, including cars, clothes and other valuable items, as well as any food they could find, including livestock. In addition, Kamajors targeted people suspected of being collaborators with both SLA and AFRC soldiers. One example is from the end of 1998, when the Kamajors drew up a list of the 25 "most wanted" people, who were suspected of having hosted soldiers in their houses. A letter was sent to Sembehun that Kamajors would attack the town to kill those 25 most wanted people and on the day they stated, a large group of Kamajors[1146] came to Sembehun. Although nobody was killed, as the 25 people were nowhere to be found, a lot of houses were burnt down. A short while later, the CDF

[1141] AFP, 24 February 1998; BBC Online News Archive, 25 February 1998.
[1142] The RUF leader was a Temne by tribe whereas the Kamajors were Mende.
[1143] No more information could be obtained on this event.
[1144] AFP, 24 February 1998.
[1145] It is not clear from the records what happened to these Kamajors after they were taken to Bo.
[1146] Records relate that "thousands" of Kamajors came to Sembehun on this day.

commander based at Koribondo, who had control over Sembehun and who led the search in December, required the 25 people to come to Koribondo and pay Le 50,000 each, or they would be killed. The people did as they were told and then were allowed to leave.

Following the RUF/AFRC invasion of Freetown in January 1999, negotiations started between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF. A ceasefire was signed in May and a peace accord supposed to mark the end of the conflict and known as the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed on 7 July in the Togolese capital. An important part of the accord was that the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process was to start within six weeks of its entry into force. This process, somehow delayed, was formally launched by the President of Sierra Leone on 20 October 1999 during a ceremony at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown and began properly on 4 November. However, despite the calls of the RUF leader and ex-AFRC leader to their troops to disarm,[1147] disarmament was implemented at a very slow pace, thus hindering the deployment of humanitarian aid in the country. The delay of the process was mainly due to the resumed fighting in the Northern Province and in Kono District.[1148] In the meanwhile, the first UN peacekeepers arrived in the country and, in January, troops from the Ghanaian contingent arrived in Bo District.[1149]

In a bid to foster and enhance the DDR process, sites for new DDR camps were identified around 10 March 2000, one being located at Gondama (Kakua Chiefdom).[1150] However, the disarmament process was stalled in May 2000, following the capture by RUF forces of over 300 UN peacekeepers in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. The process would be given a new start in November 2000 when the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF signed a new ceasefire agreement in Abuja, Nigeria.[1151]

On 31 January 2001, a CDF meeting was convened at the CDF District Headquarters in Bo Town in the presence of the UNAMSIL military observers (MILOBs) team for Bo, the resident Minister, the Deputy Defence Minister, the CDF District Administrator and the NCDDR (National Commission for the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration) representative. At this meeting, the problems caused by the CDF in the District were discussed, including the recent attack on the NCDDR office, the reorganisation of the CDF and CDF interference in police matters.

[1147] On 10 January, the RUF leader, the ex-AFRC leader and the Deputy Minister of Defence and CDF National Coordinator stopped in Bo Town, as part of sensitisation trip on the disarmament campaign, aimed at exhorting combatants, namely ex-AFRC, RUF and CDF, to disarm: IRIN West Africa, 10 January 2000.

[1148] In November 1999, only 1,500 combatants had disarmed out of the estimated total of 45,000 combatants: IRIN West Africa, 17 November 1999.

[1149] The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) was established by Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999), adopted on 22 October 1999. Six thousand peacekeepers were sent into the country and their number would increase over the coming months, following the security developments in the Northern and Eastern Provinces.

[1150] The initial camps were located at Port Loko North, Port Loko South, Kenema Town and Daru (Kailahun District): IRIN West Africa, 17 March 2000.

[1151] The security situation in the Northern and Eastern Provinces prevailing in 2000 urged the Government of Sierra Leone to negotiate a ceasefire with the RUF in November 2000. On 4 May 2001, those parties would meet again in Abuja, Nigeria to review the ceasefire. Further to the meeting in May 2001, those parties would hold monthly tripartite meetings as the Joint Committee on DDR. The final meeting took place in January 2002 when disarmament was declared complete and the war over.

During a separate meeting convened by the Deputy Defence Minister, the reorganisation of the CDF in the District was discussed, rather than its disbanding.[1152]

By 31 March 2001, the 14 chiefdoms of the District were declared safe for resettlement, thereby making the entire Southern Province safe, unlike the North, where humanitarian activities were not possible in three-quarters of the Province, and in the East, where the whole of Kono and Kailahun Districts (except Daru) and six chiefdoms in Kenema District were still considered unsafe.[1153]

Following the meeting in Abuja in May 2001, disarmament was carried out at different dates across the country. It was scheduled to start in Bo District by the end of September 2001[1154] but was briefly delayed. However, during a symbolic disarmament ceremony in Gerihun (Boama Chiefdom) on 20 October 2001, over 80 CDF members disarmed in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG) in Sierra Leone and were transported to the DDR camp at Gondama, where the SRSG addressed the now ex-combatants.[1155]

At the conclusion of the seventh tripartite meeting of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), comprising representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and the RUF held in Freetown on 8 November 2001, it was communicated that disarmament would be complete in Bo District on 10 November 2001.[1156]

3. Conclusion

The pattern of the conflict in Bo District followed to a large extent the one of the three other southern Districts. The RUF/NPFL incursion in Pujehun District in 1991 expanded in the bordering chiefdoms of Bo District. Successful SLA counter-attacks in 1991 and 1992 limited the RUF/NPFL attacks to a lower scale, mainly carried out by "pockets" of RUF/NPFL members for food finding purposes. The situation was similar in Bonthe and Pujehun Districts and would continue until the second phase of the conflict began in 1994.

As in the rest of the Southern Province, the conflict reached its peak in Bo District in 1994 and 1995, as RUF forces spread across the whole District. Their strong grip over the District would allow RUF forces to advance further inland towards the north-west (Moyamba District) and the south-west (Bonthe District), where most of the attacks in 1995 originated from Bo District through Moyamba District, unlike in 1991 when Bonthe District was affected by RUF /NPFL forces coming from Pujehun District. During this period, SLA forces were wholly unable to contain the RUF advance into the District and in the Southern Province as a whole, although (or because) their numbers increased greatly in 1994.

[1152] UNAMSIL press briefing, 31 January 2001.
[1153] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 11 – 31 March 2001.
[1154] IRIN West Africa, 13 August 2001; UNAMSIL press briefing, 14 August 2001. For example, in early August 2001, the Joint Committee on DDR declared disarmament complete for Port Loko and Kambia Districts.
[1155] UNAMSIL press briefing, 23 October 2001.
[1156] UNAMSIL press briefing, 09 November 2001. However, the target date of 30 November 2001 for the completion of the process in the whole country was not met and the disarmament was declared complete in January 2002.



This RUF progression and stay in the whole Southern Province and in Bo District in particular was gradually stopped by the initiative of the Kamajors who started fighting alongside the SLA in 1996. The collaboration between those two forces however deteriorated rapidly and fighting between them reached its climax in early 1997. At this time, the Kamajors and the SLA were controlling distinct and separate areas of the District.

Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown and its deployment in different towns in the Provinces in 1998, the Southern Province became free of RUF/AFRC attacks and instead came under the total control of the Kamajors. Bo District was not affected by the retreating RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown, as they regrouped and concentrated on the main mining areas (Kono District and north of Kenema District) and those areas in which CDF members did not have established and constant control, mostly in the Northern Province.

Throughout the conflict, widespread violations were committed primarily by RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC forces, but also by SLA forces and Kamajors, especially once they firmly established their control and authority over the District. Those violations were directed against civilians and their property and included stealing and destruction of property, physical violence, sexual assault, killing and abduction for use as fighters, workers or "wives". Only a few cases of mutilation were reported for the District, as most of these incidents took place during a specific RUF/AFRC operation called "Operation No Living Thing" in the first months of 1998 and following the retreat from Freetown. Furthermore, while it hosted thousands of IDPs from other Districts, mainly Pujehun District, Bo District suffered less internal displacement of its own population.

b. Bonthe District

1. Introduction

Bonthe District is located in the south-west of the Southern Province of the Republic of Sierra Leone. It is the only District in the Southern Province that shares boundaries with the other three Districts in the Province, namely Moyamba and Bo Districts in the north and Pujehun District in the south and east. Bonthe District is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean in the west.

Although located on Sherbro Island,[1157] its headquarter, Bonthe Town, is not part of the two chiefdoms of the island (Sittia and Dema Chiefdoms). Rather, its is part of another administrative structure, the Sherbro Rural District.

There are 11 chiefdoms in the District, two of which are located Sherbro Island:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Bendu Cha	Bendu
Bum	Madina
Dema	Tissana
Imperi	Gbangbama
Jong	Mattru

[1157] This island is commonly known as "Bonthe Island".

Kpanda Kemo	Matuo
Kwamwbai Krim	Tei
Nongoba Bullom	Gbap
Sittia	Yonni
Sogbini	Tihun
Yawbeko	Talia

The presence of the water, whether it is the ocean, the rivers or the swamp, is the most striking natural feature of the District. The nine chiefdoms of the mainland are separated by the ocean from the two chiefdoms located on Sherbro Island. The south of the District, especially Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom is an area made up of swampland.

The two main rivers of the District, the Sewa River and the Jong River, both of them taking their source directly in the ocean, would affect the deployment of the forces throughout the conflict. They would be a substitute way of communications, especially in the south of the District where the road network is rather poor. The highway that links Bo Town to Mattru (Jong Chiefdom), via Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom, Bo District) and Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom would allow rapid penetration into the north of the District from Bo District. From this highway, secondary roads extend into the neighbouring chiefdoms of Sogbini and Imperi.

The main economic activities include fishing, rice growing and palm plantations but the greatest revenue is generated by the rutile mining in the north of the District, particularly in Imperi Chiefdom. The north of the District and the south of Moyamba District, which advances into Bonthe District, are indeed renowned for the importance of their mining activities, which procured vital economic resources for the Government.

The ten years of conflict in Sierra Leone started in Bonthe District as early as April 1991, due to the fact that the District shares a border with Pujehun District, which was one of the entry points of the RUF/NPFL forces into Sierra Leone in March 1991. The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces entered the border chiefdom of Kwamebai Krim in May. This was the start of a long series of hostilities and atrocities committed against the civilians in the District, which lasted until the completion of disarmament in the District in mid 2001.

From this first incursion, Bonthe District was affected by the conflict through three discernable phases, the first one running from 1991 until the end of 1994. During the first attack in May 1991, RUF/NPFL forces settled in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom for a short while before moving westwards to the neighbouring chiefdom of Nongoba Bullom. When entering a village, they would always proceed in the same manner: they gathered the civilians in the Court Barrie, introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to redeem Sierra Leoneans from the corrupt APC regime and deposed and replaced local authorities. Defeated by the SLA forces some months later, they withdrew from Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom to their base in the south-west of Pujehun District. At the time of this first incursion, SLA forces were deployed mainly in Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island) but by the end of 1991, more bases in the east of the District were set up. RUF/NPFL forces occupied Bum



Chiefdom for six months before being repelled by the SLA. Although RUF/NPFL attacks were still reported during the subsequent years of this first phase, they never succeeded in going further than the three chiefdoms of Kwamebai Krim, Bum and Nongoba Bullom. In 1994, RUF forces coming from Pujehun District re-entered the District and succeeded in controlling some areas in those three chiefdoms.

Each of the RUF/NPFL and, later, RUF incursions was marked by violence against civilians; indeed, from the very beginning of the conflict in the District, there were incidents of physical violence against civilians, who were also killed, raped and abducted for the purposes of using them as fighters or workers. Government authorities in particular were targeted. Those forces also stole civilians' property, mainly food and domestic animals, and destroyed houses and other buildings. The SLA forces also imposed harm on civilians in general and on "collaborators" in particular, killing those suspected of having collaborating with the RUF/NPFL and RUF during their stay in their villages. Civilians were also harassed for their food and other property. As the conflict continued, SLA violence heightened, with cases of killing, rape and use of civilians for forced labour being reported. By the close of this first phase, rumours of imminent RUF attacks in the other chiefdoms of the District were rampant.

The second phase encompassed 1995 to February 1998 and is characterised by the spreading of the conflict across the District. By February 1995, RUF forces controlled all of the northern chiefdoms of the District and proceeded southwards and westwards in an ultimately unsuccessful attempt to attack Bonthe Town on Sherbro Island. Training bases were opened across those chiefdoms under RUF control. This phase was marked by a clear increase in violence against civilians, as RUF forces settled in those areas. Physical violence, killings, rapes and the abductions of civilians, mainly to be trained as fighters and to work for the forces continued to be carried out on a scale much larger than during the first phase. Also during this period, a massive killing, which was scarcely reported in the media, took place in late 1995.

By the end of the year, the RUF were dislodged from most of their strongholds by SLA forces assisted by foreign troops and Kamajors, who had earlier emerged in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom and subsequently developed in the other chiefdoms. During the subsequent years until the Coup in May 1997, Kamajors entrenched their control of the District, although some skirmishes with RUF forces were still reported. The Kamajors' initial collaboration with the SLA did not last long as tension and fighting erupted between the two factions.

Following the 25 May 1997 Coup, the RUF/AFRC were concentrated in Bonthe Town, from where the Kamajors had pulled out but maintained a covert presence around the town, allowing them to retake control of the town the day after the RUF/AFRC retreat in 1998. Civilians rapidly suffered at the hands of the Kamajors, who increased their demands on civilians, chased RUF collaborators and started regulating people's everyday life. The Chiefs, whose actions had been paralysed during the RUF stay, were again deposed and had no authority over their chiefdoms, as the Kamajors set up their own administrative structures and appointed their own Town Chiefs. Civilians were constantly harassed for food and other items; this harassment included physical violence and killing, mainly of alleged collaborators.

The last phase ran from February 1998 to the completion of disarmament in late 2001. During this time, the Kamajors were in total control of the District, as no more RUF or AFRC forces were operating in the District. The brief return of RUF/AFRC forces to Bonthe Town following the invasion of Freetown did not much change the situation of the District, let alone Bonthe Town. The Kamajors continued to impose and affirm their authority in every aspect of life, deciding over administrative and private matters, chasing "rebel" and "Junta" collaborators and intensifying their havoc on civilians. This would continue until the completion of disarmament and the deployment of UN peacekeepers throughout the District in late 2001.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1991

In early April 1991, traders coming from Bo Waterside (Soro Gbema Chiefdom, Pujehun District) reported to inhabitants of Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom that unknown gunmen had crossed into Sierra Leone from Liberia.[1158] Soon after, on 9 May 1991, RUF/NPFL forces coming from Gbandapi (Panga Kabone, Pujehun District) [1159] arrived by canoes to Tei (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom) in the south of Bonthe District, while civilians were conducting a ceremonial rite. These forces were allegedly led by some civilians from the chiefdom who had earlier gone to Gbandapi to bring them to Tei in search of the Paramount Chief.[1160]

On their arrival in Tei, one member of the RUF/NPFL forces shot a person in the leg, not knowing he was the Paramount Chief for whom they were searching. The Paramount Chief fled to the bush to hide from the forces. The RUF/NPFL forces asked civilians where they could find the Paramount Chief and when civilians revealed he was the man previously shot in the leg, the RUF/NPFL forces became more aggressive and beat people. The Paramount Chief was found behind his house, had his hands tied behind his back and was brought at the front of his house, where his property was taken away[1161] in his presence. He was then taken into his house and shot many times before the house was set on fire. His head was cut off and allegedly brought to Gbandapi. The RUF/NPFL forces appointed a man to be Town Commander of Tei and asked him to take care of the town in their absence.

In the same month, the combined forces entered Topain (north of Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom). There, they identified themselves as RUF fighting along side the NPFL from Liberia, who were mainly Burkinabes and Liberians. They assembled all the men and elderly people in the centre of the town and made them sit in the sun, on the accusation that they knew where the SLA forces and the

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[1158] Bo Waterside is the crossing point between Liberia and Sierra Leone and, by April, the RUF/NPFL had spread across Pujehun District.

[1159] Gbandapi is located on the bank of Malemie River, which joins the Wanjei River that flows to Bonthe District. It is renowned for hosting weekly trade fares where slat is predominantly sold. The RUF/NPFL forces were based there for a while.

[1160] Reports recount that a disgruntled man who had an argument with the Paramount Chief over a land issue went to Gbandapi to relate his fate to the RUF/NPFL forces. This has to be read in conjunction with the fact that the RUF/NPFL forces had been targeting Paramount Chiefs since they entered the territory of Sierra Leone, as the Chiefs represented the APC Government in the chiefdoms.

[1161] The property taken away included clothing, money earmarked for the mechanical cultivation of the rice the following year, two single barrel guns, rice and other personnel belongings.



staff of the Paramount Chief were. Property was taken, including household items and livestock. People were abducted and forced to carry the loads.

The RUF/NPFL forces then headed for the town of Borleh, which is four miles from Topain. In that village a man was slaughtered and mutilated in his house. They went further south to Mass Kpanguma, where they carried out similar actions as they had done in Topain, to where they returned in the evening of the same day. Topain was at that time selected to be a training centre as it was on a flat land and reasonably close to their base at Gbandapi (Panga Kabone Chiefdom, Pujehun District). The young men of the town were taken aside and encouraged to join the RUF/NPFL forces since they claimed to be fighting against corruption and for the liberation of the people of Sierra Leone. The young men were then assigned to operate checkpoints established at the entrance of the town.

From Topain, the forces went on daily stealing and killing sprees in the neighbouring villages. Young and elderly people were forced to carry loads from neighbouring villages to Topain and onwards to Gbandapi. A load meant to be carried by three people was often given to one person to carry.

On one Sunday in May, RUF/NPFL forces attacked Kale (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom), a town approximately 10 miles to the west of Topain. A lot of property was taken, including food items and livestock. The former Regent Chief was captured and seriously flogged before he was taken to Topain, where he was finally killed. His head was cut off and put at the main junction in the village for everybody to see.[1162] This killing was reported to the RUF High Command in Gbandapi, which led to the withdrawal of the troops based at Topain and to the court martial of the commander who had ordered the killing of the former Regent Chief. This commander was killed and replaced by another commander.[1163] The forces continued stealing and killing in the surrounding villages and attacked the town of Benduma (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom), three miles from Topain. The Chiefdom Speaker was captured there together with his three sons and some of his relatives. The RUF/NPFL forces took all of his property, then forced him and his sons to carry it for them to Gbandapi, where one of the sons and a relative were later killed.

Later in May 1991, the RUF/NPFL forces left Topain for Bonthe Town on Sherbro Island to launch an attack on the SLA forces based there. They gathered their forces from all their minor bases in and around Topain, abducted young men and elderly people to carry stolen property for them and took away all the canoes they could find from the surrounding villages. They continued to take property in the villages they passed on their way. There are reports of clashes between them and SLA forces along the way. A few days later, a heavy battle took place in the area surrounding Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island) between the RUF/NPFL forces and the SLA forces.[1164] Most of the RUF/NPFL forces retreated to their base at Gbandapi while others were killed and the SLA forces at Bonthe Town also started to advance to Topain.

[1162] It is further revealed that to make it more fearful, a cigarette was placed into the mouth of the dismembered head. This killing led many civilians to flee to the bush.

[1163] To a certain extent, the RUF adopted the internal structure and organisation of the Sierra Leone Army.

[1164] However, attacks actually taking place on Sherbro Island were not reported. It is accordingly more likely that this battle took place somewhere between Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom and Bendu Cha Chiefdom, on the western edge of the mainland. No further information is available on this event.

From their base at Gbandapi, the RUF/NPFL forces came at intervals to attack neighbouring towns and villages in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom but this time, they did not follow the previous pattern of introducing themselves as "freedom fighters". Rather, their attacks were allegedly carried out for reasons of reprisal, as they accused the civilians of supporting the SLA forces. Furthermore, they were poorly dressed and some were barefoot. For example, on 14 May 1991, RUF/NPFL forces entered Topain at 6.00am and fired continuously to scare people away. Civilians ran into the bush, leaving the RUF/NPFL forces free to take whatever property they could find. They also raped five young women, some under the age of 12. A three-month-old suckling mother was raped by many assailants.

Another attack was made on the town just one week later. This time not many people were found and the forces had to search for them in their hiding places in the bush. RUF/NPFL forces inflicted physical violence on the civilians and took away nearly all of their property, which consisted mainly of food items. Those civilians found hiding were severely beaten and their property was taken from them; some were brought into the town and forced to catch the remaining livestock for the forces. A woman was beaten with sticks until her skull cracked.[1165] Another was seriously beaten all over her body on the accusation of having committed adultery with the fighting forces. Others had hot melted plastic dripped in their eyes. Two houses, two kitchens and the Court Barrie were burnt by the troops on that day before they left for neighbouring villages. They returned in the evening from the direction they had come, bringing a lot of young men and boys below the ages of 12 and 15.

As their base in Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island) was too far to enable them to fight the RUF/NPFL concentrated in the south-east of the District, the SLA made a base south of Topain at Massa Kpanguma (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom). One hundred and fifty of them came to the chiefdom between June and July 1991, all in full military uniform and armed with new weapons including AK47s, RPGs, LMGs, mortar guns and grenades. From there, they went to Topain to open another base. Arriving in Topain, they gathered the young men[1166] of the town and told them they must help the SLA forces in ensuring the security of the town, mainly by operating checkpoints.

At this time, the SLA forces had already begun to harass civilians; for example, anyone who refused to operate a checkpoint was severely beaten and/or arrested and put in detention. Women were sometimes raped by some SLA members while their husbands were kept in detention. Other civilians from neighbouring villages were captured and brought to Topain to work as labourers. Their wives and children were taken away to unknown places and nobody knows what happened to them. The situation was similar at Massa Kpanguma, where civilians were forced to feed the SLA forces even although these forces already had their own supplies of food.[1167]

After a month staying in Topain, the SLA forces commanded the civilians to arm themselves with sticks, cutlasses or any other potential weapon to be ready to fight the RUF/NPFL forces who were

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[1165] This woman reportedly had significant and permanent mental health problems following this attack.

[1166] No further information is available about how young these people were.

[1167] Every town or village was to contribute 24 dozen fish, a bag of rice, five litres of palm oil and Le 25,000 on a monthly basis.



threatening to attack the town. An ambush was laid at Bandakor, a village close to Topain, but the RUF/NPFL forces did not come at that time.

Between June and July 1991, the RUF/NPFL forces attacked the town of Sohlon (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom, which adjoins Kwamebai-Krim Chiefdom to the west). Dressed in country clothes with red bandanas tied around their heads, the forces came together with some of the inhabitants of the town and some people from Pujehun District, all speaking the Mende dialect.[1168] Those civilians had allegedly joined the forces willingly and were leading them and indicating the places where they could find SLA forces, Lebanese businessman and Government authorities or their relatives. On their arrival, the RUF/NPFL forces summoned a meeting of all the people of the town and instructed the Section Chief to detain everyone until they came back from Yelewa (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom). Two days after the attack of Sohlon, Yelewa was also attacked. The forces held a meeting with the civilians in the town and killed one prosperous businessman and native hunter after he was asked to produce his gun. His body was left in the open to rot, as the RUF/NPFL forces prevented people from burying it.

At around this time, the eight SLA members who had came to Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) from Bonthe Town asked civilians to help them construct an elevation at the jetty on which they could put their anti-aircraft gun. However, the SLA forces soon realised that the RUF/NPFL forces would overpower them and went back to Bonthe Town to obtain reinforcements from the SLA naval branch. Most of the RUF/NPFL forces left Yelewa after two days by boat, taking a lot of civilians with them, allegedly for use as protection against attack. Along the route for the headquarter town of Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) on the north bank of the river,[1169] the RUF/NPFL forces reached the junction on the Sewa River at Yele, which has routes going both to Bonthe and Gbap. On their arrival, they were attacked by the SLA reinforcements coming from Bonthe, who killed many of the RUF/NPFL forces. Civilians who were travelling with the RUF/NPFL forces had to dive and swim underwater to the other side, where they hid themselves until the battle was over. The SLA forces then went back to Gbap and from there to Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island).

The remaining RUF/NPFL forces (about eight of them) who were not part of the crossing went to Daama (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) where they took civilians' property, mostly clothes, food items and a box of tobacco, and forced a woman to cook for them. The troops then went to Mecca (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), where they abducted two men to bring the stolen property across the river to Yele before letting them go and telling them to go back to Mecca. The forces then withdrew from the chiefdom and retreated to Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom.

Some civilians and SLA forces who were left at Bandakor (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom) were attacked in November 1991 by RUF/NPFL forces coming from the Gbandapi route. The SLA forces were forced to retreat to Topain before going on to their base at Mass Kpanguma. After two days, they returned to Topain and launched a counter-attack that successfully repelled the

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[1168] Those RUF/NPFL forces probably came directly from Pujehun District, using the Wanjei River, which flows almost parallel to the Ocean.

[1169] The natural features of Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom are very unique, as the Sewa River separates the mainland on the north from the south edge, composed of a long strip of swamps and bordered by the Atlantic Ocean.



RUF/NPFL forces from Bandakor. More civilians were brought from neighbouring villages to Massa Kpanguma and used as labourers by the SLA forces. However, RUF/NPFL forces attacked Massa Kpanguma two weeks later, killing a lot of civilians. Defeated, the SLA forces pulled out of the town[1170] and when the SLA forces based at Topain heard of this attack, they also left the area. The surviving civilians fled to the bush but the RUF/NPFL forces did not settle in the town, destroying houses and taking livestock as they left the village. The day after the battle at Massa Kpanguma, the SLA forces who had pulled out passed by Korankor (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom); at a nearby village they tried to stop all the civilians at a checkpoint but as the fleeing population grew, they let them go.

Civilians at Mano (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), at the border with Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom, abandoned the town and boarded a patrol boat together with the SLA forces to safer areas. No sooner had they left than the RUF/NPFL forces entered the towns of Korankor and Mano. Civilians who had fled Korankor described discovering bodies when they returned to the village, mostly the elderly and children who could not find their way in the bush. They also found a lot of dwellings burnt, including the mosque, the Bondo society house and the Court Barrie. Civilians were also abducted to carry the stolen property.[1171] This incident forced civilians to abandon the town for the bush where they made makeshift camps. Food and medicine were difficult to get while in the bush, which led to many deaths, especially of children.

SLA forces who later entered the towns of Mano and Korankor after the RUF/NPFL attacks took civilian property, such as building materials and household utensils. The forces then burnt down the remaining two houses in Korankor when leaving the town. After this incident, SLA troops went from town to town identifying civilians they alleged to be "enemy collaborators", who they executed in public without any trial.[1172]

In November 1991, approximately 25 armed men entered the town of Kanga Oil Mill (Bum Chiefdom), at the border with Bo District (Bagbo Chiefdom). Civilians suspected those armed forces, who were carrying talisman and other charms, were NPFL forces, because they were all speaking in Liberian dialect. They were proved right as the men introduced themselves as NPFL forces who had come to liberate the people of Sierra Leone from the then APC government. The civilians cheered them and the night passed without incident, the forces leaving the next morning for Madina. On their way to Madina, they came across a commercial vehicle and took it to continue their journey. As in Kanga Oil Mill, their arrival in town passed without incident and they left to go

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[1170] This battle at Massa Kpanguma was also reported as taking place in July 1991. As this information could not be reconciled with the attack on Bandakor, which allegedly took place in November, it has to be considered that all these actions were carried out in the same period of time, between broadly July and November 1991.

[1171] It is reported that the RUF/NPFL forces went back to the direction of Soro Gbema Chiefdom (Pujehun District). This action, although carried out by an important number of RUF/NPFL forces that forced SLA to escape, was probably not part of a wider movement to advance into the District, as at this time, the SLA forces had repelled most of the RUF/NPFL forces out of Bo and Pujehun Districts.

[1172] Although one report mentioned that at this time, RUF/NFPFL forces were based in Topain, it seems that RUF/NPFL forces were no longer settled in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom and launched their attacks from Pujehun District.

back to Bo District. However, at some point on their way, they killed a Lebanese businessman, drank his blood and threw his body into a river.[1173]

One month later, NPFL forces together with RUF forces again entered Bum Chiefdom in Madina, where they abducted the Paramount Chief and took her to an unknown destination.[1174] They recruited a large number of the town's inhabitants, including young boys and girls, into the fighting forces, which swelled from 50 to about 200. During their stay in Madina, they forced civilians to carry loads, raped young girls and women in the town and flogged elderly men and women. Town Commanders and secretaries were appointed in villages and towns in the chiefdom to carry out directives from the RUF/NPFL forces, disregarding any other authority in the chiefdom.

RUF/NPFL forces, around 45 in number, also reached Kanga Oil Mill, firing randomly while entering the town. Civilians were gathered at the Court Barrie and detained there while the forces took away property and food items. They introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" who had come to liberate the people of Sierra Leone from the APC misrule. They carried with them sophisticated weapons, large quantity of arms and ammunition. During their first night, they raped young girls, most of whom were between 12 and 13. During their stay in the town,[1175] RUF/NPFL forces deposed all the chiefdom authorities, appointed Town Commanders and Town Mothers and passed laws for the civilians, saying they had come to settle in the area.[1176] While no incidents of mutilation, killing or destruction of property were reported, the RUF/NPFL forces forced civilians to work for them, raped women and girls, beat people and inflicted punishments such as frog jump[1177] and rolling on the ground. Youths were encouraged to join the RUF/NPFL forces. Old as well as young people were forced to carry loads for the forces. After they ate all the livestock of the village, they taxed civilians to supply them with fish or meat in turns. It was later observed that the forces came into the town in batches of 25 every two months. At this time, one commander was very notorious in trafficking civilians and training them to be fighters for the forces, often shooting those who tried to resist, and for taking civilians' property away.

Sometime in December 1991, SLA forces made a base in Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), from where they went on routine checking missions in the surrounding villages.

b) Events in 1992

Between January and February 1992, SLA forces entered Sohlon (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), were they took civilians' livestock. The matter was reported to their High Command at Gbap, who warned them against such acts, as it did not present a good image of the SLA. These actions stopped for three months, during which time civilians hid all their livestock. However, on or around 15 May

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1173 The exact location of this incident could not be ascertained.

1174 She would be released in 1993 in Pujehun District.

1175 This group stayed six months in the village before being dislodged by SLA forces in July 1992.

1176 Some of these laws were as follows: everyone's personal property is meant for everybody; no civilian should steal or would be killed and every civilian was to deposit his money to the RUF/NPFL forces or face arrest for carrying illegal property.

1177 To "frog jump" or to "pump" is done by first holding on to the earlobes with two hands – the left hand holding the right ear lobe and vice versa– after which the person is required to jump up and down continuously on their haunches. This form of punishment was both physically and psychologically painful, because it is a punishment meted out mostly to children and it is considered shameful for an adult to be made to "pump".

1992, the livestock was stolen from these hiding places with the help of one of the inhabitants of the town, who was a vigilante at the time.

Around August 1992, the town of Gbap was attacked by RUF/NPFL forces who successfully dislodged the SLA forces from the town. The SLA forces retreated temporarily to an island, labelling it "F.M".[1178] Civilians staying at Sohlon, a few miles away from Gbap, moved to the neighbouring town of Nyandehun, four miles from Sohlon, which became a "safe haven" for many civilians in the chiefdom. Realising that their villages were not affected by the RUF/NPFL forces and that the living conditions in the camp at Nyandehun were deteriorating, civilians decided to resettle in their houses.

In the middle of the year,[1179] on hearing the rumours that SLA forces were close to Bum Chiefdom, RUF/NPFL forces left the chiefdom and made their way to Pujehun District.[1180] The SLA forces did in fact enter the chiefdom later and made a base at Madina.[1181] After a few days, all the Town Commanders and their secretaries were gathered and interrogated by the forces on how they were helping the RUF/NPFL forces. Those people that the SLA forces considered had taken active part in aiding the RUF/NPFL were killed, while those they considered having taken lesser part were detained for a certain number of days and given manual jobs to do before they were released. Apart from the Town Commanders and their secretaries other civilians who were considered collaborator of the enemy forces were also killed. A boy of 18 was tied to a stick head downwards and fire set under him. He was then tortured to death by the heat of the fire. Sometimes civilians from other villages like Tarsor and Kassie (both of Bum Chiefdom) were alleged to be "rebel" collaborators, because they came from areas where RUF forces were known to be, and were killed by firing squad without proper investigations. In addition, civilians were forced to harvest the oil palm and process it for the SLA forces. Plantains, fish, bananas and other commodities were either seized or bought cheaply from civilians; indeed, the SLA appeared to be more interested in trading these items than in ensuring the security of the chiefdom or the District.

The SLA forces also settled at Moyia, which gave some respite to the people at first. However, not long after, the SLA forces gathered together all the Town Commanders, their secretaries and all other alleged collaborators. An unspecified number of them were killed on the basis that they had encouraged the RUF/NPFL forces to stay in the town and were helping them in their activities. Some people were forced to dig their own graves and lie down in them. They were then shot at afterwards and left there; some people were buried while they were still alive. Harassment of civilians, stealing of property and killing was taking place on a daily basis. People were grossly intimidated as the SLA forces frequently fired their weapons and made people frog jump. In addition, the SLA forces made the people work for them, processing the palm oil fruits, fishing and engaging in many other activities.

[1178] The RUF/NPFL forces did not however stay in the town but it could not be ascertained when the SLA forces came back to Gbap.

[1179] This may have occurred either in July or in October/November.

[1180] No more information could be obtained on this movement of forces.

[1181] As the RUF/NPFL forces had already left the chiefdom, no confrontation was reported. The SLA forces would have control over the chiefdom for two years, until the middle of 1994 when RUF forces came back.



In November, one Saturday afternoon, most of the SLA forces the civilians had seen the year before at Massa Kpanguma (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom) entered Topain and took away civilians' property in a manner described as "much like the RUF/NPFL forces". Women were raped and livestock was taken away the same day. They came back the next day and spent a night in the town, during which they fired their guns to frighten people out of the town. However, the inhabitants stood their ground and the SLA forces soon left the way they had come.

c) Events in 1993

In June 1993, another SLA officer was sent to command the SLA forces deployed at Madina (Bum Chiefdom). They occupied the house of a civilian who later demanded payment of rent for the period. The troops not only refused to pay but also imprisoned one of the civilians after severely beating him up, accusing him of having been a "rebel" collaborator. The villagers were then forced to build more huts for the troops deployed in the town. Those who refused or tried to escape were caught and severely flogged.

In around July 1993, some SLA forces came to their base at Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) in order to expand their number in the area. They dispatched some troops at Yele (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) and at Massa Kpanguma (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom); in August, others were sent at Sohlon (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), on the other the bank of the river.[1182] Young men were asked to be vigilantes at various locations in Gbap Town. The fishermen were required to put the Sierra Leonean flag on their fishing boat, to allow the SLA to monitor and control the movement of boats on the river. At this time, the SLA only required civilians to provide fish for the troops and there were no reported incidents of physical violence or ill-treatment. At one time, when the civilians could not give them fish, the SLA took some livestock away from the people of the town and prepared it as food for the forces. However, this stopped when civilians told the forces that they would complain to their commanding officer.

In October 1993, SLA forces from Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island) visited Tissana (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) on a security tour. The troops harassed the civilians by forcing them to contribute money for their feeding. Those who failed to pay were beaten up and a teacher who incited the people not to pay was imprisoned. SLA forces also took away some property of the civilians, including fish and livestock. Civilians were detained at a Court Barrie while the SLA forces searched their homes and took away what they found.

Also in October 1993, a small group of armed men travelled along the Wanjei River and stopped in Baoma Section, west of Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom. They were all dressed in country clothes and had masks covering their faces. One of them who was speaking Liberian dialect told the civilians they were from Burkina Faso. They took away some food items and alcohol they found in the town and forced civilians to carry this load to a crossing point, where they were released. Burkinabe

[1182] This deployment was probably done to allow SLA to have control over the river, which leads to the ocean in the west, thus preventing the RUF forces not only from making incursions in the chiefdom but also from advancing towards Bonthe Town.

mercenaries also entered Mecca (Bendu Cha Chiefdom, west of Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom),[1183] where they took the property of civilians and forced elderly people to carry loads for them. A man who had never drunk any alcohol before was forced to drink wine to excess by one of the forces. It appeared that those armed men had come from Pujehun District and were on a raiding tour of villages in Nongoba Bullom and Bendu Cha Chiefdoms. At one point, SLA forces from Bonthe Town were informed about those armed men and laid an ambush in Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom, where many of the armed men were killed and some captured. A civilian was arrested and taken to Bonthe Town together with the captured forces for interrogation; they were all killed in Bonthe Town.[1184]

d) Events in 1994

Throughout 1994, RUF activities were mainly reported in the eastern chiefdoms of Bonthe District, in Kwamebai Krim, Bum and Nongoba Bullom Chiefdoms.[1185]

In the first week of May 1994, SLA forces based at Bonthe Town (Sherbro Island) entered Mina village and ambushed some RUF forces on their day patrol. The SLA forces attacked the first loaded boat of the RUF troops heading for the town in the early morning hours. Forty-seven of them were killed, including five women, and 12 were seriously wounded. On their way back to their base the RUF forces entered Mano (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) and captured a girl of 11 years old, whom they raped. They further went to Topain where they established a base. When the SLA forces realised that the RUF forces had left Mass Kpanguma, they immediately re-established a base there. They later attacked and dislodged the RUF forces at Topain, occupying that town as well.

Pelewahun was attacked by the RUF forces on 14 May 1994 and several people were killed in the town, including elderly people and children as young as seven, some of them being hacked to death. People who remained in the town had absolutely nothing to survive on as the forces took all the property in the town. After a month, in June 1994, Mass Kpanguma was attacked. At the time of the attack, the town was full of displaced people from the neighbouring chiefdoms of Pujehun District. The attack did not appear to be a surprise to the SLA forces based there, as some of them had already left the town the previous day with their relations.[1186] During the attack, the remaining SLA forces were overpowered and some were killed. Immediately afterwards, civilians in the neighbouring villages fled their houses and went into hiding in the bush, sometimes in neighbouring

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[1183] Although it is not specified when in 1993 those mercenaries reached Bendu Cha Chiefdom, we can infer from the information collected in Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom that they reached Bendu Cha Chiefdom around the same time.

[1184] It cannot be ascertained whether those arrested men went through any kind of process before being killed.

[1185] In 1993, most of the NPFL forces had been recalled by their leader to fight in Liberia as the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO), a fighting faction that emerged in May 1991, started to defeat them in various areas in Liberia. Thus, the troops that entered Sierra Leone in 1994 were mostly composed of RUF forces whose number had considerably increased from the 250 men at the beginning of the conflict, due to the conscription that had been carried out.

[1186] The day before the attack, SLA forces based at Massa Kpanguma came to Tei and told civilians they were going to Bonthe Town to get their salaries. They however told their relatives to pack quickly things they could lay hand on and to leave Tei for a safer area. It can however not be inferred from this information that the SLA acted in concert with the RUF forces during the attack. It rather seems that, having heard about the incoming attack, the SLA deserted the area.



chiefdoms like Bum Chiefdom.[1187] This control over strategic towns in Kwamebai Krim District would allow the RUF to continue its advance in the District.[1188]

On 17 July 1994, the RUF forces made a move to recapture Bum Chiefdom from the SLA forces,[1189] following the Sewa River and arriving from Tormabum, on the main road to Madina. Four truckloads of SLA forces together with their families and some vigilantes retreated from the chiefdom without putting up any resistance to the RUF/NPFL forces, because the SLA forces were far outnumbered. As a result, by August 1994, the RUF forces had taken control of the entire chiefdom and settled in almost all the villages, making Madina their administrative town. The forces had limited number of Liberians among them at this time and were mainly Sierra Leoneans who came through Tormabum along the Sewa River. Their behaviour towards civilians was different from the previous years, as it was reported they were violently hostile to every civilian they came across, killing unspecified numbers whenever they entered a town. At this period, the RUF forces were dressed in such a way[1190] that suggests they had been living in the bush for quite some time.

RUF forces attacked the town of Kanga Oil Mill (Bum Chiefdom) during the night to recapture it from the SLA forces based there.[1191] They met no resistance from the SLA forces, as they killed a lot of civilians even before they entered the town. Houses were burnt and many people killed in the town. In the first two weeks after they recaptured the town there was indiscriminate killing of civilians because they regarded everyone to be the "enemy". Civilians were forced to abandon the town for camps in the bush. They were later hunted and brought back into the town by the forces; those who refused to come were killed in the bush. This forced the civilians to return to the town, particularly following an incident where RUF forces killed two people in the bush to underscore their threats. Furthermore, it is worth noting that most of the RUF members were inhabitants of the chiefdom, who had earlier been abducted by the RUF forces. Raping and killing of civilians was an everyday occurrence. More young men and women were conscripted and people were forced to carry loads for the forces.

After two months in Madina, during which time they went on patrol missions, the RUF forces entered the village of Mami, a fairly large village situated six miles south of Madina. The RUF forces were engaged in a house-to-house search in the village when they saw some military uniforms in one of the houses. The inhabitants were all gathered to explain why military uniforms should be found in the village. The chief and his wife were first called upon to explain; when they failed to do so they

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[1187] It however seems that the RUF did not settle in the area for a long time as in December 1994, civilians who had fled their villages went back and did not encounter any RUF activity.

[1188] The control over Mass Kpanguma would give access to the Wanjei River, which merges with the Sewa River in Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom.

[1189] Early in 1994, RUF forces dislodged the SLA forces that had been in Bagbo Chiefdom (Bo District) for two years, thus allowing the RUF to attack Bum Chiefdom, knowing the SLA would not be reinforced by those who used to be based at Momajoe (Bagbo Chiefdom, Bo District), a few miles from Madina Town. Bum Chiefdom adjoins the southern part of Bagbo Chiefdom (Bo District).

[1190] These forces were roughly dressed in jeans and t-shirts, with slippers on their feet and very few military boots, although their attire improved as they stole more clothes from civilians.

[1191] Although the report mentions that the town was attacked in December 1994, it is clear that it took place shortly after Madina town was attacked and prior to the incident in Mami (see below) took place. Accordingly, it probably took place earlier than December.

were both shot dead. A woman in the front row was then picked to explain and when she could not, she was told to undress. Her son was called upon and told to do the same. He was then told to have sex with his mother in the presence of everybody. Shocked and panicked, he could not do it and they were both shot dead. Another woman was picked from the crowd and shot in the head. Although the troops were only three in number, the people were so terrified that they were unable to escape. Four more people were killed that day, making a total of eight. Four girls were raped on the same day and 17 more were abducted. Property was taken and removed from the village on the same day.

In a small village called Tarsor (Bum Chiefdom) located near a stream, the decomposed bodies of two RUF child combatants who had earlier gone missing were found on the seashore. Around 30 people who were found in the village were quickly gathered and asked to explain by the RUF forces. No one knew anything about the death of the boys and could not explain anything to the satisfaction of the RUF forces. Six people were immediately shot and killed and the other people were tied up and made to lie in the sun. Rubber was melted and dropped in their eyes. This was done to both young and old, including babies. Fifteen houses were burnt in the town and the farmhouses were destroyed, at which time seven more people were killed. At Bisoa, at the boundary with Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom, RUF forces burnt six houses at night and killed 18 people on the grounds they were harbouring SLA forces.[1192]

Madina was made a training base for the abducted young men and boys; drugs were allegedly given to them during the course of the training that took place at the school compound, during which young girls were also trained as fighters. Although not all of them were given weapons after the training, these new recruits were used to attack SLA positions in Pujehun and Bo Districts. RUF forces also had a training base at Torma, where conscripted civilians were sent for training. The training was carried out in two phases. Training to fight was done during the first phase and then trainees were drugged during the second phase. Most of the boys that were trained in this way were below 15 years of age and they were usually sent on looting patrols called "mission" for their commander.

During their stay in Bum Chiefdom in 1994, the RUF did not face any counter-attack by government troops. This firm control over Bum Chiefdom would only be the prelude for further incursions into the District in early 1995 from Bo District.

In November and December 1994, six months after the SLA established a navy base in Bonthe Town, those navy forces patrolled the waters in Sittia and Dema Chiefdoms on the pretext that they were chasing away illegal foreign trawlers, despite the fact they never met any trawlers during their patrols. Their visits were sometime announced to the Chiefs in advance, who consequently taxed the civilians to contribute money for the feeding of the SLA members. On one occasion, the SLA forces called the people and local authorities at Tissana (Dema Chiefdom) to a meeting at which they demanded that they should be supported financially so they could protect the lives and properties of the civilians. Women were required to give Le 1,000 and men had to give Le 1,500. One civilian, who incited the others not to give this money, on the grounds that the SLA was already paid, was arrested and put in a cell. This meeting concluded with a token by the Paramount Chief of Le

[1192] It was however revealed that this village did not host SLA forces.



500,000;[1193] once the SLA forces had sufficient money and food, they released the civilian who had earlier been detained.

Around this time, rumours of impending RUF attacks were spreading across almost the entire District and in late December, a Catholic priest of St. Ambrose Parish who was travelling from Rutile (Imperi Chiefdom) to Mattru (Jong Chiefdom) ran into armed RUF men. He was flogged by them and given a letter for the people of Mattru together with the sum of Le 6,000. On his arrival in Mattru, he informed the Chiefs and other civilians what had happened and gave them the letter. Most people abandoned the town for bigger towns like Bo and Freetown on account of this while others went to villages like Blama, Kabati, Wongifor, Bisao and Nyandehun all in the neighbouring chiefdoms. Furthermore, three RUF members who disguised themselves as State Security Division (SSD) officers were arrested at a dance organised by the people of Mattru (Jong Chiefdom) on 25 December 1994. They later confessed that they were RUF spies.

e) Events in 1995

On 19 January 1995, RUF forces attacked the Sierra Rutile Company in the north of Imperi Chiefdom.[1194] In the morning, three groups of RUF forces[1195] passed in succession by Moriba, heading to the plant-mining site where they were to gather. With them, they had abductees from the Sieromco Bauxite Mining Company in Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District), which they had attacked the day before.[1196] They did not shoot while they were going to the mining site but took with them a large number of people of all ages and both sexes. The whole population was in panic but the RUF told them that they were not here for them but for the SLA forces so that they should join their movement, which some civilians did. They arrested all the junior staff at Kpanguma, 100 yards from the mining site. When they arrived at the senior staff quarters at Mobimbi, they started shooting and arrested some of the staff, including foreign workers. Soon after, they were in control of the mining site, where they fired their weapons for some time and took almost all the property from the area, including vehicles, money, fuel, engines, medicines, food, livestock and other items taken from the company itself. RUF forces started giving food to civilians, which once more convinced civilians to join them.

[1193] As a very rough guide, five hundred thousands Leones is approximately equivalent to 250 USD. This should be placed in the context of Sierra Leone's position at the bottom of the Human Development Index: between 1991 and 2000, 57% of the population lived on less than 1 USD (2.000 SLL) per day and 74.5% lived on less than 2 USD (4.000 SLL) per day: see UNDP Human Development Report 2003, http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_SLE.html, last visited on 30 December 2003.

[1194] The Sierra Rutile was the world second largest producer of rutile, used in paints; before the war, the rutile extracted from this site represented 50% of Sierra Leone's total exports and 3,000 people were employed at the mining sites: AFP, 11 March 1997. At the time of this attack, the mine was in the middle of a major expansion program: Africa Review World of Information, 1 September 1995.

[1195] Numbering 40, 80 and nearly 100 men in the respective groups, the RUF forces were equipped with AK47 and RPGs.

[1196] This Swiss-owned mine was the world's largest producer of bauxite. These mining areas in Moyamba and Bonthe Districts were the two most important economical sectors after Kailahun and Kono Districts had fallen in 1992 and 1993, thereby depriving the Government of significant resources coming from the mining of diamond and the cultivation of cash crops like coffee and cacao.

At the time of the attack, foreign troops[1197] and SLA forces were deployed in the area; members of the SSD (Special Security Division) were in charge of the security of the company. SLA and foreign troops made attempts to dislodge the RUF forces and finally succeeded on 30 January, at which time the RUF retreated to areas not far from the mining site. Doubts were raised among the civilians on the role played by the SSD and especially its commander in the overrun of the mining site by the RUF.[1198]

At the end of January 1995, RUF forces attacked and captured Mattru (Jong Chiefdom) without much resistance, as it seems the SLA had already pulled out of the town. While the bulk of these forces most likely came from Imperi Chiefdom, it is possible that some of these forces came from Lugbu Chiefdom (Bo District)[1199] through Gbonge, stopping at the crossroad between the main road going west to Mattru and a southern one going to the chiefdom headquarter of Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom), at which time they decided to attack Mattru. When they entered the town, the RUF forces did not kill people or destroy property, informing civilians that they were only against the NPRC government and the government soldiers.[1200] As they settled in the town, they put in place structures to administer the town and the chiefdom, including the appointment of Town Commanders and Town Mothers. They also appointed adjunct clerks who, in charge of the control of movement in the chiefdom, were responsible for issuing passes allowing civilians to go from one area to another. They encouraged civilians to join them by giving them food, medicine, clothes and other items. However, this behaviour was not to last long and soon they began to act in a manner contrary to their words.

During the first weeks of their stay in the town,[1201] they lived on the food and other items they had taken away from the Sierra Rutile but as they run out of those items, they forced civilians to work for them, notably by repairing and maintaining the ferry on the Jong River that allowed RUF forces to use the direct road to Sierra Rutile, where they had a lot of stolen property stored. Vehicles from civilians were used for this purpose. Civilians were also required to undertake other tasks; everyday, the young men each had to bring a bag of cassava and women had to bring vegetables, water and wood, as well as cook the food. Failure to carry out these tasks brought punishments, like being beaten or tied up and laid under the sun; the most severe punishment was death, for example if a civilian refused to give vegetables from his or her garden or if a civilian was caught hiding in the bush, like one woman who was shot at Luawa, near Mattru, in April. People were also brought from other towns and villages and killed for similar reasons at the RUF headquarter in Mattru. Youths, mostly between the ages of eight and seventeen, were also brought from the surrounding towns and villages to be conscripted.

Two bases were established in the chiefdom, one at Mattru and the other at Gambia Oil Mill. The RUF forces stole the supply of medicine and other items at the government hospital in Mattru and

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[1197] The records mention ECOMOG but this refers to either Nigerian or Guinean troops.

[1198] The commander would have carried arms and ammunitions for the RUF at the mining site, once the RUF had overrun it and would have gone in surrounding villages

[1199] Lugbu Chiefdom adjoins Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom on the east. Its headquarter town, Sumbuya, is on the main road that leads to Mattru (Jong Chiefdom). Since 1994, Lugbu Chiefdom had been under RUF control.

[1200] Mattru was the hometown of the Vice Chairman of the NPRC and two Government Ministers.

[1201] RUF forces would occupy the town for eight months before being dislodged by the SLA in October.



turned the hospital into a training base. The base at Gambia Oil Mill, nine mile from Mattru, was called "Camp Lion"[1202] and hosted the more mature and top ranking members. To build the camp, the RUF forces unroofed houses in the surrounding villages. The new recruits who were trained in Mattru were presented to the commander at Camp Lion for approval to be sent at the war front.

The RUF forces also burnt down many houses in the town, including the entire compound of the Paramount Chief as well as houses that were allegedly empty. Occupied houses were also burnt and in one incident, two civilians who went back to their burnt house to gather some of the things that had not been destroyed were stopped by the RUF forces; one was killed and the other mutilated. Throughout the chiefdom, civilians' property, including furniture, clothing and money, was taken away, which led civilians to hide some of their belongings. When the RUF forces discovered that civilians were hiding property, they would take a member of the family, who would be forced at gunpoint to show them the hiding place. As at that time condiments and tobacco were only to be found in areas under SLA control, any civilian found with those items would be killed. Radios were also not allowed, to prevent civilians from hearing independent news about the war. During the time of their stay, both young and old women, including girls as young as 10, were sexually assaulted, sometimes in public and by more than one RUF member. People who escaped in to the bush were later hunted down and brought back into the town; some people were killed in the bush and their property taken.

RUF forces settled in many areas in the chiefdom, such as in Blama, south-east of Mattru, and Biawo, north-east of Mattru. When they settled in these villages, they carried out the same actions as previously described, including forcing civilians to work, to go hunting and to carry the load and conscripting children. In addition, they deposed existing authorities and installed their own structures, including the appointment of Town Commanders and Town Mothers, and established the "pass" system. At Blama, the Town Commander was sent to Camp Zogoda to be trained.[1203]

On 3 February 1995, a very large number of RUF forces entered the headquarter town of Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom). Over 1,000 people were in Tihun at the time the RUF forces entered it, at which time they gathered all the civilians they met in the town, including the Town Chief. Gathering the inhabitants at the Court Barrie, the RUF forces asked the civilians who identified themselves as members of the Bio family (relations of the then NPRC Deputy Head of State, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio) to step forward. Many civilians did step forward, even if they did not belong to the family, thinking that the RUF forces were doing this to protect them; however, everyone who stepped forward was then killed.[1204] Other civilians were killed on that day, including two girls and an elderly woman. Over 34 houses were also burnt down in the town, a large amount of property was taken and a lot of people were captured.

The following day, the captured civilians, including the Town Chief, three white foreigners taken from the Sieromco Company in Mokanji (Moyamba District) and hundreds of others captured from

[1202] This was a generic name for training bases and other Camp Lions existed in the country, notably in Makeni (Bombali District).
[1203] This Camp Zogoda, although it is a generic name, probably refers to the important camp located in Koya Chiefdom (Kenema District).
[1204] It is estimated that around 300 people were killed during this incident.

Mattru, were marshalled towards the town of Senjehun (Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom), near the Sewa River.[1205] They stopped at a junction near Senjehun, where the abductees, who were carrying stolen property for the RUF forces, were divided into five groups. The Town Chief was told that the troops were heading for their base at Camp Zogoda in Kenema District (Koya Chiefdom), where the RUF leader used to stay. These forces further explained that they had captured some elderly men, as the RUF wanted elderly people advise the parliamentarians they would have once they seized power in the House of Parliament. Some civilians, headed by the Town Chief of Tihun, were then told to go back to Tihun under an RUF escort while the others proceeded to Senjehun carrying the stolen property, crossed the Sewa River at Borleh and headed for Madina (Bum Chiefdom), from where the RUF said the civilians from Madina would continue the journey to Camp Zogoda.

Soon after this attack, SLA troops were sent to secure the town of Tihun. On 11 February 1995, the RUF attacked the town but faced stiff resistance from the SLA forces based there. Several other unsuccessful attempts were made by the RUF to recapture the town between 11 and 18 February, when the SLA forces were dislodged from the town by a strong and fierce attack. A lot of civilians were killed; young men, women and girls were abducted; and several houses were burnt. Children got lost in the battle and a lot of property was taken and carried away by the RUF forces, who left the town on the same day of the attack.[1206] They went to neighbouring villages like Moyorgbo, Gerehun, Bauya Junction and Karleh, where they took away and destroyed civilian property and abducted several people. In each village or town they visited, they deposed the traditional chiefs and appointed Town Commanders, Town Mothers and clerks, who assumed administrative responsibilities and the running of the towns and villages. As in other places, a system of "passes" was established and civilians caught travelling without their pass were severely beaten.

When they entered Bauya Junction, RUF forces wrote "RUF" on the doors of civilian houses before leaving for the nearby village of Semabu, two miles from Bauya Junction. People in Bauya fled into the bush as sooner as the RUF forces left the town. That same night, the RUF forces returned from Semabu, together with a large number of young men who carried property the RUF forces had taken from the people of Semabu. Some of the RUF forces then took the property to "Camp Charlie",[1207] returning four days later. They asked the civilians to return to the towns and stop sleeping in camps in the bush. They also imposed laws on civilians preventing them from travelling to Bo Town (Bo District) without permits; people caught travelling without the permit would be killed. Indeed, movement from one place to the other could only be done with a "pass". The forces elected administrative leaders in the town and surrounding villages. Often, people accused of coming from Bo by the RUF forces were shot dead without questioning. People were also killed if they were found with tobacco or food items like fish and any manufactured goods, as this was considered to be proof that they had gone to areas controlled by SLA forces, which were the only areas such items were available.

[1205] Information from Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom confirms that this chiefdom was used as a transit chiefdom for RUF forces, who did not settle there but used it to transport their stolen property, including televisions, bags of rice, corrugated iron sheets and food items, across the Sewa River and through Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom, Bo District) to Camp Zogoda in Kenema District.

[1206] Although it is not certain whether RUF forces came back to the town, it is clear that SLA forces did not launch any counter-attack the following months.

[1207] There was one famous "Camp Charlie" near Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District).



This continued for up to three months, when the RUF forces introduced another system known as "Man Power", by which civilians were forced to carry loads for distances of about 50 miles. At that time, wives of civilians forcefully became the "wives" of the RUF forces and the husbands were to thank them whenever they had intercourse with their wives. Civilians were also forced to have sexual intercourse with their relatives in public and those who refused to do so were killed.

Also in February 1995, RUF forces entered the headquarter town of Matuo (Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom), killed two civilians and burnt down 16 buildings including the Court Barrie. At Senjehun, a town used as a crossing point on the Sewa River, the forces terrorised the civilians by killing several people, burning down several houses and destroying the boats they found at the waterside in the town, on the grounds that civilians were using the village as an escape way to Bo District and other places.[1208]

During that month,[1209] SLA forces based in Bonthe Town regularly patrolled the sea route in the north-west of Bonthe District between Dema Chiefdom and Gbangbatoke (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District). Civilians were banned from going to sea for fishing in this area, as the SLA feared that RUF forces might attack them and use their boats to continue their advance in the District. Civilians however continued to travel to Gbangbatoke, at night and SLA forces started to chase them and once captured, took away their fish and sometimes killed the faulting civilians.

On 25 February, the RUF made a successful counter-attack at the rutile mining site (Imperi Chiefdom), dislodging the SLA forces based there. During their stay, their behaviour was not as friendly as during their first stay. On the contrary, they told civilians that because civilians in the area had taken the side of the Government when the RUF was dislodged on 30 January, they would not spare any soul in the area. On that day in Imperi Chiefdom, in villages such as Mogwemo, Kpanguma and Moriba, the RUF forces ransacked villages, indiscriminately killed civilians, forced civilians into houses and set fire to them, destroyed and burnt houses, raped women and girls, conscripted young people into their movement and forced civilians to work for them. As in other places, any civilian caught with condiments or tobacco would be accused of going to areas under SLA control, where those items could be found, and would be killed.

Following the recapture of the mining area, RUF forces scattered throughout almost the entire chiefdom, taking control of the area for over eight months before being dislodged by SLA forces in November. For example, RUF forces entered Gbangbama on 20 February 1995, where they stole a lot of property, killed two people and captured many others. One week later, on 27 February 1995, the forces attacked the nearby village of Foinda. They took a lot of property, killed one civilian and abducted many others, who were forced to carry the stolen property to Mobimbi, which was previously the headquarter of the senior staff of the Sierra Rutile Company and became the RUF headquarters when they re-captured the town. Another example is Gaindema, which was attacked

[1208]The same forces also entered Lawana (Bumpeh Chiefdom, Bo District) where they burnt down five houses and stole a lot of civilian property. They also killed four old people who were unable to escape from the attack. The town was attacked because of rumours that diamond mining was going on and a big diamond had been found there.

[1209] It is likely that this was a practice that was carried out for a number of months around February 1995.

on 1 March 1995. RUF forces invaded the village in the north of the District with heavy gunfire. They remarked that civilians were ungrateful to them, as they had laid down their lives to fight against the dictatorship government of the NPRC, which had earlier toppled the APC government. They described the NPRC government as selfish, not transparent and unaccountable. The RUF forces attacked the village from its landlocked side, leaving the direction to the river open; accordingly, people fled from the continuous gunfire into the river where some, who were unable to swim, drowned while others were shot. In the village, RUF forces captured civilians, killed some and conscripted others. These forces also took a lot of property, which they then transported to their headquarters.

These continuous attacks on the villages in the chiefdom led the majority of the population to leave Imperi Chiefdom and to find refuge in more secure areas like Bonthe Town on Sherbro Island. Their control of the chiefdoms in the north of the District, where the strategic roads spreading through the rest of the District originate, allowed RUF forces to proceed further southwards to Yawbeko, Nongoba Bullom and Bendu Cha Chiefdoms In these chiefdoms, most of the civilians were already living in camps in the bush, after they heard about the attacks in the north of the District. Furthermore, it is believed that the attack on the mining company, which led hundred of civilians jobless, resulted in increased favourable public opinion for the expansion of the Kamajors in the chiefdom.

The situation for Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom was, however, slightly different as it seems that the first RUF attack in the chiefdom, which took place in February 1995, originated from Pujehun District.[1210] Civilians ran into the bush leaving behind children and elderly people who were unable to run. Those forces, dressed in military attire,[1211] identified themselves as RUF forces based at Sulima (Soro Gbema Chiefdom, Pujehun District). Young girls who were caught were raped in front of their parents, including a 10-year-old girl, who was severely traumatised and remained ill for a long time. A lot of civilians were appointed as labourers to carry property as far as Dama, some 11 miles from Topain, where they were released and ordered to return back to Dama. People abandoned the town and stayed in the bush, where life rapidly became unbearable. Several visits were made to the town by the RUF forces in the following days but no one was found in the town so they stopped going there.

Most of their activities were then carried out at Bandakor, from where they raided the neighbouring villages. Tei was also attacked in February, at a time when most of the people had gone to their farms or fishing, leaving the youngest and eldest in the town. The RUF forces burnt down the whole town, including the school, the UBC church and the Town Barrie and took away property such as fishing nets, canoes, seed rice, livestock and poultry. Five civilians were killed, among them an 85 year-old man, and some young people were abducted and forced to carry the load.

During one of their raids on the villages, three young men at Kale resisted the attack and killed two of the RUF forces. Civilians in the neighbouring towns and chiefdoms were informed and they

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[1210] Although RUF forces were reported to be in the chiefdom in 1994, it seems that an important attack was carried out on the chiefdom from Pujehun District.

[1211] Starting in 1992, RUF forces acquired uniforms from the SLA, often taken after a battle. Some of those uniforms also came with SLA members who deserted their ranks to join the RUF.



immediately formed civilian-fighting groups or local militia to defend themselves, since the SLA forces was no longer able to contain the RUF advance. This group was composed of Kamajors, a Mende word for hunters. Civilians started contributing to the support of this civil force, donating single barrel guns and money for the purchase of cartridges. Other weapons like knives, spears and machetes were made by blacksmiths in the chiefdoms as part of their contributions.[1212] The main place for initiation was at Kaileh Wanjama (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom) but, as the group expanded, it was further divided into sections with its headquarter base at Kale, south of Topain.

On 21 March 1995, around 120 RUF members coming from Jong Chiefdom, dressed in new combat attire with red cloth tied around their necks, entered the town of Baoma (north-east of Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) as they had heard SLA forces were in the area. The RUF forces made civilians they met in the town lead them to the farmhouses, where they took civilians' property, including food items and livestock, and captured a lot of civilians to be trained as fighters. They then went north-east to the town of Gambia (Jong Chiefdom) with all the stolen property. The attack was reported to the SLA forces based at Gbap, south-west of Baoma. They came to the town two days afterwards, took the remaining food items and livestock and returned to Gbap. On hearing about SLA troop movements, a large number of RUF forces came back to the town on 27 March 1995. One man who was asked whether he had informed the SLA about the first attack was tied up and stripped naked, as was another man. The first man was hit with a bladed weapon on his neck until he died while the second one had his genital organ cut off before being hacked to death. On the same day, RUF forces went looting in the surrounding villages, burnt down houses and came back to Baoma with captives carrying their load before leaving the town for Gambia (Jong Chiefdom).

Two members of the RUF re-entered Baoma about a week later, on 5 April 1995. They encouraged an old man they found in the village to call all the civilians who were hiding in the bush to return to the town, as there was no other person in the town, but nobody responded to the old man's appeal. A few days later, the RUF forces raided the camps of the civilians in the bush and burnt down several huts and destroyed other property. They threatened to kill all those who failed to return to the town, as a result of which civilians returned to the town a few days later. Town Commanders were appointed and arrangements were made for the support of the forces while they were in the town. However the Town Commanders were fearful for their lives, having heard that SLA forces killed civilians appointed as Town Commanders and those who stayed with the RUF on the grounds that they were collaborators, so they advised the civilians to escape back into the bush.

The RUF forces continued to harass civilians in the neighbouring towns and villages. Also in April, the RUF forces dislodged the SLA from Gbap, where civilians had already fled the town. The retreating SLA forces went to Bonthe Town before coming to the chiefdom between May and June and settle at Yele, south west of Gbap. From Yele, the SLA exhorted the civilians to leave the Baoma area, as they were going to launch an offensive on the RUF. The SLA did not however succeed in dislodging the RUF forces who themselves launched a counter-attack on SLA position at Yele five days later. During this counter-attack, RUF forces killed a large number of civilians and a

[1212] The support of the force was voluntary at the beginning but as time went on it became compulsory and also included provision of food and other essential materials for the Kamajors.

few SLA forces. The few remaining SLA forces left for Bonthe Town and the RUF went back to Baoma, burning down some houses before leaving.

Around April, RUF forces attacked and settled in many villages in Yawbeko Chiefdom, in the centre of the District, including the chiefdom headquarter of Talia.[1213] The pattern they followed in the villages they entered was similar to what they had done so far in the north of the District. Local authorities were particularly targeted, deposed and replaced by Town Commanders and Town Mothers. Some of the local authorities were also molested and killed.

RUF forces coming from Jong Chiefdom reached Bendu Cha Chiefdom in May 1995.[1214] Their arrival was accompanied by severe brutality towards civilians and instances of killing, often with bladed weapons, raping, burning of houses, stealing of civilians' property and abduction of civilians were commonplace. For example, in May 1995, RUF forces reached Tigbe from Jong Chiefdom and shoot and killed two fleeing civilians. The forces cut off the dead men's genital organs, which they placed in the mouths of the bodies and left the mutilated corpses on the road. They then burnt down 10 houses before proceeding to another village, Tisama, where they beat a man with sticks almost to the point of death. Also in May, some RUF forces on their way to Malama passed by Molamdeh. They burnt a house in which a sick woman was lying in bed, allegedly because she did not give them water as they had asked. Once in Malama, they took a lot of property, including food items, which they forced captured civilians to carry to their base at Baoma (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom). They also killed a petty trader who refused to give them money.

Fighting between the RUF on one hand and SLA forces assisted with Kamajors on the other hand continued in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom. On 25 May 1995, RUF forces located the hidden camp at Taifa, where civilians from Tei had found refuge, and attacked it. The SLA and the Kamajors fought the RUF forces and a big battle took place at Tamgbassi, two miles from Taifa. About 50 RUF forces were killed while 10 SLA members and two Kamajors died.

Another heavy battle took place at Bombokor (Kwamebai Krim chiefdom) on 7 June 1995 as a result of which the RUF forces were dislodged; about 25 of them killed while five were captured alive. There were no civilian fatalities reported to have been committed by the SLA, as their commander[1215] ordered his forces not to shoot civilians. The SLA commander also returned the stolen property left behind by the retreating RUF forces to the civilians.[1216] On their way back to their base after the defeat at Bombokor, the RUF forces, apparently in retaliation, raped, beat and killed civilians with bladed weapons, including young children. Nevertheless, the RUF forces were driven entirely from the Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom. As such there was great influx of civilians from

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[1213] The date of their arrival in Talia could not be determined with precision. More details will be added for Yawbeko Chiefdom.

[1214] Bendu Cha Chiefdom is a small chiefdom on the western edge of mainland Bonthe.

[1215] This SLA officer who used to be based in the Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom favoured the idea of these local militia fighting alongside the SLA to bring the war to a speedy conclusion in the District.

[1216] However, this action of the commander made his men dissatisfied and they became disgruntled. Shortly after, the SLA forces were over powered by the RUF during an encounter in the west of the Chiefdom; it was said the SLA forces could not face this battle, mainly due to the loss of morale following the episode of looting at Bombokor. Those RUF forces required that the commander identify himself and one junior SLA member pointed out the commander, who was then killed by the RUF forces.



the other chiefdoms into Kwamebai Krim, which caused a lot of hunger, starvation and disease, as there were not enough food and medicine.

However, RUF forces maintained control over chiefdoms in the centre of the District and continued their actions against civilians. For example, sometime in June 1995, RUF forces entered the village of Ghaloh (Bendu Cha Chiefdom), captured civilians, flogged some and later killed some of them. They also entered Bormimahun village but found no one in the town. They burnt down all the houses and traced the footprints of people to the camp in which they were hiding, where they killed some civilians and abducted the rest. As they were about to leave, they set fire to seven houses in the town. Kanga village was also raided and eight houses were burnt down and several civilians were abducted, including a 15-year old girl together with other women. The following month, civilians made another camp between the boundary of Jong and Bendu Cha Chiefdoms in the northwest of Bendu Cha Chiefdom.[1217] At some point during the month, this camp came under the attack of the RUF forces at about 6.00pm. A baby boy was hit with bladed weapons by the RUF forces. Several people were captured and girls were raped and abducted.

Again in Bendu Cha Chiefdom, on 30 August 1995, RUF troops coming from Baiama (Jong Chiefdom) attacked Momaya, where they abducted civilians, including one man whom they recruited into their fighting force and some young girls, who they made their wives. The RUF forces then headed to Bawoma and Kpetema (both in Jong Chiefdom). On their way they killed two civilians. On or around 15 September, the Muslim festival day of Eid al Adha, RUF forces attacked civilians who had moved out of their camps to observe prayers around Mindohun village. Civilians were captured in the mosques and abducted; two men were killed, allegedly because they did not properly carry out a task the RUF forces had asked them. On their way out, they encountered a young man of about 30, who they suspected of being an SLA member, so they tied him to a stick, poured petrol over him and set him on fire.

As RUF forces were progressing and affirming their control of the District, except Sherbro Island, and the SLA were increasingly unable to defend the District, rumours about the Kamajors began to reach Bonthe Town. This consisted of information about the development of Kamajors, armed with cutlasses and knives and rumoured to have mystical powers, who were coming together to restore peace in their villages in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom. At this time, Bonthe Town was full of displaced people and the local authorities decided to send around 300 youths to the area where initiations were being performed.[1218] Once initiated, the Kamajors went back to various areas in the District, engaging the RUF forces and, initially, working hand in hand with the SLA.

On their return from their initiation, a group of Kamajors engaged the RUF forces based at Baoma (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) with heavy firing between September and October 1995. About 22 members of the RUF were killed and several of them and their wives were captured. They were taken to the Kamajor base at Karleh Wanjama (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom). Following the attack, the RUF completely left Baoma but one week later they regrouped and launched a counter-attack.

[1217] Civilians were leaving the camp during the day to go farming or fishing and were coming back after their activities.

[1218] The local authorities asked the representatives of the chiefdoms, who had found refuge in Bonthe Town, to present a number of their young men.



They succeeded in dislodging the Kamajors and burnt down the remaining houses in the town. On 5 November 1995, Kamajors also launched a fierce counter-attack on the RUF forces at Baoma. They finally succeeded in ousting them out of Baoma and Gbap and entirely chased them out of the Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom. This was the final battle between the RUF forces and the Kamajors in the chiefdom. Civilians returned to resettle in the various towns and villages in the chiefdom and also in the neighbouring Yawbeko Chiefdom.

In late October, rumours of imminent SLA attacks[1219] and sounds of heavy gun firing coming from the Bo road led some of the RUF forces based at Mattru (Jong Chiefdom) to leave the town for Senehun, in the south-west, and Gbonge (Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom),[1220] although those based at Camp Lion refused either to leave or to release the civilians. On 25 October, a group of SLA Forces known as "Special Task Force" and composed mainly of ULIMO forces entered Mattru with heavy gunfire. They were accompanied by two jets, which were clearing the way for them before they entered the town. The RUF forces who had stayed in Mattru deserted their base as soon as the members of the Task Force arrived in the town, after killing many civilians who were with them. The following day, the Task Force attacked the RUF at Camp Lion in the north of Mattru Town. A lot of civilians including men, women and children were killed during that attack and the survivors were all brought into Mattru Town. Civilians in neighbouring villages were also requested by the Task Force to come and live in Mattru Town. While bringing civilians from the villages to Mattru, the Task Force faced pockets of resistance from the RUF but continued to defeat the RUF forces who, while retreating, imposed great havoc on the population, burning down houses wherever they were dislodged and killing many civilians. For example, in Kale Kowama, RUF forces retreating from Blama came across a family (parents and two small children) and killed the two parents. Civilians brought to the town undertook a massive brushing and cleaning of the town and surrounding villages but soon, started to lack food and other necessary items.

In one of their patrol to bring civilians to Mattru, members of the Task Force went to Njahun and Senjehun (Sogbini Chiefdom). On hearing this, the RUF forces at Bauya (Sogbini Chiefdom) gathered the civilians and told them to wait for a while and all the civilians would go to Mattru. More civilians, some from neighbouring chiefdoms, came to Bauya, either brought by the RUF forces or arriving of their own free will, hoping to find a safer haven in Mattru. Therefore, thousands of people where gathered at Bauya when the RUF forces divided them in two queues, one for men and one for women. The civilians were told to sing a song and the RUF forces started to take one person after the other and killed them either with a gun or a bladed weapon. When they realised what was happening, the civilians started to flee to the bush. RUF forces fired on the fleeing crowd, killing hundreds of people. The RUF forces also ambushed the town to catch and kill

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[1219] Starting in August, SLA forces, who had just received military training from the South African mercenaries company Executive Outcomes, who were contracted by the Government of Sierra Leone, engaged in "mopping up" operations in the Southern Province, dislodging the RUF forces from various strongholds in Bumpeh Chiefdom (Bo District) and the mining area around Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District).

[1220] At this time, Kamajors from Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom, in the south of the District started to have successful confrontation with RUF forces and went as far as Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom). This strong grip on the south east of the District probably explains why the RUF forces did not move south, using the Sewa River and Wanjei River, that flow in Nongoba Bullom and Kwamebai Krim Chiefdoms but rather retreated to Gbonge, a hilly area in Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom.



escaping civilians.[1221] The surviving civilians went back to their camps in the bush, where RUF forces chased them, killing everyone they found, including young children. At Licono for example, they gathered the civilians they found in the Court Barrie, hacked some of them into pieces, opened the stomach of one pregnant woman and threw the foetus in the fire. Some civilians found refuge at Bahoi, on the Sewa River east of Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom, and were rescued by Kamajors from Senjehun who came and took them to their base. Around 200 RUF forces attacked the Kamajor base at Senjehun but were defeated by the Kamajors stationed there, who were assisted with civilians equipped with sticks. After this attack, the RUF forces went to the Gbonge hills from where they raided villages in Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom, burning houses, taking away property, killing and abducting civilians. Senjehun did not however sustain any further RUF attacks.

In November, SLA forces dislodged the RUF forces from Imperi Chiefdom and settled in the mining area, at Kpanguma and Mobimbi.[1222]

Around October/November, Kamajors repelled the RUF from Yawbeko Chiefdom. To strengthen their positions, the Kamajors established more training bases in other chiefdoms than Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom, so that they could spread over wider areas of operation. Many young men and boys, some aged below 15, enlisted to be trained, calling themselves "Black December". One such base was at Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom). Another base was at Gambia (Jong Chiefdom) where young men and boys initiated were called "Avondo".

On 13 November, Kamajors from Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom entered the village of Kpankpa (Bum Chiefdom) and killed 19 civilians on the allegation that they were accommodating the RUF forces in the village. The bodies were dragged into the river flowing by the village. The Kamajors who carried out this action were around 15 in number, only two of them had shotguns and all the others had cutlasses. After this incident, the Kamajors went back to their base at Karleh Wanjama (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom) before returning in the same month to attack RUF positions in Bum Chiefdom. The RUF forces' position at Mami was attacked and they were dislodged from the town. They regrouped at Madina, where they faced a serious confrontation with the Kamajors. The RUF forces were again dislodged from their Madina base but burnt down 25 houses and killed several civilians before leaving the town. Eighteen RUF members were killed during the encounter. The RUF left towards the north and went in the direction of Sumbuya (Lugbu Chiefdom, Bo District).[1223] As they were retreating, the RUF forces killed civilians they came across, abducted a large number of people and took with them all the young girls they found. In December, RUF forces launched hit and run attacks on the chiefdom from Bagbo Chiefdom (Bo District), north-east of Bum Chiefdom, but following their retreat from Madina they no longer settled in Bum Chiefdom, where more and more young men were initiated within the Kamajors society.

[1221] This event resulted in the death of hundreds of civilians. In 1998, over 1,000 human skulls were discovered at Bauya Junction: AFP, 10 March 1998.

[1222] No information on fighting with RUF forces was recorded. Those SLA forces would be joined by some ULIMO-K forces for a short while in January 1996.

[1223] Information gathered for Bo District reveals that in December 1995, RUF forces arrived in Bagbo Chiefdom from Bonthe District, repelled by Kamajors.



At a general meeting held in Mattru on 27 and 29 November 1995, civilians who had formerly served the RUF forces in various ways were identified and condemned to death. Some were later freed after investigations proved that they were innocent. At around this time, some of the Task Force members engaged in cannibalism, cooking and eating the bodies of RUF members they had captured and killed. In once incident, one child member of the RUF and known by the civilians for making "unruly" statements about the government forces was arrested by the civilians, who brought him to the Task Force members. Those shot him, removed the organs and left the body, asking civilians to dump it in the river.

As food was lacking, civilians living in Mattru were authorised by the SLA to go back to their villages in December with an SLA escort. The civilians were divided into groups depending on the area they were from and taken to their villages in order of the directions of the compass, with a group from the north going out one day, a group from the east when the first group returned and so on.

Towards the end of the year, the RUF were sill to be found in Bendu Cha Chiefdom. In an incident that took place around October or November, RUF forces came to Gordana, approaching it from the river side. Two civilians who had earlier been captured in the chiefdom were with these forces. They were mainly interested by food products and told civilians that the war was not over and that the rumours that they did not have any more ammunition were not true. Before leaving, they forced civilians to carry the property they had taken to the south of Jong Chiefdom.

f) Events in 1996

In January 1996, civilians continued to resettle in Jong Chiefdom and engaged in commercial transactions with SLA members from the navy branch and coming from Bonthe Town.[1224] This period is referred to by civilians as "being calm".

Since RUF forces had been repelled from the boundaries of the chiefdom in 1995, the inhabitants of Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom did not sustain any more RUF attacks. After the February elections, however, the Kamajors started subjecting civilians to physical violence, sometimes killing people, and stealing people's property. For example, the Kamajors erected a detention cage made of thorns at every checkpoint in the chiefdom, which they used to punish people who did not have proper papers or for other reasons. Civilians were targeted for a variety reasons and were often ill treated.[1225]

Many civilians, particularly adult males, sought initiation into the Kamajor society not because they wanted to go to the war front but to protect themselves and their families from mistreatment by the Kamajors. One specific example of this occurred at the beginning of 1997 in Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom. A civilian who was selling tobacco in the chiefdom came across Kamajors at Torma Gbangbahun, who took his tobacco. As he wanted to talk, they threatened to beat him. On his

[1224] The SLA forces were bringing condiments, tobacco, clothes and radios that the civilians in the chiefdom could buy or exchange for gari, cassava or palm oil.

[1225] No further details are available on this information.



return to Sohlon, some Kamajors he knew advised him to be initiated, because it would stop this kind of harassment. Accordingly, the man went to Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom) for initiation.

The Kamajor presence expanded across the whole District, gaining control over areas previously under RUF control. They starting settling in the various chiefdoms and putting in place local structures. The collaboration with the SLA rapidly became problematic as tension, amounting sometimes to fighting, erupted between the two forces. Indeed, most of the activities reported for the year concern the Kamajors and the SLA, as the RUF forces were gradually being repelled from their positions across the whole District. While RUF forces were still present in some areas, they were more likely to be acting in small groups and looking for food rather than in large numbers and on the offensive. For example, RUF forces were coming from time to time to Bendu Cha Chiefdom, chasing civilians in their camps in the bush, especially in the coastal area of Tisagbe, where they burnt down houses and took away a lot of property.

In January 1996, Kamajors joined the SLA forces based at the mining site in Imperi Chiefdom. The ground commander for the Kamajors kept his men within the rules of the Kamajors and punished the few Kamajors who harassed civilians. On one occasion, for example, he ordered the arrest of one Kamajor who had seized a whole lorry of gari from a civilian. The Kamajor was put in a culvert pipe for sometime and had to pay a fine.

Kamajors also settled in Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom), which became an initiation centre where the High Priest and Chief Initiator performed initiations. A big camp was built behind the health centre, where the ceremonies were performed. Before being initiated, Kamajors had to bring money for initiation fees (Le 10,000) and other items like oil, old country clothes and razor blades. In Tihun, Kamajors and civilians together gathered the remains of civilians killed by the RUF forces and buried them in a grave dug in a graveyard.[1226]

In January 1996, Kamajors based in the Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom held a meeting with the civilians at Baoma, where they appointed a chief or PRO they referred to as "AG" (Action Group). At the meeting, several laws were made regarding how the civilians were to behave, requiring them to observe the practices of the Kamajors, of whom there were 33 based in the town. The Kamajors took over all civil authorities in the town and surrounding villages, taking on the responsibility for judging all cases and settling disputes. Several restrictions were put on the civilians, who were forbidden to pound anything in a mortar[1227] and to hit a Kamajor with a broom. Contravention of these laws would lead to loss of life and the fine of demolition of the offender's dwelling house. The civilians were also tasked with feeding the Kamajors. In or around March, a woman violated one of the laws by pounding in a mortar and, as the Kamajors were chasing her in order to catch and kill her, she ran to the AG for rescue. The AG pleaded with the Kamajors, who demolished part of the woman's house as a fine. A civilian was also imprisoned on allegations that he was a rebel

[1226] It is not clear when the RUF was dislodged from Tihun and whether the SLA carried out this operation alone or in conjunction with the Kamajors. On 20 November 1995, the Government claimed the SLA had retaken control over the town but this information could not be confirmed by independent sources: Xinhua News Agency, 20 November 1995.

[1227] This particular law did not fit in the pattern of civilians' life, where pounding was the basis of food preparation, be it pepper, cassava leaves or rice.



collaborator. On 7 August 1996, some Kamajors from Gambia (Jong Chiefdom) sent by the High Priest Initiator, took a lot of food items from the civilians at Baoma, which was also an initiation centre for the Kamajor society in the chiefdom. In a separate incident, civilians were molested and beaten when one of the initiators fell from his motorbike after hitting a stick that was lying across the road. The people of Motefoe village, where this incident happened, were brought to Baoma, where they were punished. The commander ordered the people to pay for the parts that were damaged on the motorbike. The people who had been brought to Boama, together with the authorities of Baoma, paid the money.

SLA forces based in Bonthe Town and equipped with two gunboats (101 and 201) were working together with the Kamajors, entering the mainland to chase RUF forces. At this time, a lot of civilians labelled as RUF collaborators were brought from the mainland to Bonthe Town by both the SLA and the Kamajors, were killed and buried along the seaside, on the road opposite the military naval base. On one occasion, a man from Gbap (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom) accused of being a collaborator, as he cooked for the RUF, was brought to Bonthe town and killed. In a separate incident, a man from Bendu (Bendu Cha Chiefdom) was also brought to Bonthe Town, accused of being an RUF collaborator and was killed.

On 15 February, Executive Outcomes reached the District and deployed at the rutile mining site (Imperi Chiefdom). They held meetings with the civilians, SLA and Kamajors on strategies to protect the chiefdom. These three forces had different bases in the area and Executive Outcomes worked together with the Kamajors but not with the SLA, whose behaviour towards civilians was "not cordial". Indeed, the SLA engaged in taking away civilians' property and in chasing RUF collaborators. In one incident, the Town Chief of Mogwemo was killed without much questioning, accused of being an RUF collaborator.

Some SLA troops came to Jong Chiefdom from Bo road, as a support body for the Task Force in February 1996. The SLA forces occupied places captured by the Task Force from the RUF forces but, after staying in the chiefdom for a while, started to take civilian property, including zinc and palm oil, and began to beat up civilians who refused to work for them. In the meanwhile, Kamajors had deployed at Gambia,[1228] east of the chiefdom, equipped with cutlasses, knives, shotguns, sticks and FM ropes.[1229] In the town, they appointed a chief (AG). Information gathered from Jong Chiefdom reveals the general laws the Kamajors had to abide by. For example, newly initiates could not have relations with women, could not lie on beds, could not bath and could not eat nut oil during the two weeks following their initiation. Kamajors were also not allowed to sit on mortar, to eat unscaled food or to stand at doorposts. It was believed that any Kamajors breaking those laws was no longer protected and would be killed by enemies during battles. To strengthen the force of the Kamajors in the chiefdom, more initiation began to take place at Gambia.

In a bid to control the chiefdoms where they were deployed, Kamajors established checkpoints and issued passes to civilians, thus regulating the movements of the population. In Bum Chiefdom,

[1228] It was allegedly a lack of ammunition that prevented Kamajors from attacking the RUF stronghold in Mattru in 1995.

[1229] This rope, one foot long with small sticks at its edge, was used to tie people at the ankle by their backs. "FM" means "frequency modulation", because when somebody was tied with such a rope, he would talk and reveal a lot.

civilians coming to any village without such a pass were beaten, made to lie on the floor or forced to beat the back of their fingers on concreted floor, a practice referred to as "typing". They also appointed civilians as Town Chiefs (AG) and GS clerk,[1230] to deal with administrative issues. At this time, the Kamajors' attitude towards civilians started to become hostile, as the villages were taxed in order to feed the Kamajors and, above all, summary executions of alleged RUF collaborators were carried out. On 27 January, Kamajors from Bum Chiefdom attacked Torma, killed some civilians, took away some property and vandalised the quarters and offices of the swamp rice project.

Sometime in 1996,[1231] Kamajors from Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom attacked RUF forces who had retreated from Mattru and re-established in the Gbonge Hills (Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom). Sixty-eight civilians were rescued from the RUF, although 23 died in the crossfire. Seventeen RUF forces were killed and the Kamajors recovered the property the RUF had previously taken away.[1232]
On 26 April, a serious fight broke between the Kamajors and the SLA forces based at Mabaka (Imperi Chiefdom), which resulted in some SLA members being killed.[1233] Following this encounter, the SLA withdrew from Mabaka and went to their main headquarter at Mobimbi. Sometime in 1996, reports of actions carried out by "lawless" SLA forces reached the military headquarter in Freetown and those forces were removed from the mining site and brought by helicopter to Camp Charlie, an SLA base near Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili Chiefdom). Those forces who escaped this evacuation were believed to have gone to the Mokanji area (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District).

A few months after the 1996 general elections,[1234] a conflict arose between the SLA and Kamajors in Kpanda Kemo Chiefdom. The SLA forces fell in a Kamajor ambush at the village of Kebawana, where one of the SLA members was killed. In revenge, the SLA forces killed seven Kamajors at Kebawana and displayed their bodies on the Mattru-Bo highway. Two days later, the Kamajors regrouped and attacked the SLA forces. However, the SLA forces defeated them, killing 40 Kamajors and burying them in a mass grave in Mattru. The two groups continued to live as enemies for another month until an SLA officer came and settled the conflict.

Local authorities were among the people harassed by the Kamajors. In March 1996, the Paramount Chief of Sittia Chiefdom went into hiding, opposed to the Kamajors deployment in his chiefdom and their behaviour towards civilians. This did not go down well with the Kamajors who chased them, severely beating one of his relatives to know about his hiding place. The Kamajors eventually found him, seriously beat him, went to another relative of the Paramount Chief who had hosted him and fined her Le 300,000, which she subsequently did not have to pay due to a reverend's intervention. However, the Paramount Chief was so severely beaten that he was transported for medical treatment to Freetown, where he allegedly died.

Sometime in May 1996, the Kamajors continued to harass civilians, particularly businesswomen and other civilians who often went in search of food in Sittia Chiefdom on Sherbro Island. Some of the civilians were punished by being forced to carry loads for the Kamajors or were beaten and

[1230] Those GS clerks fulfilled the same kind of tasks as the clerks appointed by the RUF.
[1231] This attack probably took place early 1996, before May.
[1232] This attack may have been carried out by Kamajors deployed in different chiefdoms.
[1233] This was however not the only conflict between Kamajors and the SLA in Imperi Chiefdom.
[1234] The exact date of this event could not be ascertained.

sometimes killed. People deserted the towns and villages to go into hiding in camps. However, the Kamajors followed them to the camps and forcefully brought them back to the towns. In the same month, the Kamajors attacked the village of Mobayeh (Sittia Chiefdom), where civilians were hiding. They burnt down the whole village and killed three people, namely one old woman who had given notice to the inhabitants of the village of the Kamajors coming was tied up and left to burn in one of the houses; a pregnant woman, whose womb was slit open; and that woman's four year-old daughter.

In June 1996, the Kamajor ground commander of Sogbini Chiefdom ordered the killing of four people on the grounds that they were enemy collaborators, who were arrested at night, taken to Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom) and killed.

In September 1996, Kamajors, who were mainly from Imperi Chiefdom in the north of Bonthe District, arrested 28 civilians and killed many of them in Sittia Chiefdom. There were cases reported of human flesh being cooked and eaten by the Kamajors. SLA forces were given notice about these civilians held captive by the Kamajors and went to attack them and free the captives. In retaliation, Kamajors laid an ambush for the SLA at Mbockie (Sittia Chiefdom). During the attack, some civilians who ran to the river and could not swim across it were drowned, while others were burnt in their houses by the fire sparked by fragments of RPGs. Two members of the SLA were also killed by the Kamajors. Over 50 Kamajors attacked the town and overpowered the 10 SLA soldiers who were based there. A large amount of stolen property was loaded into boats and carried away to Gbangbatoke (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District) by the Kamajors.

By the end of the year, the main Kamajor base was at Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom). After the 25 May events, it would be called "Base Zero".

g) Events in 1997

By 1997, the Kamajors together with the SLA forces had succeeded in removing the RUF forces from most of their strongholds in the District. This notwithstanding, there were several clashes between the Kamajors and the SLA forces. The Kamajors also wrecked a lot of havoc on the civilians, as the SLA and RUF had done previously and continued to do.

SLA forces continued to mistreat civilians in the few areas in the District where they were deployed. A group of SLA forces from the navy branch posted at York Island used to take food and other non food items away from civilians. Civilians accused of committing crimes like killing or raping were punished by the SLA forces without many investigations into the truth of these accusations. The main punishment was to tie the suspect up, hang them upside down from the roof of a house and beat them. The most senior SLA member in command used to mete out this type of punishment. Cases of sexual violence against women by SLA members were also reported, including harassing civilians in order to take their wives. In one incident, some SLA members locked a woman in one room of her house and assaulted her sexually. As they heard her husband was coming home, they went outside the house and fired in the air to make people flee the area. Those SLA forces however

withdrew from York Island and went to Bonthe Town as reinforcements following the Coup in May 1997.[1235]

In March 1997, a combined force of Kamajors and SLA from Bonthe Town launched a fierce attack on the RUF position at Bendu, the headquarter town in the west of Bendu Cha Chiefdom. The combined forces had about 20 to 25 wounded, who were taken to Bonthe Town for medical treatment.[1236] The RUF forces continued to occupy the town and sent several messages to the SLA forces and the Kamajors in Bonthe Town threatening to attack them and the town. Nevertheless, despite this collaboration, fighting between the two factions continued. In one incident, an SLA member who had come to an area under Kamajor control was killed at Foinda–Madina (Imperi Chiefdom).

In May 1997, the military overthrew the Government and put in place a military regime called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). This brought a total change in the attitude of the SLA forces based in Bonthe Town and its environs, who then joined the AFRC government. Civilians were continuously harassed, property was taken and a large number of people were killed on the allegation that they were Kamajors. The RUF forces, then referred to as "Peoples Army", joined the AFRC forces and the combined forces continued to attack and mistreat civilians in the Town.[1237] The Kamajors in Bonthe Town moved out of Bonthe Town, which is part of the Sherbro Urban District, to Sittia Chiefdom and to Bendu (Bendu Cha Chiefdom), where they regrouped to attack the AFRC forces now in Bonthe Town. Furthermore, Kamajors had been deployed since 1996 in all the villages along the river from Mattru down to York Island, three nautical miles to Bonthe Town. Accordingly, the RUF/AFRC forces were surrounded by Kamajors.[1238]

Following threats of attack by the Kamajors on Bonthe Town, the AFRC forces mounted checkpoints at various locations in the town around July/August. Civilian movement was restricted and all boats and other vessels were grounded. Fishing nets and boats were seized from the civilians by the RUF/AFRC forces. Civilians were beaten, molested and deprived of their daily food. The AFRC commanders often sent their forces to attack villages occupied by Kamajors and to kill civilians. Sometimes civilians, suspected of being Kamajor collaborators, were arrested and brought to Bonthe Town, where they were imprisoned; those who could not be identified were shot and buried by the seaside opposite the naval base.

People were evicted from their homes to accommodate the RUF forces when they began to arrive in Bonthe Town in May 1997 and were harassed. At this time, the actions carried out by the RUF/AFRC members were masterminded by the AFRC forces, because the RUF forces, who mostly came from outside the District, did not know the area.

The Kamajors occupied SLA and RUF positions in Bendu Cha Chiefdom soon after the overthrow of the Government in May 1997. By July 1997, RUF/AFRC forces were shooting at civilian locations in the area. People in villages like Momaya were under serious attacks and during one

[1235] They would however come from time to time to patrol the island.
[1236] Casualty figures for the RUF forces could not be ascertained.
[1237] This would be the only time RUF managed to get a grip on Bonthe Town.
[1238] The Kamajors were however not deployed in York Island.

attack, a 15-year old girl was killed. People abandoned their villages in the area for camps in the bush. Those attacks carried out by RUF/AFRC forces also prompted many young people in the chiefdom to join the Kamajor society, in Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom and at Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom). Reports however mention that as their number grew larger, they became out of control and created more havoc on civilians.[1239] In November 1997, two young boys from Bonthe Town coming to Bendu to bring their relatives to Bonthe Town were arrested at the wharf by the Kamajors posted at Bendu checkpoint. When they admitted they were coming from Bonthe Town, they were accused of being "junta" collaborators and were killed with cutlasses.

Kamajor harassment and violence against civilians was reported in almost all the chiefdoms where they were deployed. In Bum Chiefdom, they targeted businessmen, especially if they were Fullah or Temne by tribe, and killed them.[1240] In one instance, one man from Moyia who was coming back from Bo District with food items was intercepted by Kamajors at Moyia who took away his food, locked him up in a guard room and subjected him to punishment, as a result of which he died. Punishments included starvation or tying the elbows behind the back and projecting the chest forward. The harassment of civilians increased when an embargo was imposed on Sierra Leone. At the checkpoints they mounted, Kamajors from Bum Chiefdom used to take whatever property the civilians had. If they resisted, civilians were beaten and put in a 2" x 2" cage made of thorns. In Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom, Kamajors were forcing civilians to work for them and were also taking away their property. They would load vehicles with the property they had stolen and take it to Talia (Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom). On another occasion, a group of Kamajors in Mattru amputated the ears of one civilian. He was also severely wounded on the arm and later died of the wound. Another Kamajor killed two civilians at the Keiga checkpoint (Imperi Chiefdom).

The situation for the civilians in Bonthe Town worsened when RUF/AFRC forces imposed an economic embargo on the civilians in Bonthe Township. No one was allowed to leave Bonthe Town for Freetown and those who attempted were beaten and molested. Civilians therefore found themselves caught between the Kamajors and the RUF/AFRC forces, with the RUF/AFRC forces threatening them for being relations of Kamajors and the Kamajors threatening them for being "rebel" collaborators. This situation became unbearable by August 1997, so the elders of Bonthe organised a peace deal between the Kamajors and the RUF/AFRC forces. The peace was initiated after the peacemakers met with the Kamajor High Priest and Chief Initiator who was based at Talia (Yawbeko Chiefdom). Their trip to Talia was, however, accompanied by many obstacles, most of them being the Kamajors checkpoints all along the road to Mattru. Those civilian peacemakers were severely molested at a checkpoint at Momaya (Bendu Cha Chiefdom), where Kamajors opened fired into the air.[1241] They were also molested by Kamajors on their arrival at Talia. Nevertheless, they met the High Priest and Chief Initiator, who gave them a message for the RUF/AFRC based at Bonthe Town. In that message, the Chief Initiator asked those forces to stop killing civilians and Kamajors and, in return, he promised he would try to stop his men from launching attacks on Bonthe Town.

[1239] Around this period, it was suggested that there was "[...] a clear difference between newly-recruited Kamajors, who have access to automatic weapons and apparently operate outside the authority of chiefdom representatives, and the traditional Kamajors who are carefully screened and respect traditional chiefdom structures": Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 29 October – 18 November 1997. REG. NO. 97/0390.

[1240] It has to be remembered that the Kamajors were Mendes.

[1241] This checkpoint was called "the gate of hell".

The peacemakers went back to Bonthe, escorted by some Kamajors responsible for the security of the High Priest, and the RUF/AFRC agreed to the peace plan.

However, the AFRC forces soon undermined the peace deal several times by attacking the positions of the Kamajors. For example, a few days after the return of the peacemakers from the negotiations, the RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Kamajor position at Gbangbatoke (Banta Chiefdom, Moyamba District). They were defeated and two members of the RUF/AFRC forces were killed. In September 1997, the RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Kamajors at Pembihun, north of Bonthe Town. The RUF/AFRC forces were again defeated and the Kamajors killed a lot of their number, including a very top RUF member. Soon after, the RUF/AFRC made another attack on Kamajor location in Bamaba, west of Bonthe Town, and were again defeated by the Kamajors. The RUF/AFRC forces continued to harass the civilians and killed people they suspected of being Kamajor collaborators in Bonthe Town. Dema Chiefdom, east of Sittia Chiefdom, was also affected by these attacks, as in December 1997, AFRC members went to Moyema by sea, over powered the few Kamajors posted there, looted some houses and a store and burnt down some houses before leaving.[1242] The AFRC members left for Bonthe Town but one of them proceeded to the village of Mokutu (Dema Chiefdom) and killed a youth, who allegedly tried to be "defiant". This AFRC member was later arrested on his way to Tissana and killed by Kamajors.

In the middle of 1997, newly initiated Kamajors settled at Mokossie (Nongoba Bullom Chiefdom), where they convened a meeting with the civilians to explain the new laws civilians would have to obey. These laws included no whistling in the town, no sitting on motorbikes by women, no trousers for women and no use of mortars at night. The penalty for the breach of one of these laws was the destruction of the civilian's house. The Kamajors decided on cases and tied people with a FM rope for various reasons.

Around 10 and 11 September 1997, the AFRC commanders ordered that all the important personalities in Bonthe Town be arrested, in particular those who initiated the peace talks, alleging they did not negotiate in the interests of the AFRC. The arrested people were, however, released in the evening. On 15 September, the Kamajors launched an attack on Bonthe Town, which was unsuccessful, as the RUF/AFRC forces had a large amount of weapons in the town. Several Kamajors and a lot of civilians were killed during the battle, which lasted for four hours. The dead Kamajors were buried in a mass grave dug by the RUF/AFRC forces. After the battle, the RUF/AFRC forces conducted a house-to-house search in Bonthe Town, looking for Kamajors. Civilians were advised not to host any Kamajor and to report any case of a civilian harbouring a Kamajor. Information of imminent Kamajor attacks on the town continued to arrive in Bonthe Town, through the businessmen travelling back and forth to Sittia Chiefdom. This led many RUF/AFRC forces to leave the town on gunboats for Freetown, taking with them a lot of property they had previously stolen. Few civilians were authorised to board the RUF/AFRC gunships on that occasions but on subsequent trips and during a transfer to the boat, the sea car they boarded capsized and many civilians drowned in the ocean.

[1242] During the period of 1997 to 1999, Dema Chiefdom administration was entirely in the hands of the Kamajors, who presided over cases and served as chiefdom police sub chiefs and as Paramount Chief.



The RUF/AFRC forces who stayed in the town continued to take property and kill civilians in and around Bonthe Town. On 14 October, they arrested the SLPP secretary for Bonthe District, accusing him of being among the Kamajors who launched the attack on the town on 14 September. He was detained for three days, during which time physical violence was inflicted on him; the RUF/AFRC forces also burnt down his house. On 18 October, he was brought to the United Methodist Church, where he was mutilated and had his head cut off.[1243] The RUF/AFRC forces then dismembered the body, put his head on a stick and paraded across the town, asking civilians to give them money for the good work they did.[1244] Four days later, the civilians asked the RUF/AFRC members for authorisation to bury what was left of his body.[1245]

h) Events in 1998

In January, Kamajors went to York Island and stole a lot of property from civilians' houses, without killing anybody. They took their load and went back to Bendu Cha Chiefdom.

On 14 February 1998 the AFRC forces departed from Bonthe Town for Freetown.[1246] The Kamajors replaced them the next day, on 15 February. Two groups of Kamajors heavily armed with AK47s, RPGs and LMGs under different commanders, one numbering about 30 members and the other of unknown size, entered Bonthe Town on that day. A meeting was held with the civilians in the township, where some people were killed, mostly on the grounds that they were identified as "rebel" or "junta" collaborators. One of the civilians killed was a tailor who had made the "Kamajors uniforms" the RUF/AFRC forces sometimes used to attack the Kamajors by surprise. In another instance, Kamajors arrested a man who used to live in York Island but was now hiding in Bonthe Town. He was put in prison where two civilians and two policemen were already detained. He was severely beaten by a young Kamajor around 13 years old, following the order of a commander; a few minutes later, five Kamajors entered the cell and told them they would be killed because they were collaborators. They were then taken to the Kamajors High Command, where they were tied up and beaten. It was only due to the intervention of a parish priest that their lives were spared. Instead, they were allowed to pay a fine, which – because the original punishment had been death – was set at Le 200,000, although the first civilian was allowed to leave on payment of Le 54,000.

More Kamajors from the mainland chiefdoms arrived in Bonthe Town, where they looted houses and public offices before going back to the chiefdom from which they had come. Businessmen and traders were continuously harassed by Kamajors who took all their property from them; sometimes, people were killed. Checkpoints were established at various locations at the entry points of the town through which civilians coming from the mainland or from Sherbro Island had to pass. In one instance, Kamajors went to Mania, a trading place for civilians. On their way, they met some

[1243] It was reported that his organs were cooked and eaten at the naval base.

[1244] It is reported that the officers in charge of the town did not take any action, which led civilians to think that they actually masterminded every action carried out by the junior staff.

[1245] Those responsible for this action would be court marshalled in September 1998 and the mother of the man killed testified she was forced to eat her son' s heart by the men who had killed him: AFP, 16 September 1998.

[1246] In late March, over 500 decomposed bodies were discovered in two shallow graves on Sherbro Island. It was believed that these bodies were hurriedly buried by the RUF/AFRC forces before they pulled out of Bonthe Town. It is not clear whether those people had been killed by the RUF/AFRC forces just before they retreated or throughout their stay in the town: AFP, 1 April 1998.

civilians going to the nearby village of Ndainga to trade. Those civilians were flogged and one was wounded with a dagger on his back. The Kamajors took most of the items the civilians were about to trade and left for Jimi. On their way, they saw a canoe going towards Ndainga. They took away all the traders' property and took control of the speedboat with the traders still inside, leaving their canoe out at sea. The civilians were disembarked on a piece of land and the Kamajors continued on their way to Jimi, where they set one house on fire.

The Kamajors continued to harass civilians, killing people alleged to be "junta" or "rebel" collaborators and stealing property. They were totally dependant on civilians for their food and starting taxing civilians, as a contribution to their feeding and to the purchase of ammunition. This made life for the civilians very difficult in the township and surrounding villages. The Kamajors burnt down villages like Gbogboma, Puokie and many others in the Sittia Chiefdom and killed people who occupied positions of respect in the community.

Throughout the remainder of the year and those following, Kamajors victimised civilians in towns and villages across the District. They deposed or ignored all the chiefdom authorities and themselves acted in those positions, including as chiefs and policemen. They added to the suffering of the civilians with their prohibition laws to protect their powers and their mistreatment of civilians, applicable only to the Kamajors. Civilians were required to obey a set of different laws, which included no stealing, no fighting and no travelling from one village to another without a pass, each with different penalties depending on their gravity. Furthermore, the Kamajors asserted that their authority was supreme and that the Town Commander called AG had the right to intercede between civilians and Kamajors.

While the Kamajor initiation was going on at Gambia (Jong Chiefdom) in 1998, one Kamajor commander raped a suckling mother at the market place in Goba town. He also threatened to kill the husband of the woman. On 27 March 1998, a one-year old boy was deliberately killed at Mowagor village near Mattru by a Kamajor commander.

i) 1999, 2000, 2001 and 2002[1247]

The Kamajors were not respectful to each other let alone to the civilians in the District, including instances of riots and fighting between different groups of Kamajors in the District. The High Priest would send his own men out on looting missions, but they would often encounter troubles with other groups of Kamajors in other chiefdoms. The Kamajor structure appeared blurred or non-existent to the civilians at this time: acts of violence against civilians and their property throughout the country led people to think that there was no more structural organisation, aside from the District Coordinator and High Priest.

In January 1999, a group of Kamajors from Sittia Chiefdom entered the island town of Timbima (Dema Chiefdom) and required the civilians to pay the sum of Le 1,000.00 and a quantity of fish for their feeding. Defaulters were tied up and made to lie down and look at the sun. Another group of

[1247] It is mentioned that Executive Outcome were based in the Moyamba District, and intermittently went into Bonthe District to give moral support to the Kamajors. However, Executive Outcomes left the country early 1997, therefore this information may refer to other forces.

Kamajors from Dema Chiefdom went to attack this first group,[1248] but could not find them in the town. This second group therefore required the civilians to pay for the cost of fuel used to visit the village. From September 1999 to the end of 2000, the administration of all of Dema Chiefdom was in the hands of the Kamajors, with the chiefdom ground commander assuming the responsibility and position of the Paramount Chief. They also made themselves into sub chiefs down to headmen and made additional laws, including prohibiting civilians from eating certain food, like bananas. Civilians were forced to obey their instructions and defaulters were always given severe beatings. Housewives were punished together with their husbands. The Kamajors continued these practices throughout the years of 1999, 2000, 2001 and the early part of 2002, when disarmament begun in the District, although on a lower scale.

Following the Freetown invasion by the RUF/AFRC in January 1999 and their subsequent defeat by ECOMOG and others, RUF/AFRC forces retreated hastily into the country and some arrived in Bonthe Town. While in the town, they raided villages in Sittia and Dema Chiefdoms, took property and burnt houses. Four months later, Kamajors from Dema Chiefdom agreed to regroup with those of Sittia Chiefdom to attack Bonthe Town. Civilians were requested to provide them with the items they needed, like food and cartridges. During a meeting with elders at the chiefdom headquarter of Tissana (Dema Chiefdom), the Kamajors were told that civilians could not gather the money to buy the ammunition, which did not please them. They molested the Paramount Chief and some began going around to collect money from civilians while others were chasing cattle. From Tissana, they moved to an island called Nyagai, where they found a man they accused of having been an attendant for the RUF/AFRC in Bonthe Town during previous years. The Kamajors amputated the man bit by bit, starting with his ears, before removing his eyes and internal organs and finally dumping him in the river. The people for whom the man was working for were obliged to pay a fine for having harboured and kept a collaborator. The Kamajors then launched their attack on Bonthe Town but were unsuccessful[1249] and about one month later, those Kamajors, now over 500 in number, launched a second attack on the town. In the meanwhile, the RUF/AFRC forces had started pulling out of the town, having learnt of this attack.[1250]

On 24 May 1999, the deputy task force commander of Bonthe District led a troop of Kamajors and attacked Mattru Police station at midday. Two police officers were killed. On 8 July 1999, the same commander led a group of Kamajors at night to launch a strong attack on Kortumahun village (Yawbeko Chiefdom). A pregnant woman was shot in the leg during the attack and later taken to Bo Government Hospital.

In Sogbini Chiefdom, the Kamajors had no regard for the Paramount Chief. They defied his authority and claimed that they were only accountable to the CDF National Coordinator. Civilians were physically and sexually harassed. Children below the age of fifteen were abducted and some were forcefully conscripted and initiated into the Kamajor society. More and more youths joined the society to protect their relations and families from the continuous harassment and havoc

[1248] This second group of Kamajors were from Dema Chiefdom and were ordered by their commander to drive the Kamajors from Sittia Chiefdom back to their chiefdom.
[1249] Some Kamajors and few RUF/AFRC members were killed but civilian fatalities could not be ascertained.
[1250] It could not be ascertained whether there had been any fighting at all between the RUF/AFRC forces and the Kamajors.

wreaked by the Kamajors. In the town of Semabu (Sogbini Chiefdom) a notorious Kamajor killed civilians, took property and burnt down civilian houses. Fear of the Kamajor atrocities forced civilians to go back into the bush camps for safety, abandoning their property behind them. The Kamajors took all of that property that had been abandoned, sometimes visiting the bush camps to steal property and harass civilians.

Following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement on 7 July 1999, the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration program (DDR) was formally launched on 20 October 1999 by the President of Sierra Leone during a ceremony in Freetown. Very few combatants out of the estimated 45,000 combatants, however, laid down their arms at this time.[1251]

The DDR process was halted in 2000, due to the insecurity in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and the abductions of UN peacekeepers in May 2000. To reactivate this process, a ceasefire was signed in Abuja, Nigeria on 10 November 2000, which again had to be re-activated for the second time on 4 May 2001.[1252]

Following a meeting between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF held at the UNAMSIL headquarters in Freetown, the parties agreed on the need to accelerate and complete the disarmament process, which included the opening of a DDR centre in Bonthe District.[1253] The second meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR took place in Magburaka (Tonkolili District) on 2 June 2001 and the parties agreed on an accelerated disarmament process meant to take place simultaneously in Kono and Bonthe Districts in June 2001,[1254] although the disarmament camp was not yet set up.[1255]

Disarmament finally began on 2 July 2001[1256] although at a slow pace, as only nine CDF members turned in their weapons on the first day of the opening of the DDR centres. In fact, CDF members from the mainland expressed their wish to disarm in Mattru (Jong Chiefdom) and not in Moyamba District, as was planned.[1257] Therefore, following a meeting attended by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General, UNAMSIL's Force Commander and Deputy Force Commander, the CDF coordinator and other officials and a member of the NCDDR, the parties

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1251 In November 1999, only 1,500 combatants had disarmed out of the total 45,000 estimated combatants: IRIN West Africa, 17 November 1999.

1252 The security situation in the Northern and Eastern Provinces prevailing in 2000 urged the Government of Sierra Leone to negotiate a ceasefire with the RUF in November 2000. On 4 May 2001, the parties would meet again in Abuja, Nigeria to review the ceasefire. Further to the meeting in May 2001, they parties would hold monthly tripartite meetings under the Joint Committee on DDR. The final meeting took place in January 2002 when disarmament was declared complete and the war over.

1253 In addition to the existing DDR camps in Port Loko, Bo, Moyamba, Kenema and Daru, the parties also agreed on the urgent need to open new DDR camps in the country, in the Northern Province (Lunsar, Makeni, Kamakwie, Masingbi and Alikalia), the Eastern Province (Koidu and Kailahun) and the Southern Province (Pujehun and Bonthe): UNAMSIL press release, 15 May 2001.

1254 UNAMSIL press briefing, 5 June 2001.

1255 UNAMSIL press briefing, 8 June 2001. The acceleration of the disarmament was meant to take place District by District.

1256 UNAMSIL press briefing, 3 July 2001.

1257 Kamajors wanted a fast-track disarmament to be able to return rapidly to their farming activities.



agreed to establish another DDR camp in Mattru.[1258] This camp was opened around 13 July and from this time, the disarmament process began to accelerate in the District: as of 27 July, 813 CDF members had disarmed in the two DDR camps in Bonthe District. On this date, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General visited the two centres to assess the disarmament progress and to stress the importance of having this process complete by the end of July.[1259]
During a meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR, the parties formerly declared disarmament in Bonthe District complete in September.[1260] UN peacekeepers of the Nepalese contingent deployed in the District in late 2001.[1261]

3. Conclusion

Sharing a border with Pujehun District, Bonthe District was affected by the RUF/NPFL incursion into Sierra Leone as early as 1991. The effect of the conflict, however, differed slightly from the experience in Pujehun District. Until 1995 in Bonthe District, the conflict had only spread into the three chiefdoms of Kwamebai Krim, Bum and Nongoba Bullom, while in 1991, although only for a few months, RUF/NPFL forces had spread across the whole Pujehun District. After a first short stay in Kwamebai Krim Chiefdom in 1991, RUF/NPFL forces would visit the District sporadically, often in small numbers, but would not establish a real presence there, except in Bum Chiefdom for six months in late 1991/1992.

The natural features of the District, particularly the swamp areas and rivers in the south, could explain the containment of the conflict to the three aforementioned chiefdoms during its early stage. This is reinforced by the fact that the major incursion penetrating the District in 1995 was carried out from the north of the District, where the road network is the more developed.

By 1995, the conflict had taken a new turn, as RUF forces spread across the whole country. The attacks on the east and south of Moyamba District and the north of Bonthe District in January 1995 was in fact preceded by a massive RUF operation in Bo District, where RUF forces launched attacks on camps and headquarter towns in the centre of the District all within a couple of days towards the end of December 1994. RUF forces then proceeded directly to Moyamba District and then to Bonthe District.

RUF forces attacked and thus paralysed the economically vital mining area, which spreads across the north of Bonthe District and the south of Moyamba District. This new development was dramatic for the Government of Sierra Leone, as the income from mining activities and the selling of cash crops produce had already dropped considerably following the previous occupation of Kono and Kailahun Districts. RUF forces spread across the mainland District, failing however to reach Sherbro Island.

Their progression and the violations they committed were hampered by the intervention of a special military unit in late 1995 and the continuous development and successes of the Kamajors. By the

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[1258] UNAMSIL press briefing, 6 July 2001.
[1259] UNAMSIL press briefing, 27 July 2001.
[1260] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 01 - 30 September 2001. Disarmament would only be declared complete for the whole country in January 2002.
[1261] UNAMSIL press briefing, 16 November 2001.

end of 1996, the RUF forces were dislodged from their positions across the District and the subsequent actions they carried out was the fruit of small pockets of RUF remnants.

Unlike Pujehun, Bo, Kenema and Kailahun Districts, after the overthrow of the Government and the establishment of the AFRC regime, the Kamajors did not withdraw from their positions and go underground, as the RUF/AFRC forces were concentrated in Bonthe Town and not in the rest of the District. Furthermore, most of the RUF forces who joined the AFRC members in the Bonthe Town did not originate from the District but came from Kailahun District.

From February 1998 and following the withdrawal of the RUF/AFRC forces from Bonthe Town, the pattern of actions in Bonthe District was similar to how the conflict affected the other Southern Districts of Pujehun, Moyamba and Bo. Free of RUF/AFRC presence, Kamajors actions, originally aiming at defend their chiefdoms against RUF attacks and violence, became oppressive for the civilians, as Kamajors affirmed their control not only of the security of District but also of the local administration, substituting themselves for the local authorities, and of the civilians living in Bonthe District.

After 1998, the conflict concentrated in the Northern Province and areas of the Eastern Province, where the CDF members were not able to put up a firm and continuous resistance to the RUF/AFRC advances and where the main mining areas were located.

Violations committed by Kamajors during this period were fewer reported than the violence carried out by the RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC forces. This is probably mainly due to the fact that key people mostly reported violence when carried out during an attack; from 1998 onwards, the Kamajors were in total control of the District, so the day-to-day violations were most of the time not reported, blurred in the memories of the key persons.

As RUF forces did not settle in the District for a long period and the intensity of fighting was generally lower than in the rest of the country, Bonthe District was one of the least affected Districts in term of destruction of property, displacement of people[1262] and violence against civilians.

c. Moyamba District

1. Introduction

Moyamba District is one of the four Districts in the Southern Province of the Republic of Sierra Leone. It is bounded by Bo District in the east; Tonkolili and Port Loko Districts in the north; Bonthe District in the South; and the Western Area in the west. The headquarter town, Moyamba Town, is located in Kaiyamba Chiefdom, in the centre of the District.

There are 14 chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarter
Bagruwa	Sembehun

[1262] Although there was no massive displacement of population between towns inside the District and outside the District, civilians often took the bush, leaving in bush camps called "sorkoihun".



Banta	Gbangbantoke
Banta Mokele	Mokele
Bumpeh	Rotifunk
Dasse	Mano
Fakunya	Gandohun
Kagboro	Shenge
Kaiyamba	Moyamba
Kori	Taiama
Kamajei	Senehun
Kongbora	Bauya
Kowa	Njama
Ribbi	Bradford
Timdel	Bomotoke

Having borders with both the Southern and the Northern Province, Moyamba District would be affected by the development of the conflict in those two Provinces, both of which were used to launch attacks on its borders, primarily from the south.

Two strategic roads pass through the District. The main highway leaving Freetown for the Provinces separates into two roads at Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). The first road goes from the west to the north towards Magburaka (Tonkolili District) and Koidu (Kono District), while the second one reaches Bo and Kenema through Moyamba District. This second road reaches Moyamba District in the east, and runs in the District from the extreme north-east of Fakunya Chiefdom and its headquarter town, Moyamba Junction, Taiama (Kori Chiefdom), and Senehun (Kamajei Chiefdom) before arriving in Bo District in Gbo Chiefdom. From Moyamba Junction (at the border with Tonkolili District), a road leaves to the south-west to reach Moyamba Town. Accordingly, controlling Moyamba Junction would allow access to the north-west to Tonkolili District, to the south-west to Moyamba Town and to the south-east to Bo Town. When circumstances make using this highway impracticable, an alternate route to reach Bo from Freetown runs through Moyamba Town. It leaves the Western Area through Songo and goes south-east to Moyamba District, passing by the headquarter towns of five chiefdoms, before ultimately reaching Bo District through Bumpeh Chiefdom. The control of this road would be of a critical importance, as it makes Freetown reachable from Moyamba District.

Its main economic activities, besides salt production on the coast, are rutile and bauxite mining. The mining area is located in the south of the District, in Banta Chiefdom, and in the north of Bonthe District (Imperi Chiefdom). The headquarters of the bauxite company are in Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom), while the headquarters of the rutile company is in Imperi Chiefdom (Bonthe District). Those mining activities were of vital importance for the Sierra Leone Government, as mineral resources made up the bulk of its exports before the war.

Njala University College (south of Kori Chiefdom), by the Taia River that flows south-north in the east of the District, is part of the University of Sierra Leone and is the only University Campus in the Provinces.



The way the conflict affected the District can be divided into three distinct stages. The first stage was from 1991 to 1994, the period before the RUF forces entered the District. During this time, SLA forces were deployed in the District but harassed civilians, including taking away their property. Cases of rapes and killing were reported and the chasing of collaborators increased by the end of 1994 as rumours of imminent RUF attacks grew stronger.

The second stage ran from 1994 to 1998 and saw the progression and settlement of RUF forces in the District and the development of the Kamajor society. In early 1995, RUF forces made an incursion in the District and, shortly after, began to make their way towards Freetown. As this advance was stopped by SLA forces, the RUF forces settled in the District, progressively reaching all the chiefdoms and establishing a strong base in the north. The chiefdoms in the south of the District were less affected and most of the actions were concentrated in the north of the District. Civilians began organising themselves into Civil Defence Units (CDUs) and by early 1996, the first Kamajors deployed in the District and engaged RUF forces. They however also fought SLA forces who were asked by the civilians to leave in 1996. The following year was described as the peak of Kamajor activities in the District. RUF forces were still active in the north of the District but had been repelled from the south and centre.

During the AFRC regime, RUF/AFRC forces were only deployed in limited areas of the District and were strongly resisted by the CDF. This second phase was characterised by violence inflicted on civilians mainly by RUF forces but also by SLA forces and Kamajors. RUF forces, once stopped on their progression to Freetown, mainly carried out hit and run attacks, entering villages, taking away property and burning houses but also killing civilians, raping girls and capturing civilians to carry their loads, usually to their main base. They also killed number of civilians on the grounds they were Kamajor collaborators. During this period, the behaviour of the Kamajors towards civilians began changing, as they intensified their fight against the RUF and, later, RUF/AFRC forces and started gaining control over different areas. Civilians were initially requested to provide them with food and other basic items but soon, Kamajors began harassing civilians and taking their property. Kamajors did not recognise the authority and power of local authorities and other Government personnel, as they only had respect for those who had been initiated and they soon extended administrative authority over civilians in the areas they occupied. Their control of an area included physical violence against civilians in general, including sexual violence against women. Alleged RUF or AFRC collaborators were killed without first undertaking an investigation. The Kamajors made certain laws for the civilians and those who broke those laws were subject to various punishments, including imprisonment in a small cage made of sticks and thorns.

The third and final stage ran from 1998 to 2001 when disarmament was complete in the District. Following the retreat from Freetown, RUF/AFRC forces pulled out of the entire District, which was therefore in total control of the District. Only few and limited attacks were carried out in the north of the District by RUF/AFRC forces based in Tonkolili District. This period was however marred with a lot of atrocities, and most of the CDF actions described in 1997 also happened in 1998. Alleged RUF or RUF/AFRC collaborators were killed and traders and businessmen were particularly targeted for their belongings. Fighting between two factions of the CDF erupted in the District in 1998 and 1999.



However, by the end of 1998 CDF activities against civilians started to decrease and, gradually, civilians became free from attacks and harassment. People returned to their various towns and villages and started resettling. This continued until the disarmament of the CDF in the entire District by 2001.

2. Factual analysis

a) Events in 1991 – 1994

Sierra Leone Army (SLA) forces were deployed across the country in the District's headquarter towns and other sensitive areas soon after the coup d'état in 1992, with the aim of securing the country from the National Patriotic Front (NPFL) and Revolutionary United Front (RUF) forces, which had entered Sierra Leone from Liberia in 1991. Around this time, new SLA units emerged, such as Tiger Battalion, Scorpion Battalion and SLA Rangers. In Moyamba District in 1992,[1263] some SLA members deployed in Fakunya Chiefdom in the central north of the District, which shares a boundary with Tonkolili District. They deployed in two sensitive areas of the chiefdom, namely Moyamba Junction, 102 miles from Freetown on the Freetown-Bo highway, 22 miles to Moyamba and Njagbahun Junction, on the Moyamba Junction-Moyamba road, 8 miles from Moyamba Junction and 14 miles from Moyamba town.[1264]

At this time, the District was free of an RUF/NPFL presence, as those forces were confined to the south-east and north-east of the country. However, the war had already begun to affect civilians, who were harassed by SLA forces, mainly for their food and domestic animals. Food was often stolen at the checkpoints mounted by the SLA, but also when SLA forces would leave their checkpoints and visit towns and villages in the chiefdoms for the purposes of finding food. In addition, cases of physical violence, killings and rapes were reported. At the checkpoints, SLA forces took some women and girls away and sexually assaulted them. The forces also took aside civilians suspected of being "rebels", inflicting physical violence on them and sometimes killing them when they could not be identified by relatives or other civilians.[1265]

By the end of January 1994, the then Head of State declared "total war" against the RUF forces and launched a massive recruitment process, more than doubling the ranks of the SLA.[1266] In addition, in April 1994, an SLA captain visited Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom),[1267] in the north-east of the District, where he held a meeting with the people of the town. During that meeting, he instructed the people of the town to give their young men to be trained as vigilantes to help the SLA fight the RUF forces and to further protect their chiefdoms in the Districts. The trained youths formed a Civil Defence Unit (CDU).[1268] The people of the town were instructed to provide the CDU with

[1263] The date is not clear from the record, but this was probably sometime in 1992.

[1264] Whoever controlled these junctions would have open access to Moyamba Town (Kaiyamba Chiefdom), south-east of Fakunya Chiefdom.

[1265] No more detail was available on this information, nor the precise year of its occurrence.

[1266] In late 1993, RUF forces launched a massive operation in the south of Kenema District and rapidly spread across the District. By the end of 1994, they were all over Kenema, Pujehun and Bo Districts and continued their inland progression.

[1267] There is also a Bumpeh Chiefdom in Bo District.

[1268] A CDU was the most developed form of organisation the civilians put in place for the defence of their chiefdoms. This was the step prior to the initiation and development of the Kamajors.



food and logistics but as elders were reluctant to tax an already poor population, the Chiefs decided to tax themselves to support the youths. The CDU kept guard at certain locations in Rotifunk and the surrounding villages. Other units were formed in other chiefdoms in the District. Additional security was provided for the workers at the mining company[1269] in Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom) by SSD (State Security Division) forces, who arrived on 4 July 1994.[1270]

However, towards the end of 1994, the actions of the SLA against civilians continued to increase. For example, SLA forces who introduced themselves as SLA members went by military truck to the town of Rotawa (north of Fakunya Chiefdom) on 14 October 1994. Those men were dressed in full military uniforms. They took civilian property, mainly food items and livestock, and proceeded to Falaba and Gbotima, in the north of Fakunya Chiefdom, where they carried out the same action. Another group of SLA forces, allegedly coming from Mofokoya (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), five miles to the north of Rotawa, entered Rotawa on 16 December 1994. They entered the compound of an elder, once a Regent Chief, and took her 16-year daughter whom they began to beat up. When the girl's father and one of his guests pleaded for her release, the SLA killed them; the father was beaten with stick and the guest was shot and killed. On their way back to Tonkolili District, they came across a woman whom they raped before giving her Le 1,000. They further told her they were SLA forces from Camp Charlie at Mile 91.[1271] Also, the town of Kwellu (Fakunya Chiefdom) was raided on 11 December by the SLA forces, who took a lot of property from civilians living there.

On 14 November 1994 the SLA forces came to Mano (Dasse Chiefdom), situated on a highway leading Fakunya Chiefdom to Dasse Chiefdom, through Kori Chiefdom southwards into Bo District. They were fully dressed in military uniforms and armed with RPG and automatic riffles. The SLA forces established a base in the town and erected checkpoints in the town at roads leading out towards Taiama to the north, Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom) to the south and Bumpeh Chiefdom (Bo District) to the south.[1272] Soon afterwards the SLA forces started harassing civilians in the town, taking money from people at the checkpoints, and even went to other towns and villages in the chiefdom. Civilians were beaten and their property was taken. Following the attack on Bo Town in late December 1994, the SLA imposed a curfew from 6.00pm to 7.30am and started suspecting civilians of being "rebels" or "rebel" collaborators; several people were beaten, imprisoned in the guardroom and even killed.[1273]

By the end of 1994, news about possible attacks by the RUF forces began to be heard in the District. There were rumours that the RUF forces were fast advancing to attack the mining town of Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom) and make a base there. Around 28 December 1994, SLA forces coming from Freetown were airlifted to Mokanji as reinforcements for the SSD.

[1269] Sierra Leone Ore and Metal Co. (Sieromco), a Swiss-owned mining company based in the southern area of Mokanji was the only bauxite producer in the country and was mining deposits within 4 km of the washing plant at Gondama, in the centre of the Chiefdom: The Mining Journal, 29 May 1994.

[1270] The year is uncertain, as the SSD may have deployed in July 1993.

[1271] Reports for Tonkolili, however, do not make mention of SLA troops based at Mile 91 around this time.

[1272] Around this time, RUF forces had spread across Bo District and were approaching Bumpeh Chiefdom, which adjoins Dasse Chiefdom to its west.

[1273] Massive attacks were carried out during the Christmas week in Bo District. RUF forces first attacked an IDP camp before attacking Bo Town and major cities in its environs.

Civilians were very much disturbed by the presence of the SLA forces in the District as those forces were treating them roughly and although RUF forces had not yet reached the District, civilians began to mistrust the SLA.

b) Events in 1995

On 11 January 1995, SLA forces entered Njama (Kowa Chiefdom, in the east of Moyamba District) and their commander introduced them to the Paramount Chief as troops sent from the SLA Brigade headquarter at Bo Town to secure the chiefdom, as RUF forces were on their way to the chiefdom. The SLA forces erected checkpoints in the town but departed the town on the following day, led by civilians taken to lead the way, en route to attack RUF forces that were based at Momajoe (Bagbo Chiefdom, south of Bo District). However, they returned to Njama later the following day, overrun by the RUF forces at Momajoe; that evening, Njama was attacked by RUF forces.

This first RUF attack into Moyamba District was the prelude of a massive operation, at the end of which RUF forces attacked and spread across most of the District. There was, however, some confusion at the time of the attack on Njama, as the SLA present in the town appeared to put up no resistance to the RUF forces and some of them were seen outside the town, rubbing black and blue materials on their faces and putting on masks. RUF forces entered the headquarter town, shooting randomly and shouting at civilians to fight them with sticks and cutlasses.[1274] As they started to set houses on fire, civilians ran away from their houses. One hundred and six houses were burnt down that day and the houses that were not burnt were looted and the shops vandalised. RUF forces molested and beat civilians, raped seven girls, whose age could not be ascertained, and killed 10 civilians, including the Chiefdom Speaker and the Paramount Chief's son and younger brother. The RUF forces spent the night in town before departed the next day, early in the morning of 14 January, with some civilians whom they had abducted to carry the load. They arrived at Mokoya (Kowa Chiefdom), where they took property from the village. No casualties were reported, as all the civilians had deserted the village before they arrived. On the same day, an SLA gunship coming from the direction of Bo shot at Njama for two hours.

On 15 January 1995, RUF forces battled with SLA coming from Mano (Dasse Chiefdom) on their way to Njama. This battle took place at Pelewahun (Kamajei Chiefdom) some six miles to the north-east of Mano. The RUF forces overpowered the SLA, which forced them to retreat hastily to Mano. Before this battle, RUF forces had attacked some villages in the extreme south-east of Kori Chiefdom, west of Kamajei Chiefdom. RUF forces attacked Njala, including the University campus, and Mosongo, where they burnt 12 houses and killed some civilians. It appeared that RUF forces then separated,[1275] with one group advancing north to Kamajei Chiefdom and one going south-westward to Dasse Chiefdom.

In Kamajei Chiefdom, RUF forces attacked villages in the south of the chiefdom, including Buma and Ngiyehun. At Buma, two civilians were killed and others abducted and taken to Njala (Kori Chiefdom). Although the RUF forces did not attack Senehun, the headquarter town, most of the

[1274] This referred to the attack on Bo Town in late December, during which RUF forces were repelled by civilians equipped with sticks and cutlasses. See Bo District for further information.

[1275] It is not clear whether they divided before or after the battle at Pelewahun.

civilians left the town and went to live in the bush or, for those who had money, to Bo Town. RUF forces established a base at Pelewahun Kenneh, where they would stay for 11 months and from where they would launch attacks on Kori and Kamajei Chiefdoms. For example, Pelewahun[1276] was attacked on 18 February, by RUF forces dressed in military uniforms, underneath which some of them had attire adorned with the RUF initials.

The RUF group that had advanced in the direction of Dasse Chiefdom pursued the SLA forces to Mano, where they discovered that the SLA had fled the town. The RUF forces captured eight civilians and introduced themselves as "freedom fighters", coming to redeem the Sierra Leoneans from the APC regime. The RUF forces spent six hours in the town but did not inflict harm on the civilians. They then attempted to take the Mokanji road but were ambushed by the SLA on the bridge over the Taia River. Sixteen RUF members were killed and two civilians, who had attempted to escape, drowned in the river. The RUF left the area and spent the night at Benduma.

SLA forces and civilians who were in hiding returned to Mano and the SLA continued to harass civilians. People were killed on the suspicion that they were "rebels" or "rebel" collaborators. More checkpoints were established throughout the town and youths were asked to work as vigilantes, which included running the checkpoints but also doing menial work for the SLA like fetching water or cooking. When an attack was imminent, those youths were given weapons to fight.

From Benduma, the RUF forces proceeded to the south to attack Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom), the location of the Sieromco Company, a Swiss-owned company that specialised in the mining of bauxite. Prior to this attack, some SLA forces who were stationed in Mokanji had left the town for Njama (Kowa Chiefdom) to fight the RUF but were repelled at Pelewahun on 15 January and came back to the town.[1277] On 17 January, 30 SLA members, allegedly from Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District), were airlifted as reinforcement to Mokanji.[1278]

On 18 January 1995, the RUF forces from Banduma passed by Kabiama (Banta Chiefdom), where they abducted a diamond dealer, his wife and other civilians and continued to Mokanji, three miles from Kabiama.[1279] In Mokanji, no houses were burnt, but several civilians, both locals and foreigners, were abducted, including the personnel manager of the Sieromco company and civilians were killed, including the Government representative to the mining companies, a retired Inspector of Police, a worker from the company, a Fullah man and two SLA members. SLA forces deployed at the Sierra Rutile Company (Imperi Chiefdom, Bonthe District) came to the town, in order to consolidate the SLA forces at Mokanji and thus to protect the security of the other mining company. However, the RUF did not stay long in Mokanji and by the end of the afternoon had left the town

[1276] There are two Pelewahuns in the south of Kamajei Chiefdom.

[1277] It is likely that they regrouped with the SLA forces who were deployed at Mano (Dasse).

[1278] A strong SLA military base was located at Daru, called Moa Barracks. This base had been attacked many times during the first years of the conflict by RUF/NPFL forces but SLA forces always repelled them, which led civilians in Mokanji to say that those SLA forces "knew how to fight". It is also alleged that this reinforcement was not too much encouraged, as the SLA forces already stationed in the town were poorly dressed in half combat, were carrying cutlasses and half of them were wearing bathroom slippers.

[1279] During the attack on Mokanji, it appeared that the RUF were "all over the town", as gunshots were heard from everywhere. This may suggest two things: either RUF forces were already in the town before the attack, disguised in SLA uniforms, or some SLA forces left their ranks and joined the RUF.



and proceeded further south to Tongor (Banta Chiefdom) where they took a lot of civilian property. From there, they moved to Imperi Chiefdom (Bonthe District), the location of the Sierra Rutile Company, which would be attacked on 19 January 1995. Military strategists in Freetown suspected that the RUF forces would use the Sierra Rutile area as a base to access the sea through the port of Nitti (Banta Chiefdom), where major shipments of mineral products from both Sieromco and Sierra Rutile companies were exported by sea to Europe.[1280]

More SLA members were again airlifted to Mokanji to reinforce the forces already in the area. Supported by Nigerian Alpha Jets, they fought the RUF forces who had not gone to Bonthe District and who were allegedly still in the Mokanji Hills area.[1281] The workers of the mining company and their families were evacuated to Freetown. SLA forces based in Mokanji, however, began to harass civilians and to chase them out of their villages to steal their property, forcing them to live in the bush. For example, around 13 February, the SLA forces went to a bush camp in order to take civilians and to make them work for them. During their escape, a woman and her four children drowned in the Taia River. They also killed civilians they accused of being "rebel" collaborators.

For two months, the RUF forces concentrated on Bonthe District[1282] and to a limited extent on the south of Moyamba District. In February, RUF forces entered Mokele, the headquarter town of Banta Mokele Chiefdom. They burnt down the Paramount Chief's compound and four other houses and stayed in the town for two weeks before leaving. During the time of their stay, the civilians had fled to the bush. The RUF forces were also scattered in villages throughout Banta Chiefdom, including Yebanna and Mogbomo Junction in the south of the chiefdom, and asked civilians whether any SLA forces had visited their villages at any time. In late February, RUF forces coming from the rutile area (Imperi Chiefdom, Bonthe District) launched an unsuccessful attack on Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom). Until August, RUF forces would make other unsuccessful attempts to dislodge the SLA forces and to take control over the mining company.

In March 1995, a massive RUF operation was launched in Moyamba District. The pattern of the RUF actions clearly demonstrated that their goal was Freetown and that they initially did not intend to settle in Moyamba District, which they used more as a transit towards the capital. RUF forces simultaneously attacked Moyamba Junction (Fakunya Chiefdom) and Moyamba Town, following the same pattern in each attack.[1283] The group that attacked Moyamba Town would then follow the Moyamba-Freetown road, attacking the major roads on its way, before being halted in Ribbi Chiefdom, in the north-west of the District.

Prior to the attack on Moyamba Town, RUF forces attacked the town of Mokele (Banta Mokele Chiefdom). On their arrival in the town, the commander informed the civilians that they were peace-loving citizens fighting to liberate the people of Sierra Leone, which was why they were called "freedom fighters." However, no sooner had the meeting ended than the harassment of civilians begun. The forces stole civilians' property and took away all the young men and women including

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[1280] Xinhua News Agency, 24 January 1995.
[1281] AFP, 25 January 1995.
[1282] By February 1995, all the chiefdoms in the north of Bonthe District had been attacked by RUF forces.
[1283] It is probable that the RUF group who attacked Moyamba Junction, to the north of the District came from Tonkolili District, and the one who attacked Moyamba Town came from Bonthe District.

girls between 13 and 16 years old. They looted the township and forced the young men and women to carry the loads. Another group of RUF forces entered the town of Mosekie (Banta Mokele Chiefdom) where they had a meeting with the civilians. At the meeting people were ordered to cook for the them, after which the town was looted and the property was carried for them by young men captured in the village. Some houses were burnt but no one was killed. Around the same time, the RUF forces also entered Mokepie village (Banta Mokele Chiefdom), where they introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" and took property from civilians. They burnt down some houses in the town and abducted youths, for the purposes of recruiting them into their fighting force.[1284]

These RUF forces, dressed in military uniforms, reached Moyamba Town (Kaiyamba Chiefdom), close to the centre of Moyamba District, on 14 March 1995. At the time of the attacks, members of the CDU were deployed in the town but had to withdraw, as they could not withstand the heavy firepower of the RUF forces; the SLA forces, similarly overpowered, also had to retreat. Twenty-five civilians were killed in the town and several young girls and women raped. The RUF forces also burnt down 23 houses, including the Moyamba Police station and took away a lot of property from civilians and shops. Captured civilians were forced to carry property taken by the RUF forces, who also captured some children to be conscripted into the fighting forces. The RUF forces spent only one night in the town and continued their way on the Moyamba-Freetown road, passing by Yoyema (Kaiyamba Chiefdom).

Another group of armed men entered the town on 17 March 1995 and set up base in the compound of the Moyamba Boys Secondary School. They introduced themselves as SLA forces and encouraged civilians to come back to the town; civilians were convinced that these were SLA forces, as they were wearing military uniforms. Furthermore, the commander introduced himself as a famous SLA officer. However, three days later, those men began breaking into houses, shops and Government buildings and taking everything they could lay their hands on. They stayed in the town for one more month, during which they harassed civilians for their domestic animals and created more havoc, killing, raping and abducting civilians. They only left the town on hearing the rumour that SLA forces were on their way to the town. Civilians then identified those armed men as RUF forces.[1285]

At Yoyema (Kaiyamba Chiefdom), which they reached on 15 March, RUF forces also beat civilians, killing some, took away all the domestic animals and left the same day, continuing their journey westwards. Five days later, another group of armed men claiming to be SLA forces reached Yoyema and, as they did in Moyamba Town, persuaded people to resettle in the town; for one week, the town was calm. However, pandemonium broke out not long after, including the massive stealing of property throughout the town, and those forces were then identified by civilians as RUF forces. These forces also left on hearing that SLA forces were approaching Moyamba Town.

[1284] Although this action was reported to have taken place on 19 March, it is likely that it took place before the attack on Moyamba Town on 14 March, as it is located in the south of the District and RUF forces reached Moyamba Town from Bonthe District, which is further south.

[1285] It is however not clear whether those armed men where RUF forces or ex-SLA forces deserting their positions and acting like the RUF. Civilians however recounted that they were RUF forces in disguise.

The next chiefdom to the west was Kongbora and Bauya, the chiefdom headquarter town, is located on the main road. RUF forces who had left Yoyema on 15 March attacked villages on the road but by-passed Bauya. They entered Morkorewo (Kongbora Chiefdom) on 16 March and burnt down the first house of the village. They killed some people, among them two elderly people, and abducted others. Those captured civilians were to carry their property while young boys, some of whom had weapons, were to fetch water. One old man who was captured at Yoyema the day before and who told them he was tired to carry the load was killed. The RUF forces stole property from the old part of the village and stayed for three days, during which time they killed some civilians and took all the livestock. These RUF forces were accompanied by men and women fulfilling different missions, some of them being engineers, cooks, first aid men, load carriers or road map directors.

The headquarter town of Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom), which is also located on the main road, was attacked in the afternoon of 18 March 1995. Civilians were abducted and killed; people coming to the town one week later found a lot of bodies in the centre of the town, some already beginning to decompose. Many houses were burnt, mostly on City Road, and property was taken. The day before this attack, armed men introducing themselves as SLA forces had come to the town. However, on the day of the attack, those armed men took red pieces of cloth out of their pockets and tied them around their heads. This made civilians understand that those armed men were not SLA forces coming to protect them as they pretended but RUF forces.[1286] Before leaving the town, the forces wrote on some of the houses: "RUF heading for the city Freetown – we will be back soon".

RUF forces then attacked the headquarter town of Bradford (Ribbi Chiefdom), to the north-west of Rotifunk. All the civilians in the town ran into the bush while the forces burnt down many houses, killed 13 civilians and took a lot of property. They were however repelled by SLA forces who had come from Freetown on three trucks the day before. During the fighting, one RUF member and two SLA members were killed. Although they had defeated the RUF, the SLA forces did not stay in the town.

After the attack on Bradford and their encounter with SLA forces, RUF forces came back to Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom). They established a camp, known as "Camp Fol Fol",[1287] located in a strategic position on a hilly hideout at the border with four chiefdoms, Bumpeh, Ribbi and Kongbora Chiefdoms (Moyamba District) and Yoni Chiefdom (Tonkolili District). From this camp, they went on to attack villages, notably the villages surrounding Rotifunk, where they killed civilians and took property. At Berembu, a woman was killed and in Makombrabai the RUF forces killed three people, one woman and two men. At Mokebbi, five miles from Rotifunk, no one was killed but several people were captured and property was taken. Old men and women were forced to carry the stolen property, including mattresses, rice, palm oil, gari and cattle, while young boys and girls were taken to the RUF base for training and recruitment. One young boy who attempted to run in order not to be abducted was shot and killed by an RUF member. When they reached Levuma, in the north-west of Kongbora Chiefdom, near their base, RUF forces released the carriers, as they did not want them to know the location of their base. A guard place or second camp was established at Motokoh, two and a half miles from Camp Fol Fol, where civilians abducted to carry loads from the

[1286] The red headband was characteristic of the RUF forces who had worn it since the beginning of the conflict. This red headband distinguished them from the NPFL forces during the early stages of the conflict.
[1287] This camp was reported spelled in two different ways, the alternative one being "Camp Fall Fall".



villages were released and told to return to their villages. RUF forces also made several visits to Rotifunk town, which was completely deserted by civilians for some weeks. All these attacks led many civilians to find refuge in the centre of the chiefdom, notably in Bumpeh, a village virtually only accessible by the Bumpeh River, which originates in the ocean.

More than 200 RUF members, armed with AK47s, RPGs and a Anti Aircraft gun mounted on a lorry, attacked Bauya (Kongbora Chiefdom) sometime in March.[1288] Several buildings were burnt, including the Chief's house, the Secondary School, the Court Barrie and the market. More than 30 people were killed and a lot of property was taken. From Bauya, they attacked the surrounding villages. Besides Camp Fol Fol, a secondary training base was opened at Levuma (north-west of Kongbora Chiefdom). The area soon became deserted, as the RUF forces were settled and in control of the area.

In the other wave of attacks occurring concurrently with the attacks on Moyamba Town, Moyamba Junction (Fakunya Chiefdom) was attacked on 14 March 1995, probably by RUF forces coming from Tonkolili District.[1289] Early in the afternoon, armed men with full military uniforms entered the town with sporadic shooting; giving no excuse for the shooting, they left the town towards Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District), where they claimed they came from.[1290] Late in the evening, those armed men came back and attacked the town again. At the time of the attack, the SLA forces posted there were nowhere to be found. The RUF forces burnt down nine houses and captured several people. These forces then went south, attacked Waterloo in the evening and proceeded on to Njagbahun Junction, where SLA forces were based. Although no fatalities are reported, RUF forces succeeding in capturing a lot of newly supplied arms and ammunition from the SLA. From Njagbahun, they headed back in the direction of Waterloo and, on their way, attacked Kpetema Fanday at midnight. Property was taken and several people were captured in the town.[1291] On 15 March, civilians who had been abducted from Moyamba Junction and surrounding villages were forced to carry the stolen property to an RUF camp called "Borkor One" near Lumleblu village.[1292]

In about mid April 1995, the RUF forces attacked Motobong (Bumpeh Chiefdom), 16 miles from Rotifunk. As they opened fire while entering the village, civilians ran into the bush. The RUF forces shot two cows and took away other domestic animals to Moshibara Junction, where they entered the town, killed one woman and wounded another civilian. They then advanced to Moshemoi, capturing many civilians without resistance or the need for gunfire during the night. They asked a girl to show them the direction of the Paramount Chief's farm and, as they realised she gave them the wrong direction on purpose, they raped her. They then gave her Le 10,000, telling her that they would come back for her, and left for their base at Camp Fol Fol.

[1288] Although it took place in March, this attack may have taken place before the establishment of Camp Fol Fol. It is also possible that some of the RUF forces had settled in villages in Kongbora Chiefdom, while the bulk of the RUF forces were heading to Rotifunk (Bumpe Chiefdom). Accordingly, the exact date of these events could not be ascertained. They took place either before or after the Rotifunk and Bradford attacks.

[1289] Around the same period, RUF forces attacked Mile 91, a strategic town on the highway to Freetown, in Tonkolili District.

[1290] At this time, SLA forces were deployed in Mile 91 in Tonkolili District.

[1291] No further information was available on this event.

[1292] Although the location of this camp could not be ascertained, it was probably a secondary camp.



The SLA forces who had earlier prompted RUF forces, disguised as SLA members, to leave Moyamba Town in late March/early April, arrived in Moyamba Town on or around 20 April 1995. The SLA forces defended the town from several more attacks by the RUF forces, who never succeeded in retaking the town. Their stay in the town was described as "peaceful" and no acts of violence against civilians were reported.

Probably coming from Camp Fol Fol, RUF forces came to Rotifunk (Ribbi Chiefdom) around 14 June 1995, although at that time, most of the people were living in the bush. On their way to Rotifunk, they came across a civilian at Mokaikono, whom they asked to lead them to the other civilians in the bush. As he did not want to disclose their location, he was hit with a bladed weapon and left for dead in the bush. The man however survived and after two days, managed to go back to his camp.

Sometime between June and July, Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom) was attacked for the fourth time by RUF forces probably coming from Bonthe District. They were repelled by SLA forces and 28 of them were killed. No SLA member or civilian was killed but SLA forces were actively engaged in stealing and vandalising the Sieromco Company.[1293]

During August 1995, the upper part of Bumpeh Chiefdom was under the control of the RUF forces. Villages in Bumpeh Chiefdom including Berembu, Topkumbu, Mosenesse, Kpamgbaya, Komrabai and Yenkissa were attacked. The RUF forces burnt a house at Tokpumbu and took the property of a civilian at Kpamgbaya. In that town, they also forced a man who was a Muslim and had never drunk wine in his life to drink alcohol; as his wife came out of the bush crying, she was shot and killed and acid was sprinkled on her body. The town of Mokebbi was attacked for the second time by the RUF forces and they proceeded to Mogbindi. Finding nobody in the town, they burnt all the houses there.

At that time, however, RUF forces were launching those attacks by group of 20 to 30 men, of whom only four to five had guns. It thus appeared that the progression force of the RUF as evidenced by their attacks on Moyamba Junction, Moyamba Town and the main towns on the highway had come to a halt during this period, and RUF forces were more engaged in looting.

In October 1995, another wave of attacks were carried out in Fakunya Chiefdom, by RUF forces coming from their main base at Camp Fol Fol. On 9 October 1995, they passed through the towns of Rotawa, Falaba Gbotima and arrived at Sembehun Kortuwabu, where they set up a temporary base. Many civilians were captured in the town on their arrival. The commander informed the people of the town that they were RUF forces and that both the town and all its surrounding villages were under their control. The RUF forces attacked neighbouring towns and villages and various items were stolen, including food products such as rice, groundnut, pepper and palm oil as well as personal effects, including tape recorders, radios, clocks, clothing and cameras. In those villages, some women were raped. On 10 October 1995, the RUF forces attacked the town of Kpangbama. After they entered the town, the RUF commander ordered the forces not to shoot, so they did not shoot. Over 100 people were captured, including women, including suckling mothers, and children.

[1293] RUF forces carried out a fifth and last attack on Mokanji in August but were, once more, repelled by SLA forces.



The captured civilians were forced to carry property stolen from the town to Sembehun Kortuwabu, escorted by one RUF group, while another group left intending to attack Njagbahun Junction but instead went back to Sembehun Kortuwabu, as they did not find any SLA forces at the Junction.

Other attacks were launched in the surrounding villages of Ngandorhun, Kwellu, and Falaba. The attacks were successful and a lot of property was taken. Again, captured civilians were forced to carry the stolen property to Sembehun. SLA forces who had come from Moyamba Town staged an ambush for the RUF forces but, as they could not withstand the firepower of the RUF, they went back to Moyamba Town. Some captured civilians managed to escape during the crossfire. In retaliation for the attack, RUF forces burnt down Kpangbama, accusing civilians of having warned the SLA they were there. Over 100 goats from the surrounding villages were killed and smoked, for later consumption at Camp Fol Fol. During their six-day stay in Sembehun Kortuwabu, RUF forces raped women and many girls, sometimes aged below 11, and killed three civilians who attempted to escape.

On 14 October, the RUF commander sent a message to Camp Fol Fol for the High Command to send more men, both captured civilians and RUF members, to collect the looted items, as he, and his troops, together with the civilians captured in the area were heading for Njala University (south-east of Kori Chiefdom). The commander told the civilians that this university would not function until the RUF took over government.[1294] RUF forces entered the town of Mokorewa (Fakunya Chiefdom) on 15 October 1995 and took property, mainly personnel items like tape recorders, radios and clothing, from several houses. Two civilians were killed and several more were captured. They told the civilians they came from Sembehun Kortuwabu and were heading for Njala University. Just over a week later, on 24 October, the forces visited the town again and attacked surrounding villages, stealing property, raping and sexually harassing women and young girls. They stayed at Mokorewa for four days, during which time they abducted many civilians, the majority of whom were children. Civilians were forced to carry stolen property for the RUF forces.[1295]

A subsequent attack was launched on Sembehun Kortuwabu and its environs around 2 December 1995. A large number of the RUF members were children between the ages of 12 and 15 years, who had been captured in schools in Lunsar, Port Loko Town (Port Loko District) or Kambia. Civilians were captured and maltreated by the RUF forces in an attempt to learn where the civilians were keeping their food and sexual violence was rampant.[1296] From December to March 1997, it appeared that the civilians in Fakunya Chiefdom suffered greatly, as both RUF and SLA forces raided their villages and camps in the bush, mainly to steal food and other property; some of the civilians were beaten and some women were raped.

On 15 December 1995, RUF forces coming from Camp Fol Fol reached the north of Kagboro Chiefdom, to the south of Bumpeh Chiefdom. At this time, an influx of people had arrived in Shenge, the headquarter town located by the ocean, south of Kagboro Creek. The RUF forces came

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[1294] Njala University was attacked by RUF forces on 27 December 1995. BBC Summary of World Broadcasts, 28 December 1995.

[1295] This attack on Mokorewa may have been carried out a few days earlier, before the RUF forces sent their message to Camp Fol Fol.

[1296] No more details were available on this information.

mainly for the purposes of finding food and, as they had done earlier in the beginning of 1995, introduced themselves as SLA forces. They entered Morkandor, where they took away domestic animals before continuing their journey to nearby villages, including Bandasuma and Mokana. In all these villages, they abducted civilians to carry the loads, mainly consisting of domestic animals, to their base at Camp Fol Fol. Civilians were warned by the RUF commander that they would be killed if they could not continue the journey. When they arrived near the base, those civilians were released and told to go back to their villages.

Following these attacks, a CDU comprised of civilians with cutlasses, swords and a few shotguns was formed in Kagboro Chiefdom. In addition, the attacks on Bumpeh Chiefdom led the elders to hold a meeting in Moyeamoh in December, at which they sought to find means by which they could repel the RUF forces. One Section Chief asked all the civilians with hunting rifles to surrender them to the Chiefs. Only nine guns could be gathered and 29 youths gave themselves up for training and to form a CDU.[1297]

On 28 December 1995, RUF forces attacked Senehun, the headquarter town of Kamajei Chiefdom, where they killed 28 civilians, burnt houses and took property, mainly money and other valuables. As a result of the attack, most of the civilians left the town and went to camps in Bo and Freetown.

c) Events in 1996

Kamajors from Bonthe District came to Moyamba District to assist the CDUs in the defence of their chiefdoms. At that time also, members of the CDUs and other young men progressively became initiated into the Kamajor society. They initially went to Bonthe District before initiation ceremonies began to be performed in Moyamba District. In February, the first Kamajors of Kagboro Chiefdom came back to the chiefdom from their initiation.

In early 1996, members of the newly formed CDU of Bumpeh Chiefdom had their first encounter with RUF forces between Moyah and Mogbainchain (Bumpeh Chiefdom). They staged an ambush, killing two RUF members, capturing one and taking two AK47s.[1298] Soon after, a few Kamajors from Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District) came to the chiefdom and started patrolling in the area, looking out for RUF members. They went to Moyah, where they joined the members of the CDU. In February, both the Kamajors and the members of the CDU went to attack Motokoh, the guard place or secondary camp near Camp Fol Fol. As they took the RUF forces by surprise, they succeeded in dislodging them. They killed some RUF members, took some arms and ammunition, destroyed the base and went back to Moyah. The relations between the Kamajors and the members of the CDU, however, began to deteriorate and they started to quarrel over the Kamajors behaviour. Their main complaints were that the Kamajors wanted the CDU to be their juniors, because the Kamajors had mystical powers; they were harassing civilians, beating them up whenever they did something wrong; and they were taxing civilians and treating the Chiefs and elders without respect.

Initiation ceremonies began to take place at Taninehun (Kongbora Chiefdom) in early 1996 at first only for men recommended by the Section Chiefs. Prior to this, in 1995, a few men had left the Chiefdom to be initiated as Kamajors and had come back to the chiefdom, chasing the RUF who

[1297] Those men were not initiated Kamajors.

[1298] It could not be ascertained what happened to the captured RUF member.



were sporadically raiding small villages, taking away property, abducting young boys and girls and killing some people.[1299] As more and more men were initiated, the Kamajors established checkpoints across the chiefdom, notably three in Bauya, the chiefdom headquarter town. An administration for the Kamajors was set up in the chiefdom with the following positions: Supreme Leader and Initiator, Deputy Initiator and Battalion Commander, Deputy Battalion Commander, Chiefdom Ground Commander and Commanders. Kamajors, equipped with hunting guns, swords, spears, knifes and other bladed weapons did not initially attack identified RUF positions but began by staging ambushes, capturing small groups of RUF forces on food finding missions. They killed a lot of RUF members and took their arms and ammunition. As their number grew, the Kamajors began organising their deployment in strategic areas of the chiefdom.

Before the elections scheduled for 26 February, RUF forces entered Moyoka (Fakunya Chiefdom), and killed with bladed weapons eight civilians attending a church service. They then headed for Moyolo and on their way, killed a man and left the body in the bush. On approaching Moyolo, some entered the bush and encircled the town while others in military uniforms and Kamajors attire entered the town, telling people they had come to talk about the initiation process. Youths came from their different locations and the RUF forces disguised in SLA members and Kamajors[1300] ordered them to assemble at the Court Barrie. The civilians were told to undress and were kept locked in houses. Some 18 civilians were then taken out of the houses, were set on fire and died. As this was going on, three women were raped by many RUF members and were then mutilated, one being forced to sit in a solution of caustic soda and another had her breast cut off with a knife. The third woman was sexually assaulted with a stick, as a result of which she died. Five more civilians including two children aged 12 and 15 were taken out of their houses and, after they were told by the RUF forces to identify which was their predominant hand, this hand was cut off.

The RUF forces left the next morning and one day later, SLA forces from Njagbahun came to the town. They told civilians who were burying their relatives that they had come to assess the damage caused by the RUF forces. However, they took civilians' property, including domestic animals, rice, groundnut and clothing. Three days later, SLA forces came back to the nearby villages of Mobayngahun, Salima, Bembeh, Mopotey, Njala Gofor, Gbeworbu, Potehun and Batama, where they took property, forced civilians to carry the load to their base at Njagbahun and sexually harassed women.

After the February elections, RUF forces came back to Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom) and burnt down more houses, but by this time most of the civilians had deserted the town. RUF forces were described as being "totally out of control", as each time they went to a village, they burnt down houses, took away property and killed anybody that they came across.

The north-east of Kamajei Chiefdom was attacked by RUF forces coming from Valunia Chiefdom (Bo District), to the east of Kamajei Chiefdom. They established a base in Yelina Section in March 1996 and abducted some young boys and girls to carry loads and to show them the various routes and passages through the chiefdom. In the same month, Kamajors arrived in the chiefdom to

[1299] It could not be ascertained where they went for the initiation ceremony.

[1300] It is also suggested that those RUF forces introduced themselves as officers of the Interim National Electoral Commission (INEC), coming to educate the people of the town about the electoral system.



protect Gondama.[1301] The Kamajors attacked the RUF forces in Yelina section and rescued many civilians, who they then brought to Gondama. However, Gondama was attacked shortly after, with over 30 people being killed by the RUF forces, and the Kamajors left the town. Most of the people killed were civilians recently brought to Gondama by the Kamajors and, accordingly, did not know any escape routes. During this attack, the RUF forces did not burn any houses but took away property, mainly livestock.

In late March/early April 1996, RUF forces attacked the town of Mokainsay (Kagboro Chiefdom), in the south of the District. At first, the Kamajors put up a stiff resistance but they were soon forced to withdraw, as they ran out of ammunition. The RUF burnt some buildings, including a mosque. They left the town and two days later, killed an old man in his hammock and burnt houses at Mojana, in the east of the chiefdom. The RUF forces then retreated to their base at Camp Fol Fol.

Bagruwa Chiefdom, also in the south of the District, was attacked by RUF forces for the first time around April 1996. RUF forces coming from the north of Bonthe District through Banta Chiefdom arrived in the south of Bagruwa Chiefdom.[1302] At this time, the Paramount Chief hired Kamajors from Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District) to defend the chiefdom. RUF forces were dislodged in a fierce battle at Mogboi. The battle lasted for several hours and a large number of RUF forces were killed. At Mattru Bangay, one Kamajor killed a civilian on the allegation that he was an RUF collaborator.

In late May, RUF forces came back to Kagboro Chiefdom and attacked Mokobo (north-east of the chiefdom) for the second time, with the intention to establish a base there. They stayed in the town for two days, stealing civilians' property in the town and in the surrounding villages and forcing civilians to carry the load. These attacks led civilians to desert the town and go to live in the bush. The RUF forces then divided into four groups and scattered throughout the chiefdom, including at Tissana, Morkandor, Bandajuma, Mokana, Suen and Mohiteh, where they harassed civilians, stole their property and forced them to carry the load. They also made a rapid incursion into Timdel Chiefdom, east of Kagboro Chiefdom.

RUF forces attacked Sembehun, the headquarter town of Bagruwa Chiefdom, around 3 June. They broke into all the houses, took away property and captured four boys and four girls who cooked for the RUF forces at their temporary base at Kongonani.[1303] They then left the area, heading in the direction of Bonthe District. On their way, they stopped at Mokassie, where they released some civilians they had abducted but killed one man because he refused to go with them. Another man was killed for the same reason at Jondu. Following the attack on the town, CDUs were formed in Sembehun and young people, equipped with sticks, machetes and shotguns, established checkpoints.

Around May or June 1996, a new wave of attacks were carried out in Fakunya Chiefdom and its environs by RUF forces using Falaba Gbotima village as their base. They raped women and took

[1301] This is a different Gondama Town from the one in Bo District, which hosted an IDP camp.
[1302] At the time of this attack, RUF force had already been dislodged from their positions in the north of Bonthe District and had scattered throughout the bush.
[1303] It is not clear whether those children were released after doing the cooking.



property in more than 30 villages in the area, capturing several civilians who were forced to transport their loads to Falaba Gbotima. Around the same period, Kamajors who went to be initiated came to Kwellu together with some Kamajors from Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District) and began engaging the RUF forces, who were continuing their attacks on the small villages of the area. Between June and July, Kamajors based at Kwellu heard that RUF forces were going on looting sprees in Kpangama, Gbengbedu and Mayendu. Four Kamajors met the RUF forces at Nyandehun and engaged them in battle, which left some civilians and some RUF forces, including their commander, dead. The following day, 45 RUF members came to Nyandehun to find their commander, as they could not believe four Kamajors had defeated them and killed their commander. They found the body of their commander displayed at the centre of the village and in retaliation, burnt the village. On their return to Falaba Gbotima, they captured a civilian whom they then mutilated and killed. While still alive, his genital organ was cut off and forcibly put in his mouth. His stomach was then slit open and his intestines tied across a stick by the side of the road. At the time of these attacks, the SLA forces were still based at Njagbahun, four miles from Nyandehun, but did not make any move. They would later comment on this by saying that the area was "divided" and as the RUF forces had not come to their area, there was no need for them to go and attack the RUF forces.

As Kamajors continued to attack RUF positions in Yelina Section (Kamajei Chiefdom), RUF forces launched a second attack on Gondama (Kamajei Chiefdom) around 28 June 1996. No casualties were reported, as most of the civilians were by then living in the bush, but the RUF forces burnt down the town. This attack was the last ones in the area, as the Kamajors started patrolling around Gondama. In the neighbouring chiefdom of Kori, Kamajors deployed at Wayima (north-east of the chiefdom), where they mistreated civilians and passers-by, notably by imprisoning them in cages made of thorns. On one occasion, they severely beat the Village Chief of Ketumah, near Wayima, on the grounds that he had made a statement against Kamajors. On another occasion, those Kamajors from Wayima killed three brothers who had travelled from Markoli to Ketumah to meet their mother, accusing them of being RUF members. When their father came to enquire about what had happened to them, he was hit with a bladed weapon and killed.

Around June, the Paramount Chief of Bagruwa Chiefdom sent 70 young men to be initiated at Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District). Prior to this development in the chiefdom, some members of the SSD had been sent to the headquarter town of Sembehun to protect the town from RUF attacks. However, those SSD members soon began to harass civilians, moving from village to village and taking away civilians' property, including domestic animals. On one occasion, they killed one young man at Gbangbatoke Junction. This harassment prompted the Paramount Chief to request the presence of Kamajors in the Chiefdom and to report the matter to the Paramount Chief of Kaiyamba Chiefdom. While the Kamajors did come back to Bagruwa Chiefdom, they also soon began harassing civilians.

On 13 July 1996, RUF forces entered Waterloo Town (Fakunya chiefdom) for the second time, from the direction of Rogboya (Fakunya Chiefdom). One of the RUF forces, described as a young boy, killed a civilian. On their arrival in the town, an old deaf man was in his garden, working with a machete, and as he did not drop his machete when told to do so by the RUF forces, a child soldier shot and killed him. During this attack on Waterloo, RUF forces burnt down 23 houses and attacked

nearby villages, including Kondiama, Tombay Gbahama and Togbie. In those villages, a lot of property was taken away and civilians were abducted to carry the stolen property to the RUF base at "Camp Fol Fol".

Between June and August, RUF forces battled with Kamajors in Nyaogihun (Kagboro Chiefdom). Four members of the CDF were killed, including their commander. The RUF forces beheaded two of the bodies, cut their stomachs open and displayed their intestines across the road at a checkpoint. The RUF forces then burnt the village before crossing over to neighbouring villages in Timdel Chiefdom where they took property, mainly cattle, and harassed civilians. At this time, Timdel Chiefdom had no Kamajors, as it had never been attacked by RUF forces and the Paramount Chief paid for Kamajors to come from other chiefdoms, requesting subscriptions from the civilians to pay for their services.

As this harassment on Timdel Chiefdom grew, Kamajors from Kagboro Chiefdom went to Bumpeh Chiefdom to obtain reinforcements. They agreed with the Kamajors from Bumpeh that each would send reinforcements to the other chiefdom when it was under attack. Kamajors from the two chiefdoms went to Timdel Chiefdom and staged an ambush near Mokobo (Kagboro Chiefdom), killing many RUF forces. The remaining RUF forces fled the area but promised they would come back. More men from Kagboro Chiefdom were initiated, in Banta Chiefdom and in Kangahun (Kaiyamba Chiefdom) and deployed in different sections of the chiefdom in or around October. Men from Timdel Chiefdom were sent for initiation in Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District). No further RUF attacks took place in Timdel Chiefdom and the Kamajors established a base at Mosanda.

Around August, armed men claiming to be SLA forces arrived in Yoyema Town (Kayima Chiefdom), soon followed by another group composed only of women. Despite their claims, civilians understood that they were actually RUF forces, because the initials "RUF" were written on the weapons carried by the women. The RUF forces sent a message to the SLA commander in Moyamba Town. The SLA forces went to Yoyema and after a fierce battle, repelled the RUF forces out of the town.[1304] The SLA commander left some troops in the town and went back to Moyamba Town. The SLA forces left in Yoyema took away civilian's property and left for Moyamba Town three days later. RUF forces came back to Yoyema and stayed for five days, during which they maltreated and killed some civilians, raped some women and abducted about 20 children for conscription.

Around the same time, SLA forces were asked to leave Moyamba Town by the people. It seems that following all the reports of SLA harassment across the District, the Paramount Chief of Kaiyamba asked the Government to withdraw the SLA forces, which he did. After the departure of the SLA forces, the people of the town decided to initiate themselves as Kamajors so that they could defend themselves, since they did not want any SLA forces in the town. The men in the town made it clear that the Kamajor society was only open to people who were Mende by tribe and taxed every

[1304] This event could, however have taken place in June, as around this period, Moyamba Town was under RUF siege and SLA forces thought the RUF were provoking them to violate the ceasefire, signed earlier that year following the elections: AFP, 7 June 1996.

household to pay a contribution of Le 1,000. Whoever did not pay the contribution was tied with a FM rope.[1305]

However, the Kamajors engaged in continuous harassment of civilians, including taking property, forcing women into marriage and sexually harassing them. The Kamajors also killed two SSD officers in Moyamba Town, taking their guns and uniforms. Those Kamajors went to Yoyema after the RUF departure from the town. They told civilians to call those who were hiding in the bush and "screened" them, looking for RUF members and collaborators. As in Moyamba Town, they taxed each household as a contribution to their feeding before leaving the town.[1306]

A large number of RUF forces returned to Kagboro Chiefdom in November. Having seen this large group, Kamajors from Mokobo asked for more reinforcements from the other sections. In the meanwhile, two Kamajors who had advanced on the RUF forces were killed. Their bodies were beheaded and their intestines were tied on two sticks across the road to act as a checkpoint. At Nyayagoihun, the RUF forces killed two pregnant women and three children, who were hiding under a bed, and burnt the houses of the village.[1307] Around the same period, RUF forces made another incursion in Bagruwa Chiefdom. They killed one man at Moseinongor and burnt three houses at Ngayebu. They also encountered SLA forces from Moyamba Town who were patrolling the area and some fatalities on both sides were reported. As they approached Gbangbatoke Junction, they burnt two commercial vehicles going to Shenge (Kagboro Chiefdom) but the passengers managed to escape by running into the bush. The RUF forces then left the area and went back up north.

At around this time, the Kamajors began increasing their numbers and, consequently, began putting in place structures for better coordination amongst themselves. Kamajors from Kagboro, Timdel and Bagruwa Chiefdom organised themselves and appointed one man as the Chief Kamajor for the region. Men from Banta Mokele Chiefdom were sent for initiation to Tihun (Sogbini Chiefdom, Bonthe District). Around the same period, Kamajors from Bonthe District arrived at Mano, the headquarter town of Dasse Chiefdom. However, as time went on, Kamajors started harassing civilians and summary executions of alleged collaborators took place at the Kamajor base at Mosanda. On one occasion, a man was brought to Mosanda from Sembehun (Bagruwa Chiefdom), was beaten and put in a cage made of thorns for one full day before being released.

By the end of the year, probably around November, the Kamajors from Kongbora Chiefdom launched their first attack on RUF positions at Levuma, north-west of the chiefdom. The Kamajors shot down a helicopter and succeeded in dislodging the RUF forces from their positions. A large cache of arms, ammunition and weapons that the Kamajors did not have so far – in particular AK47s and RPGs – was captured. Following this successful attack, Kamajors launched an offensive on Camp Fol Fol, the main RUF base in the area. The battle went on for two days and the RUF

[1305] This rope had two sticks on its edges. "FM" means "frequency modulation", for it was believed that once tied with such a rope, anyone would talk.

[1306] No more information was available on these events.

[1307] Although it seems that the RUF forces were repelled from the chiefdom, there is no further report on fighting with Kamajors in the chiefdom. In the south of Bumpe Chiefdom (north of Kagboro Chiefdom), RUF forces battled for two days with Kamajors before being chased away.

forces were eventually dislodged.[1308] Kamajors came back from this battle with a lot of arms and ammunition and other property, including televisions and fridges. These victories led more and more men to be initiated into the society, fighting the RUF stationed in the north-west of the chiefdom. Kamajors brought back a lot of RUF members and people they suspected of being RUF members or collaborators and killed them; civilians recounted that they regularly heard that a "rebel" had been captured and that they knew he was going to be "washed", meaning killed.

In December 1996, RUF forces entered Benge (Bumpeh Chiefdom) where they killed a civilian who refused to have sex with his mother. They proceeded to other villages like Mobainda and Nyadahun (Bumpeh Chiefdom) where they took a lot of property from civilians.

In late 1996 and probably after the Abidjan Peace Agreement of 30 November, civilians refused to allow deployment of SLA forces in the District. By 1996, the population of Moyamba had developed a complete distrust of SLA forces, since the RUF forces who came to the District were wearing military uniforms and the SLA forces deployed in the District, mainly in Kaiyamba, Fakunya and Banta Chiefdoms, were harassing civilians.

d) Events in 1997

At the beginning of the year, resettlement of displaced persons, which had began in late 1997, continued as the Government declared the Southern Province safe for resettlement.[1309] Nevertheless, the year continued to be marked by violence against civilians and between all the different fighting factions.

On 3 January 1997, SLA forces based at Taiama (Kori Chiefdom), together with SLA forces from Bo Town, attacked Kamajors at Taiama. Prior to this event, tension between the SLA and Kamajors deployed at Taiama had built up to the extent that both forces were controlling different checkpoints in the town. In late December, one SLA member destroyed a Kamajor checkpoint in the town; civilians were killed during the subsequent attack in January. SLA forces then headed to Njala, south of Kori Chiefdom. On their way to Njala, those SLA forces stopped by Mokonde, where they ransacked the hospital. At Njala University, they went to a "customers store", broke into it and took everything they could carry away with them.

In January, villages in the Kovella Section (Fakunya Chiefdom) were tasked with sending men for initiation at Kwellu (Fakunya Chiefdom). On 30 January, Kamajors battled with the SLA troops based at Njagbahun for two hours before dislodging the SLA from the town, killing some SLA members during the battle. This battle was the last of a series of fights between the two fighting factions in the chiefdom.

[1308] The RUF spokesman stated that the constant attacks on their main bases in the District from the air and the land around 9 and 11 November were undermining the peace process. Furthermore, conflicting information was reported about the crash of a helicopter in the Rotifunk area. According to the RUF, this was an SLA helicopter bringing reinforcements to strategic sites in preparation for a ground assault while it carried out aerial bombardment on RUF bases. The RUF claimed to have brought it down with an Anti-Aircraft weapon. However, military sources spoke about a helicopter bringing relief supplies, which had to undertake an emergency landing after developing engine trouble and was then set on fire by the Kamajors: AFP, 13 November 1996.

[1309] This resettlement went on in various areas in the south and at the same period, thousands of IDPs left the camps in Bo District and returned to Pujehun District.



On 26 January, Kamajors attacked the SLA forces based in Mokanji (Banta Chiefdom), allegedly because those forces had been stealing property. The Kamajors were defeated by the SLA forces and three SLA members, a lot of Kamajors, including the son of the High Priest and Chief Initiator, and some civilians were killed. Three days later, the SLA forces were transferred to Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District),[1310] leaving the way open for the Kamajors to settle in the town and erect checkpoints. Soon, they began harassing and ill-treating civilians; any person found having a link with a member of the SLA member was targeted and killed. Kamajors also cleared out what was left in the Sieromco Company during an operation they named "Operation clear all".[1311] Some months later in the south of the District, at Gbessebu (Kamajei Chiefdom), SLA forces killed a Kamajor while they were going to Pelewahun (Kamajei Chiefdom).

In February 1997, tired and hungry RUF forces entered Kawama (Kori Chiefdom) on a food finding mission. They asked civilians to cook for them and took away civilians' property. They also took with them five strong men to carry the load and three young girls between the ages of 15 to 18 years; since that time, their fate remains unknown.

Since they had taken control of Moyamba Town, in around August 1996, Kamajors had been mistreating the civilians in the town. Indeed, for the inhabitants of Moyamba Town, the only difference between the Kamajors and RUF forces was that the Kamajors were in the towns, while RUF forces were in the bush. In February 1997, Kamajors from Moyamba Town went to Korgbotuma, where they beat the Village Chief for two days and forced him to swallow stones, as a result of which he died. The villagers were then taxed Le 400 as a contribution to the Kamajors, who burnt the houses of those who did not pay. Kamajors also stole most of the remaining property in the town, including zinc from the houses and zinc recently provided by an International NGO. Civilians were forced to give money and rice every two weeks and whoever did not do so was killed.

Sometime between January and May 1997, RUF forces attacked Mano (Dasse Chiefdom) but were repelled by Kamajors from Bonthe District who had deployed in the chiefdom in late 1996. This attack prompted the chiefdom elders to initiate their own Kamajors and civilians were asked to contribute a small amount of money for the initiation ceremonies. A Kamajor administration was put in place in the chiefdom and the following positions were established and filled: Chiefdom Ground Commander, Deputy Chiefdom Ground Commander, Section Commanders, Patrol Commander and Welfare Officers (AG). The Welfare Officers were generally civilians appointed by Kamajors to act as a liaison between the civilians and the Kamajors.

Shortly after the Coup on 25 May, which saw the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council overthrow the government and seize power, RUF forces from Bumpeh Chiefdom left their camp and went to Freetown to join the AFRC regime.[1312] However, they later returned to Rotifunk, the headquarter

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[1310] Around this time, SLA forces were deployed at Mile 91, where fighting with the CDF was also reported.

[1311] Later during the year, in November, the Sieromco Director contracted Executive Outcomes to protect a team sent to evaluate the damage at Mokanji: Africa Energy & Mining, 11 September 1996. Executive Outcomes was a mercenary company hired by the Government of Sierra Leone in 1995.

[1312] It is not clear whether an attack on the camp took place in 1996 and, if it took place, whether the RUF forces went back to the camp afterwards.

town, and took away the zinc from the remaining houses. RUF forces brought the zinc to Waterloo (Western Area),[1313] where they met their business partners. All the Kamajors from the chiefdom assembled at Mokkebi, ready to attack RUF/AFRC forces if they came back, which they did two days later and were attacked by the Kamajors.[1314]

After the Coup, the AFRC forces made an announcement over the radio that Kamajors should lay down their arms and surrender to the nearest Police Station, which the Kamajors in Moyamba District did not do. RUF/AFRC forces established checkpoints from Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom) to Mabang (Ribbi Chiefdom, at the boundary with Port Loko District) and on the highway, as they knew there were Kamajors in Bumpeh Chiefdom. Nevertheless, the Kamajors continued their attacks, and after few months, they had succeeded pushing the RUF/AFRC forces beyond the Mabang Bridge, thus controlling Ribbi, Bumpeh, Kongbora and Kayima Chiefdoms.

From May 1997 until January 1998, the RUF/AFRC forces killed a number of civilians travelling on the Taiama (Kori chiefdom) to Bo (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District) highway, during which time they also took a lot of property from the travellers. Men were particular targets, as the RUF/AFRC forces alleged that any man in Kamajei and Kori Chiefdoms was either a Kamajor or a Kamajor supporter. Kamajors from Kamajei Chiefdom, together with some Kamajors from Mongere (Valunia Chiefdom), also ambushed vehicles they claimed to belong to AFRC members. The stolen property was taken to Gondama (Kamajei Chiefdom) and to Mongere. Civilians in this area were therefore caught between the two fighting factions.

On 5 June 1997, RUF forces from Kailahun District and en route to Freetown to join the AFRC regime raided the town of Senehun (Kamajei Chiefdom). They took a lot of property from the civilians, as a result of which civilians fled the town. On 7 June, RUF/AFRC forces entered Moyamba Town, although it had been under Kamajor control since August 1996, when Kamajors forced the SLA forces out of town. RUF/AFRC forces killed 12 civilians and took away property, leaving the same day and promising they would come back.

Around 16 June, RUF/AFRC forces entered Yoyema (Kaiyamba Chiefdom), where RUF forces had been repelled around August 1996. They told civilians they had come to thank them for voting for the Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP). They burnt down many houses in the town and killed a tremendous number of civilians.

Since the Kamajors had been in control of Kagboro, Timdel and Bagruwa Chiefdoms, in the south of the District, since late 1996, there was a shift in their organisation. At this time, the Kamajors were identified in two different categories: the "old" and the "new"; it was believed that most of the havoc on civilians was created by the new Kamajors, most of whom had been initiated after the RUF forces made their last attack on the chiefdoms. Thus at this time both old and new Kamajors from Kagboro reorganised themselves and, having taken control over an area, began to harass not only civilians but also their own colleagues. For example, starting in June, a base commander from Sembehun (Bagruwa Chiefdom) used to visit Shenge (Kagboro Chiefdom). On these occasions he

[1313] There are two Waterloo Towns in Sierra Leone, one in the Western Area and one in the north of Fakunya Chiefdom.

[1314] The outcome of this battle and any casualties could not be ascertained.



and his men would loot the town and harass the inhabitants. On one occasion he killed two civilians visiting Shenge and left their bodies near a bridge at Sembehun. One of these civilians was a trader, carrying US dollars to the value of Le 11,000,000, which was taken away by this Kamajor commander. During these raids, this Kamajor commander also threatened some Kamajors from Kagboro Chiefdom at gunpoint. On another occasion, Kamajors based at Mossanda (Timdel Chiefdom) went to Mokobo in Kagboro Chiefdom where they took some cattle away.

Kamajors at Shenge and elsewhere also made cages constructed with different kinds of thorns, where suspected "rebel" collaborators and civilians or Kamajors who violated their laws were imprisoned. Civilians were flogged with sticks and forcefully pushed into the cages, the floors of which were also lined with broken bottles. The CDF forces also had another form of punishment for civilians known as "FM": a thin nylon rope was tied on two short equal sticks and then wrapped either on the two wrists or above the elbows. It was continually rolled until the nylon was squeezed into the body, injuring veins and muscles as the circulation of blood stopped in the affected areas. When the person was released, usually either their hands were broken or very swollen, which often led to partial deformity. These forms of punishment (FM and cages) were found in almost all the chiefdoms in the District where CDF were based. For example, at Mano Junction (Kagboro Chiefdom), two members of a church were accused of preaching against the Kamajors and were put in the cage into which hot ashes were poured; Kamajors referred to this as "a jet is bombing".

CDF members in other chiefdoms continued their harassment of civilians, inflicting sexual, physical and mental violence. In fact, this period was described by some civilians as the peak of the CDF activities in the District, with Kamajors being described as "having spoiled their mandate". People who defied the Kamajors' authority were often killed. For example, at Banta Chiefdom, three youths who went to purchase gari at Gbangbatoke were arrested for not paying due respect to the CDF command. Two of them were killed and the third was severely beaten before being released. This harassment led to an incident in Gbangbatoke in September, during which civilians threw stones at Kamajors and told them they would take care of their defence themselves.[1315] At Dodo Bridge (Bagruwa Chiefdom), summary executions were carried out. Checkpoints were established and travel cards issued to civilians. A civilian without such a card was considered to be an RUF member and was dealt with accordingly.

In Banta Mokele Chiefdom, Kamajors also passed laws civilians had to abide by, presided over cases and acted as Chiefs. The Kamajors' behaviours in Kamajei Chiefdom (north-west of the District) also began to change after the signing of the Abidjan Peace Agreement and they were described as being the "chiefs". They decided cases and punished people they found guilty: Town Chiefs and Section Chiefs were molested by young Kamajors, civilians were maltreated and sometimes, were put the cages made of sticks and thorns. In other cases, women were beaten publicly, particularly when they refused to marry a Kamajor.

In Dasse and Kowa Chiefdoms, civilians recounted that the checkpoints, originally set up by the Kamajors to search for RUF members and weapons, were now used to harass civilians and drivers, asking them for money and taking their property. Cages made of thorns were built at these checkpoints and were used as prisons or guardrooms. On one occasion, a student coming from Bo

[1315] AFP, 26 September 1997.

had his shoes and his money taken away at Mano (Dasse Chiefdom). As he wanted to talk, he was a hit with a rifle one Kamajor was carrying.

RUF/AFRC activity in the second half of the year continued with numerous attacks on different towns and villages. During the night of 25 June 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Mokonde, south of Kori Chiefdom near Njala University. As it was dark, it was difficult for people to see where they were going when they tried to escape and many drowned in the Taia River. Others were shot and killed by the RUF/AFRC forces. RUF/AFRC forces went to Njala College and stole a lot of property. Before leaving, they captured some civilians to carry the load; one of them was later shot and killed when he said he was too tired to carry the load. RUF/AFRC launched subsequent attacks on Mokonde and its environs throughout the year, almost without exception on a hit and run basis.

In the north of the Chiefdom, at the boundary with Yoni Chiefdom (Tonkolili District), RUF/AFRC forces entered Negeleboiya at night sometime in July. They gathered the civilians who did not manage to escape at the Court Barrie and began calling people's names. Those who were called had to lie down and then the RUF forces then cut their throats; 40 men were killed that night in this way.

On 28 June 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Moyamba Junction (Fakunya Chiefdom) and villages on the road leading to Moyamba Town. Houses were burnt at Kpangbama and Ngandorhun while civilians were killed between Kpetema Junction and Waterloo. Sometime the next month, a large number of RUF/AFRC forces went from Moyamba Junction to Moyamba Town (Kayima Chiefdom). They captured 11 commercial vehicles at Moyamba Junction and mounted an anti-aircraft gun on one of the vehicles, which they used to fire at towns and villages they passed on their way to Moyamba Town. They burnt down several houses at Kpangbama and Ngandorhun (Fakunya Chiefdom). Kwellu (Fakunya Chiefdom) was fiercely attacked, as it was an important initiation centre. Despite stiff resistance from the CDF, between four to eight civilians and one CDF member were killed during the battle and eight houses were burnt down. The RUF forces reached Moyamba Town around mid to late July and dislodged the CDF forces after a stiff battle.

Moyamba District in a whole and Moyamba Town in particular, was a target for the AFRC when it came into power in May 1997 due to the earlier rejection of SLA forces by civilians in the District. During their short stay of eight days in Moyamba Town, the RUF/AFRC forces killed almost all the young men they found; women, children and even livestock were also killed. They hunted people who had fled into the bush and killed them. Section Chiefs and elders were targeted and killed, including one prominent Section Chief. His death terrified all the chiefdom elders as well as the young men, as a result of which many young men volunteered to join the Kamajor society to defend their chiefdoms.

After eight days in the town, RUF forces returned to Moyamba Junction with all the property they had taken. The RUF/AFRC settled in Moyamba Junction, which led to the harassment of civilians, who by then were mostly living in the bush. One group of RUF/AFRC members was everyday going to the bush to take away civilians' property. During this period, women and girls were constantly sexually harassed.

Two days after the RUF/AFRC forces had left, Kamajors returned to Moyamba Town, sending messages to people in the bush telling them to come back to town. Civilians were screened for RUF members or collaborators when they came out of the bush and every household was taxed Le 2,000 to contribute to the feeding of the Kamajors. The Kamajors conducted a house-to-house search and took away any property that had not been burnt or stolen by the RUF/AFRC forces. The Government agricultural office was also looted. As many civilians left the town and found refuge in the nearby village of Korgbotuma, the Kamajors went there and threatened to kill civilians who would not come back to the town. On their way back, two civilians were shot and killed by Kamajors.

Kamajors imposed their authority on everybody. They used a building on Coromboya Road as their secretariat and established laws and decrees. Chiefs were prevented from exercising their powers and were molested, beaten or tied up. Kamajors exercised all the powers normally vested in different official bodies and fulfilled the tasks of chiefs, judges and policemen. They set up tribunals and presided over cases. Civilians were continuously harassed, for all the non-initiates were treated with disrespect. Wealthy civilians were targeted and all their money and valuables were taken away, often at checkpoints. On one occasion, four Kamajors killed a trader and burnt down his compound. In another incident, a civilian was killed at a checkpoint for Le 500. Women were sexually harassed and forcefully became the "wives" of Kamajors. RUF/AFRC members, if captured, were killed. Kamajors also killed civilians, on the allegation that they were collaborators. The way they qualified the collaboration was so wide that relatives of RUF/AFRC forces were killed, even if they had nothing to do with their relatives in the RUF/AFRC: having the same name as an RUF or AFRC member was sufficient to be "washed", i.e. killed. On one occasion, an employee of the District Office was accused of being a "Junta" collaborator and beheaded at Sembehun Road.

Kwellu (Fakunya Chiefdom) became the centre of administration in the chiefdom and cases were directed to the CDF leaders based in the town. The head of the CDF initiation process and his assistants presided over all cases. RUF members captured at the war front were brought to the town and were killed. On one occasion, a civilian alleged to be a "rebel" collaborator was arrested at Falaba Gbotima and was hit with a knife and severely beaten before he was taken to Kwellu, where he died. Other civilians were killed on the same grounds, including one man from Madina and one man and his son from Monyanga. Cages made of thorns were built, where civilians and Kamajors who did not respect the laws the Kamajors had established were imprisoned. The local authorities, including Paramount Chiefs, Section Chiefs and Town Chiefs who did not want to be initiated no longer had any control or power.

On 10 December 1997, the CDF launched a successful attack on the RUF/AFRC forces at Moyamba Junction (Fakunya Chiefdom). Five RUF/AFRC forces were killed and the town was captured by the CDF. This attack was the first of series of battles for the control of Moyamba Junction, where RUF/AFRC forces were based and Waterloo, where Kamajors were based. Ultimately, Kamajors would keep the control of Waterloo and would also dislodge the RUF/AFRC from Moyamba Junction.[1316]

[1316] In December, an increase in Kamajor activities was reported, despite the declaration of a ceasefire on 22 October as part of the Conakry Peace Plan: Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 19 November - 2 December 1997.

The RUF/AFRC forces launched a counter-attack on 16 December, reinforced by RUF/AFRC forces from Bo and Camp Charlie.[1317] A helicopter gunship was also brought by the RUF/AFRC forces, which they used to overpower the CDF, leaving one of them dead. The RUF/AFRC forces captured two other CDF and killed them. Nevertheless, the CDF captured a lot of weapons from the RUF/AFRC forces. On 25 December 1997, the CDF again attacked Moyamba Junction and captured the town. However, on 27 December the RUF/AFRC forces launched a counter-attack and recaptured the town, killing one member of the CDF. On 31 December, the Kamajors finally chased the RUF/AFRC forces out of Moyamba Junction, forcing them to leave a lot of arms and ammunition behind.

Once the Kamajors consolidated their control over the whole Fakunya Chiefdom (they already had control over Kwellu), they increased their pressure and harassment of civilians, establishing laws that civilians had to abide by. Those laws, among others, prevented civilians to pound food in mortars at night and forbad them from giving the Kamajors bananas or any food containing banana. As in Kwellu, cages of 2 ½ feet high and 3 ½ feet wide and made of thorns were built and used as prisons. The punishments for not obeying the laws were varied and ranged from being fined to receiving lashes, being imprisoned in the cage and going "round the kabba"[1318] seven times, asking for forgiveness, during which the Kamajors would encircle the violator and give them lashes while they went around seven times.

The last major attack on the town of Njala (Kori Chiefdom) was on 23 December 1997, while Kamajors were carrying out the operation "Black December". RUF/AFRC forces burnt houses from Mokande to the College and occupied Njala for seven days. They killed civilians and captured and raped a lot of young girls and women in the town. Surrounding villages like Pujehun and Bambuibu (both in Kori Chiefdom) were also attacked at this time. The RUF/AFRC forces then went south along the main road to Mano (Dasse Chiefdom), chasing civilians who had found refuge in the bush. The "sorquehun", bush camps, were ransacked and property was taken away. On the walls of some houses, the forces wrote the names of some of their commanders in blood.

In December 1997, the CDF high command announced over the radio the commencement of the "Black December Operations", namely that no vehicle should travel to Freetown. This operation was designed to cut off the AFRC forces in Freetown from the rest of the country. The CDF in the District stopped all vehicles and boats from travelling to Freetown and severely punished those who did not obey the announcement. For example, a defaulting vehicle, which did not stop as requested was fired on at Bengeh (Bumpeh Chiefdom), killing two people.

e) Events in 1998 to 2001

After they were driven out of Freetown during the first week of February 1998, RUF/AFRC forces left Moyamba District, although little information was recounted on this departure, except the following incident. RUF/AFRC forces attacked Korgbotuma (Kaiyamba Chiefdom) from four

[1317] This camp was located in the outskirts of Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District).

[1318] The kabba is a cube-shaped building in Mecca, which Muslims believe was built by Abraham for the worship of Allah. When going on Hajj, namely the journey to Mecca, pilgrims begin by going seven times around the kabba.

different points and battled with the CDF in the town, defeating the CDF and capturing the town. The RUF/AFRC commanders informed the civilians that their mission was to carry out "Operation no living thing" in the town and its environs.[1319] The forces stayed in the town for eight days, during which they killed a lot of civilians, took property and burnt down houses in the town. Two days after their departure the CDF took over the town and ordered all the people in the bush to return to the town even when they had no where to sleep since almost all the houses were burnt.

In early 1998, Kamajors from Bo District came to Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom) and told the Kamajors from Bumpeh Chiefdom that they had received instructions from the CDF High Command to reinforce those already deployed at Rotifunk, in order to prevent the RUF/AFRC forces retreating from Freetown using the Mabang Bridge (Ribbi Chiefdom, at the border with Port Loko District). Those Kamajors soon took control of the township and the Kamajors from Bumpeh Chiefdom went under cover, for they had less arms and ammunition than the recently arrived reinforcements. One month after they had arrived, the elders of the chiefdom met at Moyamba Town to find a way to move out the Kamajors from Bo District. It was agreed that more men should be initiated, so an initiator was brought to perform initiation ceremonies at Bellentin. Within two weeks, he had initiated over 400 men and one woman. Those new initiates, equipped only with bladed weapons, drove out the Kamajors from Bo. Nevertheless, the new Kamajors established checkpoints on the highway and took money from drivers at those checkpoints. Drivers who did not want to pay would be beaten or their vehicle damaged. On one occasion, one driver who could not give Le 10,000 as requested had two of his tyres shot out.

ECOMOG forces deployed in various areas of the District in February 1998 and ensured the security of the District, notably by setting up checkpoints that they operated together with Kamajors. In Kamajei Chiefdom, for example, they set up checkpoints at the headquarter town of Senehun and at Lonponga. However, Kamajors who assisted the ECOMOG forces at those checkpoints were still mistreating civilians. Vehicles suspected of carrying RUF or AFRC members or goods without proper documents were detained at those checkpoints and passengers were forced to remain there and sleep on the ground. Women who openly opposed the activities carried out at those checkpoints were stripped naked and forced to lie on the ground. The situation worsened when the ECOMOG forces left the checkpoints in the hand of the Kamajors,[1320] who would only dismantle those checkpoints in November 2001.

Immediately after the RUF/AFRC forces were pushed out of power in early 1998, an internal fight occurred between different factions of the CDF. Kamajors operating in the Southern Province accused the Gbethies, who were active in the Northern Province, of supporting AFRC members in their fight against Kamajors. A group of Gbethies from neighbouring chiefdoms in Tonkolili District attacked the Kamajors base at Gondama and Fogbo (Kori Chiefdom). Nobody was killed during the attack but houses were burnt by the retreating Gbethies. Five days later, the Kamajors

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[1319] "Operation No Living Thing" was the name of the operation carried out by the RUF/AFRC forces retreating from Freetown, during which atrocities committed against civilians reached unprecedented levels. It was mostly carried out in the Northern Province and in Kono District.

[1320] It could not be ascertained when ECOMOG forces exactly came in the District, nor when they left Kamajei Chiefdom.



launched a counter-attack on the Gbethies at Pateful (Gbonkolenken Chiefdom, Tonkolili District). The situation was finally resolved through the intervention of the elders.

On 29 March, a letter issued by the CDF headquarter was circulated to all Kamajors in the District, ordering that since the Sierra Leonean President had now been reinstated, the Kamajors should let the Chiefs assuming their functions and stop presiding over issues. However, Kamajors from the chiefdoms in the south of the District, Kagboro, Timdel, Bagruwa, Banta and Banta Mokele Chiefdoms continued to affirm their authority and to maltreat civilians and authorities. CDF in Moyamba Town (Kaiyamba Chiefdom) also continued to rule as chiefs and to control the live of civilians, as they had done in 1997. For example, around 5 March 1998, a young woman moved from Foyah to Matta Gelema in Banta Chiefdom to sell cassava leaves. At a checkpoint on her way, she was asked by a Kamajor to show him her pass. The woman told the Kamajors that her father was a Town Chief and that they did not know about this system of pass. Kamajors replied by saying that Kamajors were now the chiefs and authorities and that they were not respected by the civilians, who treated them with over-familiarity. They took her cassava bag away and detained her for two hours before she was freed. Her father, the Town Chief, reported the matter to the Ground Commander to no avail, as the Ground Commander told him he had no time for reports, for he knew his men were doing a good job.

In Kagboro Chiefdom, by 1998, the CDF had established checkpoints along the road going through the middle of the chiefdom at Yoyema, Gondama Junction, Talia and Tawovahun. Vehicles were checked for guns and "rebels" or "rebel" suspects. Anyone caught as a "rebel" or "junta" soldier or who was suspected to be such by the Kamajors was immediately carried away and "washed", a term the CDF used for killing. People were killed at the checkpoints very often, sometimes for money or other property. In other places where the CDF had checkpoints, people who were not from that chiefdom were often singled out to be victims.

The CDF frequently beat women and one commander in particular travelled around the chiefdom harassing young men and women and molesting the elderly. From Bauma to Blama and from Mamboma to Senehun, this commander was well known for this type of behaviour. On one occasion, he ordered his boys to torture a civilian whose daughter was alleged to have been in love with an RUF/AFRC member. In another incident in Mokebay Section, Kamajors killed a lady who had come from Bumpe to buy fish. They removed her body parts for rituals, as they allegedly believed that the ritual murder would prevent their "evil deeds" from been exposed. Several other civilians were killed afterwards. Other civilians killed included one man from Yorgborfore, one from Mbawoma, one from Metiba and one from Bumpetoke. A Kamajor cut off the ear of a woman from Bonthe District with a cutlass and chewed it. The woman latter suffered severe pain from the ear. Another Kamajor declared one day that any civilian not abiding by their laws would be killed and eaten raw. In Timdel Chiefdom, at Morkandor, one civilian was beaten with orange sticks covered in thorns, as he failed to be his contribution for the feeding of the Kamajors. He was them asked to contribute with three bushels of husk rice or would be killed. The deputy Town Chief of Morkandor was severely beaten because he refused to act as a town crier.

In April or May, a schoolteacher riding his bike between Mokonde (Kori Chiefdom) and Pelewahun (south of Kamajei Chiefdom) was caught by Kamajors who had established a checkpoint at

Pelewahun. The man was dragged in the bush, had his stomach cut open and his intestines removed. The Kamajors then set the body on fire, taking his bicycle and his two months salary he had just received. This killing was carried out because one of the Kamajors wanted to take his revenge on this schoolteacher, the new partner of his ex-girlfriend. Police officers from Taiama (Kori Chiefdom) investigated the matter and the four Kamajors who killed the schoolteacher were arrested, put in prison and tried in the High Court in Bo. Following this arrest, the other Kamajors left Pelewahun.

In 1999, some incursions were carried out in the District by RUF/AFRC forces based in Tonkolili District. Those attacks were, however, limited to villages in Fakunya Chiefdom, along the border with the Northern Province. Sometime in March 1999, RUF/AFRC forces based in Tonkolili District launched a series of attacks on villages on the Fakunya/Yoni boundary, mainly for searching for food and other items. One serious attack was made at Mataradegba, one mile from Rogboya, by the RUF forces from Mile 91 in late March 1999. It was a silent attack and they entered the town without discharging their weapons. Sixteen people were locked in a house, which was then set on fire and set ablaze. The RUF forces also shot and killed another five people. They then went to Rogboya, where they met with stiff resistance from the CDF forces in the town. On their retreat, they fell in a CDF ambush; six of the RUF forces were killed and a lot of their arms and ammunition captured. On 18 April 1999, the RUF forces launched another attack on Rogboya and succeeded in capturing the town. They were, however, soon repelled from the town by CDF from other towns nearby. On their way back to Tonkolili District, they had a battle with some Kamajors, which left over 40 RUF/AFRC members dead. This was to be the last battle between the CDF and RUF forces in Fakunya Chiefdom.

During the same period, some RUF/AFRC forces coming from their base at Okra Hills (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) crossed into the north of Ribbi Chiefdom, mainly chasing civilians in the camps they had built in the bush.[1321] They took away the rice and burnt a farmhouse near Makabie before heading for Makabie, where they abducted one man. This man was told to deliver the message to the inhabitants of Makabie that they would come back again to the village, as one of their boxes of cigarettes had been stolen. They further added that anyone they caught would be either mutilated or killed, depending on their will. When they came back to the village, they took some property away, burnt the houses and abducted one man, who they later killed.

The inhabitants of Ribbi Chiefdom, north-west of the District at the border with Port Loko District, were in total disarray at this time because of one group of CDF, who were opposed to the Gbethies from Port Loko District and who were inflicting a lot of violence on civilians in the chiefdom. On 24 March 1999, Kamajors and Avondos came to Bradford,[1322] the headquarter town of Ribbi Chiefdom and began to shoot indistinctly.[1323] One civilian was caught escaping and was accused by the Kamajors of being a "rebel". Those Kamajors and Avondos told the civilians they had come to Ribbi because they knew they had been RUF/AFRC forces in the chiefdom. Some civilians were

[1321] Okra Hills was the base of the West Side Boys, a fighting faction that emerged from the RUF/AFRC forces in late 1998: see the analysis for Port Loko District for more information.
[1322] It is not clear where those CDF members came from. It seems that the Avondos came from Taima (Kori Chiefdom) while the group of Kamajors came from Kongbora and Bumpeh Chiefdoms.
[1323] It seems that there were no Kamajors operating in Ribbi Chiefdom before this incident.

killed, accused by the CDF members of selling food to RUF/AFRC members. Throughout May and April, the two groups deployed in the town and went to the surrounding villages, killing civilians and burning houses. For example, they went to Rogbonkol, burnt 10 houses and killed 20 people; at Mothankey, they killed one woman and took away her two children and all her property. They also crossed the Ribbi River and went to Bathpon (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District). On their return to Bradford, the Kamajors and Avondos met a deaf woman in her garden and asked her what she was doing there. The woman told them that since they were "soldiers" – because they were wearing military uniforms – they should not disturb her. The CDF members told the woman they were going to kill her, as they said she was inhabited with devil spirits. The Avondo commander[1324] ordered his men to kill her, so she was shot and killed.

The CDF members then moved to Makabie, where they established a checkpoint on the highway leading to Freetown. Any civilian caught speaking Temne was accused of being a Gbethie collaborator, who were their targets at this time. Anybody thus accused was forced to lead them to the place where he was living and all his property was taken away. The inhabitants of Makabie were gathered, accused of being "rebels" and threatened with death; they were not, however, killed and the Town Chief was forced to pay Le 15,000 instead. Civilians were told that they could not go anywhere without the permission of the CDF members and that as long as they remained in the town, the civilians were responsible for their feeding. It was alleged that the main purpose of the CDF members was to steal their property and that the allegation of collaboration was a pretext. Some CDF members then left the town and went to Rosint Loko, where they abducted civilians, subsequently releasing all but one. The captured civilian who was not released was killed, as he failed to lead the Kamajors to the Gbethies. He was hit with a bladed weapon on his face and as he was wiping away the blood, the Kamajor commander told him not to waste his blood as he was thirsty and wanted to drink it. The man was then shot and killed; he was later buried by civilians from Makabie. A report on this incident was made to the ECOMOG forces deployed at Songo (Western Area). ECOMOG forces arrested the CDF members but released them shortly after.[1325]

The CDF members returned to Ribbi Chiefdom and resettled first at Mo Lamina and then at Mo Goba, from where they raided the surrounding villages, harassing civilians for their property. One truck belonging to the International Labour Organisation was stolen in Moyamba village (Ribbi Chiefdom) and used by the CDF members to carry the property they were stealing. At Massampa, for example, they entered the town shooting their guns and killing one student. They looted the town and burnt five houses. At Sueu, they shot the Chiefdom Speaker, stripped him, tied him up and took him to Bumpeh Chiefdom, where they allegedly had their main base. At Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom), one of the commanders wore the fingers of the late Chiefdom Speaker on a necklace around his neck. The CDF members went back to Moyamba village (Ribbi Chiefdom), burnt 19 houses and captured two traders, whom they later killed. Other incidents included another attack on Bradford, where they took a significant sum of money from traders and another attack on Sueu, where they killed one woman and took away her property. CDF members also went to Mabang,

[1324] Both the Avondos and the Kamajors had their own commanders, although they carried most of these actions together.

[1325] No more details were available on this arrest.

after the RUF/AFRC forces had left the bridge,[1326] and killed a lot of civilians and harassed anybody using the bridge.[1327]
The Kamajors stayed in Bradford for a while, forcing civilians to bring them food and money and to work for them, harvesting palm nuts. These actions continued until the Government announced that all the fighting factions had to stop hostilities.[1328]

By May 1999, some commercial vehicles used the alternative highway from Freetown to Bo, through Moyamba, without encountering any attack, although the highway was not yet reopened for traffic.[1329]

Probably in 1999 or 2000, Kamajors from Bumpeh Chiefdom battled with Kamajors from Kagboro Chiefdom, for one lady trader from Bumpeh Chiefdom had been beaten and her money taken away by Kamajors at Ribbi (Kagboro Chiefdom). The Kamajors from the two chiefdoms were later reconciled through the intervention of the Paramount Chief of Bumpeh Chiefdom and elders of Kagboro Chiefdom.

Following the Freetown invasion in January 1999, a peace accord marking the end of the conflict and known as the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed on 7 July in the Togolese capital. Pursuant to this accord, the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) process was formally launched by the President of Sierra Leone on 20 October 1999 during a ceremony at Wilberforce Barracks, Freetown and began properly on 4 November 1999.[1330] Five demobilisation centres were opened at Lungi (Port Loko District), Port Loko South, Port Loko North, Kenema and Daru (Kailahun District). In early 2000, UN peacekeepers from the Guinean contingent were deployed at Moyamba Town.[1331]

On 10 March 2000, the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR) identified two more sites, one of which was at Levuma (north of Kongbora Chiefdom).[1332] However, disarmament started at a slow pace and was halted temporarily in May 2000, as fighting were still going on in the Northern and Eastern Provinces and peacekeepers were abducted by RUF/AFRC forces. Although Moyamba District was not directly concerned by these events, it seems clear that the CDF members would not disarm as long as the other fighting factions were still carrying out armed operations. The DDR process would be given a new start in November 2000 when the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF signed a ceasefire in Abuja, Nigeria on 10 November 2000. On 4 May 2001, those parties would meet again in Abuja, Nigeria to review the cease-fire. Further to this meeting, those parties held monthly tripartite meetings under the Joint

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[1326] RUF/AFRC forces were in Koya Chiefdom (Port Loko District), on the other side of the bridge.
[1327] No further information was available on this incident.
[1328] A ceasefire was signed in May 1999. No more information was available on what exactly happened in the chiefdom following this announcement.
[1329] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 1 - 17 May 1999.
[1330] The launch of the DDR process was delayed as it was meant to start within six weeks of the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement.
[1331] IRIN West Africa, 12 April 2000. On 22 October 1999, the UN Security Council had adopted Resolution 1270 approving the deployment of 6,000 armed peacekeepers alongside the 260 unarmed military observers. Their number would increase over the subsequent months.
[1332] IRIN West Africa, 17 March 2000.

Committee on DDR and decided on an accelerated schedule for the completion of the disarmament process. During the fourth meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR in Kenema on 10 August 2001, it was agreed that the next stage of disarmament was to take place simultaneously in Moyamba and Koinadugu District, between 15 and 30 August.[1333] However, disarmament was not complete by 31 August, mainly for logistics reasons.

In a symbolic disarmament ceremony in the town of Moyamba on 20 October 2001, CDF combatants and their senior commanders handed over more than 50 weapons to UN peacekeepers, in the presence of the Special Representative of the Secretary General in Sierra Leone.[1334] At the end of the seventh meeting of the Joint Committee on DDR on 9 November, disarmament was declared complete in Moyamba District.[1335] On 30 November 2001, a Nepalese Battalion of peacekeepers was deployed in Moyamba Town and Rotifunk (Bumpeh Chiefdom), at which time the war officially came to an end in Moyamba District.[1336]

3. Conclusion

Moyamba District was the last District of the Southern Province to be attacked by RUF forces. The first incursion into the District was launched in early January 1995, at a time when NPFL forces, originally fighting alongside the RUF from 1991, had long since withdrawn to Liberia. This first wave of attacks was carried out from Bo District and in the aftermath of a series of attacks on major towns in Bo District. Attacks on Moyamba District were subsequently carried out by RUF forces who settled in the District but also from the neighbouring Districts of Bonthe and Bo in the Southern Province and Tonkolili in the Northern Province.

The spreading of RUF forces into Moyamba District was one of the latest developments of a new phase of the conflict, which started in late December 1993 in the south of Kenema District. From this date on, RUF forces took to the bush and adopted guerrilla warfare tactics, progressing to Districts so far unaffected and by 1995, had established positions in all the Districts.

In March 1995, it was clear that the ultimate goal of the RUF forces who attacked Moyamba District was to reach Freetown. To this end, they progressed through the District using the highway that leads to Songo in the Western Area, systematically attacking the major towns located on this highway. It was only when their progression to Freetown was stopped that they settled in the District and established a strong base in the north.

As in the other Districts of the Southern Province, Kamajors progressively halted the actions of the RUF forces from the beginning of 1996. The initiation of youths and local hunters, members or not of the CDUs, started in early 1996 and developed throughout the year. Bonthe District played an active role in the development of Kamajors throughout Moyamba District, as many men from Moyamba District went to Bonthe District for initiation also because Kamajors from Bonthe District went to Moyamba District to fight the RUF forces.

[1333] UNAMSIL press briefing, 14 August 2001. At that time, the disarmament was complete in Port Loko and Kambia Districts. As of that date, 1,500 CDF members had disarmed in Moyamba District.
[1334] UNAMSIL press briefing, 23 October 2001.
[1335] UNAMSIL press briefing, 9 November 2001.
[1336] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 06 - 30 November 2001.

The chiefdoms in the south of the District were under Kamajor control earlier than the chiefdoms in the north. By late 1996, Kamajors had taken control of the southern chiefdoms and no more RUF attack was reported in those areas. This was probably also due to the fact that around this period, Kamajors had already dislodged RUF forces from Bonthe District. The situation for the chiefdoms in the north of the District was far different. Although their main base, Camp Fol Fol was destroyed in late 1996 by Kamajors, the RUF forces and, shortly after, RUF/AFRC forces were present in many of the chiefdoms in the north, wreaking a lot of havoc on civilians. At this time, both Port Loko and Tonkolili Districts, which adjoin Moyamba District to the north, were also infiltrated by RUF and RUF/AFRC forces.

Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in early 1998, the actions of the RUF/AFRC forces were concentrated in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. Free from RUF/AFRC incursions, the Kamajors affirmed their control of the security of Moyamba District and expanded this control to civilians and local authorities. In this regard, the pattern of actions in Moyamba District at this time would converge with what happened in the other Districts of the Southern Province.

d. Pujehun District

1. Introduction

Pujehun District, with its headquarter of Pujehun Town, is one of the four Districts of the Southern Province, the other three being Bonthe, Bo and Moyamba Districts. It is bordered on the east by Liberia, on the northeast by Kenema District (Eastern Province), on the northwest by Bo District and on the west by Bonthe District. At its southern edge is the Atlantic Ocean.

There are 12 chiefdoms in the District:

Chiefdom	Headquarters
Barri	Potoru
Gallinas Peri	Blama
Kpaka	Massam
Makpele	Zimmi
Malen	Sahn
Mano Sakrim	Gbonjema
Panga Kabonde	Pujehun
Panga Krim	Gobaru
Peje	Futa
Soro Gbema	Fairo
Sowa	Bandajuma
Yekomo Kpukumu Krim	Karlu

The main rivers flowing through the District would prove to be of strategic importance during the conflict. The Mano River that flows on the eastern edge of Makpele and Soro Gbema Chiefdoms constitutes the natural border between Sierra Leone and Liberia. The entry point to the District is

located in Soro Gbema Chiefdom, at the Mano River Union Bridge, Bo Waterside, which was a joint venture between Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Control of the bridge would be of great importance for the RUF/NPFL and later on for the RUF forces, as it allows easy penetration into the District and the transport of supplies from Liberia. Accordingly, throughout the conflict, the RUF forces would mainly be based in the east of the District. The Moa River originates from the ocean between Gallinas Peri and Soro Gbema Chiefdoms, following more or less the border between those two chiefdoms through Barri Chiefdom before reaching Kenema and Kailahun Districts, thereby isolating Soro Gbema and Makpele Chiefdoms from the rest of the District. Other rivers located in the south of the District and of lesser strategic importance would be used by the fighting factions, mainly the RUF forces, to move within the District.

Crossing the Mano River Union Bridge, there is only one motorable road linking Fairo (Soro Gbema Chiefdom headquarters) to Sulima in the south (Soro Gbema Chiefdom) and to Zimmi in the north (Makpele Chiefdom Headquarters). Furthermore, this road to Zimmi is the only way to reach Pujehun Town, other than by using bush paths. From Zimmi, it continues westwards to Potoru (Barri Chiefdom headquarters), Futa (Peje Chiefdom headquarters) and Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom Headquarters). Bandajuma is located on the main road that links Pujehun and Bo Districts, starting in Pujehun Town and leading to Koribondo and Bo Town (Bo District). From Potoru, an alternative road passing by Gallinas Peri and Kpaka, the two central chiefdoms, goes to Pujehun Town.

The small number of roads providing access to other Districts is an important factor in how the RUF/NPFL forces would attack surrounding Districts. To go to Kenema District in the north-east, there are only two alternative roads, through Makpele Chiefdom or through Peje Chiefdom. Two roads also allow the penetration of Bo District, the main one being a highway passing through Panga Kabone and Sowa Chiefdoms, while the second one leaves Pujehun Town to pass through Malen Chiefdom in the west. There are no motorable roads linking Pujehun District with Bonthe District in the south-east; accordingly, this District would not be affected during the first years of the war, as access was achieved only later through Bo District.

The main economic activities of the District consist of mining, fishing and cash crops, notably coffee and cocoa plantations. In some chiefdoms, primarily in Makpele Chiefdom, the main economic activity is diamond mining.

Pujehun District, at the border with Liberia was concerned by the conflict as early as March 1991 when Revolutionary United Front (RUF)/ National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL) forces crossed the border at the Mano River Union Bridge into Soro Gbema Chiefdom. From this first incursion, the conflict would affect the District through three discernable phases.

The first phase, which ran from 1991 to 1993, was first marked by the first incursion in 1991, where almost all the chiefdoms and major towns, including Pujehun Town, were attacked by RUF/NPFL forces within one month. This first incursion was characterised by widespread violations committed by RUF/NPFL forces. Those forces would follow the same pattern upon entry to a village: they would gather the civilians, identify themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to redeem Sierra Leone from the corrupted All People's Congress (APC) regime and depose and replace the local

authorities, setting up basic administrative structures. Their arrival and stay in a place was accompanied by the infliction of physical and mental violence on the people of the village, as well as the abduction of members of the population, including children, for use as forced labour, as soldiers, as cooks and as "wives". RUF/NPFL forces also engaged in widespread theft and property destruction, notably the burning of houses. However, from July to September 1991, SLA forces, assisted by foreign troops, dislodged the RUF/NPFL forces from most of their positions, pushing them back to the Liberian border. This SLA offensive and control of the District was nonetheless soon accompanied by violence inflicted on civilians, in particular those labelled as collaborators with the RUF/NPFL. Attacks, probably carried out by remnants of RUF/NPFL forces, were however still recorded at the end of 1991 and in 1992. At the end of 1992 and beginning of 1993, RUF forces launched a powerful attack from Liberia, established a stronghold in Soro Gbema Chiefdom and started spreading across the District. This second incursion was, however, less successful than the first one as they were soon defeated in most areas by SLA forces. While in control, SLA forces continued to inflict great havoc on civilians, killing a lot of alleged collaborators, chasing civilians for their property, destroying some property and engaging in mining activities in the east of the District.

The second phase spanned from 1994 to May 1997, during which time the RUF forces succeeded in spreading throughout the country, shifting their tactics away from direct confrontation with the SLA to bush warfare, during which they mainly staged ambushes. At this time, thousands of civilians had fled the District for a refuge camp in Bo District. Starting in 1996, newly initiated Kamajors, initially operating in collaboration with SLA forces, engaged the RUF forces and by 1997 had succeeded in taking control of most of the RUF positions across the country, which led thousands of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) to resettle in the District. However, their control was also accompanied by harassment of civilians, including constant requests for food and the taking of property. Physical violence was also inflicted, in particular on those they identified as being RUF collaborators.

The third phase of the conflict started in May 1997, when a military regime – the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) – seized power in the capital and concluded at the end of 2001, when the disarmament process was complete for Pujehun District. Shortly after the Coup, RUF forces who had been living in the bush for some months joined the AFRC and Kamajors in the District went underground. During their stay in the District, the RUF/AFRC forces imposed great harms on civilians in general and on alleged Kamajors collaborator in particular, including physical violence, killing, rape, abduction for use as forced labour, soldiers or "wives" and stealing and destruction of property. Starting in October, Kamajors regrouped and intensified their fighting against those combined forces, gaining more and more ground; by March 1998, following ECOMOG deployment in the District, the RUF/AFRC forces were repelled from the District. From this date onwards, the District remained under control of the Kamajors, who imposed their authority in all aspects of life, restricted the movement of the population by establishing checkpoints, replaced the local authorities and themselves administered the District, increased their violence against all civilians and engaged in mining activities. This would continue until the completion of disarmament at the end of 2001.

2. Factual Analysis

a) Events in 1991



On 28 March 1991, RUF/NPFL forces crossed the Mano River Union Bridge[1337] at Jendema (Soro Gbema Chiefdom), 7 miles from Fairo. They then headed for Malema, where they seized weapons from the SSD store, before heading for Fairo. From Soro Gbema Chiefdom, the RUF/NPFL forces would then head for Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom, in the east of the District), passing by Makpele, Barri, Peje, Sowa, Kpaka and Gallinas Peri Chiefdoms, leaving behind some forces to settle in each of those areas. A few days after the RUF/NPFL forces crossed the Mano River Union Bridge, the RUF and NPFL leaders paid them a brief visit at Bo Waterside, allegedly to check that the forces had crossed the river and to receive food items and furniture taken from the Police Barracks at Jendema.[1338]

At the time of this incursion, SLA forces were deployed in the District, chiefly in Fairo (Soro Gbema Chiefdom), Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom), Potoru (Barri Chiefdom) and Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom).

At Fairo (Soro Gbema Chiefdom), a short battle took place with some SLA forces and SSD members who were posted there.[1339] The house of the Paramount Chief, occupied at the time by SLA forces, was burnt down and the first killings of civilians and taking of their property was recorded at this time. Gunshots were heard in the town until night fell. The following morning, the civilians were gathered in the Court Barrie and addressed by the RUF/NPFL forces, who told them they should not be afraid, as they had come to redeem the civilians from the APC regime. However, a few days later, the RUF/NPFL forces killed one civilian who refused to give them food at Jendema. At Sulima, in the south of the chiefdom, they also killed one civilian, allegedly because he questioned them about the previous killing. Following this incursion, civilians from Wai, a town located on the main Fairo-Sulima road in the chiefdom, fled the town; some went to Liberia, first hiding their property, as they had heard from fleeing civilians that the RUF/NPFL forces were stealing food and any other items that took their interest. However, those who fled Sierra Leone did not find a safer haven in Liberia, where a civil war was raging; while in Liberia, the people who had fled the war in Sierra Leone were harassed by NPFL forces, who took their property and sexually assaulted their daughters and wives.[1340]

After they took control of Malema and Fairo (Soro Gbema Chiefdom), two training camps were opened in those towns to train conscripts on how to use weapons. The RUF/NPFL forces first went from village to village to get people to join their movement, but when they realised that few young people were joining them, they forced villages as a whole to contribute and to give some of

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[1337] The control of the Mano River Union Bridge, a joint venture between Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, would be of great importance as it allows penetration of the territory of Sierra Leone from Liberia.

[1338] During the first weeks of the conflict, many reports mention the visit of the RUF leader to Pujehun and Kailahun Districts, although it appeared that he spent more time in Kailahun District than in Pujehun District, while the NPFL leader is only mentioned as being present at Bo waterside.

[1339] The SLA forces were only 10, together with five SSD members, and had little ammunition, mainly only to defend themselves.

[1340] Since 1989, the NPFL had been waging war against the then President, Samuel Doe, who would be killed by a splinter group of the NPFL in 1990. Also in 1990, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent some Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces to assist the Liberian Government to end the war. As part of this mission, ECOMOG based some forces at Lungi, Sierra Leone's international airport to the north of Freetown.

their inhabitants for training, threatening them with the destruction of the village if they refused. In this way, the RUF/NPFL forces recruited many young boys and girls and whoever refused to join or tried to hide during training was killed on the spot. Furthermore, those newly conscripted members were told to point out houses where young people had not volunteered to join, after which the RUF/NPFL forces looted and then burnt them. This situation led many families to give one of their family members to join the movement. RUF/NPFL forces also chased people who were hiding in farm huts in the bushes, raiding them at night, stealing their food and other valuable items and capturing young boys and girls. While the boys were conscripted into the fighting forces, the girls were used for sexual purposes. On one occasion, in the area of Malema, a five-months pregnant women was raped by five RUF/NPFL members and, as a result, had a miscarriage. In another incident, also in the Malema area, one girl was raped during a night raid. That same night, the commander of that RUF/NPFL forces told the people that the RUF leader had told them in Liberia that all the Sierra Leonean women were their wives and all the property they could find was also theirs.

The RUF/NPFL forces nominated a former candidate in the 1982 elections to be the chairman of their war council in the chiefdom. Following the 1982 general elections, a fight had erupted between the partisans of the two political groups contesting the elections and many civilians were killed and much property destroyed. The nomination of the war council chairman for the chiefdom recalled these events in 1982 for the civilians of Soro Gbema, as the newly appointed chairman was the candidate in the 1982 election who had not been elected to represent the Pujehun east constituency in Parliament.[1341] Some supporters of the man who was elected chairman and leader of the Ndorgbowusui group, saw this nomination to the war council as an opportunity to take revenge for atrocities committed against their families almost 20 years ago. For this reason, they voluntarily nominated some of their children to join the RUF/NPFL forces. Thus, civilians who were not members of the Ndorgbowusui group were particularly targeted during the RUF/NPFL presence in the chiefdom in 1991.

In late March 1991, civilians fleeing the RUF/NPFL advance in Soro Gbema Chiefdom crossed the Moa River that flows on its west edge and took refuge in Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, at Gbanahun, returning to their chiefdom a week later.

Zimmi,[1342] the headquarter town of Makpele Chiefdom, and the surrounding villages are diamond-rich area. On 3 April, RUF/NPFL forces entered the town and established a base there that became their main one for the District. During their stay in the chiefdom, up to December 1991, the RUF/NPFL forces attacked many villages, where they followed the same actions upon taking control of the different villages. The RUF/NPFL forces would enter the town and gather the inhabitants at the Court Barrie, where they would introduce themselves as the Revolutionary United Front, their purpose being to remove the APC Government from power and liberate Sierra Leone. At this meeting, or soon after, they would depose the Town Chief and replace him or her with their

[1341] It is accordingly not a coincidence if the RUF/NPFL nominated somebody who opposed at one time to the APC regime representative.

[1342] Zimmi is a strategic town for many reasons because, aside from its location in a diamond mining area, it is the first major town to be reached when crossing the border from Liberia and it allows further inland advances in the east of Kenema District.



own Town Commander, who was sometimes appointed from the civilian population. While in the town, the RUF/NPFL forces would destroy property; take food and other items; force civilians to work for them, such as by cooking and fetching water; tie civilians up; kill people; and abduct people, both adults and children. The following incidents are examples of the attacks carried out and the violence inflicted on civilians in the chiefdom, most of them taking place in April.

Between April and December, Gbaa was burnt three times, virtually all the property in the town was taken and some people were killed. On 9 April, the RUF leader visited the town, gathered hundreds of civilians for a meeting and stated that RUF were peacemakers, coming to free people from slavery. Zimmi became a main base in the District and beyond, in the south-east, and the RUF leader had a lodge reserved for him there. At Palima, on 25 April, RUF/NPFL forces fired on a car full of police officers being driven into the town, as a result of which the driver and one police officer were killed. Cattle and poultry were also taken from Palima and brought to Zimmi. In the same month, RUF/NPFL forces, nine in number, attacked Vaama Kortu and entered the town accompanied by gunfire. The sheep and goats of the village were taken away. During the same attack, two women were raped and three boys (two aged 18 and one aged 15) were taken away; their fate still remains unknown. At Sembehun, a group of 15 RUF/NPFL forces took property from houses, including furniture and other belongings, and forced inhabitants to carry the loads to the RUF base in Zimmi. Those who did not obey the order were beaten, tied up, forced to roll and look at the sun and eventually carried the load at gunpoint. Goats and sheep were taken away, as well as two sewing machines and a bailing machine belonging to a diamond dealer, carpentry tools and blacksmith's equipment. Fifteen houses were burnt down at this time.

At Njabaama, also in April 1991, a woman was raped in the presence of her husband and another woman was taken to be the "wife" of one of the RUF/NPFL forces coming from Liberia. That same day, the village was burnt down in retaliation for the inhabitants not welcoming the RUF/NPFL forces. Household property, furniture and money were taken. On 22 April, a group of seven RUF/NPFL forces entered the village of Gbahama and appointed a 24 year-old man as the Town Commander. This newly appointed Town Commander, who was unable to refuse this appointment, was told to mobilise the civilians to operate checkpoints. Women were told to cook for the RUF/NPFL and eight people were forced to carry a load comprised mainly of coconuts to Zimmi. This continued until June, by which time most of the civilians had managed to leave the town and found refuge in Liberia. At Gbeakor, 27 RUF/NPFL members entered the town, instantly killing seven people. The Town Chief was deposed and a new Town Commander was appointed. Before leaving, the forces took with them all the cattle and poultry they could find.

At Ngombu, in June 1991, 70 houses were burnt and 42 kitchens and 15 toilets were destroyed by a group of 30 RUF/NPFL members. Diamond mining towns were also visited, such as Gbahama in April 1991, where property was taken and civilians were used to carry the loads. In this town and others, such as Baguihun, the RUF/NPFL forces engaged in mining activities and stole everything that was in the offices of the mining company. Daar-es-Salaam, a town north of Zimmi on the bank of the Mano River, was at this time hosting a camp for thousands of refugees from the Liberian war. In April, the camp was attacked and all the property belonging to various NGOs and UNHCR was taken; fleeing civilians died, drowning in the Moa River.[1343] It appeared that the RUF/NPFL forces

[1343] No more information could be obtained on this event, either from the records or open source materials.

had registered in large numbers as refugees in the camp, so that they would have easier access. Daar-es-Salaam became a training camp, known as the second Camp Zogoda.[1344] Wonde, another border town hosting a refugee camp, was also visited in April 1991; the RUF leader came to the camp and asked civilians to join the RUF. It appeared that only few of them did in fact join and a lot of refugees left the camp, leaving their few belongings in the hands of the RUF/NPFL forces. Due to these constant attacks, many civilians left the chiefdom, the majority of them going to Liberia.

On their way to Pujehun Town, in early April 1991, RUF/NPFL forces[1345] coming from Zimmi passed by Moala (Barri Chiefdom), located on the west bank of the Moa River. After Moala, they headed for Potoru (Barri Chiefdom headquarter), which is at a junction on the main road to Pujehun Town (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom) from Kenema District.[1346] In both towns, they introduced themselves as "freedom fighters" coming to save people from the corrupt APC regime. On arrival, they searched for SLA forces and gathered the civilians in the Court Barrie. While some of the forces were addressing the inhabitants, telling them they were not going to steal anything or take their women as wives, others were parading in the towns, entering houses in search of food and money. Local authorities were deposed and new Town Commanders were appointed. At Moala, three people were killed with berretta guns, allegedly because they were reconnaissance/spies, since they run from the RUF/NPFL forces. During one night, some women were taken from their husbands. At Potoru, a Fullah man was killed for refusing to give them his sheep. Ten other civilians were also killed, accused of being reconnaissance and, for two of them, for refusing to hand over their bags; at least one man was shot in the head with an AK47 and two were beaten to death with a bladed weapon. Checkpoints were mounted where cards called "pass" were issued, which allowed civilians to move through the chiefdom. During their stay in the town, women and underage girls were sexually assaulted. All this violence led many people to leave the town for Sowa Chiefdom and Bo District.

From Potoru, some of the RUF/NPFL forces (a group of 25 to 30 men) went to Waima, four miles from Potoru. After calling the inhabitants for a meeting, they undertook a house-to-house search, removing the people they found and shooting some of them. Those forces were speaking a number of different languages, but the majority language was Liberian. Before leaving the town, they abducted girls under 15 years-old and then headed for other villages in the chiefdom, including Kotumahun and Dendegahun, where the same kind of attacks took place.

From Barri Chiefdom, some RUF/NPFL forces went to Peje and Sowa Chiefdoms, relatively small chiefdoms located to the west of Barri Chiefdom,[1347] while others probably went to Pujehun Town

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[1344] Zogoda, meaning "land of freedom" is a generic name given to training bases, like "Camp Lion" in other places. Other camps called Camp Zogoda were to be found at different times in Kenema and Kailahun Districts. This camp in Pujehun District was called "second Camp Zogoda", because the first one was established in Kailahun District.

[1345] These forces were armed with berretta guns, AK47s, single barrel rifles, RPGs and machetes and were dressed in military attire or with headbands with "RUF" written on it.

[1346] Potoru is the necessary entry point for Kenema District from the south-west, whereas Zimmi allowed penetration from the south-east.

[1347] Two main roads leave Potoru, one going to Peje and Sowa Chiefdoms and beyond to Wunde Chiefdom (Bo District) while the other one links Potoru to Pujehun (Panga Kabone Chiefdom), through Gallinas Peri and Kpaka Chiefdoms.

(Panga Kabone Chiefdom) through Gallinas Peri and Kpaka Chiefdoms.[1348] At Futa (Peje Chiefdom), on or around 17 April 1991, around 100 RUF/NPFL members gathered the civilians in the Court Barrie; those who refused were severely beaten with sticks and gun butts and some were killed. This first group of RUF/NPFL forces were joined the next day by another group,[1349] who merged before dividing into two groups: while one went to Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom, west of Peje Chiefdom), the other group went back to Potoru, allegedly to join other RUF/NPFL forces before their attack on Pujehun Town.

The RUF/NPFL forces then proceeded to Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom), where SLA troops were posted. Those SLA forces advised civilians to go indoors while RUF/NPFL forces were approaching. However, after a one-hour battle, RUF/NPFL forces entered the town, forced the inhabitants at gunpoint to gather at the Court Barrie, paraded in the town and killed some civilians who attempted to escape or who refused to go to the Court Barrie. Some civilians accused of being SLA members who would go and call their colleagues were killed, while others were beheaded. It appeared that the RUF/NPFL forces then left the town[1350] and SLA forces arrived in the town, but RUF/NPFL forces returned with a mounted anti aircraft gun while the inhabitants were busy burying their dead. The SLA and the RUF/NPFL fought all day, with some casualties being reported on both sides. The SLA forces were unable to repel the RUF/NPFL forces and ordered the civilians to leave the town and to go to Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, Bo District[1351]) for safety. One week later, the SLA forces, reinforced by ULIMO, were eventually able to dislodge the RUF/NPFL forces from the town.

Repelled from Bandajuma, RUF forces concentrated on Futa (Peje Chiefdom) and Potoru (Barri Chiefdom), where they trained people who had joined willingly as well as those conscripted by force. They remained scattered in those two chiefdoms until the major SLA attack in August 1991. Some of the RUF/NPFL forces who had been repelled from Bandajuma went to Jeoma (Sowa Chiefdom). Civilians from the upper part of the village were gathered together and the men were forced to go into the veranda of the first house on the road from Bandajuma and Pujehun Town, while the women and children were put in a school compound. The RUF/NPFL forces shot at the men gathered in the veranda and 26 of them died; two managed to escape to the bush after pretending to be dead beneath the corpses.[1352]

In mid April 1991, a RUF/NPFL group, different from the one that took control of the aforementioned chiefdoms, entered Gbanahun (Gallinas Peri), two miles east of Bumpeh. This group was coming directly from Soro Gbema Chiefdom (located to the east of Gallinas Peri Chiefdom[1353]) and came mainly for the purposes of finding food, as they did not stay in the village

[1348] Information gathered concerning Kpaka Chiefdom tends to demonstrate that RUF/NPFL forces used this chiefdom as a transit point, using the main highway from Potoru to reach Pujehun Town. Accordingly, RUF/NPFL forces must have passed through Gallinas Peri Chiefdom where the highway lies in the north, although no information was recorded on this.

[1349] It could not be ascertained where this second group came from.

[1350] The RUF/NPFL forces apparently left the town when they heard the noise of a truck coming to the town, thinking it could be SLA reinforcements. The truck however did not pass by Bandajuma.

[1351] At this time, SLA forces were deployed at Koribondo, their main base in Bo District.

[1352] No details could be obtained on what happened to the women and the children.

[1353] The Moa River is more or less the natural border between those two chiefdoms.

nor did they go to Bumpeh, which is a bigger town. At Gbanahun, nevertheless, they appointed a Town Commander who was asked to provide food for them. After eating, the RUF/NPFL forces looted the shops of the village and forced young people to go with them to their base to carry the stolen property, which included domestic animals. Fullah people were targeted and two men were severely tortured. On their way back to their base in Soro Gbema Chiefdom, they passed by Bomi (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom), where they shot dead one man they accused of being a SLA member and again abducted young people to carry the property they had stolen. Those young boys from the two villages were then conscripted and when they came back to the chiefdom, they returned as members of the RUF/NPFL forces.

On their way to Pujehun Town on 17 April 1991, RUF/NPFL forces coming from Sowa Chiefdom passed by Koranko (Kpaka Chiefdom), reaching the headquarter town of Massam the following day. At Koranko, this RUF/NPFL group composed of 10 men dressed in black t-shirts and military trousers entered the town firing indiscriminately; they gathered the people and told them they should obey their laws forbidding raping and telling lies, which were punishable by death. The RUF/NPFL forces appointed a Town Commander and a secretary. Poultry from the village was taken and cooked for the forces. The next day, five of the RUF/NPFL members, followed by reinforcements from Potoru (Barri Chiefdom), went to Massam and, as in other villages, followed the procedure of holding a meeting in the Court Barrie, introducing themselves, appointing Town Commanders and so on. They slept in the town, mounting checkpoints to ensure their security. One man who was accused of being an APC sympathiser had his property taken away. One teenage girl was taken away to be a "wife"; her whereabouts remain unknown.

RUF/NPFL forces advanced further towards Pujehun Town, only a few miles from Massam, and laid an ambush between Massam and Yonni (Kpaka Chiefdom, at the border with Panga Kabone Chiefdom), killing one SLA member[1354] who was riding his bicycle to Massam to check about the rumour of an attack on the town. A reinforcement group of RUF/NPFL forces came from Potoru (Barri Chiefdom) to Yonni and headed for Pujehun Town, which they captured between 19 and 20 April 1991. By then, following the death of the SLA member in the ambush between Massam and Yonni, the few SLA members stationed at Pujehun Town had left the town. A Ministry of Social Welfare employee on his way home in the centre of Pujehun failed to stop when requested to do so by RUF/NPFL forces, so they followed him to his house. There, they asked for the keys of his motorbike and, when he refused, one of the RUF/NPFL members shot and killed him with an AK47 then took the key from his pocket. Other civilians were killed for trivial reasons, such as one man, killed because he was allegedly an APC sympathiser, although he was killed before he had time to answer the question whether he was or not. On another occasion, RUF/NPFL forces killed a petty trader who had refused to give them his motorbike. The petty trader's shop was also looted, together with other shops in the town that were broken into and looted.

Checkpoints were established to prevent civilians from escaping and the RUF/NPFL forces undertook the familiar gathering and address. Other meetings would be held during the time of their stay in the town, including one that took place four days after their arrival. At that meeting, the RUF/NPFL forces declared that the premises of a bank were now used to be as a "task force" office, revealing they were taking direct orders from the Head Office at Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom)

[1354] At this time very few SLA forces – 10 in number – were based at Pujehun Town.



and requesting elders and other literates to work for them on administrative matters. One week later, as the elders complained about the starvation of the civilians, a system of "pass" was put in place, allowing civilians to move within the area under RUF/NPFL control.

Also in April, prior to the capture of Pujehun Town, Gallinas Peri Chiefdom was again visited by small groups of RUF/NPFL forces coming from the south of Barri Chiefdom. On their arrival in Bumpeh, they pointed guns at civilians, threatened to kill them if they did not join them and beat some of them, returning on the same day to Barri Chiefdom. As with the first incursion from Soro Gbema Chiefdom, the elders decided to report the matter to the few SLA forces posted at Pujehun town, but no action was taken. RUF/NPFL forces came back to Bumpeh and Gbanahun, having learnt that the matter had been reported to SLA forces at Pujehun Town. At Konia (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom), one person suspected of having a link with the SLA forces was killed by the RUF/NPFL commander. Near Fonikoh, a man on his bicycle was killed after having refused to stop. Three people were killed at Blama Massaquoi and on his way back to Moala (Barri Chiefdom) with his men, the commander killed two more people at Fonima for running away when they saw the forces approaching.

From Pujehun Town, some RUF/NPFL forces boarded a car and a motorbike headed towards Gbandapi, a trade fair centre, passing through Najay. Gbandapi, in the south of Panga Kabonde Chiefdom, is located on the bank of Malemie River, which joins the Wanjei River flowing to Bonthe District. In all the villages along the road to Gbandapi that they visited, RUF/NPFL forces gathered the inhabitants, asked for weapons and enquired about the presence of SLA forces. They also established checkpoints, appointed a Town Commander, who was to send a daily report to the area commander,[1355] and told the civilians to bring food including rice, poultry, goats and sheep to Pujehun Town.[1356] Punishments for failing to bring food included beating with sticks and gun butts and the order to roll on the ground or swim in dirty water in a gutter.

The RUF/NPFL forces followed the Malemie River with speedboats to attack Benganie, which is the largest town in Mano Sakrim Chiefdom, albeit not the headquarter town. A meeting was summoned, checkpoints mounted, travelling passes issued, a Town Commander appointed and a green flag raised, meaning that the chiefdom was under RUF/NPFL control. The commander who mounted the green flag that day made it clear to the civilians that no other commander had the right to occupy the town and its environs without his consent, which would lead to internal fighting in May.[1357] Since it is located by the ocean, Benganie inhabitants were regularly asked to provide salt - a valuable and expensive commodity at this time - to forces stationed at Gbandapi and to those coming from time to time by boat.

Again in April, the RUF/NPFL forces from Pujehun Town proceeded further west to Malen Chiefdom, which shares boundaries with Bonthe District on the south-west and Bo District on the north-west. Before their arrival, people from the chiefdom had already fled to Bagbo Chiefdom (Bo District), upon hearing of the attack on Pujehun Town. The RUF/NPFL forces arrived in the

[1355] This information was reported specifically for Najay town, but is illustrative of general practice at this time.
[1356] The civilians would carry the food on their heads to the next village, where new people would take the load to the next village until it reached Pujehun Town.
[1357] See below for more details on this infighting.

chiefdom headquarter of Sahn on 24 April, when they summoned a meeting at the Court Barrie, asking for the Paramount Chief. When he arrived, the RUF/NPFL forces[1358] told the Paramount Chief that he should join them and exhort his people to do the same, while other RUF/NPFL members were looting property in the village and establishing checkpoints. An 11-year-old RUF/NPFL member called "child soldier" handcuffed the Paramount Chief. The first civilian to be killed in this chiefdom was a man riding his motorbike from Jimmi (Bagbo Chiefdom, Bo District) to Taninahun (Malen Chiefdom) who did not stop and accordingly was considered to be a member of the SLA or SSD. The RUF/NPFL forces then departed for Pujehun Town, taking with them the motorbike of the man they had killed.

At this time, a place in Gadorhun (Malen Chiefdom) known as Kuwait, due to the valuable items that could be found in the town, was used to launch attacks on Bagbo Chiefdom in Bo District.

On 18 May, following the announcement over the BBC that the Paramount Chief from Malen Chiefdom had fled with his family between 9 and 10 May,[1359] RUF/NPFL forces came back to the chiefdom from Pujehun Town. Those RUF/NPFL forces coming in two trucks and armed with AK47s, bladed weapons and sticks, went straight to Taninahun in the north of the chiefdom, where they shot and killed the Town Chief with an AK47. They then went to Sahn, where they tied up prominent elderly people with bush ropes, forced six elderly women to sit on the floor in the Court Barrie, shot and killed some civilians, including women and children, raped one women and took her away, together with her son. Fifteen houses were burnt, including the Paramount Chief's compound. At Fonikor, near Sahn, nine civilians were killed with AK47s by RUF/NPFL forces looking for the Paramount Chief's mother. From that day until July 1991, the RUF/NPFL forces remained in control of the chiefdom.

During their stay at Massam (Kpaka Chiefdom), RUF/NPFL forces forced young men to manage checkpoints for them while others were used to carry their loads, as the forces were expanding their control to surrounding villages, like Manjama, Nyayahun and Bendu, stealing food and domestic animals. In May, a training base was opened at Gobaru, two miles from Massam, where a lot of school-going children were conscripted. A herbalist and fortune teller performed rituals during the training that were believed to make members invulnerable.[1360]

In May, an RUF/NPFL commander together with some of his forces arrived at Benganie and started stealing property. On hearing this news, the RUF/NPFL commander who had earlier warned civilians that no other commander should come to the town without his consent sent some troops, who captured the commander and the other members who carried out the looting. The captured commander tried to escape but was re-captured and brought back to Benganie, where he was publicly disgraced, tied up and seriously beaten. The other boys were taken to Gbandapi (Panga Kabone Chiefdom) for further interrogation, but their fate remains unknown. In late May, a similar

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[1358] The commander of these forces was speaking a Liberian Creole, which led people to identify him as a NPFL member.

[1359] The Paramount Chief allegedly fled through Bum Chiefdom (Bonthe District) to give information about what was happening in Pujehun District to the authorities in Bo Town.

[1360] It is reported that the belief in the powers of this person attracted many school children and other youths who decided to join the movement.



incident took place and two commanders who had been stationed at Benganie were punished[1361] by the same commander as the previous time for sabotaging the administration he had set up in the village. In early June, another commander with his troops came to Benganie and, stating he was a good dancer, ordered the civilians to dance. Everybody was obliged to attend the dance, except the elderly, all doors had to stay open and the dance itself was organised so that the men were to lead the dance, followed by drummers and then by women at the end together with the RUF/NPFL forces. One man who defied the order and went to bed was severely beaten and tortured. When the dance started, the men at the front realised that the women at the back were being raped by the RUF/NPFL forces. This dance continued for four nights until the RUF/NPFL forces left the town.

By late June, SLA forces, together with United Liberation Movement for Liberia[1362] (ULIMO) forces, recaptured Dandabu (Panga Kabone Chiefdom), on the highway linking Pujehun Town and Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom) and then Bo Town (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District). As this town was the first one to be recaptured in the chiefdoms located to the west of the Moa River and as this town is on the road that goes to Bandajuma, it is highly likely that the SLA forces, reinforced with ULIMO forces, who recaptured those chiefdoms came from Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom). Within two months, the SLA and ULIMO forces were able to dislodge the RUF/NPFL forces from all the chiefdoms located on the west bank of the Moa River.

On or around 14 July 1991, combined SLA and ULIMO forces successfully repelled RUF/NPFL forces from Pujehun Town and its environs, in particular Gobaru, Yonni and Massam (Kpaka Chiefdom). The RUF/NPFL forces withdrew to Bumpeh (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom). Following this attack on Pujehun Town, a curfew from 4:00pm to 6.00am was imposed in the south of Panga Kabone Chiefdom in the villages along the road leading to Gbandapi. Inhabitants from Najay saw a truck loaded with RUF/NPFL forces passing by their village without stopping. Two days later, SLA forces boarded a jeep and pursued the RUF/NPFL forces into Gbandapi, returning to Pujehun Town the same day. The retreating RUF/NPFL forces then passed by Benganie (Mano Sakrim Chiefdom), where one civilian had his slippers and tape recorder stolen. The next day, another batch of disgruntled and hungry RUF/NPFL forces previously based at Yonni (Kpaka Chiefdom) arrived in Benganie, requested civilians to cook for them, looted the houses and forced young men to carry the loads. One day, probably in August, youths from the chiefdom went to Pujehun Town to tell the SLA and ULIMO forces they had learnt that an RUF/NPFL commander who was hiding in the bush with his wife and daughter had recently asked a civilian for accommodation. ULIMO forces arrived in the chiefdom in search of the commander and killed the civilian who had hosted him. In late August, ULIMO forces tied up young people accused of being RUF/NPFL collaborators, as a result of which two of the young people died.

SLA and ULIMO forces successfully attacked RUF/NPFL forces at Gobaru (Kpaka Chiefdom, near Pujehun Town) on 14 July 1991. Some retreating RUF/NPFL forces passed by Largo (Kpaka Chiefdom) and one of them forced a woman to have sexual intercourse with him, threatening to kill

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[1361] The two commanders were requested to fight bodily as enemies and as one was much younger, this one was then beaten by the commander. The two men were then undressed, ordered to dig two holes, which were filled with pepper, and ordered to put their genital organs in the holes.

[1362] This fighting faction, composed mainly of supporters of the late previous Liberian President, Samuel Doe, emerged in May 1991 to fight the NPFL.

all the other women of the house if she refused. While at Gobaru, the SLA and ULIMO forces requested the civilians to come to the town, for screening and registration purposes. However, molestation of civilians was at its highest peak during this time, as young people were undressed and beaten with gun butts; the screening test was so stringent, a lot of young men were killed accused of being RUF member without much investigation.[1363] Women and girls were also alleged to be the wives of the RUF/NPFL forces. Night searches for RUF/NPFL members were also instituted. In one incident, during such a search, a man who hid under his bed after SLA forces had knocked on his door was killed, on the allegation that he was a "rebel". In early August, as the number of civilians coming to the town was increasing and as a lot of people had already been killed during the screening process, SLA forces required civilians to assist in the screening process and established an action group composed of three SLA member and six civilians. As food coming from an international NGO was provided at Gobaru, Yonni and Massam, SLA forces mounted checkpoints at Massam to enhance security, particularly because RUF/NPFL forces were still present in the District, on the east side of the Moa River (Soro Gbema and Makpele Chiefdoms). At those checkpoints, young people were screened and on one occasion, on 21 August, one man was killed as documents were found in his bag demonstrating he was a secretary for the RUF/NPFL forces. Civilians were also required to operate checkpoints for the SLA forces, especially at night. As the SLA commander was replaced sometime between September and November, the situation changed slightly as civilians were no longer required to operate checkpoints and those suspected of belonging to the RUF/NPFL were thoroughly investigated.

On 18 July, four days after the recapture of Pujehun Town, 28 members of the SLA and ULIMO forces drove the few remaining RUF/NPFL forces out of Malen Chiefdom, with ULIMO forces killing one RUF member at Sahn. However, 47 men and children were also killed by ULIMO and SLA forces. Most of them were shot with AK47s and one man was killed with a knife, accused of having been trained by RUF/NPFL forces when they took control of the chiefdom after the Paramount Chief had left. Twenty members of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) were then deployed in the chiefdom.

Repelled from Pujehun Town in July 1991, RUF/NPFL forces resettled in Bumpeh (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom). A checkpoint was established at Koni Junction, ¼ mile west of Bumpeh, and civilians from the surrounding villages were forced to operate it. During their one-month stay, RUF/NPFL forces harassed and beat civilians and raped girls. For example, civilians who refused to take their turn at a checkpoint were given 100 lashes each. The rate of killing increased at this time and there are reports of a practice whereby RUF/NPFL forces made people form a line and killed the 10th person in the line. A camp was opened to train young boys and girls who had been conscripted. It is reported that over 100 civilians were killed during the RUF/NPFL stay for not collaborating with them. Among those people killed were one woman who had come to buy palm oil and was accused of being a spy for SLA forces and a man who was killed because he was coming from an area behind the front line and accordingly was considered to be an SLA collaborator.

Those RUF/NPFL forces were reinforced in late July by two groups crossing the Moa River, both of whom killed civilians on their way to Bumpeh. At Gbanahun, the first group shot and killed six

[1363] It is however reported that the ULIMO were more abrupt in screening and killing young men than SLA forces.

civilians who had previously quarrelled with an RUF/NPFL child soldier. The other group that crossed the Moa River near Saama killed one man who failed to offer them his cassava leaves.

On 3 August, RUF/NPFL forces resisted an attack from combined SLA/ULIMO forces who, after a fierce battle,[1364] went back to Pujehun Town, from where they had come. After this battle, the RUF/NPFL resettled in Saama, south of Bumpeh, where they frequently mistreated civilians at their newly-established checkpoints. These forces often sought out women and girls who were still virgins and raped them and civilians' valuable items and food were stolen. In one incident, all the inhabitants were told to undress, form two lines - one for men and one for women - and dance until nightfall. Women were later raped and those who refused to have sexual intercourse were killed. At this time, the forces were under the command of NPFL commanders. However, by the end of August 1991, combined SLA and ULIMO forces successfully dislodged the RUF/NPFL forces from the chiefdom, which was declared a "rebel- free area".

Until August, it is unclear who was in real control of Potoru (Barri Chiefdom), whether it was the RUF/NPFL forces or the SLA forces who, throughout April and May, claimed to have retaken the town from the RUF/NPFL forces.[1365] However, the only attack that is reported by civilians, possibly because it was the major one, took place in August in Potoru and other places in Barri Chiefdom; this freed the chiefdoms from any RUF/NPFL presence. Accordingly, although they may have been exchanges of control of the town and skirmishes between SLA forces and RUF/NPFL forces from April to August, because this period is characterised by the RUF/NPFL periodically crossing the Liberian border and both SLA and RUF/NPFL forces launching sporadic attacks on the other fighting faction, two periods can clearly be identified for Peje and Barri Chiefdoms: from April to August/September, when RUF/NPFL were present in the chiefdoms and from August/September, when SLA forces took control of the chiefdoms.

During the SLA attack on Potoru (Barri Chiefdom) in August, during which SLA forces were armed with anti aircraft guns, RPGs, hand mortars and AK47s, about 30 civilians and 42 to 45 RUF/NPFL members were killed and about 15 houses were burnt. From Potoru, RUF/NPFL forces were pursued to Moala, on the bank of the Moa River, where RUF/NPFL forces managed to cross the river towards Makpele Chiefdom, together with a number of civilians.[1366] SLA forces also went to Peje Chiefdom to dislodge the remaining pockets of RUF/NPFL forces, taking those forces they captured to Potoru.[1367] SLA forces began to patrol Barri and Peje Chiefdoms, sometimes falling into ambushes laid by the few RUF/NPFL small groups who had not been dislodged.

Under SLA control, any person suspected of being a "rebel" or a "rebel collaborator" was maltreated and some were killed. Youths from different chiefdoms, accused of being RUF/NPFL members, were brought to Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom), where they were killed. The Paramount

[1364] Both fighting forces had the same kind of weapons, including AK47s, AK58s, RPGs, hand grenades and "local" guns.
[1365] See, for example, BBC, 19 April 1991; there were also additional reports on this in April.
[1366] It is reported that the RUF/NPFL forces convinced civilians to go with them in Liberia so that they would not be killed by the SLA forces. This statement may also refer to what happened in other places such as Kailahun District where retreating RUF/NPFL forces succeeded in taking with them a large number of civilians by telling them they would be considered as RUF/NPFL collaborators by the SLA forces who would accordingly kill them.
[1367] It was not disclosed what happened to those captured RUF/NPFL members.



Chief of Barri Chiefdom was arrested, stripped, beaten, thrown into a military truck and taken to the military base at Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom). At the base, he was accused of having harboured RUF/NPFL forces in his compound; his fate remains unknown. By the end of 1991, civilians who had fled to the bush and to the nearby District of Bo had resettled and resumed farming activities in Barri, Sowa and Peje Chiefdoms.

In September 1991, people staying at Bo Waterside were requested by the retreating RUF/NPFL forces to go onto the Mano River Union Bridge, which led to over 2,000 people gathering there. The civilians were forced to stay on the bridge for two days and nights, without access to food. Some children died and youths were killed when, authorised to leave the bridge, they headed for Sierra Leonean territory.[1368] It is believed that it was following this RUF/NPFL forces attempt to contain advance of the SLA and Guinean forces that those SLA and Guinean forces[1369] retook control of the bridge, thus cutting off the supply route for the remaining pockets of RUF/NPFL forces in the District. During their stay in Soro Gbema Chiefdom, SLA and ULIMO forces killed any suspected RUF collaborator, although they could escape death once arrested if their family gave money and/or women to the SLA forces. Valuable items were also taken from civilians during this period and transported to Freetown.

Activities resumed on 3 September 1991 in Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, when RUF/NPFL forces crossed the Moa River and came to Bopon, 15 miles south of Bumpeh, as they saw that there was no SLA deployment along the Moa River. In Bopon, they killed one prominent man, cut off his head and displayed it at the Gondema checkpoint in Soro Gbema Chiefdom. Three miles from Bopon village, they killed the 15 inhabitants of a farmhouse, including a pregnant woman whose stomach was split open and the foetus removed. After that killing in the farm, SLA soldiers took control of the whole chiefdom and reinforcements were sent to the various crossing points along the Moa River. No RUF/NPFL incursion was felt for the rest of the year, until April 1992.

In late 1991, as fighting on the east bank of the Moa River was taking place, SLA forces based on the west side appealed to the Paramount Chiefs of Kpaka, Panga Krim and Panga Kabonde Chiefdoms to give them young men to help them maintaining the security of the chiefdoms.

b) Events in 1992 –1995

The number of incidents for 1992 to 1994 drops considerably when compared to 1991,[1370] which is instructive of how Pujehun District was affected by the war. By 1992, SLA forces together with ULIMO forces had driven most of the RUF forces out of the District. The RUF, together with NPFL forces, nevertheless came back to the District from the Liberian border in late December 1992, when they established their stronghold in Soro Gbema chiefdom.

[1368] It is not clear from the records who killed those civilians, whether it was SLA or RUF/NPFL forces, and open source information does not clarify the matter. Accordingly, to say that the RUF/NPFL forces used the civilians to protect themselves from the SLA forces is an inference gleaned from the records, although it was not expressly stated.

[1369] According to the Agence France Presse, the bridge was retaken on 6 September 1991: 06 September 1991.

[1370] Thus, the number of records for 1992 represents 1/5th of the records for 1991, 1993 – 1/6th and 1994 and 1995 together 1/10th.

Therefore most of the fighting as such was concentrated in the east, at the Liberian border, which may account for the fewer number of incidents during this time period. In addition, in 1993, most of the residents of the District were advised to go to Gondama camp, which may also explain the scarcity of the incidents of this period. However, beginning in 1992, there were increasing incidents of violations committed by SLA forces.

Events in 1992

Although SLA forces claimed to have recaptured Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom) in August 1991,[1371] it appears that Makpele Chiefdom came under SLA control only in January 1992, when SLA forces took over Daar-es-Salaam, the easternmost point of Pujehun District on the border with Liberia, and many other towns in the chiefdom. RUF/NPFL bases became SLA bases; Zimmi camp and Baquima were now under their control. SLA forces were also based at Gofor in the south of the chiefdom along the road that goes to Soro Gbema Chiefdom, where they brought poultry and other domestic animals they had found in the villages they had visited.

However, SLA forces began to harass and mistreat civilians from the beginning of 1992. Sexual assaults are reported, such as a woman from Joporwahun who was raped by an SLA member while she was at Zimmi. SLA forces chased civilians for their food, restricted their movement and forced them to work for them, including by hunting or fishing. SLA forces also engaged in mining and at Gbojibu, which became one of their mining villages, they set 13 houses on fire as they did not want to have civilians in their midst. This drove civilians to regional towns like Kenema or Bo or to Liberia.

In January 1992, following the appeal of the SLA commander to the Paramount Chiefs of Kpaka, Panga Krim and Panga Kabone Chiefdoms, youths[1372] from all these chiefdoms, some of them being local hunters, gathered in Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom) to receive summary training and some ammunition for their barrel guns. Shortly after, they were sent to Bumpeh (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom), located a few miles from the Moa River. SLA forces used underage children to carry arms and ammunition to the warfront. Furthermore, not only did the SLA forces take money and food items from the population in what they called the "war effort", they also took other property, including drums of palm oil, furniture and other household items. These items were believed to be transported to Freetown by SLA trucks and other trucks they had seized from civilians.

The killing of alleged collaborators was ongoing; the standard SLA practice was to tie up alleged RUF collaborators and to throw them off the Yonni Bridge (Kpaka Chiefdom) or to execute suspects at the Makibi Bridge in Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom). For example, SLA forces beheaded a man in the Sambo section, allegedly because he had given meat to the RUF forces.

In 1992, SLA forces were well established in Panga Krim Chiefdom, which forced the RUF forces into hiding. However the presence of the SLA forces was heavily felt by the civilians, as the SLA forces ill-treated the civilian population. For example, civilians who had previously been appointed

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[1371] AFP, 19 August 1991.

[1372] The term 'youths' in Sierra Leone could refer to anybody aged up to their mid to late 30s, although it probably does not include anyone under 14.

to any position by the RUF, which they could not refuse or they would be killed, or who had been forced to join the RUF were punished by the SLA forces. Common punishments included amputations of the hands and ears, the plucking out of eyes, putting people in a bag and then setting the bag on fire, taking them to the river and drowning them and shooting and killing them.

In May 1992, RUF/NPFL forces crossed the Moa River and launched a series of attacks on different towns in Gallinas Peri Chiefdom. By the end of the month, civilians reported that the chiefdom was under their control. However, it appeared that in 1992, most of the RUF/NPFL forces had been chased out of the District and only pockets of forces were still active, mainly laying ambushes. Indeed, following the successful attacks on RUF/NPFL positions by the SLA and ULIMO forces in 1991 and the SLA control over Makpele Chiefdom in January 1992, the major RUF attacks in the District took place in December 1992 and 1993. Accordingly, those attacks on Gallinas Peri could be considered not as highlighting a massive operation for the control of the chiefdom but rather as sporadic actions carried out by isolated pockets of RUF forces. Thus in May, apparently taking advantage of the disorganisation of the SLA forces,[1373] RUF forces attacked Kakayama, where they battled for two days with SLA forces. An SLA truck with human and logistical reinforcements fell into an ambush, but there were no fatalities. The SLA forces then retreated to their other base at Saama, which - overpopulated with civilians fleeing the previous fighting - was later attacked on 3 May 1992. Some civilians were killed in the crossfire and others were captured by the RUF forces. The Town Chief of a nearby village was captured and later killed by the RUF forces, who left his body at one end of the town. Within the same month, another RUF group attacked another SLA position at Njala.

Kpaka Chiefdom was fairly quiet during this period, with only two incidents reported. Probably before the overthrow of the Government of J.S. Momoh on 29 April, RUF forces who had crossed the Moa River attacked many villages, including Gedeyama, Saama Peri, Kpetema and Mamboma, looting, killing and abducting civilians.[1374] Similarly to what happened in Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, these actions were probably raids from some isolated groups of RUF forces. In June, unidentified armed men attacked Massam (Kpaka Chiefdom) in the early hours of the day but were repelled by some SLA forces who claimed that they fought armed men they could not identify.[1375]

In October 1992, SLA forces counter attacked and retook some positions in Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, although Saama remained an RUF base. SLA forces based at Bumpeh encouraged civilians to come back and resettle. Some civilians were killed, mainly for the purposes of taking their property. For example, one Fullah businessman was killed by an SLA member who took away his belongings, namely a gold wristwatch, a gold chain, some money and a bicycle. The SLA member who carried out this killing was arrested by the SLA commander to whom the killing was reported and sent to Freetown. In November, the youths gathered at Bumpeh to help the SLA forces repel the RUF forces from their chiefdom. Those youths, who brought single barrel guns and various bladed weapons, were dispatched by the SLA commander in two groups, one heading to Saama

[1373] Although SLA forces were based at Bumpeh, Kakayama and Saama, the command position on the SLA forces was just changing hands at this time.
[1374] No details could be obtained on these incidents.
[1375] Fatalities – if any – were not reported.



where the RUF forces were based. On their way to Saama, they fell into an RUF ambush, during which some of them were killed while others were captured by the RUF forces.[1376]

RUF forces regrouped and returned in December 1992 to capture Soro Gbema Chiefdom, which became their stronghold. This attack led to a massive exodus of civilians crossing the Moa River. Towards the end of December 1992, inhabitants of Barri Chiefdom saw a large number of civilians from Soro Gbema Chiefdom crossing the Moa Rover and passing by their chiefdom. Those civilians, disclosing that an attack had taken place in Soro Gbema Chiefdom where many civilians were killed and houses were burnt, did not settle in Barri Chiefdom but continued their journey to find a safer haven. Civilians from Potoru heard three days later that the RUF forces were also in Makpele Chiefdom.[1377]

Events in 1993

In January 1993, RUF forces crossed the Moa River and launched attacks on all the chiefdoms located on the west bank of the river. Thus, they attacked Saaquehun village (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom), 12 miles north of Bumpeh, where they killed 12 people, burnt many houses and abducted many civilians.

On 13 January 1993, well-armed RUF forces attacked Potoru in Barri chiefdom,[1378] shelling the town. Over 30 people were killed, some having their throats cut with bayonets. The forces used Potoru to attack other villages in the chiefdom, such as Waima and Kundowahun, and to make raids on Peje and Sowa Chiefdoms. In Peje Chiefdom, villages like Bumpeh and Quiva came under attack and civilians described this wave of attack as a "full-scale offensive", "a fearful battle, worse than ever". Over 100 civilians were killed and 30 houses burnt in Bumpeh, most of which were populated with civilians. During these attacks, young girls were raped and a lot of civilians were abducted. Indeed, throughout their stay in these areas,[1379] the RUF forces raped women, including rapes by many men of girls under 15, killed people for not supporting them and abducted people on a daily basis, including young boys who were abducted for the purposes of recruitment. As a result, civilians left the chiefdoms and went to Gondama camp.

Also in January 1993, an unspecified number of RUF forces[1380] attacked Massam (Kpaka Chiefdom) and on the same day, moved on to Yonni (Kpaka Chiefdom) and to Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom). Since this attack took place on the day of the weekly trade fare at Gbandapi (south of Panga Kabone Chiefdom), most of the women were not in Pujehun Town and the surrounding villages, which led to the abduction of many children. The SLA forces based at Pujehun Town left the town and the RUF forces occupied the town.

Civilians from the chiefdoms where these attacks took place were advised by the SLA forces to go to Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, Bo District), a major SLA base in Bo District. At

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[1376] It could not be ascertained where the second group went.
[1377] No more information could be gathered on these attacks.
[1378] Some of those forces were speaking in Liberian language.
[1379] As for Sowa Chiefdom, conflicting information concerning Bandajuma where the SLA was stationed did not allow us to ascertain what happened in this town.
[1380] It is reported that some of them had their faces masked for fear of recognition.



Koribondo, an international NGO provided assistance to the displaced people who were advised by the SLA commander to go to Gondama, at the border between Kakua and Tikonko Chiefdoms (Bo District), where the Pujehun District Development Association had secured a land to build a camp. By March, registration started in the camp for proper food supply and each household was to build a booth before they could be registered. By the end of April, civilians from all the chiefdoms of Pujehun District were to be found in the camp.[1381] Again, in February 1993, the SLA forces exhorted the civilians from Gallinas Peri Chiefdom to go to Koribondo (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom, Bo District) for their own safety. When they arrived at Koribondo, the civilians were advised by the SLA base at Koribondo to go to Gondama.

However on 28 January, coming from the direction of Dandabu (north of Panga Kabone Chiefdom), SLA forces recaptured Pujehun Town, which by that time had been under the control of the RUF for two weeks. In March 1993, the SLA recaptured Blama Massaquoi (Gallinas Peri Chiefdom) and rescued over 260 civilians who were being held captives by the RUF forces after a fierce battle in Tongie. In late March, RUF forces retook Pujehun Town overnight, armed with heavy machine guns but SLA forces successfully counter attacked four days later on 30 March.[1382] In early June 1993, other unsuccessful attacks were launched on Pujehun Town, allegedly by hungry RUF members, which did not challenge SLA control over the area.[1383]

Civilians began having doubts about the SLA forces; starting in 1993, there appeared to be "much understanding" between the RUF forces and the SLA forces. Indeed, civilians found that any time there was a RUF attack on a village or settlement, the SLA forces based in Pujehun Town would not go there until they heard the RUF had left the area. On their arrival, they would take away the any property left by the RUF forces and bring it to Pujehun Town, sometimes by truck and sometimes by forcing civilians to carry the load. Civilians also understood that during attacks on SLA bases, the forces stationed there would only shoot in the air and then run away, leaving their arms and ammunition behind them. Civilians further noticed that those kind of incidents happened especially after SLA forces had received deliveries of arms and ammunition and food rations. Civilians who dared to question the behaviour of the SLA forces and their efficiency in repelling RUF attacks were killed.

In May 1993, SLA forces, SSD members and ULIMO forces launched a successful attack on Potoru (Barri Chiefdom). After a three-day battle, the RUF forces were repelled from the town and had spread throughout the chiefdom. During this attack, some civilians were killed. After they recaptured Potoru, ULIMO and, to a lesser extent, SLA forces killed up to 70 civilians whom they suspected of being "rebels" or "rebel collaborators" and burnt the houses of many people they suspected of hiding suspected "rebels" or "rebel collaborators". Furthermore, civilians were used to carry supplies for the SLA and, accordingly, some of them were killed during ambushes laid by RUF forces. From May 1993 to 1994, SLA positions in these chiefdoms came under persistent attacks.

[1381] This camp was made up of makeshift mud and thatch huts without sewage or proper ventilation. Living conditions would start becoming catastrophic and the death toll would soon be very high, between 50 and 80 deaths per month: BBC, 16 September 1993.

[1382] AFP 26 March 1993 and BBC 1 April 1993.

[1383] BBC, 3 June 1993 and 5 June 1993.



Those in the RUF High Command in Soro Gbema Chiefdom were members of the late Ndorgbowusui Group. However, others who were not members of this group volunteered to be recruited for the RUF, which led to dissention among the RUF ranks. When orders were given, they refused to follow them or, if they were forced to carry them out, it was not in the best interest of the commanders. The rivalries between these two RUF groups, each of them giving allegiance either to Solomon Demby or to Hon. Mannah Kpaka, led to much destruction of property and killing of civilians in Soro Gbema chiefdom. For example, one group carried out the massive destruction and burning of Malema and Fairo, the two major towns in the chiefdom, while the other group burnt down Wai and surrounding villages. In any village where either group felt there were supporters of the other group, they would wage war on those communities. Furthermore, as the Demby supporters were known for being wealthy, constant ambushes were staged along the main roads of the chiefdom.[1384]

The population of Makpele Chiefdom suffered continuous looting and property destruction by the SLA forces, who had begun to engage in mining activities that would continue until after the 1996 elections. For example, at Palima in 1993, the roofs were taken from the Court Barrie, the mosque and other houses. By early 1993, most of the civilians had fled to camps (including the Gondama camp in Bo District, which was opened in January 1993), to larger towns such as Kenema and to Liberia. The SLA forced those who remained to mine for diamonds, bring the SLA forces food and give them money for food.

Thus, by August 1993, RUF forces were entrapped in Pujehun District by SLA and ULIMO forces whose main bases where in Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom) and Gofor (Makpele Chiefdom). The remaining RUF forces controlled only a region of marshland and tropical forest on the Atlantic coast,[1385] where they staged ambushes. On 28 August, some RUF forces laid an ambush at Golahun, nine miles south of Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone or Kpaka Chiefdom), and opened fire on ICRC personnel. Two ICRC nurses were killed and a third one, together with the two Gambian drivers, was wounded.[1386]

Events in 1994

At the end of January and following the renewed RUF attacks, notably in Kenema District, the Government of Sierra Leone declared "total war" against the RUF.

Despite the SLA presence in Zimmi, RUF forces attacked Palima (Makpele Chiefdom, 1.5 miles from Zimmi) in April 1994, by passing the SLA forces. Thirty-two people were abducted and brought to their stronghold in Soro Gbema Chiefdom, where they stayed over two years, being trained as RUF member or used to work for the RUF forces, mainly as fishermen.

[1384] None of those events could be specifically dated and happened sometime between 1993 and 1995 when the Government of Sierra Leone sent a delegation to the Mano River Union Bridge.

[1385] AFP, 16 September 1993

[1386] AFP 28 August 1993 and 29 August 1993.

In 1994, RUF forces were occupying most of the villages in Barri Chiefdom, looting, raping, killing and abducting. These forces began spreading to Kenema District.[1387] However at that time, most of the population of these chiefdoms had fled to the bush or to Gondama camp.

Events in 1995

At the beginning of the year, the Sierra Leonean Government sent a delegation to the Mano River Union Bridge (Soro Gbema Chiefdom) to negotiate a cease-fire with the RUF. This was the second round of talks between RUF forces and the NPRC regime, the first one taking place in December 1994.[1388] For one of these meetings, the delegation composed of Government representatives and prominent people was airlifted to the crossing point at Bo Waterside from Monrovia and crossed the bridge towards the Sierra Leonean side, at Jendema (Soro Gbema Chiefdom) without seeing any RUF forces. RUF forces appeared shortly after and abducted them, threatening to kill them. It is believed that those people remained in the hands of the RUF forces until 1998 when the District was cleared of any RUF presence.

In 1995, SLA forces were still in control of Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom) and harassment of civilians continued. In one incident, 25 people from Palima were undressed and taken to Zimmi, where they were forced to push a truck loaded with SLA forces.[1389] Palima (Makpele Chiefdom) was again attacked by RUF forces in October 1995 but this time, the forces came from Tunkia Chiefdom in Kenema District. Two people were killed and some houses looted.[1390] Thus, civilians from Makpele Chiefdom were caught between RUF attacks and SLA harassment. All the houses and other facilities (including kitchens and toilets that had been built by UNHCR) at Palima were destroyed by both the RUF forces and the SLA forces, although more destruction was done by the SLA forces.

Notwithstanding the relatively scarce information related to this period, it appears that Pujehun District together with the Mokanji Hills (Moyamba District) and the north of Bonthe District had become a stronghold of the RUF.[1391]

c) Events in 1996 – 1998 and beyond

These years are marked by the progressive initiation of Kamajors in the District. As with other Districts in the south, from the time of their initiation until the May 1997 Coup, the Kamajors together with SLA forces were successful in containing and repelling RUF forces from their positions. Shortly after the Coup on 25 May, the Kamajors went underground and reassembled; from the end of 1997, they were successfully engaged in driving the RUF/AFRC forces out of the District.

[1387] More detail is needed on these incidents.

[1388] This second round of talks failed as the RUF turned down NPRC's offer of peace: Communiqué Inter Press Service, 3 January 1995 and 11 January 1995. In April, the NPRC Chairman proposed an immediate cease-fire and negotiations to the RUF, which was rejected by the RUF. Amnesty International Report 1996.

[1389] No more details could be obtained on this incident.

[1390] Although no more details could be obtained on this incident, it has to be borne in mind that Palima is 1½ miles from Zimmi and accordingly, the reported attacks on Palima, could reveal an attempt of the RUF forces to overrun the SLA forces based at Zimmi.

[1391] BBC, 20 February 1995.

CDF initiations began in late 1995 or early 1996 in Gondama camp in Bo District. It is reported that the catalyst for the commencement of initiations was the attacks on Gondama Camp and the heavy casualties suffered there. In early 1996, the first CDF members moved to Pujehun District to reinforce the SLA forces stationed there. All chiefdoms represented in the camp were to appoint a certain number of men from their chiefdom as Kamajors, in proportion to their size and population. The initiation rite was performed in Bo Town. All the adults in the camp had to contribute Le 500[1392] or the equivalent in bulgur for the initiation to take place. In the early stages, the new initiates, equipped mainly with bladed weapons and single barrel guns, were under the command of the chiefdom authorities but they soon came under the command of a National Coordinator, with District Coordinators.[1393]

Following the general elections in February 1996, people started leaving the camps and the bush to resettle in their villages. Displaced people who had found refuge in Bo District and refugees from Liberia began to be repatriated in the District. However, in May, Kamajors found over 100 civilians dead in Bendu (north of Malen Chiefdom), mainly aged over 50 years old. The RUF forces who killed those civilians also captured teenagers from the town and took them to Camp Libya in Soro Gbema Chiefdom.[1394] In late August 1996, AFP reported that tens of thousands of people left Gondama Camp as the "rebel war dies down"[1395] and it was believed that people had returned to 10 out of the 12 chiefdoms of the District. Makpele and Soro Gbema Chiefdoms, at the Liberian border, were the two chiefdoms where resettlement remained impossible for security reasons. Those people who resettled in the District nevertheless still received food distribution in Bo District until this distribution began also in Pujehun District later in the year.

During the period leading up to May 1997, the Kamajors, together with SLA forces, repelled RUF forces in many areas, allowing for relative tranquillity and continuing resettlement. People tried to engage in farming activities, being supplied with seeds and basic agricultural equipments by NGOs and UN Agencies. However, this collaboration between SLA forces and the Kamajors soon started to deteriorate. In Barri Chiefdom for example, quarrels over the dismounting of checkpoints arose and checkpoints mounted by SLA forces were destroyed by Kamajors. This led the SLA forces to leave the chiefdom, which was then under Kamajor control only until the May 1997 Coup.

In Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, the first attack the Kamajors launched against the RUF was in Blama Massaquoi and they continued fighting until the chiefdom was declared a "rebel free area" around November 1996. Thus, from November 1996 until May 1997, the chiefdom was under Kamajor control. Kamajors from Soro Gbema Chiefdom passing through Gallinas Peri Chiefdom reached their chiefdom sometime between August and October 1996. In Barri Chiefdom, the Kamajors first joined the SLA forces based at Potoru, the chiefdom headquarters, while RUF forces were scattered mainly in the north of the chiefdom, between Vaama and Baiama. Following attacks on RUF camps,

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[1392] This should be placed in the context of Sierra Leone's position at the bottom of the Human Development Index: between 1991 and 2000, 57% of the population lived on less than 1 USD (2.000 SLL) per day and 74.5% lived on less than 2 USD (4.000 SLL) per day: see UNDP Human Development Report 2003, http://www.undp.org/hdr2003/indicator/cty_f_SLE.html, last visited on 30 December 2003.

[1393] See section [X] for a more detailed explanation of the formation of the Civil Defence Forces.

[1394] Xinhua News Agency and AFP: 9 May 1996.

[1395] AFP, 22 August 1996.

Kamajors obtained arms and ammunition that were more sophisticated than the ones they had so far.

However, the Kamajors in Makpele Chiefdom, in particular the 23 Kamajors based at Manjama, engaged in massive mining activities, the junior members undertaking mining for the most senior ones. Mining equipment was taken away from civilians, who were forced to feed the Kamajors, go hunting and fetch wood and water. No respect was paid to the chiefdom authorities and the Regent Paramount Chief had no control over the Kamajors. The movement of civilians was restricted and harassment of civilians was frequent; their houses were searched, property was confiscated and farms were harvested by the Kamajors for their own purposes. Civilians from this village went into hiding, as they could no longer withstand this situation. At Vaama in 1996, Kamajors argued with SLA forces, allegedly because both groups wanted to have access to the resources of the villages, namely food, money and women. The two groups fought, the Kamajors being equipped with single barrels guns and the SLA with automatic rifles and RPGs, as a result of which the Kamajors left town. SLA forces from Zimmi visited Ngombu, close to Zimmi, as they heard Kamajors had gathered there to fight them. As they arrived in the town, they started shooting, thus preventing people from giving explanations, as a result of which seven civilians were killed. Before leaving, those SLA forces took some furniture for Zimmi.

Kamajors based at Madina (Makpele Chiefdom) also engaged in the same behaviour towards civilians, who were forced to contribute to the Kamajor's activities by providing money, bulgur, rice and palm oil. Toobu (three miles from Zimmi) was also visited by Kamajors and in April 1997, they took away bicycles, bailing machines, a power saw, Le 1,000,000 and other property.[1396] Civilians made a report to the head Kamajor at Zimmi but no action was taken. Until the May Coup, more initiations took place for youth of the chiefdom and almost all the villages suffered similar kinds of harassment.

In late December 1996 following the signing of the Abidjan Peace Agreement, more than 8,000 people who had been captured two years earlier by RUF forces were released in Soro Gbema Chiefdom, allegedly on the directive of RUF High Command.[1397] During this period, it appeared that RUF forces were ordered by their High Command to regroup and encamp at Camp Libya, located in a dense rainforest on the Moa River, which was practically their only remaining stronghold in the District after the Mano River Union Bridge and Sulima (both in Soro Gbema Chiefdom) had been recaptured.

In Soro Gbema Chiefdom, before the May Coup in late 1996 or early 1997, Kamajors drove many RUF forces out of the chiefdom. At Felo Mano and other places in the chiefdom, the Kamajors discovered arms stores and an airstrip was also found at Felo Mano. This information was transmitted to the Sierra Leone Government through the SLA and SLP based at Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom) and the arms and ammunition were airlifted to Freetown in 1997.[1398] The Kamajors

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[1396] Those Kamajors "dressed carefully" and "behaved like RUF or SLA forces".

[1397] BBC, 28 December 1996.

[1398] According to the records, ECOMOG from Freetown and Kenema would have come to the site of these discoveries and air lifted the ammunition to Freetown. However, no ECOMOG forces as such were to be found in these towns. The key person probably referred to foreign troops such as Guinean or Nigerian who have been

fought to retake the whole chiefdom up to Jendema, at the Liberian border. Many RUF forces fleeing to Liberia were caught and killed on the Mano River Union Bridge, which has been described as the "Kamajor slaughter site", where many RUF members were tied up and thrown alive in the Mano River.

After the Coup in May 1997 and the merging of the RUF with AFRC forces, the CDF were defeated in many areas and went into hiding. They operated from underground, refusing to obey the AFRC leader's general order to lay down their arms and to report to the nearest police station. Instead, initiations continued took place; in Sowa Chiefdom, for example, 150 young men were initiated.[1399]

From May 1997 until they were repelled from the District in 1998, the combined RUF/AFRC forces imposed great harms on civilian population in general and on suspected Kamajors or Kamajors collaborators/sympathisers in particular. For example, three days after the overthrow of the Government, AFRC forces burnt down compounds belonging to Kamajor commanders in Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom). Other houses were looted, including those of two Limba people. In Sowa Chiefdom, AFRC forces accused civilians of being Kamajors, killing many of them. The RUF/AFRC forces went on patrols in Sowa Chiefdom and established themselves in the chiefdom headquarters of Bandajuma. RUF/AFRC forces then commenced patrols in Bandajuma, as they knew the chiefdom was initiating Kamajors, attempting to prevent the Kamajors from establishing themselves in the chiefdom headquarter. The Bo-Pujehun Highway, which passes through Sowa Chiefdom, was constantly patrolled at night and houses along the highway were set on fire. Youths who were found during these patrols were killed by the combined forces, who accused them of being Kamajors. These constant patrols led civilians once more to flee their villages to go in their settlements in the bush, called "sorquehun".

Women were sexually abused and in Pujehun Town, one woman died as a result. The practice of padlocking the private parts of women is also reported.[1400] In Gallinas Peri Chiefdom, in December 1997, RUF/AFRC forces coming from their main base in Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom) entered Blama Massaquoi, fully armed with automatic rifles and an anti-aircraft weapon mounted on vehicle. They burnt down the house of the CDF commander using an RPG, as a result of which other houses nearby were also burnt. The RUF/AFRC forces took supplies from returnees to the chiefdom, mainly seed rice and other seeds, and continued to steal property throughout the chiefdom, in particular at Saahn Massaquoi, before returning to Pujehun Town.

Whenever they lost men at the battlefront, RUF/AFRC forces killed a number of civilians similar to the number of men they had lost. For example, in late 1997, in Gofor (Makpele Chiefdom), RUF/AFRC forces placed 20 people in a house and set fire to it. The reason advanced for this was that these people were coming from a place where the Kamajors had previously ambushed and killed RUF/AFRC forces.

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fighting with SLA for a long time. Furthermore, the reference to Kenema should probably understood as Kenema District and not Kenema Town, as no presence of such foreign forces was reported for Kenema Town.

[1399]According to the OCHA report for 16-21 July 1997, in many parts of Pujehun District, "local military commanders have good relations with Kamajors and do not support AFRC" but from the information collected from key people, this could not be confirmed.

[1400] This information was related in such general terms and no more details could be obtained.



The Kamajors regrouped their forces and more initiations took place, initiating often children below the age of 15.[1401] Starting late 1997, Kamajors attacked RUF/AFRC forces' positions. In October 1997, RUF/AFRC forces in a four-truck convoy fell into an ambush near Fairo in Soro Gbema Chiefdom. Kamajors killed those caught in the ambush, together with the civilians who were travelling with them, because the Kamajors considered them to be collaborators. According to those Kamajors, those civilians used to lead the RUF/AFRC forces and show them the Kamajor hiding places. Between late 1997 and March 1998, many villages were burnt down in Soro Gbema Chiefdom by both Kamajors and RUF/AFRC forces to prevent the other fighting faction from settling there.

ECOMOG forces based in Liberia were carrying weapons sent by the CDF National Coordinator through the Mano River Union Bridge to the CDF District Coordinator, who in turn distributed the items to the Kamajors in the District. ECOMOG was also supplying the Kamajors with medicine and the wounded forces were transported to Tieni in Liberia by helicopter, where there was a base at that time.[1402] Whenever arms and ammunition were seized at battlefronts, they were taken to the District Coordinator, who reallocated them as required.[1403]

In November 1997, the Kamajors repelled most of the combined forces from Sowa Chiefdom. While fleeing, the RUF/AFRC forces burnt 30 houses in Bandajuma and set many villages along the Bandajuma-Koribondo (Bo District) highway on fire. Nevertheless, the Kamajors took control of the area and people came out of the bush where they had been hiding.

On 20 to 22 December 1997, Kamajors from Gbandapi (south of Panga Kabone Chiefdom) moved to Pujehun Town in a bid to recapture the town from the RUF/AFRC forces. During this first attempt, the Kamajors were repelled and sustained heavy casualties. A few days later, on 27 December, RUF/AFRC forces from Pujehun Town went down to Gbandapi, burning houses and looting food items on their way; 23 houses were burnt down at Najay. This counter-attack would mark the first step of a series of reprisals against civilians by the Kamajors. On 8 January 1998, three Kamajors came to Najay, where they fired many shots, burnt down one house and arrested two men gathered for the morning prayer at the Mosque whom they accused of collaborating with the

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[1401] According to the Sierra Leone Humanitarian Report for 29 October-18 November 1997, "[...] insecurity in Bo, Pujehun and Bonthe districts has also increased due to clashes between the military and the Kamajors. It seems that there is a clear difference between newly-recruited Kamajors, who have access to automatic weapons and apparently operate outside the authority of chiefdom representatives, and the traditional Kamajors who are carefully screened and respect traditional chiefdom structures. Aid Agencies operating in the Southern province are being increasingly harassed by some groups of Kamajors and are currently being prevented from accessing areas to the South of Bandejuma on the Bo-Pujehun highway. This is a source of concern as there are known pockets of malnutrition in parts of Bonthe and Pujehun districts." Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 29 Oct - 18 Nov 1997. REG. NO. 97/0390.

[1402] Indeed, it seems that Kamajors had a base on the Liberian territory.

[1403] It is alleged that some of these weapons were sold for money by the CDF District coordinator and were thus kept out of circulation to the Kamajors. Furthermore, some weapons would have been given to civilians who were not Kamajors for them to benefit from the disarmament program. This information was also revealed during the TRC (Truth and Reconciliation Commission) hearings in Pujehun Town in June 2003.



RUF/AFRC forces, taking them to Bonthe District.[1404] Other Kamajors later returned to the town, stripped naked six civilians and beat them, on the same grounds. On 15 February, Kamajors killed the Chief Imam of the District and the Section Chief at Bayama (Panga Krim Chiefdom) by tying a rope around his neck and stabbing him many times before shooting him. These events prompted inhabitants from Najay to leave the village for fear of further reprisals but Kamajors found them in their hiding places and took away all their belongings, including food, domestic animals and money. As they were unable to stay any longer in the bush and as many surrounding villages refused to host them, these civilians went to Bassaleh, east of Najay.

Over 20 fierce and repeated battles took place between 28 May 1997 and late February 1998 to establish and maintain control of Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom), which was a stronghold of the RUF/AFRC forces in the District. During the two first attacks[1405] launched by Kamajors coming from the direction of Gofor, civilians were killed. As the fighting intensified between Kamajors and the RUF/AFRC in June, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) sheltered over 1,000 civilians.[1406] In early July, Kamajors regrouped and launched a third attack, coming from the main road of the chiefdom, like the previous attack. This attack was unsuccessful although no casualties were reported. However, the RUF/AFRC forces burnt down houses of Kamajor supporters, which made them flee the town, leaving their belongings in the hands of the RUF/AFRC forces. During the fourth attack in early August, many civilians, RUF/AFRC members and Kamajors were wounded. Some of the wounded died in the bushes and the decomposing bodies were later discovered by civilians. While they took control, the Kamajors would control the town only for a very short period of time.[1407]

Inhabitants from Palima, half a mile from Zimmi on the road to Kenema District, deserted the town following the fourth attack and went to the bush for three weeks. They were discovered by the RUF/AFRC forces, who took the produce from the harvests to Zimmi. During the subsequent battles from September to December, houses were burnt down and civilians from Zimmi and the surrounding villages suffered heavy casualties; four Chiefs and 14 counsellors were killed, accused of being supporters of the Sierra Leone President. During this period, civilians also died from starvation while others drowned in Mahoi River, trying to seek refuge in other areas.[1408] On 6 January 1998, another Kamajor attack left a lot of civilians dead.[1409]

Also in January, Kamajors went to Vaama (east of Zimmi) where they stole all the household property they could find and took some money from civilians. Before leaving, they set some buildings on fire and took away one civilian.[1410] Starting on 23 January, there was another attack described as a 'no retreat battle' that lasted for four days. At the end of the battle, during which both

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[1404] What happened to those civilians was not specified.

[1405] During the second battle on 17 June, the key person recounts that he had the impression that when it came time for the battle, the Kamajors did not have central command.

[1406] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Report 24-30 June 1997.

[1407] According to Africa News, 25 August 1997, ICRC had to withdraw from its office at Zimmi.

[1408] Also in September, the fight for the control of Tongo Field (Lower Bambara Chiefdom, Kenema District) intensified.

[1409] Hundreds of fatalities are mentioned, but this figure could not be confirmed. Also in January, serious fighting took place at Tongo Field.

[1410] Those Kamajors were described as acting like the "junta" i.e. the RUF/AFRC forces.

fighting factions used RPGs, there was a great deal of property destruction and a large number of bodies, both civilians and members of the fighting forces, were left on the streets. Following this, the Kamajors went back to Gofor. During the battle that took place on 1 February, the Kamajors were again unsuccessful in dislodging the RUF/AFRC forces from the town. Thirteen RUF/AFRC forces were caught by Kamajors and killed opposite the R.C. School on the Zimmi Fairo Road. Three of their "wives" taken by the Kamajors to Gofor, where they were used as sex slaves before being killed.

The final battle in Zimmi, which took place on 17 February, saw the Kamajors being assisted by ECOMOG forces and some SLA forces. Those combined forces blocked all the roads leading to the town and battled for three days with the RUF/AFRC forces who had not fled the town, which some had on hearing that Freetown was no longer under their control. Over 1,500 civilians used by the RUF/AFRC forces as sex slaves or as workers to do petty jobs like brushing the town, bringing food or water were freed by the Kamajors, who then made Zimmi their base. From Zimmi, Kamajors raided surrounding villages, taking property including household items and bicycles. They also harassed civilians in these villages because for the Kamajors, any civilians near Zimmi were RUF/AFRC collaborators.

After the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in February 1998, the District rapidly became free of RUF and AFRC forces as the Kamajors took control of it. In Kpaka Chiefdom, for example, as they were cut off from Koribondo which used to be a stronghold in Bo District (Jiama Bongor Chiefdom),[1411] the remaining RUF/AFRC forces left the chiefdom in March.[1412] In early 1998, Kamajors from Sowa Chiefdom battled with RUF/AFRC forces at Jeoma and successfully repelled them. From this time on, civilians were forced to feed the Kamajors, the burden of which increased when Kamajors opened a new initiation base at Foindu. In Panga Kabone Chiefdom, Kamajors attacked the remaining RUF/AFRC stronghold in the District three times before eventually driving them out in March 1998, when the RUF/AFRC forces were cut off from their headquarters in Koribondo.

During this period, Kamajors looted Pujehun Town (Panga Kabone Chiefdom), Yonni and Gobaru (Kpaka Chiefdom). However, after 1998, it is reported that Kpaka Chiefdom was relatively quiet as was Mano Sakrim Chiefdom, which did not suffer much from the Kamajors after May 1997, because they were fighting RUF/AFRC forces in other parts of the District.[1413]

Kamajors controlled the District by conducting patrols and mounted checkpoints, imposing the pass system in search of arms and ammunition and alleged "enemies". In Barri Chiefdom for example, up to 1999, Kamajors issued passes to travellers for a fee of Le 500, as a way to control the movement of people and to search for their enemies. This pass was only valid for a limited period of time and

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[1411] Following the coup in May 1997, the SLA base at Koribondo had become a stronghold of the RUF/AFRC forces as part of the general "transfer" of SLA bases and property to the AFRC.

[1412] No information was obtained for Kpaka Chiefdom after the departure of the RUF/AFRC forces. Kamajor harassment of civilians is reported in the same general terms as for the other chiefdoms, without relating any precise event.

[1413] It appeared that in 1997, Mano Sakrim Chiefdom did not sustain much the presence of the RUF/AFRC forces, who were concentrated in other areas in the District.



had to be renewed at the expiration of that period.[1414] Kamajors from Potoru explained to civilians that only Kamajors could travel without such a pass.[1415] Civilians were requested to show their pass that proved they were civilians and not RUF/AFRC members at any Kamajors checkpoints they passed through. Those checkpoints were also used to request money from drivers and passengers and to search passengers' bags. For example, from Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom) to Jendema (Soro Gbema Chiefdom, Liberian border), eight checkpoints were mounted and four were established between Zimmi and the border with Tunkia Chiefdom (Kenema District).

The Kamajors systematically ill-treated civilians across the District, mainly as a reprisal for their suspected collaboration with the RUF and RUF/AFRC forces. The District Coordinator used to go from chiefdom to chiefdom to visit the Kamajors on the ground; such visits were witnessed, for example, in Barri Chiefdom. In particular, relatives of RUF/AFRC forces were humiliated, punished and killed. The Mano River was used to drown alleged collaborators; Jijama and Jembe (Soro Gbema Chiefdom) were two towns where this practice was carried out. Traditional leaders were deposed and their power seized, some of them being molested. Prominent people were killed, such as the Assistant District Officer, who was mistaken for an AFRC lieutenant, and the Chief Imam of Soro Gbema Chiefdom. Looting was also frequently carried out and on one occasion, when this was being done and civilians were being chased into the bush, the Kamajors stated that when the RUF/AFRC forces took away their property, they never grumbled or did anything, but now they were complaining when the Kamajors were taking their property. Houses, compounds and communities termed "unfriendly" were burnt down, as happened, for example, in Nanjay (Panga Kabone Chiefdom). The killing of civilians for whatever reason was mostly carried out along the Liberian border.

The houses of relatives of RUF and AFRC members were broken into, damaged and burnt down. It was common practice to send alleged collaborators to "wash" in the river, which was a euphemism for drowning, or to put them in cages where they were tied with FM ropes, which are nylon ropes wrapped around two short sticks and which often lead to loss of circulation to the hands. For example, in Sowa Chiefdom, during the Operation called "Black December" carried out in December 1997, two civilians who pleaded with the Kamajors authorities to let some vehicles come in were arrested and tied with FM ropes. Another example is a woman from Bandajuma (Sowa Chiefdom) who was killed and her head displayed on a sharp stick, as she was suspected of being a collaborator with the AFRC. Thirty people were killed in Bomborhun (Soro Gbema Chiefdom) for failing to report to the Kamajors that RUF/AFRC forces had crossed the Mano River.

Women were sexually abused and some of them had their heads shaved. In addition, women were also forcibly married to Kamajors, unable to refuse or they would be killed. This information was

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[1414] On one occasion, Kamajors told civilians that the pass would be valid only for four days. This is however not a fixed limit as information from other Districts notes that the passes issued could be valid for other periods of time.

[1415] It is interesting to note that this system of pass together with the harassment suffered at checkpoints led some civilians to be initiated within the Kamajors society. This type of initiation was however different from the one the fighters to be had to go through, it was among other things much quicker. Furthermore, this type of initiation was mostly carried out once Kamajors were in control of the District and not previously while they were fighting RUF/AFRC forces.

given in general terms for Soro Gbema Chiefdom but could most likely be extended to the other chiefdoms under CDF control. It is interesting to note that this was rather controversial among the Kamajors as they believed that once covered with their traditional attire and protection, they could not be approached by any woman or they would no longer be protected. Accordingly, this was used as an argument to deny the assertion that some of them had committed sexual offences against women.

The Kamajors established laws, both for Kamajors and civilians, and anyone caught breaking these laws was punished, including by public flogging, being locked in a guardroom and, for the Kamajors, being required to give up their weapons. Such incidents happened, for example, at Potoru, the CDF headquarter in Barri Chiefdom. Offices were established in the villages and Kamajors intervened in domestic affairs. They would settle cases of debts and other disputes, including marital affairs. Civilians reported cases to them and not to the Government authorities, who had no power or control over the chiefdoms at this time. Fines were levied on those civilians found guilty and other type of punishments were carried out, such as putting people in pens of two feet high and five feet long, built with palm stalks and sharp pointed materials.

One former Kamajor relates how children between the ages of 10 and 15 were initiated when the fight for Zimmi intensified towards the beginning of 1998. Those children were sent to enemy zones and battlefronts to act as spies and some became fighters. Others were also used to mine diamonds for the leaders. Kamajors also embarked on forceful conscription of men. When things started to become difficult for the Kamajors, they asked civilians to contribute with food and money to the movement. The food was for the forces and the money was used to pay initiators and to buy weapons. Civilians were also used to carry arms and ammunition, food and property stolen by the Kamajors. Those who refused to carry out these orders were arrested, beaten, put in cages, tied up or fined. Children were used to transport gravel from the mining areas to washing sites. RUF/AFRC forces captured alive during battle by the Kamajors were either initiated into the Kamajors or killed, depending on the situation. Other punishments were applied to these captured enemies such as imprisoning them, stripping them, tying them up and putting them in cages.[1416]

Kamajors also engaged in mining in different chiefdoms such as Soro Gbema, Makpele, Gallinas Peri and Malen and it is reported that the District Coordinator was allocating forces for mining. It was said that these diamonds were given to ECOMOG to get ammunition, but doubt was raised over the destination of the gems as the District Coordinator was suspected of keeping diamonds for his own use. In 1998, at Famina (Soro Gbema Chiefdom), a group of five civilians caught by the Kamajors mining diamonds without their permission were killed.[1417]

In September 1998, at Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom), Kamajors seized seven big trucks loaded with rice, sugar and other items coming from Liberia and en route to Kenema District. The trucks were parked opposite the police station, the SLP being unable to do anything. The passengers abandoned their loads and continued their journey to Kenema.

[1416] This was apparently done on the advice of civilians, which may refer to the fact that some civilians were appointed in the administration of the CDF in the Districts.

[1417] No further information is available on this incident.

On one occasion, in October 1998, the killing at Zimmi (Makpele Chiefdom) of a man from Koya Chiefdom (Kenema District) accused of being a "rebel" led to a fight between Kamajors from Koya Chiefdom (Kenema District) and those from Makpele Chiefdom. The dispute was resolved through the intervention of the two CDF chiefdoms coordinators. Other incidents of friction between Kamajors were reported and in November 1998, some young men from Gallinas Peri Chiefdom decided to form their own society, allegedly with the assistance of the son of the Kamajor's High Priest. This decision to form a separate group of Kamajors concluded rapidly as, following the initiation, three of the young men who were to queue to test their bullet proof ability were killed and many others wounded when the initiator fired at them. The matter was reported to the police but no action was taken.

In mid October 1998, serious clashes occurred between CDF assisted by ECOMOG forces and some RUF/AFRC members accompanied by Liberian armed men at the Mano River in the south of Soro Gbema Chiefdom. According to the CDF Coordinator for Pujehun District and ECOMOG forces, those armed men were members of the Liberian Army, which was denied by the Liberian President. To avoid further incursions, the Kamajors created a buffer zone at the Liberian border by strengthening their forces in the border villages.[1418]

Discussions on the disarmament process began in December 1999, when the CDF National Coordinator together with the District Coordinator convened a meeting for Kamajors at Potoru (Barri Chiefdom). By April 2000, UNAMSIL forces were deployed in Zimmi and Joru and shortly after, at Pujehun Town, following ECOMOG withdrawal from the country. Possibly as a result of this, Pujehun District also became a transit area for refugees coming back from Liberia and originating from other Districts in Sierra Leone. A DDR camp was opened at Pujehun Town[1419] in May 2001 and in October, following a meeting of the Joint Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR), comprised of the Government of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and representatives of the RUF, it was agreed that the remainder of the DDR process should be accelerated between 1 and 14 November.[1420]

At the end of 2001, SLA forces deployed alongside the Liberian border in Pujehun and Kenema Districts following intensified fighting of the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)[1421] forces in the west of Liberia.[1422]

[1418] This incident was related by AFP, 04 November 1998, and comes from Kamajors source; it was neither confirmed nor denied by independent sources.

[1419] Following a meeting between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF at UNAMSIL headquarters, Freetown, it was agreed between the parties that DDR camps should be opened as a matter of urgency in Lunsar, Makeni, Kamakwie, Masingbi, Koidu, Kailahun, Alikalia, Pujehun and Bonthe, in addition to the existing ones in Port Loko, Bo, Moyamba, Kenema and Daru: UNAMSIL press release, 15 May 2001.

[1420] IRIN West Africa, 12 October 2001. Furthermore, disarmament for the whole country was scheduled to be complete by 30 November 2001. During this disarmament period in November 2001, over 2,000 CDF members demobilised: UNAMSIL Press Briefing, 20 November 2001

[1421] The LURD was a fighting faction engaged in the Liberian conflict and challenging the authority of the Liberian Government. This group had been fighting the Liberian Government since 1998.

[1422] Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 01 - 31 December 2001.



Aside from this, there is almost no information available from the end of 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2001, as the District was under the control of Kamajors and ECOMOG forces and, later on, UNAMSIL troops. It appears that civilians were able to resettle in their villages and were mostly engaged in farming activities.[1423]

3. Conclusion

Pujehun District was an entry point to Sierra Leone for RUF/NPFL forces as early as 1991 and all the RUF incursions in the District were carried out following an east-west pattern, RUF forces first settling into the two chiefdoms bordering Liberia, namely Soro Gbema and Makpele before proceeding further west by crossing the Moa River. Accordingly, those two chiefdoms were the most affected, particularly because Makpele Chiefdom is the main mining area of the District.

The first major incursion in the District, carried out by RUF/NPFL forces was done in concert with a northern flank in Kailahun District; the RUF/NPFL forces rapidly scattered throughout the chiefdoms of both Districts. From the very start of the conflict, the headquarters of the RUF forces was, however, established in Kailahun District. Three motorable entry points into Sierra Leone were thus clearly identified, two in Kailahun District and one in Pujehun District.

The RUF/NPFL forces were repelled from Pujehun District in the middle of 1991, while some chiefdoms in Kailahun District remained under RUF/NPFL control. At that time, Pujehun District came under SLA control, with the RUF/NPFL forces being limited to launching sporadic actions in the District.

In late 1993 and in 1994, RUF forces launched a second massive incursion from the Liberian border and spread across Pujehun, Kenema and Kailahun Districts, before continuing further westwards, establishing positions in the whole country by 1995. As such, Pujehun District was for the second time under RUF control, although for a longer period this time. This RUF presence in the District led thousands of civilians to flee the District and go to IDPs camps in Bo District, encouraged by an SLA that was being gradually defeated in the District. Accordingly, Pujehun District was one of the most affected Districts in terms of displacement of population and of destruction of property.

From late 1995 and especially after February 1998 and the intervention in Freetown, the pattern of the conflict in Pujehun District differed from Kailahun District and was more similar to the other Districts of the Southern Province. This was due to the initiation and deployment of Kamajors, who were able to retake most of the RUF positions in the District, unlike Kailahun District, which was never completely under Kamajor control.

Following the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in February 1998 and its deployment in the District, the RUF/AFRC who had stayed in the District during the AFRC regime pulled out and the retreating RUF/AFRC forces from Freetown did not settle at all in the District. Free from further RUF/AFRC incursions, the District was thus left under Kamajor control, as with the other Districts of the Southern Province, which deprived the RUF/AFRC forces of one of their main supply roads from Liberia. From 1998 until the completion of the DDR process, RUF/AFRC attacks were

[1423] The situation was radically different for the Districts of the Northern Province and for Kono District where RUF/AFRC activities were still ongoing, with high fatalities among the civilian population.



concentrated in the main mining areas of the District and in the areas where CDF members did not have constant and complete control, namely the Northern Province, Kono District, Kailahun District and the north of Kenema District.

Throughout the conflict, widespread violations were committed in the District, primarily by RUF/NPFL, RUF and RUF/AFRC forces, but also by SLA forces and Kamajors, especially once they firmly established their control and authority over the District. Those violations were directed against civilians and their property and included stealing and destruction of property, physical violence, sexual assault, killing and abduction for use as fighters, workers or "wives". Both the RUF forces and the Kamajors forces deposed and replaced local authorities and put in place basic systems of administration. Only a few cases of mutilation were however reported for the District, as most of the cases reported took place during a specific RUF/AFRC operation called "Operation No Living Thing" in the first months of 1998 and following the retreat of Freetown.



F. Western Area

1. Introduction

The Western Area is located in the far central west of Sierra Leone and adjoins Port Loko and Moyamba Districts on its eastern side; its western side is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean. Roughly two-thirds of the Western Area is a mountainous peninsula, along the north of which is located Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone. Freetown has been a major international port for merchant and military shipping for the best part of 150 years.

Unlike the rest of the country, the Western Area is not composed of chiefdoms, but is divided into four Rural Districts (RD) and a metropolitan area known as Greater Freetown:[1424]

Western Area	**Main Settlements**
Koya Rural District	Newton, Songo
Waterloo Rural District	Fogbo, Hastings, Kossoh Town, Newton, Tombo, Waterloo
Greater Freetown	Freetown and suburban areas
York Rural District	Goderich, Lakka, York
Mountain Rural District	Regent

Koya RD is in the far east of the Western Area and is bordered to the north by Koya Chiefdom (Port Loko District). Across the River Ribbi, which delimits the southern boundary of Koya RD, lies Ribbi Chiefdom (Moyamba District). The main motorable crossing point over the River Ribbi is located at Mabang, connecting the towns of Moyamba, Rotifunk and Bradford (all Moyamba District) to Songo, in the far east of Koya RD. This Moyamba route rejoins the main highway at Tiama Junction, giving travellers access to all major locations in the Southern Province. The RUF would use this route to enter the Western Area in 1995.

From Songo, moving inland, the main hard-surface arterial route from provincial Sierra Leone passes through the north of Koya RD and its main town, Newton. From Newton, the villages of Bath Comp and Fogbo are accessible by a road running south. Fogbo is a main transit point for goods and people westward across the swamp areas of the Calmont Creek and eastward to Shenge (Kagboro Chiefdom, Moyamba District) and to other locations up the Ribbi River. A large number of small settlements can be reached from the Newton-Fogbo road. Moving east from Newton, the main arterial route leads to Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and on to all other major towns in Sierra Leone. Control of the stretch of road between Newton and Masiaka was a major strategic aim of all factions in the conflict.

Moving westward from Newton, the main highway leads to the town of Waterloo, and the Waterloo RD. The area between Newton and Waterloo is flat, highly fertile agricultural land. There is a large palm oil plantation at Banga Farm, also on the main highway. Waterloo is on the foothills of the

[1424] Along with the SUDC area of Sherbro Island (Bonthe District), the Western Area is administered directly by the Government of Sierra Leone without the traditional structures found throughout Sierra Leone. This is a result of the early British administration, which did not extend its control over the provincial areas of Sierra Leone until the late 1800s, at which time it exercised authority mainly through the traditional structures already in place: see General Overview.

mountainous Western Area Peninsula. It has a number of suburban areas, including Lumpa, Kossoh and Bassu Town to the south and Cole Town to the north. The Prince Alfred Road Bridge, over which the main highway runs, is a key point in the town. The harbour settlement of Pa-Loko is located directly north of Waterloo.

The main highway into Freetown runs through Devil Hole, Rokel and Hastings. On the flat area north of Hastings town and running down to the Sierra Leone Estuary is a hard-surface airfield. The Sierra Leone Police Training School is also located at Hastings. On the Kossoh Town–Hasting axis, a number of different routes into Freetown converge. The main highway continues into the east of Greater Freetown through Wellington and Kissy. From Kossoh Town, two routes lead into Freetown. The first leads through Mountain Rural District from Grafton to Regent. This winding, cliff edge road is made of broken asphalt. At Regent, the road splits again allowing access to Freetown's civic centre through Mount Aureol and to Freetown's west end through Hill Station. The alternative route from Kossoh Town leads through Allen Town to Calaba Town, where it runs parallel to the main highway. This road is also of extremely poor quality and passes through the busy and densely populated areas of Wellington, Low Cost and Portee.

Another road leaves Waterloo and runs south around the Western Area Peninsula into west Freetown. The road passes through the SLA's Benguema Training Centre,[1425] through to the harbour town of Tombo, which marks the southern-most point of Waterloo Rural District. The peninsular road loops around along the coast through to York, Sussex and Goderich in the York RD. From Goderich, the road passes straight into the Lumley and Juba Hill areas of west Freetown. The peninsular road is of extremely poor quality and takes around three hours to get from Freetown to Waterloo in a regular vehicle. The main highway route, through Hastings, takes only 20 minutes.

In 1991, the conflict that was taking hold in other areas of Sierra Leone had little impact on the Western Area except for troop movements to other areas of the country and the establishment of checkpoints – at which there were incidents of harassment of civilians and stealing of their property by the SLA – and defensive deployments in strategic areas, particularly in Waterloo. Following the coup in 1992, which saw the NPRC take power, harassment of civilians and stealing of their property by the SLA increased as more checkpoints were established. This also marked the beginning of Cleaning Day, according to which on the last Saturday of every month, people had to stay home during the morning hours and clean their houses: those caught on the streets would be punished by the SLA. However, these incidents were relatively few and there would continue to be little impact on the Western Area throughout 1992 to 1994.

Starting in 1995, the RUF began to extend their presence westward, at one point cutting off the main highway linking Freetown with the rest of the country and occupying much of Koya RD. There were a number of battles between the RUF on the one hand and the SLA and foreign forces on the other hand, with the SLA establishing more checkpoints in sensitive areas. Throughout 1995 there was an increase in violations committed against civilians, including killing, raping, abduction and looting primarily committed by the RUF, with some violations by the SLA and the Nigerian forces. Elections were held in early 1996, the run up to which was marred by incidents of violence including the first amputations (of thumbs) in the Western Area by SLA, who believed there should

[1425] The Benguma Training Centre was subsequently renamed the "Armed Forces Training Centre".

be peace before elections. There was little fighting in the Western Area in 1996, with SLA, Guinean and Nigerian forces deployed in strategic areas and the SLA continuing to operate checkpoints along major routes. Civilians were routinely harassed at these checkpoints and were punished for failing to produce identity cards, including being beaten, primarily by the SLA and the Nigerian forces. Towards the end of 1996, peace talks between the RUF and the Government resulted in the Abidjan Peace Agreement on 30 November 1996.

Nevertheless, the conflict only began to have a major impact on the Western Area on the magnitude experienced in the rest of the country in 1997. In May of that year, the AFRC launched a coup, as a result of which the elected government fled to Guinea. Soon after taking power, the AFRC invited the RUF to join them and a large number of RUF forces joined the AFRC forces already in Freetown and the rest of the Western Area. This period saw a massive increase in violations against civilians, with RUF/AFRC forces in particular targeting students, representatives of civil society and journalists, especially after the commencement of broadcasting by the clandestine pro-government radio station, FM98.1 Radio Democracy. Civilians were beaten, raped, killed and arrested and detained without being charged, sometimes for up to a number of weeks. Despite the formation of an anti-looting squad by the AFRC, which saw the return of some stolen property to civilians, looting was widespread; civilians were searched and their property, most commonly food, was taken at checkpoints and in their houses. Civilians were also detained and forced to work for the RUF/AFRC forces, primarily undertaking domestic work such as cooking and cleaning. There was a large build up of foreign forces at this time and fighting between the RUF/AFRC and these forces would lead to massive internal population displacement as civilians fled the fighting. In the latter half of the year, first ECOWAS and then the UN Security Council imposed sanctions on Sierra Leone, including a travel ban on members of the RUF/AFRC.

Despite a ceasefire signed at the end of 1997, fighting continued with numerous violations of both the spirit and letter of the ceasefire. The instability in the city and the country at large prompted a military intervention by the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces, reinforced by CDF and "loyal" SLA members, in February 1998, as a result of which the RUF/AFRC forces were driven from Freetown and the majority of the Western Area. The ECOMOG intervention continued to roll back the RUF/AFRC from every major town in Sierra Leone during March and April 1998. The Government returned from Guinea and sanctions were lifted, except those banning the import of weapons. For the most part, order was restored in the Western Area, although there were incidents of harassment of civilians, including the torture and killing of suspected RUF/AFRC members and collaborators by ECOMOG forces and the CDF. The middle of the year saw the commencement of a wave of treason trials against civilians and military personnel for their involvement in the coup in May 1997. The majority of those being tried were convicted, with death sentences and terms of imprisonment being imposed. Some of the military personnel, who had been court martialled, were executed in October while those who had been tried in civilian courts appealed their sentences and were still in detention awaiting the outcome of their appeals when the invasion of Freetown occurred on 6 January 1999.

Towards the end of 1998, RUF forces had begun attacking towns in the west of the Western Area, including the strategic town of Waterloo, which led to renewed fighting in these areas. This would be the prelude to the major attack on Freetown by the RUF/AFRC on 6 January 1999. Thousands

of RUF/AFRC forces converged on Freetown, occupying various locations, killing and amputating hundreds of civilians, taking their property and burning their houses. ECOMOG forces with assistance from the CDF managed to repel the RUF/AFRC forces and by the end of January had regained control of the city, although the destruction wreaked on the city and the loss of human life during the brief RUF/AFRC stay would be tremendous. In the coming weeks, ECOMOG extended its control to the areas surrounding Freetown and in April, peace talks began in Togo that would lead to the Lomé Peace Agreement, signed on 7 July 1999. That Agreement included a power-sharing arrangement for the elected Government and the RUF as well as a blanket pardon and amnesty for all combatants for all acts committed in pursuit of their objectives. From the time the AFRC and RUF leaders returned to Freetown in October 1999 until May 2000, the Western Area was mostly quiet.

In 2000, UNAMSIL began deploying across Sierra Leone and implementing the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration program agreed to during the Lomé peace talks. On 8 May, there was a large demonstration outside the house of the RUF leader, which resulted in the deaths of some of the protestors and the capture and detention of the RUF leader, accused of violating the spirit and letter of the Lomé Agreement. From then, UNAMSIL deployment continued in the Western Area, which remained quiet until the war was officially declared over in January 2002.

2. Factual Analysis

a) Events in 1991

At the beginning of 1991, around 2,000 members of the SLA were sent the southern border of Sierra Leone with Liberia to prevent the incursion of forces from the Liberian war into Sierra Leone. These would be reinforced by three truckloads of SLA forces dispatched from Freetown on 25 March 1991 and 1 April 1991.[1426]

In early 1991, the conflict broke out in the Eastern Province of Sierra Leone. The Government of Sierra Leone requested the assistance of Guinean and Nigerian troops to prevent RUF forces from entering Freetown and other large towns. Responding to this request, checkpoints were established between Waterloo and Tombo (both Waterloo RD) along the road running from the north to the south in the middle of the Western Area towards the border with Port Loko and Moyamba Districts. Waterloo is of strategic military importance, due to its location on the highway leading from Freetown to the rest of the country and its proximity to Freetown.

The Nigerian forces operated the checkpoint at Madina, whilst the others at Tombo and Russell (Waterloo RD) were operated by the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). SLA forces stationed at these checkpoints required people who were unable to produce their identity cards to pay them money. If civilians did not have money, SLA forces would punish them. For example, some were forced to clean up a particular area and others were forced to lie down on the ground and stare at the sun.

Following news of the first incursions, the Government of Sierra Leone – in 1991, the All Party Congress (APC) – was quick to mobilise political support for the war effort. The then President

[1426] Xinhua General Overseas News Service, 25 March 1991 and UPI, 2 April 1991.

received gifts of food from representatives of the Fullah and Indian communities and entertained a gesture of solidarity from the Sierra Leone Judiciary.[1427]

In addition, the Government of Sierra Leone made requests for assistance to various foreign governments, including those of the US[1428] and the UK. Officials from both governments publicly stated they were considering how to assist.[1429] The US provided a variety of direct assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone. First, the US Government flew in an undisclosed amount of light weapons and ammunition.[1430] A further shipment of materials was reported as scheduled to arrive by US Air Force cargo plane by 9 August 1991. Also in August 1991, a 15-member US Army mobile training team commenced a program of training in communications, medical care, equipment maintenance and setting-up effective command structures for non-commissioned SLA officers at the SLA's Benguema Training Centre. In September 1991, the US Government also agreed to provide $500,000 to the Government of Sierra Leone to support the continuing involvement of the SLA in ECOMOG, then operating in Liberia. Freetown was one of the key logistic points for the 7,000-strong ECOMOG peacekeeping force stationed in Liberia.

On 13 April, the Governments of Guinea and Nigeria sent 700[1431] military personnel and accompanying hardware to Sierra Leone.[1432] The Nigerian forces arrived on 16 April 1991,[1433] at which time the Government of Sierra Leone cut air, sea and land transport links with Liberia, restricting incoming flights to Freetown to humanitarian and military traffic.[1434] Following the visit of delegation of Nigerian military officials to Freetown, a further 500 Nigerian forces arrived on or around 29 April 1991[1435] and were posted to strategic locations in the Freetown area including Lungi International Airport[1436] (Kaffu Bullon Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and the power station.

In May 1991 a camp for Liberian refugees was established near Waterloo town (Waterloo RD). On 6 May 1991, around 3,000 Liberian refugees were repatriated to Liberia from Freetown aboard the Nigerian vessel, the *River Adada.* Over the weekend of 4-5 May, the same ship had ferried an undisclosed number of Nigerian soldiers from Lagos.[1437]

b) Events in 1992 - 1994

In mid-April 1992, a group of low-ranking members of the SLA Tiger Unit, armed with an anti-aircraft gun mounted on a military truck, moved from Kailahun District to Freetown. They by-passed the SLA base at Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and used the Moyamba-Rotifunk-Mabang (Moyamba) route to Freetown through Songo town (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko

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1427 BBC, 15 April 1991.
1428 UPI, 9 April 1991.
1429 Independent, 7 May 1991.
1430 AFP, 8 August 1991.
1431 Number initially undisclosed, reported as 700 by Xinhua on 29 April 1991.
1432 Xinhua, 13 April 1991.
1433 AP 16 April 1991.
1434 AP, 16 April 1991.
1435 These forces were under the command of the field commander of ECOMOG in Liberia: Xinhua, 28 May 1991.
1436 A short distance away (7 minutes by helicopter) from Freetown, north over the Sierra Leone River.
1437 AFP, 6 May 1991.

District), south-west of the Western Area. These forces continued along the main highway and when they arrived in Freetown., other SLA forces stationed at the Benguema Training Centre were made aware of this unusual military movement.

On 29 April, the Kailahun group of SLA members overthrew the APC Government and established a military junta known as the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Led by 25 year-old Captain Valentine Strasser, the NPRC suspended the Constitution of Sierra Leone and imposed a State of Emergency. An SLA Major from the Benguema Training Centre was arrested and detained in Pademba Road prison when he tried to persuade those leading the coup to reverse their actions. The ousted President fled to the Republic of Guinea, where he was later granted asylum, as 50 SLA troops acting for the NRPC stormed the presidential offices at State House, in the centre of Freetown. Lungi International Airport was temporarily closed to air traffic and international telex and telephone lines were reportedly disabled.[1438]

The US Government airlifted 300 expatriates out of Sierra Leone and issued a warning advising against travel to Sierra Leone. The French Government sent a frigate into Sierra Leonean waters to assist with further evacuation of expatriates should the situation in Sierra Leone deteriorate.

On 30 April 1992, the NPRC leader made a broadcast over national radio on the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service citing corruption and incompetent governance as the reasons for the coup.[1439] Later in the day, around 700 students marched through Freetown in support of the NPRC coup.[1440] In Freetown on 5 May 1992, students and trade unionists staged a much larger march in support of the NPRC. [1441]

A number of foreign Governments, including Nigeria, Japan and Ghana, were quick to recognise the NPRC as the Government of Sierra Leone. Cooperation between Nigerian troops and the SLA against the RUF continued.

Following the NPRC coup, SLA forces in Waterloo (Waterloo RD) and surrounding areas broke into shops and residences on the Calmont Road, stealing civilian property and loading it onto military trucks. SLA forces attacked villages in the Koya RD near the boundary with Port Loko and Moyamba Districts. In these villages, which included Mafonikay, Nyamgba Town and Newton, SLA forces killed an unknown number of civilians, stole property and inflicted violence on many people. SLA forces attacked the Waterloo Oil Palm Plantation and other farms in the Waterloo and Koya RDs, taking agricultural machinery, household furniture and other high value items.

During 1992, the SLA arrested an unknown number of people in Lumpa, near Waterloo Town. On a beach near Sussex village, along the peninsular road, the then Inspector General of Police and up to 12 other people were summarily executed on the suspicion of plotting a coup. It is alleged that their bodies were buried in a mass grave in that location.

[1438] AFP 30 April 1992.
[1439] BBC, 2 May 1992, transcribing SLBS, 30 April 1992.
[1440] BBC, 30 April 1992.
[1441] AFP, 5 May 1992.

During 1992, the NPRC declared that the last Saturday of every month would be National Cleaning Day. Between 06.00 and 10.00 only those on official business were excused the task of cleaning their compounds, residences and commercial properties.[1442] A variety of punishments were meted out to civilians who did not adhere to these rules. Civilians were beaten with belts, made to roll around on the floor, thrown into the gutter effluent and forced to quick-march 500 metres carrying a heavy rock on their heads. A common SLA punishment was termed Frog Jump, or "pumping". Civilians were made to perform squat jumps, crossing their arms one over the other and holding their earlobes between thumb and forefinger. This exhausting punishment could last for hours. Another gruelling SLA punishment was "making civilians fly"; civilians were forced to lie down on their backs with their legs held straight into the air, their arms outstretched across the ground.

Shortly after the coup, the SLA mounted five military checkpoints along a 15km stretch of the peninsula road running from Tombo to Waterloo Town (both Waterloo RD). SLA forces operating checkpoints continued to extort money from travellers.

In late December 1992, a special military tribunal created by the NPRC condemned to death an unknown number of people for their alleged involvement in a coup attempt in November 1992. The British Government condemned the executions[1443] and briefly suspended all economic aid to Sierra Leone.[1444] Between 9 and 16 January 1993, the NPRC declared a week of national repentance and prayers for those who had been executed.[1445]

On 18 March, NPRC security agencies arrested 7 civilians and 4 UK expatriates accused of plotting a coup. On 8 April, concerned with rumours of RUF movement towards the Western Area and a growing smuggling network, the NPRC banned movement of heavy vehicles on public roads between 19.30 and 07.00 every night. In Freetown, the ban stretched from 22.00 until dawn.

The Western Area was mostly quiet for the remainder of 1993 and throughout 1994.

c) Events in 1995

In January 1995, the NPRC contracted Ghurka Security Guards,[1446] a private military company, to run a training program for the SLA and provide security at Camp Charlie, a key SLA base near Mile 91 (Yoni Chiefdom, Tonkolili District).

In March 1995, the RUF extended their reach further west, with RUF movement through Moyamba District towards the towns of Songo and Mile 38 (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) putting pressure on the Western Area. In late April, RUF forces targeted locations on the high quality, asphalt highway leading through Waterloo (Waterloo RD) to Freetown. RUF forces gained a foothold in the bush areas of the southern half of Koya RD and managed to create a frontline

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[1442] Cleaning Saturday is still observed in Freetown to date.
[1443] AFP, 4 January 1993
[1444] AFP, 5 January 1993
[1445] Interpress, 7 January 1993
[1446] For background information see Cillers, J & Mason, P (eds), *Peace, Profit and Plunder: The Privatisation of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, pp 129-33: http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Books/PeaceProfitPlunder/Chap7.pdf [Link alive: 7 January 2004].

spanning Joe Town (Koya RD) to Pa-Loko (Waterloo RD). This had the effect of temporarily cutting off the main highway, or at least making it too dangerous for civilian traffic. Nevertheless, RUF forces were unable to penetrate or bypass Waterloo. RUF attacks on locations on the unsealed, southern route around the Peninsula to Freetown were also unsuccessful.

In February 1995, representatives of the NPRC Government held a meeting at the Waterloo Community Centre, requesting that the local community provide auxiliary support to the SLA in preventing the infiltration of RUF forces into the Western Area. Guinean forces moved from Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) to Bassa Town (Waterloo RD), less than a kilometre from Waterloo Town (Waterloo RD), establishing checkpoints and numerous mortar positions facing towards Newton (Koya RD). The Bassa Town Primary School was used as an ammunitions dump for the Guinean contingent. SLA forces armed with light weapons were based at nearby Lumpa (Waterloo RD), in addition to a heavily armed SLA Tiger Unit in the grounds of the Peninsular Secondary School in Waterloo. To prevent the RUF moving from Pa-Loko through Cole Town into Waterloo, SLA forces were also deployed at the Prince Alfred Road Bridge.

Between 21 and 30 March 1995, the SLA established checkpoints along the north-south Newton-Fogbo road at Newton–Fogbo Junction, Magbathti and Bath-Comp (all in Koya RD, on the border with Port Loko and Moyamba Districts). Fogbo (Koya RD) is near the mouth of the River Ribbi and is a trading centre for fish and salt. It is also a transit point for inland traffic along the river and to points further along Sierra Leone's coast, with a large wharf to handle the inland river traffic. Before 10 April, an unknown number of heavily armed SLA forces deployed on foot to Fogbo Wharf, escorted by a military helicopter. The SLA forces were equipped with a mobile anti-aircraft gun and numerous RPGs. They established a command point in the house of the then Town Chief and confiscated village livestock to use as food.

Newton is an agricultural centre on flat, fertile land between Songo (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) and Waterloo (Waterloo RD). The SLA forces stationed at Newton-Fogbo Junction patrolled the area between Newton (Koya RD) and Songo, mainly on a circular route running anti-clockwise from Newton, through Makoibundo, Mabange, Garahun, Kwama[1447] and Mile 6 (all Koya RD).

Between 8 and 11 April, RUF forces attacked villages in a triangular area sketched out by Songo to the east, Waterloo to the west and Fogbo to the south, establishing a base at Mashewureh (Koya RD), about 2 km north-west of Fogbo. There, they captured fleeing civilians, raped women and destroyed houses. RUF forces attacked and captured a number of villages adjacent to Songo, including Mokobech, Maferkalay and Mathonteh (all Koya RD). RUF forces attacked the village of Kwama to the north of the main Masiaka-Waterloo highway, killing 7 civilians and burning down an unknown number of houses. Shortly after this attack, SLA forces engaged a 58-strong RUF group on the main highway at Brima Junction (Koya RD).

RUF forces attacked Newton (Koya RD) on 9 April, moving from the villages of Ragberfi and Magbafti to the south and Makoibundu and Garahun to the east, but were repelled by SLA forces stationed in Newton. On 11 April, RUF forces attacked Fogbo, where they raped a young mother,

[1447] Also spelled Quama.

abducted an unknown number of civilians and stole civilians' livestock. The SLA forces deployed at Fogbo offered limited resistance; the RUF established a base and operated out from Fogbo and nearby Mashewureh.

Between 15 April and 20 April 1995, RUF forces advanced on Waterloo (Waterloo RD), moving through Nyamba Town[1448] and Joe Town (both Koya RD). They advanced to Pa-Loko, 10 km north of Waterloo, and to the Banga Farm palm oil plantation halfway between Newton and Waterloo. Between 21 and 22 April, RUF forces at Banga Farm came under heavy air attack from an Alfa Jet,[1449] which killed an unknown number of RUF members and civilians. On 21 April, RUF forces attacked Lumpa with RPG and AK-47s, but retreated to Pa-Loko following heavy mortar and other artillery fire by Guinean forces. During the RUF attack on Lumpa, civilians fleeing from Lumpa, Waterloo and surrounding areas were stopped by Nigerian forces operating a checkpoint at Rokel, about 4 km north-west of Waterloo on the main highway. At the checkpoint, Nigerian troops beat an unknown number of people with sticks and gun butts; saying "Let your brothers kill you", they turned the people back towards the Waterloo area, which was then under attack.

Over the weekend of 29-30 April, combined SLA and Guinean forces engaged the RUF in Pa-Loko and Joe Town, forcing their retreat by 3 May;[1450] shortly after, the corpses of RUF members could be seen floating in the Waterloo Creek. Between 3 and 7 May 1995, the NPRC Government contracted a South African based private military company called Executive Outcomes to replace the Ghurka Security Service.

In addition, around 600 demobilised Liberian militia, formerly from ULIMO-K, were concentrated in the area around Allen Town (Greater Freetown, Western Area), on the outskirts for Freetown's East end.[1451] RUF forces retreating from Pa-Loko moved towards Newton, ambushing civilian traffic on the Waterloo-Newton stretch of highway. A joint Executive Outcomes and ULIMO-K "Special Task Force" cleared this road of RUF activity.[1452]

Nigerian forces were stationed at Madina, along the peninsula road between Waterloo and Tombo (both Waterloo RD). On or around 2 May, an unknown number of RUF forces attacked Kerry Town (Waterloo RD), a village on the peninsula road. Civilians fled 2 km northwards from Kerry Town to Macdonald (Waterloo RD). Although no direct contact was made between SLA-aligned forces and the RUF, Guinean and SLA forces bombarded the area.[1453]

The beach village of Tombo, which had a large wharf, had increased in significance as a trading and passenger transit point following the RUF attacks on Waterloo and the main inland highway as well as the strengthened RUF control of Fogbo jetty and the northern chiefdoms of Moyamba District. At this time, the SLA and SSD were seeking out suspected RUF members and collaborators with increasing vigour, often beating and killing those they found. After 2 May, residents of Kerry Town

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[1448] Also called Yamba Town.
[1449] It is unclear whether the Alfa Jet was SLA or Nigerian.
[1450] AFP, 1 May 1995, 3 May 1995.
[1451] AP Worldstream, 11 May 1995.
[1452] It is not clear whether Executive Outcomes participated directly in hostilities.
[1453] Event reported by AFP, 2 May 1995



captured a suspected RUF member and took him to the SLA base at nearby Tombo. Following interrogation by the SLA commanding officer, SLA forces took the man onto the beach, shot him and cut off his head and genitals. Residents of Tombo and SLA members danced the severed head around the village. After failing to set fire to the corpse using petrol, two members of the SLA tied weights to it and dumped it out at sea. Also after 2 May, unknown perpetrators captured and killed two suspected members of the RUF by placing burning car tyres around their necks.

On 15 December in Tombo, an SSD Sergeant shot dead two teenage boys and severely injured one other. The boys were on a boat, the pilot of which had refused to pay the Le500 levied on all boats entering or exiting the wharf.

d) Events in 1996

In early January, Strasser accepted offers from both the Organisation of African Unity and the Government of Burkina Faso to mediate between the NRPC and the RUF. Soon after, Julius Maada-Bio, the then Deputy Head of State, overthrew Strasser, claiming that he was planning to cancel the elections planned for 26 February 1996. Maada-Bio continued a policy of dialogue with the RUF. A nighttime curfew was imposed in Freetown from 16 to 23 January. On 24 January, the NPRC and the RUF announced a ceasefire, which was quickly followed by a 2,000-strong civilian peace march through Freetown.[1454]

Doubts about the durability of the NPRC-RUF ceasefire, concerns about voter registration and whether the National Electoral Commission would be sufficiently well-resourced prompted calls for the postponement of the Presidential and Parliamentary elections scheduled for 26-28 February. Nevertheless, on 9 February, 5,000 protestors marched through Freetown in support of non-postponement. A day later, grenades were thrown into the house of the Electoral Commission Chief, who was an advocate for non-postponement.

The Electoral Commission organised a national consultative conference at Freetown's Bintumani Conference Centre on the theme "Peace Before Elections or Elections Before Peace?". On 12 February, the majority of delegates participating in the conference voted in favour of non-postponement, while all 14 delegates from the RUF voted for postponement. On the same day, 43 Paramount Chiefs from the Northern Province adopted an 8-point declaration also supporting postponement pending substantive peace talks between the NPRC and the RUF. The SLA were generally in support of "Peace Before Elections" while the majority of the civilian population supported "Elections Before Peace."

Between 23 and 25 February, NPRC and RUF delegations commenced peace talks in Abidjan, Ivory Coast, chaired by the Ivory Coast's Foreign Minister. The talks were adjourned in the late hours of 25 February, the eve of elections, with RUF delegates still calling for their postponement.

Polling in the elections began at 07.00 on 26 February. A curfew was imposed overnight into the second day of polling. Shortly before the polling centres closed, at around 19.00, machine gun fire was reported on Pademba Road and at the Wilberforce Barracks in Freetown. News sources report that a 40-strong military unit dressed in blue uniforms assaulted the home of Maada Bio using RPGs

[1454] Xinhua, 24 and 26 January 1996.

and heavy machine guns.[1455] A polling station supervisor was shot dead while returning to his home. Also on 26 February, the National Reconciliation Commission was inaugurated. Polling continued on 27 February. The results of the Presidential election were inconclusive and a run-off election was planned for 15 March, despite RUF declarations on 1 March in Abidjan that they would not accept the results.

During and after the elections at Wilberforce Barracks and other military barracks, people's thumbs were held out by SLA forces and beaten because they voted. Heavy gunfire broke out near Kabasa Lodge to discourage the voting and have it cancelled, which was unsuccessful. The run-off election on 17 March, in which Alhaji Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was elected President of the Republic of Sierra Leone,[1456] saw the cutting off of thumbs, marking the first amputations in the Western Area.

Meanwhile, Nigerian forces established a checkpoint at Jui Junction (Waterloo RD) in March 1996, since their commander was residing at the SSD quarters in the Jui SSD Barracks. At the same time, SLA forces established checkpoints between Waterloo and Freetown. Guinean forces established a base between Lumpa and Waterloo as a back up for SLA checkpoints mounted around that area. As in other places, both Nigerian ECOMOG and SLA forces harassed people passing through these checkpoints, inflicting punishment where people were unable to produce identity cards. Punishments included forcing civilians to clean up the checkpoint area and beating them with wooden sticks.

Peace talks continued in Abidjan. On 23 April, President Kabbah met with the RUF leader, continuing the peace negotiations commenced by the NPRC in late February 1996. Three joint working groups were established to draft the text of a peace agreement, hammer out details for encampment and disarmament and to work out the demobilisation process. On 15 May, talks yielded agreement on a ceasefire although by 19 May, the RUF leader was already calling for fresh elections during a visit to the Republic of Guinea. News reports indicate that removal from Sierra Leone of the South African private military company, Executive Outcomes,[1457] was an RUF precondition for a peace agreement.[1458]

On 3 July, around 20 senior SLA officers from the disbanded NPRC regime were removed from their positions in the SLA. On 10 July, the Sierra Leone Parliament re-activated portions of the Constitution that had been suspended by the NPRC in 1992. On 9 September, Government security agencies uncovered a coup plot against the SLPP government and arrested at least six SLA soldiers.

The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF leadership signed the Abidjan Peace Accord on 30 November 1996. This provided for the immediate and total cessation of hostilities and the creation of a Committee for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP). Demobilisation of RUF and other militia

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[1455] AFP, 28 January 1996.

[1456] President Kabbah was sworn in on 29 March 1996.

[1457] The NPRC had contracted Executive Outcomes on or around7 May 1995 following the extension of RUF military operations into the Western Area.

[1458] Before 11 September, Executive Outcomes was reportedly contracted by Sierra Leone Ore and Mining Co (Sieromco) to secure bauxite mined in Moyamba: Africa Energy & Mining, 11 September 1996. The removal of Executive Outcomes from the country became a specific term of the Abidjan Peace Accord, signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF on 30 November 1996.



would commence upon the identification of suitable sites and SLA units not required for the maintenance of general security would be returned to barracks. The CCP would examine options for restructuring the SLA and the SLP would be strengthened to ensure realistic police primacy. An international, neutral monitoring group would be deployed in the country and Executive Outcomes would withdraw within five weeks of the arrival of that group. By 30 May 1997, all other foreign troops would be removed from the country, consistent with the treaty obligations of Sierra Leone. The RUF would become a legitimate political movement and a blanket amnesty was granted to all RUF members in respect of actions taken in pursuance of the objectives of the RUF up until 30 November 1996. Provision was made to guarantee the civil rights of the RUF and for the creation of an independent National Commission on Human Rights to monitor and investigate alleged abuses.[1459]

e) Events in 1997

On 1 January, the Government commissioned into service a gunboat donated by the Chinese Government to combat poaching in Sierra Leone's territorial waters. The boat was able to carry around 200 security personnel and had been donated as part of a $20 million aid package agreed to by China in 1995.[1460] On 6 January, six SLA soldiers were sentenced to 10 years in jail for piracy, having raided a Spanish fishing vessel in 1996, attempting to abscond with $200,000 of fishing equipment.[1461]

On 30 January, Executive Outcomes completed a withdrawal that began with the signing of the Abidjan Peace Accord, removing around 300 personnel and heavy weaponry from Sierra Leone.[1462] Around a month later, Sierra Leone and Nigeria signed a new Status of Forces Agreement, redefining the legal status of Nigeria's forces in Sierra Leone and expanding Nigeria's training role from solely the SLA to other parts of the Sierra Leone armed forces.

In mid-March, there was a leadership struggle within the RUF, sparked by the arrest of the RUF leader in Nigeria on firearms charges. On 11 March, the Government of Nigeria confirmed the presence of the RUF leader in Nigeria, although they denied that he was under house arrest.[1463] They reversed this position a few days later, admitting that they had arrested him for the illegal possession of a firearm and detained him in a federal government guesthouse in Lagos.[1464] Spokespersons for the RUF leader insisted variously that he was in Nigeria on private business and also that he was discussing the Sierra Leone peace process with the Nigerian Government.[1465] Some days later, a senior RUF member declared himself to be the new interim leader, which was soon followed by the RUF taking into custody a number of its senior membership and the Sierra Leone Ambassador to

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1459 For the full text of the Abidjan Peace Accords, see http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierra_leone_10301996.html.
1460 AFP, 2 January 1997 and Xinhua 1 January 1997.
1461 AFP, 6 January 1997.
1462 AFP, 4 February 1997.
1463 Xinhua, 11 March 1997.
1464 He was later transferred to the Sheraton in Abuja.
1465 AFP, 18 March 1997.

the Republic of Guinea on 31 March[1466] and the issuance of a public statement that the RUF leadership had not been changed in any way.[1467]

On 7 April, 130 troops from Burkina Faso joined ECOMOG in Liberia. On 17 April, the UK agreed to train two battalions of SLA soldiers.[1468] On 28 April, it was announced that all civil militia groups in Sierra Leone were to be put under the command of the Nigerian-led ECOMOG force, reportedly to make them more effective and to facilitate their rapid demobilisation.[1469]

On 25 May 1997, elements of the SLA staged a coup d'etat and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC released over 700 inmates from Pademba Road Prison, including their leader, who was formally sworn in as Head of State on 17 June 1997.[1470] The AFRC immediately suspended the Constitution of Sierra Leone. President Kabbah escaped to the Republic of Guinea by helicopter.

The AFRC moved quickly to draw close to it popular personalities, political and civil society groups and organised labour groups. However, this failed to stave off a month-long strike staged by the Sierra Leone Labour Congress. Additionally, 50 members of the 80-seat Parliament met despite the suspension of Parliament, condemning the AFRC's action and demanded the immediate restoration of democratic order.

Immediately after the coup, the AFRC invited the RUF to share power. On 28 May, the RUF leader appeared on SLBS Radio, encouraging RUF solidarity with the AFRC. Part of his statement is worth quoting: "You will always get instructions from me through [the AFRC leader]. They are our brothers. Let no one fool you. You have to work with them to put the situation under control, especially in the western area. As you [sic] the field commander, instruct your other Commander ... to stand by for any reinforcement needed by [the AFRC leader] for any eventualities. We have to defend our sovereignty. You are to act on these orders immediately."[1471] On 30 May, the RUF declared their support for the AFRC on SLBS television and radio and on 1 June, the AFRC declared the RUF leader to be the Vice President of Sierra Leone.

In anticipation of a Nigerian led military intervention, the AFRC was quick to secure strategic locations around Freetown. This included Hastings, which was adjacent to the pre-coup Nigerian base at Kossoh Town[1472] and near an airfield. Accordingly, around 200 AFRC members entered Hastings and took over the Hastings Police Station on 26 May 1997. In the wake of the coup, there was a large build up of predominantly RUF forces in the Hastings area. Hastings, Waterloo and the SLA's Benguema Training Centre were concentration points for RUF combatants entering the Western Area. RUF forces entering the Western Area camped in public building in Waterloo (Waterloo RD), because the town residents refused to lodge them. In Waterloo, RUF forces

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1466 Including RUF delegates to the CCP, see AFP, 31 March 1997.
1467 AFP, 31 March 1997.
1468 APF, 17 April 1997.
1469 AFP, 28 April 1997.
1470 Xinhua, 17 June 1997,
1471 BBC Media Monitoring, 30 May 1997 transcribing SLBS, 28 May 1997.
1472 Nigerian forces, and then ECOMOG, were based at Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD) from 1994 until 1999.

occupied the Commercial Secondary School, the REC Secondary School and the SDA Primary School.

On 29 May, a further 500 RUF members arrived in Hastings, bringing the total to around 2,000, taking over the expansive Police Training School complex and the Kelly's Rural Vocational and Agricultural Secondary School. That same day, the leadership of this RUF group met with the Hastings village authorities and complained that they had not offered the RUF/AFRC their support. On 30 May, RUF forces set up five large checkpoints throughout Hastings, each operated by around 20 people. Civilians trying to leave the settlement had to pass through each checkpoint, where they were searched for food. The RUF forces also conducted house-to-house searches confiscating prepared foods from civilians and held an unknown number of civilians at the Police Training School, forcing them to collect wood and fresh water for the RUF commanders.

There were a number of random shootings and extensive looting in the Freetown metropolitan area around this time. For example, a large number of armed robberies were committed in Freetown on 25 May. The National Treasury building was completely gutted, most foreign exchange bureaus were looted and the Central Bank was damaged by fire as AFRC forces unsuccessfully sought access to the vaults. As the armed men roamed the city, attacking and looting residences, many people were raped and otherwise assaulted, including girls under the age of 14 and the wives and daughters of foreigners. The son of a prominent businessman was killed when he refused or was unable to meet the demands from armed men for money. At an AFRC press conference on 28 May 1997, this was explained as an accidental shooting.

The AFRC took a number of largely inadequate steps to contain the widespread looting of civilian and government premises. These including creating an anti-looting squad with orders to shoot looters dead on sight and ordering the return to base of all SLA members who did not have proper deployment orders. On 9 June, the AFRC gathered property they had recovered at the Cockerill Defence HQ and invited civilians to search through it for their belongings.[1473]

On 25 May, AFRC forces looted tourist locations in the coastal York Rural District along the coastal, peninsula road. AFRC members from the SLA Juba Barracks in west Freetown and the SLA Engineering Mechanical and Electrical Battalion near the Guma Reservoir arrived in Sussex village and looted the Florence Diving Centre and Hotel. AFRC forces also confiscated boats from civilians at the Goderich fishing village and used them to transport looted fridges, TVs, fans and furniture from the Africana Hotel Complex at Tokeh Beach back to Freetown. The RUF would later lodge at Tokeh and Mama beaches, stealing fishing hauls and other food items from civilians. On 27 May 1997, RUF forces also entered villages in the Mountain RD, establishing checkpoints in Regent and Bathurst. On 29 May, RUF forces mounted a checkpoint at St Michael's lodge near Lakka Beach, extorting money and food items from passers-by.

The period immediately after the coup is also marked by a large military build-up of foreign forces within Sierra Leone, including Nigerian, Guinean and Ghanaian forces. A small Ghanaian contingent stationed in Monrovia entered Sierra Leone to evacuate Ghanaian nationals, referred to as "Operation Ogyefo". On 27 May, two boatloads of Nigerian forces arrived in Freetown also from

[1473] AFP, 9 June 1997.



Monrovia, reinforcing the Nigerian base at Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD). Additional troops were airlifted to Freetown from James Spriggs Payne Airbase, just outside Monrovia, Liberia.[1474] This build-up placed huge pressure on the AFRC, resulting in intense diplomatic activity to prevent further escalation.

The armoured vehicles attached to the Nigerian Army 2nd Mechanised Battalion had been loaded onto the NSS Ambe and previously shipped to Liberia.[1475] On 1 June, orders were given to the 2nd Mechanised Battalion and 231 Tank Battalion to perform two simultaneous actions in Freetown. The first was to move from Kossoh (in Waterloo Town, Waterloo RD) and take control of Hastings Airfield and the nearby Police College (Waterloo RD). The second was to capture the Kissy Port Terminal in east Freetown, which would allow the NSS Ambe to dock and offload the amour and supplies required by the Nigerians. The codename for operation would be "Sandstorm." However, the AFRC intercepted the transmission of the operational orders, giving them ample prior warning of the Nigerian plans.

On 2 June, at 05.30, two ships[1476] anchored out at the Cape commenced mortaring the SLA Defence HQ at Cockerill in west Freetown. AFRC spokespersons were quick to dismiss this as a training exercise, but later announced that the Nigerian naval bombardment had caused between 40 and 100 deaths. However, the family of one person claimed by the AFRC to be a victim of the bombardment later revealed that he had in fact been ambushed and killed by unidentified armed men in another part of the city. His Peugeot car was stolen, his body dumped at the central mortuary and he was recorded as one of the victims of the day's fighting. Nigerian forces set up a command post at the Mammy Yoko hotel in Aberdeen,[1477] while US marines evacuated some 200 expatriates to the USS Kearsage,[1478] stationed in waters off Freetown.

Nigerian forces stationed at Mammy Yoko were isolated, overpowered and captured by the AFRC after running out of ammunition. On 4 June the AFRC released 300 Nigerian prisoners of war, after reportedly threatening to use them as human shields[1479] at the SLA Cockerill Defence HQ and Wilberforce in Freetown.[1480] RUF/AFRC forces were lodged in the Mammy Yoko complex until the ECOMOG intervention in Freetown in February 1998.

Meanwhile on 2 June, the Nigerian group moving towards Hastings (Waterloo RD) met with strong resistance from RUF/AFRC forces, who set up a defensive position at the Orogun Bridge and shelled Nigerian forces along their line of advance from Kossoh Town. With no mechanical support

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1474 AFP, 28 May 1997

1475 This account of the Nigerian assaults on Freetown on 2 June 1997 owes much to Brig. Gen. R.A. Adeshina.

1476 The NNS Ambe and NNS Ekun, joined on or around June 11 by NNS Aradu and NNS Ekpe: Xinhua, 11 June 1997.

1477 The seaside location of Freetown's main hotels. Mammy Yoko would later become the Freetown Headquarters of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).

1478 Marines on the USS Kearsage evacuated over 1,200 expatriates between 25 May and 2 June 1997 both from Aberdeen and a collection point on a beach to the south of Freetown. See US Defence Department Briefing, 3 June 1997.

1479 AFP, 3 June 1997 reports: "Sierra Leonean state radio repeatedly broadcast reports of 300 Nigerian soldiers being held as 'lucrative targets which would be targets for any possible Nigerian bombardment' of the city."

1480 AFP, 3-4 June 1997.

to clear debris dumped on the bridge by the AFRC, the Nigerian advance was delayed. Eventually, Nigerian forces moved further towards to Hastings, arriving at Allen Town. RUF/AFRC forces had taken positions in the surrounding hills and continued shelling. Without significant heavy weapons support and with ammunition supplies depleted, the Nigerians were unable to advance further. Nevertheless, it is probable that Nigerian advance units were briefly in possession of Hastings Airfield and with limited artillery support were able to damage RUF positions at the Police Training School and in the village itself. RUF casualties were evacuated to Benguema Training Centre.

In the evening of 2 June, the Nigerian advance was called off following successful negotiations between the AFRC, the ICRC and foreign governments. Nigerian forces retreated from Hastings Airfield and Allen Town, returning to their base at Kossoh Town. Nigerian forces continued to use Hastings Airfield to obtain supplies of medical provisions and food until 9 June, when the RUF took over the airfield completely. Between 3 and 9 June, Nigerian forces took full control of Lungi International Airport,[1481] although skirmishes with the RUF/AFRC continued throughout 1997. On 21 June, Ghanaian-led mediation between Nigeria and the RUF/AFRC led to the withdrawal of the four Nigerian warships from Sierra Leonean waters.[1482]

Throughout June 1997, RUF/AFRC forces began targeting students and prominent people in Freetown, including journalists, lawyers, human rights activists and others for their perceived lack of support for the RUF/AFRC coup. For example, RUF/AFRC forces beat up a prominent journalist when he told another journalist that he did not support the coup, as a result of which he went into hiding. Two students were arrested and tortured for failing to support the coup. One was held for over two months without charge, while the other was cut with a razor blade for possessing a National Union of Sierra Leone Students (NUSS) card. NUSS issued a statement condemning the coup and called for the reinstatement of the elected government. Another journalist was severely beaten by armed soldiers who accused him of hiding a government minister in his house. This journalist later fled the country after receiving death threats.

Also in June, AFRC officials arrested 15 people – seven civilians and eight senior SLA officers – on allegations that they were involved in a coup plot to reverse the coup. The detainees were ill-treated in custody and held for over six weeks without charge. The same month, the AFRC anti-looting squad caught two civilians who were alleged to have broken the curfew, cut off their genitals and limbs and left their torsos on the road as a warning to others.

July 1997 was marked by similar events. In addition, this was the month when the pro-democracy pirate radio station FM 98.1 came to the air, beginning broadcasting on 7 July 1997 from locations in the Republic of Guinea and possibly from within the Nigerian base at Lungi International Airport.[1483] Seven media workers and visitors were arrested at offices of a Freetown newspaper on the suspicion of being connected to the clandestine station. A woman, who was seven months pregnant at the time, was physically and possibly also sexually abused by her captors; she died three weeks later from a miscarriage and massive bleeding. The other detainees were released after over a

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[1481] AFP, 9 June 1997.

[1482] AFP, 21 June 1997.

[1483] On 18 May 1998, UK Foreign Secretary, Robin Cook, announced that the Foreign Office had provided £60,000 to support the clandestine radio station. BBC, 20 May 1998.

week in prison. In addition, RUF/AFRC forces shot a 22-year-old woman when she defended her right to listen to the radio station, which often broadcast anti-AFRC statements and speeches from the exiled President.

The advent of Radio Democracy (FM 98.1) also saw increased attacks on journalists in general. Journalists accused of writing subversive stories were arrested, as were vendors who sold the offending editions. Many journalists were arrested, including one who was arrested and detained for several days, accused of sending messages to the Sierra Leonean President in Guinea, while others fled the country. At the time, the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) issued a statement protesting against the arbitrary arrest and detention of journalists as four media workers were held for activities deemed subversive by the AFRC.

People were also killed during this period for other reasons, including for the purposes of taking their property. For example, a civilian was killed in Freetown when a member of the AFRC demanded he hand over an army belt that he was wearing. The RUF/AFRC forces killed another man when he told them that he had the right to move freely at night since there was no curfew in place. In addition, a trader was shot and killed near Kline Town on 6 July 1997 when a member of the RUF/AFRC opened fire at a person he was arguing with and missed. Youth in the area left the body in the road so that the AFRC Chairman could see for himself the work of "his boys".

In the Wellington area of Freetown, a businessman was robbed of thousands of dollars when armed men in uniform ransacked his home. He was then forced to watch as the RUF/AFRC forces raped his wife. In addition, a Ports Authority worker was arrested on 10 July 1997 on suspicion of being a supporter of the ousted government and was held for over four months at Pademba Road prison.

In the early evening of 12 July 1997, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Nigerian positions at Kossoh Town, but were overpowered and repelled by heavy gun and mortar blasts coupled with air support from an Alfa Jet. As a result of this attack, more civilians fled to the hilltop over looking Hastings and Kossoh Town. Around 450 houses were looted and partially destroyed by the contingent of the RUF based at Hastings village. Over 10,000 residents fled Hastings and sought refuge at nearby ECOMOG bases at Jui and Kossoh Town. Around Kossoh Town, ECOMOG expanded the territory under their control both to extend protection to these civilians and to block the main highway out of Freetown. Although most intense on 12 and 13 July 1997, skirmishes continued between ECOMOG and RUF/AFRC forces until 17 July 1997. ECOMOG's Kossoh Town and Jui positions were attacked again in August 1997. RUF forces moved from the Benguema Training Centre and attacked Jui, while others moved from Regent and attacked the ECOMOG base at Kossoh Town; both attacks were successfully repelled.

Between 17 and 18 July, a delegation representing the AFRC launched negotiations with the ECOWAS Committee of Five in Abidjan, resulting in a ceasefire. A second round of talks was held across 29-30 July 1997, after which the AFRC leader announced over SLBS that there would be a return to civilian rule in not less than four years.

The National Union of Sierra Leonean Students (NUSS) organised a pro-democracy demonstration on 18 August 1997. This met with an immediate and brutal response from the AFRC. Over 110

people, including 65 students, were arrested and detained for 12 days after the demonstration. Many of the detainees were seriously wounded with bayonets and cutlasses by the RUF/AFRC forces. In one case, the injuries were so serious that the prisons officials refused to accept the detainee for fear he might die. At least six female students were abducted and sexually abused by AFRC forces. One student was held captive for over a week and forced to go naked for the first two days of her captivity. In addition, the Secretary General of the Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU) was arrested and beaten up, because striking teachers declared solidarity with the pro-democracy cause.

A Freetown lawyer and human rights activist was detained by the RUF/AFRC forces, beaten, tortured and forced to make a statement on the government radio, calling on students to go home. He was held incommunicado for over two weeks. A prominent female leader was also arrested a few days after the demonstration. She fled the country following her release from detention. RUF/AFRC forces captured a teacher who had participated in the 18 August demonstration at the ECOMOG camp at Jui when she strayed on the main road. She was sexually assaulted by at least eight soldiers on the first day of her captivity then held at the Benguema Training Centre for over a week, during which she was repeatedly raped.

AFRC forces killed at least six peaceful demonstrators. Two of them were students, one of whom was shot. After he died, AFRC forces mutilated and ate his body in what was described as "ritual cannibalism", according to which RUF/AFRC forces allegedly believed that eating human flesh would give them "more courage".

Following the suppression of the demonstration, hostile activity against the press in particular was stepped up. Journalists who attempted to demonstrate were injured and detained at Cockerill Military headquarters. Two journalists required stitches after they were cut deeply on the back and head respectively with a razor blade. The men were held in a freight container at Cockerill for over 24 hours without food, water or medical attention. One SLAJ Executive member was arrested and also held at Cockerill in a freight container for several days for alleged participation in the pro-democracy protest. Armed forces attacked another SLAJ Executive member in his house, who subsequently escaped and fled to Guinea. Arrests and detentions of so-called Kabbah supporters continued. Three people - a teacher, a trader and a student - were all held without charge at the Pademba Road prison for several days on this basis.

The AFRC banned all movement of commercial and relief food to the estimated 30,000 displaced people sheltering at the Jui ECOMOG camp. The death rate from disease and malnutrition rose from 22 in June to 35 by the end of August 1997. AFRC forces laid anti-personnel landmines around the ECOMOG base at the Hastings-Grafton (Waterloo RD) road. In August 1997, disgruntled RUF members started taking private property from civilians passing through their checkpoint at the Boys' Society Compound in Regent (Mountain RD). They claimed that this was in lieu of the monthly salary that soldiers of the AFRC were receiving.

Calls for a trade embargo against the AFRC had been repeatedly made since June 1997. Nigerian forces had imposed a navel blockade on the Port of Freetown between 25 May and 21 June 1997, but were forced to back down by the AFRC's diplomatic overtures concerning return to civilian rule. On or around 2 August a Ukrainian vessel, the *Kapitan Modest Ivanov*, docked at Freetown Kissy



Terminal (Greater Freetown) carrying 6,800 tonnes of rice;[1484] a number of other ships carrying fuel also docked successfully in Freetown, including a Chinese vessel carrying 28,000 tones of fuel on 3 August[1485] and a Panamanian vessel on 1 and 10 August.[1486] This was unacceptable to the Nigerian Government, primarily since it took considerable pressure off the AFRC to continue immediate negotiations.

However, on 29 August, at its 20th Annual Summit, ECOWAS imposed sanctions on Sierra Leone, effective throughout all ECOWAS member States.[1487] The ECOWAS embargo included military hardware, supplies and spare parts, petroleum and petrol-derived products. An export ban was also imposed. A travel ban was imposed on AFRC members and their families, in addition to a freeze on their assets. Moreover, ECOWAS formally expanded the mandate of ECOMOG to include the use of force to impose sanctions against Sierra Leone.[1488] Effectively, this gave legal backing to a complete navel blockade of the Port of Freetown and the prohibition of air-freight traffic. From this date, the Nigerian forces present in Sierra Leone operated under an ECOMOG banner. On the same day that these sanctions were approved, ECOMOG artillery at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom, Port Loko District) fired on two cargo ships moored outside the territorial waters of Sierra Leone as a warning not to enter. Aside from shelling incoming ships, ECOMOG forces at Lungi enforced the sanctions by shelling the Kissy Terminal and the Government Wharf in east Freetown. East Freetown is very densely populated, particularly around the port area, where there are a large number of marketplaces and slum settlements.

On 3 September, ECOMOG gunners fired across the bows of the Greek-registered *Proteus* as it entered the Port of Freetown, forcing it to anchor out at sea. This artillery barrage reportedly killed 15 people at Dove Cote market.[1489] The AFRC claimed that 50 people were killed across the eastern Freetown ward of Mabella, although there was intense scepticism about this number. Following these deaths, AFRC forces added further security to the Kissy Terminal. In the wake of the shelling, at least two Nigerian nationals resident in Freetown were killed; their corpses were mutilated and put on display along the streets of Freetown on 9 September 1997. ECOMOG Alfa Jets air raided Kissy Terminal on 7 September, reportedly destroying 10 moored vessels.[1490] The *Proteus* eventually entered the port, prompting an ECOMOG air sortie, which partially destroyed the boat. On 13 September, SLBS reported that ECOMOG Alfa Jets had bombed the oil tanker *Norvisco*, killing two members of the crew.[1491] ECOMOG air activity was met with anti-aircraft gunfire from AFRC positions across Freetown.

1484 Lloyds List, 2 August 1997.
1485 AFP, 3 August 1997.
1486 AFP, 24 August 1997.
1487 Decision on sanctions against the junta in Sierra Leone, Twentieth Session of the Authority of Heads of State and Government, Abuja, 28-29 August 1997. Source: ECOWAS
1488 Ibid. "Article 7. The sub-regional forces shall employ all necessary means to impose the implementation of this decision. They shall monitor closely the coastal areas, land borders and airspace of the Republic of Sierra Leone, and shall inspect, guard and seize any ship, vehicle or aircraft violating the embargo imposed by this decision."
1489 AFP, 4 September 1997.
1490 Xinhua, 7 September 1997.
1491 BBC, 15 September 1997.

Over 200,000 people fled the area following this escalation of hostilities between ECOMOG and the AFRC, amid warnings from ECOMOG that the bombing would continue. The bombings also led some AFRC forces deployed in the port and other strategic locations to withdraw from their positions to safer locations the hilltops, leaving behind many arms and ammunition of various types. Later in the month, ECOMOG also announced that they would be patrolling the harbour area with gunboats.

On 8 October, the UN Security Council unanimously gave its support to the ECOWAS sanctions regime, extending its provisions to all UN member States.[1492] Between 8 and 14 October, ECOMOG Alfa Jets destroyed a number of structures in the SLA Cockerill Defence HQ and silenced SLBS TV and radio by destroying a transmitter located on Leicester Peak, in the peninsular area of Freetown.

Around 8 October, RUF forces attacked and occupied the villages of Bathurst, Mongema and Charlotte (all Mountain RD) along the mountain road between Freetown and Kossoh Town, where ECOMOG were stationed. Civilians were forced to prepare food for the RUF forces, who established checkpoints in all three villages. A few days later, RUF/AFRC forces attacked the Kossoh Town ECOMOG base from four flanks. The clandestine pro-democracy radio station, FM 98.1, announced the impending attack, giving civilians a chance to retreat to safer locations. Two ECOMOG soldiers were captured, killed and their corpses strung up on trees by the RUF/AFRC forces. ECOMOG forces went on the offensive in a bid to repel these forces and capture all the surrounding towns and villages, including Kossoh Town, Grafton, Jui and other nearby coastal villages. This expanded ECOMOG control over movement to and from Freetown. RUF/AFRC forces retreated east to Yams Farm (Waterloo RD). ECOMOG strengthened their position around Hastings, allowing civilians to return to the village.

AFRC actions against civil society continued throughout October. Armed AFRC members beat a university lecturer who was wrongly assumed to be a relative of the exiled President and looted his house. Another 18 men and two women were taken from a house and held in the container cell at Cockerill on suspicion of being informants for the exiled Government. AFRC forces shot a journalist when he went to investigate the AFRC-inspired burning of the Presidential residence, torturing him as he lay wounded on the ground. Another journalist was arrested and thrown in Pademba Road Prison for alleged anti-AFRC activities. His sister-in-law and her 13-year-old daughter were both raped by the AFRC forces during a raid of their residence. In addition, three journalists were arrested within 24 hours of each other, accused of subversive activities; all were beaten at time of their arrest and detained in Pademba Road Prison. No formal charges brought against them. On 15 October 1997, a newspaper editor was arrested and severely beaten by AFRC forces. According to the Committee to Protect Journalists, the journalist sustained rifle butt wounds on his head, was blindfolded and taken to the notorious Sahr Sandi Army Camp[1493] near Regent (Mountain RD) and detained incommunicado with hard labour.

The AFRC shut down one of Sierra Leone's most popular newspapers during October, raiding their offices, arresting the editor and detaining him in Pademba Road Prison. All the newspaper's

[1492] UNSC Resolution 1132 (1997).
[1493] Also known as "SS Camp".

equipment and vehicles were seized. The AFRC spokesman told journalists that the paper had been banned. The intimidation and harassment of journalists continued into November 1997, during which the Committee to Protect Journalists posted a special action alert on the Internet warning that the AFRC was circulating a "wanted" list of 13 journalists and called on all to condemn the flagrant attacks on press freedom by the AFRC. Nevertheless, the editor of another well-known Freetown newspaper was arrested on 21 November, tortured and left at the SLP Criminal Investigation Division cells for subversive activities. Many other editors and publishers were also arrested and detained for a number of days for subversive activities. This clampdown on journalists continued until December, at which time some journalists went into hiding after receiving death threats from the AFRC.

Civilians fleeing ECOMOG shelling in Kissy and the east end were forced to use the poor quality peninsular road leading through Tombo to Waterloo. This movement resulted in a major road traffic accident at a place called Comfort Bridge near York, during which 67 people were killed. RUF/AFRC movement to the inland provinces was also limited to this route. Checkpoints and security points at major locations like Tombo and St Michaels Lodge on the route were maintained by the RUF/AFRC.

The continuous shelling of strategic locations in Freetown, the effects of the embargo and the AFRC's inability to dislodge ECOMOG from Kossoh and Jui prompted them to continue the negotiations started early in the year. ECOWAS mediators, led by the then Nigerian Foreign Minister, hammered out a peace plan. This led to a ceasefire on 21 October 1997, followed on 23 October by the signing of the Economic Community of West African States six-month peace plan for Sierra Leone (23 October 1997-22 April 1998).[1494] The central provisions of this agreement were the maintenance of a ceasefire and the return of the elected Government by 22 April 1998. Other provisions included the hammering out of nationwide demobilisation and disarmament plans across December 1997 and the return of internally displaced persons to their places of habitual residence. ECOMOG and UN observers would supervise the implementation process, effectively requiring the deployment of ECOMOG forces throughout Sierra Leone.

Throughout December, numerous of violations of the sprit and letter of the ceasefire occurred across Sierra Leone. The CDF High Command implemented "Operation Black December", during which Kamajor units in Boama Chiefdom (Bo District) cut off all the highways and roads leading to the villages, restricting the movement of RUF/AFRC forces. Kamajors from Gorama Mende (Kenema District) also took part, cutting off stretches of the Kono-Makeni highway. In Pujehun Distric, Kamajors engaged RUF/AFRC forces around Pujehun Town (Kpanga Kagonde Chiefdom, Pujehun District) and in areas of Gbondapi (Panga Kabone Chiefdom, Pujehun District). In Bombali District, ECOMOG jets bombed positions outside of Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District), claiming that the ARFC was constructing an asphalt runway to allow arms supplies to enter the country more freely in violation of ECOWAS and UN sanctions. RUF/AFRC forces conducted violent food-finding missions in Koinadugu District, attacking civilians and stealing from residences in the towns of Mansofenia and Kurobonla (Neya Chiefdom, Koinadugu District).

[1494] Full text available at http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierra_leone_09231997.html.



On 21 December, the exiled President flew from Conakry to the ECOMOG base at Freetown International Airport to spur on the implementation of the peace process.

f) Events in 1998

Despite the Conakry Accord, RUF/AFRC attacks on ECOMOG and their harassment of civilians, particularly businessmen and other high profile people, became frequent in the city and its environs. This instability in the city and the country at large provoked the February 1998 military intervention by the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces.

ECOMOG began preparations for an invasion of Freetown in mid-January, reinforcing the ECOMOG field artillery and concentrating its forces at Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD), in addition to flying training sorties over selected positions in Freetown. On 5 February, operational orders were given to ECOMOG to break out of Kossoh Town and take control of Freetown. Three major movements were planned. The Nigerian 2nd Mechanised Battalion was to move along the main Freetown highway to capture Freetown. Protecting its flank, the Nigerian 5th Mechanised Battalion was to advance towards Freetown through Upper Allen Town, Calaba Town and Portee (Greater Freetown) along the old Freetown highway, which eventually joins the main Freetown highway through a series of junctions at Kissy. The Nigerian 5th Mechanised Battalion would disperse within Freetown and capture strategic governmental and security institutions. The Nigerian 231st Tank Battalion was ordered to seize Waterloo and the Benguema Training Centre (both in Waterloo RD), heading away from Freetown.[1495]

Shortly before dawn on 6 February, the ECOMOG intervention began on three fronts. One front moved from Jui (Waterloo RD) towards Freetown; a second front moved from Hastings Airfield towards Waterloo. ECOMOG also opened a third front and moved from Kossoh Town through the hills to Regent (Mountain RD) and down into the Mount Aureol (Mountain RD) and Hill Station (Greater Freetown) entrances to metropolitan Freetown.

RUF/AFRC forces had blocked the road across Orogun Bridge with a large container, delaying the ECOMOG advance. ECOMOG fought several battles along the route into Freetown. At Portee Junction, a fierce battle was fought, forcing the RUF/AFRC to retreat towards the west end of Freetown and giving ECOMOG forces the upper hand to flush them out of Freetown on to the villages via the peninsular, the only safe exit from the city. There is very little detailed information about the conduct of the battle within the Freetown metropolitan area. It is clear that the RUF/AFRC put up stern resistance at the Kissy Terminal and used gunboats to fire on some ECOMOG advance units that reached the Connaught and Wharf areas of central Freetown. Eventually retreating from Kissy Terminal, RUF/AFRC forces booby-trapped and vandalised a considerable amount of the harbour machinery and equipment.[1496]

The ECOMOG group moving from Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD) into Freetown along the mountain road encountered landmines between Mortema and Charlotte village (both Mountain RD). RUF/AFRC forces also placed a large cargo container filled with sand across the single

[1495] This account of the advance plans is taken mainly from Adeshina, pp.22 ff.

[1496] The vandalism was comprehensive enough to delay the offloading of nearly 800 tons of humanitarian aid from a UN ship on 22 February 1998: AFP, 22 February 1998.



carriageway road between Mangaba and Mortema village (both Mountain RD). ECOMOG forces assisted by local youths managed to dislodge this obstacle and entered Regent (Mountain RD) by midday on 6 February, securing the village. RUF forces stationed at Regent and Bathurst (both Mountain RD) withdrew with their possessions along the route from Regent through Gloucester into Freetown. AFRC forces positioned mortars at Regent and shelled ECOMOG along the mountain road.

Between 10 and 12 February, ECOMOG forces advanced into Freetown along two routes into the town: through the Mount Aureol (Mountain RD) campus of Fourah Bay College and through Hill Station (Greater Freetown). Mount Aureol is the highest point in Freetown and overlooks the entire Kissy area and all approach roads into Freetown from Kossoh Town. In addition, the road from Mount Aureol into Freetown leads directly to the civic quarter of Freetown. The Hill Station route leads directly to the SLA Wilberforce Barracks and into the west Freetown areas of Lumley and Aberdeen (Greater Freetown). Control of this road isolates the TV and radio transmitter at Leicester Peak (Mountain RD) and Freetown's second hospital.

Other auxiliary forces also fought alongside with the ECOMOG troops, namely the Organised Body of Hunters Society (OBHS) in addition to Kamajors and Gbethis from the CDF. These auxiliary troops were responsible for carrying ammunition for the ECOMOG forces and some few loyal[1497] SLA forces fighting alongside ECOMOG;[1498] they were also responsible for burying RUF/AFRC fatalities and civilians who were killed during the offensive. CDF forces advancing with ECOMOG through the Mountain RD villages of Charlotte, Bathurst and Regent were used to screen the many civilians who used bush tracks to flee the fighting on the main highway. The tactic was useful in preventing the RUF infiltration of territory only lightly occupied by ECOMOG throughout the main assault.

The ECOMOG advance westward into Freetown along the main highway left those RUF/AFRC forces stationed in Freetown only one option for retreat: east along the poor quality peninsula road. By 8 February, RUF/AFRC forces retreating along this route using hundreds of commandeered utility vans and jeeps started arriving at Tombo (Waterloo RD). RUF/AFRC forces threatened to kill every resident of Tombo (Waterloo RD) unless the owners of fishing boats gave them passage to Fogbo Jetty (Koya RD). The RUF/AFRC forces abandoned many of their vehicles at Tombo (Waterloo RD). Most were stripped down or burned, but vehicles in working order were taken to Waterloo between February and March of 1998 by the ECOMOG forces and parked in front of the Rural Education Committee School near the Post Office. A large cache of weapons abandoned by retreating RUF/AFRC forces was handed over to ECOMOG by the Tombo village (Waterloo RD) authorities. An RUF member who had failed to escape to Fogbo (Koya RD) shot dead a popular young man who had arranged the weapons collection.

The ECOMOG advance westward into Waterloo from Hastings (both Waterloo RD) along the main highway quickly dislodged the RUF/AFRC forces based at Yams Farm (Waterloo RD) and

[1497] Namely, those SLA forces that did not change their allegiance to the leaders of the AFRC and instead retained allegiance to President Kabbah.

[1498] ECOMOG reported that 84 "loyal" SLA soldiers had surrendered to them in early February, but it is not clear whether ECOMOG had under its command any full units of the SLA that were unaffiliated with the AFRC.



pursued them to Waterloo. These ECOMOG forces captured Waterloo without any resistance on 6 February 1998. All the villages on ECOMOG's route to Waterloo, including Lower Allen Town, Rokel and Devil Hole (all Waterloo RD), were cleared of RUF/AFRC forces and lightly occupied. Residents of these villages fled towards Waterloo and onwards towards Newton (Koya RD) as ECOMOG advanced. Civil militia in Waterloo assisted ECOMOG in identifying the key locations in the town. During the shelling of Waterloo, ECOMOG levelled a two-story house.

At Waterloo, ECOMOG mounted a checkpoint at the Post Office, ordering local youths to dig trenches for them. ECOMOG forces shot a man with learning difficulties who had failed to identify himself promptly and executed a man alleged by villagers of Matanky (Waterloo RD) to be an RUF/AFRC collaborator. Throughout Waterloo and Lumpa, ECOMOG conducted house-to-house searches for RUF/AFRC members. Civilians were instructed to clear the streets and remain in their residences while ECOMOG searched for armaments.

In the afternoon of the ECOMOG capture of Waterloo, an Alpha Jet flew over the village and the camp. The ECOMOG forces then moved to Lumpa, where they established a base and a checkpoint near the Banga Farm palm oil plantation (straddling Waterloo and Koya RDs). ECOMOG forces executed a young man and maltreated an unknown number of others before advancing to Campbell Town (Waterloo RD), where they attacked the remnants of the RUF/AFRC forces, killing six. Three days after the capture of Waterloo, several unarmed SSD officers surrendered to ECOMOG at their Post Office checkpoint. Some were sent to Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD) while others remained at Waterloo.

Thousands of civilians, together with some of the RUF/AFRC forces based at the Benguema Training Centre, Waterloo, Lumpa and satellite villages moved towards the Waterloo Displaced Camp, east of Waterloo (all Waterloo RD). The RUF/AFRC forces stationed at the Benguema Training Centre offered resistance to ECOMOG until they were overrun on 9 February.[1499]

Over the next few days, the RUF/AFRC forces moved from the Waterloo Displaced Camp and counter-attacked the ECOMOG troops based at Lumpa. This led to the renewed shelling of the camp by ECOMOG and a mass movement of civilians and RUF/AFRC forces towards the main highway at Newton (Koya RD), where the other RUF/AFRC forces from Fogbo Jetty (Koya RD) joined them. This group of RUF/AFRC forces subsequently moved inland to Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) along the main highway. They took with them a large number of abducted civilians, allegedly to prevent the ECOMOG Alpha Jet from bombing them on their way to Masiaka.

By 12 February, ECOMOG had control over the majority of the Freetown metropolitan area and had commenced intense "mopping-up" operations. Between 12 and 24 February a curfew was imposed throughout areas occupied by ECOMOG. They established checkpoints all over the city and in villages through the York and Mountain RDs. At locations in York RD, a civil militia was trained by ECOMOG to maintain these checkpoints and assist them in identifying suspected RUF/AFRC members and collaborators. Other militia groups were trained by ECOMOG at

[1499] ECOMOG claimed they had captured Benguema Training Centre (Waterloo RD) on 9 February: AFP, 9 February 1998.



Hamilton and Lakka (both York RD). The OBHS, who were armed, also assisted ECOMOG forces with screening and operating checkpoints. During this period, ECOMOG forces killed a lot of civilians without any form of trial[1500] and "cordon and search" operations were conducted as a mechanism for trapping suspected RUF/AFRC members and sympathisers.

Between 16 February and 3 March, ECOMOG mounted checkpoints at Goderich, Lakka, Hamilton, Sussex, Bawbaw, Tokeh, York, Kissy Town (all York RD), Tombo, Russell and Madina (all Waterloo RD). The Nigerian 232nd Tank Battalion operated the checkpoint at Long Beach in Hamilton. ECOMOG forces based at Lakka imposed a fish tax on the villagers: every fishing day, a large basket was passed around among the fishers, into which everyone was supposed to contribute a minimum of four fish to feed the Nigerian contingent. These fish were demanded as a contribution to ECOMOG's daily food ration, although sometimes they were sold and the ECOMOG forces kept the money.

Between Freetown and Newton (Koya RD), ECOMOG erected several checkpoints. At each of these checkpoints, ECOMOG forces intimidated civilians, took their money and beat and killed people, among other things. For example, people were killed for failing to produce an identity card or for being suspected of being a relative of any member of the AFRC, RUF or SLA forces.

While Nigerian ECOMOG forces were generally welcomed, there were many instances of apparently arbitrary punishment and cruel treatment of civilians. In March 1998, ECOMOG soldiers from the Nigerian 192nd Battalion were stationed at York village (York RD). On finding a vehicle burned-out by retreating RUF/AFRC forces, the ECOMOG platoon commander demanded that all the men of the village gather at the Hospital compound so they could identify who was responsible for the burning. The village elders were made to sit on the floor, which symbolically is extremely demeaning. The gathered men were divided into groups according to their age and interrogated by ECOMOG forces. When they failed to obtain information about the vehicle, ECOMOG forces beat the gathered men with doubled-up length of electrical cable. Starting with the Head Man and moving from eldest to youngest, ECOMOG forces hit each man at least 12 times before deciding that three young men had the information they sought. These three youths were left out in the sun for a day and then beaten with sticks.

After 2 March, ECOMOG forces began running night and day patrols between the villages of Sussex and Baw-Baw (both York RD). Local youths were trained to run patrols between Baw-Baw and Number Two River (York RD).

In early March 1998, there was also an influx of Kamajors into York RD from Kagboro Chiefdom (Moyamba District), establishing bases in and around Tokeh (York RD). Between 8 and 10 March, a Kamajor commander order a local youth group to mount a checkpoint at the Number Two River Road Junction (York RD); ECOMOG later ordered them to dismantle the checkpoint. In Tombo (Waterloo RD), Kamajors took up residence in the village, claiming to be providing security. The Kamajors took property from the houses of two suspected RUF/AFRC collaborators and ill-treated a number of residents who complained. Following requests from the village authorities, ECOMOG

ordered the departure of all Kamajors from the Tombo area. Kamajors also deployed to provide security in Regent and Bathurst villages (Mountain RD).

On 17 February, a supervisory task force was set-up to provide joint leadership between ECOMOG and the exiled Government during the immediate post-intervention period. The task force met with representatives of key civil society groups and governmental institutions. British and Nigerian military vessels docked in water off Freetown on 1 March 1998 to provide technical assistance on a range of unspecified matters.[1501] On 10 March, the President returned to Freetown, which was followed a few days later by the UN Security Council lifting the ban on fuel imports to Sierra Leone and deciding to review other sanctions provisions.[1502] Nevertheless, the prohibition on the importation of arms remained in force.

Successful ECOMOG interventions in Bo (Kakua Chiefdom, Bo District) and Kenema (Nongowa Chiefdom, Kenema District) took place between 12 and 17 February, coinciding with operations in the Western Area. Following their successful offensives against RUF/AFRC forces in the Western Area and Southern Province, ECOMOG focussed on operations in the Northern and Eastern provinces of Sierra Leone. In brief, between 1 March 1998 and 5 March, ECOMOG forces took control of Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District), Makeni (Makari Gbanti Chiefdom, Bombali District) and Magburaka (Kholifa Rowalla Chiefdom, Tonkolili District) and locations in Koinadugu District thereafter. ECOMOG moved into Kono District, taking full control of Koidu (Gbense Chiefdom, Kono District) in early April 1998. ECOMOG forces had also moved as far east as Daru (Jawie Chiefdom, Kailahun District) by April 1998.

On 17 April, the UN Security Council authorised the deployment of a 10-strong team of military and security observers to Sierra Leone, who arrived in May 1998.[1503] The UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), comprising around 70 military observers and accompanying logistic support, was established on 13 July 1998.[1504]

Immediately after the reinstatement of the President, criminal investigations into hundreds of alleged RUF/AFRC collaborators and surrendered SLA soldiers detained at the Pademba Road Prison commenced, ending in a wave of treason trials. Between 21 March and 14 April 1998, 35 civilians who were alleged members of the AFRC regime were charged in three separate trials with treason, a crime punishable by death in Sierra Leone. On 24 August, all 35 were found guilty by jury trial and the court handed down sentences of death to 16 of these 35. All appealed the death sentence and were still in prison awaiting their appeals when the RUF invaded Freetown in early January 1999; they were later pardoned as part of the Lomé Peace Agreement. On 24 July 1998, 34 members of the SLA accused of carrying out the AFRC coup faced a court martial. On 12 October, all were found guilty of treason by a military court and 24 were executed by firing squad on 19 October at the SLA Juba Barracks in west Freetown.[1505] The remaining 10 had their sentences commuted to

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[1501] AP, 1 March 1998.

[1502] UN Security Council Resolution 1156 (1998), 15 March 1998.

[1503] UN Security Council Resolution 1162 (1998), 17 April 1998.

[1504] UN Security Council Resolution 1181 (1998), 13 July 1998.

[1505] Those sentenced to death in the court martial had submitted a complaint to the Committee on Human Rights under the procedure in the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,

long prison terms. Some 300 SLA members under investigation for their suspected involvement with the AFRC were released from government custody on or around 3 September. A final set of treason charges were brought against 22 civilians on 14 December.

The RUF leader was repatriated to Sierra Leone from Nigeria on 25 July and charged with treason on 4 September. Despite efforts to locate counsel for him, he represented himself throughout the trial, which began on 4 October. A jury found him guilty and the court sentenced him to death on 23 October; the RUF leader appealed the sentence and remained in custody until he was pardoned as part of the Lomé Peace Agreement. In September, ECOMOG formally moved its headquarters from Monrovia, Liberia to Freetown.

On 21 December 1998, RUF/AFRC forces attacked Songo and Six-Mile (Koya RD) and, by the early afternoon, had arrived at Newton Village (Koya RD), resulting in a mass movement of civilians to Waterloo (Waterloo RD). The swell of people into Waterloo caused widespread panic-buying of food and palm wine. Later that same day, residents of Waterloo heard small arms fire coming from Banga Farm, on the main highway between Waterloo and Newton. Late that night, ECOMOG forces based at the Waterloo Post Office and Peninsular Secondary School launched several mortars towards Banga Farm, followed by an aerial bombardment by the Alpha Jet at the same location.

Heavily armed RUF/AFRC forces attacked Waterloo (Waterloo RD) before dawn on 22 December 1998. During this attack, they killed between 15 and 19 civilians, looted extensively and burnt down at least 53 houses. AFRC forces identified as being comprised predominantly of ex-SLA members marched down Calmont Road with powerful flashlights, targeting the houses of prominent people in Waterloo. A large RUF Small Boy Unit accompanied them, sprinkling petrol on doorframes and around houses. The AFRC forces ignited the petrol with gunfire, setting fire the to the houses. A Guinean ECOMOG unit entered Waterloo and commenced shelling the RUF/AFRC forces from an armoured car, resulting in their onwards advance to the Benguema Training Centre (Waterloo RD). The RUF/AFRC forces captured a large cache of arms and ammunition before destroying the base's main ammunition dump. A prominent AFRC commander was killed in the explosion and buried nearby Koba, a few kilometres south of Benguema.

RUF/AFRC forces continued advancing southward along the peninsular road, moving from the Benguema Training Centre through Koba, During Town, Boyah Village and Russell (all Waterloo RD). At Russell, RUF/AFRC forces dislodged the small ECOMOG contingent stationed there. Not long after midnight on 24 December, RUF/AFRC forces entered Tombo through Worlai Village (both Waterloo RD), to the immediate east of Tombo. The day before, the village authorities of Tombo had received warning of the coming RUF/AFRC attack from an SLA soldier who escaped the attack on Benguema Training Centre.

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alleging that their right to appeal, guaranteed in article 14(5), had been violated: Communication Nos. 839/1998 & 840/1998 & 841/1998. Despite the Committee requesting a stay of execution, they were executed a week after they had lodged their complaint. The Committee subsequently found that their rights had in fact been violated, as there was no right of appeal from a court martial: *Anthony B Mansaraj et al; Mr Gborie Tamba et al; Mr Abdul Karim Sesay et al v Sierra Leone*, decision of 16 July 2001.

At that time, the RUF were accompanied by a large number of civilians, some carrying ammunition and other supplies and some banging drums and chanting about celebrating Ramadan in Tombo (Waterloo RD). To help identify each other in night attacks, RUF/AFRC forces stuck the transparent cellophane wrapping from popular boiled sweets called "Diamonds" over their torch lenses, giving the beams a red tint. The Nigerian ECOMOG contingent was outnumbered and immediately retreated towards Freetown along the peninsula road through Kassi to Kissy Town (Waterloo RD), together with thousands of civilians. Many civilians escaped by boats to Shenge (Kagboro Chiefdom, Moyamba District), Banana Island[1506] and villages inland along the Ribbi River, while others moved to Lakka Village (York RD). RUF/AFRC forces left Tombo, having taken the contents of many abandoned homes, and burned down at least 20 others without attempting to occupy the township.

Between 22 and 25 December 1998, Nigerian ECOMOG reinforced Waterloo. On 24 December, Hastings was reinforced by around 500 Kamajors, who immediately imposed a curfew between the hours of 18.00 and 07.00. Two days later, Kamajor members arrested two suspected RUF/AFRC collaborators, who were tied up, their heads forced into a large white plastic bowl and their throats cut; civilians were forced to bury the corpses. Kamajors also killed four other civilians at Jui Junction, near Kossoh Town (Waterloo RD), leaving a severed head on a pole at their checkpoint.

Waterloo Town was bombarded by ECOMOG on 26 December 1998, causing further civilian flight from the town. A Guinean ECOMOG contingent from Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) reinforced ECOMOG stationed at Waterloo (Waterloo RD) and set up a base at the SDA School compound, moving later to the PSS School compound. Guinean ECOMOG provided limited security around the market area of Waterloo, where traders remained at work until the RUF/AFRC raided Lumpa (Waterloo RD). Members of the Guinean ECOMOG contingent mistakenly killed eight traders who were running towards the PSS Compound to escape an RUF/AFRC ambush at Lumpa. The RUF/AFRC occupied Lumpa and other parts of Waterloo, effectively dividing the town in two. RUF/AFRC forces stole medical supplies from the Waterloo Health Centre. The RUF/AFRC stayed in Lumpa throughout January, forcing civilians to perform domestic services for them; they would not allow civilians to close their doors and performed frequent house-to-house searches for food. The RUF commanding officer in Lumpa personally executed at least three civilians, dumping the body of one victim in a pit latrine and cutting out and eating the heart of another. At this time, the RUF and AFRC forces were not lodging together.

Between 25 and 28 December, RUF/AFRC advance units continued from Tombo around the peninsula towards Freetown. The villages of Black Johnson and Big Water (both York RD), on the approach road to York, were infiltrated by small numbers of RUF/AFRC. RUF/AFRC forces exchanged heavy machine gun fire with Nigerian ECOMOG forces at the York Grass Field area of York town. ECOMOG gunners killed three members of the RUF/AFRC. Following these attacks around the peninsula road, Nigerian ECOMOG redeployed at Tombo (Waterloo RD) in greater force. A Kamajor detachment was sent to guard the bridge at MacDonald (Waterloo RD). Nigerian ECOMOG imposed a strict security regime around the York Town area, organising local youth into groups to accompany them on a continuous day-and-night patrol routine. ECOMOG also began collecting and, in collaboration with locals, screening for RUF/AFRC infiltrators displaced by the

[1506] Also called Plantain Island.

fighting on the peninsular at locations. These screening centres included the Cotton Club and St. Michaels Lodge in Lakka and the Hamilton Community Centre (all York RD). After 6 January, villagers in Tombo burnt alive an RUF/AFRC member at the Tombo Grass Field area. An unknown number of other suspected RUF/AFRC members were killed with bladed weapons by the Tombo youth.

g) Events in 1999

Between 30 December and 5 January 1999, RUF/AFRC forces staged attacks on Hastings and Kossoh Town (both Waterloo RD). Using bush tracks through the hills from Waterloo (Waterloo RD), RUF/AFRC forces staged major attacks on Hastings, Allen Town and Jui on 5 January. They encountered sporadic resistance from ECOMOG forces who, considerably reduced in number, progressively retreated towards Freetown. On 4 and 5 January, RUF/AFRC forces, hardware and vehicles were moving continuously through Newtown and Four Mile (Koya RD) towards Waterloo, gathering in the Ibo Town area (Waterloo RD).

Just after midnight on 6 January, RUF/AFRC forces began their assault on Freetown. An advance RUF/AFRC unit, numbering around 300, moved quickly to engage ECOMOG at their Kissy Roundabout security point. Meanwhile, RUF/AFRC forces in Waterloo started round the clock attacks on the Guinean ECOMOG contingent at PSS in Waterloo. On 9 January, the RUF/AFRC granted the Guineans safe passage from the town only in return for their remaining stock of ammunition.[1507] From Ibo Town, the RUF also began sending out units to Yams Farm (Waterloo RD), from where throughout the night they laid down heavy machine gun fire on ECOMOG positions at Hastings. Civilians were often used in these attacks.

The advancing RUF/AFRC forces were reinforced by thousands of others, who entered the Wellington and Calaba Town areas of eastern Freetown. On 7 January, RUF/AFRC forces occupied a petrol station near Kissy Road roundabout and started burning every solid structure in its immediate vicinity. The exact chronology of the movement of RUF/AFRC forces through east Freetown is not completely clear. One of their first successes, on either 6 or 7 January, was a raid on Pademba Road Prison, releasing many RUF/AFRC members captured by ECOMOG and pro-government forces over the previous year. Pademba Road Prison is to the west of central Freetown in Brookfields at the end of Pademba Road, which is also an access route through to the New England and Wilberforce areas of western Freetown. That RUF/AFRC forces made it to Pademba Road so quickly suggests that they had free movement through both the centre of Freetown, through the "PZ" junction and also through the Mountain Cut route from Kissy through to New England.

However, the brunt of the RUF/AFRC assault was in east Freetown. RUF/AFRC forces quickly occupied the Clay Factory IDP camp in Kissy, killing at least 20 people. ECOMOG commenced shelling into the hills behind the Clay Factory. By the early afternoon of 6 January, RUF/AFRC forces had occupied the main Kissy Terminal, killing eight ECOMOG soldiers in the Terminal's security office. The Kissy Police Station and the Kissy Mental Hospital were set on fire and a number of churches including the Holy Trinity and the Trascott Church were burned down.

[1507] The Guineans actually handed the RUF/AFRC a haul of blank ammunition.

Behind their line of advance, RUF forces made every civilian in the Eastern part of Freetown hoist white pieces of cloth in front of their houses and tie white ribbons on their heads and wrists to signify their support for peace. Each night, civilians were forced to burn old tyres in order to light up the city and to sing peace songs. Some beat drums while others clapped their hands or banged empty tins together. Some were even forced to dance, especially old people. Those who failed to obey these orders were shot and killed or had their houses set on fire; many civilians were burnt alive in their houses.

At irregular intervals, ECOMOG Alpha Jets bombed various locations in Freetown including "PZ", a busy business district centre, killing an unknown number of civilians who had been forced onto the streets by the RUF/AFRC.

Between 8 and 9 January 1999, the RUF/AFRC forces advanced into the west end of Freetown and were prevented from crossing the Congo Cross Road Bridge by the combined forces of ECOMOG, "loyal" SLA and CDF. The Congo Cross Road Bridge carries a dual carriageway (dubbed "main motor road") from Brookfields through to Congo Cross, Wilkinson Road, Murray Town, Lumley and Juba. It is the only way of quickly moving a large force from central to western Freetown; alternative routes into west Freetown are longer and far easier to secure. One route moves from New England to Hill Station up a steep winding mountain road in full sight of ECOMOG's main base at Wilberforce. Other routes to Congo Cross move from King Harmon Road up the winding Old Railway Line through Tembah Town and also through Congo Town along a poor quality road and a decrepit old bailey bridge. Combined with artillery from Wilberforce and the defence of the Hill Station route into west Freetown, RUF/AFRC movement westwards was halted at Congo Cross Road Bridge, from where the RUF/AFRC forces launched missiles into Congo Cross.

ECOMOG forces fought with RUF/AFRC forces for control of a key roundabout called Eastern Police between 8 and 9 January. By 10 January, ECOMOG were putting pressure RUF/AFRC forces stationed at Waterloo Town. By 11 January, the RUF/AFRC had begun their retreat east from the civic centre of Freetown, burning down the Law Courts, the telephone exchange and many government buildings.

Behind ECOMOG lines, a curfew was imposed from 15.00 to 06.00. Ahead of ECOMOG lines, a 24-hour curfew was then announced by the Government on Radio Democracy 98.1 FM. Anyone caught violating the curfew would be perceived as hostile and would be executed on the spot by the ECOMOG forces. By 13 January, ECOMOG had pushed the RUF/AFRC forces back from the Congo Cross Road Bridge and had taken control over the densely populated, central-west Brookfields area. The RUF/AFRC forces started burning houses as they retreated eastwards. ECOMOG advised civilians to move into the National Stadium,[1508] where ECOMOG in collaboration with the Kamajors and OHBS screened civilians. An unknown number of suspected RUF/AFRC members were lined up against the walls of the National Stadium and shot dead by ECOMOG. Other collection points for displaced persons included the National Workshop by Pademba Road Prison and the Parade Group on Fourah Bay Road. ECOMOG also began

[1508] At the highpoint of the invasion, UN World Food Program estimated that around 40,000 civilians sought security in the National Stadium by 21 January 1999.

confiscating satellite telephones and radio communications equipment from international NGOs, reportedly to prevent them falling into the possession of the RUF/AFRC.

On 18 January, the HMS Norfolk arrived in Freetown carrying medical supplies and a 200-strong liaison and reconnaissance group. The UK denied that it was taking any military part in the conflict, but had earlier in January released over $1.6 million for humanitarian supplies and logistic support for ECOMOG.

RUF/AFRC forces started mutilating civilians on 19 January 1999 at Black Hall Road in Freetown, as ECOMOG forces steadily forced them out of the city. At that time, ECOMOG forces had control over the Ferry Junction at Kissy eastward to Waterloo (Waterloo RD). Civilian volunteers used carts to transport the corpses of those killed in the conflict to the Kissy Road cemetery. On 16 January, RUF/AFRC forces they had befriended warned civilians remaining in Waterloo that an order had been given to amputate the arms of any non-RUF/AFRC found in the town. The ECOMOG Alpha Jet bombing of numerous RUF/AFRC positions in the east end of Freetown and Waterloo pushed RUF/AFRC forces eastwards to the outskirts of the city. As they retreated via the hills, avoiding the ECOMOG checkpoint at Kossoh Town, RUF/AFRC forces abducted hundreds of civilians, many of whom were given narcotics to make them compliant.

Although most of Greater Freetown area had come under ECOMOG control by 20 January, RUF/AFRC forces continued to stage attacks and attempt to infiltrate locations in the east of the town. ECOMOG reported having trouble with large numbers of snipers remaining in hillside locations overlooking their positions following the main RUF/AFRC retreat. Across February and March, RUF/AFRC occupied Waterloo (Waterloo RD), evading ECOMOG Alpha Jet bombardments by using bush paths and moving mainly during the nighttime from Waterloo to attack surrounding villages. For example, one night they attacked Susu Town near Devil Hole (Waterloo RD) at a location called Compound, where they raped and killed a policewoman. Many civilians escaped across the Madonke creek to villages in Koya Chiefdom (Port Loko District). In addition, RUF/AFRC patrols rounded up civilians hiding in the Waterloo area and returned them to the town.

At the end of January, Nigeria announced that it wished to remove its troops from Sierra Leone by May 1999.[1509] On 2 February, ECOMOG continued to reinforce with the arrival of over 400 Malian troops[1510] and around 1,000 Ghanaian troops by 8 February.[1511] A general mobilisation of ECOMOG throughout Freetown was announced on 5 February 1999.[1512] The Chief of Staff of the SLA reportedly announced that ECOMOG would not hesitate in firing on civilians should the RUF/AFRC use them as human shields.[1513] The ECOMOG general mobilisation was followed by an intensification of cordon and search operations throughout the city.[1514] ECOMOG restructured its operations to include a specific garrison and force for the Freetown area. The UK Government

[1509] BBC, 28 January 1999.
[1510] IRIN West Africa, 2 February 1999.
[1511] IRIN West Africa, 8 February 1999.
[1512] AFP, 4 February 1999.
[1513] IRIN West Africa, 5 February 1999.
[1514] BBC, 6 February 1999.

stated that it would be providing a package of comprehensive logistic and other support to ECOMOG,[1515] followed soon after by the announcement that it would be providing around $16 million in military and training support for Sierra Leone and ECOMOG.[1516]

Between 20 and 25 February, ECOMOG launched an attack on Waterloo by continuously shelling the town. Some of the shells landed at the creek at the Christian cemetery. The remnants of RUF/AFRC forces, who were mainly ex-SLA, pulled out of Waterloo and Campbell Town along the Prince Alfred Road towards Cole Town (all Waterloo RD) and proceeding along bush tracks to the Waterloo Displaced Camp. By nightfall, all of them had left and headed towards Newton (Koya RD). In Waterloo, around 700 houses had been burnt down during the RUF/AFRC occupation. ECOMOG and Kamajor forces secured the town, with approximately 50 Kamajors deploying to Waterloo. They were shown around town by a local man who identified suspected RUF/AFRC collaborators, of whom at least two were tortured and executed by the Kamajors. The Kamajors also deployed at Bath-Comp (Koya RD), where they looted and burnt down an unknown number of civilian residences. At Kissy Town, near the IDP camp, combined "loyal" SLA and CDF on the one hand and ECOMOG on the other, erected checkpoints.

Responding to demands made by the RUF/AFRC, on 15 April the Court of Appeal of Sierra Leone temporarily released the RUF leader from prison,[1517] where he had been awaiting appeal from his treason conviction, allowing him to meet with the High Command of the RUF/AFRC and engage in peace talks in Togo, Lomé.[1518] Preliminary discussions between representatives of the RUF/AFRC and the Government of Sierra Leone yielded a ceasefire, which entered into force on 24 May. Full talks commenced on 25 May, leading to the signing of the Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone on 7 July 1999 (the Lomé Peace Agreement).[1519] The Lomé Peace Agreement provided for a number of joint RUF-GOSL processes for the provision of humanitarian assistance, return of displaced persons, demobilisation, management of natural resources and other matters related to the consolidation of the peace process. Additionally, it contains provisions for a governmental power-sharing arrangement between the RUF and the Government. The Lomé Peace Agreement also pardoned the RUF leader and others and granted a blanket amnesty to all combatants and collaborators for acts done in fulfilment of their objectives.

The RUF and AFRC leaders arrived back in Freetown on 3 October 1999 from Liberia, where they had gone following the conclusion of the peace talks.[1520] On 22 October, the United Nations Security Council authorised the deployment of a 6,000-strong peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone to replace the previous observer mission.[1521]

[1515] IRIN West Africa, 22 February 1999.

[1516] IRIN West Africa, 3 March 1999. The UK starting exporting ammunition and military equipment to Sierra Leone after 7 October 1999.

[1517] The RUF leader was reportedly taken from Pademba Road prison into protective custody in the Republic of Guinea prior to the RUF/AFRC 6 January 1999 assault on Freetown.

[1518] BBC, 15 April 1999.

[1519] The full text is available at http://www.usip.org/library/pa/sl/sierra_leone_07071999_toc.html.

[1520] Both reportedly held talks with the Liberian President in Monrovia during this time: http://www.sierra-leone.org/slnews0999.html.

[1521] UN Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999).



h) Events in 2000

Between January and May 2000 no violent incidents are recorded for the Western Area. By 12 April 2000, the DDR program had taken on over 22,000 ex-combatants, comprising 4,227 RUF; 7,474 CDF; 5,590 AFRC: 3,804 SLA: and 1,463 unaffiliated combatants.[1522]

On 1 May, the United Nations reported that RUF forces had attacked its positions near Newton (Koya RD), a few miles east of Waterloo (Waterloo RD),[1523] that there had been a number of RUF attacks near Waterloo and that RUF forces had been seen moving towards Hastings (Waterloo RD). However, the BBC reported on 6 May that UNAMSIL had retracted the latter statement and that in an "unfortunate reporting error on our part" they had confused this with RUF activity near Lunsar (Marampa Chiefdom, Port Loko District).[1524] Nevertheless, while information gathered for this report confirms that there were no RUF attacks on locations in the Western Area at this time, rumours of RUF attacks sparked at least 20,000 civilians to leave Songo, Newton (both Koya RD), Waterloo and Hastings (Waterloo RD) and move into the Greater Freetown Area.[1525]

However, UNAMSIL faced a serious crisis between 5 and 28 May: nearly 500 troops from different UNAMSIL contingents were disarmed and held hostage by RUF forces. On 8 May, the UK military commenced "Operation Palliser", deploying to Sierra Leone the *HMS Ocean* and other vessels with around 800 soldiers from the Parachute Regiment.[1526] Initially, UK forces secured the airport at Lungi and commenced the evacuation of UK nationals and other expatriates. Also on 8 May, civilians in Freetown held a large demonstration outside the Spur Road residence of RUF leader. The details are not clear, but a number of gunshots were fired, reportedly by RUF members guarding the residence.[1527] Nineteen civilians were killed during the rally and were buried on 13 May.[1528] The RUF leader apparently disappeared, but was apprehended by civilians on 17 May whilst travelling in a civilian vehicle through the Lumley area of Freetown. The UK Secretary of Defence subsequently stated to the BBC that the RUF leader was being held in "protective custody" by UK forces.[1529]

Between 8 and 14 May, RUF forces unsuccessfully attempted to gain control of Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) from pro-Government forces. During the same period, UK forces bolstered security at strategic locations on the main highway at Hastings and Waterloo. On 19 May, UK Royal Marines rehearsed amphibious landings in the Freetown area[1530] in preparation for replacing the Paratroops deployed on 8 May.[1531] In addition, the UK announced its decision to

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[1522] From National Commission from Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (NCDDR), quoted in IRIN West Africa, 18 April 2000.
[1523] IRIN West Africa, 1 May 2000.
[1524] BBC Online News, 7 May 2000 (06:40 GMT 07:40 UK).
[1525] OCHA Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report, 12 May 2000.
[1526] On 24 May, soldiers from the 42 Commando Royal Marines replaced the paratroopers.
[1527] BBC Online News, 8 May, 2000, (17:13 GMT 18:13 UK).
[1528] BBC Online News, 13 May 2000 (01:53 GMT 02:53 UK).
[1529] BBC Online News, 17 May 2000 (18:03 GMT 19:03 UK).
[1530] BBC Online News, 19 May 2000 (15:48 GMT 16:48 UK).
[1531] IRIN West Africa, 24 May 2000.

provide an ongoing series of six-week training courses for around 8 battalions of the SLA.[1532] The 180-strong team began arriving in Freetown on 10 June 2000,[1533] dovetailing with the withdrawal of the Royal Marines after 15 June 2000.[1534] On 24 July, nearly 1,000 SLA members graduated from the UK-run training course,[1535] the first group of a total of around 8,000 who would eventually be trained this way. Various rotations of the UK military teams occurred between August and December 2000. The overall number of UK service personnel in Sierra Leone was around 550, operating from the headquarters of the 1st Mechanised Brigade in Freetown.

On 14 August, the AFRC leader announced that he had formally disbanded the AFRC,[1536] which had seized power in the coup on 25 May 1997. On 22 August, a senior RUF member replaced the RUF leader, who remained in custody.

The West Side Boys apprehended 11 UK soldiers from the Short Term Training Team near Masiaka (Koya Chiefdom, Port Loko District) on 27 August 2000. Although UK negotiators secured the release of five of the captives, UK Special Forces and Paratroopers arrived in Freetown and executed "Operation Barrass", freeing the remainder on 10 September.[1537] In the Western Area, no further significant incidents are reported for 2000.

i) Events in 2001 and beyond

In January 2001, the Ukrainian contingent of UNAMSIL deployed from Freetown, contributing 534 men, 220 Armoured Personnel Carriers and 220 trucks to the peacekeeping mission.[1538] Ukrainian troops were based at Hastings (Waterloo RD). The RUF, the CDF and the Government of Sierra Leone commenced tri-partite peace talks on or around 16 May 2001.[1539] Disarmament proceeded at the Hockey Pitch at Wilberforce Barracks. At Waterloo the OBHS who used to patrol the village disarmed at the IDP Camp. By 30 September 2001, the UK had reduced its military presence in Sierra Leone to around 360[1540] and UNAMSIL reached the ceiling of its authorised deployment strength of 17,500 personnel on 20 November 2001.

Following disarmament and demobilisation of members of all the different fighting factions, on 18 January 2002 President Kabbah declared that the war was over and held a symbolic "Arms Burning Ceremony" at Lungi (Kaffu Bullom Chiefdom, Port Loko District).

3. Conclusion

** TO BE COMPLETED ON COMPLETION OF ANALYSIS FOR THE NORTHERN PROVINCE**

[1532] The UK Military handed over to a UK-led International Military and Advisory Training Team (IMATT) in September 2001.
[1533] BBC Online News, 10 June 2000 (19:28 GMT 20:28 UK).
[1534] IRIN West Africa, 14 June 2000.
[1535] IRIN West Africa, 24 July 2000.
[1536] BBC Online News, 14 August 2000 (03:40 GMT 04:40 UK).
[1537] See Port Loko District: West Side Boys for more details.
[1538] IRIN West Africa, 10 January 2001.
[1539] BBC Online News, 16 May 2001 (00:26 GMT 01:26 UK).
[1540] OCHA Sierra Leone Humanitarian Situation Report 01 - 30 September 2001.



Annex I: List of Acronyms

AFRC	Armed Force Revolutionary Council
APC	All Peoples Congress
CDF	Civil Defence Force
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Cease Fire Monitoring Group
EO	Executive Outcomes
NPFL	National Patriotic Front for Liberia
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone Peoples Party
UNAMSIL	United Nation Mission in Sierra Leone
ULIMO	United Liberation movement for Democracy in Liberia.



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Annex II: Acknowledgments

This report is the result of a program carried out in Sierra Leone over many months and in which many people took part. Although it is not possible to name each and every person who participated at one point or another, the following list of people reflects the dimension and importance of the No Peace Without Justice Conflict Mapping Program in Sierra Leone.

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Program Director
Niccolò FIGÀ-TALAMANCA

Country Director
Alison SMITH

Conflict Mapping Coordinator
Catherine GAMBETTE [Feb2003 onwards]
Andrew SWINDELLS [Sep2002-Feb2003]

Conflict Mapping Officer
Kizito G. BANGURA

Conflict Mapping Recorders

Patrick	ADU
Joseph J.	ALPHA
Roland	ALPHA
Francis	AMADU
Paul K.	AMARA
Aiah A.Y.	AROUNA
Sahr S.	AROUNA
Joseph I.	BABAO
Florence	BAION
Bentson M.	BAKOOI
Francis A.	BANGALI
Ibrahim G.	BANGURA
Mohamed R.	BANGURA
Santigie	BANGURA
Sherbora	BANGURA
Sulaiman H.	BANGURA
Thaimu S.	BANGURA
Mohamed L.	BARRIE
Sahr J.	BENDU
Mohamed	BLAKE
Alpha A.	KANU
Idrissa	KENDOR †
Joseph	KOBBA
Kabba S.	KOITA
Alusine S.	KOROMA
Hassan K.	KOROMA
Joseph M.	KOROMA
Komeh A.	KOROMA
Magdalene	KOROMA
Milton	KOROMA
Osman	KOROMA
Sembu	KOROMA
Syl S.	KOROMA
James B.	LAHAI
John A.S.	LAHAI
Alpha M.	LALUGBA
Andrew	LISSA
Mathew T.J.	LORH
Philip C.	MACFOY
Moses	MANDO



Munda D. BOCKARIE
Samuel K. BOCKARIE
Joseph O. BUREH
Samuel CAULKER
Alfred COLE
Christiana CONNEL
Ibrahim B. CONTEH
Magnus CONTEH
Morlai CONTEH
Sallieu A. CONTEH
Samuel S. CONTEH
Thomas M.CONTEH
Mustapha DABENI
Ann-Marie DARAMY
Ibrahim DARAMY
Lennox DEIGH
Foday S. DUMBUYA
Yusufu T. FABU-KANJA
A. P. FOMBA
Alex K. FOMBA
Allieu K. FOMBA
Neneh A. FULLAH
William T.P. GBANABOME
Tamba B. GBENDA
Hassan M. GIBATEH
Esther HARDING
Richard HOWARD
Biah Y. IDRISS
Abdul R. JALLOH
Mohamed B. JALLOH
Joseph B. JUSU
Paul JUSU
Alims KABIA
A.S. KAIFINEH
Andrew S. KALIVA
Sylvestre KALLON
Abdul K. KAMARA
Alie B. KAMARA
Ambrose KAMARA
Bamba S. KAMARA
Catherine K. KAMARA
David S. KAMARA
Mohamed A. KAMARA
Mohamed B. KAMARA
Momodu B. KAMARA
Alieu B. MANSARAY
Mohamed MANSARAY
Zainab MANSARAY
Janet MASSAQUOI
Mustapha S. MASSAQUOI
Tamba D. MOIWO
Brima M.S. MOMODU
Harriet M. MYERS
Alfred S. NABIEU
David A. NGOMBU
Sahr NJAAMA
Alpha B. ONEIL
Jonathan PEARCE
Susan PESSIMA
Julrick PRATT
Sylvanus O. PRATT
Sawudatu SAMAI
Sandi SAMURA
Hindolo A.SANDI
Abdulai G. SANKOH
Augustine SANNOH
Dominic SEBBEH
Abu B. SESAY
Alfred K. SESAY
Brima SESAY
Edward B. SESAY
M.S. SESAY
Mohamed A. SILLAH
Mohamed SIMBAY
Andrew SIMBO
Wilfred O. SOLOMON
Ahmed B. SOMBIE
Rosetta M. SOVULA
Augustine K. SUMAILA
James M.B. SUMAILA
Abu B. TAILU
Sorie Bala TARAWALIE
Abdulai THORONKA
Faith G. TUCKER
Dominic VANDI
Patrick S. VANDY
John C. VANJAH
Matthew M. YAMBA
Moses L. YANGUBA
Andrew YAVANA



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Osman	KAMARA
Theresa F.	KAMARA
Yakoya	KAMARA
Amara	KANNEH
Mohamed M.	YEMOH
Francis	YONDA

Conflict Mapping Trainers

Abdul	BANGURA
Andrew	SIMBO
Patrick	FATOMA

Conflict Mapping Reviewers

Abdul	BANGURA
Alieu	MANSARAY
Andrew	SIMBO
Idriss	TARAWALLIE

Typists

Melody	MARTIN
Annette	NICOL
Letitia	SESAY
Violetta	STANLEY

Data Entry Processors

Andrea	BROGGI
Sharon	CARROLL
Martin	EBERT
Ilario	FUSARO
Patrick	JOHNBULL
Yvonne	JOHNSON
Mohamed	KALIL
Julianna	KAMANDA
Nicole	NADIA
Stefano	PANTALEONE
Letitia	SESAY
Violetta	STANLEY
Rachel	TAYLOR
Margaret	TURAY
Hubert	TSHISWAKA

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Isha	WRIGHT
Abdul Rahim	KAMARA
Josephine	KOROMA
Bailey	HAND

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John	STOMPOR
Ibrahim	KOROMA

Judicial Assistance Program

Pascal	TURLAN

Library

Avril	ROWE
Eldred	DURING

Operations Officer

Matilda	KOROVESHI

Intern-Project Assistant

Edward	PLEETH

Drivers

Mamadu	JALLOH
Mohamed	JALLOH
Sam	ALLIE, Jr.

Logistics

Yah	AMOH
Sahr	ANSUMANA
Joseph	BANGURA
Pa	ISSA
Mr	JAMES
Brima	TARAWALLIE



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46. War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone, Report by Physicians for Human Rights, published 2002. ISBN: 1-879707-37-3. Pages: 2-3, 19, 29, 34, 46-48, 52, 56-57, and 75-76.

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Full Report

War-Related Sexual Violence in Sierra Leone

A Population-Based Assessment

A Report by
Physicians for Human Rights with the support of UNAMSIL
Boston • Washington DC

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Glossary

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ADRA: Adventist Development and Relief Agency
AFRC: Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (rebel force)
CDF: Civil Defense Forces (pro-government force)
CRS: Catholic Relief Services
DDR: Demobilization, Disarmament and Reintegration
ECOMOG: Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group, a military intervention force with troops donated by ECOWAS members
ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
FAWE: Forum for African Women Educationalists
ICRC: International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP: Internally Displaced Person
IMC: International Medical Corps
IRC: International Rescue Committee
Krio: lingua franca of Sierra Leone
MSF: Médecins sans Frontières
NCRRR: National Commission for Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Reconciliation
NGO: Non-governmental organization
OTI: Office of Transitional Initiatives
PHR: Physicians for Human Rights
PHU: Peripheral Health Units
RUF: Revolutionary United Front (rebel force)
SLA: Sierra Leonean Army
TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UN: United Nations
UNAMSIL: United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP: United Nations Development Program
UNDPKO: United Nation Department of Peacekeeping Operations
UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF: United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA: United Nations Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance
US: United States
USAID: United States Agency for International Development
WFP: World Food Program
WHO: World Health Organization

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Purpose of Study

Sierra Leone's decade-long conflict has been marked by an extraordinary level of brutal human rights abuses, including summary killings, sexual violence against women and girls, abductions, amputations, and the use of child soldiers. The combined effects of prolonged conflict, pervasive human rights abuses, and massive forced migration[1] in one of the poorest countries in the world have devastated the health and well-being of the Sierra Leonean people. The daunting process of rebuilding and reconciliation in the aftermath of such destruction requires the establishment of an accurate account of the nature and extent of abuses that have been committed. For this reason Physicians for Human Rights (PHR), with the support and participation of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), conducted a population-based assessment of the prevalence and impact of sexual violence and other human rights abuses among internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sierra Leone.

Findings

The findings of this study, the most comprehensive population-based assessment to date of war-related sexual violence and other human rights abuses in Sierra Leone, indicate that combatants have committed widespread human rights abuses and international crimes against IDPs in Sierra Leone including: abductions, beatings, killings, rape and other forms of sexual violence, capturing for less than 24 hours, torture, forced labor, gunshot wounds, serious injuries, and amputations. Such quantitative findings contribute considerable insight into the nature and extent of human rights abuses among IDPs in Sierra Leone, i.e., the frequency of specific human rights abuses, the identity of the alleged perpetrators, the impact of these experiences and the most urgent needs identified by the victims. Furthermore, a rigorous approach to sampling enables the findings to be generalized to the larger IDP population. In order to gain insight into individual experiences of human rights abuses of Sierra Leonean women and their families, the PHR study included qualitative assessments of abuses as well.

[1] Approximately 400,000 people have fled Sierra Leone into neighboring Guinea and Liberia as refugees. At the time of this study, there were 334,061 registered and approximately 500,000 to 1 million unregistered internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Sierra Leone.

A striking 94% of 991 households randomly surveyed reported among its members at least one of these serious abuses during the past ten years of conflict. The majority of abuses reported by participants in the PHR study occurred between 1997 and 1999 and, when known, were attributed primarily to forces from the Revolutionary United Front (RUF). The study's primary focus on abuses of women and girls stems from the historical neglect of these sexual crimes committed against women from previous reports of human rights abuses in Sierra Leone.

The PHR study indicates that war-related sexual violence experiences perpetrated by armed combatants (primarily RUF) are, indeed, widespread among IDPs in Sierra Leone. Approximately one of every eight household members (13%) reported one or more incidents of war-related sexual violence. Nine percent (94/991) of respondents reported war-related sexual violence.[2,3] A striking 53% of respondents reporting "face to face" contact specifically with RUF forces reported experiencing sexual violence, compared to less than 6% for any other combatant group.[4] One third of the women who reported sexual violence reported being gang raped.

Participants reporting sexual violence related the following: rape (89%), being forced to undress/stripped of clothing (37%), gang rape (33%), abduction (33%), molestation (14%), sexual slavery (15%), forced marriage (9%), and insertion of foreign objects into the genital opening or anus (4%). In addition, 22 (23%) of the women who experienced sexual violence reported being pregnant at the time of the attack with an average gestation of three months. The majority of the incidents of sexual violence reported by participants (68%) occurred between 1997 and 1999.

This prevalence rate of war-related sexual violence (8%-9%) during only a ten-year period is equivalent to the lifetime prevalence of non war-

[2] It is likely that the prevalence of war-related sexual violence in the study was underestimated because of willful non-disclosure of sexual violence and the lack of privacy in some of the interviews, despite efforts to ensure privacy. According to Koss (Koss M.P, "Detecting the scope of rape: a review of prevalence research methods," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence.* 1993(8);198-222) reasons for willful non-disclosure often include fear of retribution by an assailant, being stigmatized and rejected, being blamed for the attack, and/or the psychological consequences of disclosure.

[3] In addition, the average age of participants reporting war-related sexual violence was more than twice the average age of non war-related sexual violence reported in the study. Although interviewers were careful to explain that there would be no material or other gain by participating in the survey, the number of abuses reported in the study may have been overestimated or underestimated if IDPs judged that it was in their material, political or psychological interest to exaggerate or conceal claims of abuse.

[4] Other perpetrators reported included Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), West Side Boys, unspecified "rebels", and Sierra Leonean Army (SLA) and ex-SLA. The UN peacekeepers and Civil Defense Forces (CDF) militia forces were not identified as perpetrators among respondents reporting sexual violence.

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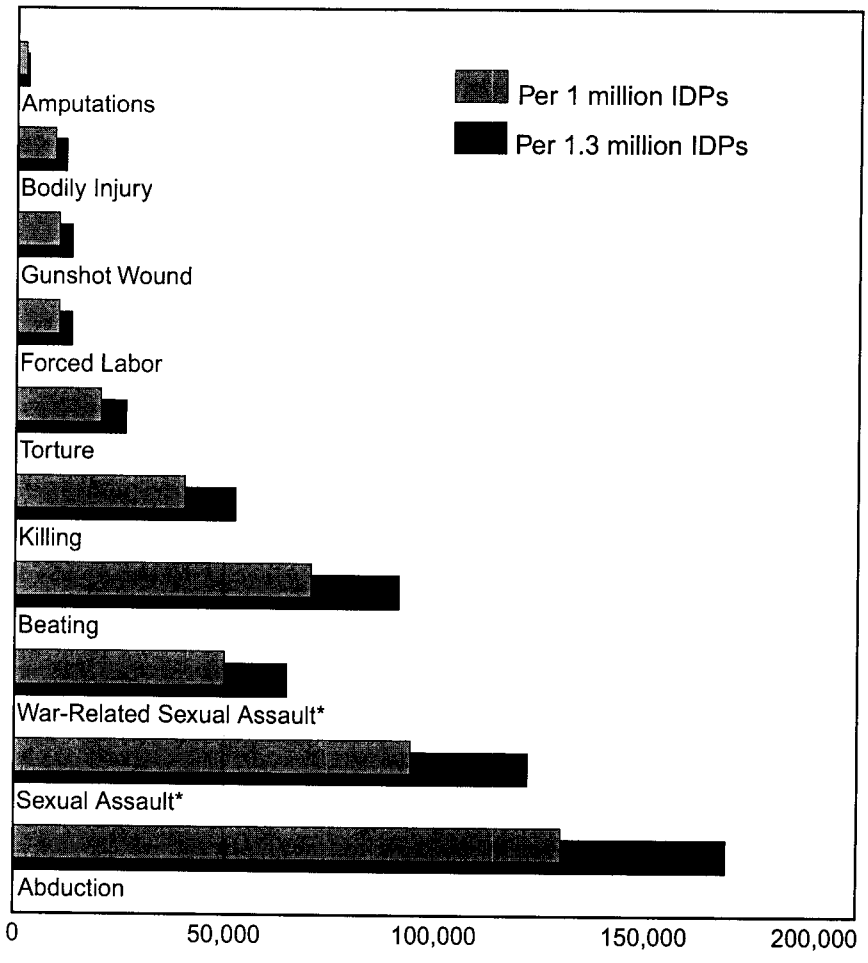
FIGURE 1:
Extrapolation of Human Rights Abuses Among All IDPs in Sierra Leone



* Extrapolations are based on frequencies reported by 9,166 household members (Table 2); sexual assault is among female respondents only. For 95% confidence intervals, please see page 45, footnote 165.

related sexual violence (9%) among the study participants.

By extrapolating the number of war-related sexual violence incidents reported by participants in the PHR sample to the total female IDP population in Sierra Leone, PHR estimates that approximately 50,000 to 64,000 Sierra Leonean IDP women may have suffered such human rights abuses. If non-war-related sexual violence among non-IDP females is added to the IDP totals (assuming a 9% prevalence rate), as many as

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215,000-257,000 women and girls in Sierra Leone currently may have been affected by sexual violence.[5]

Today, in the context of war, rape and other forms of sexual violence are considered war crimes[6] and can be prosecuted as such.[7] They also constitute crimes against humanity when committed as part of a widespread or systematic[8] attack against the civilian population.[9] This population-based assessment demonstrates that war-related sexual violence and other human rights abuses were indeed perpetrated as a widespread attack against the civilian population, and therefore constitute both war crimes and crimes against humanity.[10] A Special Court has been proposed by UN Security Council Resolution 1315 to prosecute those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for violations of international humanitarian law in Sierra Leone's conflict.[11] A Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) is being created to provide an impartial historical record of the war and to foster reconciliation.[12]

Methods of Investigation

Quantitative

PHR sampled 1,048 households in three IDP camps (near Freetown, Port Loko, and Kenema) and one community with a large number of IDPs,

[5] To generate population estimates of sexual violence among the IDP and non-IDP females in Sierra Leone, PHR assumed a total IDP population of 1.0-1.3 million (55% female) and a non-IDP population of 2.7-3.0 million (50% female). UNOCHA database. Sierra Leone: UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs. Updated February, 2001; Norwegian Refugee Council, Sierra Leone Section, "Population profile and figures". Available at: www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/1c963eb504904cde412567820074 93b8/fdc6d215bab90118c12569dd002b1aec?OpenDocument; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Available at: unhcr.ch/un & ref/numbers/numb2000.pdf

[6] Kunarac, Kovac and Vukovic, IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1 "FOCA" Available at: www.un.org/ICTY/judgement.htm

[7] *Ibid.*

[8] See Chapter V for a discussion.

[9] Statute of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, Article 5, Crimes against Humanity. Available at www.un.org/icty/basic/statut/stat2000.htm#5.

[10] Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Rome Statute), adopted 7/17/98. Available at: untreaty.un.org/English/notpubl/rome-en.htm; Askin K.D., *War Crimes Against Women: Prosecution in International War Crimes Tribunals*, M. Nijhoff Publishers, 1997. Askin K. "Women and International Humanitarian Law," in Askin K.D, Koenig D.M., Editors, *Women and International Human Rights Law*, Transnational, 1999. Vol. I. Also see: United Nations, Draft Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, S/2000/915. Available at www.un.org/Docs/sc/reports/2000/915e.pdf

[11] United Nations Security Council Resolution 1315 (Adopted August 14, 2000). Available at: www.un.org/Docs/scres/2000/res1315e.pdf

[12] For more information see www.sierra-leone.org/trc.html

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Mile 91 Township. The camps/locales included in this study represented 91% of the registered IDP population in Sierra Leone. All study participants were selected using systematic random sampling or a combination of systematic random sampling and cluster sampling.[13] A total of 991 female heads of household participated in the study (response rate = 95%). The 991 household representatives reported on the experiences of 9,166 household members, which included themselves and those who lived with them prior to their displacement. The PHR survey contained 49 questions pertaining to demographics, physical and mental health perception, experiences of human rights abuses among household members and experiences of sexual violence. It also inquired about assistance needs, opinions regarding punishment and justice for perpetrators, and attitudes on women's human rights and roles in society.

Qualitative

In order to gain additional insight into individual experiences of human rights abuses of Sierra Leonean women and their families, the PHR study included qualitative assessments of abuses as well. Two primary approaches were used to elicit qualitative information. Seven open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire itself, and longer semi-structured interviews were conducted with survivors of human rights abuses, some who were not survey participants.

Individual case testimonies provided considerable insight into the brutality of the human rights abuses reported, including sexual violence, in the PHR survey. Katmara B, a 13-year-old girl, reported being abducted, beaten, raped and forced to become a rebel's "wife." She was released during the latter stages of her pregnancy and now has a baby girl. The story of what happened to her and her family during the rebel incursion into Freetown in January 1999 captures the anarchy of those days which left the people of Sierra Leone's capital city terrified:

> *...So, on our way to be killed, we were taken to a house with about 200 people held in it. My older cousin was sent to go and select 25 men and 25 women to have their hands chopped off. Then she was told to cut off the first man's hand. She refused to do it saying that she was afraid, I was then told to do it. I said I'd never done such a thing before and that I was also afraid. We were told to sit on the side and watch. So we sat. They chopped off two men's hands. My cousin couldn't watch and bowed her head down to avoid the sight. Because she did that, they shot her in the foot. They bandaged her foot and then forced her to walk. We left the two men whose hands had been cut off behind. We were then taken to a mosque in Kissy. They killed everyone in there...They were*

[13] See Patton M.Q., *Qualitative Evaluation and Research Methods*, Sage Publications, 1990; 169-283.

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snatching babies and infants from their mother's arms and tossing them in the air. The babies would free fall to their deaths. At other times they would also chop them from the back of their heads to kill them, you know, like you do when you slaughter chickens...One girl with us tried to escape. They made her take off her slippers and give them to me and then killed her...one time we came across two pregnant women. They tied the women down with their legs eagle-spread and took a sharpened stick and jabbed them inside their wombs until the babies came out on the stick.

Several women who had not suffered sexual violence spoke of the range of abuses they and their families had experienced and the multiple losses they faced. A young woman, Marie K., described her and her family's experience:

...They killed many of us, many people...about 100, we were in an unfinished house when they came and kicked at the doors and demanded to know who was in there. They yelled that if we didn't come out they would kill us or burn the house down. Someone near the door opened it. The rest of us were hiding in a room, huddled together. They came in and began to hit us with their weapons yelling "get out, if you don't come out we will kill you." Those who refused to come out, they lit the house up and burned it with them inside the house...

Some of the women who reported experiencing sexual violence provided the PHR/UNAMSIL team with information that suggests that the incidents of sexual violence were politically motivated. One woman told PHR that her attackers told her "to come and report or tell [president] Tejan Kabbah that they will continue to do such things." Another told PHR that her attacker asked her "whom are you going to vote for?"

Sexual Violence

Given the prevalence of sexual violence reported in the PHR study, it is not surprising that the vast majority (91%) of respondents reported being "quite a bit" or "extremely" worried about sexual violence to themselves or family members by combatants. They were much less worried about sexual violence by family members, friends, or civilian strangers despite 9% of respondents reporting sexual abuse by family members, friends, or civilian strangers in their lifetime.

In February 2001, PHR interviewed a fifteen-year-old girl, Bola N. Rebels had abducted her four times since 1999. At the time of the interview she was two months pregnant and living at an IDP camp in Port Loko. She described her first abduction to the interviewer:

When they first attacked the village, we fled to the bushes. When they removed us from our village we were frightened...They held us, they cut

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some hands. They killed some. They forced us to be tied. We were taken to the bush where the sexual act was forced on us...Nine men raped me...My mother was taken away, my things, belongings, taken. I slept three days in the bush after they had raped me. I was unconscious, not myself...After they had raped me to their satisfaction, they left me in the bush. I was beaten, bruises on my body, part of my body. Some around were amputated. I was not well.

Isata, a 15-year-old girl, was abducted and gang raped by rebels. She described her experiences and their continuing effects on her health:

...I don't have any children. I was a virgin before. They ruined me. The story is long, much too long. I was at home when they came and kidnapped me...They demanded money. My family has no money. They demanded Le 200,000.00 ($83.00)...they said to my parents, come and see how we use your children. They undressed five of us, laid us down, used us in front of my family and took us away with them. They wouldn't release us, they kept us with them in the bush...When I escaped, I couldn't walk – the pain. I was bleeding from my vagina. That night, God gave me strength to walk...I can't remember how long I was held...I don't like to talk because of the memories. When I made it back, my mother couldn't believe it. Since I got back I have been so sick...I never used to get sick like this...I would like to go back to school, but I can't concentrate anymore, I can't do anything...

Characteristics of Assistance Needs among Respondents Reporting Sexual Violence

Sixty-five percent of respondents said that they had reported the incident(s) of sexual violence to another person. The most common reasons for not reporting these incidents were feelings of shame or social stigma, fear of being stigmatized/rejected, and not having trust in anyone. Only 53% of women reported seeking help after the attack, although 80% of these women reported that they informed a health care provider of the specifics of the attack. Women reported that what helped most after the attack was trying to forget about the incident, support of family, a medical provider, and country medicine/traditional healer.

A number of testimonies collected by PHR in March 2000 were from survivors of rape who reported becoming pregnant by their attackers. Many of these young women are particularly vulnerable as they must not only recover from the trauma of their ordeals while often facing stigma from their communities, but at the same time learn to care for and support a baby with few resources.

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II. BACKGROUND

Population and Geography

Sierra Leone, named by the Portuguese for the resemblance of its peninsula mountains to a crouching lion,[15] borders Liberia to the southeast, the Republic of Guinea to the north, and the Atlantic Ocean to the West. It is about 71,700 sq. km in size[16] and has a population of approximately 5 million.[17] The year consists of two main seasons; the wet season lasts from May to October and the climate during the rest of the year is dry.[18]

The largest of the indigenous ethnic groups in Sierra Leone are the Mende, Temne (each about 30%), and Limba (under 10 %).[19] Most of the population is Muslim, though there is a significant Christian population and followers of indigenous religions. English is the country's official language, however, the population primarily uses Krio, Mende and Temne.[20]

Historical Overview

Sierra Leone gained independence from England in 1961. From that time it was ruled by a series of governments most of which were plagued by corruption. Its first Prime Minster, Milton Margai, ruled until his death in 1964. At that time his brother Albert Margai became the Prime Minister. Albert Margai's rule was marked by authoritarian efforts to consolidate power and remove opposition.[21]

Albert Margai and his Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) were challenged during the 1967 elections by Siaka Stevens and his All People's Congress (APC) Party. On March 21, the Governor General of Sierra Leone declared Stevens winner of the contested elections.[22] Before Stevens could

[15] Alie, J.A.D., *A New History of Sierra Leone,* St. Martin's Press, 1990; p 4.

[16] Central Statistics Office, "Sierra Leone in Figures" (1997) Available at: www.sierra-leone.org/cso.html#Natural Resources

[17] UNICEF, "Statistical Data: Sierra Leone," available at: www.unicef.org/statis/ Country_1Page154.html

[18] Conteh-Morgan, E & Dixon-Fyle, M., *Sierra Leone at the End of the Twentieth Century: History, Politics, and Society,* Peter Lang, 1999; p.11.

[19] Africaville.com, "Sierra Leone Profile," available at www.africville.com/seraleon1.html

[20] Kaplan, I, Dobert, M, McLaughlin, J.L., Marvin, B. J., & Whitaker, D P. *Area Handbook for Sierra Leone* , 1976; p. vii.

[21] Conteh-Morgan p. 77

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take office, however, a series of military coups and counter coups established a military government named the National Reformation Council (NRC) headed by Brigadier Andrew Juxon-Smith.[23] Another coup in 1968 brought Stevens back from exile and restored a civilian government.

For the next 17 years, Stevens ruled Sierra Leone. In 1968, Stevens established a one-party state.[24] Under his rule, the economy declined due to alleged mismanagement and corruption. By the start of the 1980s, Sierra Leone was increasingly dependent on international assistance – specifically International Monetary Fund loans.[25] Virtual insolvency, high inflation, shortages of power and food, mounting deficits, declining exports, corruption, and high unemployment particularly among youth became increasingly severe problems.[26] In 1985, Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh, then head of the military, took over leadership of the APC and the presidency of the country in a peaceful hand-over. Although Momoh promised economic reform and an end to corruption,[27] his seven years in power were marked by increased deprivation and economic collapse. In 1987 a coup attempt against Momoh took place – believed to have been sparked in part by Momoh's anti-corruption efforts.[28] Although it failed, the coup marked a return to the status quo and the start of Momoh's downfall.[29]

In 1990, Momoh instituted reforms including the drafting of a new constitution. Before multiparty elections could be held, however, an April 1992 military coup headed by young officers overthrew Momoh's government. The young coup leaders, many in their twenties, formed a new ruling body, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) headed by Captain Valentine Strasser.

During this time, the ongoing conflict in neighboring Liberia played a part in the development of a new threat to stability in Sierra Leone.[30] In March 1991, a group calling itself the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) began a rebellion against the Freetown Government. The small band of insurgents consisted primarily of disaffected youth from the criminal cultures spawned in the urban ghettos of Freetown and the mining regions,

[22] Ibid p. 80

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid p. 81

[25] Conteh-Morgan p.87

[26] Pratt, D. "Sierra Leone: Danger and Opportunity in a Regional Conflict: Report to Canada's Minister of Foreign Affairs, The Honorable John Manley, P.C., M.P." July 27, 2001;p.37 available at: www.davidpratt.ca/sleone_e.htm

[27] Conteh-Morgan p.122

[28] Ibid p. 125

[29] Ibid.

[30] Ibid p. 127

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though a number of university students who had been radicalized by conditions in Sierra Leone and inspired by the revolutionary teachings expressed in Muammar al-Qaddafi's Green Book[31] also participated. They were led by Foday Sankoh, a former army corporal and photographer who had received military training in Libyan camps.[32] From their base in a part of Liberia controlled by Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), the RUF attacked the southeastern region of the country. The NPFL's support for the RUF may have been in response to Sierra Leone's participation in ECOMOG, the West African Regional Peacekeeping Force, which was using Freetown as a staging ground for operations against Taylor in Liberia.[33] Marked by their brutality against civilians and the abduction and forced conscription of children, the RUF raids caused rapid flight by much of the population in the region. In a matter of weeks after the first incursions, the RUF controlled much of Kailahun District in the East[34]. This period was marked by confusion and brutality as rebels committed attacks while dressed in army uniforms and as disaffected members of the armed forces carried out attacks against civilians, which they blamed on rebels. These soldiers by day, rebels by night became known as "Sobels."[35] By late 1992, local militias known as the Civil Defense Force (CDF) or Kamajor (Mende for hunter) sprang up to defend areas against the RUF and the "sobels." Within a year and a half of the first attacks in Sierra Leone, international agencies estimated that at least 400,000 people were displaced within Sierra Leone. Sierra Leonean refugees in neighboring Guinea and Liberia numbered in the hundreds of thousands by the summer of 1992.[36]

In 1995, with the RUF not far from Freetown, Strasser turned to the South African mercenary (security) firm Executive Outcomes for assistance in pushing the RUF back from their positions.[37] Executive Outcomes succeeded in forcing the retreat of the RUF from the Freetown area but were not able to uproot the RUF from their headquarters in Kailahun.[38]

By 1996, civil society and the donor community placed great public pressure upon the government to hold democratic elections and return the country to civilian rule. Women's groups were especially instrumental in

[31] Pratt,. Sierra Leone: Danger and Opportunity. p.38. The Green Book is Qaddafi's two volume treatise on Islamic socialism published between 1976-1980. See www.encyclopedia.com/articles/10672.html

[32] Ibid p.38

[33] Ibid p.38

[34] Ibid p.38.

[35] Conteh-Morgan p.135

[36] Conteh-Morgan pp.128-9

[37] Hirsch, J. L., *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy,* (International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series), Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001; p.38

[38] Ibid p.39

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this campaign.[39] In spite of a coup in January in which Strasser was overthrown by his deputy Julius Bio,[40] popular pressure intensified and democratic elections were held as scheduled in February and March, 1996.[41]

In the weeks leading up to the elections, RUF attacks on civilians in areas under RUF control became more violent. The RUF hacked off the limbs and other body parts of men, women and children. The RUF particularly employed the amputation of hands or arms as a method of attempting to discourage others from voting in the elections.[42] Despite this, the voter turnout was large and the winner of these elections was Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, a former United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) official.[43]

At the time of the elections, peace talks began between the RUF and the short-lived Bio Government. The Abidjan talks continued after Kabbah took power as did attacks by the RUF and counter attacks by Kamajors and Executive Outcomes.[44] The Abidjan peace agreement was signed by the RUF and the Government in November of 1996. Shortly thereafter Executive Outcomes was dismissed from the country as required by the agreement.[45]

In May 1997, the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) overthrew Kabbah and formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) regime under Major Johnny Paul Koroma.[46] The AFRC invited the RUF to join in ruling the country. This period was marked by lawlessness, rampant destruction and looting of property, and specific targeting of Kabbah allies.[47] An estimated 200,000 Sierra Leoneans fled the country in the weeks following the coup. Many of these ended up in refugee camps on the Guinea-Sierra Leone border.[48] In October 1997, the UN Security Council adopted resolution 1132 which imposed sanctions on the AFRC junta and prohibited the importation of military equipment and petroleum into Sierra Leone. The resolution also placed travel restrictions on AFRC officials and their families.[49]

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[39] Ibid p.40

[40] Ibid p.42

[41] See www.Sierra-Leone.org/govt8.html

[42] Hirsch, John L., *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy* p.45

[43] Ibid p.57

[44] Pratt p.40

[45] Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, Article 12; Available at: www.sierra-leone.org/abidjanaccord.html

[46] Pratt, p.40

[47] Ibid.

[48] Hirsch, J. L., *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy* (International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series), Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2001; pp.59-60

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In February 1998, following months of increased CDF and ECOMOG activity against the AFRC/RUF, ECOMOG forces removed the AFRC/ RUF from Freetown in fierce fighting. Many civilians were injured and killed in battles throughout the city. Kabbah was restored to power and returned to Freetown in March from exile in Guinea. The RUF continued to brutally attack civilians and, together with elements of the SLA, to fight the Freetown government, a policy dubbed by the RUF, "Operation No Living Thing."[50] By the end of December the rebels were again near Freetown and foreigners began to leave the capital.[51] On January 6, 1999, the RUF and AFRC forces entered the Eastern part of Freetown and unleashed an unprecedented wave of terror upon the population – killing, amputating and raping civilians and setting fire to buildings and vehicles. They were eventually pushed back by ECOMOG. During the invasion and their subsequent withdrawal following the ECOMOG intervention, the rebels committed egregious human rights abuses against the civilian population, killing at least 5,000 civilians, including members of the government and journalists who were singled out, and abducting an estimated 3,000 children.[52]

The Role of Diamonds in the Conflict

Sierra Leone's rich diamond resources have largely been fueling the brutal war. Diamonds, primarily alluvial deposits, discovered in 1930, are found in about a third of the country's territory – mostly in the east and southeast.[53] For more than half a century, diamonds have been the leading source of foreign exchange, accounting for between 80% and 90% of export earnings in recent years.[54] Official exports, however, for 1999 as reported by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) totaled only $1.5 million, though diamond exports for the first half of 2000 were valued at $3.45 million.[55]

The Lome Peace Agreement

The attack on Freetown accelerated local and international desire for peace. A cease-fire was brokered by May of 1999 which set the stage for peace negotiations held in Lome, Togo which led to the signing of the

[49] www.un.org/Docs/scres/1997/9726713E.htm

[50] Pratt, p.41

[51] Hirsch, p.71

[52] Pratt, p.41

[53] Pratt, p.36

[54] Ibid.

[55] Cook, N., *Diamonds and Conflict: Policy Proposals and Background*, Congressional Research Service, November, 2000; p.22.

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where the infrastructure and rule of law have virtually collapsed and there seems to be little hope for the future in terms of work and education opportunities. The humanitarian assistance community has an enormous task providing aid to the displaced and other war-affected peoples and beginning to rebuild the country, particularly in the areas of housing, health care, and education.

Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons

Mass displacement has been a defining characteristic of the crisis in Sierra Leone. At the height of the hostilities, more than 3,000 communities[110] were destroyed resulting in the flight from their homes of nearly half the country's population. Many have experienced displacement more than once. At the time of writing it is estimated that more than one million, approximately a quarter of the population, are either displaced internally or have fled to neighboring countries to escape the conflict.[111] An estimated 75,000 refugees had been repatriated by UNHCR to Sierra Leone and had returned independently by ship and foot since the beginning of 2001 as a result of the declining security situation in Liberia and Guinea. As many as 500,000, however, remained in camps in Guinea, as well as in the Gambia, Ghana and the Côte D'Ivoire.[112] As the numbers of returnees grow, particularly in Freetown where IDP camps are already over capacity, the government of Sierra Leone and relief agencies are making efforts to relocate them to host communities in areas deemed secure.

The official caseload of internally displaced persons (IDPs) is over 400,000 at the time of this writing.[113] An estimated 170,000 people reside in eighteen official IDP camps, and thousands more are living with host communities primarily in the Port Loko and Tonkolili districts. The UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) estimates that an additional one million Sierra Leoneans are internally displaced and absorbed into host communities where they are not receiving any humanitarian relief.[114] At least 55% of the refugee and displaced populations are estimated to be women and girls.[115]

Most of the camps in Sierra Leone were constructed as temporary measures to address the immediate shelter needs of the displaced population.

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[110] United Nations Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Sierra Leone, 2000, p. 117.

[111] Global IDP Database, Sierra Leone Profile Summary. Available at: www.idpproject.org/Sites/idpSurvey.nsf/wViewSingleEnv/Sierra+LeoneProfile+Summary

[112] USAID, BHR, OFDA, *Humanitarian Situation Report #1* (FY 2002), October 3, 2001.

[113] Pratt. p.23

[114] Global IDP Database www.idpproject.org/Sites/idpSurvey.nsf/wViewSingleEnv/Sierra+LeoneProfile+Summary

[115] UNOCHA Database - Sierra Leone: UN Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs. Updated February, 2001

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They have, however, since been used as long-term housing and issues of space, sanitation, durability and management exist. The breakdown of the peace process in May 2000 not only prevented the resettlement of most IDPs, but led to additional internal displacements of people fleeing fighting, which overwhelmed already inadequate facilities.

The camps are generally crowded and unsanitary and most IDPs interviewed by PHR desperately want to return home. The return of the displaced to their home communities, many of which have been occupied by rebels for years, may, however, pose an even greater challenge to the government of Sierra Leone and humanitarian relief agencies. Sierra Leone's fragile and limited infrastructure may be unable to absorb an influx of refugees from unstable areas in Liberia and Guinea. This difficulty may be exacerbated by the voluntary resettlement of IDPs as the peace process moves forward and areas of the country are secured. The National Committee for Relief, Reconstruction and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) which is providing those who return home with seeds, tools and other essential household items, had reached only 77 of 149 chiefdoms before the end of the planting season in May, 2001.[116] So whether the displaced return home or remain in camps, the need for food aid will remain high. Massive reconstruction of shelter and education and health facilities must also be a top priority.[117]

Extension of state authority into the provinces – crucial in order to undertake and sustain programs in key sectors – has been hampered by the military, political and economic situation. Government capacity to deliver basic services continues to be limited and civil administration in areas under RUF control was virtually obliterated. Health and development indicators point to particularly dire conditions in the North.[118] The current needs for displaced populations, the host communities and resettlement far exceed the existing capacity at all levels.[119]

Health Care Delivery

The health sector, which was already weak prior to the war, has been further compromised during ten years of conflict. It is ill equipped to serve a large number of returning IDPs and refugees. Hospitals and health clinics were systematically looted and destroyed over the past 10 years. Though some district hospitals are now open including Kenema, Port Loko, Lungi and Kabala, they are not operating at full capacity and the percentage of

[116] Pratt p.23

[117] Mid-Year review of the 2001 UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Sierra Leone

[118] The Government of Sierra Leone, *Survey Report on the Status of Women and Children in Sierra Leone at the End of the Decade*, November, 2000; p.51.

[119] Mid-Year review of the 2001 UN Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for Sierra Leone.

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The issue appears to be one of lack of capacity and management as well as of financial resources.[137]

Whatever the reason for the lack of effective government response, the pattern of HIV infection in other countries demonstrates that once the adult rate of infection passes 5%, the infection spreads exponentially – sometimes as swiftly as 50% per year.[138] If, as limited data suggest, the prevalence rates in Sierra Leone are significantly above that level, the country could potentially reach South Africa's prevalence rate of over 20% within 10 years if an effective HIV/AIDS control program is not established.[139]

Education

Although the Government of Sierra Leone is committed to improving children's education and welfare generally, and girls and boys are legally required to attend primary school, the government lacks the financial and practical capacity to provide basic education and other services for children, particularly in areas that have been under rebel control.[140] An estimated 70% of schools were destroyed during the fighting and rampant looting has left most facilities still standing without teaching materials and furniture.[141] Additionally, school fees and/or the cost of uniforms and books are prohibitive for many.[142] As a result, a large percentage of children are currently receiving no formal education, or have missed many years of school.[143] Furthermore, reentry into the educational system is proving to be a challenge for those whose schooling was disrupted by displacement or who suffered psychological trauma. Many children feel they are too old to return to the level where they left off and feel pressure to

[138] Ibid p. 11 citing a World Bank document.

[139] Ibid.

[140] According to a Government of Sierra Leone Survey Report on the Status of Women and Children in Sierra Leone at the End of the Decade, released in November 2000, 42% of primary school age children are attending school, though attendance levels in the North and East are markedly lower at 28% and 35% respectively.

[141] Global IDP Database, "Sierra Leone: Widespread Destruction of Schools in 1997 and 1999," www.db.idpproject.org

[142] Global IDP Database, "Sierra Leone: Combination of Factors Discourage Displaced Children from Attending School (2000)," www.db.idpproject.org

[143] Ibid.

[144] Global IDP Database, "Sierra Leone: Combination of Factors Discourage Displaced Children from Attending School (2000)," www.db.idpproject.org; Interview with Glenis Taylor of UNICEF; UNICEF recognizes the vital role of education in normalizing the lives of psychologically traumatized children and is particularly focused on ensuring that girls return to school. UNICEF has proposed working to improve access to formal primary education, but also to advocate for the development of specialized programs for displaced populations and for over-age children to complete primary education in accelerated learning programs, which would also include psychological counseling and peace building.

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earn income to help rebuild the lives of their families. Others now must take on the responsibility of breadwinner due to the death of parents or pregnancy resulting from rape.[144]

The Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs has primary responsibility for children's issues within the government and has been working actively with UNICEF and civil society to provide services and normalize conditions for children as a way to address the trauma so many of them have suffered.

Impact of War on Women

The impact of war on civilians has increased substantially in the past century. In World War I, approximately 5% of casualties were civilians, whereas in the 1990s it is estimated that 80% of war casualties were civilians, many of whom are women and children. Women and children also constitute the majority of the world's displaced and refugee populations.[145] This dramatic increase in the impact of conflict on civilians is likely due to the changing nature of conflict itself. Most conflicts today occur within a state's borders and are often characterized by deliberate and systematic violence against civilians and civilian institutions. Of 101 armed conflicts around the world between 1989 and 1996, 95 were internal disputes characterized by the use of light weapons and small decentralized fighting groups. These conflicts have devastating consequences for civilians.

Although rape is thought to be a common aspect of military conflict throughout history and in all regions of the world, rape, until recently, remained the "least condemned war crime,"[146] not because of inadequate legal provisions, but because of the international community's willingness in the past to tolerate sexual abuse of women and girls.[147] There had been little or no research on the scale of sexual violence, the factors that provoke it, or how to mitigate the problem.[148] Perhaps even less is known about how women recover after the trauma of rape in war and about the impact of rape on their communities.[149] Documenting sexual violence, already difficult during peacetime, is even more challenging during conflict when lack of ordinary support systems, general instability and collat-

[145] Worldwide Refugee Information, US Committee for Refugees, www.refugees.org/articles/women_refugees.htm

[146] Commission on Human Rights , *Preliminary report submitted by the Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women, its Causes and Consequences.* United Nations, 1994; p.64.

[147] Human Rights Watch, *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence during the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath*, 1996.

[148] Swiss S., Giller J.E., "Rape as a Crime of War: A Medical Perspective," *JAMA.* 1993; 270:612-615

[149] Ibid, p.2

[150] Ibid

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Consequences of Abuse †	
Self reported "depression" or symptoms of depression ‡	837(22)
No consequence	455 (12)
Killed/died after attack	420 (11)
Bodily injury	321 (8)
Stigmatized and rejected	27 (1)
Consequence of Sexual Assault, n=396	
Self-reported "sexually transmitted disease"	79 (20)
Self-reported pregnancy following rape	36 (9)

* Values are number (percent) unless stated otherwise
† May list more than one
‡ Symptoms of depression included "sleeping difficulties," "excessive worry," "unhappy," "change in appetite," "crying all the time," "cannot stop crying," "feeling bad," and "feeling sad."

Temne or Mende tribes who most commonly reported their occupation as farmers, petty traders and business women. Nearly one quarter of women were either separated or widowed due to war, had been displaced more than four times since 1990 and had, on average, lived in the IDP camps or Mile 91 Township for eighteen months. Fifty-seven percent of women reported that they had been displaced between one and six years ago, and 41% of women had been displaced between six and ten years ago.

The majority of women perceived their general health (89%) and mental health (94%) as "fair" or "poor" (Table 1). Approximately one third of women (280, 28%) reported suicidal ideation (thoughts or feelings), and 3% (34) had attempted suicide. Women reported types of aid that would help their states of mind the most, including humanitarian assistance (960, 97%), medical assistance (956, 96%), income generation projects (937, 94%), religious counseling and support (879, 89%), skills training (832, 84%), and mental health counseling (714, 72%).

Human Rights Abuses Reported among Household Members [165]

The 991 household representatives reported on the experiences of 9,166 household members, which included themselves and those who lived with

[165] The following 95% confidence intervals (CI) are calculated among household members (N=9166) for all human rights abuses (12.6 ± 0.635), abduction (9.0 ± 0.564), beatings (6.7 ± 0.494), killings (4.5 ± 0.415), sexual assaults among household members (4.4 ± 0.399), captured for less than 24 hours (3.4 ± .307), torture (1.6 ± 0.255), forced labor (1.2 ± 0.221), gunshot wounds (1.4 ± 0.239), bodily injuries (0.9 ± 0.192) and amputations of limbs or digits (0.2 ± 0.097); sexual assault among respondents where N=991 (9.0 ± 1.74), sexual assault among household females where N=5001 (7.9 ± 0.717), sexual assault among household males where N=3983 (0.15 ± 0.120). The 95% confidence intervals reported here can be used to calculate the confidence interval for the estimates of abuses of the total IDP population (see Figure 1) using (95% CI X N value).

TABLE 3:
Reported Abuses of Household Members (n=1157), by Offender

Reported Abuse*	RUF	"Rebels"	AFRC	West Side Boys	Ex-SLA	SLA	CDF	ECOMOG	UN
All Abuses, n=2266	1312 (58)	645 (28)	125 (5)	69 (3)	58 (2)	42 (2)	11 (.5)	3 (.1)	1 (.04)
Abduction, n=666	398 (60)	161 (24)	46 (7)	26 (4)	19 (3)	12 (2)	3 (.04)	1 (.1)	-
Beating, n=511	260 (51)	188 (37)	21 (4)	15 (3)	14 (3)	11 (2)	2 (.04)	0	-
Killing, n=335	218 (65)	90 (27)	10 (3)	1 (.3)	7 (2)	5 (2)	2 (.06)	1 (.3)	1 (.3)
Sexual Assault									
Females, n=353	186 (53)	103 (29)	23 (6)	17 (5)	11 (3)	12 (3)	0	1 (.3)	-
Males, n=3	2 (67)	1 (33)	0	0	0	0	0	0	-
Torture, n=135	81 (60)	37 (27)	9 (7)	0	3 (2)	2 (1)	3 (2)	0	-
Forced Labor, n=86	48 (56)	22 (26)	9 (10)	6 (7)	1 (1)	0	0	0	-
Gunshot Wound, n=108	75 (69)	29 (27)	2 (2)	1 (1)	0	0	1 (1)	0	-
Bodily Injury, n=49	35 (71)	12 (25)	0	1 (2)	1 (2)	0	0	0	-
Amputations, n=20	9(50)	2(11)	5(28)	2(11)	2(11)	0	0	0	-

*The 2266 abuses represent abuses (1 or more) listed by the 1157 household members who could identify the perpetrator. This data excludes those who could not list the perpetrator.

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them prior to their displacement (mean household size 9.4 ± 0.11) (Table 2). Of the 9,166 household members, 5,001 (55%) were females and 3,983 (44%) were males.[166] Overall, there was a total of 1157 household members with specific forms of war-related human rights abuses reported among the 9,166 household members. These included abductions (841, 9.3%), beatings (618, 6.7%), killings (414, 4%), and sexual violence against women (396, 8%) and men (6, 0.1%). Three hundred and sixteen (3%) were "captured" for less than 24 hours, 151 (2%) were tortured, 114 (1%) were forced into labor, 128 (1%) reported gunshot wounds, 85 (0.9%) had serious injuries, and 21 (0.2%) reported amputations. Burning of homes and/or looting of property also was commonly reported among household members (1,836, 20%).

Regarding sexual violence, 9% (94) of the 991 respondents reported one or more war-related sexual violence experiences. Study participants also reported war-related sexual violence among 396 (8%) female and 6 (.1%) male household members. The prevalence of war-related sexual violence among female household members may be as high as 11% (554/5001) if 158 women are included who did not report sexual violence per se, but did report abduction with the likely consequences of sexual violence, and who became pregnant, or experienced vaginal bleeding, pain, swelling, uterine pain, vaginal discharge, or sexually transmitted diseases.

For all abuses reported, the RUF was identified most often (1,490, 40%) as the perpetrator (Table 2). Table 3 and Figure 3 represent the 1,157 household members who reported abuses and could name the perpetrator. These household members had 2,266 incidents of abuse since each victim could have one or more abuses listed; however, this does not take into account those who did not know their perpetrators. In this analysis, the RUF was reported as the perpetrator 58% of the time. The most commonly reported consequences of all abuses reported among household members included "depression" or having symptoms of depression 837 (22%), 420 being killed (12%), 455 reported "no consequence" (11%), and 320 had bodily injury (8%). Respondents reported that 36 (9%) female household members became pregnant as a consequence of the attack. Respondents reported that the majority of the abuses among household members occurred in the last three years with most of these occurring between 1997 and1999 (Figure 2).

Characteristics among Respondents Reporting War-related Sexual Violence

Table 4 presents the characteristics of respondents reporting war-related sexual violence. Nine percent (94 of 991) of the respondents reported a

[166] There were a total of 9,166 household members but the gender was not indicated for 182 persons. Since some of these individuals may have experienced sexual assault but were not included in the analysis, it is likely to have led to an underestimate of sexual violence.

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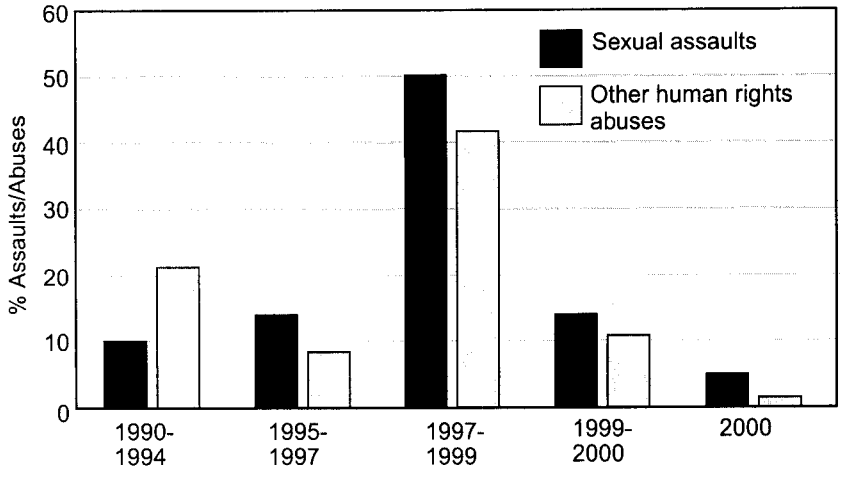
FIGURE 2:
Occurance of Sexual Assaults Among Respondents and Other Human Rights Abuses Among Household Members



personal account of sexual violence (Table 4). The mean number of attackers was 3.2. Sixty-eight percent of the incidents reportedly occurred in the last three years, with more than half (54%) in their home villages, and 22% while fleeing. More than half (60%) of the abuses lasted for one week or less. The majority of the incidents of sexual violence (63, 67%) occurred between 1997 and 1999. In addition, 22 (23%) of women reported being pregnant at the time of the attack with an average gestation of three months. Fifty-three percent of respondents and 47% of female household members who were sexually assaulted reported "face to face" contact specifically with RUF forces, compared with less than 6% for any other combatant group.

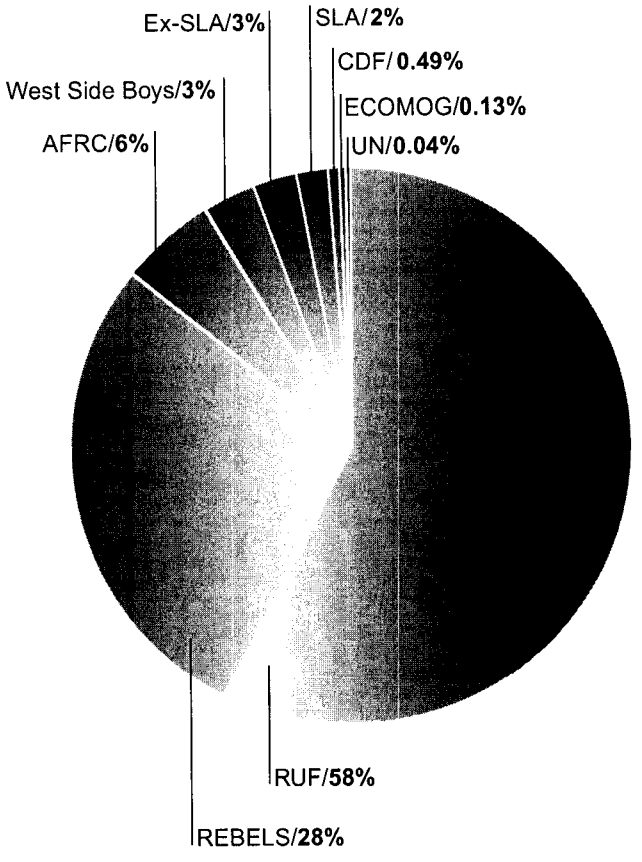
Overall, 79 (84%) of 94 respondents reported the identity of one or more of their perpetrators (Table 5). Of these, the RUF was the perpetrator 60% of the time (Figure 5). Other perpetrators reported included AFRC, West Side Boys unspecified "rebels", and both SLA and ex-SLA. The UN peacekeepers and CDF militia forces were not identified as perpetrators among respondents reporting sexual violence.

Rape was reported by 84 of the 94 women reporting sexual violence and 31 reported being gang raped. Also, approximately one third of the 94 women reported abduction, being stripped of clothing and being forced to undress. Nine women reported forced marriage to combatants, and six women reported pregnancy as a consequence of the attack. Forty-four percent of women felt the incident of sexual violence had "quite a bit" or an "extreme" effect on relationships with family and friends. The

most commonly reported consequences of the attack included bodily injury/physical disability, sexually transmitted disease, and "reproductive complications" including miscarriages.[167]

The majority (91%) of respondents reported being "quite a bit" (161, 16%) or "extremely" (740, 75%) worried about sexual violence to themselves or family members by combatants (Figure 4). Concern about sexual violence by family members, friends, or civilian strangers was lower (39% "quite a bit" or "extremely" worried). In addition, 91 (9%) of respondents reported sexual abuse (occurring at age 15±1.2 years) by family members, friends, or civilian strangers during their lifetime.

FIGURE 3:
Proportion of Reported Human Rights Abuses by Offender



[167] Female Genital Cutting is reportedly widely practiced in Sierra Leone. Women who are raped and who have undergone female genital cutting are likely to be at increased risk for genital trauma and related complications.

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TABLE 4:
Characteristics Among Respondents Reporting Sexual Violence

Characteristics	Respondents Reporting Sexual Assaults* n=94
Reporting Sexual Assault, n=991	94 (9)
# of Attackers, mean ± SE (range)	3.2 ± 0.39 (1-25)
Timing of Abuse, n=92	
Within last 3 years	63 (68)
> 3 years ago	23 (25)
Unsure	6 (6)
Where Abuse Occurred, n=91	
Home village/town	49 (54)
While fleeing	20 (22)
While abducted	18 (20)
Non home village	2 (2)
IDP camp/town	1 (1)
Other	1 (1)
How Long Abuse Lasted, n=91	
Less than one week	55 (60)
One week to 1 month	16 (18)
1-6 months	10 (11)
More than 6 months	10 (11)
# Women Pregnant at Time of Assault	22 (23)
Months Pregnant During Assault, mean ± SE (range)	3.1 ± 0.47 (1-7)
Abuse †	
Rape	84 (89)
Being forced to undress/stripped of clothing	35 (37)
Abduction	31 (33)
Gang rape	31 (33)
Molestation	13 (14)
Sexual slavery	14 (15)
Forced marriage	9 (9)
Insertion of foreign object	4 (4)
Consequences of the Abuse †	
Bodily injury/physical disability	48 (51)
Self reported "sexually transmitted disease"	32 (34)
Self reported "reproductive complications/miscarriage"	19 (20)
Stigmatized/rejected by family and/or community	14 (15)
Fear of STD/AIDS	9 (9)
Self reported "pregnancy" after the assault	6 (6)
Other	19 (20)

TABLE 5:
Reported Sexual Violence of Respondents (n=79) by Offender

Reported Assaults	RUF	"Rebels"	AFRC	West Side Boys	Ex-SLA	SLA	CDF	ECOMOG	UN
All Assaults, 213	129 (61)	21 (10)	18 (8)	19 (9)	12 (6)	10 (5)	0	4 (2)	-
Rape, n=75	48 (64)	10 (13)	5 (7)	4 (5)	4 (5)	3 (4)	0	1 (1)	-
Abduction, n=34	21 (62)	2 (6)	4 (12)	3 (9)	1 (3)	3 (9)	0	0	-
Stripped of clothing, n=39	22 (56)	3 (8)	4 (10)	4 (10)	3 (8)	2 (5)	0	1 (3)	-
Gang Rape, n=30	16 (53)	3 (10)	3 (10)	4 (13)	3 (10)	0	0	1 (3)	-
Molestation, n=14	8 (57)	3 (21)	0	1 (7)	1 (7)	0	0	1 (7)	-
Sexual Slavery, n=12	7 (58)	0	1 (8)	3 (25)	0	1 (8)	0	0	-
Forced marriage, n=9	7 (78)	0	1 (11)	0	0	1 (11)	0	0	-

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TABLE 7:
Beliefs about Justice among Respondents Reporting Sexual Assault

Belief	Respondents Reporting Sexual Assault* n=94
Who Should Be Punished for Sexual Assaults †	
Perpetrators	30 (32)
Commanders	17 (18)
All involved in attacks	17 (18)
Believe Perpetrator Should Be Punished, n=88	
Yes	37 (42)
No	51 (58)
Reasons Why Perpetrators Should Not Be Punished, n=51 †	
In the spirit of reconciliation	35 (69)
Fear of reprisal/revenge	13 (25)
No confidence in a system for such punishments	8 (16)
Respondent just wants to forget about incident	4 (8)
Other	13 (25)
Believe Perpetrators Commander Was Aware of Assault	34 (36)
Believe Punishment of Perpetrators Will Prevent This From Happening to Others	33 (35)
Willing to Give Name to Truth and Reconciliation Commission or the Special Court	22 (23)

* Values are number (percent) † May list more than one

Comments on Survey Findings

The findings of this study indicate that combatants (primarily, members of rebel forces) have committed widespread human rights abuses against civilians in Sierra Leone, including: abductions, beatings, killings, sexual violence against women and men, being "captured" for less than 24 hours, torture, forced labor, gunshot wounds, serious injuries, and amputations. These abuses were experienced on an individual level by a substantial number of participants and their household members. The respondents in this study reported at least one of these abuses had occurred during the past ten years of conflict among 94% of households surveyed (Figure 7). Recent PHR surveys in Chechnya[168] and Kosovo[169] found abuse rates of 19% and 31% respectively among participant households. The burning of homes and/or looting of property was also

[168] Physicians for Human Rights, *Endless Brutality: War Crimes in Chechnya*, PHR, 2001.

[169] Physicians for Human Rights, *War Crimes in Kosovo: A Population Based Assessment of Human Rights Violations Against Kosovar Albanians*, PHR, 1999.

TABLE 8:
Majority Opinions Among Primary Respondents on Women's Rights and Gender Roles in Society

Shared by more than 90% of women
• Women and girls should have the same access to education as men and boys
Shared by more than 80% of women
• Women should be able to express themselves freely
• There should be legal protections for the rights of women
• Women and girls need more education about their reproductive health
• A good wife obeys her husband even if she disagrees
Shared by more than 70% of women
• Family problems should only be discussed with people in the family
• Women and girls need more education about their rights to refuse sex
• More should be done to protect women and girls from having sex when they don't want to
Shared by more than 60% of women
• A man has the right to beat his wife if she disobeys
• It is a wife's duty/obligation to have sex with her husband even if she does not want to
• Women have the right to control the number and spacing of their children

commonly reported among household members. The majority of these abuses experienced by interviewees occurred between 1997 and 1999. Forty percent of these abuses were attributed to RUF forces; however, of those who could identify a perpetrator, 58% of abuses were reported to be due to the RUF. Fifty-three percent of respondents and 47% of all female household members reporting "face to face" contact specifically with RUF forces reported experiencing sexual violence. Sexual violence was reported by less than 6% of respondents reporting "face to face" contact with any other combatant group.

Sexual violence in war has increasingly been recognized as a means of demoralizing individuals, families and communities[170] and is used as a weapon to disable an enemy by dissolving bonds between family and society.[171] Today, in the context of war, rape and other forms of sexual violence have been recognized as instruments of genocide, crimes against humanity,

[170] Swiss, S., Giller, J.E., "Rape as a Crime of War: A Medical Perspective," *JAMA*, 1993;270:612-615; Human Rights Watch, *Shattered Lives: Sexual Violence During the Rwandan Genocide and its Aftermath*, New York, NY: Human Rights Watch: 1996; Herman, J.L., *Trauma and Recovery*, New York, NY: Harper Collins: 1992.

[171] Goldfeld, A.E., Mollica, R.F., Pesavento, B.H. & Farone, S.V., "The Physical and Psychological Sequelae of Torture," *JAMA*. 1988;259:2725-2729.

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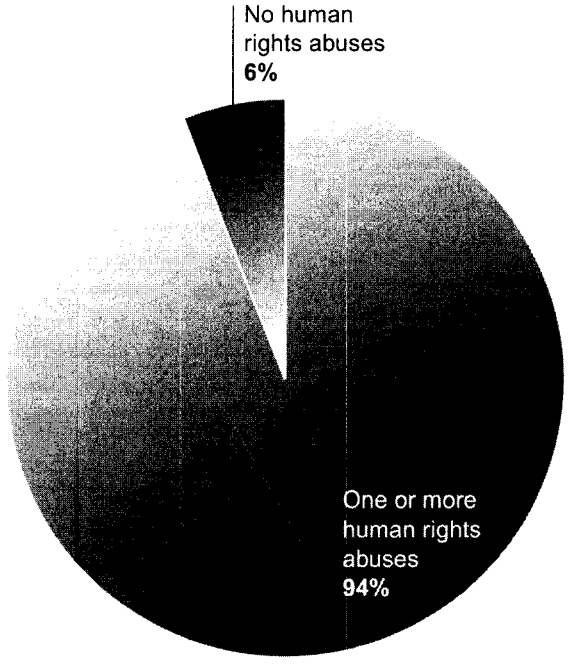
FIGURE 7:
Proportion of Households Reporting Human Rights Abuse



means of torture, and crimes of war[172] and can be prosecuted as such.[173] They also constitute crimes against humanity "when committed as part of a widespread or systematic attack directed against any civilian population, with knowledge of the attack."[174]

To generate population estimates of sexual violence among the IDP and non-IDP females in Sierra Leone, the PHR/UNAMSIL team assumed a total IDP population of 1.0-1.3 million (55% female)[175] and a non-IDP population of 2.7-3.0 million (50% female).[176] By extrapolating the number of incidents of war-related sexual violence reported by participants in

[172] Kunarac, Kovac & Vukovic IT-96-23 and IT-96-23/1 "FOCA." Available at: www.un.org/icty/foca/trialc2/judgement/index.htm.; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (adopted 7/17/98). Available at: untreaty.un.org/English/notpubl/rome-en.htm.; Askin, K.D., *War Crimes Against Women: Prosecution in International War Crimes Tribunals*, The Hague, M. Nijhoff Publishers, Distributed by Kluwer Law International, 1997; Askin, K., "Women and International Humanitarian Law," in Askin, K.D. & Koenig, D.M. editors, *Women and International Human Rights Law*, Ardsley, NY: Transnational. 1999. Vol. I.

[173] Kunarac, Kovac & Vukovic; Askin, K.D., *War Crimes Against Women: Prosecution in International War Crimes Tribunals*; Askin K. "Women and International Humanitarian Law"

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the sample to the total female IDP population, PHR estimates that approximately 50,000 to 64,000 Sierra Leonean IDP women may have suffered such human rights abuses. The prevalence of sexual violence among IDP women and girls, including war-related or non-war-related, in this study was 17%, or an estimated 94,000-122,000 individuals. If non-war-related sexual violence among non-IDP females is added to the IDP totals (assuming a 9% prevalence rate), as many as 215,000-257,000 women and girls in Sierra Leone currently may have been affected by sexual violence.

This study indicates that war-related rape and other forms of sexual violence were committed on a widespread basis among IDPs in Sierra Leone. In fact, the prevalence of war-related sexual violence (8%-9%) was equivalent to the lifetime prevalence of non war-related sexual violence (9%) among the study participants, increasing Sierra Leone's total prevalence rates to 17%.[177] The lifetime prevalence of rape in the United States is 9%, though the average life span of an American is more than twice that of a Sierra Leonean.[178]

Rates of sexual violence vary based on research methodology and populations surveyed. Studies of sexual violence in Sierra Leone that include non-probability samples[179] or select populations such as clinic patients[180] generally report higher prevalence rates of sexual violence but cannot be generalized to broader populations. The prevalence of war-related sexual violence in this study was less than that reported in Liberia (15%),[181] but

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[174] Rome Statute; Askin, K.D., *War Crimes Against Women: Prosecution in International War Crimes Tribunals*; Askin, K., "Women and International Humanitarian Law"; United Nations, Draft Statute of the Special Court for Sierra Leone, S/2000/915.

[175] United Nations Office for the Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA), UNOCHA Database: IDP Census (data collected February 2001), UNOCHA, February, 2001.

[176] Norwegian Refugee Council, Sierra Leone Section: Population profile and figures, Available at: www.db.idpproject.org/Sites/IdpProjectDb/idpSurvey.nsf/1c963eb504904cde41256782007493b8/fdc6d215bab90118c12569dd002b1aec?OpenDocument; United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, available at: unhcr.ch/un & ref/numbers/numb2000.pdf.

[177] One percent of participants had experienced both war-related and non-war-related sexual violence.

[178] Crime Victim Research and Treatment Center, *Rape in America*, Charleston, SC: Medical University of South Carolina: 1992.

[179] Coker, A.L., & Richter, D.L., "Violence against Women in Sierra Leone: Frequency and Correlates of Intimate Partner Violence and Forced Sexual Intercourse, *African Journal of Reproductive Health*, 1998; 2(1):61-72.; Giller, J.E., Bracken, P.J., Kabaganda, S., "Uganda: War, Women, and Rape," *Lancet*, 1991;337:604.

[180] Shanks, L., Ford, N., Schull, M. & de Jong, K., "Responding to Rape," *Lancet*, 2001;357:9252; Human Rights Watch, "Women's Rights Project" in: *Human Rights Watch World Report 1998*, New York, NY: Human Rights Watch: 1998.

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exceeded that found in other population-based assessments of refugees and displaced persons (0-0.1%),[182] including a prior study conducted in Freetown, Sierra Leone (2%).[183]

Physical injuries and self-reported "depression" were among the most common consequences reported following sexual violence. The adverse physical and psychological consequences of sexual violence are described in other studies.[184] The prevalence of sexual violence, including war-related or non-war-related, suggests a serious health burden for individual and community members that cannot be addressed adequately by services that currently exist in Sierra Leone. The assistance needs most commonly identified by women reporting sexual violence included humanitarian assistance, including food and shelter, medical care, income generating projects, and women's support groups. These needs were not significantly different ($p<0.05$) from Sierra Leonean women who did not experience sexual violence but did experience other human rights abuses.

The majority of participants reporting sexual violence indicated the belief that their perpetrators should not be punished and, among these women, the most common reasons cited were "in the spirit of reconciliation" and "fear of reprisal/revenge." This highlights the need to protect survivors of war-related sexual violence including those that come forward to testify. Twenty-three percent of these women indicated an interest in giving their names for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court that are expected to be established in 2002. This may be explained by feelings of shame, and/or fear of being stigmatized or rejected also reported in the study, as well as a desire to put the incident(s) behind them. Such concerns are not unfounded in societies where women are financially dependent on their husbands or extended family and are subjected to structural social inequality on many levels.[185] Being cast out of a community or family can have dire consequences not only for the woman but her children as well.[186]

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[181] Swiss, S., Jennings, P., Aryee, G., et. al. "Violence against Women during the Liberian Civil Conflict," *JAMA*, 1998; 279:625-629.

[182] PHR, "A Population-based Assessment of Human Rights Abuses against Ethnic Albanian Refugees from Kosovo," *American Journal of Public Health*, 2001;91(12); Physicians for Human Rights, *Endless Brutality: War Crimes in Chechnya*, Physicians for Human Rights, May 2001:1-143; Physicians for Human Rights, *Women's Health and Human Rights in Afghanistan: A Population-Based Study*, Physicians for Human Rights, May, 2001.

[183] de Jong, K., Mulham, M. & van der Kam, S., *Assessing Trauma in Sierra Leone: Psychological Questionnaire: Freetown Survey Outcomes*, Doctors Without Borders/Médecins sans Frontières, January 11, 2000. Available at: www.doctorswithoutborders.org/publications/reports/2000/sierraleone_01-2000.shtml

[184] Resnick, H.S., Acierno, R., Kilpatrick, D.G., "Health Impact of Interpersonal Violence, 2: Medical and Mental Health Outcomes," *Behavioral Medicine*, 1997;23:65-78; Schafran, L.H., "Topics for Our Times: Rape is a Major Public Health Issue, "*American Journal of Public Health*, 1996;86(1):15-17.

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Despite 80% of women expressing that there should be legal protection for the rights of women, more than half of women reported that their husbands had the right to beat them and that it was a wife's duty to have sex with her husband even if she did not want to. The apparent disparity between such beliefs and international principles of human rights suggests a need for public discourse and education on local, regional and international levels.

Limitations

It is likely that the prevalence of war-related sexual violence in the study was underestimated because of willful non-disclosure of sexual violence and the lack of privacy in some of the interviews, despite efforts to ensure privacy. Reasons for willful non-disclosure often include fear of retribution by an assailant, of being stigmatized and rejected, blamed for the attack, and/or the psychological consequences of disclosure.[187] In addition, the average age of participants (female heads of households) reporting war-related sexual violence (34 ± 0.48 years) was more than twice the average age of females experiencing non war-related sexual violence reported in the study (15±1.2 years). Although interviewers were careful to explain there would be no material or other gain by participating in the survey, the number of abuses reported in the study may have been over or underestimated if IDPs judged that it was in their material, political or psychological interest to exaggerate or conceal claims of abuse.

[185] Ulin, P., "African Women and AIDS: Negotiating Behavioral Change," *Soc Sci Med.* 1992;34(1):63-74; Bruyn, M., "Women and AIDS in Developing Countries," *Soc Sci Med.* 1992;34(3):249-262.

[186] Ibid.

[187] Koss, M.P., "Detecting the Scope of Rape: A Review of Prevalence Research Methods," *Journal of Interpersonal Violence,* 1993;8:198-222.

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ask for punishment for them, it will never amount to what I went through, so the best thing is just to leave them so that we can have peace in Sierra Leone.[205]

A desire for a return to peace was also expressed by Fatmata, a 21 year-old woman with two children:

I was dragged out of the house, but when they saw me, they said that they wanted a virgin, even then I was told to undress...a gun was put to my head, I was kidnapped and constantly threatened with rape...I just want peace in the country, I want things to go back to the way they were in the old days...[206]

Madina K., a young woman, was one of the women who expressed a desire to bring one of those involved in her attack to justice:

...They'd wanted to burn the house down with me in it...I was beaten, raped, forced to go with them. They told me to do bad things, they threatened me with death and beat me. Two men raped me. The first one would go and call other men to come and join in. Others intervened and saved me...I don't want revenge. I don't even remember who they were. The only one I want punished is the one who kidnapped me. I want him to be punished for his wickedness...[207]

Some victims revealed that their attackers made explicit threats. A 30 year-old woman from the north was raped and beaten by two RUF members in 1997. Her husband was also beaten and their home burned and looted. She told PHR, "They [the attackers] were saying to me after they raped me if I will say it to anyone, they will come and kill me."

In spite of the risks, women did offer to give their names to the Special Court or the TRC. One victim who agreed to testify said enthusiastically: "I am ready to go anywhere in the world to explain myself."

The PHR survey administered in 2001 concluded with a series of six open-ended questions for those respondents who reported war-related sexual violence to provide more details about their experiences and additional information about their health, their future, and other concerns. All participants were also encouraged to provide additional comments at the end of the interview. The experiences and concerns women described in their answers to these questions are briefly described here.

Identity and Affiliation of Attackers

Participants were asked to provide identifying information about their attackers and their affiliation:

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[205] PHR interview, March 2000, Freetown, Sierra Leone

[206] PHR interview, March 2000, Freetown, Sierra Leone

[207] PHR interview, March 2000, Freetown, Sierra Leone

Do you know anything that could identify your attackers? Did they call each other by name? How do you know which military group your attackers were with?

Many respondents were able to provide first names of their attackers – both real names and *noms de guerre* such as Blood, Pepper, Nasty, Bullet, Cut Hand, Poison, God Father, Rebel Baby, Dry Gin, Rambo and Commando Around the World. While one woman was gang-raped by eight members of the RUF, she only named one perpetrator: "His name is Body Naked and if I see him now I will identify him." Several women offered the full names of their attackers as well as descriptions of them.

The affiliation of perpetrators was understood primarily through verbal communication, "They call their leader's name, Foday Sankoh and their commander Superman;" "They call themselves West Side Boys and they took me to their base and I was with them until I escaped." A twenty-five year-old woman from Port Loko who was captured by the AFRC in 1998 and whose husband was tortured said that the perpetrators referred to themselves as "our junta the AFRC." Two women specifically identified members of the Sierra Leone Army, though it is possible that they were part of the military that turned on the government: "They said they were the Sierra Leone Military Group."

Dress also played a role in linking individuals to a group in the minds of those who were attacked. One woman told PHR, "They were running after us and they were calling Superman, Colonel Issa, and everybody knows that these people were RUF, because they were always at the bush and wore T-shirts with "RUF" printed on them. I was given one to wear by Gold Teeth." A 16-year-old from Port Loko who was gang raped by five attackers and held for months was able to identify her attackers "because they were wearing Tupac [Shakur] T-shirts, so I know they were rebels." The RUF were identified numerous times as wearing red scarves tied around their heads. "They identify each other by names. One called himself Abdullah, another Mohammed and the last Sorie. They all had red cloths on the forehead. The Ex-SLA wore their uniforms and identified themselves as Ex-SLA," recounted a woman who had been abducted and gang raped. Another woman who had a similar experience in which she was jointly attacked by RUF and Ex-SLA claimed: "They had red cloth on their forehead and call their leaders name, which is Poppeh,[208] meaning Foday Sankoh." Another woman told PHR, "They had red headbands and green uniforms on and said they were fighting for Foday Sankoh (and) that they were going to fight until Tejan Kabbah goes away."

Of the 93 survivors of sexual violence interviewed in the PHR survey

[208] The name of Poppeh, apparently a nickname for Foday Sankoh, was mentioned by many women in the questionnaire. While it was spelled differently by the various researchers, it is reasonable to assume that they are all referring to the same name.

who were able to identify the affiliation of their perpetrator(s) in the PHR survey, the RUF was named 63 times, four of which were in complicity with ex-SLA soldiers. The West Side Boys were named 14 times, the AFRC eight times, Liberians two times, and the Sierra Leone military twice, though it is unclear whether their loyalty was with the government at the time of the attacks. Most attackers identified themselves verbally as well as by their dress, but also, in the incidents perpetrated by RUF fighters, by declaring their loyalty to their leader. Several victims concluded the affiliation of their perpetrators because they were "based near by."

While no direct evidence of command responsibility was provided to PHR, several women pointed a finger at rebel leadership. A 30 year-old woman from the North who was abducted, raped and beaten by RUF stated, "I just know that the leader of the fighters is the fault because if he stopped them, they would never do it – because he supported it – that's why."

Many participants were clear about the affiliation of their attackers. It must, however, be understood that many of the rebel factions collaborating and loyalties shifted at various times of the war. As such, in some cases, it may be difficult to determine perpetrator affiliation with certainty.

Relationship between Victim and Perpetrator

The complexity of the relationship between victim and perpetrator that has on occasion developed in the bush must be noted. It has been reported that some women and girls who were abducted chose to remain with their captors. There are a number of possible explanations. The PHR survey revealed that some who became pregnant as a result of rape consider themselves married to their captors and believe they have no choice but to remain with their "husbands." Other possible factors contributing to the reported phenomena of abductees voluntarily remaining with their captors include: identification with the abductor, drug addiction, the more desirable food options reportedly available in the bush, fear that they will be rejected by their families and communities if they go home, and the fact that many abductees, particularly those who were abducted as young girls are now accustomed to their new way of life and surrogate families.[209]

For example, one 16 year-old girl from the Port Loko area with no schooling was raped and abducted by a member of the RUF. She thinks commanders were aware of the attacks and she "can identify her attacker because she knows his name and he forced her to marry him." While she expressed fear of contracting a disease and of future sexual violence by combatants, she does not think her perpetrator should be punished now because he is her legal husband and they have a child together.

[209] PHR conversations Corinne Dufka of Human Rights Watch, January, 2001 and with NGO representatives who were providing services to returned abductees, March 2000.

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A 16-year-old from the Eastern area was abducted by the RUF in 1999 with her sister and forced to marry her captor. She also claims the commander was aware of the attack. She does not think her attacker should be punished because of fear of reprisals and in the spirit of reconciliation:

> *In the bush he was called Lt. Papay, ... He said they were Mosquito's group. That he was pure rebel and would marry me and carry me into the bush and live with me there because they are bad people and want to destroy me and even the country.*

What Perpetrators Said During the Attacks

More than half of the women who reported sexual violence answered the question, "What did [your attackers] say to you, or to each other?" About a fourth of these reported that their attackers explicitly claimed to be targeting supporters of Pa (Tejan) Kabba. Of these, many women were directly told to go tell Pa Kabba about what had happened to them: One woman told PHR 'They told me to go complain to Tejan Kabbah after they have burnt my clothes and house, then raped me." Another reported that "they told me if I refuse to lie down they will kill me and after they finished they told me to go and report to Pa Kabba." This was almost identical to what was reported to PHR by another woman: "They told me they are going to kill me if I refuse to follow them and they told me to lie down. They also used all sort of obscene language at me and they told me to go and tell Tejan Kabba." These remarks suggest that the attacks were politically motivated.

Other women reported comments made by their attackers that suggest political motivation. According to one participant, "they asked me, 'whom are you going to vote for?'" Another told PHR "they said they are coming with their boss Foday Sankoh to take over from Pa Kabbah, and that we should support them." A 22 year-old woman who was abducted by the RUF with her husband's other wife quoted her attackers; "We will never release you until we marry you... Because Foday Sankoh is not president, that's why we are doing this to women." Another told PHR "they said they were fighting because the government was corrupt." A 19 year-old woman was raped along with all seven other female members of her household. "They were saying we are not ready for disarmament until they release Foday Sankoh from prison to come to us."

Many also reported to PHR that they were threatened with violence or death by their attackers if they did not cooperate, as evidenced by some of the statements above. A woman from Port Loko whose husband was beaten, whose sons were abducted and are still missing, and who was raped along with her daughter and her husband's other wife reported the

52. Statement on the historic return to Freetown, Sierra Leone, of the Leaders of the Alliance of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, 3 October 1999. (Freetown, Sunday. October 3, 1999).

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STATEMENT ON THE HISTORIC RETURN TO FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE, OF THE LEADERS OF THE ALLIANCE OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL

Freetown, Sunday, October 3, 1999

We herald the dawn of a new era. The war has ended. The era of peace, forgiveness and reconciliation has come.

We stand before you today to ask for forgiveness and a spirit of reconciliation across the country.

We offer hands of kindred understanding and love to all those who we have wronged. You, who we have wronged, you have every human right to feel bitter and unforgiving but we plead with you for forgiveness.

Those who have died; those who are grieving for the loss of their loved ones; those who have been disabled; those whose property have been destroyed; those traumatized - the children, the youth, the women and the old aged - we ask for their forgiveness.

We ask for forgiveness from the displaced and refugees.

We also ask for forgiveness and a spirit of reconciliation from the relatives and governments of all those foreign troops who lost their lives and suffered casualties in their tour of duty in Sierra Leone.

We ask for forgiveness and a spirit of reconciliation from members of the international community whose good will has been frustrated by this war. We ask of the same from non-governmental organisations, journalists and civil society groups both local and foreign.

We will like to repeat that the war has ended. To this effect, all prisoners of war are to be released. All roads are opened. To complement this, we call on the government to release all political prisoners and prisoners of war.

We are no longer in a state of war. We are in a state of peace and our presence here today is a testimony to our commitment to the full implementation of the Lome Peace Accord.

We have come to stay and to help consolidate the peace. We want all fears to be removed from our society starting from today. We are now in an era of peace. We are in an era of absolute respect for human rights.

All fears must be removed from our society. The state of emergency must be lifted immediately as we are no longer in a state of war. We have a responsibility now to remove all signals of mistrust, fear and war. The curfew must be lifted. All so-called collaborators are freed of their charges and we welcome them back into our society. Let know one be intimidated or live in fear in the new Sierra Leone we are about to create.

We are happy to announce to the nation today that the reason that brought together the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council still remains. We came together to end the war. We shall remain together to consolidate the peace. Nothing will divide us as our union or alliance is with the blessing of the Almighty Allah/God and our glorious ancestors.

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Our alliance is for peace! Our alliance is for peace! Our alliance is for peace.

With peace comes politics. The RUF/AFRC alliance will enter into politics. By this, therefore, the RUF/AFRC alliance is to be transformed from a military alliance to a political alliance in accordance with the Lome Peace Accord.

To further demonstrate our abiding commitment to peace, we the leadership and high command of the Revolutionary United Front and the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council are happy to announce today the transformation of the RUF/AFRC alliance into a political movement. We usher in a vibrant political movement for peace. The RUF/AFRC alliance is now the ALLIANCE FOR PEACE (AFP)!

Very soon we will announce the symbol and flag of the Alliance for Peace (AFP). Our chosen symbol will be that of peace, goodwill and respect for human rights. Our chosen flag will reflect the strength and pride of our Pan-African heritage. We shall strive for the empowerment of our people so that the root causes of the civil war shall be removed from our society forever. Our rallying call shall be "Power to the People". Our Alliance is for Peace and we are here to sustain the peace and contribute to the creation of a new Sierra Leone of equal opportunity, freedom and justice for all.

We have come home to stay! We have come home to build! We have come home to remove fear, intimidation and mistrust from our society.

We embrace you, our people, in the spirit of forgiveness and reconciliation.

Our dear nation has suffered enough but at long last peace is now at hand. All the fighting forces of this country will be mobilised to rebuild this country. We will transform ourselves into builders of homes, schools, hospitals, markets, roads, bridges, airfields and dams to provide electricity. We shall make farms, fish ponds and raise livestock. We will be the motivating force behind the regeneration of our mining industry. We will transform the motivation on the battlefield to the fields of construction and development. This is the challenge we have put before us. Our movement for peace is also a movement for reconstruction and development.

Fellow Sierra Leoneans, join us in expressing our profound gratitude to all those who have patiently assisted us on this our footpath to peace and democracy. We thank the Heads of State of the ECOWAS Authority, their governments and people for helping us to achieve peace at last. We thank the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the European Union and the Commonwealth for listening to the cries of Sierra Leoneans for peace and helping the nation to focus on the benefits of peace. We thank the NGO community, journalists and the civil society groups who constantly reminded the warring factions of their human rights obligations. To them and the international community who supported them we reaffirm our commitment to the observance of human rights. Let their collective voice continue to ring in our ears and remind us of our human rights obligations to the rest of society.

We hold our Alliance for Peace sacred and therefore our commitment to peace and our desire to see to the implementation of the Lome Peace Accord in full.

We are at home and there is no turning back. We have come to help build a new Sierra Leone. May the Almighty Allah/God and our glorious ancestors continue to guide and bless us all.

53. Personal Statement by Lt. JP Koroma on 1 October 1999.

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PERSONAL STATEMENT BY Lt. Col. J.P. Koroma on October 1st 1999.

Previous to May 1997, I did not collude with the RUF/SL nor did I ever collaborate with any coup plot. I want to hereby inform my brothers and sisters in the Diaspora that yesterday was the very first time that I ever met with the RUF leader.

On the 23rd March 1991, I was the very first officer who was sent from Daru Barracks to counter the RUF at Bomaru in Eastern Sierra Leone and until May 1997, God being my witness, I never had any contact with the RUF leadership. However, I had seen the devastation that the war had wrought on the country. In 1997, when I saw an opportunity to get peace for Sierra Leone through dialogue and power sharing, I worked hard to achieve this in spite of the enormous misunderstandings that were created.

Yesterday, after meeting with Chairman Foday Sankoh, I am very pleased that we are one step closer to the meeting between President Kabbah, Foday Sankoh and myself that I repeatedly called for in 1997 and 1998.

I am fully aware of the concerns by the International Community and my countrymen about the state of the Lomé Peace Accord. I want to assure all that the meeting between Chairman Sankoh and myself went well. I want to assure all that my men and I are fully committed to the Lomé Peace Accord albeit the necessary addendum(s) that would have to be attached in the near future. I am very sincere in seeing my country at peace and seeing that the socio-economic problems that caused the RUF to take up arms be addressed.

I am very thankful to President Charles Taylor for the role he has played in seeing that the first face to Face meeting between Chairman Sankoh and myself went smoothly. My first meeting with Foday Sankoh was successful because of the diplomacy showed by President Charles Taylor. After the meeting at the Liberian Executive mansion, I held a second meeting with Foday Sankoh again last evening. This ended at 11pm. I had suspected that Chairman Sankoh's earlier statements referencing me had been made based on a lot of misinformation that he had received. Yesterday, after meeting with me, the RUF Leader publicly told President Taylor and others that he had been largely misinformed about my motives.

Again, I want to assure my brothers, sisters and the International Community that Chairman Sankoh and myself will work together to see the full implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord. There are however a few points that we wish the world to be made aware of:

1. The document released this week by the Sierra Leone Government, which promises to see to the grievances of the Sierra Leone Army, was signed not by our Commander-In-Chief, President Kabbah but by his deputy, Vice President Demby. We welcome the written promise by the government to see to the re-instatement and payment of salaries of my men but we question the rationale behind Demby's signature on the document as against President Kabbah's.

2. The exact role of the Civil Defence Force in the Peace process has to be seriously considered by all concerned. These fighters should not be made to feel that they have been used and are now being marginalised. The assurance from their leaders that all is well is in sharp contrast to the reality on the field. A package must be designed to rehabilitate and re-integrate the civil defence force fighters. In the current situation, any fighting force, however small can disrupt the Lomé Accord if they feel aggrieved.

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3. All addendum(s) to the Lome Peace Accord including the current proposal signed by Vice President Demby must be signed by President Kabbah, Chairman Sankoh, myself and all the moral guarantors of the Lome Peace Accord before they can be considered as Addendum(s) to the Lomé Accord. They must also be speedily passed through parliament for legislative approval.

Finally but most importantly, I want to appeal to my countrymen to forgive my men for atrocities that they might have committed. I sympathise with the suffering of my brothers and sisters throughout Sierra Leone and I am again assuring them that I, Lt. Col. Johnny Paul Koroma, am fully committed to making Sierra Leone a land of peace and subsequent development. I had been kept out of contact with my men for 18 months since February 1998; However, as from now, I will see to it that the suffering inflicted on the populace be brought to an end. Too many innocent people on all sides of the war spectrum have died. I want to encourage us all against the shedding of blood. Let us now look towards making our rich country a place we can all be proud of.

54. Revolutionary United Front's Apology to the Nation, delivered on SLBS, 18 June 1997.

16476

REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT'S APOLOGY TO THE NATION
Delivered on SLBS, 18 June 1997

Fellow Countrymen,

For the past six years or so, we have been living in an environment of hatred and divisiveness. We looked at our brothers and killed them in cold blood, we removed our sisters from their hiding places to undo their feminity, we slaughtered our mothers and butchered our fathers. It was really a gruesome experience which has left a terrible landmark in our history. But the atrocities that occured must not be taken in the context of a personal vendetta. They were the result of the rottenness of a system which could not be uprooted except by brutal means. We did not take to the bush because we wanted to be barbarians, not because we wanted to be inhuman, but because we wanted to state our humanhood to a society so deep that had the RUF not emerged, we wonder if we would not have still been under the yoke of that wretched regime.

In the process of cleaning the system, however, we have wronged the great majority of our countrymen. We have sinned both in the sight of our Sierra Leonean brothers and sisters, for all the terror and the mayhem we unleashed on you in our bid to make Sierra Leone a country that all Sierra Leoneans would be proud of.

Today, we have rejoined you. We have come back as prodigal sons, brothers and sisters, to meet our families in our different homes, so that we all can sit in our houses in peace and tell tales to our young ones of how Sierra Leone was once cleansed of the mess that unpatriotic politicians brought to her in yonder years. Let the farmers take their tools and go to their farms in peace, let the young women go to the stream and swim in peace, let them sing to their loved ones under the moonshine in peace, let Sierra Leoneans walk in peace, let us talk in peace, let us travel in peace, and just let us live in peace. We have finally discovered the right atmosphere for a peaceful co-existence.

We must accomodate each other if we want to live in peace, and that is the miracle that has occurred in Sierra Leone throught the coming of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). We have accepted to join forces with this government because it is the first to demonstrate a genuine feeling of brotherhood for us - it is the government that has seen us as Sierra Leoneans who came together to stand for a cause for the general good. We want to assure everybody that we are sincerely and genuinely committed to the maintenance and sustenance of this miraculously achieved long-awaited peace. We have not come to terrorize you, our brothers and sisters, we have come to embrace you in love and harmony.

Our members are not involved in the recent spate of armed attacks on residents of Freetown. No RUF member has so far been caught looting or behaving in any indisciplinary manner. Perhaps what has delayed the wholesome practicality of this long-cherished peace is this threat of a Nigerian invasion. But the moment that chapter is closed, we are prepared to disarm and melt into the civilian populace and the regular army, because we are fully convinced that the foundation for lasting peace and true democracy has been laid.

We have all along been most willing to end this crisis peacefully, but the past

governments proved insincere and unfaithful to their words. The NPRC did not come with the desired reformation, and the SLPP made mockery of the Abidjan Peace Accord. Instead of integrating us into the society as promised, the SLPP only tried to bring divisiveness in our camp by selling our leader Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh to the Nigerians and staging a coup against him. This was a blatant disregard of the articles of the Peace Accord. Even when some of our members surrendered, they were still ostricized and treated as the dregs of society. And further still, even though we were abiding by the dictates of the cease-fire agreement, Hinga Norman directed the Kamajors to attack our bases. This clearly showed that the SLPP was not ready for PEACE, and so we prepared for the worst. But we must give bountiful thanks to the Almighty for the refreshing fact that instead of the worst, it is the best that has come through the concrete unbelievable peace that has been attained through the AFRC.

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We have not therefore denounced attempts at bringing back Tejan Kabbah because we hate him, but it is because he is not willing to accept us as his fellow Sierra Leoneans. Ex-President Kabbah disappointed us gravely, and we can never trust him again. We were prepared for peace, but the SLPP was not. We are therefore appealing to the International Community, and all those that love Sierra Leone, to critically examine the Sierra Leonean problem before any unwarranted action is taken. For six years, we have lived in blood-bath, let us now have fresh baths in our streams, swimming pools and beaches.

We assure the International Community and all Sierra Leoneans of the RUF's total and unflinching commitment to lasting peace. All that we need now is for the United Nations to take the lead in assisting the AFRC in demobilising and re-integrating our combatants into the society for the ultimate achievement of true democracy through free and fair elections that will be conducted in the whole country in peace. At least we can today sleep in peace in the thought that Sierra Leone has finally achieved its nationhood by being bold enough to tell the whole world that we are capable of solving our own problems. The People's Army has come to stay.

55. The Lomé Peace Accord, the Peace Agreement Between the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), 7 July 1999.

16479

PEACE AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE

THE GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE and THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE (RUF/SL)

Having met in Lome, Togo, from the 25 May 1999, to 7 July 1999 under the auspices of the Current Chairman of ECOWAS, President Gnassingbe Eyadema;

Recalling earlier initiatives undertaken by the countries of the sub-region and the International Community, aimed at bringing about a negotiated settlement of the conflict in Sierra Leone, and culminating in the Abidjan Peace Agreement of 30 November, 1996 and the ECOWAS Peace Plan of 23 October, 1997;

Moved by the imperative need to meet the desire of the people of Sierra Leone for a definitive settlement of the fratricidal war in their country and for genuine national unity and reconciliation;

Committed to promoting full respect for human rights and humanitarian law;

Committed to promoting popular participation in the governance of the country and the advancement of democracy in a socio-political framework free of inequality, nepotism and corruption;

Concerned with the socio-economic well being of all the people of Sierra Leone;

Determined to foster mutual trust and confidence between themselves;

Determined to establish sustainable peace and security; to pledge forthwith, to settle all past, present and future differences and grievances by peaceful means; and to refrain from the threat and use of armed force to bring about any change in Sierra Leone;

Reaffirming the conviction that sovereignty belongs to the people, and that Government derives all its powers, authority and legitimacy from the people;

Recognising the imperative that the children of Sierra Leone, especially those affected by armed conflict, in view of their vulnerability, are entitled to special care and the protection of their inherent right to life, survival and development, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention on the Rights of the Child;

Guided by the Declaration in the Final Communiqué of the Meeting in Lome of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of ECOWAS of 25 May 1999, in which they stressed the importance of democracy as a factor of regional peace and security, and as essential to

the socio-economic development of ECOWAS Member States; and in which they pledged their commitment to the consolidation of democracy and respect of human rights while reaffirming the need for all Member States to consolidate their democratic base, observe the principles of good governance and good economic management in order to ensure the emergence and development of a democratic culture which takes into account the interests of the peoples of West Africa;

Recommitting themselves to the total observance and compliance with the Cease-fire Agreement signed in Lome on 18 May 1999, and appended as Annex 1 until the signing of the present Peace Agreement;

HEREBY AGREE AS FOLLOWS:

PART ONE

CESSATION OF HOSTILITIES

ARTICLE 1

CEASE-FIRE

The armed conflict between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL is hereby ended with immediate effect. Accordingly, the two sides shall ensure that a total and permanent cessation of hostilities is observed forthwith.

ARTICLE II

CEASE-FIRE MONITORING

1. A Cease-fire Monitoring Committee (hereinafter termed the CMC) to be chaired by the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (hereinafter termed UNOMSIL) with representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF/SL, the Civil Defence Forces (hereinafter termed the CDF) and ECOMOG shall be established at provincial and district levels with immediate effect to monitor, verify and report all violations of the cease-fire.

2. A Joint Monitoring Commission (hereinafter termed the JMC) shall be established at the national level to be chaired by UNOMSIL with representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF/SL, CDF, and ECOMOG. The JMC shall receive, investigate and take appropriate action on reports of violations of the cease-fire from the CMC. The parties agree to the definition of cease-fire violations as contained in Annex 2 which constitutes an integral part of the present Agreement.

3. The parties shall seek the assistance of the International Community in providing funds and other logistics to enable the JMC to carry out its mandate.

PART TWO

GOVERNANCE

The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL, recognizing the right of the people of Sierra Leone to live in peace, and desirous of finding a transitional mechanism to incorporate the RUF/SL into governance within the spirit and letter of the Constitution, agree to the following formulas for structuring the government for the duration of the period before the next elections, as prescribed by the Constitution, managing scarce public resources for the benefit of the development of the people of Sierra Leone and sharing the responsibility of implementing the peace. Each of these formulas (not in priority order) is contained in a separate Article of this Part of the present Agreement; and may be further detailed in protocols annexed to it.

Article III Transformation of the RUF/SL Into a Political Party

Article IV Enabling Members of the RUF/SL to Hold Public Office

Article V Enabling the RUF/SL to Join a Broad-Based Government of National Unity Through Cabinet Appointment

Article VI Commission for the Consolidation of Peace

Article VII Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development

Article VIII Council of Elders and Religious Leaders.

ARTICLE III

TRANSFORMATION OF THE RUF/SL INTO A POLITICAL PARTY

1. The Government of Sierra Leone shall accord every facility to the RUF/SL to transform itself into a political party and enter the mainstream of the democratic process. To that end:

2. Immediately upon the signing of the present Agreement, the RUF/SL shall commence to organize itself to function as a political movement, with the rights, privileges and duties accorded to all political parties in Sierra Leone. These include the freedom to publish, unhindered access to the media, freedom of association, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and the right to mobilize and associate freely.

3. Within a period of thirty days, following the signing of the present Agreement, the necessary legal steps shall be taken by the Government of Sierra Leone to enable the RUF/SL to register as a political party.

4. The Parties shall approach the International Community with a view to mobilizing resources for the purposes of enabling the RUF/SL to function as a political party. These resources may include but shall not be limited to:

(i) Setting up a trust fund;

(ii) Training for RUF/SL membership in party organization and functions; and

(iii) Providing any other assistance necessary for achieving the goals of this section.

ARTICLE IV

ENABLING MEMBERS OF THE RUF/SL TO HOLD PUBLIC OFFICE

1. The Government of Sierra Leone shall take the necessary steps to enable those RUF/SL members nominated by the RUF/SL to hold public office, within the time-frames agreed and contained in the present Agreement for the integration of the various bodies named herein.

2. Accordingly, necessary legal steps shall be taken by the Government of Sierra Leone, within a period of fourteen days following the signing of the present Agreement, to amend relevant laws and regulations that may constitute an impediment or bar to RUF/SL and AFRC personnel holding public office.

3. Within seven days of the removal of any such legal impediments, both parties shall meet to discuss and agree on the appointment of RUF/SL members to positions in parastatals, diplomacy and any other public sector.

ARTICLE V

ENABLING THE RUF/SL TO JOIN A BROAD-BASED GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNITY THROUGH CABINET APPOINTMENTS

1. The Government of Sierra Leone shall accord every opportunity to the RUF/SL to join a broad-based government of national unity through cabinet appointments. To that end:

2. The Chairmanship of the Board of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD) as provided for in Article VII of the present Agreement shall be offered to the leader of the RUF/SL, Corporal Foday Sankoh. For this purpose he shall enjoy the status of Vice President and shall therefore be answerable only to the President of Sierra Leone.

3. The Government of Sierra Leone shall give ministerial positions to the RUF/SL in a moderately expanded cabinet of 18, bearing in mind that the interests of other political parties and civil society organizations should also be taken into account, as follows:

(i) One of the senior cabinet appointments such as finance, foreign affairs and justice;

(ii) Three other cabinet positions.

4. In addition, the Government of Sierra Leone shall, in the same spirit, make available to the RUF/SL the following senior government positions: Four posts of Deputy Minister.

5. Within a period of fourteen days following the signing of the present Agreement, the necessary steps shall be taken by the Government of Sierra Leone to remove any legal impediments that may prevent RUF/SL members from holding cabinet and other positions.

ARTICLE VI

COMMISSION FOR THE CONSOLIDATION OF PEACE

1. A Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (hereinafter termed the CCP), shall be established within two weeks of the signing of the present Agreement to implement a post-conflict programme that ensures reconciliation and the welfare of al parties to the conflict, especially the victims of war. The CCP shall have the overall goal and responsibility for supervising and monitoring the implementation of and compliance with the provisions of the present Agreement relative to the promotion of national reconciliation and the consolidation of peace.

2. The CCP shall ensure that all structures for national reconciliation and the consolidation of peace already in existence and those provided for in the present Agreement are operational and given the necessary resources for realizing their respective mandates. These structures shall comprise:

(i) the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development;

(ii) the Joint Monitoring Commission;

(iii) the Provincial and District Cease-fire Monitoring Committees;

(iv) the Committee for the Release of Prisoners of War and Non-Combatants;

(v) the Committee for Humanitarian Assistance;

(vi) the National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration;

(vii) the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction;

(viii) the Human Rights Commission; and

(ix) the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

3. The CCP shall have the right to inspect any activity or site connected with the implementation of the present Agreement.

4. The CCP shall have full powers to organize its work in any manner it deems appropriate and to appoint any group or sub-committee which it deems necessary in the discharge of its functions.

5. The Commission shall be composed of the following members:

(i) Two representatives of the civil society;

(ii) One representative each named by the Government, the RUF/SL and the Parliament.

6. The CCP shall have its own offices, adequate communication facilities and secretarial support staff.

7. Recommendations for improvements or modifications shall be made to the President of sierra Leone for appropriate action. Likewise, failures of the structures to perform their assigned duties shall also be brought to the attention of the President.

8. Disputes arising out of the preceding paragraph shall be brought to the Council of Elders and Religious Leaders for resolution, as specified in Article VIII of the present Agreement.

9. Should Protocols be needed in furtherance of any provision in the present Agreement, the CCP shall have the responsibility for their preparation.

10. The mandate of the CCP shall terminate at the end of the next general elections.

ARTICLE VII

COMMISSION FOR THE MANAGEMENT OF STRATEGIC RESOURCES, NATIONAL RECONSTRUCTION AND DEVELOPMENT

1. Given the emergency situation facing the country, the parties agree that the Government shall exercise full control over the exploitation of gold, diamonds and other resources, for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone. Accordingly, a Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (hereinafter termed the CMRRD) shall be established and charged with the responsibility of securing and monitoring the legitimate exploitation of Sierra Leone's gold and diamonds, and other resources that are determined to be of strategic importance for national security and welfare as well as cater for post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction, as provided for under Article XXVIII of the present Agreement.

2. The Government shall take the necessary legal action within a period not exceeding two weeks from the signing of the present Agreement to the effect that all exploitation, sale, export, or any other transaction of gold and diamonds shall be forbidden except those sanctioned by the CMRRD. All previous concessions shall be null and void.

3. The CMRRD shall authorize licensing of artisanal production of diamonds and gold, in accordance with prevailing laws and regulations. All gold and diamonds extracted or otherwise sources from any Sierra Leonean territory shall be sold to the Government.

4. The CMRRD shall ensure, through the appropriate authorities, the security of the areas covered under this Article, and shall take all necessary measures against unauthorized exploitation.

5. For the export or local resale of gold and diamonds by the Government, the CMRRD shall authorize a buying and selling agreement with one or more reputable international and specialized mineral companies. All exports of Sierra Leonean gold and diamonds shall be transacted by the Government, under these agreements.

6. The proceeds from the transactions of gold and diamonds shall be public monies which shall enter a special Treasury account to be spent exclusively on the development of the people of Sierra Leone, with appropriations for public education, public health, infrastructural development, and compensation for incapacitated war victims as well as post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction. Priority spending shall go to rural areas.

7. The Government shall, if necessary, seek the assistance and cooperation of other governments and their instruments of law enforcement to detect and facilitate the prosecution of violations of this Article.

8. The management of other natural resources shall be reviewed by the CMRRD to determine if their regulation is a matter of national security and welfare, and recommend appropriate policy to the Government.

9. The functions of the Ministry of Mines shall continued to be carried out by the current authorized ministry. However, in respect of strategic mineral resources, the CMRRD shall be an autonomous body in carrying out its duties concerning the regulation of Sierra Leone's strategic natural resources.

10. All agreements and transactions referred to in this Article shall be subject to full public disclosure and records of all correspondence, negotiations, business transactions and any other matters related to exploitation, management, local or international marketing, and any other matter shall be public documents.

11. The Commission shall issue monthly reports, including the details of all the transactions related to gold and diamonds, and other licenses or concessions of natural resources, and its own administrative costs.

12. The Commission shall be governed by a Board whose Chairmanship shall be offered to the Leader of the RUF/SL, Corporal Foday Sankoh. The Board shall also comprise:

(i) Two representatives of the Government appointed by the President;

(ii) Two representatives of the political party to be formed by the RUF/SL;

(iii) Three representatives of the civil society; and

(iv) Two representatives of other political parties appointed by Parliament.

13. The Government shall take the required administrative actions to implement the commitments made in the present Agreement; and in the case of enabling legislation, it shall draft and submit to Parliament within thirty days of the signature of the present Agreement, the relevant bills for their enactment into law.

14. The Government commits itself to propose and support an amendment to the Constitution to make the exploitation of gold and diamonds the legitimate domain of the people of Sierra Leone, and to determine that the proceeds be used for the development of Sierra Leone, particularly public education, public health, infrastructure development, and compensation of incapacitated war victims as well as post-war reconstruction and development.

ARTICLE VIII

COUNCIL OF ELDERS AND RELIGIOUS LEADERS

1. The signatories agree to refer any conflicting differences of interpretation of this Article or any other Article of the present Agreement or its protocols, to a Council of Elders and Religious Leaders comprised as follows:

(i) Two members appointed by the Inter-Religious Council;

(ii) One member each appointed by the Government and the RUF/SL; and

(iii) One member appointed by ECOWAS.

2. The Council shall designate its own chairperson from among its members. All of its decision shall be taken by the concurrence of at least four members, and shall be binding and public, provided that an aggrieved party may appeal to the Supreme Court.

PART THREE

OTHER POLITICAL ISSUES

The Part of the present Agreement Consists of the following Articles

Article IX Pardon and Amnesty

Article X Review of the Present Constitution

Article XI Elections

Article XII National Electoral Commission

ARTICLE IX

PARDON AND AMNESTY

1. In order to bring lasting peace to Sierra Leone, the Government of Sierra Leone shall take appropriate legal steps to grant Corporal Foday Sankoh absolute and free pardon.

2. After the signing of the present Agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone shall also grant absolute and free pardon and reprieve to all combatants and collaborators in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives, up to the time of the signing of the present Agreement.

3. To consolidate the peace and promote the cause of national reconciliation, the Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure that no official or judicial action is taken against any member of the RUF/SL, ex-AFRC, ex-SLA or CDF in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives as members of those organisations, since March 1991, up to the time of the signing of the present Agreement. In addition, legislative and other measures necessary to guarantee immunity to former combatants, exiles and other persons, currently outside the country for reasons related to the armed conflict shall be adopted ensuring the full exercise of their civil and political rights, with a view to their reintegration within a framework of full legality.

ARTICLE X

REVIEW OF THE PRESENT CONSTITUTION

In order to ensure that the Constitution of Sierra Leone represents the needs and aspirations of the people of Sierra Leone and that no constitutional or any other legal provision prevents the implementation of the present Agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone shall take the necessary steps to establish a Constitutional Review Committee to review the provisions of the present Constitution, and where deemed appropriate, recommend revisions and amendments, in accordance with Part V, Section 108 of the Constitution of 1991.

ARTICLE XI

DATE OF NEXT ELECTIONS

The next national elections in Sierra Leone shall beheld in accordance with the present Constitution of Sierra Leone.

ARTICLE XII

NATIONAL ELECTORAL COMMISSION

1. A new independent National Electoral Commission (hereinafter termed the NEC) shall be set up by the Government, not later than three months after the signing of the present Agreement.

2. In setting up the new NEC the President shall consult all political parties, including the RUF/SL, to determine the membership and terms of reference of the Commission, paying particular attention to the need for a level playing field in the nation's elections.

3. No member of the NEC shall be eligible for appointment to political office by any government formed as a result of an election he or she was mandated to conduct.

4. The NEC shall request the assistance of the International Community, including the UN, the OAU, ECOWAS and the Commonwealth of Nations, in monitoring the next presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone.

PART FOUR

POST-CONFLICT MILITARY AND SECURITY ISSUES

1. The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL, recognizing that the maintenance of peace and security is of paramount importance for the achievement of lasting peace in Sierra Leone and for the welfare of its people, have agreed to the following formulas for dealing with post-conflict military and security matters. Each of these formulas (not in priority order) is contained in separate Articles of this Part of the present Agreement and may be further detailed in protocols annexed to the Agreement.

Article XIII Transformation and New Mandate of ECOMOG

Article XIV New Mandate of UNOMSIL

Article XV Security Guarantees for Peace Monitors

Article XVI Encampment, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

Article XVII Restructuring and Training of the Sierra Leone Armed Forces

Article XVIII Withdrawal of Mercenaries

Article XIX Notification to Joint Monitoring Commission

Article Notification to Military Commands.

ARTICLE XIII

TRANSFORMATION AND NEW MANDATE OF ECOMOG

1. Immediately upon the signing of the present Agreement, the parties shall request ECOWAS to revise the mandate of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone as follows:

(i) Peacekeeping;

(ii) Security of the State of Sierra Leone;

i. Protection of UNOMSIL.

i. Protection of Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration personnel.

2. The Government shall, immediately upon the signing of the present Agreement, request ECOWAS for troop contributions from at least two additional countries. The additional contingents shall be deployed not later than 30 days from the date of signature of the present Agreement. The Security Council shall be requested to provide assistance in support of ECOMOG.

3. The Parties agree to develop a timetable for the phased withdrawal of ECOMOG, including measures for securing all of the territory of Sierra Leone by the restructured armed forces. The phased withdrawal of ECOMOG will be linked to the phased creation and deployment of the restructured armed forces.

ARTICLE XIV

NEW MANDATE OF UNOMSIL

1. The UN Security Council is requested to amend the mandate of UNOMSIL to enable it to undertake the various provisions outlined in the present Agreement.

ARTICLE XV

SECURITY GUARANTEES FOR PEACE MONITORS

1. The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL agree to guarantee the safety, security and freedom of movement of UNOMSIL Military Observers throughout Sierra Leone. This guarantee shall be monitored by the Joint Monitoring Commission.

2. The freedom of movement includes complete and unhindered access for UNOMSIL Military Observers in the conduct of their duties throughout Sierra Leone. Before and during the process of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, officers and escorts to be provided by both Parties shall be required to facilitate this access.

3. Such freedom of movement and security shall also be accorded to non-military UNOMSIL personnel such as Human Rights Officers in the conduct of their duties. These personnel shall, in most cases, be accompanied by UNOMSIL Military Observers.

4. The provision of security to be extended shall include United Nations aircraft, vehicles and other property.

ARTICLE XVI

ENCAMPMENT, DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

1. A neutral peace keeping force comprising UNOMSIL and ECOMOG shall disarm all combatants of the RUF/SL, CDF, SLA and paramilitary groups. The encampment, disarmament and demobilization process shall commence within six weeks of the signing of the present Agreement in line with the deployment of the neutral peace keeping force.

2. The present SLA shall be restricted to the barracks and their arms in the armoury and their ammunitions in the magazines and placed under constant surveillance by the neutral peacekeeping force during the process of disarmament and demobilization.

3. UNOMSIL shall be present in all disarmament and demobilization locations to monitor the process and provide security guarantees to all ex-combatants.

4. Upon the signing of the present Agreement, the Government of Sierra Leone shall immediately request the International Community to assist with the provision of the necessary financial and technical resources needed for the adaptation and extension of the existing Encampment, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programme in Sierra Leone, including payment of retirement benefits and other emoluments due to former members of the SLA.

ARTICLE XVII

RESTRUCTURING AND TRAINING OF THE SIERRA LEONE ARMED FORCES

1. The restructuring, composition and training of the new Sierra Leone armed forces will be carried out by the Government with a view to creating truly national armed forces, bearing loyalty solely to the State of Sierra Leone, and able and willing to perform their constitutional role.

2. Those ex-combatants of the RUF/SL, CDF and SLA who wish to be integrated into the new restructured national armed forces may do so provided they meet established criteria.

3. Recruitment into the armed forces shall reflect the geo-political structure of Sierra Leone within the established strength.

ARTICLE XVIII

WITHDRAWAL OF MERCENARIES

All mercenaries, in any guise, shall be withdrawn from Sierra Leone immediately upon the signing of the present Agreement. Their withdrawal shall be supervised by the Joint Monitoring Commission.

ARTICLE XIX

NOTIFICATION TO JOINT MONITORING COMMISSION

Immediately upon the establishment of the JMC provided for in Article II of the present Agreement, each party shall furnish to the JMC information regarding the strength and locations of all combatants as well as the positions and descriptions of all known unexploded bombs (UXBs), explosive ordnance devices (EODs), minefields, booby traps, wire entanglements, and all other physical or military hazards. The JMC shall seek all necessary technical assistance in mine clearance and the disposal or destruction of similar devices and weapons under the operational control of the neutral peacekeeping force. The parties shall keep the JMC updated on changes in this information so that it can notify the public as needed, to prevent injuries.

ARTICLE XX

NOTIFICATION TO MILITARY COMMANDS

Each party shall ensure that the terms of the present Agreement, and written orders requiring compliance, are immediately communicated to all of its forces.

PART FIVE

HUMANITARIAN, HUMAN RIGHTS AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ISSUES

1. The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF\SL recognizing the importance of upholding, promoting and protecting the human rights of every Sierra Leonean as well as the enforcement of humanitarian law, agree to the following formulas for the achievement of these laudable objectives. Each of these formulas (not in priority order) is contained in separate Articles of this Part of the present Agreement

Article XXI Release of Prisoners and Abductees

Article XXII Refugees and Displaced Persons

Article XXIII Guarantee of the Security of Displaced Persons and Refugees

Article XXIV Guarantee and Promotion of Human Rights

Article XXV Human Rights Commission

Article XXVI Human Rights Violations

Article XXVII Humanitarian Relief

Article XXVIII Post War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction

Article XXIX Special Fund for War Victims

Article XXX Child Combatants

Article XXXI Education and Health

ARTICLE XXI

RELEASE OF PRISONERS AND ABDUCTEES

All political prisoners of war as well as all non-combatants shall be released immediately and unconditionally by both parties, in accordance with the Statement of June 2, 1999, which is contained in Annex 3 and constitutes an integral part of the present Agreement.

ARTICLE XXII

REFUGEES AND DISPLACED PERSONS

The Parties through the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction agree to seek funding from and the involvement of the UN and other agencies, including friendly countries, in order to design and implement a plan for voluntary repatriation and reintegration of Sierra Leonean refugees and internally displaced persons, including non-combatants, in conformity with international conventions, norms and practices.

ARTICLE XXIII

GUARANTEE OF THE SECURITY OF DISPLACED PERSONS AND REFUGEES

As a reaffirmation of their commitment to the observation of the conventions and principles of human rights and the status of refugees, the Parties shall take effective and appropriate measures to ensure that the right of Sierra Leoneans to asylum is fully respected and that no camps or dwellings of refugees or displaced persons are violated.

ARTICLE XXIV

GUARANTEE AND PROMOTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

1. The basic civil and political liberties recognized by the Sierra Leone legal system and contained in the declarations and principles of Human Rights adopted by the UN and OAU, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, shall be fully protected and promoted within Sierra Leonean society.

2. These include the right to life and liberty, freedom from torture, the right to a fair trial, freedom of conscience, expression and association, and the right to take part in the governance of one's country.

ARTICLE XXV

HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

1. The Parties pledge to strengthen the existing machinery for addressing grievances of the people in respect of alleged violations of their basic human rights by the creation, as a matter of urgency and not later than 90 days after the signing of the present Agreement, of an autonomous quasi-judicial national Human Rights Commission.

2. The Parties further pledge to promote Human Rights education throughout the various sectors of Sierra Leonean society, including the schools, the media, the police, the military and the religious community.

3. In pursuance of the above, technical and material assistance may be sought from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and Peoples Rights and other relevant international organisations.

4. A consortium of local human rights and civil society groups in Sierra Leone shall be encouraged to help monitor human rights observance.

ARTICLE XXVI

HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

1. A Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall be established to address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation.

2. In the spirit of national reconciliation, the Commission shall deal with the question of human rights violations since the beginning of the Sierra Leonean conflict in 1991.

This Commission shall, among other things, recommend measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of victims of human rights violations.

3. Membership of the Commission shall be drawn from a cross-section of Sierra Leonean society with the participation and some technical support of the International Community. This Commission shall be established within 90 days after the signing of the present Agreement and shall, not later than 12 months after the commencement of its work, submit its report to the Government for immediate implementation of its recommendations.

ARTICLE XXVII

HUMANITARIAN RELIEF

1. The Parties reaffirm their commitment to their Statement on the Delivery of Humanitarian Assistance in Sierra Leone of June 3, 1999 which is contained in Annex 4 and constitutes an integral part of the present Agreement. To this end, the Government shall request appropriate international humanitarian assistance for the people of Sierra Leone who are in need all over the country.

2. The Parties agree to guarantee safe and unhindered access by all humanitarian organizations throughout the country in order to facilitate delivery of humanitarian assistance, in accordance with international conventions, principles and norms which govern humanitarian operations. In this respect, the parties agree to guarantee the security of the presence and movement of humanitarian personnel.

3. The Parties also agree to guarantee the security of all properties and goods transported, stocked or distributed by humanitarian organizations, as well as the security of their projects and beneficiaries.

4. The Government shall set up at various levels throughout the country, the appropriate and effective administrative or security bodies which will monitor and facilitate the implementation of these guarantees of safety for the personnel, goods and areas of operation of the humanitarian organizations.

ARTICLE XXVIII

POST - WAR REHABILITATION AND RECONSTRUCTION

1. The Government, through the National Commission for Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reconstruction and with the support of the International Community, shall provide appropriate financial and technical resources for post-war rehabilitation, reconstruction and development.

2. Given that women have been particularly victimized during the war, special attention shall be accorded to their needs and potentials in formulating and implementing national rehabilitation, reconstruction and development programmes, to enable them to play a central role in the moral, social and physical reconstruction of Sierra Leone.

ARTICLE XXIX

SPECIAL FUND FOR WAR VICTIMS

The Government, with the support of the International Community, shall design and implement a programme for the rehabilitation of war victims. For this purpose, a special fund shall be set up.

ARTICLE XXX

CHILD COMBATANTS

The Government shall accord particular attention to the issue of child soldiers. It shall, accordingly, mobilize resources, both within the country and from the International Community, and especially through the Office of the UN Special Representative for Children in Armed Conflict, UNICEF and other agencies, to address the special needs of these children in the existing disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes.

ARTICLE XXXI

EDUCATION AND HEALTH

The Government shall provide free compulsory education for the first nine years of schooling (Basic Education) and shall endeavour to provide free schooling for a further three years. The Government shall also endeavour to provide affordable primary health care throughout the country.

PART SIX

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE AGREEMENT

ARTICLE XXXII

JOINT IMPLEMENTATION COMMITTEE

A Joint Implementation Committee consisting of members of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP) and the Committee of Seven on Sierra Leone, as well as the Moral Guarantors, provided for in Article XXXIV of the present Agreement and other international supporters shall be established. Under the chairmanship of ECOWAS, the Joint Implementation Committee shall be responsible for reviewing and assessing the state of implementation of the Agreement, and shall meet at least once every three months. Without prejudice to the functions of the Commission for

the Consolidation of Peace as provided for in Article VI, the Joint Implementation Committee shall make recommendations deemed necessary to ensure effective implementation of the present Agreement according to the Schedule of Implementation, which appears as Annex 5.

ARTICLE XXXIII

REQUEST FOR INTERNATIONAL INVOLVEMENT

The parties request that the provisions of the present Agreement affecting the United Nations shall enter into force upon the adoption by the UN Security Council of a resolution responding affirmatively to the request made in this Agreement. Likewise, the decision-making bodies of the other international organisations concerned are requested to take similar action, where appropriate.

PART SEVEN

MORAL GUARANTORS AND INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

ARTICLE XXXIV

MORAL GUARANTORS

The Government of the Togolese Republic, the United Nations, the OAU, ECOWAS and the Commonwealth of Nations shall stand as Moral Guarantors that this Peace Agreement is implemented with integrity and in good faith by both parties.

ARTICLE XXXV

INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

Both parties call on the International Community to assist them in implementing the present Agreement with integrity and good faith. The international organisations mentioned in Article XXXIV and the Governments of Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mali, Nigeria, Togo, the United Kingdom and the United States of America are facilitating and supporting the conclusion of this Agreement. These States and organisations believe that this Agreement must protect the paramount interests of the people of Sierra Leone in peace and security.

PART EIGHT

FINAL PROVISIONS

ARTICLE XXXVI

REGISTRATION AND PUBLICATION

The Sierra Leone Government shall register the signed Agreement not later than 15 days from the date of the signing of this Agreement. The signed Agreement shall also be published in the Sierra Leone Gazette not later than 48 (Forty - Eight) hours after the date of registration of this Agreement. This Agreement shall be laid before the Parliament of Sierra Leone not later than 21 (Twenty-One) days after the signing of this Agreement.

ARTICLE XXXVII

ENTRY INTO FORCE

The present Agreement shall enter into force immediately upon its signing by the Parties.

Done in Lomé this seven day of the month of July 1999 in twelve (12) original texts in English and French, each text being equally authentic.

Alhaji Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh
Leader of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone

His Excellency Gnassingbe Eyadema
President of the Togolese Republic
Chairman of ECOWAS

His Excellency Blaise Compaore
President of Burkina Faso

His Excellency Dahkpanah Dr. Charles Ghankey Taylor
President of the Republic of Liberia

His Excellency Olusegun Obasanjo
President and Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces
of the Federal Republic of Nigeria

His Excellency Youssoufou Bamba
Secretary of State at the Foreign Mission in charge of
International Cooperation of Cote d'Ivoire

His Excellency Victor Gbeho
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ghana

Mr. Roger Laloupo
Representative of the ECOWAS Special Representative

Ambassador Francis G. Okelo
Executive Secretary of the United Nations
Secretary General

Ms. Adwoa Coleman
Representative Organization of African Unity

Dr. Moses K.Z. Anafu
Representative of the Commonwealth of Nations

ANNEX 1

AGREEMENT ON CEASEFIRE IN SIERRA LEONE

President Ahmed Tejan KABBAH and Rev. Jesse Jackson met on 18 May 1999 with Corporal Foday Saybana SANKOH, under the auspices of President Gnassingbe EYADEMA. At that meeting, the question of the peace process for Sierra Leone was discussed.

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The Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL),

- Desirous to promote the ongoing dialogue process with a view to establishing durable peace and stability in Sierra Leone; and

- Wishing to create an appropriate atmosphere conducive to the holding of peace talks in Lome, which began with the RUF internal consultations to be followed by dialogue between the Government and the RUF;

- Have jointly decided to:

1. Agree to ceasefire as from 24 May 1999, the day that President EYADEMA invited Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS to discuss problems pertaining to Sierra Leone. It was further agreed that the dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF would commence on 25 May 1999;

2. Maintain their present and respective positions in Sierra Leone as of the 24th of May 1999; and refrain from any hostile or aggressive act which could undermine the peace process;

3. Commit to start negotiations in good faith, involving all relevant parties in the discussions, not later than May 25 in Lome;

4. Guarantee safe and unhindered access by humanitarian organizations to all people in need; establish safe corridors for the provision of food and medical supplies to ECOMOG soldiers behind RUF lines, and to RUF combatants behind ECOMOG lines;

5. Immediate release of all prisoners of war and non-combatants;

6. Request the United Nations, subject to the Security Council's authorisation, to deploy military observers as soon as possible to observe compliance by the Government forces (ECOMOG and Civil Defence Forces) and the RUF, including former AFRC forces, with this ceasefire agreement.

This agreement is without prejudice to any other agreement or additional protocols which may be discussed during the dialogue between the Government and the RUF.

Signed in Lome (Togo) 18 May 1999, in six (6) originals in English and French

For the Government of Sierra Leone

ALHADJI Dr. Ahmad Tejan KABBAH
President Of The Republic Of Sierra Leone

For the Revolutionary United Front Of Sierra Leone

Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh, Leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

WITNESSED BY:

For the Government of Togo and Current Chairman of ECOWAS

GNASSINGBE EYADEMA
President of the Republic of Togo

For the United Nations

Francis G. Okelo
Special Representative of the Secretary General

For the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

Adwoa COLEMAN
Representative of the Organization of African Unity

US Presidential Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa

Rev. Jesse JACKSON

ANNEX 2

DEFINITION OF CEASE-FIRE VIOLATIONS

1. In accordance with Article II of the present Agreement, both parties agree that the following constitute cease-fire violations and a breach of the Cease-fire Agreement:

a. The use of weapons of any kind in any circumstance including: -

(i) Automatic and semi-automatic rifles, pistols, machine guns and any other small arms weapon systems.

(ii) Heavy machine guns and any other heavy weapon systems.

(iii) Grenades and rocket-propelled grenade weapon systems.

(iv) Artillery, rockets, mortars and any other indirect fire weapon systems.

(v) All types of mine, explosive devices and improvised booby traps.

(vi) Air Defence weapon systems of any nature.

(vii) Any other weapon not included in the above paragraphs.

b. Troop movements of any nature outside of the areas recognized as being under the control of respective fighting forces without prior notification to the Cease-fire Monitoring Committee of any movements at least 48 hours in advance.

c. The movement of arms and ammunition. To be considered in the context of Security Council Resolution 1171 (1998).

d. Troop movements of any nature;

d. The construction and/or the improvement of defensive works and positions within respective areas of control, but outside a geographical boundary of 500m from existing similar positions.

f. Reconnaissance of any nature outside of respective areas of control.

g. Any other offensive or aggressive action.

2. Any training or other military activities not provided for in Articles XIII to XIX of the present Agreement, constitute a cease-fire violation.

3. In the event of a hostile external force threatening the territorial integrity or

sovereignty of Sierra Leone, military action may be undertaken by the Sierra Leone Government.

ANNEX 3

STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE ON THE RELEASE OF PRISONERS OF WAR AND NON-COMBATANTS

The Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF/SL) have agreed to implement as soon as possible the provision of the Cease-fire Agreement which was signed on 18 May 1999 in Lome, relating to the immediate release of prisoners of war and non-combatants.

Both sides reaffirmed the importance of the implementation of this provision in the interest of the furtherance of the talks.

They therefore decided that an appropriate Committee is established to handle the release of all prisoners of war and non-combatants.

Both the Government of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone decided that such a Committee be established by the UN and chaired by the UN Chief Military Observer in Sierra Leone and comprising representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF and other relevant UN Agencies and NGOs.

This Committee should begin its work immediately by contacting both parties to the conflict with a view to effecting the immediate release of these prisoners of war and non-combatants.

Lomé - 2 June 1999

ANNEX 4

STATEMENT BY THE GOVERNMENT OF SIERRA LEONE AND THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT OF SIERRA LEONE ON THE DELIVERY OF HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE IN SIERRA LEONE

The parties to the conflict in Sierra Leone meeting in Lome Togo on 3rd June 1999 in the context of the Dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone (GSL) and the

Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL):

Reaffirm their respect for international convention, principles and norms, which govern the right of people to receive humanitarian assistance and the effective delivery of such assistance.

Reiterate their commitment to the implementation of the Cease-fire Agreement signed by the two parties on 18th May 1999 in Lome.

Aware of the fact that the protracted civil strife in Sierra Leone has created a situation whereby the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans in need of humanitarian assistance cannot be reached.

Hereby agree as follows:

1. That all duly registered humanitarian agencies shall be guaranteed safe and unhindered access to all areas under the control of the respective parties in order that humanitarian assistance can be delivered safely and effectively, in accordance with international conventions, principles and norms govern humanitarian operations.

2. In this respect the two parties shall:

a. guarantee safe access and facilitate the fielding of independent assessment missions by duly registered humanitarian agencies.

b. identify, in collaboration with the UN Humanitarian Co-ordinator in Sierra Leone and UNOMSIL, mutually agreed routes (road, air and waterways) by which humanitarian goods and personnel shall be transported to the beneficiaries to provide needed assistance.

c. allow duly registered humanitarian agencies to deliver assistance according to needs established through independent assessments.

d. guarantee the security of all properties and of and goods transported, stocked or distributed by the duly registered humanitarian agencies, as well as the security of their project areas and beneficiaries.

3. The two parties undertake to establish with immediate effect, and not later than seven days, an Implementation Committee formed by appropriately designated and mandated representatives from the Government of Sierra Leone, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, the Civil Society, the NGO community, and the UNOMSIL; and chaired by the United Nations Humanitarian Co-ordinator, in co-ordination with the Special Representative of the Secretary General in Sierra Leone.

The Implementation Committee will be mandated to:

a. Ascertain and assess the security of proposed routes to be used by the humanitarian agencies, and disseminate information on routes to interested humanitarian agencies.

b. Receive and review complaints which may arise in the implementation of this arrangement, in order to re-establish full compliance.

4. The parties agree to set up at various levels in their areas of control, the appropriate and effective administrative and security bodies which will monitor and facilitate the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance in all approved points of delivery, and ensure the security of the personnel, goods and project areas of the humanitarian agencies as well as the safety of the beneficiaries.

Issued in Lomé
June 3 1999

ANNEX 5

DRAFT SCHEDULE OF IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PEACE AGREEMENT

1. ACTIVITIES WITH SPECIFIC TIMING:

TIMING	ACTIVITIES	ACTION REQUIRED	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
DAY 1	Signing of the Peace Agreement		
	Amnesty Transformation and new mandate of ECOMOG	The Government to grant absolute and free pardon to the RUF leader Foday Sankoh through appropriate legal steps Request to ECOWAS by the parties for revision of the mandate of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone Request to the UN Security Council to amend the mandate of UNOMSIL to enable it to undertake the various provisions outlined in the present Agreement; Request to the international community to provide substantial financial and logistical assistance to facilitate implementation of	

		the Peace Agreement. Request to ECOWAS by the parties for contributions of additional troops.	
	Transformation of the RUF into a political party	RUF/SL to commence to organize itself to function as a political party	
	Encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR)	Request for international assistance in adapting and extending the existing DDR programme	
	Withdrawal of mercenaries	Supervision by Joint Monitoring Commission	
	Notification to Joint Monitoring Commission	Communication by the parties of positions and description of all known warlike devices/materials	
	Notification to Military Commands	Communication by the parties of written orders requiring compliance	
DAY 15	Enabling members of the RUF/SL to hold public office, and to join a broad-based Government of National Unity through Cabinet appointments	Removal by the Government of all legal impediments	
	Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP)	Creation of the Commission to implement a post-conflict reconciliation and welfare programme	Mandate of the Commission to terminate at the end of next general elections Jan.-Feb. 2001
	Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD)	Ban on all exploitation, sale, export, or any transaction of gold and diamonds except those sanctioned by the CMRDD	
DAY 22	Enabling members of the RUF/SL to hold public office	Discussion and agreement between both parties on the appointment of RUF/SL members to positions of parastatal, diplomacy and any other public sector	For a period of fourteen days
DAY 31	Transformation of the RUF into a political party Commission for the management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD) Transformation, new mandate, and phased withdrawal of ECOMOG	Necessary legal steps by the Government for the registration of the RUF as a political party Preparation and submission by Government to the Parliament of relevant bills for enabling legislation commitments made under the peace agreement Deployment of troops from at least two additional countries	
DAY 60	Completion of encampment, disarmament and demobilization	Restriction of SLA soldiers to the barracks and storage of their arms and ammunition under constant surveillance by the Neutral Peace-Keeping Force during the disarmament process Monitoring of disarmament and demobilization by UNOMSIL	
DAY 90	Human Rights Commission	Creation of an autonomous quasi judicial national Human Rights Commission Request for technical and material assistance from the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, the African Commission on Human Rights and Peoples Rights and other relevant organizations Creation of a Truth and Reconciliation	

		Commission	
	Elections	Establishment of a new independent National Electoral Commission (NEC) in consultation with all political parties including the RUF/SL Request for financial and logistical support for the operations of the NEC Request for assistance from the international community in monitoring the next presidential and parliamentary elections in Sierra Leone	
DAY 456	Human Rights Violations	Submission by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of its report and recommendation to the Government for immediate implementation	

II. ACTIVITIES WITHOUT SPECIFIC TIMING: (SHORT/MEDIUM/LONG TERM):

SERIAL NO.	ACTIVITIES	ACTION REQUIRED	FOLLOW-UP ACTION
1.	Ceasefire monitoring (Ceasefire Agreement signed on 18 May 1999)	Establishment of a Ceasefire Monitoring Committee at provincial and district levels Request for international assistance in providing funds and other logistics for the operations of the JMC	JMC already established and operational
2.	Review of the present Constitution	Establishment of a Constitutional Review Committee	
3.	Mediation by the Council of Elders and Religious Leaders	Appointment of members of the Council by the Interreligious Council, the Government, the RUF and ECOWAS	
4.	Timetable for the phased withdrawal of ECOMOG	Formulation of the timetable in connection with the phased creation and deployment of the restructured Armed Forces	
5.	Security guarantees for peace monitors	Communication, in writing, of security guarantees to UNMILOBs	
6.	Restructuring and training of the SLA	Creation by the Government of truly national armed forces reflecting the geo-political structure of Sierra Leone within the established	

56. The Abidjan Peace Accord, the Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), 30 November 1996.

Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL)

The Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL).

Moved by the imperative need for a just and durable peace in Sierra Leone;

Inspired by the equally imperative need for genuine national unity and reconciliation to end the fratricidal war in Sierra Leone;

Committed to promoting popular participation in governance and full respect for human rights and humanitarian laws;

Dedicated to the advancement of democratic development and to the maintenance of a socio-political order free of inequality, despotism and corruption;

Convinced that a sense of common purpose and patriotism is the need of the hour;

HEREBY AGREE as follows:

ARTICLE 1

The armed conflict between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL is hereby ended with immediate effect. Accordingly, the two foes will ensure that a total cessation of hostilities is observed forthwith.

ARTICLE 2

The Government and the RUF/SL undertake that no effort shall be spared to effect the scrupulous respect and implementation of the provisions contained in this Peace Agreement to ensure that the establishment and consolidation of a just peace becomes a priority in Sierra Leone.

ARTICLE 3

A national body to be known as the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace shall be established within two weeks of the signing of this Agreement. The Commission shall be a verification mechanism responsible for supervising and monitoring the implementation of and compliance with all the provisions contained in this Peace Agreement.

The Commission, in fulfilment of this task during the period of consolidating the peace, shall co-ordinate and facilitate the work of the following bodies which will proceed to establish:

(i) Socio-Economic Forum;
(ii) Citizen's Consultative Conferences;
(iii) Multi-partisan Council;
(iv) Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace;
(v) Demobilization and Resettlement Committee;
(vi) National Budget and Debt Committee.

The Commission shall comprise representatives of the Government and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, drawing on the resources of state and civic institutions as and when necessary.

The Commission shall have the power to recommend the preparation of enabling measures contained in this Peace Agreement. It shall have the power to issue publicly its conclusions. The parties undertake to comply with the conclusions of the Commission.

The Commission shall have the power to prepare preliminary legislative drafts necessary for the implementation and development of the provisions contained in the present Peace Agreement.

The Parties undertake to consult the Commission before taking decisions on measures relating to the present Peace Agreement.

The Commission may similarly consult the Parties at the highest level whenever it is appropriate.

The Commission shall have access to and may inspect any activity or site connected with the implementation of the present Peace Agreement. The Commission shall have full powers to organise its work in the manner in which it deems most appropriate and to appoint any group or sub-committee which it may deem useful in the discharge of its functions.

The Commission shall have its own offices, adequate communication facilities and adequate secretariat support staff.

A Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace shall be established to provide funding for the implementation of the present Peace Agreement.

ARTICLE 4

Citizens' Consultative Conferences shall be organised once a year the first of which shall be organised within one hundred and twenty days of the signing of the present Peace Agreement in order to encourage people's participation and to invite recommendations for the formulation of guidelines and their implementation that will ensure truly fair and representative political processes.

ARTICLE 5

The disarmament of combatants will be effected upon their entry into the designated assembly zones, and demobilization and reintegration as soon as practicable thereafter.

The upkeep and welfare of the encamped combatants shall be the primary responsibility of the Government of Sierra Leone in conjunction with the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, assisted by the international community.

ARTICLE 6

The Parties commit themselves to a well planned national effort on encampment, disarmament, demobilization and resettlement linked to national development objectives. To that end, a Demobilization and Resettlement Committee shall be established within a month of the signing of the present Peace Agreement.
The Committee shall coordinate the encampment, disarmament, demobilization and resettlement of RUF/SL combatants. The Committee shall work in coordination with all the relevant institutions and agencies.

Both Parties shall consult on the nomination of the membership of the Committee which shall not exceed seven persons.
The Committee shall be provided with adequate funding.

ARTICLE 7

The Demobilization and Resettlement Committee shall identify assembly zones and camp areas for RUF/SL combatants where they shall be registered, encamped and disarmed. The movement into the Assembly Zones shall commence within once month of the signing of this Agreement and be completed as soon as practicable but no later than three months from this date.

ARTICLE 8

The Parties shall request the international community to help supervise and monitor the encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. The Joint Monitoring Group shall have observers at any of these processes.

ARTICLE 9

The Commission shall, as a priority, make recommendations on the restructuring and re-orientation of the military as well as its leadership. In this context, members of the RUF/SL who may wish to be part of the country's military can become part of the new unified armed forces within a framework to be discussed and agreed upon by the Commission.

ARTICLE 10

The Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure the return to barracks of those units of the army not required for normal security duties and the downsizing of the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone (RSLMF), taking into account the security needs of the country.

ARTICLE 11

A Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG) from the international community shall be responsible for monitoring breaches provided under this Peace Agreement.
Both Parties upon signing this Agreement shall request the international community to provide neutral monitors.

Such monitors when deployed shall be in position for an initial period of three months.

The Neutral Monitoring Group shall report any violations of the ceasefire to its headquarters which shall in turn communicate the same to the headquarters of the Joint Monitoring Group comprising of representative of the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF based in Freetown.

ARTICLE 12

The Executive Outcomes shall be withdrawn five weeks after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG). As from the date of the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group, the Executive Outcomes shall be confined to barracks under the supervision of the Joint Monitoring Group and the Neutral Monitoring Group.
Government shall use all its endeavours, consistent with its treaty obligations, to repatriate other foreign troops no later than three months after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group or six months after the signing of the Peace Agreement, whichever is earlier.

ARTICLE 13

The Parties agree that immediately following the signing of the present Peace Agreement, the RUF/SL shall commence to function as a political movement with the rights, privileges and duties provided by law; and that within thirty days, following that, the necessary conditions shall be created to enable the RUF/SL to register as a political movement according to law.

ARTICLE 14

To consolidate the peace and promote the cause of national reconciliation, the Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure that no official or judicial action is taken against any member of the RUF/SL in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives as members of that organization up to the time of the signing of this Agreement. In addition, legislative and other measures necessary to guarantee former

RUF/SL combatants, exiles and other persons, currently outside the country for reasons related to the armed conflict shall be adopted ensuring the full exercise of their civil and political rights, with a view to their reintegration within a framework of full legality.

ARTICLE 15

The mandate and membership of the existing National Unity and Reconciliation Commission shall be expanded in consultation with the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace to enable it to undertake a sustained and effective campaign of civic education aimed at enhancing national unity and reconciliation, taking into account the imperative need to heal the wounds of the conflict.

ARTICLE 16

The Parties agree that the standards of accountability, integrity and probity in the public services of Sierra Leone shall be raised. To that end, immediate steps shall be taken to establish the office of Ombudsman to promote the implementation of a professional code of ethics, and the integrity and patriotism of all public servants. It shall also seek to eradicate all forms of corruption.

ARTICLE 17

The Parties shall approach the international community with a view to mobilizing resources which will be used to establish a trust fund to enable the RUF/SL to transform itself into a political party.

ARTICLE 18

The Parties agree to the principle of reforming the present electoral process in Sierra Leone. There shall, in that regard, be the full participation of citizens and their organizations in formulating electoral reforms.

The independence and integrity of the National Electoral Commission shall be guaranteed to ensure fair and acceptable electoral exercise.
In reconstituting the National Electoral Commission, the President shall consult all political parties and movements including the RUF/SL to determine the membership and terms of reference of that Commission, paying particular attention to the need for a level playing field in the nation's electoral politics.
Both the Government and the RUF/SL shall, together with other political parties, nominate men and women of professionalism, integrity and objectivity to the National Electoral Commission, not later than three months after the signing of the present Peace Agreement.

It is hereby agreed that no member of the National Electoral Commission shall be eligible for appointment to a political office by any government formed as a result of an election they were mandated to conduct.

ARTICLE 19

The Parties agree that the basic civil and political liberties which are recognised by the Sierra Leone legal system and are contained in the Declarations and Principles on Human Rights adopted by the UN and the OAU, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, shall be fully guaranteed and promoted within Sierra Leone society.

These include the right to life and liberty, freedom from torture; the right to a fair trial, freedom of conscience, expression and association, and the right to take part in the governance of one's country.

To foster national reconciliation and ensure the full and unrestricted participation of the RUF/SL in the political process, the RUF/SL shall enjoy:

(i) freedom of the press and access to the media in order that they may be heard and informed.
(ii) freedom of association, expression, assembly and the right to mobilise and demonstrate freely, and to communicate politically in order that they may organise effectively and set up appropriate infrastructure.

All political prisoners and prisoners of war, if any, shall be released.

ARTICLE 20

To monitor compliance with the basic rights guaranteed in the present Peace Agreement, as well as to promote human rights education throughout the various sectors of Sierra Leonean society, including schools, the media, the police and the military, an independent National Commission on Human Rights shall be established.

In pursuance of the above, technical and material assistance may be sought from the UN Special Commission on Human Rights, UN Centre for Human Rights, African Commission on Human and People's Rights and other relevant international organisations.

The National Commission on Human Rights shall have the power to investigate human rights violations and to institute legal proceedings where appropriate.
Further, a consortium of local human rights groups shall be encouraged to help monitor human rights observance.

ARTICLE 21

The Parties undertake to respect the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.

ARTICLE 22

In the pursuit of the reconstruction, rehabilitation and socio-economic development of Sierra Leone as a matter of the utmost priority, special attention shall be given to rural and urban poor areas, war victims, disabled persons and other vulnerable groups. The Government in conjunction with the Committee for Demobilization and Resettlement shall co-operate with all political parties and movements, including the RUF/SL, to raise resources internationally for these objectives during the initial phase of the consolidation of peace.

ARTICLE 23

The Government shall do all in its power to mobilize resources internally and externally to meet the needs of the post-war reconstruction and socio-economic development.

ARTICLE 24

The Parties agree that the independence of the Judiciary shall be strengthened in accordance with its role of ensuring the fair and impartial dispensation of justice in a democratic order. The composition of the present Judicial and Legal Service Commission shall be determined so as to ensure the independence of the Judiciary from the other organs of state as well as the political parties. Its membership shall include, in addition to judges and representatives of the legal profession and public services, representatives of other sectors of society not directly connected with the administration of justice.

ARTICLE 25

The Police Force shall be strengthened to ensure that the rule of law is upheld throughout Sierra Leone. To that end, the present Police Force shall be vetted. Furthermore, the professional training of the Police Force shall henceforth assure a new orientation, by emphasizing professionalism, the importance of human dignity and democratic values and respect and protection of human rights. It shall, further, emphasise that the conduct of members of the Police Force shall be free from all partisan considerations of politics, ideology and social position and that the Police Force shall avoid and combat corruption.

Nominations for the Police Council will come from wider sectors of society prior to their appointment so as to ensure their truly civilian and non-partisan character.

ARTICLE 26

It is recognised that there is a socio-economic dimension to the conflict which must also be addressed in order to consolidate the foundation of peace. Accordingly, the socio-economic policy of Sierra Leone shall be guided among other things, by the following principles, taking into account available resources:

i. Enhancement of the nation's productive capacity through meaningful grassroots participation in the reconstruction and development of the country;

ii. The provision of equal opportunities to all Sierra Leoneans especially those in the countryside and the urban poor, with the aim of equitable distribution of the nation's resources thereby empowering them to contribute effectively to decision making and implementation of policies which affect their lives;

iii. Improving the quality of life of the people through the provision of, inter alia,

a. primary health care in all villages and towns;

b. affordable and quality housing, especially in the countryside and poor urban areas;

c. improved educational services to enable all children of primary and junior-secondary school age to receive free and compulsory schooling as well as provide the opportunity for the youth and all other Sierra Leoneans to receive affordable quality education;

d. clean drinking water and sewerage system in every village and town;

e. provide job opportunities in a systematic and sustainable way for the people, especially the youth;

f. promote and sustain rural development and support agriculture in terms of technical, credit and marketing facilities;

g. provide support for production and provision of basic food and nutritional requirements of the people and food security in general;

h. protect the environment and regulate the exploitation of natural resources in the interest of the people, as well as prohibit monopolies;

i. provide the required infrastructure such as roads, transport and communications, energy and rural electrification, for improved living conditions, especially of the rural people;

j. seek to obtain debt relief in order to transfer funds from debt servicing to meet the urgent requirements of rebuilding a war-torn society.

ARTICLE 27

A broad-based Socio-Economic forum, in which the RUF/SL shall participate, shall be established with a feiw to enriching policy forumlation and execution in the socio-economic sector.

ARTICLE 28

The Government of Cote d'Ivoire, the United Nations, the OAU and the Commonwealth shall stand as moral guarantors that this Peace Agreement is implemented with integrity and in good faith by both parties.

Annex to this Agreement:
A nationwide sensitization programme for the peace process shall be pursued by the Parties, using all available means of communication to impress upon their combatants and the nation at large:

- the fact that hostilities have ended;
- the reasons for demobilization;
- the opportunities for reintegration of combatants; and
- the need for reconciliation and lasting peace.

Done in Abidjan this 30 day of the month of November, 1996.

Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah
President of the Republic of Sierra Leone

Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh
Leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

Henri Konan Bedie
President of the Republic of Cote d'Ivoire

Berhanu Dinka
Special Envoy of the United Nations Secretary-General for Sierra Leone

Adwoa Coleman (M/S)
Representative of the Organization of African Unity (OAU)

Moses Anafu (DR)
Representative of the Commonwealth Organization

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57. The Conakry Accord: ECOWAS Six-month Peace Plan for Sierra Leone, 23 October 1997 – 22 April 1998, 23 October 1997.

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ECOWAS SIX-MONTH PEACE PLAN FOR SIERRA LEONE
23 OCTOBER 1997 - 22 APRIL 1998

(SCHEDULE OF IMPLEMENTATION)

PREAMBLE:

Pursuant to the ECOWAS mandate to implement proposals for the resolution of the Sierra Leone crisis contained in the Final Communique of 26 June, 1997 in Conakry, a seven-point peace plan has been devised for the early return of constitutional governance to Sierra Leone. These are:

1. Cessation of hostilities throughout Sierra Leone

   i. With immediate effect
   ii. Establish monitoring and verification mechanism

Note: Process to be undertaken by ECOMOG, and the UN military observers. Participation of UN military observers needs the agreement of the UN Security Council.

2. Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Combatants: 1 to 31 December, 1997

Note: ECOWAS Committee of Five Ministerial Assessment visit (20 November, 1997)

3. Commencement of Humanitarian Assistance: 14 November 1997

Note: ECOMOG to monitor the process

4. Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons

Commencement date: 1 December, 1997

UNHCR assisted repatriation and resettlement of refugees and displaced persons

5. Restoration of the constitutional Government and Broadening of the Power Base: Takes effect from 22 May, 1998.

6. Immunities and Guarantees: Takes effect from 22 May, 1998

ELABORATION OF ECOWAS PEACE PLAN

1. Cessation of Hostilities:

It is considered that cessation of hostilities should come into force immediately. However, this will have to be accompanied by a monitoring and verification regime. Leaders of the various combatant units will be expected to disseminate information concerning these measures and ensure compliance with them. These measures will be supervised by ECOMOG, assisted by UN military observation group. The verification process will continue right up to the termination of the peace plan, i.e. 22 April 1998.

2. Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Combatants:

It is considered that a minimum of 30 days would be required to conduct an effective

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disarmament and demobilisation of combatants. This should take place from 1 to 31 December, 1997. Given the nation-wide dislocation of infrastructures and administration, a simple and uncomplicated procedure is envisaged. Combatants will be directed to report at designated centres in order to be engaged in the disarmament process. ECOMOG will supervise the entire process of disarmament and demobilisation. Where necessary, incentives may have to be provided to encourage the voluntary participation of combatants in all this process.

3. Humanitarian Assistance:

Considering that sanctions/embargoes will be strictly enforced throughout the period of the implementation of the Sierra Leone peace plan, the flows of humanitarian assistance beginning 14 November 1997 will continue to be monitored by ECOMOG and UN military observers. To this effect, a mechanism will be established by ECOMOG to facilitate the flow of humanitarian assistance. All this will be worked within the context of UN Security Council Resolution.

4. Return of Refugees and Displaced Persons:

Recognising that refugees, particularly those in neighboring countries, may wish to voluntarily return following the cessation of hostilities, UNHCR assistance should begin from 1 December, 1997.

5. Restoration of Constitutional Government and Broadening of the Power Base:

The restoration of constitutional order to Sierra Leone is at the heart of the ECOWAS peace plan. Consequently, it is considered necessary that the Government of Tejan Kabbah should be enabled to exercise effective control once he is restored to office on 22 May 1998. Nevertheless, it is recognised that for an enduring peace to be restored which will enjoy the support of the majority of Sierra Leoneans and the confidence of the subregion, efforts should be made to ensure that an all-inclusive government is evolved. In this regard, the goodwill and assistance of the international community, both financial and material, would be necessary.

The interest of the various parties in Sierra Leone should be suitably accommodated. Accordingly, it is recommended that the new Cabinet should be a cabinet of inclusion.

Furthermore, in order to accommodate the aspirations of their supporters, Board and Senior Civil Service appointments are to reflect broad national character.

All the above power sharing formulas should come into effect 22 May 1998.

It is recognised that Corporal Foday Sankoh as a leader of RUF could continue to play an active role and participate in the peace process.

In the spirit of the Abidjan Accord and in the context of this Agreement, Corporal Foday Sankoh is expected to return to his country to make his contribution to the peace process.

6. Reintegration of Combatants:

All those who disarm as a result of the implementation of the peace process, should be provided with either job training to fit them for alternative employment or given scholarships and grants for further education. Access to education at all levels should be made available to all demobilised persons. Ex-combatants should be provided with assistance to facilitate their

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re-integration into their communities. We strongly appeal to the UN, OAU, ECOWAS and indeed the international community to render appropriate assistance to achieve this objective.

7. Donor Appeals for Emergency Humanitarian Assistance for Reconstruction and Rehabilitation:

The United Nations and the OAU in cooperation with ECOWAS are requested to launch these appeals as soon as hostilities cease.

8. Immunities and Guarantees:

It is considered essential that unconditional immunities and guarantees from prosecution be extended to all involved in the unfortunate events of 25 May, 1997 with effect from 22 May 1998.

DONE AT CONAKRY, THIS 23RD DAY OF OCTOBER 1997

FOR THE COMMITTEE OF FIVE
OF ECOWAS ON SIERRA LEONE

Chief Tom Ikimi
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Federal Republic of Nigeria

Lamine Kamara
Minister of Foreign Affairs
Republic of Guinea

FOR THE DELEGATION REPRESENTING
MAJOR JOHNNY PAUL KOROMAH

Col Abdul Karim Sesay
Secretary General AFRC

Alimamy Pallo Bangura
Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs

WITNESSES

For U.N.

Prof. Ibrahima Fall
Asst. Secretary-General UN

For O.A.U.

Ms. Adwoa Coleman
OAU Representative

58. Ceasefire Agreement Between Government and the Revolutionary United Front, 18 May 1999.

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AGREEMENT ON CEASEFIRE IN SIERRA LEONE

President Ahmed Tejan KABBAH and Rev. Jesse Jackson met on 18 May 1999 with Corporal Foday Saybana SANKOH, under the auspices of President Gnassingbe EYADEMA. At that meeting, the question of the peace process for Sierra Leone was discussed.

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The Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL),

- Desirous to promote the ongoing dialogue process with a view to establishing durable peace and stability in Sierra Leone; and

- Wishing to create an appropriate atmosphere conducive to the holding of peace talks in Lome, which began with the RUF internal consultations to be followed by dialogue between the Government and the RUF;

- Have jointly decided to:

1. Agree to ceasefire as from 24 May 1999, the day that President EYADEMA invited Foreign Ministers of ECOWAS to discuss problems pertaining to Sierra Leone. It was further agreed that the dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone and RUF would commence on 25 May 1999;

2. Maintain their present and respective positions in Sierra Leone as of the 24th of May 1999; and refrain from any hostile or aggressive act which could undermine the peace process;

3. Commit to start negotiations in good faith, involving all relevant parties in the discussions, not later than May 25 in Lome;

4. Guarantee safe and unhindered access by humanitarian organizations to all people in need; establish safe corridors for the provision of food and medical supplies to ECOMOG soldiers behind RUF lines, and to RUF combatants behind ECOMOG lines;

5. Immediate release of all prisoners of war and non-combatants;

6. Request the United Nations, subject to the Security Council's authorisation, to deploy military observers as soon as possible to observe compliance by the Government forces (ECOMOG and Civil Defence Forces) and the RUF, including former AFRC forces, with this ceasefire agreement.

This agreement is without prejudice to any other agreement or additional protocols which may be discussed during the dialogue between the Government and the RUF.

Signed in Lome (Togo) 18 May 1999, in six (6) originals in English and French

For the Government of Sierra Leone

For the Revolutionary United Front Of Sierra Leone

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ALHADJI Dr. Ahmad Tejan KABBAH
President Of The Republic Of Sierra Leone

Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh, Leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF)

WITNESSED BY:

For the Government of Togo and Current Chairman of ECOWAS

GNASSINGBE EYADEMA
President of the Republic of Togo

For the United Nations

Francis G. Okelo
Special Representative of the Secretary General

For the Organisation of African Unity (OAU)

Adwoa COLEMAN
Representative of the Organization of African Unity

US Presidential Special Envoy for the Promotion of Democracy in Africa

Rev. Jesse JACKSON

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60. United States Department of State, "Sierra Leone Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1997", Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, January 30, 1998. Pages 1-11, 13-16, and 18.

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U.S. State Department Human Rights Reports

U.S. Department of State
Sierra Leone Country Report on Human Rights Practices for 1997
Released by the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, January 30, 1998.

SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone is controlled by a military junta. On May 25, dissident junior officers of the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) violently seized power from the 14-month-old democratically elected Government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The United Nations Security Council condemned the overthrow of the government and called upon the military junta to restore the elected Government unconditionally. Major Johnny Paul Koroma, awaiting trial on charges stemming from a September 1996 coup attempt, was freed from prison and named Chairman of the new Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The AFRC immediately suspended the Constitution, banned political parties and all public demonstrations and meetings, and announced that all legislation would be made by military decree. Koroma invited the rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) to join the AFRC in exercising control over the country. The RUF quickly took control of the military junta, although Koroma remains nominal Chairman of the AFRC. Rule is arbitrary; maintenance of law and order has collapsed. The judiciary, like other civil institutions, has effectively ceased to function.

The Organization of African Unity (OAU) designated the Economic Organization of West African States (ECOWAS) to bring about the restoration of the constitutional government. After ECOWAS negotiations with a joint AFRC/RUF delegation failed to make progress toward the restoration of the elected Government, ECOWAS imposed regional sanctions and an embargo against the military junta. On October 8, the United Nations Security Council imposed sanctions prohibiting the importation of weapons, military materiel, and petroleum as well as international travel by members of the military junta. Dozens of civilians were killed in clashes between AFRC/RUF forces and the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) as ECOMOG attempted to enforce the sanctions. On October 23, AFRC/RUF and ECOWAS delegations signed a peace plan calling for the restoration to power of President Kabbah on April 22, 1998. Both President Kabbah and AFRC Chairman Koroma publicly endorsed the Conakry Plan. However, the junta did not cooperate in attempts to refine the details of the peace plan and by year's end had taken no steps to implement it.

Before May 25, the RSLMF was responsible for external and, together with the police, internal security, primarily against RUF attacks. The RSLMF was supported by Nigerian and Guinean military contingents and by personnel working under a training and logistics contract with Executive Outcomes, a private South African mercenary firm. In compliance with the November 1996 Abidjan Peace Agreement, President Kabbah terminated the contract with Executive Outcomes at the end of January. For 20 months, Executive Outcomes had played the critical role in government efforts to protect major towns and

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diamond mining areas from RUF attacks. Groups of traditional hunters (including the Mende Kamajohs, Temne Kapras, and Koranko Tamaboros) organized as civil defense militias, with government support defended their chiefdoms from RUF attacks and RSLMF looting. Neither the RSLMF nor the civil defense militia were fully under government control. After May 25, the RUF joined with RSLMF troops loyal to the AFRC junta and renamed itself the People's Army of Sierra Leone. RSLMF forces loyal to the AFRC appear to function separately from RUF troops. They also fought occasional battles against each other. In June the AFRC formed joint military and police antilooting squads and gave them authority to shoot looters on sight.

Before the coup on May 25, government security forces and the RUF committed numerous human rights abuses. After May 25, the scale of violence and human rights abuses committed against civilians by the AFRC and RUF greatly increased. In addition members of the Civil Defense Force allegedly committed serious human rights abuses.

Sierra Leone is an extremely poor country. Before the civil war began in 1992, more than 70 percent of the 4.5 million citizens were involved in some aspect of agriculture, mainly subsistence farming. Although the country has substantial mineral resources, including diamonds, gold, rutile, and bauxite, official receipts from legal exports have been small in recent years. For decades the majority of diamond and gold production has been smuggled abroad. The economic infrastructure has nearly collapsed due to corruption, neglect, and war-related disruptions. The 6-year RUF insurgency dislocated more than 40 percent of the country's population, placing additional burdens on Sierra Leone's fragile economy. According to the United Nations, the average life expectancy is now only 34 years. One child out of four dies before the age of 5. The economic embargo imposed on the military junta by ECOWAS caused the customs duties to dry up, depriving the AFRC of 85 percent of its expected revenue flow.

Sierra Leone's human rights record worsened significantly and is now extremely poor. Before the May 25 coup, government military forces committed serious human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, beatings, arbitrary arrest and detention, and illegal searches. Under the elected Government as well as under the military regime, there were reports that police abused suspects during arrest and interrogation. Prison conditions remained life threatening. Prior to May 25, lengthy delays in trials, prolonged pretrial detentions, and violations of due process were problems. Government harassment of the press was also a problem. Discrimination against ethnic minorities persisted, and violence against women remained widespread, as was violence against children, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and the use of child soldiers.

Prior to the coup, RUF forces continued to attack villages and ambush travelers, killing, torturing, raping, and mutilating civilians. The RUF abducted children and forced them to commit atrocities, including the torture and murder of their relatives. The RUF raped and sexually abused young girls and women during attacks.

After May 25, AFRC and RUF forces committed numerous, serious human rights abuses including deliberate extrajudicial killings of unarmed civilians, torture, mutilation, rape, beatings, arbitrary arrest and detention, and illegal searches. The military junta routinely jailed antiregime civic leaders and students without judicial process; junta forces killed some detainees; amputated the arms of others; and raped women as punishment for their

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opposition to the regime. After the coup, the court system ceased to function. The AFRC announced that it would replace the judiciary with People's Revolutionary Courts manned by ordinary citizens. There is no evidence that these or any other courts are functioning. The military junta harassed, beat, detained, and arrested journalists.

RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

Section 1 Respect for the Integrity of the Person, Including Freedom From:

a. Political and Other Extrajudicial Killing

Before and after the coup, government military forces and the RUF committed political and extrajudicial killings. Soldiers and RUF troops engaged in looting, robbery, and extortion frequently killed civilians. The situation became much worse on May 25 when coup leaders freed hundreds of prisoners from Pademba Road prison and gave them military uniforms and weapons. Freed prisoners, AFRC troops, and RUF forces engaged in looting, rape, and murder. Foreign countries evacuated several thousand foreign citizens and tens of thousands of Sierra Leoneans fled Freetown. Up to 100 civilians were killed in the violence surrounding the coup. Hundreds more have been murdered subsequently in both random violence and political killings. In mid-June, AFRC officials created antilooting squads including the Western Area Security Patrol and gave them authority to shoot looters on sight. Antilooting Decree Number Six published on November 28, but effective retroactively to May 28, made looting punishable by firing squad. AFRC and RUF officials summarily executed at least 120 soldiers and civilians accused of looting and other crimes. Eight senior members of the AFRC who looted the Iranian Embassy on New Year's Eve were demoted or lightly fined.

Throughout the last half of the year, there was fierce fighting between AFRC/RUF forces and Kamajohs in several areas in the Southern and Eastern Provinces. AFRC/RUF forces routinely summarily executed captured Kamajohs. AFRC/RUF forces routinely shot and tortured civilians and looted their property while searching for Kamajohs. While the Kamajohs usually turned AFRC/RUF prisoners over to ECOMOG, a few AFRC/RUF prisoners were executed while in Kamajoh custody.

At least one person was killed and another injured in Bo on May 27 when AFRC soldiers shot at a crowd of about 5,000 persons demonstrating against the coup. The demonstration started when large quantities of looted goods were discovered in the army's possession.

At least 80 people, including 30 civilians, were killed during fighting in Kenema between RSLMF troops and Kamajohs during the first weekend in May. Fighting started when soldiers shot at a truck of Kamajohs, killing three, as they drove past the army base at Kpetema. At least 22 people, including at least 6 civilians, were killed in fighting that started that weekend between RSLMF troops and Kapras at Camp Charlie near Matotoka.

On May 29, at Masingbi in the Eastern Province, AFRC soldiers ambushed a group of Kamajohs, killing 20 of them. RUF forces firing automatic rifles, grenade launchers, and mortars repeatedly attacked the town of Moyamba at the end of June. During 1 attack they killed more than 10 people, including women and children.

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In June the Western Area Security Patrol and antilooting squads in other parts of the country executed at least two dozen people including four soldiers who tried to rape four nuns and loot their residence on June 11. Their bodies were dumped into the sea. In other cases, armed robbers were hacked to pieces or decapitated. A teenage boy caught breaking into a house in Freetown on June 25 was hacked to death; his arms and head were chopped off and one testicle placed in his mouth by the antilooting squad.

On June 26, AFRC/RUF troops searching for Kamajohs killed at least 25 people in Bo District. Soldiers took Albert Sandy Demby, paramount chief of Baoma Chiefdom and father of Vice President Albert J.E. Demby, from his home in Gerihun, Bo District, and shot him in the stomach, killing him. The soldiers then attacked and burned the villages of Sembehun and Telu Bongor, the home of Deputy Defense Minister Samuel Hinga Norman.

During an attack on the town of Moyamba at the end of June, RUF troops tortured student leader Sheku Kabbah in public before killing him; they gouged out his eyes and cut off his ears before cutting his throat.

On July 8, a young woman was summarily executed by uniformed soldiers in Freetown for publicly supporting President Kabbah. Junta military officers executed three soldiers in July in Kenema for looting.

On August 12, AFRC troops executed a soldier in Freetown after he shot and killed a mechanic who asked the soldier to pay for five gallons of gasoline that the soldier had taken from the gas station. An angry crowd chased the soldier to a police station. Other soldiers rushed in and dragged him out, stripped off his uniform, and shot him at least five times.

On August 18, at least 11 people were killed when AFRC forces attacked students attempting a "march for democracy" in protest against the AFRC. One student from Njala University was chopped into pieces by the military forces. Many students remain missing and the number killed may be higher. Many students also were arrested arbitrarily and tortured (see Section 1.c.).

In August AFRC soldiers beat and cut the throat of paramount chief Dessima from the Dame chiefdom near Kenema. His deputy was abducted and presumed killed. In late August, seven men were arrested and taken to Cockerill Military Headquarters after arriving at a Freetown wharf from Lungi across the river. Six were shot after being accused of involvement with FM 98.1 radio station; one later was released.

On September 1, members of the Kamajoh and Kapra militias beheaded four people who they suspected of being soldiers or AFRC sympathizers. The four were traveling from Bo to Makeni in a commercial vehicle that stopped at a CDF checkpoint at Gumahun, 25 miles from Bo. After the vehicle was searched, the driver was identified as a retired soldier and arrested. Two other men in military T-shirts also were arrested, along with the girlfriend of one of the men. All four were summarily executed. The other passengers in the vehicle were allowed to continue their journey to Makeni.

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Ten soldiers were executed by firing squad on October 25. Military police head Captain John Harleston said that all 10 had pleaded guilty to murder charges during a 1-day trial. Other sources said that two of those executed had been accused of beating the girlfriend of a military officer. Harleston said that the executions were meant to send a signal to undisciplined soldiers and to reassure the civilian population.

Nine passengers on a bus traveling between Kenema and Bo were killed on November 2 in a clash between AFRC soldiers and members of the Kamajoh militia. Sierra Leone Road Transport Company officials said the fighting began when soldiers on the bus ignored an order to disembark at a Kamajoh roadblock.

On December 3, eight armed robbers were executed by firing squad in a soccer field in Koidu town in the eastern Kono District. A junta spokesman said that the eight had appeared before a 1-day military tribunal. One of the eight persons executed, Jonathan Moore, had been serving a 25-year sentence when he was released from prison during the coup.

b. Disappearance

Thousands of civilians disappeared following the May 25 junta takeover. In many cases, it is unclear whether the individuals were killed, captured by AFRC/RUF forces, or whether they successfully fled the country. Some individuals subsequently reappeared in refugee camps or in other parts of the country. The whereabouts of hundreds of people detained by junta officials since the coup remain unknown. In most cases, family members are too frightened of the junta to inquire about the location of their missing relatives.

c. Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman, or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Although the now suspended Constitution prohibits torture, there were numerous reports that government security forces at times used torture. For example in January, a soldier on trial for treason for the September 1996 plot to overthrow the government alleged that he had been forced to sign a confession under torture. Joseph Yajah, a former security officer at State House, testified in court that he was tortured at CID headquarters where deputy head Samuel Soumassa urged him to change his statement. Yajah said he was tied to a chair in the squad office, stripped naked, had ice water poured on him, and was subjected to electric shocks. He said police officers stuffed a cap in his mouth when he screamed. Yajah also testified that a subinspector put out a cigarette on his head and ordered other men to scratch his back with wire. The police denied the allegations.

In the week of the military takeover, the level of violence by military and RUF forces caused the exodus of hundreds of thousands of civilians from Freetown, the capital, and other population centers. Soldiers and released prisoners engaged in wholesale looting of private homes, businesses, diplomatic residences, international organizations, and warehouses of humanitarian assistance organizations. In particular local and foreign officials and businessman were targeted for looting and beatings. Their female family members were targeted for rape. Similar acts of abuse and violence continued through the end of the year. Both AFRC and RUF forces used torture on numerous occasions. Since 1991 the RUF waged an armed rebellion marked by violent attacks against civilians. After

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the RUF joined the AFRC junta in Freetown, RUF Spokesman Eldred Collins admitted responsibility for the atrocities committed in the country's interior. He asserted that the RUF "burned, looted, maimed, and killed," not because it wanted to, but because "that was the only way we could have uprooted a rotten system."

A leader of the AFRC beat student leader Ansu Bockarie and cut him with a razor blade in early June.

On August 18, AFRC and RUF soldiers killed at least 11 students during a student "march for democracy" against the junta in Freetown. A large number of students and other protesters suffered severe injuries when AFRC and RUF forces breaking up the march attacked them with machetes and bayonets. Four had their arms chopped off. Approximately 20 female students were arrested and taken directly to the residences of AFRC/RUF leaders who sexually assaulted them. Some are still detained. One female student remains missing.

President of the Civil Liberties Congress Soulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie was arrested on August 18 and beaten with military helmets and gun butts. His arms were tied with rope, and he was put in the truck of a car belonging to an AFRC leader. After several hours in the car, he was taken to Cockerill Military Headquarters where he was interrogated and beaten. He was later transferred to Pademba Road prison's death row and was denied washing and sanitary facilities. He was denied food for the first 3 days that he was detained. The AFRC released Tejan-Sie on August 28, but kept him under close surveillance until he fled the country in early October.

In the Eastern Province near Tongo, AFRC officials harassed, intimidated, and tortured miners to find the location of diamonds. In August a miner was roped over a fire in the Kono area by a junta official to make him disclose where he had hidden a recently found diamond. The miner surrendered the diamond and his tribe had to pay AFRC officials a large ransom sum for his release.

RUF soldiers tortured and killed numerous persons (see Section 1.a.). On October 2, three soldiers and one member of the RUF attacked Olu Jones at his house. He was tied, beaten, and stabbed in both ears with a bayonet. In the early morning, the soldiers took him to Cockerill Military Headquarters.

Refugees fleeing Sierra Leone reported torture and abuse of civilians by AFRC soldiers and the RUF, particularly in the Mende areas in the south and east where the AFRC and RUF were fighting the Kamajohs. AFRC/RUF soldiers burned villages suspected of supporting the Kamajohs. Civilians were beaten and tortured. Women and girls were raped, sexually tortured, and forced into sexual slavery.

Both the AFRC and the RUF use rape as an instrument of control and punishment. The military junta has not taken steps to control violence by soldiers against women and often encourages it.

Prison conditions remain life threatening. The quality of food and medical care was poor. In mid-May, Pademba Road prison held 60 percent more inmates than its capacity. The majority of those were on remand awaiting trial. When the AFRC seized power on May

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25, it broke open the Pademba Road prison and freed all inmates. By the end of the year, Pademba Road prison was again seriously overcrowded with persons detained by the AFRC. Many detainees are held in metal shipping containers at Cockerill military headquarters.

The AFRC junta occasionally granted the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and Prison Watch limited access to prisoners, many of whom were officials in the previous government, journalists, or student protesters. In August Prison Watch reported that most detainees in Pademba Road prison were brutalized and beaten during arrest and interrogation, and none had been formally charged or had access to legal counsel.

d. Arbitrary Arrest, Detention, or Exile

The AFRC junta suspended the Constitution and gave itself far-reaching powers of detention. Any person can be arrested "in the interest of public safety." There are no safeguards against arbitrary arrest or indefinite detention without charge or trial. Members of the elected Government and people associated with it, members of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), journalists, students, and human rights activists have been arbitrarily arrested and detained without charge in what the junta calls "military safe custody." Police and military officials arrest without warrant and detain indefinitely any person they suspected of posing a threat to military rule. With the collapse of the rule of law, all civilians are at risk of arbitrary arrest and detention.

Several hundred detainees are being held at Pademba Road prison, Cockerill military headquarters, Criminal Investigation Department (CID) headquarters, and police stations or military installations throughout the country. While some detainees have been released after a short time, others have been held for weeks or months. Many have been beaten or tortured (see Section 1.c.). Most detainees who are released go into hiding or flee from the country.

In the days immediately following the coup, several members of President Kabbah's cabinet and other senior government and military officers were detained at Cockerill military headquarters. Soldiers conducted house-to-house searches for others. Most of these detainees were released after a few days. On June 16, at least eight senior military officers and seven civilians associated with the SLPP were arrested and accused of conspiring to overthrow the AFRC. None was charged with a crime; however, they were not allowed visitors. Most were released within several weeks.

Hundreds of people have been detained and beaten by junta troops searching for the transmitter of a clandestine, prodemocracy radio station that began broadcasting in July.

More than 120 people were arrested on August 18 and 19 as the National Union of Sierra Leone Students (NUSS) attempted to hold a "march for democracy" in protest against the AFRC. Eighty-six students were taken to Pademba Road prison where they were held for 12 days before release. Another 35 students were taken to Cockerill military headquarters. Others were taken to CID headquarters and about 20 women were taken directly to the residences of junta leaders. In October the junta admitted that it was still holding 37 students; many more, including some women, remained missing.

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On September 16, People's Army troops attacked the town of Bonthe, on Sherbro Island, searching for a Kamajoh training center. The soldiers arrested 60 civilians suspected of sympathizing with the Kamajohs and took them to Moyamba for questioning. It is not clear what happened to them afterwards.

On October 13, the junta arrested eight people, including the elected Government's Deputy Minister of Marine Resources Mamoud Sesay, newspaper editor Prince Akpu, and Temne tribal chief Alhaji King Naimbana for "involvement in subversive activities." At the time the junta admitted to holding another 33 detainees it described as "prodemocracy activists."

On November 26, the AFRC arrested Chief A.B. Tomboyeke in Baoma Chiefdom, Bo District while searching for Kamajohs.

Prior to the coup, on March 29 RUF forces abducted several of its own members at Nongowa in Kailahun District in the Eastern Province. Two of those abducted, Fayia Musa and Ibrahim Deen-Jalloh, had been appointed as RUF representatives to the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace established by the Abidjan Peace Accord, which was signed by the Government and the RUF in November 1996. In April they were reported to be on trial in an RUF people's court for plotting to overthrow RUF leader Foday Sankoh. The captives' condition was uncertain at year's end.

The junta refused to allow several prominent businessmen, government officials, and journalists to leave the country. Because of the violence surrounding the coup and the RUF's reputation for brutality, hundreds of thousands of Sierra Leoneans fled the country fearing for their lives. Many more left later after being targeted by the junta. President Kabbah and members of his government are among those now in exile in Guinea.

The junta does not practice forced exile; however, thousands have fled for their own safety.

e. Denial of Fair Public Trial

The suspended Constitution included provisions for an independent judiciary. Virtually all magistrates have fled the country; several were beaten, and some were raped by prisoners released from prison during the coup. The court system has not functioned since May 25. The AFRC announced that it would replace the judiciary with People's Revolutionary Courts manned by ordinary citizens, but there is no evidence that these or any other courts are functioning.

f. Arbitrary Interference with Privacy, Family, Home, or Correspondence

The AFRC monitored actions by citizens to prevent them from acting in a manner it deemed prejudicial to its continuation in power and to control association or communication with other persons. The junta erected roadblocks to control movement and conducted surveillance of the homes of people it perceives as opponents. Telephones and mail are monitored by the military junta. There were numerous occasions of abusive treatment of citizens by soldiers and police throughout the country, including forced entry into homes, robberies, and assaults. Many of these abuses were sanctioned by or

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committed by high-ranking members of the junta. Joint military and police Antilooting Squads frequently executed soldiers caught looting homes.

g. Use of Excessive Force and Violations of Humanitarian Law in Internal Conflicts

The RUF fighting against three successive governments resulted in an estimated 20,000 deaths since 1991. More than one-third of Sierra Leone's 4.5 million citizens are displaced internally or are living as refugees in neighboring countries because of insecurity and violence stemming from the civil war and the AFRC/RUF takeover. After taking power, junta forces seized food aid destined for displaced persons and refugees, and looted the headquarters and warehouses of international aid organizations, making humanitarian relief difficult. The AFRC also planted land mines around ECOMOG installations and at other strategic sites in an attempt to hinder their efforts to restore the constitutional government.

There were many serious violations of humanitarian law throughout the country before as well as after the military takeover. Military and RUF forces committed summary executions of prisoners and killings, torture, rape, and mutilation of civilians. Traditional hunter societies (including the Mende Kamajohs, Temne Kapras, and Koranko Tamaboros) organized as civil defense militias and sought to protect their chiefdoms from both RUF attacks and military looters. At times they executed military or RUF forces that they had captured. Hundreds of civilians were killed in fighting between military and RUF troops and the civil defense forces.

Despite the Abidjan Peace Agreement signed in November 1996, and a cease-fire in effect, RUF rebels and elements of the government security forces continued to attack villages and ambush vehicles. RUF forces continued to abduct villagers and force them into involuntary servitude, making them serve as porters, sexual slaves, human shields, and fighters, among other abuses. Civilians were murdered, maimed, tortured, and raped in these attacks. In some cases, perpetrators could not be identified; however, it is generally believed that RUF forces, military personnel, and ordinary thieves, committed attacks on civilians. Even in the instances where perpetrators could be identified, the Government took no action against them.

In early May, the RUF resumed targeting international organizations. On May 7 several miles from Makeni, RUF gunmen attacked two United Nations vehicles with machine gun fire. The driver of one vehicle was killed and another U.N. employee was injured. The next day two more humanitarian aid workers were injured when the RUF attacked two World Food Program vehicles on the Makeni-Lunsar road.

Beginning on May 9, forces generally believed to belong to the RUF began a campaign of attacks against villages in the Northern province. Armed groups in both military uniforms and civilian clothes attacked at least 10 villages with sticks, machetes, guns, and rocket propelled grenades. The attacks caused 8,000 people to seek refuge in the Northern province capital of Makeni and thousands more to flee to Guinea. In the attack on Kalangba village, more than a dozen people were killed and 87 houses burned. In Gbandembu village, the clinic and 124 of 130 houses were burned. Scores of people whose hands and feet had been cut off by rebel forces sought medical attention in Makeni. Many people were also abducted in these attacks. On May 14, these forces, including

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many young boys, captured the northern town of Kamakwie, leaving dozens of corpses lying in the streets. They destroyed the hospital, dispensary, and pharmacy, and burned more than 60 houses. In separate attacks in mid-May, the RUF killed more than 100 people in the eastern towns of Kalihun and Bomaru.

On the morning of June 2, after the junta broke off negotiations with the international community, a Nigerian warship shelled AFRC/RUF military installations in the western end of Freetown for several hours. In response 150 RUF soldiers attacked and then set fire to the Mammy Yoko Hotel where some 600 foreigners were awaiting evacuation and where ECOMOG forces and Nigerian negotiators had set up their headquarters. At least one person at the hotel died in the attack and six were injured, including five Nigerian soldiers guarding the hotel. Later that day RUF troops also attacked the Bintumani hotel. At least 62 civilians were killed and more injured by the RUF-fired rocket-propelled grenades and Nigerian shells that fell into residential areas.

In late June, virtually the entire population of Magburaka fled 60 miles to Makeni after RUF troops entered the town and began harassing civilians.

On September 16, AFRC and RUF troops searching for a Kamajoh training center attacked the town of Bonthe on Sherbro Island, looting and destroying much of the town. At least 34 Kamajohs were killed. Sixty civilians were arrested and taken away for questioning. ? ?

In fighting during October, AFRC and RUF supporters looted and burned homes of President Kabbah's family and supporters of the elected Government, including the homes of Chairman of the Commission for Consolidation of the Peace Desmond Luke, Minister of Works Emmanuel O. Grant, and Deputy Minister in the Vice President's Office Theresa Koroma. At least seven villages in Baoma chiefdom, Bo District were abandoned in late October after AFRC/RUF troops burned the houses and stole the rice crop.

On November 26, AFRC soldiers burned 13 houses in the villages of Pelewahun Ngiyeibu and Gerihun in Bo district while searching for Kamajohs.

On December 3, Kamajohs seized a Sierra Leone Red Cross truck delivering relief food to Moyamba. They reportedly manhandled the Red Cross staff and told them that in the future, they should receive all relief supplies for distribution.

On December 9 and 10, AFRC and RUF forces launched attacks on Kamajoh strongholds in of Joru and Gorahun villages in Kenema District and Sonoshun, Fairo and Dia villages in Pujehun District. The villages were attacked by an AFRC helicopter gunship, artillery, and rocket propelled grenades. AFRC and RUF troops looted the villages, set fire to houses and rice farms, and raped several women. Similar AFRC/RUF attacks on Kamajoh strongholds throughout the eastern and southeastern parts of the country continued through the end of the year with significant fighting along the border with Liberia.

ECOMOG artillery and rocket attacks killed numerous civilians. In June a Nigerian warship shelled AFRC/RUF installations in Freetown for several hours. At least 150 civilians were killed and more were wounded during fighting that started on July 12 between AFRC/RUF and ECOMOG forces at the ECOMOG bases at Lungi Airport,

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Hastings Airfield, Jui, and Kossoh near Freetown. Junta forces attacked the ECOMOG bases and nearby towns seeking a new clandestine radio station that had recently broadcast a speech by President Kabbah.

About 15 civilians were killed in fighting that began when AFRC and RUF forces attacked the ECOMOG base at Lungi Airport on August 13. Most of the civilians were killed when ECOMOG troops tried to shell the attacking AFRC/RUF troops. A senior AFRC official said the junta would continue to harass ECOMOG troops until they left the airport.

Twenty-one civilians were killed and many more wounded during heavy fighting that broke out on September 4 when ECOMOG troops at Lungi Airport launched artillery and air attacks against two container ships docking at Queen Elizabeth Quay in violation of the ECOWAS embargo. There were reports that some of the ECOMOG shells fell in residential areas. Most of the civilian casualties were at Marbela Market. It is not clear whether the market was hit by an ECOMOG shell or by antiaircraft rounds fired from AFRC positions at Fourah Bay College on Mount Aureol.

On September 5, ECOMOG Force Commander Major General Victor Malu issued a "final warning" that ECOMOG would attack any ships violating the ECOWAS embargo. The next day a Nigerian Alpha jet dropped bombs into the water near a Ukrainian cargo ship Seaway as it unloaded in violation of the embargo. Three paramilitary policemen and a port official were seriously injured. The following day, another Nigerian aircraft dropped two bombs on the ship. No injures were reported in the second attack. General Malu claimed that, in addition to rice, the ship had been discharging arms and ammunition for the junta. In the following days, AFRC officials reportedly smuggled much of the rice into Guinea and sold it for their personal gain.

Hundreds of people died in 2 weeks of heavy fighting that started on October 8 between AFRC/RUF troops and ECOMOG forces. Hostilities began when an AFRC helicopter gunship fired at an ECOMOG helicopter ferrying supplies between ECOMOG bases. In retaliation a Nigerian Alpha jet fired rockets at, and dropped bombs on, the AFRC helicopter after it had returned to its base at Cockerill Military Headquarters. The AFRC reported that four soldiers and two civilians were killed in the attack on Cockerill. AFRC and RUF troops then attacked ECOMOG positions at Lungi Airport, Kossoh Town, and Jui. Dozens of civilians were killed by artillery fired by both sides. The fighting spread as AFRC/RUF troops attacked Nigerian ECOMOG contingents at Bo and Kenema. AFRC military trucks patrolled Freetown, arresting soldiers who had gone AWOL and refused to fight against ECOMOG troops, and forcibly impressed others into service. On October 16, at least 14 civilians were killed in the eastern outskirts of Freetown by ECOMOG artillery fired from Lungi Airport at AFRC/RUF troops attacking ECOMOG forces at Jui and Kossoh Town. Eight civilians were killed and 20 injured the same day when a bomb dropped by a Nigerian Alpha jet exploded in a market at Kissy. The Alpha jets also targeted junta radio and television transmitters. The AFRC placed antiaircraft guns in residential areas. Shells fired by these guns frequently fell in residential areas.

On December 11, AFRC forces at Daru barracks in Kailahun District fired on a Nigerian Alpha jet. The jet dropped two bombs that killed several people in the nearby village of Benduma.

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Section 2 Respect for Civil Liberties, Including:

a. Freedom of Speech and Press

The suspended Constitution provided for freedom of speech and of the press. In practice, however, prior to May 25 the Kabbah Government detained some journalists without charge and charged some with sedition, libel, and contempt of Parliament for their coverage of alleged government corruption, the civil war, and human rights issues. The elected Kabbah Government's frequent use of criminal libel and sedition charges encouraged self-censorship. Imposition of heavy fines financially crippled some members of the private press. Forty-six newspapers circulated while the elected Government was in power. On May 14, Parliament passed the Media Practitioner Act, designed to drastically curtail the numbers of journalists and newspapers. The law required all journalists to have an academic degree in journalism and to register with the authorities every year; editors are required to have 10 years professional experience. About 80 percent of the country's journalists could not meet these criteria; if enforced, the law would prevent them from working as journalists.

Shortly after the coup, the AFRC harshly criticized the Media Practitioner Act and asserted that press freedom would be unrestricted. However, journalists, like other critics of the junta, quickly became targets for harassment and intimidation. Dozens of journalists fled the country in fear of the military junta. In September following publication of a story in the Standard Times that revealed discord among members of the AFRC Supreme Council, the junta announced that newspapers were required to obtain permission before publishing. At year's end, only about six newspapers remained, all operating at the discretion of the AFRC Minister of Information. Under the elected Government five radio stations operated in Freetown and one in the provincial city of Bo. After May 25, the only regularly operating broadcast media were government radio and television stations tightly controlled by the military junta and the clandestine station FM 98.1 operated by the elected Government in exile. The AFRC/RUF junta took severe measures attempting to close FM 98.1, including torturing people who might know its location and electronically jamming its broadcasts. Many of the journalists who remained in Sierra Leone after May 25 were harassed, detained, arrested, and beaten by the military junta for reporting perceived to be critical of the AFRC or the RUF.

Under the elected Government, Punch newspaper correspondent Pat Kawa was arrested on January 24 on defamation charges after reporting allegations of financial improprieties by government officials. The case was dismissed in court on March 3. Footprints magazine publisher Harry Evans was arrested on March 6 and held without charge for a week after publishing an article alleging that the Minister of Presidential Affairs had imported 50 automobiles without paying customs taxes. Footprints editor Mohammed Karim and staff writer Njai Kanthba also were arrested and held for 3 days on spurious charges of drug possession. Three journalists from Expo Times newspaper were arrested without charge on March 19 following publication of an article entitled "Abacha's Wild West Gangsterism," about the detention of RUF leader Foday Sankoh by the Nigerian government. They later were charged with spying and possession of a secret military document and were released on bail after 2 weeks.

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On May 27, AFRC military personnel looted the Concord Times newspaper offices. Fearing for their safety, the newspaper's staff went into hiding. On June 4, two armed men searching for a Kabbah Government minister broke into the home of Standard Times newspaper managing editor Phillip Neville. When he denied sheltering the official, Neville was beaten. On June 9, Sky FM talk show host Ojukutu Macaulay went into hiding after a group of AFRC soldiers threatened to kill him for speaking against the military takeover. Following a June 11 story in For Di People newspaper about travel to Libya by an AFRC delegation, the junta warned journalists to seek clarification from AFRC headquarters before publishing sensitive security information. For Di People subsequently closed after receiving verbal threats from AFRC officials. In mid-June British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) stringer Sylvester Rogers went into hiding after learning that AFRC soldiers were trying to locate him. On October 2, AFRC Spokesman Allieu Kamara admitted that security personnel had taken Rogers into "safe restriction" after Rogers had attempted to leave the country without a police permit.

On July 8, The Point newspaper managing editor Budu Hayes was arrested at his home and detained at AFRC military headquarters until the following day. The soldiers who arrested Hayes alleged that he was harboring people fighting against the revolution. Also on July 8, The Democrat newspaper reporter Saloman Conteh and freelance correspondent Jeff Bowlay Williams were arrested at Democrat offices by 20 soldiers and interrogated at AFRC military headquarters. They then were transferred to Pademba Road prison and held 11 days without charge. The Democrat stopped publication when they were arrested. Business Vision reporter Martins I. Martins was arrested on July 19 and detained at AFRC military headquarters for 2 days on suspicion that he had communicated with President Kabbah. When he returned to his home, he discovered that it had been looted. On July 26, AFRC soldiers arrested Unity Now editors Dominick Lamine and Sahr Mbayoh and confiscated the newspaper's computers. AFRC officials claimed that the newspaper had subversive materials. The two editors were had incommunicado and released several days later. AFRC soldiers continued to search for the newspaper's editor-in-chief Frank Kposowa, who went into hiding to avoid arrest. On July 26, Kenema-based BBC stringer Suliman Momodu also went into hiding after learning that he was being sought by AFRC soldiers. On July 28, AFRC soldiers arrested New Tablet production manager Suliman Janger and seized 900 copies of the newspaper. Soldiers also arrested five newspaper vendors. New Tablet editor Gibril Foday Musa went into hiding to avoid arrest. On July 30, AFRC soldiers seized 1,500 copies of the Standard Times at the newspapers offices. The soldiers were searching for managing editor Philip Neville who had gone into hiding after receiving threatening phone calls for articles critical of the AFRC.

On August 18, AFRC soldiers arrested Voice of America correspondent Kelvin Lewis, Sky FM talk show host Ojukutu Macaulay, and their driver as they were on their way to cover a student demonstration against the junta. Soldiers beat them with machetes and gun butts and threatened to kill them. They were detained overnight in a metal shipping container at AFRC Cockerill military headquarters but released the next day. On September 1, BBC stringer Prince Brimah was ordered detained by AFRC Secretary of State for the Southern province, Major Augustine Kamara, who reportedly was displeased by his report about the execution of four persons at a CDF roadblock on the road between Bo and Makeni (see Section 1.g.). Kamara ordered Brimah taken to a police station where he was detained for 4 hours in a cell full of feces and then released. On the morning of

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September 20, several people who had gathered at the Mende Central Mosque in Freetown were beaten by security forces seeking information about the FM 98.1 radio station.

In early October, Concord Times acting editor Foday Fofana and the acting secretary of the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) Fallah Ensa-Ndemah went into hiding after receiving information that they were to be arrested on subversion charges stemming from the SLAJ's denunciation of the AFRC junta and its control of the press. Freelance journalist Donald Davis was arrested on October 8 and detained in Pademba Road prison. Freelance journalist Abdul Salam Timbo was arrested on subversion charges on October 10 and is being held incommunicado. On October 10, a truckload of solders arrested Punch newspaper Editor David Tambaryoh at his residence. He was held for 3 days on subversion charges stemming from his alleged contact with legitimate Sierra Leone government officials. Armed men searching for Tambaryoh's personal property looted his sister-in-law's home and twice raped her and her daughter. After his release, Tambaryoh went into hiding. Umaru Fofana, a freelance correspondent for The Vision newspaper and the BBC was shot in the leg and physically abused on October 11 by junta forces who claimed that he was reporting for FM 98.1. He was released later that day. Democrat newspaper acting editor John Foray and freelance journalist Abdul Kpowsa were beaten by junta forces and detained without charge on October 11. AFRC soldiers arrested For Di People editor Paul Kamara on October 16 and took him to Pademba Road prison. The soldiers smashed and looted the office, and confiscated the newspaper's computers and Kamara's car. The soldiers gave no reason for Kamara's arrest.

On November 13, the AFRC temporarily suspended the Standard Times and detained several of its reporters after it printed a story suggesting that the AFRC/RUF junta was involved in a plot with Liberian President Charles Taylor to overthrow the Government of Guinea. The suspension was lifted a week later after the newspaper retracted the story. On November 21, the AFRC temporally suspended The Democrat after it reported a burglary at the British High Commissioner's offices and home by seven uniformed men. It also subsequently retracted this story.

On November 22, police arrested Standard Times editor Ibrahim Karim Sei, The Democrat editor Pious Foray, and Concord Times acting editor Dorothy Awonoor-Gordon, and four other journalists. A police spokesman said that all three newspapers had carried "dubious articles" that threatened to undermine the security of the State. The seven journalists were detained for a week without charges. The Concord Times also had published an article disclosing the delivery of lubricating oil to the Freetown power plant, in violation of U.N. Security Council sanctions.

On December 16, journalist Vandi Kallon was detained and brutally beaten by AFRC officials who accused him of passing information to radio station FM 98.1 and ECOMOG. There was no information on his circumstances at year's end.

The elected Government respected academic freedom. All schools and universities were closed after May 25 as both teachers and students stayed away in protest against the AFRC's seizure of power.

b. Freedom of Peaceful Assembly and Association

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The suspended Constitution provided for freedom of assembly; however, at times the elected Government limited this right. The elected Government permitted many street demonstrations.

In February, however, police and armed forces personnel killed two persons and injured 20 others in breaking up a riot by several hundred youths against the postal service. The police fired tear gas and started shooting after rioters hurled stones at them. One of the dead men was shot in the chest as he emerged from an Ash Wednesday mass at Sacred Heart Cathedral near the post office where the riot was taking place. President Kabbah criticized the police for using excessive force in dispersing the rioters.

On March 11, police fired tear gas to disperse hundreds of students at the Parade Grounds soccer field in Freetown. The National Union of Sierra Leone Students (NUSS) had called the meeting to plan protests against the Government's decision to give retirement benefits to former President Major-General Joseph Momoh. The police refused to issue a permit for the meeting, claiming that security could not be ensured, and suggesting that the students meet instead on college campuses.

On March 14, police attacked 2,000 students attempting to meet in an open park. Before NUSS Secretary-General Abdulai Bayraytay was to address the crowd, 50 riot policemen disrupted the meeting to arrest him and other student leaders. When students attempted to prevent the leaders' arrests, the police attempted to disperse the crowd with tear gas and batons, injuring at least 15 persons. Several more students were detained by the police. A government statement said that police had been ordered "to take appropriate but reasonable action to prevent a student group meeting anywhere throughout Sierra Leone." It said that the students could hold meetings on any of the college campuses, but not elsewhere.

After May 25, the military junta restricted freedom of assembly and banned public demonstrations and meetings. At least one person was killed and another injured in Bo on May 27 when AFRC soldiers shot at a crowd of about 5,000 people demonstrating against the coup. The demonstration started when large quantities of looted goods were discovered in the army's possession. Nearly all the shops in Bo and an Action Contre La Faim warehouse were looted 2 days earlier when the junta released all the inmates at the Bo prison.

The military junta violently broke up a student march in Freetown on August 18. Using assault weapons and machetes, AFRC/RUF soldiers killed at least 11 students and maimed many others with machetes and bayonets. Soldiers shooting rocket-propelled grenades and automatic weapons set up roadblocks and searched the streets, making arrests wherever a group had gathered. AFRC/RUF forces chased students into Connaught hospital and assaulted patients as they searched for students. Students and citizens harboring students were severely beaten when found and detained in the Pademba Road prison.

Also on August 18, combined operation by AFRC and RUF troops and State Security Division police armed with automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenades, and antiaircraft guns broke up a student demonstration in the Southern province capital of Bo. After

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marching for a short distance, the students were confronted by the security forces, who dispersed them with tear gas.

The suspended Constitution provided for the right to form political, economic, social, and professional organizations, and the elected Government respected this provision in practice.

The AFRC junta restricted freedom of association and outlawed political parties and activities.

c. Freedom of Religion

The suspended Constitution provided for freedom of religion. The Kabbah Government respected this right in practice. Most religious institutions have continued to operate under the junta. However, due to security concerns, most foreign missionaries left the country. On August 17, AFRC security forces detained Secretary General of the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL) Alimamy Kokomah at his church and ordered him to cancel an interreligious worship service scheduled for Freetown's national stadium. Security officers turned back people who attempted to reach the stadium that evening. The AFRC also denied a CCSL request that it be allowed to host some form of worship service at its headquarters, alleging the possibility of infiltration.

d. Freedom of Movement Within the Country, Foreign Travel, Emigration, and Repatriation

The military junta tightly controls travel within the country. Most politicians, government officials, and businessmen left the country immediately after the coup. Many prominent persons were given safe haven through international evacuation efforts following the coup. Numerous checkpoints manned by AFRC/RUF soldiers make travel difficult. The junta refused to allow several prominent businessman, government officials, and journalists to leave the country. The junta severely restricts internal travel and emigration.

Approximately 1.4 million of Sierra Leone's 4.5 million citizens are displaced within the country. An estimated 238,000 Sierra Leoneans are refugees in Guinea and Liberia, including as many as 40,000 who fled to Guinea and 25,000 to Liberia following the coup. Several thousand more have sought refuge in The Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea-Bissau, and Mali. Many middle class Sierra Leoneans fled to Europe, Great Britain, and the United States.

Prior to the coup, the Government cooperated with the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and other humanitarian organizations in assisting refugees. Several hundred thousand refugees and displaced persons returned to their homes in the months following the November 1996 signing of the Abidjan Accord. Many of these returnees were forced to flee their homes again after the May 25 coup. Sierra Leone had provided asylum to 17,000 Liberians; several thousand of these refugees fled following the coup, but 5,500 Liberian refugees remained in the Freetown area, awaiting safe passage to Liberia. After the evacuation of United Nations personnel in early June, they were assisted by the ICRC.

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There is no formal process for granting political asylum.

Prior to the coup, there were no reports of forced return of persons to a country in which they feared persecution.

Section 3 Respect for Political Rights: The Right of Citizens to Change Their Government

Citizens do not have the right to change their government. On May 25, a military junta seized power from the civilian government which was chosen in free and fair elections. The AFRC suspended the Constitution, banned political parties, and announced that all legislation would be made by military decree. The military junta routinely threatened, harassed, imprisoned, tortured, and killed citizens who sought to challenge the military's seizure of power. The junta has not negotiated in good faith with the Committee of Five (C-5) foreign ministers appointed by ECOWAS to bring about the return of the Kabbah Government and the restoration of constitutional order. Parliament has not functioned since the military takeover. Many civil servants refuse to report to work until constitutional order is restored.

There is 1 woman in the 34 member AFRC Supreme Council and 1 woman in the 20 member Cabinet.

Section 4 Governmental Attitude Regarding International and Nongovernmental Investigation of Alleged Violations of Human Rights

Under the elected Government, several local human rights organizations operated including a local chapter of Amnesty International, the Civil Liberties Congress, Prison Watch, the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights, and the Society for Advancement of Civil Rights. Most members of these groups fled to Conakry, Guinea, from where they report on violations of human rights in Sierra Leone. Those who have stayed in Sierra Leone have to restrict their activities severely for their own safety.

On August 17, soldiers seeking Civil Liberties Congress President Soulaiman Banja Tejan-Sie arrested and beat three people closely associated with him. He was arrested the next day and taken to Cockerill military headquarters where he was tortured. He was then forced at gunpoint to appear on national television and to call upon students to cancel the "march for democracy" planned for that day. He was detained without charge at Pademba Road prison for 11 days and then placed under close surveillance until he fled the country in October. The junta allowed ICRC and Prison Watch to visit the Pademba Road prison at least through October.

Section 5 Discrimination Based on Race, Sex, Religion, Disability, Language, or Social Status

The suspended Constitution prohibited discrimination against women and provided for protection on the basis of race and ethnicity, except for the prohibition against citizenship for persons with a non-African father. This provision effectively blocks citizenship and political participation of those of Lebanese descent, and other persons with non-African

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fathers.

Women

Violence against women, especially wife beating, is common. Police are unlikely to intervene in domestic disputes except in cases of severe injury or death. Sierra Leone does not recognize domestic violence against women as a societal problem, and neither the elected Government nor the AFRC junta gave it high-level attention. Rape is a recognized societal problem and is punishable by up to 14 years' imprisonment. The elected Government enforced this law; however, the AFRC and the RUF use rape for both control and punishment.

The suspended Constitution provided for equal rights for women, but in practice women face both legal and societal discrimination. Their rights and status under traditional law vary significantly, depending upon the ethnic group to which they belong. The Temne and Limba tribes of the north afford greater rights to women to inherit property than does the Mende tribe, which gives preference to male heirs and unmarried daughters. However, in the Temne tribe, women cannot become paramount chiefs. In the south, the Mende tribe has a number of female paramount chiefs.

Women do not have equal access to education, economic opportunities, health facilities, or social freedoms. In rural areas, women perform much of the subsistence farming, all of the child rearing, and have little opportunity for education. The average educational level for women is markedly below that of men; only 6 percent are literate. At the university level, men predominate. Due to the military takeover, efforts by local NGO's to educate women on their civil rights and civic responsibilities have been suspended.

Children

Infant and child mortality is very high. In 1995 one child in four died before the age of 5 and one-third of children under the age of 5 were underweight.

As many as a few thousand RUF fighters are child soldiers who are as young as 8 years of age. They often are smaller physically than the rifles they carry. Abducted by the RUF from their villages, brutalized, and used to transport supplies, the children eventually become fighters. The armed forces also took boys off the streets of Freetown to expand its forces. The armed forces provided little or no training to the boys. This undisciplined and unsupervised group committed many atrocities. After the coup, parents began to ask the traditional hunter societies to initiate their young male children to protect them from abduction and forcible recruitment by the RUF. Human rights groups believe that a large number of the children abducted into the various armed forces, or otherwise traumatized by the war as civilians, experience serious psychological problems.

In late February, RSLMF soldiers and Kamajohs cooperating in a government operation rescued several hundred war orphans, most from 9 to 15 years of age, living in the forests in Kailahun and Kenema districts. Most of the children fled to the forests after RUF rebels attacked and destroyed their villages 4 years earlier.

Occasional instances of ritual murders of boys and girls, as well as adults, associated with

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illegal secret societies, have been reported in the past. There were no reported cases during the year. Female genital mutilation (FGM), which is condemned by international health experts as damaging to both physical and psychological health, is widely practiced on young women and girls, especially in traditional ethnic groups and among the less-educated. While UNICEF estimates the percentage of females who have undergone this procedure may be as high as 90 percent, local groups believe this figure is overstated.

In January the women's Bondo society initiated approximately 600 young women in the Grafton displaced persons camp near Freetown in a ceremony that included FGM. About 100 girls required medical treatment for complications including bleeding and serious infections caused by the multiple use of unclean knives or glass used in the procedure. An active press campaign by secret societies countered the well-publicized international effort against FGM. The 28-year- old woman abducted in 1996 by a secret society and subjected to FGM eventually found a lawyer to take her case, but now there are no functioning courts. On July 2, AFRC Chairman Johnny Paul Koroma told the executive council of the Bondo Society that he supports FGM and other traditional practices and that after the coup they could now perform these rites without hindrance.

People with Disabilities

Questions of public facility access and discrimination against the disabled have not become public policy issues. No laws mandate accessibility to buildings or provide for other assistance for the disabled. While there does not appear to be outright discrimination against the disabled in housing or education, with the high rate of unemployment, few disabled persons work in offices or factories.

Many citizens suffered debilitating injuries during the war. Many had limbs cut off by RUF fighters. A few NGO's have provided prostheses, but the vast majority of victims remain without assistance of any kind.

National/Racial/Ethnic Minorities

Ethnic loyalty remains an important factor in government, the military, and business. Complaints of corruption within ethnic groups and ethnic discrimination in government appointments, contracts, military commissions, and promotions are common. Residents of non-African descent face institutionalized political restrictions. The Constitution restricts citizenship to persons of patrilineal Negro-African descent. This constitutional restriction effectively denies citizenship to many long-time residents, notably the Lebanese community. The Lebanese community was targeted for looting by military and RUF forces during the AFRC takeover. Nigerian citizens were also targeted by the junta for harassment, arrest, and detention because of the dominant role played by Nigerian troops in the ECOMOG forces enforcing the U.N. and ECOWAS sanctions. RUF members killed two Nigerian citizens on September 9 in apparent retaliation for ECOMOG attacks against ships violating the ECOWAS embargo. In early September, at least 20 Nigerian citizens were accused of spying for ECOMOG, arrested, and held at Cockerill military headquarters. Another six Nigerians were arrested in mid-September as they traveled from Freetown to the interior of the country. The reason for their arrest is unknown.

Section 6 Worker Rights

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a. The Right of Association

Under the elected Government, the now suspended Constitution provided for the right of association. All workers, including civil servants, had the right to join trade unions of their choice. Unions were independent of the government. All labor unions had by custom joined the Sierra Leone Labor Congress (SLLC), but membership was voluntary. There was no legal prohibition against SLLC leadership holding political office, and leaders have held both elected and appointed government positions.

The Trade Union Act provides that any five persons may form a trade union by applying to the Registrar of Trade Unions, who has statutory powers under the act to approve the creation of trade unions. The Registrar may reject applications for several reasons, including an insufficient number of members, proposed representation in an industry already serviced by an existing union, or incomplete documentation. If the Registrar rejects an application, his decision may be appealed in the ordinary courts, but applicants seldom take such action. Approximately 60 percent of workers in urban areas, including government employees, are unionized, but unions have had little success in organizing workers in the agricultural and mining sectors.

Under the elected Government, unions had the right to strike without exception, but the Government could require 21 days' notice. Although union members may be fired for participating in even a lawful strike, no such incidents were reported. Unions were free to form federations and confederations and to affiliate internationally. The SLLC is a member of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, and the elected Government placed no restrictions on international travel or contacts of trade unionists.

Following the coup most businesses shut down and school teachers and many other public servants refused to return to work until the elected Government was restored. Leaders of the SLLC defied a junta demand that SLLC order all its members back to work. At year's end, most businesses and government offices and all schools remained closed as employees continued to refuse to return to work, despite warnings by the AFRC that those who did not return to work would be fired.

b. The Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively

The legal framework for collective bargaining is the Regulation of Wages and Industrial Relations Act. Collective bargaining must take place in trade group negotiating councils, each of which has an equal number of employer and worker representatives. Most enterprises are covered by collective bargaining agreements on wages and working conditions. The SLLC provides assistance to unions in preparation for negotiations. In case of a deadlock, the Government may intervene. It has not, however, used decrees to prevent strikes.

No law prohibits retribution against strikers. Should an employee be fired for union activities, the individual may file a complaint with a labor tribunal and seek reinstatement. Complaints of discrimination against unions are made to an arbitration tribunal. Individual trade unions investigate alleged violations of work conditions to try to ensure that employers take the necessary steps to correct abuses.

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There are no export processing zones.

c. Prohibition of Forced or Compulsory Labor

The suspended Constitution prohibited forced and bonded labor, including that by children. However, under the Chiefdom's Council Act, compulsory labor may be imposed by individual chiefs, requiring members of their villages to contribute to the improvement of common areas. This practice exists only in rural areas. There is no penalty for noncompliance.

The elected Government did not require compulsory labor. However, an old decree requires that homeowners, businessmen, and vendors clean and maintain their premises. Failure to comply is punishable by fine or imprisonment. The last Saturday of each month is declared a National Cleaning Day. There have been reports of security forces publicly humiliating citizens to ensure compliance.

The AFRC forcibly impressed teenage boys into military service. The RUF frequently abducted villagers, including children, during its attacks and forced the abductees into involuntary servitude as laborers for the RUF. Many of the children eventually became fighters for the RUF. This continued even after the RUF joined the AFRC junta.

d. Status of Child Labor Practices and Minimum Age for Employment

The minimum age for employment is officially 18 years, but in practice there is no enforcement because there is no government entity specifically charged with this task. Children routinely assist in family businesses, especially those of vendors and petty traders. In rural areas, children work seasonally on family subsistence farms.

Because the adult unemployment rate is high (an estimated 70 percent in some areas), few children are involved in the industrial sector. There have been reports that young children have been hired by foreign employers to work as domestics overseas at extremely low wages and in poor conditions. The Department of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation is responsible for reviewing overseas work applications to see that no one under the age of 14 is employed for this purpose and to enforce certain wage standards.

The suspended Constitution prohibited forced and bonded labor, including that by children; however, there was some compulsory labor in rural areas (see Section 6.c.). The AFRC forcibly impressed teenage boys into military service.

e. Acceptable Conditions of Work

There is no minimum wage. Purchasing power declined drastically as incomes dropped and inflation rose to 40 percent. Most workers have to pool incomes with their extended families and engage in subsistence food production to maintain a minimum standard of living. The Government's suggested standard workweek is 38 hours, but most workweeks for the few people who have jobs exceed 38 hours. The Government sets health and safety standards, but the standards are outmoded and often not enforced. The Health and Safety Division of the Department of Labor has inspection and enforcement responsibility, but

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the lack of funding and transportation limit its effectiveness.

Health and safety regulations are included in collective bargaining agreements, but there is no evidence of systematic enforcement of those health and safety standards. Trade unions provide the only protection for workers who file complaints about working conditions. Initially, a union makes a formal complaint about a hazardous work condition. If this is rejected, the union may issue a 21-day strike notice. If workers remove themselves from dangerous work situations without making a formal complaint, they risk being fired.

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70. First Report on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) 6 December 1999 (S/1999/1223). Paragraphs 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 13, 20-22, 25-26, and 33-35.

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FIRST REPORT ON THE UNITED NATIONS MISSION IN SIERRA LEONE (UNAMSIL)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. By paragraph 8 of its resolution 1270 (1999) of 22 October 1999, the Security Council established the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), with a broad mandate to cooperate with the Government of Sierra Leone and other parties to the Lomé Peace Agreement of 7 July 1999 in the implementation of the Agreement, to assist in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, and perform other tasks as set out in my report to the Security Council, dated 23 September 1999 (S/1999/1003).

2. By paragraph 26 of the same resolution, the Security Council requested me to report every 45 days to provide updates on the status of the peace process, on security conditions on the ground, and on the continued level of deployment of personnel of the Monitoring Group of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOMOG). The present report is submitted in accordance with that request and covers developments until 2 December 1999.

II. POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS

3. While substantial progress has been achieved in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement, the overall situation in the country remains precarious. After the return to Freetown on 3 October 1999 of Foday Sankoh, leader of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF), and Johnny Paul Koroma, leader of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), both men undertook a series of visits to meet with combatants and sensitize them to the Lomé Agreement and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme. They visited Lungi on 8 October and Port Loko on 13 October together. Subsequent visits to other sites were undertaken separately due to the increasing tension between RUF and AFRC. Mr. Sankoh visited RUF positions at Buedu, Daru, Segbwema, Makeni and Magburaka, while Mr. Koroma met with ex-Sierra Leone Army (SLA) combatants in the Occra Hills area.

4. On 20 October, President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah announced the composition of the Government of National Unity, comprising 20 ministers (including four members of RUF/AFRC); five ministers of State; and 13 deputy ministers

(including four members of RUF/AFRC). After Parliament confirmed the new appointees, the members of the Government were sworn in on 2 November. Since then, the new Cabinet has met regularly in discharging its functions under the Constitution. However, few policy announcements have been made by the new Government.

5. Also on 20 October, President Kabbah appointed Mr. Sankoh as the Chairman of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD), and also appointed Mr. Koroma as the Chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP). While the two Commissions have yet to be established, Mr. Koroma has already presented his views concerning the organization of work of CCP, which is the central monitoring body charged with overseeing and facilitating the implementation of the Lomé Agreement. The Parliament decided to establish an Executive Secretariat to assist the work of CMRRD.

6. On 22 November, RUF was registered provisionally with the Interim National Electoral Commission as the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP) in Freetown. As soon as RUFP meets all the criteria of a political party, such as having a constitution and party premises, the registration will become official. Mr. Sankoh, at the time of the registration, announced that all of his main field commanders will now be in charge of the party's chapters in their respective areas of operation. RUF should now give full priority to its transformation into a purely political party, which efforts would be deserving of support and encouragement.

III. MILITARY AND SECURITY SITUATION

7. After a period of relative calm, the military and security situation deteriorated in the months of October and November as a result of an increase in ceasefire violations and human rights abuses by rebel elements. In early October, RUF moved several hundred RUF fighters from Kailahun to Makeni, the provincial capital of the Northern Province and the central transit point in the north of the country. Makeni, which had been previously under joint RUF/AFRC control, was subsequently attacked and taken over by RUF troops on 15 October. AFRC elements, at the urging of Mr. Koroma, reportedly withdrew northwards. Later, fighting between RUF and AFRC also took place around Lunsar and Rogberi. RUF pursued the retreating AFRC groups from Makeni northwards and now controls a significant portion of the Makeni-Kabala axis south of the town of Kabala, one of the only two locations in the Northern Province under the Government's control.

8. These serious violations of the ceasefire have been condemned by the Joint Monitoring Commission (JMC) and were strongly protested through public statements by my Special Representative. Regional leaders, including President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, also appealed to the parties to stop their military confrontation. To date, RUF remains in control of Makeni and troop movements continue. Efforts to re-establish an Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) presence in this town failed when a company of ECOMOG troops was withdrawn in response to hostile public

statements by Foday Sankah and Sam Bockarie. However, the same company was deployed at Lunsar on 30 November.

9. On 28 and 29 November, an exchange of fire took place between ECOMOG troops and a group of ex-SLA elements, which had raided the village of Pepel, 20 kilometres East of Lungi. A Ghanian ECOMOG soldier was injured and a rebel was killed in the incident.

10. The Joint Monitoring Commission, which has met regularly since July 1999 under the chairmanship of UNAMSIL, has only recently become fully operational since RUF assigned a permanent member to the Commission. RUF also did not cooperate initially with ceasefire monitoring committees (CMCs) established with the assistance of the United Nations in the areas of Kenema, Bo, Port Loko and Hastings, and threatened UNAMSIL and ECOMOG personnel when requested to provide access to some RUF-controlled areas for CMC activities and other tasks. However, AFRC and RUF representatives to the CMCs have now been appointed and will be briefed on their tasks in early December. Two incidents of short-term detention of UNAMSIL patrols by RUF occurred at Segbwema and Buedu as a result of RUF insistence that no movement may take place without its explicit permission.

11. ECOMOG troops have continued to fulfil their vital tasks of providing security at Freetown and Lungi as well as to many new areas in the southern parts of the country. Some clashes occurred between ECOMOG troops and small groups of armed rebels during the reporting period. ECOMOG also continued to maintain contacts with RUF/AFRC field commanders, and provided some logistical assistance to the Government related to peace efforts, including visits of Mr. Sankoh and Mr. Koroma to the countryside. ECOMOG has also provided support to facilitate humanitarian assistance and to assist released abductees and displaced persons. UNAMSIL military observers continued to work closely with ECOMOG in monitoring the military and security situation in Sierra Leone and in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme.

IV. DISARMAMENT AND DEMOBILIZATION

12. The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme was officially launched on 20 October by President Kabbah, marked by the disarmament in Freetown of a symbolic number of combatants from the former rebel forces and the Civil Defence Forces (CDF). The first phase of the programme started on 4 November, when four new demobilization centres were opened at Port Loko (with separate centres for RUF/AFRC and CDF), Daru (RUF/AFRC) and Kenema (CDF), in addition to the long-standing camp at Lungi. In each area, several reception sites are operational and are set up to disarm combatants before their transfer to the demobilization centres. UNAMSIL has deployed between 12 and 25 military observers at each location and works closely with the Government, ECOMOG and the United Kingdom Department for International Development (DFID).

13. The initial response to the start of the DDR programme has been very poor. However, after an additional appeal by Mr. Sankoh on 25 and 26 November to RUF fighters at Port Loko and Lunsar, the number of their ex-combatants reporting to

the DDR camp at Port Loko rose significantly, which caused some strain on the management of the camp. As at 30 November, out of an estimated total of 45,000 fighters, 658 AFRC/ex-SLA, 1,469 RUF and 518 CDF ex-combatants have been registered in demobilization centres, in addition to the 1,572 ex-combatants registered at Lungi. Of the registered ex-combatants, 454 AFRC/ex-SLA/RUF and 92 CDF combatants were children. As of 2 December, the total number of ex-combatants registered at the DDR sites stood at 4,217, and the ratio of surrendered weapons to ex-combatants was about 1:4. Mr. Sankoh indicated that RUF might suspend its participation in disarmament in view of the poor response of the other groups.

14. So far, no RUF combatants have reported for disarmament in the areas of their eastern strongholds around Daru. These troops are under direct command of Sam Bockarie, a key RUF commander, who has publicly stated that the troops under his command will not disarm unless Nigerian ECOMOG troops withdraw from the country. He has also stated that he will resist any attempts at forced disarmament by United Nations troops.

15. In spite of the progress described above, the DDR process continues to suffer because of several security and organizational problems. Continuing movement of RUF troops and the fighting at Makeni have deepened mistrust among the rebels, which has prevented the establishment of a climate of confidence which would encourage ex-combatants to enter the DDR programme. In spite of Mr. Sankoh's public appeals, doubts remain with regard to the RUF commitment to the DDR programme. There is also a lack of understanding among combatants about the provisions of the DDR programme, especially concerning financial support and provisions for reintegration, which requires urgent strengthening of relevant public information programmes. UNAMSIL, for its part, has stepped up its own public information efforts in support of the peace process.

16. Recently, there have been several worrying incidents of unrest among the ex-combatants of the Lungi and Port Loko demobilization centres, partly as a result of a lack of information about the reintegration programme, but also because the ex-combatants have already spent several weeks or months of encampment without any necessary financial assistance for modest expenses or to provide for families and dependents who tend to accompany combatants to the demobilization centres. These issues need to be addressed urgently not only to prevent unrest among ex-combatants but also to make the disarmament programme more attractive for those who have not yet surrendered their arms. In addition, it is important to accelerate the demobilization process in order to avoid a prolonged presence of former fighters in the camps. Serious delays could occur unless a comprehensive plan for reintegration is developed and the necessary arrangements are put in place.

17. The National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR), the main policy body in which all key stakeholders are represented (Government, RUF, AFRC, United Nations, ECOMOG and donor representatives), has met weekly to review ways of accelerating the DDR process and provide guidance to the programme. As a result, sensitization efforts have been stepped up, and the RUF/AFRC leadership has received strong encouragement to ensure that their forces participate in the DDR programme. NCDDR also set 15 December as the date at which the phase of disarmament of all ex-combatants should be completed.

18. Since the camps at Port Loko have now reached full capacity, efforts are under way to establish demobilization centres at Kambia, Makeni and Magburaka once cooperation from RUF is forthcoming. As the number of ex-combatants joining the DDR programme is rising, it has become apparent that strong coordination and leadership is needed to keep the process on course and maintain a level of stability throughout the country. I therefore appeal to the Government of Sierra Leone, to rebel groups and to all agencies involved to step up their efforts to expedite the implementation of the programme.

19. According to World Bank estimates, the financial support to the DDR programme as of 2 December stands at US$ 5.6 million in committed resources from the United Kingdom to the Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF) administered by the World Bank on behalf of the Government and an additional US$ 4.3 million in confirmed pledges to MDTF from the Governments of Norway (US$ 1 million), Germany (US$ 1 million), Canada (US$ 1.7 million) and Italy (US$ 0.6 million). Approximately US$ 15 million has been made available in parallel or co-financing support, including US$ 7 million from the World Bank through a community reintegration and rehabilitation project, US$ 3.5 million from DFID for camp management, a proposal for US$ 2.7 million from WFP for the feeding of encamped ex-combatants and a US$ 2 million appeal for activities aimed at child ex-combatants in the year 2000. The Government of Japan has made US$ 1 million available for DDR activities through the United Nations trust fund. While the contributions made are encouraging signs of the international community's commitment to help the Sierra Leonean people, I should like to reiterate my strong appeal to donors to contribute to the World Bank MDTF in order to meet the total of US$ 50 million needed for the DDR process.

V. HUMAN RIGHTS

20. The human rights situation in Sierra Leone has also deteriorated markedly in recent weeks. Since early October 1999, there has been an escalation of attacks on civilians by former rebel elements in the areas west of the Occra Hills, along the Lungi-Port Loko road, as well as around Kabala and in parts of Koinadugu. The attacks frequently involve rape, abduction and harassment, in addition to looting and destruction of property. The frequency of attacks on civilians continues to impede freedom of movement in many locations and to prompt the displacement of people.

21. In particular, fighting between RUF and ex-SLA elements at Makeni, Lunsar and in other northern areas has resulted in serious abuses of the rights of the affected civilian communities. During the clashes at Makeni and Lunsar a number of civilians were killed, women were raped and there was widespread looting, including of the property of humanitarian organizations. In October, a group of some 40 humanitarian workers were prevented by RUF elements from leaving Makeni for four days. Reports received in recent weeks from Makeni and Lunsar, as well as from other locations under RUF control, such as Magburaka and Fadugu, suggest that the remaining civilian populations are subject to a harsh system of civil control, with severe punishments, including execution or threat of execution for those accused of offences, and the imposition of arduous food levies. Both national and international staff of humanitarian organizations have been subjected to threats and intimidation. One organization was obliged to cease

operating in Makeni following threats against its personnel delivered by Mr. Sankoh and senior RUF personnel on 15 November.

22. Commitments entered into under the Lomé Agreement and subsequent reaffirmation notwithstanding, both RUF and AFRC have shown great reluctance to release adult and child abductees. Only some 1,000 adults and children have been released so far. Considerable numbers are still in captivity. For instance, more than 2,000 children are registered as missing from the Western Area since the rebel incursion of January 1999. Child fighters, including abductees, were still being sent into combat as recently as October, when a number of 15-year-old boys were injured in combat with other AFRC elements.

23. Commendable efforts are being made to establish an effective and democratic police force in Sierra Leone. The newly appointed Inspector General of the national police has initiated a number of important human rights-related investigations and is promoting the development of enhanced human rights sensitivity within the force. The United Nations is redeploying a small team of civil police advisers, who will coordinate with other international efforts to advise the Government of Sierra Leone and local police officials on police practice, training, re-equipment and recruitment.

24. UNAMSIL is also working closely with consultants provided by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to facilitate the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Human Rights Commission, both of which are to be set up pursuant to the provisions of the Lomé Agreement. At the request of the Government, the Office of the High Commissioner is developing draft statutes for these Commissions which will be presented to the Government of Sierra Leone. The Office has also commissioned a consultant to study the nexus between the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and a possible international commission of inquiry into human rights violations.

VI. HUMANITARIAN SITUATION

25. Deteriorating security conditions throughout the country have reversed gains in access and prevented further expansion of humanitarian activity despite commitments by all parties of the Lomé Agreement to allow unhindered access countrywide. In particular, during the October RUF/AFRC clashes at Makeni, humanitarian agencies were targeted for looting and harassment. Much of the stolen property has not yet been returned. A further result of the fighting has been the displacement of more than 1,500 civilians to Kabala and the suspension of assistance to vulnerable groups. Disturbingly high rates of malnutrition previously assessed in other areas of the northern and eastern provinces remain unaddressed.

26. Humanitarian organizations attempting to re-establish programme activities in the area of Makeni following the October clashes have been forced to withdraw due to threats and harassment by RUF commanders. In addition, on 17 November a vehicle belonging to an international NGO was ambushed along the Port Loko-Lungi highway. Its occupants were abducted and badly treated. Regular attacks on villages in this area have led to an increase of internally displaced persons

along the Port Loko-Lungi axis. However, insecurity along the highway continues to impede the delivery of humanitarian supplies.

27. Attempts to gain access into these areas continue, including efforts to upgrade roads to allow for large-scale food distributions and other programmes in the Eastern Province. It is obvious that without sustained and convincing action by AFRC and RUF leaders to stem these incidents, the delivery of humanitarian assistance beyond the western area and southern provinces will remain extremely difficult. The deterioration of the security situation has also stalled plans to commence monitoring and assistance to internally displaced persons and returnees.

28. From 7 to 11 November, a multi-donor mission led by Caroline McAskie, Officer-in-Charge of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs of the Secretariat, visited Sierra Leone and Guinea to determine how best the international donor community could support the peace process. In addition to exploring support for the DDR programme, the mission's findings highlighted the need for a swift and vigorous humanitarian response if access increases dramatically, as well as immediate reintegration programmes for ex-combatants in tandem with support to Sierra Leonean communities. The Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeal for the year 2000, launched on 23 November at Geneva, requests $71 million in support of humanitarian activities.

VII. DEPLOYMENT OF UNAMSIL

29. In line with Security Council resolution 1260 (1999) of 20 August 1999, the civilian component of UNAMSIL is being strengthened with the deployment of additional political affairs and human rights officers, as well as the establishment of public information and civil affairs sections. The chief civil affairs officer has arrived in Freetown and has begun developing the programme of work, which should have its offices throughout the country. A senior Child Protection Adviser will be deployed shortly to ensure adequate and sustained attention to child rights and protection.

30. More than 200 military observers and a 15-member medical team are currently deployed at mission headquarters at Freetown, Hastings, Lungi, Port Loko, Bo, Kenema and Daru. Immediately after the adoption of Security Council resolution 1270 (1999), a United Nations technical team was dispatched to Sierra Leone in late October to assist the Observer Mission in preparing for the deployment of the mandated 6,000 United Nations troops. Despite the very tight timetable, preparation for the deployment of military contingents has progressed effectively, partly as a result of the excellent cooperation provided by the Government of Sierra Leone. By mid-November, reconnaissance parties from India and Kenya for the deployment of their troops had completed their tasks, and had drawn up plans for the deployment of the Indian and Kenyan battalions in Koidu/Kailahun and Makeni/Magburaka by December. The final decisions on deployment of various contingents will take into account security conditions on the ground. Meanwhile, the first contingent of 130 Kenyan troops arrived at Freetown on 29 November. Active preparations continue for the deployment of troops and military observers made available to UNAMSIL by the Governments of Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea. The Secretariat believes that it will be crucial to

expedite the deployment of these military personnel. A status of forces agreement is being finalized at Headquarters and will shortly be submitted to the Government of Sierra Leone.

31. The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the United Nations country team have continued to work on developing the modalities for the implementation of the strategic framework for Sierra Leone. An initial draft plan for the strategic framework approach is expected to be completed by the end of December.

32. On 19 November, I appointed Oluyemi Adeniji (Nigeria) as my Special Representative in Sierra Leone. Mr. Adeniji has most recently served as my Special Representative for the Central African Republic. I have also appointed Major-General Vijay Kumar Jetley (India) as Force Commander of UNAMSIL. Both men are expected to assume their duties at Freetown in the first half of December. I would like to pay special tribute to my outgoing Special Representative, Francis Okelo, who has discharged his duties under often very difficult conditions, and I am most grateful for his leadership during the peace process which included the signing of the Lomé Agreement.

VIII. OBSERVATIONS

33. Undeniably, some progress has been made in the implementation of the Lomé Agreement with the return of the RUF and AFRC leadership to Sierra Leone, the establishment of the Government of National Unity, the provisional registration of RUF as a political party, and a recent increase of the number of ex-combatants registering for the DDR programme.

34. However, serious human rights abuses, ceasefire violations, including fighting between RUF and AFRC, extensive movement of troops and weapons by the former and the targeting of humanitarian personnel give cause for very serious concern. The continued violence against the people of Sierra Leone and international personnel is unacceptable and perpetrators should expect to be held accountable for their actions. The RUF and AFRC leadership as well as all their local commanders should prove by their actions that they are indeed committed to the peace process, in particular to the complete cessation of hostilities and international human rights standards and humanitarian law, including the release of all abductees as specified in the Lomé Agreement.

35. Despite some improvements, the humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone continues unabated. In addition, some national and international humanitarian personnel have suffered harassment, assault and even detention at the hands of the former rebel forces. The Lomé Peace Agreement clearly commits all former parties to the conflict to providing safe and unhindered access for humanitarian interventions. Yet the delivery of assistance continues to be obstructed by arbitrary clearance procedures and threats. This should stop.

36. While the United Nations expedites the deployment of its troops in Sierra Leone, ECOMOG is expected to continue to play a critical role in providing national security functions as well as assisting the DDR process, as envisaged in the Lomé Agreement. To this end, it will be required to maintain a credible

force of several thousand troops. I would like to commend ECOMOG, once again, for its continued efforts in support of the Government and people of Sierra Leone. I therefore would like to renew my strong appeal to donors to provide ECOMOG with much-needed support in order to allow it the means to effectively perform its indispensable tasks.

37. I also should like to express my appreciation for the important involvement of regional leaders in the Sierra Leonean peace process, and I should like to encourage them to continue to support the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone, the international community and other stakeholders to bring peace to this battered country.

38. There is also an urgent need to strengthen and accelerate the process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants and to enhance the coordination of these crucial activities. I welcome the progress made by the Government of Sierra Leone and the invaluable contributions of the donor community, especially the Government of the United Kingdom and the World Bank, in establishing the necessary demobilization facilities. I encourage all concerned to continue their efforts to build confidence among the parties, increase awareness of the procedures and benefits of the DDR programme and improve the links between the various steps in the programme. I have already asked UNAMSIL to step up its efforts in support of these crucial aspects of the peace process.

39. The commitments of the parties to the Lomé Agreement will be put to the test in the coming crucial period. Now that the main mechanisms for ceasefire monitoring and disarmament are in place, the responsibility rests with the leaders of the rebel movements to advance the peace process in Sierra Leone. The rebel movements now take part in the Government and should work in it towards a durable peace. I believe that any efforts in this regard will meet with the support of the international community. The United Nations, in close cooperation with ECOMOG, stands ready to do its part.

40. I should like, once again, to express my appreciation to my Special Representative, Francis Okelo, to the Chief Military Observer, Brigadier-General Subhash C. Joshi, and to all the military and civilian personnel of UNAMSIL for their unwavering commitment and efforts under difficult circumstances.

76. Women Waging Peace and the Policy Commission, "From Combat to Community: Women and Girls of Sierra Leone", Dyan Mazurana and Kristopher Carlson, January 2004, pages 2, 6, 12, 14 and 16.

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From Combat to Community: Women and Girls of Sierra Leone

By Dyan Mazurana and Khristopher Carlson

With Contributions by
Sanam Naraghi Anderlini

Series Editor
Sanam Naraghi Anderlini

January 2004

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WOMEN WAGING PEACE is a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund that advocates for the full participation of women in formal and informal peace processes around the world.

THE POLICY COMMISSION is conducting a series of case studies to document women's contributions to peace processes across conflict areas worldwide.

Policy Commission
Director
Sanam Naraghi Anderlini

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Program Associate
Camille Pampell Conaway

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Chair
Ambassador Swanee Hunt

Executive Director
Sarah Gauger

Senior Vice President
Ambassador Hattie Babbitt

www.huntalternativesfund.org
www.womenwagingpeace.net

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About the Authors

Khristopher Carlson is a research specialist at the University of Montana in Missoula. His areas of expertise include child soldiers, particularly girls and young women, in armed conflict and in post-conflict reconstruction. Mr. Carlson has co-authored several articles on these topics, including "Girls in Fighting Forces and Groups: Their Recruitment, Participation, Demobilization, and Reintegration" Journal of Peace and Conflict. He was a contributing author to the United Nations Secretary-General's study, *Women, Peace and Security.*

Dyan Mazurana is a senior researcher with the Feinstein International Famine Center and a research scholar and faculty member at the University of Montana in Missoula. She is a lead researcher on and author of the United Nations Secretary-General's Study, *Women, Peace and Security.* Dr. Mazurana has written and developed training materials regarding gender, women's human rights, armed conflict, and post-conflict reconstruction for civilians, police, and military peacekeepers involved in UN, NATO, and regional peacekeeping missions.

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PROJECT BACKGROUND

Wars and internal conflicts do not end simply with the signing of peace agreements. To avoid a resurgence of violence, it is necessary to develop and support measures for strengthening the governance, security, justice, and socioeconomic capacities of a state. This is a complex task in any society, but daunting in post-conflict situations. While the international community can provide assistance and valuable resources, the local population, which has no "exit strategy," has the greatest commitment to building sustainable peace. It is therefore essential to draw on the assets, experiences, and dedication at the local level and among all sectors of society. One sector often overlooked and underestimated is women. In most post-conflict societies women are more than 50 percent of the population and are actively engaged in peace building while addressing the basic survival needs of their families and communities. Yet they are often portrayed as passive victims, and little regard is given to their actual and potential roles in fostering security.

In October 2000, for the first time in its history, the United Nations Security Council acknowledged that women have a key role in promoting international stability by passing Resolution 1325 on women, peace, and security. It called on all parties to ensure women's participation in peace processes, from the prevention of conflict to negotiations and post-war reconstruction. The Women Waging Peace Policy Commission was established to examine peace processes with a particular focus on the contributions of women. Drawing on qualitative field-based research and quantitative survey data, "From Combat to Community: Women and Girls of Sierra Leone" assesses how consideration of gender issues can improve disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) processes and documents the contributions of women in official and civil society-based reintegration programs.

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KEY FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Key Findings

1. Throughout the conflict, women led civil society peace efforts. In 2002, as the country faced the breakdown of the 1999 Lomé accords, women were pivotal in galvanizing mass demonstrations that led to the end of the war.

2. Contrary to official reports, women played a military role in the pro-government Civil Defense Forces and in the rebel movement.

3. Female ex-combatants from all forces were significantly underrepresented in official disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs.

4. Women are playing a significant but unacknowledged role in the reintegration of former fighters, filling many gaps in official programs.

Recommendations

1. When **planning DDR**, international actors, including the UN, multilateral organizations, donor governments, and national governments, must:

    - ensure the participation of women during all stages of negotiation;
    - assume that women are part of the fighting forces and be aware that, where children are present, 10 to 33 percent may be girls;
    - recognize the initial estimated number of fighters provided by military forces may be low, and thus be prepared to increase resources to ensure effective programs; and
    - extend the definition of *combatant* to include those who were part of a "regular armed force in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks and messengers...and girls recruited for sexual purposes..."—in accordance with existing norms followed by the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and outlined in the UN Secretary-General's study, *Women, Peace and Security* (2002).

2. During **disarmament and demobilization**, implementing organizations should:

    - accept females even when unaccompanied by men; and
    - develop parallel systems for the demobilization of women and girls by:

      –offering women the choice to enter care centers with their children or to remain with their male colleagues and counterparts; and

      –ensuring there are facilities to separately house girls and boys without parents.

3. In **reintegration**, donors should ensure that:

    - local organizations and communities working with former combatants are direct beneficiaries of resources from official reintegration and rehabilitation programs;
    - income-generation and job-creation programs are created to provide employment for ex-combatants and members of communities into which they are returning; and
    - DDR programs support mothers, particularly single mothers, emerging from the fighting forces—including providing basic care for them and their children (through foster care programs or centers) to facilitate their participation in education and skills training that can help them avoid petty crime or the sex trade.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Sierra Leone ended its national disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program in December 2003. Since the program began in 1998, 72,500 former combatants have been demobilized, including 4,751 women (6.5 percent) and 6,787 children (9.4 percent), of whom 506 are girls.[1] From the outset, there was some recognition that women and child soldiers made up a significant portion of the forces.[2] In theory, the DDR process was designed to include them. But while the program was effective in reaching out to male combatants, ultimately women and children were underserved. Despite this shortcoming, the plan has been hailed as a success and a model upon which other DDR processes could be based.

These DDR programs have also failed to support civilian populations faced with the reality of reintegrating former fighters. Instead, in communities across Sierra Leone, women as individuals and in groups have taken on the responsibility of assisting former combatants as they return to civilian life. But they receive little or no support from the national and international programs established to ensure successful reintegration.

Women and the War

In March 1991, the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL), led by former Sierra Leone Army (SLA) corporal Foday Sankoh, invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia. Violence against women and children, and general terror in rural and urban centers quickly became cornerstones of the RUF movement and were encouraged by its leadership. But as the war escalated, women and girls reported atrocities committed by forces on both sides. Preyed upon by the RUF and SLA, local civilians in many areas transformed traditional hunting societies, such as the Kamajors, into pro-government militias known as Civil Defense Forces (CDF). These militias gained prominence with the armed activities of the Kamajors in the eastern and southern provinces and the rise of the Gbethis in the north, among others. Throughout the war years, the government endorsed the CDF, providing them with resources, including weapons.

Soldiers and "Wives," Cooks and Spies

Women and girls were present in large numbers in pro-government and rebel forces and were involved in a variety of activities. In the survey of 50 female ex-combatants (ranging in age from 10 to 35) conducted for this study, almost all stated "abduction" as their means of entry; one third stated that they had fighting experience; nearly half indicated that they received weapons training; one fifth described themselves as spies; and more than half indicated that in addition to performing other duties, they were forced to be captive "wives." On average, they were 12 years old when they entered the forces.

Despite denials by government officials, girls and young women played an integral role in the CDF. They were spies, commanders, and frontline fighters; some were herbalists, meant to supply fighters with magic potions for invulnerability. Others were cooks, medics, and spiritual leaders. They witnessed brutal rituals and suffered significant sexual abuse.

Women and girls also made up a large part of rebel RUF forces. Many served as captive "wives" of commanders and were responsible for distributing weapons, food, and loot confiscated from village raids. They commanded fighting forces known as small boys units and small girls units; many were also involved in the mutilation and murder of civilians. In camps, commanders' "wives" sometimes used their control over food and loot to prevent young boys and men from abusing girls.

In sum, the experience of women and girls in the fighting forces was complex. They were captives and dependents, but they were also involved in the planning and execution of the war.

Disarmament and Demobilization 1998-2000

The Sierra Leone government and international partners, including the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group and the United Nations, conducted disarmament and demobilization in three phases between 1998 and 2000. Reintegration programs continued through 2003. At the start of the program, the estimated number of combatants was 45,000, of which 12 percent was presumed to be women.[3] At its completion, over 72,000 had been demobilized, indicating that the preliminary estimates of force size were inaccurate. As 84 percent of the demobilized were adult men, the program was effective in reaching out to this segment of the population. Since just 6.5 percent of the demobilized were women, however, it seems likely that thousands

more fighters, particularly women and girls, were not reached by the official process.[4]

Qualifications for Entry

Adults (18 years and older) were eligible for entry into the program by presenting a weapon at any of the official reception centers across the country. They were asked questions and required to disassemble and reassemble a gun, usually an AK-47, as a prerequisite for participation. In Phases I and II, wives and dependents were not eligible for entry.

In Phase III, a group could bring in a weapon. Late in the program, as men complained about their inability to sustain their families, "wives" were permitted to apply for microcredit. For a woman to access the loans, however, she had to be present with a man who was willing to identify her as his wife. No woman could claim benefits alone, regardless of the number of children in her care. For many abductees forced into "marriage," there was no means of escaping their captors. But some senior DDR officials did not consider this important. "Even if they were raped and abducted," said one unnamed official in a 2002 interview, "70 percent...want to be with their husbands." Officially, those under 18 were not required to present a weapon to enter DDR. However, there was widespread inconsistency among the UN, government officials, and NGO staff on whether children were required to turn in weapons. The majority of girl fighters interviewed for this study, including those who passed through the DDR process, stated that the weapons test was repeatedly administered to children.

Women and Girls in the Margins

Nearly 7,000 children participated in official demobilization programs,[5] but estimates suggest that there were as many as 48,216 children in the forces. Thus, there is significant disparity between the number of children, particularly girls, presumed to be in the forces and the numbers that entered the DDR programs (see table).

Table 1: Estimated Number for Total Forces, Child Soldiers, and Girl Soldiers[6]

Force	Total	Child Solders	Girls Soldiers
RUF	45,000	22,500	7,500
AFRC	10,000	5,000	1,667
SLA	14,000	3,500	1,167
CDF	68,865	17,216	1,722
Total	***137,865***	***48,216***	***12,056***

In the survey referenced earlier, half of the women and girls had not gone through official disarmament and demobilization. Their experiences highlight a number of gaps in the process:

1. Forty-six percent cited not having a weapon as a barrier for entry into the program. Many women in the CDF were ordered to hand in their weapons prior to demobilization, then were left behind as their male colleagues were transported to assembly centers. Others indicated that their guns were taken away by their commanders and handed to male fighters. Many who were not "primarily" fighters had used weapons from a communal source but did not possess guns themselves.
2. Twenty-one percent feared reprisals from opposing forces at the centers and so avoided the process.
3. Others reported feeling unsafe among the men and thus stayed away from the sites.
4. Many had no knowledge of the program or felt there was nothing to gain by participating.
5. Little was done to reach out to women and girls in the CDF, as it was incorrectly assumed that these were male-only units.

According to local reports since the conclusion of the disarmament and demobilization components of the official program, some female ex-combatants have turned to prostitution and petty crime for survival.

With no hope of receiving assistance from the children's fathers, their own families, or the state, some are turning to violence. In 2002, social workers observed that young women, particularly those with children, were instigating riots in urban centers. Some young women fighters have reportedly crossed borders to join armed groups across the region.

Rising to the Challenge: Women's Campaign for Peace

From the early days of the war, women in rural and urban centers mobilized to protest the atrocities and call for peace. In May 2000, with the RUF flouting the 1999 Lomé accords, a group of elderly women came together, demanding a meeting with Sankoh. On arriving at the RUF compound, they were mistreated and insulted. Frustrated, the women tried a different tactic. They collectively hitched up their skirts, bent over, and bared themselves to Sankoh and his coterie. In Sierra Leone, such an action by women is the worst curse that can be brought upon anyone.

The news had a galvanizing effect on Sierra Leoneans. They had an obligation to uphold the women's honor and support the curse. But the women's actions also gave people the courage to stand up to the RUF. Coinciding with the arrival of the new UN mission and British Special Forces, the women's protest and subsequent public demonstrations, were pivotal in the struggle for peace, culminating in Sankoh's arrest.

Caring for Ex-Combatants: Women's Contributions to Reintegration

Across Sierra Leone, women as individuals and in groups have been critical to reintegrating former combatants, particularly those excluded from official programs. Some women whose children were killed have opened their homes to former child soldiers. Others have set aside their own suffering and offered help, believing that, "If left abandoned, the child ex-combatants would have nothing positive to do...and would prove a threat to a fragile peace."[6]

In the study survey, 55 percent of respondents indicated that women in the community played a significant role in helping them reintegrate. This was higher than responses for assistance given to them by traditional leaders (20 percent) or international aid workers (32 percent). They said community women provided guidance, shared meager resources, and, perhaps most important, helped facilitate their skills training and education by providing childcare, clothes, and food. Women's organizations have also provided models for many of the female ex-combatants; over 65 percent of respondents said that they would like to join such organizations, which they see as offering practical assistance.

Nationally, the Forum for African Women Educationalists and the Progressive Women's Association are the main organizations active in reintegration programs. Among local organizations, Caritas-Makeni, affiliated with the Catholic Church and operating in central Sierra Leone, has developed a foster care program for young mothers, enabling them to attend school while their children are tended. Caritas-Makeni also offers counseling and programs on health and alternative income generation for those who have entered the sex trade.

Among international actors, the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the US Agency for International Development (USAID) offer strong models for working with local groups and reaching former combatants excluded from the national programs. UNICEF has an innovative program of providing resources to schools that accept former child combatants. In addition, UNICEF, with the support of USAID, runs training centers that offer mothers childcare and food. A number of their programs combine vocational training with basic literacy and numeric skills. Non-traditional trades such as welding, carpentry, and house building are among those taught to women. Forty-nine percent of survey participants said such training, as well as education, are critical in facilitating their adjustment to civilian life.

Conclusion

Sierra Leone's DDR process failed women and girls. As many were classified as "dependents" only, their real experiences were not acknowledged, and they were precluded from receiving the benefits provided to "combatants." The assumption that women and girls were victims only, with no role in either the execution of war or the building of peace, is proving detrimental to their future, with potentially negative consequences for the country's recovery and the region's security.

First, despite their horrific experiences in the war, women and girls have shown tremendous agency and initiative. Even during their captivity, those in the

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forces regained some control of their own lives by developing skills to ensure their survival and strategies to protect others. Yet when the DDR program was implemented, there was virtually no recognition of the multiple roles women played or the skills they had gained. Many have ambitions for education and independence. They feel tremendous responsibility for their offspring and aspire to give them a better future. By being treated as passive victims, they are again stripped of their sense of self-worth and dignity. Second, women's exclusion from official programs will have significant social consequences, including poverty, crime, prostitution, and an increase in HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the exclusion of single mothers means the exclusion of their children—and thus another generation of unskilled, marginalized youth.

Third, in the same way that disaffected male youths and ex-fighters might lead rebellions, form militias, or join other guerilla groups, so can women and girls. As the 2002 riots and female militia activities indicate, some have already taken up violence. Without support, these young mothers have little to lose from resorting to armed activity as a means of survival.

Finally, local community efforts, informal networks, and organizations—primarily led by women—provide critical support for former combatants. Women's commitment to rehabilitating and coexisting with former fighters is a matter of basic survival for themselves and others. Unlike the international community, they have no exit strategy. If they fail, violence returns to their doorsteps. At the same time, local groups are under immense pressure. They have meager resources, their work is rarely acknowledged in official processes, and they receive only limited assistance from the international community. Supporting the work of these women is a cost-effective and essential ingredient for ensuring sustainable reintegration.

Drawing on qualitative field-based research and quantitative survey data, this study assesses how a gender perspective can improve formal disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs and documents women's contributions to official and civil society-based initiatives.

Endnotes

[1] Bradley, Sean, Massimo Fusato, and Philippe Maughan. "Sierra Leone: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR)." Ed. P.C. Mohan. *Findings Africa Region* 81. Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2002, 1, 22 October 2003 <http://www.worldbank.org/afr/findings/infobeng/infob81.pdf>; Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children. *Precious Resources: Adolescents in the Reconstruction of Sierra Leone.* New York: Women's Commission, 2002, 46; Sierra Leone. National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. Statistical data provided to the authors. Freetown: NCDDR, 2002.

[2] Estimates indicate that up to 50 percent of fighters in rebel forces were children and some 10-30 percent of force members were women.

[3] Malan, Mark, et al. *Sierra Leone: Building the Road to Recovery.* Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Strategic Studies, 2003, 25.

[4] Sierra Leone, NCDDR; Women's Commission 46.

[5] Women's Commission 46.

[6] Shellac, Davies, personal interview, August 2002.

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INTRODUCTION

In December 2003, Sierra Leone ended its official disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) program. From the time of its initiation in 1998, 72,500 former combatants passed through the program, including 4,751 women (6.5 percent) and 6,787 children (9.4 percent), of whom 506 were girls[1]. From the outset there was recognition of the large presence of child soldiers (up to 50 percent of fighters in rebel forces were believed to be under 18) and women (estimates ranged between 10 and 30 percent) among the various forces, so the program was in principle, designed to include them. At completion, however, while the program was noted for its effective outreach to male combatants, women and children were underserved. Despite this significant shortcoming, the program has been hailed as a success by the UN, the World Bank, and others, and a model upon which other DDR processes could be based.[2]

The DDR program also failed to provide support to civilian populations faced with the reality of reintegrating former fighters. Instead, women as individuals and in groups took on the responsibility of assisting these fighters, particularly the children and youth among them, as they returned to civilian life. The majority of these community-based efforts, however, received little or no aid or recognition from the national and international programs established to guarantee not just successful demobilization, but ultimately effective reintegration and rehabilitation.

This report revisits the Sierra Leone conflict and peace process from the perspective of women. Drawing on field-based interviews and data, it outlines the diverse roles played by women and girls in the war and highlights the importance of women's activism for peace. This study presents key findings of the experiences of women and girls in the DDR program, focusing on obstacles to access, entry, and full participation. It documents women's individual and collective contributions to the reintegration of fighters, concluding with an analysis of the importance of a gender perspective to DDR efforts and practical recommendations to support the development of such programs.

Outlined here are the rationale for this study, assumptions of the research, an explanation of methodology, and the working definitions that frame this report.

Rationale

Limited research has been conducted to assess DDR programs' ability to respond to the experiences of women and girls within fighting forces, in Sierra Leone or elsewhere.[3] Still less is known about how programs that do or do not address gender considerations may contribute to or hinder peaceful transitions. Drawing on the Sierra Leone conflict (1991-2000) this report uses quantitative and qualitative methods and gender analysis to document and examine women and girl ex-combatants' roles and experiences within the forces and official DDR processes.[4]

In addition to a lack of information on the experiences of women and girls in official DDR programs, knowledge is scarce regarding the contributions that women make to official and community-based DDR processes. As conflicts increasingly involve civilian populations, women are more and more often called upon to "unofficially" assist in demobilizing and reintegrating ex-combatants, especially child soldiers. In Sierra Leone, children constituted half of some of the fighting forces; up to one third of these were girls.[4] This study, therefore, also documents women's previously unrecognized actions to strengthen official and community-based DDR, assist ex-combatants, and contribute to peace building within Sierra Leone and the region.

[4]Results presented in this study draw in part on data collected under a grant from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, "Girls in Militaries, Paramilitaries, Militias, and Armed Opposition Forces" (Montreal: Rights and Democracy, 2003). Principle investigators for the CIDA grant were Dyan Mazurana and Susan McKay, Professor of Women's Studies, University of Wyoming, USA; the full results are presented in the forthcoming book, *Where Are the Girls? Girls in Fighting Forces in Northern Uganda, Sierra Leone, and Mozambique: Their Lives During and After War* (Montreal: Rights and Democracy).

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Assumptions

This study rests on the assumption that effective DDR processes are critical for achieving sustainable peace. Further, it presupposes that it is insufficient to prioritize the disarmament and demobilization elements alone at the expense of the reintegration component. Finally, it acknowledges that the burden of reintegration and longer-term rehabilitation is largely placed on the families and communities into which former combatants return; too often official national and international DDR programs overlook this key component.

The study does not assume that women are more peaceful than men by nature. Indeed it shows that women play many roles during times of war, ranging from frontline combatants to community peacemakers. They should therefore be recognized as active agents rather than passive victims in peace processes, including DDR. To exclude their voices and experiences and to ignore their contributions ultimately undermines peace.

Methodology

Throughout August and September 2002 in Sierra Leone, over 60 in-depth interviews were conducted with community leaders, social workers, NGO staff, psychologists, traditional and religious leaders, as well as with government officials, representatives of international organizations and women and girls formerly in the fighting forces.

Secondary quantitative data on the fighting forces and their participation in DDR programs with particular emphasis on children and girls was gathered from the Sierra Leone National Center for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) and the Child Protection Unit of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), Sierra Leone.

Finally, a survey using quota sampling was used to gather quantitative data.[5] The Sierra Leone survey was a quota sample of girls and young women formerly associated with the fighting forces during the 1991-2002 war. Sub-categories of the study population included captive "wives" of commanders and girls involved in pro-government Civil Defense Forces (CDF). Study sites were selected with the assistance of UNICEF in Sierra Leone and international and local NGOs working with child ex-combatants or war-affected communities in Sierra Leone.[6] The sampling took place in different regions of the country and included the Western Area (the area including and surrounding the capital Freetown) and two of three provinces, the North and the East. Throughout August and September 2002, surveys were conducted in a variety of locations including remote villages, "suburbs" of urban centers, urban centers, and interim care and training centers for war-affected youth.

The survey contained 99 questions pertaining to basic demographic data, entry into the force, roles and experiences within the force, experiences of physical abuses within the respective forces and in community reintegration, experiences of time spent in the army barracks, official disarmament and demobilization, direct community entrance, reintegration, skills training, assistance needs, and current status. Fourteen open-ended questions were included in the survey itself; issues ranged from questions regarding why a girl joined an armed force if she reported joining, skills learned in fighting forces that could assist the respondent now, to difficulties and assistance during reintegration.

A full description of the research methodology can be found in Appendix 1.

Definitions

Peace Processes

Just as scholars have identified the "lifecycle" of conflict,[7] current thinking in the field identifies a lifecycle of peace. The establishment of peace is not a single event, but rather a process characterized by progress and setbacks, successes and failures. Observers of peace processes, including those who live in societies with protracted conflict, are all too familiar with premature celebration of ceasefires and peace accords that are later violated. Even if a settlement holds, the transition to a state of peace is a long-term operation. It requires extensive logistical and financial measures to create or reestablish the physical, social, and political infrastructure necessary for the country to transition towards a culture of peace.

Perhaps the most realistic approach to understanding the peace process is to acknowledge that, though negotiations are "the best-known stage in a process of peace," as Anderlini et al. write in *Journeys Through Conflict: Narratives and Lessons,*

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[They] represent but one moment. Though essential, they nevertheless do not exhaust all the possibilities of actions or initiatives that such a process may require. For negotiations to take place, prenegotiations are necessary, be they formal or informal. For a political settlement to succeed, implementation of the provisions of an accord in the postnegotiation period is vital. In other words, it could be said that peace processes have three broad phases: preparation, transformation, and consolidation.[8]

It is important to note that these three phases are seldom distinct; they blend into one another in a continuum from ceasefire toward the consolidation of peace. Timelines often blur, for example, when the reintegration phase of DDR ends and the longer-term process of reconstruction begins.

Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR)

International policymakers consider DDR one of the most important steps in any peace process. The World Bank has defined a successful DDR program as "the key to an effective transition from war to peace."[9] Although each of the three elements of DDR has distinctly different goals and requires independent planning, the phases do overlap and are dependent upon each other.[10]

The UN defines **disarmament** as "...the collection of small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone."[11] Former combatants are gathered in pre-determined assembly areas, where weapons are confiscated, safely stored, and eventually destroyed. Individuals then receive support in the form of food aid, shelter, clothing, medical attention, basic education, and orientation programs. In addition, censuses are often conducted, and ex-combatants are issued discharge documentation.[12]

Demobilization is both the formal disbanding of military formations and the release of combatants from a "mobilized" state.[13] Discharge of ex-combatants often occurs over a period of time, during which they are usually transported to their home districts or given small transportation grants and the process of initial reinsertion begins.[14]

Nicole Ball of the University of Maryland breaks down **reintegration** into two phases—initial reinsertion and long-term reintegration.[15] Reinsertion refers to the short-term arrival period of an ex-combatant into his/her former home or into a new community. Support during this phase may include basic household goods, land, food supplements, and housing materials. Reintegration takes a long-term approach, to assist the community and the ex-combatant in the difficult transition to civilian life. Assistance during reintegration usually includes job placement services, skills training, credit schemes, scholarships, and rehabilitation programs.

The international community at times refers to a second "R" in DDR, which represents "rehabilitation." This concept encompasses difficult issues, such as the need to address the psychological and emotional aspects of returning home and problems that arise in relation to the wider community. Nearly all DDR programs address rehabilitation in some form, but the most often-used acronym for the process is DDR.

Security sector reform—such as dismantling and restructuring the military and constructing a new civilian police force—is often included in discussions surrounding disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. For the purposes of this paper, DDR will only include the processes defined above and will **not** address issues pertaining to security sector reform.

Gender

The term "gender" refers to the socially constructed—as opposed to biologically determined—identities of men and women. Gender is not the same as "sex," and gender differences are not the same as sex differences. For instance, the ability of women to bear children is a sex, or biologically determined, difference from men; that women, in many societies, are responsible for food preparation and household chores is a gender, or socially constructed, difference.

Gender roles are assigned to men and women early in socialization. They cut across public and private spheres; are specific to a given culture at a given time; are affected by other forms of differentiation such as race, ethnicity, and class; and can change in different socio-political and economic contexts within a society. World Bank literature notes that in any given society, gender shapes the definitions of acceptable responsibilities and functions for men and women in terms of "social and economic activities, access to resources, and decision making authority."[16]

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This report is careful not to conflate the terms "gender" and "women." It examines how gender considerations are a necessary component of DDR planning and implementation, and how women in Sierra Leone enhanced the DDR process, primarily through their numerous ad-hoc and local reintegration and rehabilitation programs.

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PART 1: THE TRANSITION FROM WAR TO PEACE

Pre-Colonization to Independence

Prior to colonization no ethnic tribe dominated the geographic area that is now Sierra Leone. The largest ethnic groups, the Mende and Temne, have long been divided into chiefdoms in the south and the north respectively. A country rich with natural resources—timber, ivory, palm oil, and valuable mineral deposits including gold, bauxite, and diamonds—Sierra Leone fell into British control in the early 1800s. During its movement to abolish slavery, Great Britain allowed thousands of freed slaves to find refuge in the West African territory, effectively reshaping the demographic composition of Sierra Leone. Other ethnic groups including the Kono, Limba, Kissi, and Krio migrated into the new British territory.

Democratic reforms following World War II established an assembly for the territory led primarily by Paramount Chiefs. Fearing marginalization, the Krio elite, along with other chiefs, created the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), led by Sir Milton Margai, a Mende. The creation of the Temne-dominated All People's Congress (APC) followed in 1957, splitting the assembly's composition and dividing it ethnically between the Mende (SLPP) of the south and the Temne (APC) of the north. Margai was elected Prime Minister after successful constitutional talks in London in 1960. A year later, Sierra Leone became independent, women gained the right to vote, and a parliamentary system within the British Commonwealth was established. The years after independence gave way to protracted political clashes between the two parties until 1967, when the APC won in a democratic election.[17]

Cold War to Civil War

Adopting a policy of non-alignment during the Cold War, the Sierra Leone government upheld the colonial practice of emphasizing the export of raw materials over industrial production. Independent mining made up the bulk (80 percent) of economic export from Sierra Leone. Continuing a tradition of maintaining power through asset control and patron systems, by the early 1970s, the APC, with Siaka Stevens as president, controlled 52 percent of the national diamond industry. In 1978, facing increased opposition from professionals and trade unionists, Stevens consolidated his power. He destroyed many of the political institutions established in the British parliamentary system, rendering them ineffective. Tightening its grip, the APC leadership cut off access to natural resources to those outside its sphere.[18]

One result of these actions was increased frustration and unrest among youth and students unable to support themselves and their families. The political ideals expressed by jobless university students, graduates, and dropouts supplanted the unorganized political frustrations among the uneducated youth, who were sometimes used as thugs by the political leadership. Buoyed by public support, the youth promoted the idea of pan-Africanism, drawing parallels between the colonial past and the post-colonial present. The APC tried to attract distinguished "radicals" among the youth class as potential candidates for the party, but none accepted.[19]

The economy faltered throughout the 1980s, due in part to lost revenues from diamond smuggling. Yet those within the patron system, including politicians, powerful chiefs, and traders, prospered while the average citizen's standard of living continued to decline.[20] Government expenditures on health and housing dropped and state-sponsored scholarships decreased. Looking for allies to overcome the West's containment of Muamar Qaddafi's regime, Libya eagerly nurtured the political discord among young Sierra Leoneans.[21] One of those who traveled to Libya was Foday Sankoh, formerly a corporal in the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). It was in a Libyan military training camp that Sankoh met Charles Taylor of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). In 1987, the two agreed to support each other's efforts to overthrow their respective governments. Financiers and recruits were found in the main diamond mines of Sierra Leone, located in the Eastern and Southern Provinces, in some cases more easily accessed from Liberia than from the Sierra Leone capital of Freetown.[22]

In August 1985, the APC named Joseph Saidu Momoh as successor to Stevens after several years of economic decline, increased political opposition, and Stevens' increasingly autocratic approach. Corruption, the collapse of the economy, and heavy cuts in social programs, partly due to International Monetary Fund (IMF) structural adjustment programs, had severely weakened the country.[23] Momoh attempted to re-establish a multi-party government with elections scheduled for 1991. However, armed

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rebel forces led by Foday Sankoh, calling themselves the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and backed by Liberia, launched their first attack into Sierra Leone just prior to the elections, thwarting the president's efforts to stabilize the economy. Initially, RUF forces consisted of three groups: those trained in Libya with fighting experience in Liberia, young men from Liberia and Sierra Leone who had little or no work, and seasoned NPFL fighters from Taylor's army.[24]

Violent Conflict and the Rise of the Civil Defense Forces

In March 1991, RUF rebels invaded Sierra Leone from Liberia and occupied the eastern regions of the country, securing lucrative diamond reserves. In exchange for weapons, drugs, and supplies, Sierra Leonean diamonds were smuggled into Liberia for sale on the international market, generating millions of dollars annually. Controlling the diamond mines also allowed Sankoh to recruit, forcibly and voluntarily, young miners and locally unemployed men and boys into his fighting forces. By the mid to late 1990s, global exposure of these "blood diamonds" led to an international outcry against their export and sale and initiated numerous UN investigations and resolutions.[25]

Within the first 18 months of RUF attacks, over 400,000 people were internally displaced while hundreds of thousands became refugees. The war quickly came to involve not only Liberia, but also Guinea and Côte D'Ivoire. It destroyed hundreds of hospitals and schools and tens of thousands of homes. Because of a lack of health care, failing schools, and the widespread destruction of infrastructure support systems, the population grew increasingly vulnerable. The Sierra Leone countryside became militarized as a result of the presence of international forces, widespread proliferation of small arms, and a general suspicion towards one's neighbor, especially in areas protected by local militias.[26]

Women and girls reported atrocities committed by all fighting forces during the war.[27] Early in the conflict the RUF perpetrated widespread violence across southern and eastern Sierra Leone. Violence against women and children and general terror in rural and urban centers quickly became cornerstones of the movement and were encouraged by RUF leadership.[28]

As government revenues fell from the loss of mineral sales, so too did the salaries and the resolve of the SLA. Soldiers committed gross human rights violations, including rape, mutilations, looting, property destruction, and murder. They forced women and girls to exchange sex for "protection" and used them as prostitutes.[29] With the rebellion spreading virtually unchecked in the south and east, rebels preyed on civilians for food, supplies, and labor.[30]

Subjected to violence by both the RUF and the SLA, local militias known as Civil Defense Forces (CDF) emerged.[31] CDF gained prominence with the rise of the Kamajors, the largest traditional hunting society, in the eastern and southern provinces. Other hunting groups were the Tamaboro, Donso, Kapra and later, the Gbethis in the north. With the exception of the Gbethis, these groups existed prior to the war, relying on perceived magical powers and customary hunting weapons such as spears. Combining skill and valor, these groups at times thwarted RUF offensives.[32]

As the war progressed and the RUF gained ground, the government supplied the CDF with weapons and financial and logistical support. Although under the supervision of Samuel Hinga Norman, who was the deputy defense minister, chairman of the CDF, and a Kamajor, the CDF did not feature prominently in the president's overall war strategy. This was a result of the army's unease at what it perceived as competition from other fighting forces and possibly due to fear of the CDF gaining political leverage over the president's hold on authority.[33]

In 1995, the government hired Executive Outcomes (EO), a South African "mercenary" force composed of 2,000 former South African Defense Force combat veterans. The intervention of EO along with the CDF propped-up the failing Sierra Leonean government. EO's rapid deployment and well-trained soldiers attacked RUF forces and regained control of resource-rich areas. Its military victories allowed local traders to re-establish trade networks and, more importantly, enabled a corporate web of allied mining partners to fence off valuable mining zones, squeezing everyday miners into smaller low-paying illicit operations.[34] With the assistance of local landowners or policemen, these traders kept wages low, forced slave-like labor, and traded diamonds on the informal market.[35] Those who did not cooperate were removed from political positions and trading zones.[36]

Women and Girls in Fighting Forces

The presence of women and girls within the former rebel RUF and AFRC fighting forces was known early on in the war.[37] Much less is known about their presence or roles in the SLA or the CDF. Drawing on field-based data and secondary sources, this study concludes that the estimated number of girls and young women in fighting forces was higher than previously reported (see Table 1).[38] This increase is partly due to their presence as fully initiated members of the CDF.[39]

Table 1: Estimated Number for Total Forces, Child Soldiers, and Girl Soldiers

Force	Total	Child Soldiers	Girl Soldiers
RUF	45,000	22,500	7,500
AFRC	10,000	5,000	1,667
SLA	14,000	3,500	1,167
CDF	68,865	17,216	1,722
Total	***137,865***	***48,216***	***12,056***

Of the study population, nearly all stated "abduction" and "forced recruitment" as their means of entry into the various forces. Ten-year-old Maria B.[40] was outside her home playing with friends under the moonlight when the RUF attacked.[41] All of them tried to escape, but she was captured. She was told to carry looted items for the rebels and was given a five-gallon container of palm oil; anytime she tried to rest she was beaten.

Agnes V.[42] was nine years old and on vacation with her family when rebels attacked the village. After looting the village, the rebels rounded up around 50 people, locked them in a building, and began to set it on fire. A junior commander pleaded with the senior commander to release the young girl. She was then selected by the junior commander to be his captive "wife." The people remaining in the building were burned. Agnes was forced to be the captive "wife" of the commander for the next nine years. During the commanders' absences from the camp, she was in charge of the military compound, including organizing raids and fighting units.

Mariama M.[43] was seven years old when she was captured and spent 10 years with the AFRC/RUF as a fighter. She received basic military and weapons training with machine guns and two-grip pistols. She was trained with approximately 50 other girls and 100 boys.

Once recruited, women and girls had numerous roles, including that of frontline fighters. In fact, nearly half (44 percent) of the study population received basic military and weapons training from their commanders or captor "husbands." However, nearly all women and girls performed additional roles:

- 72 percent as cooks;
- 68 percent as porters;
- 62 percent as assistants for the sick and wounded;
- 60 percent as "wives;"
- 44 percent as food producers;
- 40 percent as messengers between rebel camps;
- 22 percent as spies;
- 18 percent as communications technicians; and
- 14 percent as workers in diamond mines for their commanders or captor husbands.

Notably, all of the study population who reported their primary role as "fighter" also reported that they were forced to be captive "wives." According to Kama F.,[44] who at age 15 was an RUF frontline fighter, it was better to be a fighter and the "wife" of a common soldier because you could protect yourself with your own weapon, you had access to food and loot, and your chances of escaping were greater, unlike captive "wives" of commanders who were closely guarded with little chance of escape.

Women and Girls as Full Members of the CDF

Official claims that the pro-government CDF were composed only of males are inaccurate.[45] Women and girls were fully initiated members of the CDF.[46] This study focuses on the two largest CDF: the Kamajors and Gbethis. Although the Kamajors were originally a male-only traditional hunting society, in response to the increased pressure from the RUF it became a

self-defense force and enlisted women and girls beginning in the early 1990s and continued this practice throughout the war. The Gbethis, never a traditional male society, were created as one of the CDF in the mid 1990s in response to increased rebel attacks. They enlisted and initiated women and girls where they acted as integrated members of the CDF and were included in all ceremonies, amulets, and scarification. They served as commanders, frontline fighters, initiators, spiritual leaders, medics, herbalists, spies, and cooks.[47]

Ramatu T.[48] was a fighter with the Kamajors and fought alongside other girls and women Kamajors in Kenema and Bo Districts. Describing her initiation she says,

> *They use native herbs, which you drink and they bathe you in. These herbs make it so you don't feel like returning to your family. The initiator placed charms around my neck so that bullets are deflected, and a special charm to protect against knives and pangas; they will just bounce off my body. After this they gave me my special dress and herbs and charms. I was instructed not to bathe for several days because it would reduce the magic. Later, they rubbed the blood of a human being on my skin, and I found that I was not afraid of anything. I had a strong and fearless heart.*

Some women and girls joined the Kamajors and Gbethis at the request of their husbands who were already initiated in the militias. Mamuna K.[49] was married to a Gbethi man who asked her to join for her own protection. Mamuna, who was pregnant, sent her remaining children into Freetown for their safety and joined the Gbethis the same year. Importantly, Mamuna was an herbalist and her role within the Gbethis was to prepare the baths and drinks for those undergoing initiation. Within the group she was regarded as crucial to maintaining the magical powers of the fighting force, as she collected and prepared herbs for the fighters' food and drink.

Others were abducted and conscripted by the Kamajors and Gbethis. At times, women and girls worked with their male counterparts to capture civilian adolescents and children whom they forcibly initiated and trained as fighters.[50] Some "joined" or became "wives" to male CDF fighters as a matter of survival. Mariatu R.[51] agreed to become a "wife" of a fighter and join the Gbethis when an RUF attack on her village left her and her elderly parents as the only survivors. Upon joining, Mariatu was able to bring her parents and herself within the ring of protection offered by the Gbethis.

Many adolescents and children "joined" the Kamajors and Gbethis with the approval of their parents. This was especially the case when the Paramount Chief of the area endorsed a particular unit of the CDF; it then became mandatory that all families contribute a member to the CDF.[52] Dissension was rare. For example, in Kenema Township, Kenema District, where the Kamajors were especially active during the war, the burned homes are not the result of rebel activities. Instead, they belong to families who did not contribute a family member to the Kamajors, and thus were suspected rebel sympathizers. According to one informant, "There is not a house in Kenema [Township] left that did not contribute someone to the Kamajors."[53]

Women and girls in the Kamajors and Gbethis observed widespread human rights violations by members of the CDF, including cannibalism, human sacrifice, and sexual abuse. For example, Ramatu T.[54] reported that a common practice among her Kamajor force was for adult Kamajor males to enter a village and capture an adult civilian. They would then cut the person's throat, turn them upside down, and "squeeze them from toe to head" to drain their blood into a bucket. All members of the fighting party, including the women and girls, would then drink the blood so they would not be afraid during the attack. Perhaps in part because of their participation in such violent acts, as well as their involvement in activities such as warfare, that went against traditionally acceptable roles for females, all young women and girls formerly with the CDF in the study population reported stigmatization, threats, and abuse upon returning to the communities they had fought to protect.

"Wives" of RUF Commanders in Camps and Command Structure

The RUF was loosely configured, and camp and command structure varied throughout the country. In general, a commander held "houses" or compounds in which his or her recruits and captives served. While there were a number of female RUF commanders, the majority were males.[55]

Captive "wives" of commanders exerted substantial power within the RUF compounds. These "wives" were predominately girls. When the commander was away, they were in charge of the compound. They kept in communication with the commander and would select and send troops, spies, and support when needed. These girls and young women decided on a daily basis who in the compound would fight, provide reconnaissance, and raid villages for food and loot. Some counseled their captor husbands on war strategies, troop movement, and upcoming attacks.[56]

Saramba M.[57] spent five years with the RUF as a commander's "wife." During that time she distributed weapons to boy and girl fighters prior to village raids and attacks on enemy forces. She also chose boys and girls for spy missions to infiltrate camps of the SLA, CDF, and Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and to report on force locations and size. At times, such spying led to the deaths of these children and sexual abuse by male soldiers, particularly in the case of girls who were told to become intimate with the men in these forces to gather information.[58]

In the absence of the commander, when food and loot were delivered to the camps, it was brought to his captive "wife." She would then decide how these goods were to be apportioned among those in the compound.[59] Lynette S.[60] distributed food and loot to groups of boy fighters within her RUF compound to try to persuade them not to harass or sexually abuse the young children in the camp. She expressed deep sympathy for the young children and had a number of strategies she would employ to try and influence her commander "husband" to also look out for the well being of the children.

Bodyguards accompanied the commanders' captive "wives," both to provide protection in case of attack on the compound and to prevent their escape. Between four to six children might serve as bodyguards; 25 to 50 percent were girls.[61] Ester C.,[62] a commander's "wife," was guarded by six boys and three girls; the youngest boy was six. They were armed with AK-47s and two-grip pistols. Nearly all bodyguards and the commander's captive "wife" or "wives" carried guns and other weapons.[63]

In some cases, as documented in Kono District, commanders' captive "wives" were replaced by new or more favored girls. Subsequently, the rejected "wives" were sent by their commander husbands to the front lines to fight.[64] Ramatu S. and Inna T.[65] described RUF camps in the south with strictly enforced separations between civilians and soldiers. RUF commanders believed that a separation of camps would prevent civilians from witnessing atrocities committed by soldiers or learning about force size and strength should they escape and inform government factions. Consistent with this strategy, "wives" of commanders or soldiers who were rejected were forbidden from returning to the civilian camps and were instead sent to the front lines.

Commanders' "wives" were in charge of Small Boys Units (SBU) and Small Girls Units (SGU).[66] The SBU were made up of boys aged 6-15 used primarily for scouting to prepare attacks and food raids, but were dispatched to execute some of the most violent killings and mutilations.[67] The SGU were made up of similarly aged girls and were used primarily for raiding villages and spying, although they too were sent to fight and commit atrocities.[68b] In some cases, commanders' "wives" used loot to mitigate abuse by the SBU or to reward them for not abusing the girls within the compound. In other cases, they could order punishment of the SBU or SGU for "disrupting life in the compound."[69]

Fighters, male and female, had their own "families" within the compound, which consisted of children they had captured and who were under their protection and care. Girl fighters could and did serve as heads of these "families."[70] Food and loot were distributed on the basis of these "families." Much has been said about girls trying to attach themselves to boys or men within the compounds to avoid gang raping.[71] While this appears to be accurate, this study also found that older children and adolescents who were not attached to a "family" were not given food and had to survive as scavengers. Thus, attachment of girls to boys or men was also means to secure food as well as (some) protection against sexual assault.[72]

The presence, roles, and experiences of women and girls within the fighting forces in Sierra Leone has a number of important implications for the design of those processes that seek to build human and national security and peace in the post-conflict period. It is evident that despite their trauma, women and girls showed tremendous agency. They developed a number

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of skills and strategies that enabled them to survive and regain some control over their lives during their time with the fighting forces.

From the standpoint of DDR programs, however, the need for strict categorization of individuals as "combatants" or "non-combatants," and the reluctance on the part of the international community and local governments to acknowledge that women and girls are integral to the fighting often devalues the multiple roles they play in conflict. This is not only detrimental to disarmament and demobilization, it also harms the women and girls. By being treated as passive victims or "dependents," they are again stripped of control of their lives and their sense of dignity. Moreover, by not acknowledging the skills and resources that they have attained, DDR processes risk losing tremendous social capital that could be utilized for post-conflict reconstruction.

The Role of Women in the Peace Process

Throughout the war, rural and urban women from all classes and ethnic groups mobilized to form active organizations, conduct marches, and lead rallies for peace and justice. Many women's organizations participated in peace processes during and after the war, including the Mano River Women's Peace Network, Women's Movement for Peace, Forum of African Women Educationalists (FAWE), Sierra Leone Women's Forum, Network of Women Ministers and Parliamentarians, and the Sierra Leone Women's Movement for Peace. They educated civilians on electoral proceedings, recruited and trained observers, and pressured the military to respect the results of elections.[73] Their efforts were critical in shaping informal and formal peace processes, and in bringing about an eventual end to the conflict.[74]

The first attempt at a ceasefire came in January 1996, after a bloodless coup that overthrew the brief military dictatorship of Valetin Strasser. Brigadier General Maada Bio opened negotiations to cease hostilities with the RUF. Women's groups, led by Women Organized for a Morally Enlightened Nation (WOMEN), pressured Bio's military government, the National Provisional Ruling Council to hold democratic elections. WOMEN was the first non-partisan women's group in Sierra Leone that promote women's representation and concerns in the period before elections.[75] It incorporated many smaller women's groups under one umbrella organization. Yet, when elections were held, only five women were on a list of 68 candidates representing the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP).[76] Although given the opportunity, the RUF did not submit candidates of its own. The SLPP won the elections, led by Ahmed Tejan Kabbah.

Kabbah's first attempt at brokering a peace plan was the 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord. Drafted between the RUF and the Sierra Leone government, the accord called for a cessation of violence and the transformation of the RUF into a political party, with a power-sharing incentive to entice the RUF to lay down its arms. Although women suffered greatly from the war and were active in civil movements for peace, none were present at the Abidjan negotiations.[77]

At the signing of the Abidjan peace accord, some girl captives were released from RUF control as a goodwill gesture. However, mutual distrust in implementing the provisions of the accord, and RUF reluctance to lay down arms without the unconditional departure of EO ultimately led to its failure. Other contributing factors included the government's belief that military victory remained possible and the RUF's fear of judicial reprisals.[78]

The government's failure to consistently pay or supply its soldiers, its increasing dependency on and financial support of the CDF, and the high price tag of EO led to the splintering of the SLA. Some soldiers joined the RUF or became part of the new rebel Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which aligned itself with the RUF. In 1997, the AFRC overthrew President Kabbah's regime. Former Army Major Johnny P. Koroma headed the AFRC in Freetown. Shortly thereafter, the RUF was invited to join the regime. Support for the AFRC came from professionals, civil servants, politicians, and other members of the socio-economic elite who felt alienated from the Kabbah government.[79]

[b]While much is written on the SBU, this study presents some of the first data on the presence and roles of the SGU. We interviewed girls who headed the SGU, girl members of the SGU, commander's wives who were in charge of the SGU, and boys within the SBU who confirmed the presence of the SGU.

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Growing concern in the region regarding a joint AFRC/RUF government in Freetown brought about the intervention of the Economic Community of the West African States (ECOWAS) to restore the Kabbah regime. ECOWAS determined to act militarily to prevent further chaos, economic ruin, and violence. In March 1997, with the approval of the UN, the Nigerian-led ECOMOG, the military wing of ECOWAS, attacked Freetown, forced the AFRC/RUF regime out and restored Kabbah to power. Key policy objectives of the Kabbah government were to de-legitimize the AFRC/RUF, uphold the rule of law, create a competent and trustworthy national army, and defeat the rebellion.[80] Kabbah's restored government continued to rely on ECOMOG for protection, as well as the support of the CDF.

ECOMOG's presence, however, contributed to violence against civilians. Violation of women and girls' human rights by ECOMOG soldiers was widespread. Girls desperate for income would prostitute themselves or become "girlfriends" of ECOMOG troops for protection. ECOMOG soldiers coerced others into spying on enemy camps. Girls were made especially vulnerable during RUF attacks on ECOMOG forces, and it was common for suspected "girlfriends" of ECOMOG soldiers to be targeted by the RUF for torture and murder. At the same time, girls from RUF and AFRC camps would be sent into ECOMOG areas to befriend soldiers, establish sexual relations with them, and collect intelligence.[81]

In January 1999, a joint AFRC/RUF attack on Freetown resulted in the deaths of over 5,000 civilians. Thousands more were mutilated and raped, and over 5,000 were abducted, mostly women and girls. Recognizing the improbability of a military victory over the AFRC/RUF, the government sought a peace plan and eventually agreed to the 1999 Lomé accord. The Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA), as a founding member of the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone, played a leading role in the negotiations that led to the signing of the 1999 Lomé peace accord, officially ending the war (though fighting and unrest continued into 2002). It called for RUF inclusion in a power-sharing government and granted blanket amnesty to gross violators of human rights.[82] In addition to pardoning RUF leader Sankoh, it placed him at the head of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources.[83]

Two women were involved in the Lomé process, one a member of the government delegation and the other a representative of the RUF. Although they were not chief negotiators, the final document reflected at least some gender-specific issues as a result of women's participation. For example, Article 28 calls for special attention to victimized women and girls in formulating and implementing rehabilitation, reconstruction, and development programs. The formation of commissions to promote good governance was also called for in the peace accord. Yet within the key entities including the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development, and the Council of Religious Leaders, there were no women represented at the time of writing.[84]

In October 1999, the United Nations Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) deployed troops to support the implementation of the Lomé peace accord and bolster the government in the DDR process. However, because there were vast areas still under RUF control, UNAMSIL forces were unable to fully restore peace. In particular, fighting in the diamond-rich eastern province persisted. Small RUF raids and offensives against UN troops yielded large numbers of UN weapons and armored vehicles. RUF attacks peaked on May 3, 2000, when 500 UN peacekeepers were taken hostage. Less than a week later, British Special Forces arrived in Freetown, expelled the RUF from the city, and restored a sense of security. Subsequently, British forces trained and armed Sierra Leonean troops and drove the remaining RUF soldiers from their territory, allowing UN peacekeepers to return.[85]

Women Tipping the Balance Toward Peace

The Lomé accord collapsed when the RUF broke the ceasefire following UNAMSIL's assumption of control of the diamond-rich areas of eastern Sierra Leone. Recruits from Liberia continued to enter the country, facilitating RUF control over the resource-rich region. When Sankoh's intentions of continuing the war despite Lomé surfaced, women assembled in the streets demanding "Not again! Enough is enough!"[86] Their slogan was a response to both the inadequate representation of women after the 1996 elections and Sankoh's tactics, which the women understood to be a means for him to re-arm for war. The women on

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the streets called for an end to male domination and male-biased decisions within parliament. They were particularly critical of the decision to appoint Sankoh as a minister and repeatedly called attention to the fact that he was refortifying for war.[87]

Women's activism reached a high point in 2000 when they ultimately played a catalytic role in bringing an end to the conflict. A group of elderly women, representing churches and mosques, requested a meeting with Sankoh, who was living in Freetown. The women came as an interfaith group with an agenda of peace at any cost. Upon arrival they were abused by Sankoh, his guards, and advisors, who refused to listen and mistreated them. The assembled older women stood outside the house of Sankoh, hitched up their skirts, bent over, and bared themselves. In Sierra Leone, such an action by women of this age and standing constitutes the worst curse, sign of shaming, and insult that can be brought upon anyone.

When word of what had happened reached the streets, people were shocked. But they were also mobilized, both because they now had courage to stand up to Sankoh and the RUF, and because they had an obligation to enforce the curse of these respected, senior, religious women. Previously, people had lived in fear of retaliation and violence by the RUF as Sankoh sent death squads to any part of the capital where people spoke out. Yet when such a curse is given, it is the family and society's obligation to back the curse. Men in particular were mobilized to defend the power and honor of the women. May 8, 2000, was set as the date for mass peace protests and demonstrations.

The families of the women, religious organizations, labor and trade unions, and adolescents and school children committed to join the peace protests. Since it appeared that many people would not be going to work or school, the government declared it an unofficial holiday. The mass demonstrations on May 8, 2000 marked the turning point in the conflict.[88] This time the women marched to Sankoh's house with parliamentarians and civil society leaders. Sankoh's guards opened fire, killing a number of the protesters. On May 13, British troops captured and arrested Sankoh, charging him with the murder of unarmed protestors. With the incarceration of Sankoh, the RUF began to splinter, creating a vacuum in which General Issa Sessay became the new RUF leader and eventually the head of the RUFP, a newly formed political party.

The war was officially declared over in January 2002, when hostilities between the CDF and RUF soldiers in eastern Sierra Leone ceased.[89]

When the war ended there were approximately 400,000 internally displaced people and up to 500,000 refugees in Guinea, Gambia, Ghana, and Côte D'Ivoire. At least 55 percent of the refugees were women.[90] Women's organizations continue to address these ongoing issues. For example, recognizing the regional dimensions of the conflict, the Mano River Union Women's Network for Peace visits women refugees in Guinea and Liberia encouraging them to become a part of the peace process, addressing problems such as sexual assaults in camps and food shortages, and, with assistance from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), reuniting women with family members and returning them to their homes in Sierra Leone.[91]

PART 2: THE ROLE AND EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN AND GIRLS IN DDR

DDR Design and Implementation

DDR was initiated by the government of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in the aftermath of the 1996 Abidjan accords. A National Commission for Reconstruction, Resettlement, and Rehabilitation (NCRRR) was established with a department that had responsibility for disarming the varying factions.[92] In 1998 the department was restructured as the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration (NCDDR), after which the program began. Its goals were threefold:[93]

1) collect, register, and destroy all conventional weapons and munitions turned in by combatants;

2) demobilize the *initially* estimated 45,000 combatants from the SLA, RUF, AFRC, and the CDF, 12 percent of whom were thought to be women;[94] and

3) support ex-combatants through demobilization to prepare them for reintegration.

DDR was conducted in three phases, the first beginning in 1998. Phase I was conducted by the NCDDR, chaired by President Kabbah, and ECOMOG, which was mandated to assist in disarmament, weapons collection, and demobilization. In 1999 with the Lomé accords in place, Phase II was initiated, running until April 2000; DDR was conducted by NCDDR and the United Nations Observer Mission to Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), which was mandated to assist in disarmament and monitoring of demobilization. UNOMSIL was replaced in October 1999 by a significantly larger peacekeeping mission to support the DDR effort. Phase III, which ran from May 2001 to January 2002, was conducted by NCDDR and the new United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL).[95]

Reception centers were established for disarmament and demobilization throughout the country. From September 1998 through May 2001, during Phases I and II, a series of questions and performance of disassembly and reassembly of a gun, usually an AK-47, were used to assess combatants and their DDR eligibility status (combatants 18 years or older). It was believed that the ability to assemble and disassemble a weapon was a good litmus test to determine whether an individual had participated in the conflict as an armed combatant—the requirement for participation in the DDR program. During this time, women accounted for six percent and girls for 0.6 percent of participants. In Phase III (May 18 2001 through January 2002) group disarmament was allowed, meaning a group could bring in weapons together. This helped marginally to increase women's participation to seven percent and girls to 0.7 percent.[96]

Combatants voluntarily presented themselves at the reception centers to disarm and surrender all weapons and ammunition, and to be assessed for eligibility in the program. While officially those under 18 years of age were not required to present a weapon to enter DDR, this study found widespread discrepancy among UN and NCDDR officials and staff of NGOs working within the DDR process as to whether or not children had to turn over a weapon.[97] According to nearly all interviewees who passed through DDR, despite official policy the weapons test was repeatedly administered to children to determine their admission into programs.

Qualifying adults (18 years of age and above) were sent to a demobilization center where they received pre-discharge orientation, their benefits packages, a small amount of resettlement and transportation money, and were discharged. Children (17 years of age and below) were to be sent to Interim Care Centers (ICCs) and could select to enter skills training or an educational program of their choice.[98]

Late in the program it was decided that "wives" of (male) ex-combatants could apply for micro-credit to help maintain their families, as the men complained about their inability to sustain families. However for a female applicant to access the loans, she had to be present with a "husband," who was willing to identify her as his wife. No woman could claim benefits alone, regardless of the number of children she cared for. If women had been permitted to apply alone, it could have enabled them to abdicate their "relationships." But this was not considered by senior DDR officials, one of whom said that "even if they were raped and abducted, 70 percent of the women and girls wanted to be with their 'husbands'."[99]

Obstacles to the Participation of Women and Girls in Formal DDR

The DDR program in Sierra Leone is widely seen as a success and considered to have been sensitive to the needs of female and child combatants. During a visit to Sierra Leone by UN Under-Secretary-General and Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, Olara Otunno, a UN statement was released noting that "since the Sierra Leonean conflict ended in January 2002...[a]n ambitious programme for the demobilization and reintegration of 7,000 child ex-combatants has [reunited] 97 percent of them with their families and communities."[100]

In March of 2002, in an interview with IRINnews, when asked about female ex-combatants, Dr. Francis Kai-Kai, Executive Secretary of the NCDDR stated "we had about eight percent of them...In the designed program we made every provision for the female ex-combatant."[101] However, this study finds this claim difficult to substantiate when compared to actual experiences of women and girl ex-combatants through interviews and NCDDR data (see Table 2).[102]

As previously illustrated in Table 1, the estimated number of all forces was 137,865 of whom 12,056 were assumed to be girls.[c] Yet as Table 3, and data drawn from UNICEF and NCDDR indicate, there is substantial disparity between the numbers of girls within the forces and those entering DDR programs, thus calling into question the design, implementation, and success of these programs.[103]

In the Disarmament and Demobilization Phases

Despite official policy, the possession of an AK-47 (even with a group) and knowledge of its assembly and disassembly was repeatedly used by disarmament administrators to determine entry into the program, even for those under 18. This proved to be a particular problem for women and girls who did not always have a weapon in their possession. There was a perception among them that a weapon was required for everyone seeking entry into the DDR program, and, indeed, among those in this study's sample, all who entered into DDR (half the study population) were asked to turn in a weapon and perform the weapons test. This

Table 2: NCDDR Gender-Disaggregated Data on Entry into DDR

Force	Girls Number	Percent	Boys Number	Percent	Women Number	Percent	Men Number	Percent
RUF	436	1.8%	3,229	13.3%	3,925	16.1%	16,735	68.8%
AFRC	41	.5%	375	4.2%	530	6.0%	7,914	89.3%
SLA	22	No Data	445	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data	No Data
CDF	7	.0001%	1,996	5.3%	296	0.8%	34,890	93.8%
Total	**506**	**No Data**	**6,181**	**No Data**	**No Data**	**No Data**	**No Data**	**No Data**

[c]It is not possible to make these comparisons about women, as there are no reliable estimates on the number of women within the various fighting forces. Data are available on children within the fighting forces because of the work of child protection agencies. Therefore, for this aspect of the study, findings relate only to young women and girls.

perceived requirement kept some who would have qualified from attempting to enter the program. Of the study group that did not go through DDR, 46 percent cited not having a weapon as the basis for their lack of participation. There were several reasons girl ex-combatants found themselves without weapons at this critical time. Although they had been in the fighting forces, many in the CDF were ordered to hand in their weapons prior to demobilization and were then left behind as the men were transported to the assembly centers. Other girls indicated that their guns were taken away by their commanders and handed to male fighters. Additionally, many who were not "primarily" fighters had used weapons from a communal source but did not possess a gun themselves.

In further discussion, interviewees revealed six key concerns that affected their attitudes towards DDR and the reasons they chose not to join or remain in programs. First, some girls and young women indicated they did not know about DDR or felt there was nothing to gain by going to the centers. Twenty-one percent of the sample that did not go through DDR reportedly feared reprisals at the centers and thus avoided the entire process. Other respondents perceived the facilities to be dangerous with large numbers of men and inadequate protection. According to Agnes E.[104] who left a disarmament and demobilization site after only three days, "There were too many people crowded in, too many men with nothing to do. The security was bad."

Second, female ex-combatants, particularly women and girls from the CDF, reported fearing RUF former fighters housed at the centers. Christiana R.[105] left an adult center due to the sleeping accommodations. "As a woman," she said, "I could not stay there." With regard to children in particular, young women and girls explained that interviews conducted by DDR and ICC staff in the presence of other children and youth did not protect their affiliation with regard to fighting force. CDF girls reported immediate threats to their lives when RUF youth became aware of their affiliation, and they left the ICCs shortly thereafter. For example, Bintu O.[106] was interviewed in a room where other adolescents stood around looking in. As soon as it was known that she was a Kamajor, the former RUF children began to threaten her, and she left the center that evening.

Third, there was the widely perpetuated myth that women and girls were not involved in the CDF. This denial was propagated by influential figures such as then Deputy Minister of Defense and National Coordinator of the CDF Samuel Hinga Norman,who was himself a Kamajor.[107] For some women and

Table 3: Girls in Fighting Forces and Formal DDR

Force	Estimated Number of Girls in Force	Number of Girls in DDR	Percentage of Girls in DDR	Percentage of Total Force in DDR
RUF	7,500	436	6%	54%
AFRC	1,667	41	2%	89%
SLA	1,167	22	2%	No data
CDF	1,772	7	0.4%	54%
Total	**12,056**	**506**	**N/A**	**N/A**

Sources: Names withheld. Personal interviews. August 2002; Names withheld. Personal interviews. September 2002; Sesay; *Statistical Data from the National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration; Statistical Data from the United Nation's Children's Fund.*

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girls, official denial was considered a direct attempt to prevent them from entering DDR programs and collecting benefits. At the end of the war, Norman was promoted to Minister of Internal Security, which caused a number of this study's informants to insist that they remain anonymous when discussing issues of women and girls within the CDF. Recently, however, the Prosecutor for the Sierra Leone Special Court ordered the arrest of Norman and he is currently awaiting charges of crimes against humanity and war crimes, including for the use of child soldiers within the CDF.[108]

Fourth, there was a mistaken belief that children in the CDF were not separated from their families and communities. As a result, many were not classified by UNICEF and international NGOs as "separated children" and therefore could not receive other forms of aid. This is significant, as a number of UN, government, and NGO programs and benefits were designated for "separated children," including child combatants. It was not uncommon for NGOs to report that they did not work with children in the CDF "since they were never separated," and particularly with girls, since there was the assumption that the CDF did not include female members.[109] However, among the women and girls interviewed for this study, some with the Kamajors and Gbethis, had spent significant time away from their families and communities, including traveling the length of the country to fight with other CDF.[110]

Fifth, over-classification of girls and young women abducted by the RUF, AFRC, and SLA as "camp followers," "sex-slaves," and "wives" by some within the international community and the Sierra Leone government prevented the establishment of DDR programs to address their actual lived experiences. According to DDR officials, "wives," including those abducted, were to be explicitly excluded from formal entrance into DDR.[111] The focus of DDR was on the main fighting forces, and "minority" groups would not be taken into consideration.[112] However, since women and girls frequently played multiple roles, narrow classification of them as "wives" resulted in programmatic errors. Of the study population, 60 percent reported having served as a "wife," yet only eight percent reported this as their primary role.

Additionally, in the case of the CDF in particular, there was the erroneous belief that male CDF fighters could not have sexual or casual contact with a girl or woman; it was largely considered impossible for female members of the CDF to exist in the category of CDF "wife" or "sex slave." This myth gained international legitimacy in October 1998 when a boy Kamajor refused to shake the hand of UNICEF head Carol Bellamy "because he was not allowed to touch a woman."[113] This story was widely circulated and repeated in contexts that helped strengthen the belief that women and girls were not included in the CDF.[114] However, among Sierra Leoneans, it was understood that interactions with members of the opposite sex, including sexual relations, were permitted for both male and female members of the Kamajors and Gbethis. It was common, especially among those Kamajors and Gbethis who were married to each other or lived together.[115] The only caveat was that sexual contact nullified the perceived magical powers of a fighter's charms, and thus after such contact, fighters had to reapply the charms to regain these supposed powers.

Finally, it is important to note that cultural notions of childhood in Sierra Leone affected the way in which young women and girls engaged with the DDR program. In many rural and urban areas, childhood and adulthood are defined not by chronological age but by actions undertaken by the person, such as a boy harvesting and making palm wine or a girl having a baby.[116] When girls who had borne children arrived to disarm, some entered the programs as women since this is how they were now "culturally" defined. Indeed, it was reported to the researchers by those in charge of DDR programs and officials who screened participants that it was not uncommon for girls under 18 with children to enter DDR as women.[117] Thus they did not benefit from the programs that were established for child combatants, and were largely left unsupported since the DDR program did not have adequate mechanisms to address the needs of women in the forces.

For those who did enter the DDR process (i.e. half of the study sample) many noted the paucity of supplies, particularly in terms of their physical needs as women. At the ICCs where child combatants and "separated children" were taken and demobilization centers where adults were taken, 43 percent reported not receiving adequate clothing; 54 percent did not receive proper sanitation materials, including soap, shampoo, and feminine hygiene products; and 23 percent did not

have access to medical care when requested. Women respondents also reported very poor conditions at adult demobilization centers.

In terms of the length of their stay at demobilization centers, the young women and girls surveyed had experiences that contradicted official claims. For example, while UN data indicate that nearly all children remained in the centers for at least six months, among those surveyed for this study, only 20 percent had remained for that length of time.[118]

Finally, only 44 percent of the sample reported receiving the benefits they were promised in demobilization. In particular, lack of financial payment was noted as a leading cause of rising tension among child ex-combatants and resulted in rioting, strikes, and attacks against NGO staff and property in 2002.[119]

In the Reintegration Phase

As in many war-torn countries, the reintegration of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone is complex and sensitive. For the young women and girls, in particular, there is a range of issues that create concern. In response to an open-ended question, 50 percent of the study population named material deprivation, including lack of food, clothing, and housing, as the greatest challenge for their reintegration. Others noted separation from family, rejection, and abuse by family or community, fear of a return to war, and the inability to attend school as major concerns.

When asked what factors helped to mitigate these issues, responses included the end of the war, support from their community or family, and support from NGOs. However, the most critical and often identified need was for education—a core component of most DDR programs for children. Seventy-five percent of the study population indicated a desire to attend school and gain literacy skills. Forty-nine percent stated that skills training would be essential to their successful reintegration.

Sierra Leone ranks among the lowest countries in the world in female literacy and education. Purposeful destruction of schools by the fighting forces further devastated the education system. Well-meaning social workers associated with implementing DDR programs at times discouraged or prevented older ex-combatant girls and girl mothers from entering school, instead urging them to attend skills trainings.[120] They argued that since so many of these young women now had children and few had husbands to assist with income, they would need to develop skills rather than continued education to support themselves. At the same time, a number of women and girl mothers were unable to attend skills trainings because of a lack of adequate care for their children (this is related to stigmatism and rejection by families who may welcome a girl back, but not her child or children).[121] There is also a misperception that the older girls and young women considered themselves too old to attend school. Thus, while education was an option for those who went through official DDR, many of the young women and older girls were discouraged to pursue that option. Notably, this argument was not put forward to adolescent boys or men. NGO records themselves reveal unbalanced ratios of boys and girls enrolled in education programs.[122]

Expanding the Safety Net: Women's Contributions to Reintegration

The reintegration of children and youth from fighting forces is a significant factor in any peace process. Yet few resources and limited time are given to the "R" in DDR. While significant research is being done on the need to support long-term reintegration and rehabilitation processes, in most cases, the burden of caring for ex-combatants still falls to individuals and communities. Women in Sierra Leone, though under-resourced and unheralded, have filled in these programmatic gaps and done much to reintegrate former combatants, particularly women and child soldiers. Working alone, as leaders and members of NGOs, and through the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children's Affairs, women have taken in and cared for child soldiers, provided women and child former fighters with critical services and training, and thereby worked to normalize and bring stability to their communities and their nation.

Shellac Davies, a leading peacemaker in Sierra Leone, has observed the trauma inflicted on child soldiers and the mixed responses they receive in their home communities. At the end of the war, the attachment between commanders and the child rebels disintegrated, but children often felt that they couldn't go home. "The children were in a dilemma," says Davies. "Mothers who survived the manslaughter but were witnesses to the evil acts committed by their children virtually disowned them. 'A child who committed such an atrocity could not have been born from my womb,'

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many mothers were known to have said."[123] However, Davies has documented the work of some women and mothers to reintegrate the very children who committed the atrocities. It was these women who "realized that the children involved in the war were both victims and perpetrators." She goes on to describe how the children's violence was the result of their own victimization at the hands of commanders:

> *Urged by their commanders... within the rebel movement, they were known to have committed most of the atrocities experienced during the war. Those children under the influence of drugs obeyed commands to kill their parents, burn down houses, and amputate the limbs of their siblings and other members of the community.*[124]

In the Bo District (south central Sierra Leone), a group of women decided to take back those children and youth from the fighting forces between the ages of 6 and 25. "The women claimed that such a move was their own contribution to upholding the peace," says Davies adding, "It should be noted that some of those women had lost their own children and relatives as a result of the war."[125]

Women in Makeni (Bambali District, north central Sierra Leone) also organized themselves to care for children coming out of the fighting forces. Women in this region, known as the rebel stronghold, experienced the realities of the rebel war in particularly brutal ways. They were forced to become "wives" of the commanders, rape was a weapon of war used against them, and they were forced into various functions including acting as human shields for rebels during attacks. "The women there knew those children who committed atrocities in Makeni and its environs," says Davies. "Some of those young boys and youths were urged to rape women who could pass as their mothers, aunts, or elder sisters."[126]

Despite these experiences, in their pursuit of peace the women were willing to play a pivotal role in the re-integration of these child ex-combatants. Davies notes: "If the peace so far achieved is to prove meaningful and sustainable then society has to take up its responsibility of caring for its children."[127] As individuals and through collective action, women in communities are leading efforts to reintegrate women and girl ex-combatants. "The women argued that if those children were left uncared for now that peace has been achieved they would easily revert to their old ways," says Davies. "They argued that left abandoned these child ex-combatants would have nothing positive to do and or think, and will prove a threat to the fragile peace now in existence."[128]

Fifty-five percent of the study population indicated that women in the community had played a significant role in their reintegration. This is noteworthy as it was higher than their responses for being assisted by traditional healers (14 percent), traditional leaders (20 percent), international aid workers (32 percent), health workers (51 percent), and on par with religious leaders and social workers, many of whom are women.[129] Interviewees noted that women in the community provided them with helpful guidance, shared meager resources, and, perhaps most importantly, helped to facilitate skills training and education by providing childcare, clothes, or food. The basic assistance given in the form of childcare was critical in enabling many ex-combatants to enter skills training programs.

At the Community Level

As staff of NGOs working to reintegrate combatants, women contributed to building peace throughout the country at the grassroots level. For example, Esther A.,[130] a reintegration and HIV/AIDS program officer with a local NGO that works with child ex-combatants and war-affected children, was captured by the RUF along with three of her siblings. She watched as her siblings, all university graduates, were killed. She narrowly escaped.

> *After all that has happened to me, I still want to work with these children. Really the past is not easy, you cannot force people to tell their stories. I share my story with the children. I share my losses. They see this reality that they, the RUF, were the ones who took my beloved people, and yet I am here helping them. You can forgive, but you can never forget.*[131]

Esther's colleague, Ramatu S.[132] was trained as a teacher before joining an NGO as a psychosocial supervisor for child combatants. In addition to her full workdays with children and adolescents and caring for her own two children, Ramatu has taken five girl mothers with their children and two foster children, all former members of fighting forces, into her home so they have a place to live and recover.[133]

With regard to women's collective action, the Luawa Skills Training Center (LSTC) in Kailahun, the Women's Progressive Movement (WPM) in Freetown, and Caritas-Makeni have been innovative in their efforts in the Makeni area. Founded by six women, LSTC now has 120 members. It serves as a reintegration program and assists women abductees, ex-combatants, and victims in their efforts at independent living. The organization offers tailoring and garra tie-dying classes. Once women learn the skills and sell their products, they are required to give some of their earnings back to the organization.

WPM was founded in 1998. Its mission is to find abducted children, provide financial and medical assistance, and help women become independent. When the parents of abducted children cannot be found or their relatives shun them, members of WPM adopt them. Today, nearly every member has taken on at least one child and in many cases, several.

Affiliated with the Catholic Church, locally based NGO Caritas-Makeni operates in central Sierra Leone with a staff comprised mostly of nuns and female social workers. In a country with a 60 percent Muslim population this organization has been effective in reaching beyond Catholic communities. In their programs in the Districts of Port Loko, Tonkolili, and Bombali, it has instituted programs that allow for girl mothers to bring their children to skills training or to care for them while their mothers attend school. They provide a room and mat for the child to sleep on and food for the mother and child during the day. This contributes to higher retention rates in the programs and helps prevent their involvement in illicit activities such as prostitution, which is on the rise.[134] Caritas-Makeni also offers a program on alternative income generation for those who have entered the sex trade and reproductive health and safe sex education.

At the National Level

Women in international and national NGOs are also working with young women and girls to incorporate them into their skills training programs.[135] National women's organizations such as the Progressive Women's Association (PROWA) and the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE) are among the groups running skills training centers, which include education for basic literacy. With branches across Africa, FAWE established its Sierra Leone chapter in 1995 during the war. It is now a national women's organization with branches throughout the country. It offers a range of training programs to girl and women ex-combatants including tailoring, carpentry, tie dying, and masonry. FAWE has rebuilt schools and community centers that were destroyed and in some areas, has constructed and opened schools for girls. Some of its programs cater to girl mothers and other vulnerable girl populations with the aim of increasing literacy and education.[136] FAWE is the only organization to accept pregnant girls into the classroom.[137]

In March 1999 FAWE began the Rape Victims Program. Their projects include radio programming, visits with school children, counseling, and referrals to team doctors. Female survivors who became pregnant were given pre- and post-natal care by the organization. FAWE has partnered with over 30 ministerial and government agencies, UN agencies, international and local NGOs to carry out their work.[138]

PROWA is operating in the Kono District, an area that has been heavily impacted by the war and where, at the time of publication, few international NGOs were active. PROWA was one of the few organizations in the area to offer skills training to female ex-combatants. Additionally, it is one of the few organizations that encourages and allows pregnant girls to participate in their programs. Since Kono was the last area to disarm and an RUF stronghold, many girls who recently came out of the bush are in Kono and in need of assistance, thus increasing the importance of the efforts of this women's group.

The UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) has focused its support for women in Sierra Leone at various levels, working with other UN agencies, with national ministries, and with community-level official and non-government organizations to ensure gender-sensitive policies. In particular, UNIFEM has worked to ensure that special attention is given in the Truth and Reconciliation process to crimes against women, and that the needs and concerns of female survivors are addressed. In addition, the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender, and Children's Affairs, due in part to the advocacy efforts and technical support of UNIFEM, recently received government approval and funding for a gender directorate. The ministry works with UN agencies and international and local NGOs to provide accelerated education and skills training for ex-combatant children.[139]

UNICEF, in partnership with the Sierra Leone government, and local and international NGOs, has developed model programs for encouraging the schooling and reintegration of former child combatants. To summarize, communities that receive ex-combatant children (who benefited from DDR and elect to attend school) into the education system are "rewarded" by receiving books, supplies, and sports equipment. Schools and communities receive materials based on the number of ex-combatants they accept. Thus, ex-combatants are not perceived as "benefiting" from violent behavior in the fighting forces; instead all children in the school benefit by having their peers return. At the same time, accelerated schooling is offered for older child ex-combatants who have missed school years due to the war.[140] In partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), UNICEF has developed targeted programs for young mothers, combining childcare and food with vocational training and basic literacy skills. There is also a focus on training women in non-traditional skills such as welding, carpentry, and the construction of houses.

These initiatives, led by individuals, communities, NGOs, and national mechanisms, and in some cases, supported by international aid, are relatively small and inexpensive compared to official DDR efforts. Yet their impact is notable: Over 65 percent of the study population said that women have reached out to help them and that they would be interested in joining a women's organization to assist others.

CONCLUSION: THE CENTRALITY OF GENDER PERSPECTIVES TO DDR

The presence, roles, and experiences of women and girls within the fighting forces in Sierra Leone are more complex than previously reported. This inaccurate assessment resulted in operational and programmatic errors on the part of the UN, multilateral organizations, international NGOs, donor governments, and the government of Sierra Leone. In short, the inadequate attention to women and girls, coupled with a lack of gender sensitivity regarding their particular circumstances and needs, had a detrimental impact on the DDR process as a whole. Bias in design and implementation of DDR programs resulted in the near exclusion of women and girls from DDR programs and benefits, with those within the SLA and the CDF particularly marginalized.

Disarmament and demobilization camps and procedures were constructed to attract large numbers of male fighters and did not give adequate attention to ensuring that the human rights of women and girls were protected and preserved. The efforts of child protection agencies operating in Sierra Leone are among the best to date. Still, due to biases within the DDR program, alternative approaches must be sought to address the needs and rights of the many excluded women and girls that potentially fall under the umbrella of war-affected children and youth.

A range of factors including inadequate funding resulted in limitations to reintegration and longer-term rehabilitation elements of the program. Yet the successful reintegration of ex-combatants is an essential component of national and human security, necessary to build sustainable peace.[141] Some international programs have recognized the need to address reintegration from the ex-combatants' and the community's perspectives. In addition, there is growing understanding that financial assistance alone is not sufficient for effective reintegration, that the needs and aspirations of ex-combatants and their families must be addressed, and that local support systems, psychosocial services, and other referral centers should be established to assist all ex-combatants in their efforts to return to a peaceful and productive lifestyle.[142]

But while these efforts are developing, it is critical to ensure that women and girls are fully integrated, and that there is greater understanding of the roles they played in the war.

By being over-classified as "dependents," the real experiences of women and girls were not acknowledged and they were precluded from receiving benefits provided to other combatants. This assumption—that women and girls were victims only, with no significant role in either the execution of war or the building of peace—is detrimental for their future and could adversely affect the country's recovery.

First, as observed during 2002, the exclusion of child and female combatants from official DDR processes can lead to increased levels of insecurity.[143] For in the same way that disaffected male youths and ex-fighters might lead rebellions and form militias, so can women and girls. In 2002, riots increased, particularly among former child and adolescent combatants, and ICCs were attacked.[144] Social workers reported that adolescent women and girls were sometimes the leaders of these protests. Without support or care from their former "partners" or "husbands," their own families, the community, or the state, many of the young women—particularly those with children born as a result of their captivity—resorted to civil unrest as a means of accessing basic goods for the survival of their children. For these young women and girls, the stakes are, in effect, greater than for some of the men and boys.[145]

Second, the exclusion of women and girls from official programs and assistance has significant social consequences including poverty, crime, and prostitution. Inevitably it also leads to an increase in HIV/AIDS. Moreover, the exclusion of single mothers means the exclusion of their children. Thus the emergence of another generation of disaffected marginalized youth is possible.

Third, despite the horrors they endured, the women and girls showed tremendous agency and initiative during their times in the forces. Within the confines of their environment they regained some control of their own lives by developing skills to ensure their survival and strategies to protect others. Yet when the DDR program was implemented, there was virtually no recognition of the multiple roles they played or skills they gained. Many have ambitions for education and independence. They feel tremendous responsibility for their offspring and aspire to give them better lives. But when they are treated as passive victims rather than as former combatants who played a sig-

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nificant role in the conflict, they are again stripped of opportunities and a sense of self-dignity. International human rights laws oblige national, and particularly international, actors to ensure that women are treated equal to men.

Finally, women have held leadership roles throughout Sierra Leone's history. During the war, despite the widespread violence, women were fundamental to the reorganization of civil society, mass mobilization for peace, and the eventual cessation of the war. Women's organizations such as the YWCA played central roles in the processes that led to the signing of the Lomé peace accord.

The YWCA of Sierra Leone openly encourages women to "unite and initiate programs for self sufficiency and take up leadership roles in our communities and country as a whole."[146] National organizations such as FAWE and PROWA are rebuilding schools and educating children including ex-combatants. Local community members and informal networks and groups support some of those who did not pass through DDR programs or receive benefits. Women, individually and collectively, are playing important roles in assisting in the material, social, and cultural reintegration of former fighters.

Women's commitment to rehabilitating ex-combatants is a matter of basic survival. Unlike the international community, they have no "exit strategy." If the peace fails, violence returns to their doorsteps. But such groups are under tremendous pressure. They have meager resources. Their work is often undocumented and unacknowledged in official processes, and they receive limited support from the international community and donor governments. In a region that continues to be plagued with instability, recognizing the key role that women and women's organizations play and providing adequate resources to support them, is a cost-effective and essential ingredient for ensuring sustainable reintegration and ultimately, peace.

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APPENDIX 1: METHODOLOGY

Data Collection: Interviews

Mazurana and Carlson designed the study and served as the primary researchers. They conducted fieldwork in Sierra Leone in August and September 2002. A structured survey with 50 women and girls formerly in the fighting forces was used for gathering data. Mazurana and Carlson also interviewed over 60 community, traditional, and religious leaders, parents of abducted girls and boys, and social and health workers who interact with the girls. The researchers interviewed the female ex-combatants in cooperation with NGO staff, social workers, and/or psychologists. Study participants were familiar with those serving as interpreters. In advance of the interviews, researchers explained the study to their translators and discussed the kinds of questions they might ask study participants. Most other interviews, such as with NGO staff and UN officials, occurred in English.

Prior to beginning interviews, the researchers and/or translator described the study to participants, including the study sponsorship, the purpose of the study, and why the individual was asked to participate. The researchers then explained the procedure of the interview, including that interview data and their identities would remain anonymous; participants were told that they could refrain from answering any question if they were uncomfortable, and they could end the interview at any time with no fear of penalty to themselves. No inducements were offered to the respondents prior to interviews that might have influenced their willingness to participate.

Mazurana designed the survey, consulting with a biometrician about issues of sample size and the precision with which she could estimate percentages. She then obtained reviews from two practitioners before finalizing the design. A survey using quota sampling was used to gather quantitative data.

Quota sampling was chosen because it was not possible for the researchers to do random sampling under the research conditions in Sierra Leone, due to challenges including locating mobile populations, concerns regarding anonymity, poor communication and transportation conditions, as well as security risks throughout the country. While quota samples are biased, they can do a good job of reflecting the population parameters of interest. The researcher then documents the bias.

Data Management and Analysis

All surveys were recorded on the survey form with additional details offered on any of the questions recorded in field notes. Mazurana managed all field notes and surveys, identifying the main categorical components within each, including age at entry into force, force name, entry routes, roles, training with the force, experiences of human rights violations within force, exit routes, disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration. Mazurana then compared categorical data first by force and then comparatively among the forces. When possible, both force and country findings were compared to previously published data, including historical facts, to assist in checks for accuracy. For analyses of surveys, working in MicroSoft Excel©, Mazurana designed the database, Carlson entered the data, and Mazurana quality checked the data. Mazurana then used histograms and descriptive statistics for initial analysis.

Precision of Estimates

For Mazurana and Carlson's study population in Sierra Leone (N=50) the precision of estimates is + 0.14 for 10,000 females within the fighting forces (95 percent confidence interval for a single population proportion) and + 0.2 for a population of 529 girls who went through disarmament and for a population of 506 girls that went through official demobilization conducted via ICCs.[147]

Bias

Although every effort was made to ensure that the study population reflected an accurate quota sample, the broader group of women and girls from which the study population was chosen was itself biased in several ways. First, the group from which the study population was chosen consisted only of women and girls who came or were taken to NGOs for assistance. In some cases, the girls had not come forward but were identified for NGOs by community leaders as having served in the fighting forces. Although girls who had not participated in

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official programs for child combatants (such as DDR or ICCs) were surveyed, the study population was in some way known to the NGOs they worked with. Thus, women and girls and that NGO staff did not know, or could not locate, were not included. For example, on some occasions, NGO workers were unable to locate girls they were responsible for; some had left the area, and/or had gone "unnoticed" for over six months.

Second, since the girls could be located, it can be assumed that they were having positive experiences in the various NGO programs. Third, the study population is positively biased towards female ex-combatants from the former rebel RUF, and negatively biased towards those within the SLA and the various CDF. This is because girls within the RUF were privileged with entry into programs. As this finding came to light, more focused attention was given to the girls and women who had been associated with the CDF.

At the time of interview, the mean and median age of the girls and young women was 18, with a range from 10 to 35 years of age. The study population came from a variety of ethnic groups, Temne (42 percent), Mende (23 percent), Kono (13 percent), Fuler (10 percent), Limba (8 percent), Kru (2 percent), and Soso (2 percent). The majority (94 percent) came from Sierra Leone, the rest came from Guinea (4 percent) and Liberia (2 percent). At the time of their entrance into the force their mean age was 13 and the median was 12, with a range of 2 to 32 years of age. Ninety-four percent reported abduction as their means of entry into a fighting force, while the remaining six percent reportedly "joined." Eighty-four percent of the study population entered a fighting force under 18 years of age, with 12 years of age both the mean and median age of entry into the force. The mean length of time in captivity was over three years and the median was three years, with some girls held for up to 10 years. The mean years of schooling was over two years and the median was zero, with a range from no schooling to nine years of school. Ninety percent had only received primary schooling, with 58 percent only completing primary one (first grade). Thirty percent of the study population was married or served as a common-law wife, 24 percent had one child, and 8 percent had two or more children. Thirty percent had become pregnant during their time in the fighting force. The largest percentage of girls (58 percent) named the northern province as their home province, followed by the east (28 percent) and south provinces (12 percent) and the western area (zero percent). Twenty-four percent of the study population was outside of their original home province at the time of interview.

APPENDIX 2: LIST OF ACRONYMS

All People's Congress	APC
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council	AFRC
Civil Defense Forces	CDF
Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration	DDR
Economic Community of West African States	ECOWAS
Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group	ECOMOG
Executive Outcomes	EO
Forum of African Women Educationalists	FAWE
Interim Care Centers	ICCs
International Monetary Fund	IMF
National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration	NCDDR
National Patriotic Front of Liberia	NPFL
Nongovernmental organizations	NGOs
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees	UNHCR
Progressive Women's Association	PROWA
Revolutionary United Front	RUF
Sierra Leone People's Party	SLPP
Sierra Leone Army	SLA
Small Boys Unit	SBU
Small Girls Unit	SGU
Truth and Reconciliation Commission	TRC
United Nations Assistance Mission to Sierra Leone	UNAMSIL
United Nations Children's Fund	UNICEF
United Nations Development Fund for Women	UNIFEM
United Nations Observer Mission to Sierra Leone	UNOMSIL
Women Organized for a Morally Enlightened Nation	WOMEN
Young Women's Christian Association	YWCA

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16603

About Women Waging Peace

Women Waging Peace, a program of Hunt Alternatives Fund, advocates for the full participation of women in formal and informal peace processes around the world. Over 250 members of the "Waging" network, all demonstrated leaders with varied backgrounds, perspectives, and skills, bring a vast array of expertise to the peace-making process. They have met with over 1000 senior policy shapers to collaborate on fresh, workable solutions to long-standing conflicts.

About The Policy Commission

The Policy Commission is conducting a series of case studies to document women's contributions to peace processes across conflict areas worldwide. The studies focus on women's activities in conflict prevention, pre-negotiation and negotiation, and post-conflict reconstruction—including governance; disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration; and transitional justice and reconciliation. This body of work is pragmatic and operational, offering suggestions, guidelines, and models to encourage policymakers to include women and gender perspectives in their program designs.

Advisory Group to the Policy Commission

Hizkias Assefa
Professor of Conflict Studies
Conflict Transformation Graduate Program
Eastern Mennonite University;
Founder and Coordinator
African Peacebuilding and Reconciliation Network

Leon Fuerth
J.B. and Maurice C. Shapiro Professor
Elliott School of International Affairs
George Washington University

Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf
former Minister of Finance, Liberia;
Coauthor, UNIFEM's
Women, War, Peace: The Independent Experts' Assessment

Jane Holl Lute
Assistant-Secretary-General
Department of Peacekeeping Operations
United Nations

Rita Manchanda
Program Executive
South Asian Forum for Human Rights

Jane Mansbridge
Faculty Chair
Women and Public Policy Program
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Luz Méndez
President
Advisory Council
National Union of Guatemalan Women

Thandi Modise
Chairperson, Portfolio Committee on Defense
Parliament of South Africa

Olara Otunnu
Under-Secretary-General and
Special Representative for
Children and Armed Conflict
United Nations

John Ruggie
Evron and Jeane Kirkpatrick
Professor of International Affairs
John F. Kennedy School of Government
Harvard University

Nancy Soderberg
Vice President
International Crisis Group

77. Minutes dated 23 January 1998 of meeting of AFRC Supreme Council held on 9 December, 1997

00008196

AFRC - SECRETARIAT

Minutes of Meeting held on the 9th December, 1997

Ref: SG/AFRC/02

23rd January, 1998

See Distribution:

Present:

1.	HON.	ABU SANKOH	-	PLO I
2.	"	TAMBA ALEX BRIMA	-	PLO II
3.	CAPT	SAJ MUSA	-	CSOS
4.	LT-COL	ISSAC H SESAY		
5.	COL	ISSAC MOREGO		
6.	COL	MIKE LAMIN		
7.	MAJ	MORRIES KANOU		
8.	MR	GEORGE ADAMS		
9.	MR	MOSES D KABIA	-	CSO-AFRC
10.	MR	BRIMA KAMARA		
11.	WOII	SAMUEL KARGBO		
12.	HON	SB KHANU (55)		
13.	HON.	TAMBA GBORIE		
14.	COL	AK SESAY	-	Secretary

INTRODUCTION

ACTION

1. The Chairman allowed Hon. Gborie to explain to members the events that led to a scuffle that he had with some security men manning the Chairman's gate. He was advised to maintain his status as Honourable and avoid such awful confrontations.

2. The Chairman reassured members that the problem in the Armed Forces will soon be over, and alerted all members to remain security conscious. He called on Colonel Issac to ensure that he brings in more of his men to Freetown in readiness for any eventuality.

3. On the question of sanctions, he urged members to work assiduously in the interest of the people. He noted that sanctions are biting and so modalities are being worked out to bring in humanitarian assistance and medicine to help our people who have been needlessly made to suffer.

4. The Chairman cautioned members to be very careful in the manner they entertain themselves as it is likely to give wrong signals to the public.

00008197

ACTION

5. He drew the attention to the PLO II to the misguided rumours about the rice business his wife is alleged to be involved in.

6. The Chairman elaborated on the problems the AFRC is faced with as the world is against us. However, he wondered by what miracle we keep getting on. He intimated members that he had been able to make contact with some businessmen in Dakar to work on the modalities to bring in Rice and Petroleum products. He emphasised that council members can be helpful in identifying stores where rice and other commodities are stored and ask the police to take appropriate action. He asked the PLOs to organise the Honourables in consultation with the SOS Trade so that they can divide the City into Zones for effective monitoring.

7. Members discussed extensively on the possible method of solving the current political impasses, however, he made it clear to all that under the current situation the Army must not be allowed to go without rice.

8. On the question of the Hotels, the Chairman observed that most of the Hotels have been looted and considered the need to provided security to save the remaining items.

9. The Chairman observed with extreme concern that the route along which the power pylons pass, could possibly be used by the enemy and therefore advised that the Army takes appropriate action.

DECISION

10. It was decided that Security must be provided for the hotels to save the remaining items that have not been looted. SEC-GEN

11. It was decided that the army must survellance the route along which the pylon pass to avoid posible use by the enemy. SEC-GEN

A K Sesay
Col
Secretary General

Distribution:
All Council Members
Attorney General

78. Government Notice 272 (P.N. No.3 of 1997), Sierra Leone (SL) Gazette No.69

The Sierra Leone Gazette

(Extraordinary)

Published by Authority

VOL. CXXVIII WEDNESDAY, 31ST DECEMBER, 1997 No. 69

FREETOWN. *31st December, 1997*

Govt. Notice No. 271

The following are published as supplement to this number of the Sierra Leone *Gazette Extraordinary*: —

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 15 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 16 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 17 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 18 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 19 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 20 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 21 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 22 OF 1997
The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT, SIERRA LEONE
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL
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To be purchased from the Government Bookshop, Wallace Johnson Street, Freetown. Price:—Le1,000.00 G.P. 0/570/97/1,200/12.97.

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 57 of 1997

The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Detention) Order, 1997 under the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997 (P.N. No. 3 of 1997).

ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL SECRETARIAT

Govt. Notice No. 272

ADMINISTRATION OF SIERRA LEONE (ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL) PROCLAMATION, 1997

(P.N. No. 3 of 1997)

P.N. No. 3 of 1997

Pursuant to sub-paragraph (2) of paragraph 1 of the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997, the following person is a member of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council with effect from the 25th day of May, 1997—

Staff-Sergeant Alex T. Brima ... ... *Member*

DATED this *31st* day of *December, 1997.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

Govt. Notice No. 273

ADMINISTRATION OF SIERRA LEONE (ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL) PROCLAMATION, 1997

(P.N. No. 3 of 1997)

P.N. No. 3 of 1997

Pursuant to sub-paragraph (2) of paragraph 1 of the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997, the following person is a member of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council with effect from the 18th day of October, 1997—

Haroun S. Sankoh ... ... *Member*

DATED this *31st* day of *December, 1997.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

Govt. Notice No. 274

ADMINISTRATION OF SIERRA LEONE (ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL) PROCLAMATION, 1997

(P.N. No. 3 of 1997)

P.N. No. 3 of 1997

Pursuant to sub-paragraph (2) of paragraph 1 of the Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997, the following persons are members of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council with effect from the 8th day of December, 1997—

Madam Kai Bangura ... ... *Member*
Mrs. Kadi Sawyerr ... ... *Member*

DATED this *31st* day of *December, 1997.*

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

79. Decrees 1, 5, and 7 of 1997. Dec 1 – SL Gazette No.41; Dec 5 – SL Gazette No.49; Dec 6 – SL Gazette No.63; Dec.7 – SL Gazette No.66

DECREE

Supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette Extraordinary Vol. CXXVIII, No. 41

dated 7th July, 1997

A.F.R.C. Decree No. 1

1997

Sierra Leone

The Bank of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Decree, 1997

Short title.

[16th June, 1997]

Date of commencement.

PURSUANT to paragraph 3 of the Proclamation entitled "Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997", published in the *Gazette* on the 28th day of May, 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council hereby makes and issues the following Decree:—

1. This Decree shall be deemed to have come into force on the 16th day of June, 1997.

Commencement.

00007662

16612

DECREE

Supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette Extraordinary Vol. CXXVIII, No. 49

dated 20th August, 1997

A.F.R.C. Decree No. 5 **1997**

Sierra Leone

The Imposition of Curfew Decree, 1997

Short title.

Being a Decree to make provision for the imposition of a Curfew.

[19th August, 1997] Date of commencement.

PURSUANT to paragraph 3 of the Proclamation entitled "Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997", published in the *Gazette* on the 28th day of May, 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council hereby makes and issues the following Decree:—

00007662A C.W.

16613

Commencement.

1. This Decree, except subsection (2) of Section 3, shall be deemed to have come into operation on the 19th day of August, 1997.

Power to impose curfew.

2. (1) The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council may, in the interest of public order or public safety, by Order impose a curfew throughout Sierra Leone or in any part thereof as shall be specified in such Order.

(2) While such Order is in force, no person shall be out of doors between the hours specified in the Order except under the authority of a written permit granted by the Inspector-General of Police or any officer deputed by him in that behalf.

Offence and penalty.

3. (1) Any person who contravenes any provision of an Order made pursuant to Section 2 commits an offence and may be detained by any member of the Armed Forces or the Police Force, who shall take that person immediately to the nearest police station.

(2) Any person convicted of an offence under subsection (1) shall be liable to a fine not exceeding thirty thousand leones or imprisonment for a term not exceeding one month, or to both such fine and imprisonment.

Operation of Order.

4. Every Order made pursuant to Section 2 shall come into operation upon publication in the *Gazette* or upon publication in such other manner as the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council may deem necessary for bringing such Order to the notice of all persons.

Persons deemed lawfully detained.

5. Any person detained pursuant to this Decree before its date of publication in the *Gazette* shall be deemed to have been held in lawful custody during the period of such detention.

MADE and ISSUED this *20th* day of *August, 1997.*

MAJOR JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT, SIERRA LEONE.
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.
GAZETTE EXTRAORDINARY No. 49 OF 20TH AUGUST, 1997.

NOW THIS WARRANT is to command you the aforesaid .....and any Police or Army personnel accompanying you as specified below to exercise and perform the powers and duties conferred upon you by virtue of the provisions of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Anti-Looting) Decree, 1997.

DATED the day of , 199

Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

MADE and ISSUED this *17th* day of *November, 1997.*

MAJOR JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT, SIERRA LEONE.
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.
GAZETTE NO. 63 OF 20TH NOVEMBER, 1997.

DECREE

Supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette Vol. CXXVIII, No. 66 dated 11th December, 1997

A.F.R.C. Decree No. 7 1997

Sierra Leone

The Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 (Amendment) Decree, 1997

Short title.

Being a Decree to amend the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 and to provide for other related matters.

[11th December, 1997] Date of commencement.

41991

PURSUANT to paragraph 3 of the Proclamation entitled "Administration of Sierra Leone (Armed Forces Revolutionary Council) Proclamation, 1997", published in the *Gazette* on the 28th day of May, 1997, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council hereby makes and issues the following Decree:—

Repeal and replacement of Section 156.

1. Section 156 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991 is hereby repealed and replaced by the following new Section:—

"Establishment of Police Council.

156. (1) There is hereby established a body to be known as The Police Council which shall consist of—

(i) the Chief Secretary of State;

(ii) the Secretary of State, Department of Internal Affairs;

(iii) the Inspector-General of Police;

(iv) the Deputy Inspector-General of Police;

(v) the Chairman of the Public Service Commission;

(vi) a Member of the Sierra Leone Bar Association who shall be a legal practitioner of not less than ten (10) years standing as a practising Barrister, and shall be nominated by that body and appointed by the Chairman, Armed Forces Revolutionary Council;

(vii) two other members appointed by the Chairman, Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, subject to the approval of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

(2) Every member of the Police Council shall, before assuming the function of his office, take and subscribe the oath as set out in the Third Schedule to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991.

(3) The Permanent Secretary of the Department responsible for matters relating to the Police shall be Secretary to the Council."

Repeal and replacement of Section 167.

2. Section 167 of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 is hereby repealed and replaced by the following new Section:—

Establishment of Defence Council

167. (1) There is hereby established a body to be known as the Defence Council which shall consist of—

(i) the Chairman, Armed forces Revolutionary Council, who shall be Chairman;

(ii) the Chief Secretary of State;

(iii) the Under Secretary of State for Defence;

(iv) the Chief of Defence Staff;

(v) the Commanders of the Armed Forces (Army, Navy and Air Force) and their Deputies;

(vi) the Secretary of State, Internal Affairs;

(vii) two other persons as the Chairman, Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, shall from time to time appoint.

(2) Every member of the Defence Council shall, before assuming the function of his office, take and subscribe the oath as set out in the Third Schedule to the Constitution of Sierra Leone, 1991.

1997

(3) The Permanent Secretary of the Department of Defence shall be the Secretary to the Council."

MADE and ISSUED this *3rd* day of *December, 1997.*

MAJOR JOHNNY PAUL KOROMA
Chairman,
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT, SIERRA LEONE.
BY AUTHORITY OF THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL.
GAZETTE No. 66 OF 11TH DECEMBER, 1997.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Supplement to the Sierra Leone Gazette Vol. CXXVIII, No. 16
dated 27th February, 1997

PUBLIC NOTICE No. 1 OF 1997

Published 27th February, 1997

THE PORTS ACT, 1964
(No. 56 of 1964)

THE PORTS AUTHORITY (TARIFFS) REGULATIONS, 1997 Short title.

IN EXERCISE of the powers conferred upon it by sections 66 and 78 of the Ports Act, 1964, the Ports Authority with the approval of the Minister of Transport and Communications hereby makes the following Regulations—

[27th February, 1997] Date of commencement.

1. In these Regulations unless the context otherwise requires— Interpretation.

"berth" means a section of wharf, pier, jetty or quay or other fixed mooring facility at which a vessel can be moored. (In Freetown the berths on Queen Elizabeth II quay are given nominal numbers 1 to 6);

"commencement of time" means the period between 2400 hours on the day of receipt of export cargo and 2400 hours on the day of departure of the carrying vessel from the berth or port, in the case of imported cargo;

"free storage time" means the specified period of time during which cargo or cargo containers may remain on port property, subsequent to receipt by the port, free of any storage charges;

9/1997

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The Sierra Leone Gazette

(Extraordinary)

Published by Authority

VOL. CXXVIII — MONDAY, 7TH JULY, 1997 — No. 41

FREETOWN. *7th July, 1997.*

Govt. Notice No. 186

The following is published for general information as supplement to this number of the Sierra Leone *Gazette Extraordinary*:—

A.F.R.C. DECREE NO. 1 OF 1997

"The Bank of Sierra Leone (Amendment) Decree, 1997".

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16618

00007702



The Sierra Leone Gazette

(Extraordinary)

Published by Authority

VOL. CXXVIII — WEDNESDAY, 20TH AUGUST, 1997 — No. 49

FREETOWN. *20th August, 1997*

Govt. Notice No. 202

The following is published for general information as supplement to this number of the Sierra Leone *Gazette Extraordinary*: —

A.F.R.C. DECREE NO. 5 OF 1997.

"The Imposition of Curfew Decree, 1997" — Being a Decree to make provision for the imposition of a Curfew.

Govt. Notice No. 203

The following is published as supplement to this number of the Sierra Leone *Gazette Extraordinary*: —

PUBLIC NOTICE NO. 4 OF 1997.

The Imposition of Curfew Order, 1997 under the Imposition of Curfew Decree, 1997 (A.F.R.C. Decree No. 5 of 1997).

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY THE GOVERNMENT PRINTING DEPARTMENT, SIERRA LEONE
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To be purchased from the Government Bookshop, Wallace Johnson Street, Freetown. Price: — Le1,000.00. G.P. O/306 /97/1,200/8.97.

81. Record of Deaths 1-19 January 1999, Births and Deaths Registry, Freetown, Sierra Leone

DATA ~~FROM~~

BIRTHS AND DEATHS

The attached data is a copy of a data being prepared by the Births and deaths office received today, Friday 16th May, 2003, at about 1545 hrs. from the Deputy Registrar, Births and deaths. The original copy ~~was~~ is retained by the Registrar for certification and submission to OTP whenever required after completion.

FROM — Marie Lenyon (Investigator)

To — David Gboyor, Para legal

[signature]
16/5/03

5255

16620

No.	NAME OF DECEASED	AGE	SEX	CAUSE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	NAME OF INFORMANT AND ADDRESS. (1)
1	Ibrahim K. Bangura	40	M	Gun Shot injury	09-01-99	Issa Adam Conteh 22c Blackhall Road, Freetown
2	Danda Johnny Conteh	53	M	Severe Gun Shot wounds	09-01-99	Dr. J. D. Sandy Prisons Medical Service
3	Festina Davies	20	F	Gun Shot Wounds	08-01-99	Saidu Bangura, 5 Mountain Cnt
4	Patrick T. Gbaya-Kokoya	4	M	Gun Shot injury	06-01-99	David T. J. Gbaya-Kokoya 16, Savage St, F/T
5	Abdul Noah Sawaneh	56	M	Gun Shot wounds	21-01-99	Sylvanus Sawaneh - 3 Bright St Freetown.
6	Johannes M. Jones	84	M	Cerebral Haemorrhage	15-01-99	Delwyn C. Barber, 7F Hannesson St New England
7	Rev Isaac Mackwei	43	M	Gun Shot wounds	12-01-99	Joseph Ademu John - 2 Flogusta Farm
8	Euginia Ademu-John	36	F	Gun Shot wounds	12-01-99	Joseph Ademu John - 2 Flogusta Farm
9	Euphemia Ademu-John	34	F	Gun Shot wounds	12-01-99	Joseph Ademu John - 2 Flogusta Farm
10	Joseph George	39	M	Bomb blast	15-01-99	Annette Louis - 6, Kingsella St, F/T
11	Ola Griffiths-John	81	M	Gun Shot wounds	11-01-99	Harold Taylor - 2 Circular Rd
12	Warima Wadi Williams	47	M	Gun Shot injury	17-01-99	Susan Williams - 5, Doherty St, Murray Town
13	Sitta Kamara	Adt	M	Gun Shot wounds	08-01-99	Abibatu Kamara - 8H, Ascension Town.
14	Fatmata Silla	28	F	Bomb blast	15-01-99	Annette Louis - 6 Kingsella St.
15	Georgiana Orielly Campbell	74	F	Gun Shot injury	22-01-99	Anthony Robbin-Coker - 19 Lumley St
16	Isha Bangura	7	F	Gun Shot wounds; Haemorrhage	06-01-99	Dr. Kabba Koita -
17	Samuel F. Williams	74	M	Gun Shot injury	09-01-99	Alice Williams - 3, White St, B/Fields
18	Cyrus Konda Wright	32	M	Gun Shot wounds	12-01-99	Margaret Fatu
19	Ernest Arthur French	68	M	Gun Shot injury	14-01-99	Cecil French - 25 Dundas St F/T
20	Bernard Samuel Bowen	48	M	Gun Shot wounds	31-01-99	Nathaniel Bamie-Cole 4, Willoughby Lane

5256

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	NAME OF DECEASED	AGE	SEX	CAUSE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	NAME OF INFORMANT AND ADDRESS (2)
1	Jamestina Bangura	7	F	Gun shot injury	22-01-99	Nana Sembu - 33 Davies St; Kissy
2	Mustapha Kamara	52	M	Gun shot wounds; Haemorrhage	29-01-99	Abdul A. Bangura (Amir) - 14 William St.
23	John P.F. Cawray	53	M	Gun shot injury	22-01-99	Lahai A. Cawray - Kingtom Police BKS
24	Joseph Roy-Macauley	76	M	Gun shot wounds	31-01-99	Eric Macauley - 6, Kinsella St. F/T
25	Balogun A. Smith	55	M	Gun shot wounds	07-01-99	Aaron Smith - 5, Huggins St; F/T
26	Bill Kargbo	65	M	Gun shot injury	08-01-99	Canon E.F. Thomas - K4 Fourah Bay College
27	Alusine Balogun Kaccie	23	M	Gun shot injury	11-01-99	Mohamed L. Sillah - 13 Upper Bombay St
28	PC 1910 Ransford Bangura	35	M	Gun shot wounds	07-01-99	Georgia Pratt - 16 Allen St.
29	Amadu Kabba	30	M	Gun shot injury	07-01-99	Abdulai Saccoh - 16 Malamah Thomas St
30	Christian Sunny Boy Oluwole Cole	67	M	Gun shot injury	27-01-99	Georgiana A. Benedict - 29 Naimbana St
31	Alhaji Abu Bakarr Dumbuya	39	M	Gun shot injury	18-01-99	Bintu Dumbuya - 92B Kissy Rd; F; Tun
32	Prof. Mohamed Danyah	55	M	Gun shot injury	19-01-99	Moses D. Carew - 24B, Blackhall Rd; Kissy
33	Florence Danyah	56	F	Gun shot injury	19-01-99	Moses D. Carew - 24B, Blackhall Rd; Kissy
34	Onike Collier	73	F	Blast injury	29-01-99	Francis O.R. Collier - 6, Cardew St; F; Tun
35	Soba George	9	M	Gun shot	20-01-99	Julius Dixon - 1, Pine St; F; Tun
	Momoh Koroma	58	M	Gun shot injury	15-01-99	John Bangura - 38, Steward St. F/T
37	Mustapha Amin Khalil	50	M	Gun shot injury	20-01-99	Amin Khalil - 35 Kissy Bye Pass Rd; Kissy
38	Frank Albert Kongo	61	M	Gun shot injury	21-01-99	John Sesay - 21B, Kinsella Street; F/T
39	Alhaji Conteh	Adt	M	Gun shot wounds	06-01-99	Alhaji Conteh - 70 Lower Bombay St; F/T
40	Mohamed Savage	17	M	Gun shot injury	12-01-99	Abdul R. Savage - 132 Fourah Bay Rd.
41	Haja Rakietu Alghaley	78	F	Burns	13-01-99	Abdul R. Savage - 132 Fourah Bay Rd.
42	Sheriff Cole	68	M	Burns	19-01-99	Alhaji A.K. Cole - 8 New St; Cline Town
43	Samuel Sundima Ngegbo	Adt	M	Gun shot injury	07-01-99	Jonathan R. Solomon - 298 Bai Bureh Road
44	Mamei Tucker	17	F	Gun shot injury	06-01-99	Jonathan R. Solomon - 298 Bai Bureh Rd

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	NAME OF DECEASED	AGE	SEX	CAUSE OF DEATH	DATE OF DEATH	NAME OF INFORMANT AND ADDRESS
	Fatmata Sesay	15	F	Gun Shot	12-01-99	Simeon B.K.N. Kuyembeh (Uncle) 7, Metzger lane FIT
46	Desmond Davies	25	M	Gun Shot injury	06-01-99	John Davies (Father) 95, Pademba Rd
47	Alusine S. Kamara	24	M	Gun Shot injury	06-01-99	Ibrahim S. Turay (Nephew) 92B, Kissy Rd
48	SLP PC Grisana Karim	24	M	Gun Shot injury	08-01-99	Tiangay Karim (mother) Kingtom Police Bks
49	Sulaiman Sankoh	39	M	Gun Shot injury	22-01-99	Mohamed Salam (Nephew) 14D, Taylor St, W/Ton
50	Emmanuel Williams	52	M	Gun Shot injury	06-01-99	Joko Wyse (Informant) 38, Robert St
51	Joanna Squire	64	F	Gun Shot wounds	20-01-99	Peter Squire (Husband) 36, Newcastle St
52	Ophelia Squire	36	F	Gun Shot wounds	20-01-99	Peter Squire (Father) 36, Newcastle St.
53	SLP PC 2132 A. B. Conteh	28	M	Gun Shot	07-01-99	Saidu Conteh (Brother) 8B, Waterside Rd; W/Force
54	Leonard Walker	37	M	Gun Shot	15-01-99	G. Ola Dixon (Brother) 20, Cantonment Rd
55	Neneh Fadel Watfa	58	M	Gun Shot	14-01-99	Osman Kabba (Nephew) 23, Fourah Bay Rd.
56	Francis Bucknor	45	M	Gun Shot injuries	03-02-99	Brima Mansaray (Cousin) 147 Pademba Rd
57	Desmond Wilfred C. Pratt	41	M	Gun Shot wounds	11-01-99	Matilda Pratt (Wife) 4, William Street
58	Fatu Koroma	8	F	Gun Shot injury	07-01-99	Amadu G. Kamara (Cousin) 16 Skelton St.
59	Hassan Sesay	28	M	Gun Shot injuries	07-01-99	Amadu G. Kamara (Cousin) 16 Skelton St.
60	Kadie Noah	6	F	Gun Shot injuries	22-01-99	Rose-Marie M'boma (Sister) 28, Leicester Rd
	Magdalene Isata Mboma	35	F	Gun Shot injuries	22-01-99	Rose-Marie M'boma (Neice) 28 Leicester Rd
62	Dennis Jackson-Williams	72	M	Gun Shot injuries	06-01-99	Valentine Pratt (Nephew) 4, Rasmusson St.
63	Richard P. Robinson	47	M	Gun Shot	08-01-99	Edith Robinson (Cousin) 1, Fetter Lane
64	Sampha Conteh	20	M	Gun Shot	06-01-99	Alie B. Kargbo (Uncle) 12 Kennedy St.
65	Osman Ibrahim	68	M	Burns	21-01-99	Idris Cole (Brother) 19 William St, Kissy
66	Gbassay Conteh	21	M	Burns	09-01-99	Idris Cole (Informant) 19 William St, Kissy
67	Alie Margai	67	M	Gun Shot wounds	09-01-99	[illegible] J.K. Conteh (Uncle) 9, Alfred [illegible]
68	Jainab Bundu-Conteh	24	F	Gun Shot injuries	22-01-99	

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No	Name of Deceased	Age	Sex	Cause of Death	Date of Death	Name and Address of Informant
69	Sahtigie Shellay Kargbo	26	M	Gun Shot Wounds	24/01/99	Ibrahim N. Kamara (Cousin) 4 First St; F/T
70	Christian F. Roberts	53	M	Gun Shot Injury	20/01/99	Sarah C. Roberts (Wife) 3, Ranger St; F/T
71	Harold Albert Roberts	29	M	Gun Shot Wounds	20/01/99	Sarah C. Robert (Mother) 3, Ranger St; F/T
72	S.I. Balla Musa Koroma	43	M	Gun Shot Injury	15/01/99	S.I. Koroma (Brother) Police HQ
73	Alhaji Idris Abass Kargbo	40	M	Gun Shot Injury	01/99	Mohamed S.H. Kamara (Cousin) 4, Sibthorpe St
74	Victor S.J. Walker	27	M	Gun Shot Injuries	10/01/99	Josephine Walker (Mother) 2c Old Railway line B/Fm
75	Tunde J. Langley	65	M	Gun Shot Injuries	23/01/99	Abioseh Langley (Brother) 8, Bowen St; Wellington
76	Margarett Sheriff	50	F	Gun Shot Wounds	25/01/99	Emilia John (Daughter) 2, Sanders St.
77	Winifred A. Atiba-Davies	56	F	Gun Shot Wounds	09/01/99	Sarian Thomas (Sister) 31, Upper Brook St; F/T
78	Abdula Saw	34	M	Gun Shot Injuries	10/01/99	Amadu Kamara (Informant) 7, Block Lane F/T
79	Osman Sesay	45	M	Gun Shot Wounds	14/01/99	Abdul Bangura (Cousin) 14 William St
80	Mohamed Charm	21	M	Gun Shot Injuries	15/01/99	Rebecca Charm (Wife) 33A, Grassfield, Lumley
	Momodu Samura	10mths	M	Gun Shot	07/01/99	Samuel Samura (Uncle) 37, Grassfield, Lumley.
82	Sahr Nasiru Gborie	48	M	Gun Shot Injuries	14/01/99	Biango Jhonny Abdul (Cousin) 43 William St; F/T
83	Tamba Amadu Biango	15	M	Gun Shot Injuries	14/01/99	Biango Jhonny Abdul (Brother) 43 William St; F/T
84	Solomon T. Johnny	32	M	Gun Shot Injuries	20/01/99	Francis Gbondo (Brother) 11, Sackville St; F/T
85	Francis Boyle	18	M	Gun Shot Injuries	11/02/99	Ebenezer Boyle (Father) 8, Savage Squire F/T
86	Hawa Nabieu	67	F	Butchered by rebels	27/01/99	Joseph Gabisi (Brother) 37, New Castle St; Kissy
87	Sheriff H. Sesay	43	M	Gun Shot Injuries	07/01/99	Bassie T.G. Sesay (Brother) 14 Johnson St; Aberdeen
88	Mary Kamara	41	F	G Shot Injuries	23/01/99	Hannah, Eba (Daughter) 15, Hennesson St; F; Twn.

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	NAME OF DECEASED	AGE	SEX	DATE OF DEATH	CAUSE OF DEATH	NEXT OF KIN ADDRESS & RELATIONSHIP
29	Daniel Cornelius Palmer	63	M	21/01/99	Gun shot injuries	Muzdupeh Davies (sister) 15th Rose St; Kissy
30	Allieu Bockarie Kamara	45	m	20/01/99	Gun shot injuries	Abdul Kamara (Step-father) 9, Hurton Lane FT
31	Maddy Y. Kebe	34	M	09/01/99	Gun shot injuries	Alimamy Banda Kebe( ) 8 Joseph VIC Centre, Lunsar
32	Regina Williams	18	f	06/01/99	Gun shot injuries	Ann-Marie Vincent (mother) 35, Percival St, FT
33	Moses A. Adu	43	M	23/01/99	Gun shot injuries	Wuyata Adu (wife) 53, Pademba Rd. FT
34	Moses Fayia Stevens	31	M	21/01/99	Gun shot	Fallah A. Brains (Co-worker) 61, Hill Station Terrace, W/Ton
35	Gamphs Kanu Jeany	60	m	21/01/99	Gun shot	Franklyn Kanu Jeany (Son) 61, Thunder Hill, Kissy
36	SLP Sgt 1853 John Tokowah	35	M	07/01/99	Gun shot injuries	James Tokowah (Brother) 6F, George Brook FT
37	Daphne J.A. Kai Kai	35	F	07/01/99	Gun shot wounds	Patrick Kai Kai, 20A Mount Aureol Terrace
38	Mano Lappia Kamara	78	M	22/01/99	Gun Shot.	Rev. Darlington Morrison (Son) 58 Liverpool St; FT
39	Amelia Cole	77	F	01/02/99	Butchered by rebels	Rev. Darlington Morrison (Son) 38, Liverpool St; FT
	Ramatu Gibrill	55	F	22/01/99	Gun Shot	Hamara O.B. Giboll (Brother) 7a main Rd; Wilton
	Phelix S. Mansaray	35	M	23/01/99	Gun Shot	John Kamara (Brother) 9, Kamanda Farm, Kissy
	Fatmata Toronka	43	F	07/01/99	Gun shot	Foday Gibson Toronka (Son) 86 H Congo valley, Tengbeh Town
103	Theodore B. Max-Peters	70	M	06/01/99	Gun Shot	Elizabeth Max-Peters (wife) 45, Main Rd, Allen Town
104	Samuel A. Kargbo	55	M	06/01/99	Gun Shot	Isatu Kargbo (Wife) 9, Lawson Lane, FT
105	Alaghie Davis Kabba		M	19/01/99	Gun Shot	Abdul A. Kabba (Son) 55, Adolphus St; Kissy
106	Mohamed Salieu Kamara	21	m	12/01/99	Gun Shot injuries	Alpha Kamara (Father) 35, Newsite, Mayiba
107	Aruna Mano Dumbuya	38	M	21/01/99	Gun Shot	Amadu Dumbuya (Father) 3, Ecowas St; Freetown
108	Mohamed Alieu	Bmths	m	22/01/99		Amadu Dumbuya (Grandfather) 3, Ecowas St; FT

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110	Momoh A Mansaray	39	m	Bomb Blast	11-01-99	Unisa Mansaray (Brother) 15, Ambrose St. F/T
111	Mariama Jalloh	22	f	Gun shot injury	08-01-99	Abu Bakarr Kamara (Informant) 21, Kanpa Wata, Goplo
112	Aklama Turay	31	f	Gun shot wounds	09-01-99	Abu Kesay (Cousin) Davies St, Kissy
113	Elizabeth Lakoh	46	f	Gun shot wounds	07-01-99	Alhaji J.A Lakoh ( ) 6, Keh Turay Lane
114	Abu Bakarr Deen	20	m	Gun shot	09-01-99	Abdul Karim Deen (Father) 6, Dan St, Fi Town
115	Peter Macauley	33	m	Gun shot	06-01-99	Mary Pratt (mother) 24, Guard St, F/T
116	Talibi Kamara	13	m	Gun shot	11/01/99	Abdulai Fillah
117	Kai Charles	23	m	Gun shot	06/01/99	Chief Tambo Feika Kanpalie (uncle) 19 Regent St
118	Tambo Simbo Kanpah	13	m	Gun shot	06/01/99	Chief Tambo Feika Kanpalie ( ) 19 Regent St
119	Marie Mansaray	45	f	Gun shot	08/01/99	Abu Bakar Kanpuru (Son) 1 East Brook Lane
120	Mohamed Kamara	50	m	Bomb blast	12/01/99	Alie I Turay (Uncle) 10, Emmanuel St, F/T
121	Dauda Kanpuru	28	m	Gun shot	12/01/99	Alie I Turay (Brother) 10, Emmanuel St, F/T
	Allhapie Kamara	19	m	Gun shot	12/01/99	Alie I. Turay (Brother) 10, Emmanuel St
2	Yeabu Kanpuru	28	f	Gun shot	04/02/99	Alie I. Turay (Brother) 10, Emmanuel St
	Usman B. Koroma	32	m	Gun shot	17/01/99	Mohamed Amadu Koroma (Brother) 40 Byrne Lane, Wilkinson Rd
	George D. Taylor	50	m	Gun shot	01/02/99	Velma Laura Thomas (Sister) K10, Fourah Bay College
	Issa Kamara	65	m	Gun shot	22/01/99	Mohamed Sheray Sofanah (Nephew) 2B, City Rd, Wellington
126	Nathaniel Pratt	30	m	Gun shot	08/01/99	Augustus B. Pratt (father) 13, Water Street, Cotton Tree
127	Sidi Y Bonis	22	m	Gun shot	09/01/99	Mike Salia Massaquoi (uncle) 14, Koroma St, Calaba Town
128	Joseph Y. Conteh	27	m	Gun shot	10/01/99	Borbor Augustine Conteh (Father) 20, Fly St, F/T
129	George D. Browne	53	m	G. shot	21/01/99	Festus Joe N. Thompson (Stephew) 67 Wellington St
130	Kata Thomas					Mohamed Musa (Father) 26 Morgan Street, Fi Town

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1	Massa Bassie	48	M	Gun shot	21-01-99	Mamie Batu Foray (Sister) 64 A, Freetown Rd
2	James N. O. Osho-Williams	66	M	Gun shot	11-01-99	Victor Osho-Williams (Son) 96, Dundas St, Ft
3	Mohamed H. Kargbo	19	M	Gun shot	9-01-99	Alpha Kargbo (Father) 1, Robert St, Ft
4	Alusine Sankoh	47	M	Gun shot	21-01-99	Esther Sankoh (wife) 51, Davies St.
5	Desmond Parsons	37	M	Gun shot	06-01-99	Isatu Parsons (wife) 9, Nicol Lane, Kissy
6	Kassim Tejan Savage	47	M	Gun shot	12-01-99	Tejan Kassim Savage
7	David Carew	24	M	Gun shot	23-01-99	Ingham B. Carew (Father) 10 D Smart Lane
8	Ernest M. Coker	25	M	Gun shot	07-01-99	Josephine Coker (Mother) 1, Pademba Rd Ft
9	Abu Bakarr Kamara	44	M	Gun shot	25/01/99	Osman Turay (Cousin) 6 S, Sumaila Twn Ft
10	Morlai Turay	43	M	Gun shot	19-01-99	Salamatu Turay (wife) 48 W, Blackhall Rd, Ft
11	Belmon Lansana Tarawally	50	M	Gun shot	23-01-99	Paul Musa Tarawally (Brother) 4, John St, Kissy
	Ibrahim Turay	15	M	Gun shot	19-01-99	Salamatu Turay (mother) 48 W Blackhall Rd.
	Imaru Koroma	23	M	Gun shot	22-01-99	Salamatu Turay (Sister) 48 W, Blackhall Rd
14	Vetia Roberts	21	F	Gun shot injuries	07-01-99	Mary Barnes (Mother) 23, Benjamin Lane
15	Hannah Sesay	12	F	Gun shot injuries	07-01-99	Mary Barnes (Mother) 23, Benjamin Lane
16	Richard Koroma	15	M	Gun shot	09-01-99	?
17	Alpha Osman Barrie	40	M	Gun shot	06-01-99	Amadu Tarawallie (Informant) 25, Regent St.
18	Ruben Amachie Adotey	14	M	Blast injuries	11-01-99	?
19	Emmanuel Lansana	45	M	Gun shot	14-01-99	David M. Charles – 21 C Pyke St, Ft

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82. SLBS Radio Broadcast, 25 May 1997, 18:42 GMT

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SLBS TRANSCRIPTIONS

SLBS Radio, 25 May, 18:42 GMT

Good evening fellow citizens. This is (?Captain) [name indistinct], spokesman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, AFRC. The government of Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabbah has been overthrown. In view of the above, the following should be adhered to with immediate effect and all government ministers should report at Defense Headquarters. All foreign troops with particular [words indistinct] should return to base and await further instructions. All borders -- land, air, and sea -- are closed until further notice. All commanders at the front must be in full control of their men [passage indistinct].

83. SLBS Radio Broadcast, 25 May 1997, 19:30 GMT

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SLBS TRANSCRIPTIONS

SLBS Radio, 25 May, 19:30 GMT

Good evening fellow citizens. This is Captain (Paul Thomas), spokesman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, AFRC. The government of Alhaji Ahmed Tejan Kabbah has been overthrown. In view of the above, the following should be adhered to with immediate effect, and all government ministers should report at Defense Headquarters. All foreign troops with particular reference to [words indistinct] should return to base and await further instructions. All borders -- land, air, and sea -- are closed until further notice. All commanders at the front must be in full control of their men. The Special Security Division, SSD, are required to take orders only from Defense Headquarters, and for operations of all security forces, it is a must.

All senior military and police officers from the rank of lieutenant colonel to brigadier, and superintendent to inspector general should report at Defense Headquarters immediately.

All local defense forces, kamajors, and [word indistinct] are disbanded with immediate effect and should surrender their weapons to the nearest military headquarters.

Looting: This is an offense, and offenders will be shot on sight. I repeat. Looting: This is an offense, and offenders will be shot on sight.

A dusk-to-dawn curfew has been imposed except officers and men on essential duty with specific identification.

We are, therefore, appealing to the international community to show restraint, and the designated head of state will brief them in due course.

Fellow citizens, no personal vendetta! The struggle is for us all! I thank you.

85. SLBS Radio Broadcast, 29 May 15:26 GMT. [Proclamation issued by the Administration of Sierra Leone Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Proclamation 1997, in Freetown on 28 May 1997], page 1 and 2.

SLBS TRANSCRIPTIONS

SLBS Radio, 29 May, 15:26 GMT

[Proclamation issued by the Administration of Sierra Leone Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Proclamation 1997, in Freetown on 28 May 1997] Proclamation to make provisions for the interim administration of the Republic of Sierra Leone by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council [AFRC] -- its establishment, [words indistinct] and for other matters connected therewith.

Whereas it is a fundamental duty of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone to secure and maintain the safety of the state and public order, and whereas the action and utterances of the (?ousted government), political parties and their leaders have created conditions which can lead to tribal faction, bloodshed, and tribal warfare, and whereas it is necessary and expedient to avert immediately that trend of affairs and for provisions to be made for the maintenance of law and order in Sierra Leone, [words indistinct] administration by law of the state of Sierra Leone, [words indistinct]; We, the members of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone, in cooperation with the people of Sierra Leone, in order to ensure the maintenance of law and order, domestic tranquility, the enjoyment of the blessings of liberty, unity, and democracy for the people of Sierra Leone and all persons living therein, we hereby proclaim as follows:

Constitution of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council -- There is hereby established a council to be known as the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council carrying out [words indistinct]. The council shall be (?chaired) by a chairman and a deputy chairman and other members of the [words indistinct] and secretary general shall be appointed by the council and shall uphold the functions [words indistinct] the council will determine. The council [words indistinct] provisions of the Constitution [words indistinct] 1991. All the provisions of the Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 which came into operation on 30 October (?1996) which are inconsistent or in conflict with this proclamation or any law made thereafter shall be deemed to have been suspended as from 25 May 1997. Without [words indistinct] the generality of [words indistinct] the permanent [words indistinct] under the said constitution [words indistinct] 25 May 1997 is dissolved. All political parties are dissolved and membership in political parties is prohibited with effect from 25 May 1997.

(?Decree To Empower Council To Make Law) [subhead]

1. The Council shall have power as [words indistinct] and in the national interest to make laws which shall be known as decrees.

2. Any decree made by the Council may be amended, repealed or [words indistinct] made by the Council.

3. Every decree made by the Council shall be deemed to be an act as defined in Section III of the Interpretation Act, 1971.

4. Any decree made by the Council shall be signed by the chairman or, in the

absence of the chairman, by the deputy chairman of the Council.

5. Subject to any decree made by the Council, all or enactments in force in Sierra Leone immediately [words indistinct] 25 May 1997 shall continue in force, provided that any enactment in force in Sierra Leone immediately before the 25 May 1997, which is inconsistent or in conflict with any provisions of this proclamation or any [words indistinct] made thereunder shall be deemed to have been suspended as from the 25 May 1997.

Publication and (?implementation) of Decree: Every decree made by the Council will be published in the gazette and shall come into operation on the date of such publication or on such other date as may be provided in or under the decree or in any public enactment.

6. Subject to any decree made by the Council, the public service of Sierra Leone as it existed immediately before the 25 May 1997 shall continue in existence, and any person holding or acting in any office in the public service immediately before that date shall continue in office subject to any decree or other enactments in force after that date.

7. Subject to any decree made by the Council, any reference to president, vice president, minister or prime minister in the constitution of Sierra Leone which came into operation on 1 October 1991 or in any enactment, continues in existence by virtue of this proclamation, shall, on and after 25 May 1997, be considered as a reference to the Council or such authority as the Council may by order appoint. [words indistinct] the Council may, while it considers it necessary to appoint [words indistinct] make an order against any person [words indistinct] made thereunder shall be deemed to have been suspended as from the 25 May 1997. Any order made under [words indistinct] directing that any person be detained shall not be [words indistinct] without prejudice to the generality of [words indistinct] accordingly.

Power to Amend or Repeal the Proclamation: The Council shall have power to amend, repeal, or suspend this proclamation or [words indistinct]. This proclamation shall [words indistinct] operation on the 25 May 1997.

Made in Freetown on 28 May 1997.
Major Johnny Paul Koroma [word indistinct] on behalf of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone.

86. SLBS Radio Broadcast, 30 May 19:22 GMT. ["Special Message" by the Revolutionary United Front Spokesman Lieutenant David Collins], page 1.

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SLBS TRANSCRIPTIONS

SLBS Radio, 30 May, 19:22 GMT

["Special Message" by Revolutionary United Front Spokesman Lieutenant David Collins] Fellow citizens of this our beloved Sierra Leone, brothers and sisters in arms, and serious concerned citizens, it gives me great pleasure at this time when history is being made within the borders of Sierra Leone in the liberation of our people in this our blessed country. you will agree with me that the Sierra Leone Army is in a deplorable condition according to existing standards; that is, molestation, intimidation, harassment, tribalism, state protectionism and the main sources of these conditions.

The Army needs a complete revolution so as to defend and protect the sovereignty of the state. The RUF/SL [Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone] has called for your cooperation to accomplish this desired mission. You all will agree with me that the rights of the Sierra Leonean people have been denied them by a handful of criminals who have been using their position to boast and perpetrate their selfish aims--the politicians in this regard. The RUF has come to give the power to the people through pure democracy and it is the voice of the people.

Since 1991, we have been fighting against the APC [All People's Congress], the NPRC [National Provisional Ruling Council], and the SLPP [Sierra Leone People's Party] governments respectively. These various governments did not understand the RUF calls. But today, the AFRC government has [words indistinct] and understandably invited the RUF/SL for a concerted effort. We are determined to bring complete safety to the people of this country with our sincerity, [word indistinct], and dedication of purpose.

We have come with 5,000 armed men to safeguard and to give security to this nation. As you all know, this is an internal affair. We need no foreign intervention. We need no more war in this our blessed country. This country of liberty, unity, justice, and freedom. We ask the international community to bear with us to put things into correct shape. As you all know, the RUF, under the leadership of Corporal Saybannah Sankoh, is struggling very hard to bring good sanity, good living conditions and other aspects to the Sierra Leonean people. But the politicians have been sabotaging these efforts. We welcome the present government in Sierra Leone. We embrace them so that we can bring total peace to this country.

Any intervention into the internal affairs of this our country, the RUF will never leave no stone unturned but to put things into correct shape. On behalf of the RUF and the whole country and especially our leader, Foday Saybannah Sankoh, we are here to bring peace and sanity to Sierra Leone. We are urging all citizens to be law-abiding, to embrace this revolution so that we can build a society worth living in.

RUF, as you have heard from our leader, Foday Saybannah Sankoh, now we are on march with the AFRC, and we are now the People's Army. No more RUF, but the People's Army, to bring peace and security to the people of this our country. I thank you all.

88. Address by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, Head of State and Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, Freetown, 1 June 1997, pages 1-3.

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Address by Major Johnny Paul Koroma
Head of State and Chairman of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
Freetown - 1 June 1997

My fellow countrymen, friendly nations and members of the international community. The big question at this moment on the lips of everybody inside and outside the country is what prompted us to oust former President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and his government from power.

Before dwelling on the main above-mentioned theme of my address, I want first and foremost on behalf of my colleagues avail myself o this opportunity to solemnly extend our sincere and heartfelt sympathy and expression of regret for the unfortunate incidents that occurred during the takeover operation in which some of our brothers and sisters, as well as foreign nationals, lost their lives and property.

In this regard, the AFRC, as you have been informed through the media, has taken appropriate measures to prevent the recurrence of such unfortunate incidents. My address this evening is not only directed to fellow Sierra Leoneans. It is also meant to enlighten concerned non-nationals and the international community about the welfare of our beloved country, on the main motive of our action.

I have already emphasized in my last two addresses that our action was not motivated by selfish [as heard] and greed for power. The main objective of the AFRC to seize power is to restore lasting peace and political stability in this country, which has been ravaged and continues to be shattered by a senseless war.

On this vital issue of restoring peace and political stability in our country, I would like on behalf of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the entire nation to pay a special and fitting tribute to the Ivorian head of state, His Excellency President Henri Konan Bedie, with special mention to his Foreign Minister Amara Essy, the government and people of La Cote d'Ivorie for the very important role they played in getting Corporal Foday Saybana Sankoh, the charismatic leader of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone around the negotiating table, that resulted to the signing of the Abuja peace accord last November. But for the relentless efforts of the authorities of this great African country, in the true state of African solidarity, we will not even have been thinking about...[pauses] talking about inviting the RUF leader to command his fighters to (?cease) hostilities and to join the revolution with the sole objective of bringing lasting peace to our beloved country.

The AFRC would also like to seize this opportunity to thank friendly sister countries in the subregion, namely the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the Republic of Guinea, and Ghana for their effective and invaluable role in averting irreparable destruction of our fatherland at the height of the rebel war. The AFRC would also like to behalf of the entire nation to thank the international community and NGO's [words indistinct] to the United Nations Organization, the Commonwealth, the OAU, the International Alliance, the International Community of the World Force for the very important roles they played toward the success of the Abidjan peace process.

Fellow countrymen, friendly nations, members of the international community, I would now like to dwell on the main theme of my address this evening. The main reason that prompted us to take the [word indistinct] and timely decision to overthrow the former regime and to extend an invitation to RUF Cpl. Foday Sankoh and the RUF to operate with us.

It is true the wind of democracy has blown and continues to blow around the world. Patriotic and national Sierra Leoneans, old and young, put in everything, sometimes at the expense of their lives, during the transition process to democratic rule with the objective of being in tune with progressive nations around the globe and restoring lasting peace and political stability in Sierra Leone. After five years of military governance, our country was returned to democratic rule with great pains, but due to lack of political ingenuity and sincere commitment on the part of former President Tejan Kabbah and some of his lieutenants, the hard-won democracy was being gradually jeopardized by the flagrant antidemocratic and unpatriotic practices of the lat regime. The unanimous vote in favor of the new president by SLPP parliamentarians and the appointment of ruling party stalwarts to most of the key positions of the state's administrative machinery is a palpable truth of such tendencies.

In an exclusive interview granted to the West African magazine of March this year in Washington, OAU Secretary General Dr. Ahmed Salim Ahmed (sic.) rightly opined, and quote, "Progressive African leadership must now operate, above all, on the clear knowledge that the question of peace, security, and political stability of their respective continent is of primordial importance. Without peace, security, and political stability, it is not possible that any country will achieve the type of democratic and economic growth, the type of social development that we aspire to," quote. [as heard]

This is why my colleagues and I on the AFRC have decided to focus on the question of resolving our internal conflicts. The war that has shattered our once flourishing economy, with much more of [word indistinct] efforts and reality. [words indistinct] this priority of priorities--the return of lasting peace and political stability in our country--is achieved, we will then focus on the whole question of democratization and greater respect for human rights. Military issues, the question of economic and social development, the question of security and stability, and the issue of democratization and human rights are related. If we are to achieve the objective the AFRC will set for itself and address the new challenges that face our country [sentence as heard]. The AFRC will endeavor to address each of these goals and their [word indistinct] within the present context of the social and political situation prevailing in the country.

Our brother Cpl. Foday Saybana Sankoh is quick to understand this when he emphatically stated in his radio message to the nation from Abuja that a democracy without peace, security, and political stability is baseless. The remarkable economic growth and social development achieved by our sister and friendly Republic of La Cote d'Ivoire is due to the legendary peace, security, and political stability in that country. Foreign investors and economic operators will only pour in their money into countries that will guarantee their personal security and that of their investment.

Fellow countrymen, you will surely agree with me that the unseated president and some of his round pegs in square holes collaborators dragged their feet in implementing the priority clauses stipulated in the Abuja peace accord related to developments of mutual forces to carry out encampment and disarming of combatants. The Commission of the Consolidation of Peace, PCP, was never given the attention needed to carry out its functions.

Fellow countrymen, I will not dwell much on the negative [word indistinct], but let me touch on some of its saddest aspects. The death toll could be estimated at about 15,000 troops. Damaged property could easily amount to several billions of leones. The economy has been completely crippled. Thousands of families which once enjoyed the warmth of living together have been separated. Innocent citizens, mainly comprised of agricultural workers in rural areas, were mutilated and maimed, rendering them physically handicapped and useless throughout the rest of

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their lives. The brain drain in the country during the war reached unprecedented proportions with its negative effects on the standard of education in our university and other institutions of higher learning. Children in their thousands have become homeless, orphans, and street-beggars. Persons traumatized by the atrocities of the war have become mentally unbalanced. Fellow countrymen, the negative spoils of the war cannot be fully exhausted in this address.

Nationalistic and patriotic Sierra Leoneans as well as well-meaning non-nationals and the international community will now understand why the AFRC deem it at this point in time to drive away the enemies of this nation and to call upon Cpl. Foday Sankoh and the RUF to join the revolution so as to bring about lasting peace and to arrest the unmerited and unwarranted sufferings of our people.

With the return of lasting peace and political stability in this country, Sierra Leoneans will regain their lost personality and integrity, but more especially our shattered economy [words indistinct] foreign investment. Our country will once more regain its rightly place among the progressive nations of the world.

My fellow countrymen, we are undergoing a very crucial stage in the history of our country. Our destiny and that of generations yet unborn is in our hands. Shakespeare rightly put, quote, "There is a tide in the affairs of men which, taken on the tide (sic.) leads on to fortune, omitted all their voyage is bound in shallow waters," unquote.

We should not leave the fate of this only country that we have to be determined by other people for their own personal aggrandizement. The Lord Almighty, our creator, loves this country. He has made it possible for us to know our enemies at the right time. The Biblical saying "God's time is the best" should be an eye opener for us. Prayers said in our numerous churches and mosques on Sundays and Fridays throughout the national territory for the return of lasting peace to our beloved country have not gone in vain. My fellow countrymen, our priority of priorities today is peace. Peace is an inseparable factor for human development. We have been longing for it for the past six years. Thanks to God, it is here. The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and true patriots of this country are therefore solemnly appealing to all Sierra Leoneans, irrespective of their ethnic grouping, creed, social standing, and political affiliation, within and outside our national territory to join the God-inspired revolution for the ultimate salvation of our beloved fatherland.

I will end my address by declaring three days fasting and prayers throughout the country, from Sunday, 1 to Tuesday 3 June 1997. United We Stand, Divided We fall. I thank you very much.

89. AFRC Press Release, 3 January 1998

AFRC press releases are written and distributed by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council.

AFRC PRESS RELEASE

3 January 1998

The following is a press release from the Under-Secretary of State for Defence, Colonel A.B.Y. Kamara.

The Government of Sierra Leone under the leadership of Lieutenant-Colonel John-Paul Koroma would like to thank all of our gallant soldiers for strictly obeying orders which requested all personnel of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces to refrain from firing shots on December 31st in their usual bid to welcome in the New Year. The government is proud of all our gallant soldiers who, understanding the reasons behind this order, strictly abided by them. No jubilating soldier fired any shot in any city or town through-out the whole of Sierra Leone.

Under the leadership of the former Head of State, Mr Tejan Kabbah, ten (10) people died as a result of firing on December 31st 1996 and several more were seriously wounded and hospitalised.

The government however expresses its regret, anger and shock at the involvement of some senior government personnel in the looting of the Iranian embassy at Wilkinson Road, Freetown, on December 31st 1997.

Based on the report from the committee set up by His Excellency, Lt-Colonel John-Paul Koroma, the Under-Secretary of State, Defence, Colonel A.B.Y. Kamara has taken the following disciplinary measures:

The following People's Revolutionary Leaders and State Monitors have been sacked from the Supreme Council of State, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council and the armed forces with immediate effect:

1. People's Revolutionary Leader Hassan Bangura.
2. People's Revolutionary Leader Foday Kallon.
3. People's Revolutionary Leader Brima Kamara.
4. People's Revolutionary Leader w/o II Mohamed Kallon.
5. People's Revolutionary Leader Alfred Brown (People's Army)

All government property and looted items have been recovered from these sacked individuals and have been handed over to civil police.

6. People's Revolutionary Leader Tamba Gborie has been reduced in rank from sergeant to lance-corporal and he has been sacked from the Supreme Council and the A.F.R.C. government with immediate effect. All government vehicles have been removed from him except for one utility vehicle which he would be using

for errands. All security personnel attached to Tamba Gborie have been recalled to defence headquarters except for two personal bodyguards. L/Cpl Tamba Gborie is on a very stiff probation.

7. Lt-Colonel Issa Sesay [People's Army] will lose three months salary and will be dealt with severely if he embarks on any further anti-revolutionary inclination.

The government looks on these acts of looting at the Iranian Embassy as a deliberate act of sabotage and the above corrective measures are to act as a deterrent to any other personnel or civilian embarking on looting.

Western Area Security Personnel [WASP] will henceforth guard the Iranian Embassy. Army engineers will do all necessary assessment of the damage to the Embassy and immediate repairs have already been embarked on.

The Department of Foreign Affairs has issued a letter of apology to the Iranian government yesterday.

All civilians who were involved in the looting of the Embassy, should with immediate effect return all looted food and other looted items to the police or be prepared to face the full penalty of the law.

Signed

Colonel A.B.Y. Kamara
Under-Secretary of State, Defence
Freetown,
Sierra Leone

Joint Communiqué, Meeting between the Special Representative of the UN Secretary General to Sierra Leone and the Delegation of the Revolutionary United Front, Abidjan, 19-21 February 1999.
Exhibit No.57 from the original Prosecution Proposed Exhibit List, filed on 26 April 2004

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MEETING BETWEEN THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO SIERRA LEONE AND THE DELEGATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT ABIDJAN, 19-21 FEBRUARY 1999

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General to Sierra Leone, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, accompanied by the UNOMSIL Deputy Chief Military Observer, Col. David Chepkwony and Political Affairs Officer, Mr. Modem Lawson-Betum, and the Legal Representative of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Mr. Omrie Michael Golley, and the RUF Senior Military Adviser, Gen. Ibrahima Bah, met on 19-21 February 1999 at the HOTEL IVOIRE in Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) to review the situation in Sierra Leone, including the holding of dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) and the RUF pursuant to the offer made by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on 7 February 1999.

2. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation also discussed the need for the observance of human rights and international humanitarian laws, and for addressing the serious humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone, and taking practical steps to speed up the convening of the internal RUF consultations and dialogue between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone, including: i) The RUF commitment to peace; ii) The venue, format and duration of preliminary and subsequent substantive consultations; iii) The requirements for the declaration of a ceasefire; iv) The need to provide logistical assistance to RUF and to facilitate communication between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone and the ECOMOG High Command.

3. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation stressed the need to make every effort to end the suffering of the people of Sierra Leone and to vigorously and relentlessly pursue dialogue to achieve genuine and lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone. In this regard, the RUF Delegation welcomed the recent offer of dialogue by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and his renewed commitment to peace talks. The RUF Delegation also called on the United Nations to continue to provide the needed moral authority and support for the dialogue and the peace process.

I. COMMITMENT TO DIALOGUE AND THE PEACE PROCESS:

4. The RUF Delegation reiterated the firm commitment of its Movement to engage in a constructive and sincere dialogue with the Government of Sierra Leone, leading to sustainable peace and stability, in accordance with the aspirations of the Sierra Leonean people. In this connection, it stressed the crucial importance of creating a climate of sincerity, mutual respect and spirit of accommodation. It welcomed the GOSL's offer of dialogue on the understanding that: i) The legitimacy of the elected Government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was never questioned by

the RUF; ii) The RUF is not fighting against the innocent civilian population but against ECOMOG and CDF; iii) No preconditions should be set by either party, which would impede the start of dialogue.

5. The Special Representative conveyed the unswerving commitment of the Security Council and the UN Secretary General to supp ll efforts aimed at ensuring an early start of dialogue and setting a reasonable time frame for aceful resolution of the Sierra Leonean conflict.

II. VENUE, FORMAT A CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN FODAY SANKOY AND M

6. The Special Representative and the RUF for a meeting between Foday Sankoh and RUF members in order for the Fron the substantive dialogue with the Government. These internal consultations will give F the opportunity to be fully briefed and to undergo medical check-up.

7. The Special representative and the RUF Delegation also stressed that the internal RUF consultations should be held in a secure place to allow for effective and extensive discussions during a reasonable time period, and that the issue of venue and format for the internal consultations should be addressed in a spirit of mutual accommodation. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation further underlined that the issue of venue and format for the internal consultations should not delay the start of substantive dialogue.

8. The RUF Delegation said that while taking note of the proposals of venue made by the Government regarding the internal RUF consultations, it would make the following recommendations in order of preference, subject to final ratification: i) Ouagadougou (under the sponsorship of the Chairman of the Organization of African Unity, President Blaise Campaore of Burkina Faso); ii) Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire); iii) Lome (Togo as Chairman of ECOWAS). The Delegation expressed the hope that the necessary arrangements would be made to provide security, safe passage and transportation guarantees to enable Mr. Foday Sankoh and the RUF Delegation to travel to whatever venue would finally be agreed upon. It further expressed the wish that the United Nations would consider the possibility of assigning Military Observers to be involved in making the needed security arrangements.

9. The RUF Delegation stated that the RUF and the AFRC constituted a single unified structure.

10. The RUF Delegation also requested the United Nations to assist in: i) Facilitating the establishment of regular contacts between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone and the ECOMOG High Command; ii) Lifting the travel ban imposed by the Security Council on the

RUF/AFRC leaders to permit them to participate in the internal RUF consultations and the subsequent RUF/GOSL dialogue.

III. DECLARATION OF CEASEFIRE:

11. The RUF Delegation and the Special Representative recognized the importance of a ceasefire to facilitate dialogue. In this context, the RUF Delegation expressed the readiness of the RUF to consider a ceasefire with the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOMOG and the CDF at the beginning of the internal RUF consultations provided United Nations Military Observers were immediately deployed to monitor and verify strict compliance with the said ceasefire. However, it maintained that in the spirit of peace and reconciliation, Foday Sankoh should not be held in custody after the preliminary consultations as this would constitute a retrogade step in the dialogue process.

IV. RESPECT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS:

12. The Special Representative stressed the importance of the observance of human rights in accordance with international standards, as called for by the Security Council and the UN Secretary General, and urged all parties to the conflict to publicly make this commitment. The RUF Delegation agreed to make this commitment publicly and stated that the RUF will take punitive measures against any of its members who would violate human rights. In this context, the RUF Delegation stated that it condemned and will continue to condemn all human rights violations and atrocities including amputations, mutilations, maiming, rape etc.... perpetrated against the civilian population.

V. HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE TO THE CIVILIAN POPULATION:

13. The RUF Delegation and the Special Representative stressed the need to make every effort to facilitate the unhindered provision of humanitarian assistance to the needy population in all parts of Sierra Leone. In this regard, the RUF Delegation stated that the RUF will strictly respect the neutrality of humanitarian organizations and their staff, and will take the necessary practical steps to facilitate their operations including the designation of Senior Humanitarian Liaison Officers to liaise with these organizations and to ensure free access to the needy population in all areas of the country, including those under RUF control. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation stated that the humanitarian organizations should, in turn, observe the principle of neutrality in the conduct of their operations.

VI. FOLLOW-UP CONTACTS:

14. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation agreed to maintain regular contacts as a follow up to the outstanding issues discussed in the present communique.

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SIGNED FOR THE RUF:

Mr. Omrie Michael Golley
Legal Representative,
Revolutionary United Front

SIGNED FOR THE UNITED NATIONS

Mr. Francis G. Okelo
Special Representative of the Secretary
General to Sierra Leone

Gen. Ibrahima Bah
Senior Military Adviser,
Revolutionary United Front

WITNESSED BY
S.E.M. AMARA ESSY
FOREIGN MINISTER
REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Done at Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire), on 21 February 1999

16649

MEETING BETWEEN THE SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE OF THE UN SECRETARY GENERAL TO SIERRA LEONE AND THE DELEGATION OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UNITED FRONT

ABIDJAN, 19-21 FEBRUARY 1999

JOINT COMMUNIQUE

1. The Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary General to Sierra Leone, Mr. Francis G. Okelo, accompanies by the UNOMSIL Deputy Chief Military Observer, Col. David Chepkwony and Political Affairs Officer, Mr. Modem Lawson-Betum, and the Legal Representative of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), Mr. Omrie Michael Golley, and the RUF Senior Military Adviser, Gen. Ibrahim Bah, met on 19-21 February 1999 at the HOTEL IVOIRE in Abidjan (Cote d'Ivoire) to review the situation in Sierra Leone, including the holding of dialogue between the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) and the RUF pursuant to the offer made by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on 7 February 1999.

2. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation also discussed the need for the observance of human rights and international humanitarian laws, and for addressing the serious humanitarian crisis in Sierra Leone, and taking practical steps to speed up the convening of the internal RUF consultations and dialogue between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone, including: i) The RUF commitment to peace; ii) The venue, format and duration of preliminary and subsequent substantive consultations; iii) The

requirements for the declaration of a ceasefire; iv) The need to provide logistical assistance to RUF and to facilitate communication between the RUF and the Government of Sierra Leone and the ECOMOG High Command.

3. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation stressed the need to make every effort to end the suffering of the people of Sierra Leone and to vigorously and relentlessly pursue dialogue to achieve genuine and lasting peace and stability in Sierra Leone. In this regard, the RUF Delegation welcomed the recent offer of dialogue by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and his renewed commitment to peace talks. The RUF Delegation also called on the United Nations to continue to provide the needed moral authority and support for the dialogue and the peace process.

I. COMMITMENT TO DIALOGUE AND THE PEACE PROCESS

4. The RUF Delegation reiterated the firm commitment of its Movement to engage in a constructive and sincere dialogue with the Government of Sierra Leone, leading to sustainable peace and stability, in accordance with the aspirations of the Sierra Leonean people. In this connection, it stressed the crucial importance of creating a dialogue on the understanding that: i) The legitimacy of the elected Government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was never questioned by the RUF; ii) The RUF is not fighting against the innocent civilian population but against ECOMOG and CDF; iii) No preconditions should be set by either party, which would impede the start of dialogue.

5. The Special Representative conveyed the unswerving commitment of the Security Council and the UN Secretary General to support all efforts aimed at ensuring an early start of dialogue and setting a reasonable time frame for achieving peaceful resolution of the Sierra Leonean conflict.

II. VENUE, FORMAT AND DURATION OF THE CONSULTATIONS BETWEEN FODAY SANKOH AND MEMBERS OF RUF

6. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation stressed the need for a meeting between Foday Sankoh and RUF members in order for the Front to prepare itself for the substantive dialogue with the Government. These internal consultations will give Foday Sankoh the opportunity to be fully briefed and to undergo medical check-up.

7. The Special representative and the RUF Delegation also stressed that the internal RUF consultations should be held in a secure place to allow for effective and extensive discussions during a reasonable time period, and that the issue of venue and format for the internal consultations should be addressed in a spirit

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of mutual accommodation. The Special Representative and the RUF Delegation further underlined that the issue of venue and format for the internal consultations should not delay the start of substantive dialogue.

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16651

SIGNED FOR THE RUF:

Mr. Omrie Michael Golley
Legal Representative,
Revolutionary United Front

Gen. Ibrahima Bah
Senior Military Adviser,
Revolutionary United Front

Mr. Francis G. Okelo
Special Representative of the Secretary
General to Sierra Leone

WITNESSED BY
S.E.M. Amara ESSY
FOREIGN MINISTER
REPUBLIC OF CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Done at Abidjan Cote d'Ivoire, on 21 February 1999