THE SIERRA LEONE CONFLICT: LESSONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

BY

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DECLARATION

I hereby, declare that this work has been composed by me unaided and it has not been presented to other Institutions for an academic award. All sources of reference and information had been fully cited and acknowledged in accordance with the rules for the presentation of dissertation.

Major Umar Isah
Date:

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to Almighty Allah for giving me the will and power to compose this work, my late mother, for seeing me through the struggles in my educational career, and my family for giving me courage to push on.

CERTIFICATION

The thesis THE SIERRA LEONE CRISIS: LESSONS FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES BY Major Umar Isah Reg. No. MIAD/SOC.SCI/2000 – 2001 meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of International Affairs and Diplomacy of Ahmadu Bello University (A.B.U.), Zaria, is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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As could be seen from my notes and bibliography, I have benefited immensely from the works of other writers and I wish to acknowledge my indebtedness to them. I am still indebted to those I had the privilege to meet, especially the ECOMOG Veterans, during the course of this work.

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In spite of all assistance received in the course of this work, the views expressed are absolutely mine and nobody hold any responsibility for these views or flaws in the thesis.

ABSTRACT

This research is about the Sierra Leone crisis and the lessons emanating from the crisis with regard to developing countries. The work was set out to find out if everything went on the way it is supposed to be in the ECOMOG operations. Sierra Leone is a West African country and member of ECOWAS which got involved in internal mutiny by the RUF. Moreover, there were military coup d'etats that toppled democratically elected governments. When the rebels engaged in ignoble and condemnable acts, there were international outcries including the member-states of ECOWAS. It took the intervention of ECOMOG to restore the government of Alhaji Tejan Kabbah. This study found that the decision to introduce ECOMOG troops by members of ECOWAS gave rise to a number of lessons. These lessons could be very important for developing countries when faced with similar problems in future. For example, there was no national interest at heart before Nigeria decided to lead ECOMOG into Sierra Leone. Other lessons include lack of military training of Sierra Leone Army, lack of logistic backup to ECOMOG troops, lack of adequate and timely intelligence for lower level field commanders and a host of other lessons. The study used secondary data from various sources as well as conducted interview with some ECOMOG veterans from Nigerian contingents who served in Sierra Leone. On the basis of these findings, implications and recommendations were advanced to assist developing countries that may be involved in conflict or conflict resolutions in future.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Peacekeeping operations in Africa has over the years been carried out specifically by the UN. The Congo in 1960 and Somalia in 1993 are examples. Such UN operations have been criticized by many Third World Countries because the lacked one of the basic principles of peacekeeping, ie. maintaining neutrality in a conflict. In the Congo, for instance, the crisis became an arena for cold war politics. Responding to the accusation that the UN used peacekeeping to promote Western interests, Dr. Hanmaskjold, a former United Nations Secretary General (from Norway) declared that "it is not the Soviet Union or indeed any other big powers who need the UN for their protection, it is all the others, the organization is first of all their organization"[1].

This statement and similar encouragement by the UN, influence small and medium powers in the Third World, including Nigeria to participate in and support UN peacekeeping efforts even when they have disapproved particular turns of events or actions.

The UN has often used peacekeeping as a tool of management, of conflicts than regional organization do. However, with the lessening of the East-West tension, the restructuring of the international security system has created disruptions in the social and political order in many regions of

the world and led to a higher incidence of armed conflicts which needed the deployment of the UN peacekeeping forces to perform a variety of tasks that differ radically from the classical concepts of peacekeeping.

As will be discussed in chapter three, peacekeeping, as a concept, is recently moving from its classical or traditional outlook to a force that would actually enforce the decisions of the international community today. That is, from an interpositionary force deployed to separate warring factions from firing at each other to a force that will enforce an observation of agreements or decisions of the Security Council as employed in the Gulf and in former Yugoslavia. In addition, some peacekeeping missions are now engaged in political organizations of societies such as monitoring of elections and in providing effective cover for the provision of humanitarian assistance of victims of conflicts such as in Angola, Yugoslavia and Rwanda[2].

The UN came constantly under criticism for its inability in responding to conflicts occurring in many parts of Africa which needed the world body's attention. Africa appears to have declined in importance in the calculation the superpowers. For instance, the UN was slow in reacting to crises in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Rwanda. It acted Somalia only after being repeatedly accused of neglecting Africa while entrenching itself in Yugoslavia.

When the Sierra Leone war started thousands of people died and thousands others were turned into refugees. International organizations both in Sierra Leone and abroad made appeals to the UN to intervene. In the absence of UN intervention, ECOWAS Heads of States took the initiative to settle the dispute in accordance with the provision of section VIII of the UN Charter which recognizes the validity of regional arrangements and authority in matters relating to the security of their regions in as much as they operate within the purpose and principles of the United Nations[3].

Right from independence, Nigeria has always regarded Africa as the centerpiece of its foreign policy[4], even though from 1960 – 1966 the foreign policy was mere rhetoric because of the weak economic base but at the same time, its economic potential was recognized at that time.

After the civil war, which lasted from 1967 to 1970, the country emerged with a new perception about the international system. Nigeria learnt that the countries she once recognized as her friends were indeed her 'enemies' (certain African countries such as Benin Republic, Tanzania and Cote d'Ivoire gave dejour recognition to Biafra). Nigeria also learnt that, in the international system, there is no permanent friend or enemy but only permanent interests. With this in mind, the Nigerian government came out forcefully to pursue her foreign policy objectives in which the

security of the nation was uppermost. Nigeria thus realized that the security and friendship of her neighbours amount to the security of the nation.

Hence, from 1970 with the petrodollars rolling in, Nigeria set out to pursue her Afrocentric foreign policy through what she later referred to as her concentric foreign policy circles. The national economy and economic-interests is the epicenter of these circles and is extricably tied up with the security, stability, economic and social wellbeing of Nigeria's immediate neighbours. West Africa came second followed by individual countries and intergovernmental organizations in Africa and the rest of the world including the commitment to the principle of self-determination and human dignity[5] in all parts of the world.

Hence, Nigeria signed various bilateral agreements with most of her neighbours in the subregion as well as acted in a mediatory role in conflict situations arising from the subregion, such as between Burkina Faso and Mali, and the conflict between Libya and Chad. To this effect, Nigeria championed the cause in the setting up of ECOWAS in 1975 and later a maiden peacekeeping force in Chad in 1982, under the auspices of the Organization of African Unity. Though the operation did not effectively resolve the problem, it however set the basis for future peacekeeping

operation on the continent and demonstrated the political will of Africans to solve their own problems.

This inspiration was to later feature in 1990 during the 13th ECOWAS Summit at Banjul in which the Liberian crisis appeared on top of the agenda. Once again, Nigeria took the initiative to propose for the setting up of the ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee and later the establishment and deployment of ECOMOG to the war-torn Sierra Leone.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

This study will attempt to examine ECOMOG's role in the Sierra Leoneans crisis; and the view that the ECOWAS Monitoring Group was formed to enhance the peace, security and stability in the region.

The question of global peace and security has always been of immense concern to the various governments of the world and this has elicited so much commitment to achieve this feat. Regional organizations such as the ECOMOG have over the years, committed abundant human and material resources in controlling potential and violent conflicts or outright civil wars in various parts of the region – Liberia, Chad, Sierra Leone, etc., by way of peacekeeping operations on their effort to ensure peace and security the world over.

The question before us here is, what are the lessons learnt from the peacekeeping initiative in Sierra Leone?

Recent studies have revealed that within six years of ECOMOG operation, it has spent more than N480 billion for its upkeep, which is about $20 billion. This implies that about N70 billion or $3.2 billion is being spent annually on ECOMOG; but the UN is spending only N1 billion or $45.4 million yearly on over 13 peacekeeping operations around the globe[6]. Yet despite this astronomical figure, ECOMOG, which was established and expected to resolve peace and order in Sierra Leone within the shortest possible time, is yet to achieve this purpose, six years after its inception. The more it stays in Sierra Leone the more resources it engulfs of its donor countries, particularly that of Nigeria. In fact, such countries are getting wary with the unending fracas. Ghana has withdrawn a large number of its soldiers, Nigeria during the Interim Government of Ernest Shonekan, but this idea was abandoned when General Abacha came into power.

It is in the light of the above awful situation that present research is intended to unveil and analyze the origin, causes and lessons of the conflict and attempt to proffer some recommendations aimed at guiding developing countries involved in conflicts in the future. The aftermath of the research report will be useful for library research and serve as a useful handbook or information for students of International Relations, Politics,

Law, Sociology as well as Officials of Foreign Affairs and Diplomats generally.

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 **Aim of the Study**. The aim of the study is to bring out lessons learnt from ECOMOG operations in resolving the crisis/conflict in Sierra Leone with a view to making recommendations to guide developing countries involved in conflicts in the future.

1.3.2 **Objectives of the Study**. In order to achieve above stated aim, the following objectives are outlined to:

a. Examine the historical background of the Sierra Leonians

b. Analyze the origin, causes and effects of the conflict.

c. Review available literatures on peacekeeping operations across the globe.

d. Assess the involvement of the ECOMOG in the crisis.

e. Make recommendations to guide developing countries involved in conflicts in the future.

1.4 JUSTIFICATION OF THE STUDY

Over the years, countries and international organizations have been involved in the peaceful resolution of international conflicts. Accordingly, a substantial body of literature has emerged but United Nations-centric in nature. The role of regional organizations is under-researched and little

attention is accorded to domestic conflicts which are becoming more and more complex and increasingly alarming on the African continent. Secondly, where such literatures exist, they are not comprehensive enough, they are mostly available in seminar papers, magazines and other source of media information. There is therefore the need for a well-researched and documented up-to-date work on it.

Furthermore, most of the literature available on ECOMOG operation center on the political aspect of the operation, little or no attention was directed towards the economic impact or consequences of the operation on the Nigerian public sector. Nigeria's role in the conflict resolution was so much glorified as to render its leaders insensitive to the common demands of the people.

The quest to address the problems or discrepancies of and lessons learnt from ECOWAS peace initiative so that future peacekeeping operations would yield more positive result, not only in the subregion but also in Africa and other parts of the globe forms another basis of the research.

Taking into consideration recent developments in the international scene characterized by the fall of the communist bloc and the attempt by European countries to look more inward to themselves as envisaged by the Maastricht Treaty[7] – there is the need to address the misunderstanding of

the distinctive roles of peacekeepers and peace makers in the ECOMOG operations in order to improve the workings of the regional security framework as a way to improve our own situation.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research method was an exploratory one. This was done through the use of secondary data, library research, particularly seminar presentations, journals, newspapers and other sources of media information in addition to oral interviews with Nigerian ECOMOG veterans and a few Sierra Leone refugees. This is because the phenomenon in question is a recent issue and is still continuing.

1.6 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The horrors of the First World War in human history prompted many people to begin to nurse the noble vision for a world in which, through the processes of understanding, men and states will live together in peaceful coexistence[8].

This aspiration was the motive force behind the establishment by the Wright-Sisters of the Chair of International Relations at the University College of Wales in Aberwyth in 1919. To understand the peculiarity of other states is to reduce the potential for inappropriate policy output and consequently reduce the frequency and intensity of conflict and wars. There is also the increasing realization that the technology of

communication and indeed of war has led to the shrinking of the world and reduced it to what has been described in many circles as a "Global Village". The reduction in communication time and improvement in science and technology have enhanced the permeability of states to sophisticated weapons or weapons of mass destruction which would threaten world peace and security or even annihilate the entire human race as was experienced during the Second World War when the atomic bomb was dropped in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in 1945.

Writing on inter-state relations, F.S. Northege stated that no state is an island of its own, rather, each interact with others in the international political system, that political power is not centralized but is distributed equally among states. Such interaction centre on all aspects of human endeavour including economic, social, political, religious, cultural and military cooperation

According to Ngu (1990), the systems theory is important in the understanding of organizations (and of the world) because the theory itself is basically concerned with problems of relationships, of structure and of inter-dependence of objects.

The systems theory also reaffirms the efficacy of harmonious inter-state relations. Johnson 91963) writes that a system is an organized or

complex whole, an assemblage or combination of things or parts forming a unitary whole which functions together for an activity to be carried out.

The systems theory is concerned with developing a scientific framework for describing general relationships of the empirical world. Huse and Bouditch on the other hand, described a system as a series of interrelated and interdependent parts such that the interaction or interplay of any of the sub-system affects the whole.

The quest and rationale for global peace and security is further anchored on this maxim: if a room in a 4-bedroom bungalow is on fire, the house owner and his neighbours cannot do otherwise but to make effort to put out the fire because, peradventure the fire might spread to other parts of the building and its surroundings. Human society has become so interwoven that breach in peace anywhere threatens peace, everywhere.

The theoretical framework of this research is hinged on the premise that the world at large cannot be at peace when any of its component units is in crisis. The research views the world as a system while the component parts (states) are viewed as sub-systems. The system theory propounded by various writers affirms that the component units of a system must be in harmony if the entire system is to function

harmoniously. For there to be peace and security in the world, therefore, all its component units (countries) must be at peace.

This research therefore sets out to study and analyze the Sierra Leone crisis as a sub-system (of the world) and its implications for world peace and security. The conflict will be fully studied and analyzed based on this theoretical framework and proffer recommendations.

1.7 HYPOTHESES

The research study is designed to test and confirm the hypothesis that: ECOMOG peacekeeping operations in Sierra Leone is replete with lessons to developing countries.

1.8 SCOPE

The scope of this study is contribution of ECOMOG in restoring democratically elected government to power, while looking at the genesis of the crisis vis-à-vis an inward look on regional peace enforcement efforts. Moreover, this study mainly considered ECOMOG operations up to 1999 when the UN took over peacekeeping in Sierra Leone.

1.9 LIMITATIONS

As in any study or research, there is bound to be some limitations, the source of my data may not be as comprehensive enough or might be too sensitive. This is likely to reflect in the data collected. Moreover, ECOMOG troops are still in Sierra Leone, though under UN umbrella,

discuss on some issues that are guarded secret could then jeopardize the operations and put ECOMOG troops at risk. However, effort was being made to overcome these shortcomings.

NOTES

1. United Nations Security Council Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations' Emergency Force, S/11248, 1 April 1974, 15. (j).

2. Ibid

3. See Peace and World Orders Studies Transnational Academic Program, Institute of World Order, New York, 1981.

4. Gambari Ibrahim, From Collective Security to Preventive Diplomacy, Seminar on "Nigeria's Peacekeeping in Africa", Nigerian Institute of International Affairs, Lagos 1979.

5. Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States. A Publication of Nigerian Institute of International Affairs (NIIA), Lagos, 1982.

6. African Concord and the Financial Times of London, 27 August 1991 had reported that about $250 million to $500 million form the Gulf war oil windfall is spent on ECOMOG by the Nigerian Government.

7. Maastrict Treaty of European Economic Union, 1994.

8. S.M. Ngu, Motivation Theory and Workers' Compensation in Nigeria (unpublished) 1996, p.6.

CHAPTER TWO

2.0 BACKGROUND TO SIERRA LEONEAN CRISIS

2.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The name "Sierra da Leoa" was given to the Peninsula mountain around Freetown by a Portuguese explorer, Pedro de Cintra, in 1462. Sierra da Leoa means "Lion Muntains" because of the hills which look like lions when viewed from a distance. The name later changed to Sierra Leone with use. Sierra Leone is a small country on the West African coast with a total land mass of 73,326 square kilometers.

Sierra Leone lies between latitudes 7°N and 10°N of the Equator and longitudes 10°W and 13°W. From North to South, it is approximately 320kilometers and from East to West is approximately 290 kilometers. The country is divided into four political divisions – The Northern, Eastern, Southern and Peninsula provinces – and 12 districts. There are 18 major ethnic groups in the country which are divided into two broad language divisions - the Mande and West Atlantic. The Mande group comprises the languages of the Mende, Koranko, Kono, Mandingo, Loko, Vai, Sosoand Yalunka. The West Atlantic group includes the languages of Temne, Limba, Bullom, Sherbro, Fula, Kissi, Gola, Krim, Kru and Krio.

These ethnic groups are located in various regions of the country as follows: in the North there are seven major ethnic groups – Temne, Lamba, Koranko, Fula, Loko and Yalunka; in the South - Mende, Gola, Vai, Krim, Bullom and Sherbro; in the East – Kissi, Kono and scattered settlements of Mandingo; in the West and especially in the Freetown

Peninsula people of nearly all ethnic groups are found, but the largest groups are the Krio and Kru. The two major tribes are Mende (about 32 percent) and Temna (about 30 percent). The population of Sierra Leone is estimated to be about four million, others are Lebanese and Indian merchants who own wholesale and retail shops. The highest rainfall is recorded in the months f June to October, while the hottest period is between January and April where an average temperate of 27.5 degrees centigrade can be recorded. Major cash crops include cocoa, palm oil, coffee, ginger and groundnuts. Minerals produced are rutile in Mayomba and Bonthe Districts in the South; diamonds along Sewa river, in Kono and Kenema Districts in the East; and bauxite in Mayomba and Bo Districts. There are 5 percent Christians, 25 percent Muslims and 70 percent traditional beliefs[9].

As it is known today, the country came into being only in 1896[10]. Here, in 1787, British merchant philanthropists founded a colony for free slaves. Early in 1787, 290 black men, 41 black women, 70 white prostitutes, 6 white children, 38 officials and craftsmen with their famileis and one private passenger, set sail from England. They landed on the site in May 1787 and began the formation of modern Sierra Leone[11].

In 1808, this colony became a British territory. Gradually, British influence and control were extended over the land in the interior behind

the coastal colony. In 1896, a British Protectorate was declared over this land and it became part of Sierra Leone.

The political history of Sierra Leone has certain peculiar characteristics. The area which later became known as the protectorate of Sierra Leone was largely populated by African communities who had maintained a basic continuity of occupation and political sovereignty for a very long time in the small Sierra Leone peninsula where the British colony was planted in 1787. Its main inhabitants were various settler communities of African origin who, however, appeared to have few affinities with the hinterland peoples. This was mainly because the ancestors of most of these colony Africans had been brought from England, the Americans and other areas of West Africa. Thus, many looked for their relatives outside the geographical boundaries of Sierra Leone. The affluent regarded Britain as their home. These colony Africans later formed a new cultural group called Creole and their language, Krio. They became British subjects and were subsequently assimilated into British culture. The Protectorate people, on the other hand, became British protected persons. Greater attention was given to the development of the colony, whose inhabitants played critical role in British's colonial push in West Africa. For it was among the Creole that Western technological advance received its earliest expression in Black Africa. The

close alliance between the British and their Creole partners coupled with the superior educational and other faculties enjoyed by the latter gave them an initial edge over the protectorate people. It required four successive constitutions, beginning in 1951, to reach an agreement between the people of the colony and those of the protectorate. On the attainment of political independence in 1961, the colony was designated the Western Area. The indigenous peoples of both the Western Area and the provinces were for legal purposes henceforth called Sierra Leoneans[12].

Conflict and violence has been recurring features of political life in Sierra Leone for a long time. Prior to 1896 when the British declared a protectorate over the Sierra Leone hinterland, the region had been experiencing major conflicts. These conflicts have incorrectly been called tribal wars, but the protagonists in these wars were not tribes but individual rulers and their followers who were desirous to secure some commercial or territorial advantage over their neigjbours. It was not uncommon for chiefs of the same ethnic group to fight against each other. For instance, the two Caulker families (those at Bumpe in Rotifunk and those at Plantain Island in Shenge), who dominated politics in the Sherbro area in the 19th century, quarreled often for the acquisition of more territory, independence from one another and for wealth. Similarly, various Temne groups fought against each other for the control of some

strategic trading centres on the Rokel River. Mende warriors and chiefs also waged wars against their kith and kin for commercial reasons (Alie, 1990).

Two years after the protectorate proclamation, a mass rebellion, commonly called the Hut (House) Tax War, engulfed many areas in the protectorate. It was in many ways a war of liberation. The House Tax War was a direct consequence of British administrative and fiscal policies. The protectorate ordinances had severely curtailed the powers and authority of the local chiefs, who were now under the control of British district commissioners.

Moreover, the British stopped the slave trade, a factor which tended to upset the economy, and they even attempted to control the protectorate lands. The administrative units set up were another source of discontent; these had grouped people of different ethnic backgrounds together. One of the districts, Ronietta, for example, had three ethnic groupings – the Temne, Mende and Sherbro. The district commissioner's headquarters was at Kwelu in Mende country and the Temne people, for instance, resented taking their cases to Kwelu. Apart from the long distances involved, Kwelu was regarded as a foreign country. The imposition of a house tax of five shillings on the people of the protectorate for the maintenance of the colonial regime did not go well with the local

people. They therefore decided forcefully to resist the tax and other obnoxious policies when peaceful protests and petitions failed to achieve the desired results. The war was directed against the upper echelons of the colonial administration and its agents, including some chiefs (Fyfe, 1962). Some of the warriors directed their anger against white missionaries. Several missionaries were killed and their stations burnt. Many members of the paramilitary, the frontier Police Force, were also brutally murdered, largely because of their excesses. Despite early successes by the freedom fighters, they were eventually defeated by British colonial forces. The British victory had grave consequences for the political history of the country.

In their attempt to maintain law and order in the protectorate and forestall any future unrest, the British broke up larger political entities into small chiefdoms. This resulted in the creation of many petty chiefdoms in the early 20th century. Also, paramount chiefs who were perceived not to be in line were deposed. The powers of the chiefs were further eroded until they were reduced to the status of "colonial civil servants". Chiefs were made to realize that they held their positions at their colonial master's pleasure and not on any former traditional principle of acceptance by their people. This meant for all practical purposes that chiefs were now

required to promote the interests of their colonial masters, not those of their people.

The colonial administration also imposed the concept of 'Ruling Houses' on certain ethnic groups; for example, the Mende. The precolonial political organization of the Mende did not make provision for hereditary rule and even strangers could be appointed kings. The king was generally someone who manifested the greatest skill in leadership and there was no definite rule of succession to the kingship (Abraham, 1978). 'Ruling House' competition was to play a key role in fuelling conflicts in subsequent years, down to the present day.

One way in which the British tried to appease the people of the protectorate after the House Tax War was to open a notable school, the Bo School, in 1906 for the sons and nominees of chiefs. The school was meant to produce progressive chiefs who would uphold the indirect rule system. These future leaders of the people were to be given a cultural education and training in the duties of citizenship, and a sense of their obligations to the community. The Bo School experiment had two important implications for the political development of the country. First, the School sought to further polarize the protectorate people by emphasizing ethnic divisions and inculcating in the students a sense of ethnic pride. Put differently, a Temne student, for example, was to be

taught to feel that his land and people were superior to any other in Sierra Leone (Fyfe, 1964). Second, Bo School was founded barely eight years after the Hut Tax War when a lot of chiefs who had taken part in the rebellion were still not on the best of terms with the colonial administration. Such chiefs were afraid to send their children to the school for fear of reprisals. Consequently, they sent their wards or slaves who took the surnames of their masters. Upon graduation some of these young en later returned to their chiefdoms and claimed chieftaincy titles and many had the support of the colonial administration. This competition for power between the true rulers (most of whom were illiterate) and the usurpers (who were literate) was to be a major source of discontent and conflict in some chiefdoms[13].

After the end of World War I, political thinking in Whitehall centred on the perfecting of the indirect rule system and it was believed that 'progress and security' could be attained under this system. But as Hargreaves (1979) argues, native authorities, at their best, 'were like vintage cars – elaborate and dignified structures with little capacity for acceleration and strong tendencies to steer to the right'. Not much was expected from the chiefs. They were required to perform extractive functions such as settling customary disputes, recruiting labour for public works and tax collection (Kilson, 1966).

By the 1930s, however, certain socio-economic changes were taking place in the protectorate which necessitated a re-examination of the protectorate system of law and administration earlier established. These changes required, among other things, chiefs to perform 'regulatory' and 'distributive' functions. Relations between the chiefs and their subjects also needed re-examination. Town dwellers began to question the right of chiefs to demand customary labour and tributes. This caused some political tension which became a matter of concern to the colonial authorities. Cases of misuse of power by the chiefs were also becoming rampant (Peace, 1982).

Senior District Commissioner, J.S. Feuton noted in 1935 that:

> In the face of modern condition (education, effects of the mines, etc) it appears the native institutions of the chiefdoms are no longer secure … Native institutions are likely to be heavily attacked in the future. Increasing ease of travel and the attraction of the mines means the influx of strangers into the chiefdoms, strangers who know what is done elsewhere, who criticize and despise a weak native government, or one which tends to be reactionary or oppressive (Kilson, 1966).

Attempts at reforming the local government structures gave birth to the Native Administration System in 1937. Under this system, chiefs were to be paid a regular salary in place of the traditional dues they formerly collected. Most chiefs, however, felt the salaries paid to them were too small and consequently, many of them continued to demand tributes from their subjects (as late as the 1990s the monthly salary of a class 'A' paramount chief was less than US$30).

Certain chiefdoms were too small to constitute a viable native administration unit. Such chiefdoms were cajoled to amalgamate into larger ones. The misuse of power by the chiefs together with the amalgamation issue were to lead to serious conflicts and violence in many Sierra Leone chiefdoms both in the colonial and post-colonial periods. Some of these disturbances have been characterized as a 'form of rural radicalism', which in certain instances constituted a virtual peasant revolt against traditional rulers and authority; they were violent forms of populist opposition to specific features of chiefdom administration that proved unjust or unduly burdensome to the masses (Kilson, 1966). Walter Barrows (1971) regards rural violence not as a result of popular discontent, but as the expression of conflict between elites within the chiefdoms.

There was a high incidence of rural violence during the 1946-56 decade, and in the years after 1967. The colonial administration laid part of the blame for the breaches of peace on the arrogance of some chiefs. This is because although the more intelligent paramount chiefs and tribal authorities were adapting themselves to changes, there were still some who preferred the use of power to leadership and persuasion[14].

Sierra Leone government ministers and other policy makers also began to express grave concern over the question of lawlessness in the

provinces. They were of the view that the disturbances would seriously undermine the ability of Sierra Leoneans to govern themselves. In 1950, Chief Minister, Dr. Milton Margai, for instance, moved in the Protectorate Assembly that immediate steps must be taken to curb these disturbances. His move was supported by his colleagues including chiefs.

The worst conflict occurred in late 1956 in the provinces, when several young men rose up in arms. The disturbances were variously described as chiefdom rebellions or as chiefdom revolutions. Even the commission set up later to inquire into the disturbances came to the conclusion that the disturbances were popularly inspired, although local tax increases were the important factors that played a part in fomenting trouble in the provinces.

Two main factors, according to Roger Tangri (1976), combined to produce these violent events. First, there was the unpopularity of the chiefly hierarchy among the young men. In all the areas where violent eruptions occurred there was considerable discontent regarding the general misrule of the paramount chiefs and their supporters. Second, there was the factor of dynastic ambition. Almost every chiefdom of the 149 had at least two 'ruling' or crowning houses, and given the prerequisites and privileges of the office of the paramount chief, there had always been active competition among the rival groups. The leaders of

opposition 'ruling' houses were often frustrated in their attempts to gain access to the local decision-making bodies by conventional means. And given the ignorance of the British officials concerning the abuse of power by chiefdom rulers, and the absence of the means by which their rivals could exert influence on the colonial regime, the opposition leaders remained frustrated. These leaders resorted to the use of violence as their only means of expression.

Martin Kilson (1966) had concluded that 'ruling' house competition, amalgamation differences, ethnic antagonisms (these were manifested, for example, in Bumpe and Ribbi chiefdoms, Moyamba District), personal enmities and other conflicting interests, all involving men of influence, constituted the underlying causes of the various chiefdom conflicts of 1955 – 1956. These conflicts resulted in considerable loss of life and property. The colonial administration employed a great deal of force to put down the disturbances.

Colonial economic and social policies also seemed to foment trouble in Sierra Leone. One such policy was the building of railway. As early as 1872, a West Indian colonial civil servant had suggested the building of railway from Freetown to the Northern region where much produce was then obtained for the Freetown as well as overseas markets. But the idea did not gain much support. When, towards the end of the 19th century,

the colonial administration finally decided to build a railway, the line passed through the southern and eastern regions where exotic crops like cocoa and coffee and other export crops like oil palm were to be obtained. A branch railway line was later extended to the northern region. The railway line with its feeder roads had a major impact on the socio-economic development of the country.

The exploitation of important minerals like diamonds in southern and eastern Sierra Leone greatly facilitated the overall development of these regions, as did the activities of Christian missionaries who opened many schools in the south and east. Many northerners were not initially receptive to western education largely because of their adherence to Islam. During the colonial era, therefore, there was great disparity between the northern half of the country and the southern half and certain mischievous politicians were to later capitalize on these disparities to promote their own interests.

The political landscape of Sierra Leone since independence in 1961 has been one of conflicts in various forms and manifestations. As a multi-ethnic country, the seeds of disagreement that have the potential of degenerating into crisis and conflict have always been in existence. Policy makers and academics have in recent times started to engage themselves in the study of some of the incidents that have led to crisis situations in

Sierra Leone. The causes of these conflicts are numerous and they vary from those seemingly simple disagreements in clan meetings, especially in the rural communities, to confrontations between subjects and their traditional rulers, or at the micro and national level instances of outright challenge to the central government authorities over issues of policy, the conduct of government and national business, etc.

A look at the country today would make a cautious observer realize that Sierra Leone is indeed experiencing one of the most traumatic periods of statehood since independence.

2.2 THE ROLE OF THE POLITICIANS

Sierra Leone gained her independence on 27 April 1961 under the leadership of Sir Milton Margai who was the presidential candidate of Sierra Leone Peoples' Party (SLPP). Sir Milton had the zeal to build and develop his country but he fell sick and died under mysterious circumstances in 1963. Many Sierra Leoneans believed he was killed by his personal physician and political associate, Dr. John Karefa Smart who made spirited efforts to succeed him, but his efforts were thwarted by other political associates. Mr. Stephen Margai, the younger brother of Sir Milton Margai was later elected president to succeed his brother. The resultant political wrangles within the party later made the SLPP to loose the next election while the All People Congress (APC) led by Dr. Siaka

Stephens came to power. By 19 April 1971 Sierra Leone became a republic and Siaka Stephens became the executive president. On 24 June 1978 the APC Party became the only political party in Sierra Leone via an executive fiat. On 1st October 1985 Major General Joseph Momoh became the new president and Head of State. He was overwhelmingly returned by 99 percent of the 2.97 million voters on a new electoral register. The enthusiasm for the elections showed the overwhelming desire for a change after 16 years of Dr. Siaka Stephen's rule. General Joseph Momoh, a Limba by tribe as Stevens, was elected president.

The APC managed Sierra Leone's political stability for almost 24 years, but the price of this political stability was high. In order to retain power and muzzle its opponents, the APC developed an extensive policy of patronage and intimidation. Under this policy, the army and security services played vital roles. They were needed to intimidate and harass political opponents of the government. In turn, the government was forced to shower material benefits to the leadership of the army and security services. It also turned a blind eye to their misdeeds and excesses. Apart from intimidation, APC developed an extensive system of cronyism. Its opponents who were not intimidated, were co-opted into its service through various inducements. The overall effect of this twin policy

of inducement or intimidation resulted in a general decline of Sierra Leone's national institutions[15].

2.3 THE REVOLUTIONARY UNTIED FRONT (RUF) REBELS

Political opponents of the APC, finding that all alternative political platform were closed resorted to underground subversive activities. This manifested in form of political activism by intellectuals and students. It started from the usual student demonstration, labour strikes and critical media attacks. It then turned to active political organization, which was quickly exploited by foreign governments with vested interest. The end result was the formation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by some lecturers and students of Fourah Bay Colelge in 1982[16].

The long years of the APC in power had many consequences, which played a salient part in the military mutiny of 25 May 1997. It led to the political marginalization of a significant section of the country that formed the bulk of the intellectual, bureaucratic and indigenous business elite of Sierra Leone. This caused deep division within the national polity. The political class did not enjoy the trust and confidence of the bureaucracy. Each group worked for its own interest and owed loyalty to interests outside the national institutions they worked. It was therefore easy for external interests to recruit surrogates within the national elite to pursue their interest. Next, the leadership of the military and security services

became privileged group with vested political and economic interests to protect. Since the government increasingly relied on these two institutions to stay in power, the necessary political control could no longer be exercised effectively over its leadership. Within the Armed Forces, the leadership, finding that could do as they wished, abandoned their command responsibilities with disastrous consequences for themselves, the military institutions and the Sierra Leone nation itself.

The Sierra Leone crisis in a way is an overflow of the civil war in Liberia. The intellectual founders of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) trained with the leadership of the National Patriotic of Liberia (NPFL). They probably had common objective. This was to mutually support each other to overthrow their respective governments. However, at a point which remain a mystery, the NPFL leadership split the RUF leadership, making it possible for Corporal Foday Sankoh to assume the leadership of the RUF at the expense of the intellectual founders of the organization.

Several reasons have been advanced for the emergence of the unlettered Foday Sankoh as RUF leader over the original intellectual founders of the movement. One possible reasons is that Foday Sankoh was prepared to follow the NPFL leadership to Liberia while the intellectuals believed that the RUF should limit its revolutionary activities to Sierra Leone. Since the NPFL had better access to arms and finance, they

were able to impose Foday Sankoh as the RUF leader. He started as a battalion commander-in-charge of the NPFL "Strike Force" in Liberia and fought alongside the NPFL leadership up to the gates of the Presidential Villa in Monrovia. However, the intervention of the West African Monitoring Group Force, ECOMOG, stalled the impending triumph of the NPFL over the forces loyal to President Samuel Doe. The NPFL leadership was very bitter at this new development and subsequently threatened that those countries which facilitated ECOMOG operations against their forces, would pay dearly for it.

Sierra Leone of course was the country being referred to by the NPFL leadership. Thus, this became the origin of Sierra Leonean crisis. Sierra Leone had previously declined a request by the NPFL leadership to launch their rebellion from its territory. The request was made personally by Mr. Charles Taylor to President Saidu Momoh who refused out of deference to the mutual non-interference treaty binding the member-states of the Mano River Union.

The RUF now under the leadership of Corporal Foday Sankoh commenced armed rebellion against the constituted government of Sierra Leone. On 23 March 1991, an armed RUF Unit consisting of an estimated 150 NPFL soldiers led by Corporal Foday Sankoh attacked the villages of Bomaru and Sienga in the Eastern district of Kailahun. The

RUF/NPFL attack was launched from Voinjaina in Lofa country of Liberia. Government forces quickly repelled the attack with heavy casualty on the rebel side. However, that lonely event of 23 March 1991 marked the beginning of a long civil war which has not been concluded till date. The cross-border rebellion has led to the collapse of two Sierra Leonean governments, halted all economic activities in the mineral rich eastern part of the country. It imposed a very heavy strain on the Sierra Leone economy, brought tremendous social dislocation in the country and ruined the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces.

The Sierra Leone civil war from inception was planned and launched from Liberia. It was never a spontaneous political rebellion. Rather, it was an instrument to further the political objectives of the NPFL leadership which funded, armed and organized all RUF operations against targets in Sierra Leone. The absence of the original intellectual founders of the movement enabled the NPFL leadership to mould the political and military leadership of the RUF and never allowed independent objectives to be pursued, which does not suit its interest.

This factor accounts largely for the brutal and senseless nature of RUF operations. The new RUF leadership under Foday Sankoh was limited in their movement. Consequently, the RUF degenerated to a gang of killers and looters. Their modus operandi became blind pursuit of crude

capitalism and wealth accumulation arising out of a lawless environment created by their operations. They mined the vast mineral deposits of the eastern part of the country especially diamonds and sold them to unscrupulous Europeans and Lebanese businessmen through Liberian and Sierra Leonean middlemen. These middlemen regrettably included senior officers of the Sierra Leone Army, their relations and local chiefs. These business mercenaries and their Sierra Leonean agents now constituted an economic group with vested interest in the war. The absence of an effective government therefore in Freetown which attempted to restore its authority in the mining areas of the country, would naturally be threatening the interest of developed between the leadership of the NPFL, Lebanese and European diamond dealers and some sections of the Sierra Leone elite in sustaining a permanent state of war in Sierra Leone. This interest was to come out in the open after the May 25 1997 mutiny.

The Sierra Leonean Army was ill-equipped to confront the type of military operations conducted by the RUF. It was a small army, not well equipped and badly led. Its leadership has meshed itself deeply into politics. Commanders who could rally troops were lacking. The vast nepotism and corruption which were rampant in the Armed Forces now became a big hindrance to effective logistic support to troops in the war front. The RUF Commanders proved more imaginative and daring. They

slowly moved their operational strategy from that of hit and run to security and garrisoning large population centres such as Jailahum, Zimmi and Koidu. The Sierra Leone Army on the other hand, was knitted in leadership crisis and ineffective command and control. Out of desperation, the then President Saidu Momoh entered into a bilateral military agreement with Nigeria and evoked an already existing defence treaty with Guinea.

These measures brought a temporary relief to the embattled Sierra Leone Army. It was able to push back the RUF rebels and retake most of its garrisoned cities. The initial logistic problems however was not solved and this eroded the authority and legitimacy of the military and political leadership. On 29 April 1992, a group of junior offers deserted their posts at the war front, came to Freetown and overthrew the APC government led by President Saidu Momoh. The coup wa to have catastrophic consequences on the command structure of the Sierra Leonean Army. Invariably, it formed the bedrock of 25 May 1997 tragedy and its aftermath.

2.4 THE REGIME OF CAPTAIN VALENTINE STRASSER

The junior officers who overthrew President Momoh's APC government styled their government, the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Captain Valentine Strasser headed it but Captain Maada

Bio later overthrew him. The NPRC regime completely destroyed the command structure of the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces. It subverted the normal military promotion system and discipline. Subordinate officers assumed positions incompatible with their experience, training and rank. Senior officers were initially marginalized but later most of them were co-opted into the regime but in subordinate positions. They had no impact in major decisions.

It therefore became possible for officers and soldiers to gain promotions, advancements and positions without any due regard laid down procedure. The heart of the Army simply ground to a halt. The senior officers lost moral authority, respect and prestige. Consequently, the Army which was already weakened by politicization completely lost all semblance of discipline, authority and control. It became fashionable for senior officers to lobby their juniors and carry tales about each other to their erstwhile subordinates holding political positions. It was under this environment that the entire officers' corps lost influence, respect and fear of the ordinary soldier. The root of the 25 May 1997 mutiny will have to eventually be traced to the rule of thew NPRC and the dishonourable conduct of the senior leadership of the Armed Forces.

The leadership of the NPRC or at least a faction of it led by Maada Bio and Tony Nyuma appear to have reached some understanding with the

RUF leadership before the coup. This section of the NPRC clearly related with the RUF respective business interests which had links with the diamond and produce trade of the RUF. This group was to later overthrow Captain Valentine Strasser in a palace coup and subsequently initiated talks with RUF leadership.

Maada Bio was under considerable pressure by some elements within and outside the NPRC government and RUF not to hold democratic elections and to hand over power to politicians. However, mounting international pressure, stiff opposition by the SLPP led by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah (a minority Mandingo) made Maada Bio hold elections.

The elements which opposed the democratic elections will seem to have given up. The RUF for example, found that it had lost a good opportunity to gain power through the back door. It knew that it had a lot of allies and sympathizers within the Maada Bio regime and would have favoured the conclusion of peace treaty with the regime. Indeed, the RUF attempted by violent means to stop the elections from holding but was unsuccessful. The other elements within them were military officers who had gotten used to political offices and the tremendous opportunities it offered for easy wealth accumulation. Closely associated with them were their personal staff and business allies. This group was to play a decisive role in the mutiny of 25 May, 1997.

2.5 THE RE-EMERGENCE OF SLPP GOVERNMENT[17]

The new SLPP government which took over from the Maada Bio NPRC regime inherited a lot of dissatisfied power groups. Each of these groups had a vested interest for several reasons for the continuation of military government. They were forced to accede to democratic government due to an unfavourable international and domestic public opinion. When they lost power, many of these groups were apprehensive that the new government may not protect their interests.

First among these apprehensive power groups were certain political elite most of whom came from the Northern part of the country. They came into prominence under the APC government especially under the tenure of President Saidu Momoh. Members of this group had access to privileges and were able to accumulate wealth. The source of some of their wealth came from transactions carried out by virtue of the offices they or their relatives occupied. In order to protect their wealth and reputation, it was necessary for them to continue to hold unto power. The return of the SLPP now allegedly dominated by Mendes threatened to offset their interest. They were particularly vulnerable because the new government could discontinue policies, projects and programmes from which they derived direct or indirect economic and political benefits.

The second apprehensive power groups were some former APC leaders. They had been in power for almost 24 years. In this period, they abolished the SLPP and other opposition parties. They equally had accumulated wealth and privileges. The NPRC regime had been particularly hard on this group of politicians singling them out as public scapegoats for their own shortcomings and misrule. However, the return of their former foe; the SLPP having been in political wilderness for almost 24 years could possibly resort to a politics of witch-hunting and revenge. Besides, some members of the party had already began mooting suggestions about a Mende hidden agenda which was to be pursued under the SLPP government.

The third apprehensive power groups were the senior leadership of the military and security services. Under the APC, they had developed extensive economic interests which access to power was necessary to protect and expand. Under the NPRC, their prestige, respect and authority had been partially undermined. Many of them however had quickly come to terms with their subordinates now turned masters. They accepted to serve under their juniors primarily to protect their economic interests. This arrangement was acceptable to the NPRC which did not disrupt this economic interest rather it opted to share from it. The senior leadership of the military whose authority had been restored by the SLPP government

will protect their economic interests. Many of them were to be heavily affected by the economic reform measures of the SLPP government which threatened the unofficial economy where some of the military leadership had considerable interest.

The fourth apprehensive power groups were a group of junior officers and soldiers who were members of the NPRC or had close affiliation to them. They had tested power and the privileges that went with it. They were not comfortable with the ordinary chores of military life especially its humble lifestyle. This class of officers and men mixed with the high and mighty in the society. Many have forgotten their actual status within the military. Moreover, with the restoration of senior officers many feared that any reorganization within the military will jeopardize their careers. It is from the rank of this group of soldiers that the bulk of the leadership of the 25 May 1997 mutiny came from.

The fifth and last apprehensive power groups were the businessmen and women, intellectuals and bureaucrats who derived benefits from the power positions of the previously mentioned four groups. Many of them were not competent to stand on their own and depend on the patronage arising out of their association with the previously mentioned power groups for their upward mobility.

The new SLPP government will seem to have recognized the fears of these groups. It therefore embarked on a policy of national reconciliation. However, its economic policies which were aimed at putting the Sierra Leonean economy on a better footing was hurting the vital interests of the previously mentioned power groups. Though they recognized the political handshake extended to them, they were more interested in protecting their economic and political interests no matter how it hurts the rest of the society. It is within the ambit of this self-centredness that many of them betrayed the democratically elected government after the mutiny of 25 May 1997.

2.6 THE IMMEDIATE CAUSE OF THE CRISIS[18]

Two major reasons can be singled out as responsible for the immediately eruption of the Sierra Leone crisis, which began, with the mutiny of 25 May 1997. One was the effects of the SLPP government economic reform programme.

The other are widely held grievances within the military especially among the ordinary soldiers. The SLPP government on assuming power began implementing an IMF-backed economic reform programme. As is usual with all IMF-backed packages, it led to restructuring of the bureaucracy, removal of subsidies and strengthening government revenue generation and collection method. These in effect led to job losses,

general price increases and decline in standard of living of many people in the lower strata of the society whose income declined in real terms.

No government anywhere in the world enjoys the affection of common people when it is implementing harsh but necessary economic reforms. The SLPP government was no exception. Many of its opponents however simply used public dissatisfaction occasioned by the pains of the economic reforms, to mount a vigorous propaganda against the government and its policies. Institutions were made in mass media to suggest that life was better under the military NPRC government. Some of the critics of democratic regime were businessmen and women who made fabulous profit from the unofficial economic activities especially in the mining sector. When the government began to take active measures to bring unofficial economy under control, some of these businessmen and women began to take active measure to subvert democratic government and process.

It will seem that part of this strategy of subversion was a combination of sponsored media misinformation and spreading of rumours among the rank and file of the military. The campaign seemed to have succeeded. The democratic government was forced to enact legislation to check the obvious subversive campaign being conducted against it in the media. The opponents of the government capitalized on this to claim that

the government was aiming to muzzle the freedom of expression in order to facilitate a hidden and undemocratic agenda. One of the outcomes of this successful campaign of subversion was the mass desertion of soldiers from the front. Troops were successfully penetrated with stories designed to favour their ethnic sentiments, economic dissatisfaction and general disillusionment with their condition of service.

The most prominent of the military grievances was an alleged government preference for a group of civil militia locally known as the Kamajors. Many Army recruits came from Northern tribes and many of its key officers were of Northern extraction. The Kamajors on the other hand were mostly Mende and its coordinators were known Mende politicians in the SLPP. There was consequently widespread fear within the Army that the Kamajors were being promoted to a status of first rival the Army and eventually to supplant it. This fear was widely shared by officers and soldiers alike. The SLPP government unfortunately took no active measures to dispel this fear. Its opponents consequently capitalized on it to subvert the Army and turn it against the government.

Another grievance within the military had links with the perceived general corruption of the senior officers. Many soldiers believed that their officers were embezzling their pay, allowances and other benefits. Many senior officers were alleged to be diverting rice allocated to soldiers to their wives

for resale to the general public. Though no concrete evidence was ever advanced to prove these allegations, they were widely believed by common soldiers. This, more than any other factor derailed their confidence and respect in their officers. It was this particular grievance that was exploited by the ringleaders of the 25 May 1997 mutiny to rally troops to themselves.

There was also pay problems within the military. Most of the soldiers belong to the lower strata of the society. Like most members of this section of the society their pay could not meet the rising cost of living arising from the economic reforms of the SLPP government. Opponents of the democratic government capitalized on this to start a rumor that the SLPP government was refusing to implement a 500 percent pay rise that had been approved by the NPRC regime. Though the President made effort to dispel this rumour, he seemed not to have succeeded. Many soldiers simply believed that he did not care for their welfare. The leaders of the 25 May 1997 mutiny and later the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) were toe exploit this grievance in their attempt to retain the allegiance of the Army. The widespread looming immediately after the mutiny can also be attributed as a kind of protest by soldiers regarding their poor condition of service.

A state of very low morale, poor leadership and dissatisfaction thus was prevalent in the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces. It was in this unfortunate and charged atmosphere that the democratic government made the error of reducing the troops' rice allocation. To many soldiers, this was the last straw. All they needed to revolt against constituted authority was a determined leader. Sergeant Abu Sankoh, a.k.a. Zagallo recognized this opportunity and took advantage of it to execute the mutiny of 25 May 1997.

2.7 THE EMERGENCE OF THE ARMED FORCES REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL[19]

In the early hours of 25 May 1997, Sergeant Abu Sankoh supported by 15 other NCOs and one civilian mobilized some soldiers on duty at the 1 Battalion Barracks, Wilberforce. He apparently appealed to them on their grievances especially on the reduction of their monthly rice allocation and general financial difficulties. With the soldiers won over, he proceeded with them to Defence Headquarters where they persuaded the soldiers on duty to join in revolting against the senior officers whom they accused of embezzling their pay and other benefits due to them. The soldiers quickly joined and allowed those without arms to arm themselves from the armoury of the Air Wing.

Now mobilized, they proceeded to Pademba Road Prison, killed one of the Prison Staff and freed all military personnel who were being held in the Prison. Among the detained military personnel they released was Major Johnny Paul Koromah. He was alleged to be planning a coup to overthrow the democratic government. he was subsequently investigated, charged and was on trial when the mutiny took place. Some of the leaders of the mutiny like Corporal Tambe George had served under Major Koromah and apparently admired him personally. Major Koromah subsequently took charge of the mutineers. He directed them to proceed immediately to the Presidential Palace and sack the palace. By the first light of 25 May 1997, the mutineers had gained control of all military units in Freetown. President Kabbah managed to escape to Lungi International Airport after a detachment of Nigerian troops deployed at the Presidential Palace set up stiff resistance until they were overwhelmed by sheer numbers. He subsequently left for Guinea where he began to mobilize international support to resist the outcome of the coup and restore him to power.

The aim of the original leaders of the mutiny was to murder all senior officers. Beyond this act, they seem to have no further objectives. The mutineers were dissuaded by Major Koromah from carrying out their plan. He persuaded them that it was necessary to co-opt some of the officers since theywere not sure what will be attitude of the Nigerian

Government to the coup. Major Koromah subsequently began recruiting first junior and middle rank officers to join the mutiny and later persuaded majority of the senior officers to cooperate with them.

The coup was immediately condemned by the international community. Africa and West African leaders pledged support to the ousted democratic government and refused to recognize the coup and its outcome. The civil population of Sierra Leone also came out to strongly condemn the coup. The organized labour called a general strike. Much of the business community closed shops following widespread acts of looting by soldiers and later, members of the RUF, whom the mutineers invited to come and join them in forming a national government.

The decision to invite the RUF was suggested to all the mutineers by a prominent London-based Sierra Leonean businessman, Mr. Omrir Golley. He telephoned Major Koromah in the morning of the coup and gave him the telephone numbers of RUF leader Corporal Foday Sankoh to record a telephone message ordering his supports to join the mutineers. This was subsequently broadcast on radio and RUF units came out of the bush and joined the mutineers in forming the (AFRC). Major Johnny Paul Koromah ws made Chairman of the Council while Corporal Foday Sankoh became Deputy Chairman. Since he was however under house arrest in Nigeria for allegedly importing arms into the country without authority, the RUF leader

was represented by one Same Bockarie also known as Maskita. The original leaders of the mutiny were appointed members of the Council in addition to other officers who agreed to join the mutiny. The leader of the AFRC knew from inception that their government was unpopular at home and rejected abroad. They failed to heed international and domestic opinion to give up power. Much of the leadership believed that given them, they will be able to win international recognition, covertly first and later overtly. Internally, they began to recruit supporters from the various interest groups who were opposed to the democratic government.

2.8 THE ABIDJAN AGREEMENT[20]

Towards the end of June 1997, the ECOWAS leaders met in Abidjan and decided to pursue diplomatic means instead of military to settle the Sierra Leone crisis. The Committee of Five headed by Nigerian Foreign Minister, Chief Tom Ikimi was appointed to monitor events in Sierra Leone. The Committee of Five and the representatives of Major Paul Koromah agreed to continue negotiations towards effective and prompt implementation of the peace plan. The ECOWAS peace plan for Sierra Leone provided for the reinstatement of the legitimate government of President Tejan Kabbah within a period of six months and the immediate cessation of the hostilities. The peace plan also mandated the junta to cooperate with ECOMOG in order to peacefully enforce the limited

sanctions imposed by the ECOWS leaders. Other provisions include disarmament, demobilization, reintegration of the combatants and the provision of humanitarian assistance, return of refugees, immunities and guarantees to the leaders of the 25 May 1997 coup d'etat and modalities for broadening the power base in Sierra Leone.

The AFRC pretending to respond to international pressure including UN Security Council sanctions which were being policed by ECOMOG agreed to negotiate. However, they later backed out of the Conakry Peace Agreement on the demand to disarm with the excuses that it was unrealistic to ask them to surrender power to President Kabbah on 22 April 1998 as earlier agreed. The AFRC also felt it was improper for AFRSL Army to be disarmed. In the meantime, they were busy arming themselves. During this period, they occasionally fire at ECOMOG locations. At frequent intervals, AFRC would phone the BBC focus on Africa to cry wolf complaining that ECOMOG was planning to attack them which was to the contrary.

2.9 THE LOME PEACE AGREEMENT

The Lome Peace Agreement which was signed on 7 July 1999 remains the most comprehensive ever drafted on the Sierra Leone crisis. This agreement includes the following key areas: Part One – ceasefire and Ceasefire Monitoring; Part Two – Governance, Transformation of the

RUF/SLA into a political party, Enabling members of the RUF/SLA to hold public office and Enabling the RUF/SLA to join a broad-based government of national unity through cabinet appointment. Others are Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development, Council of Elders and Religious Leaders; Part Three – this part includes among others; Political Issues, Pardon and Amnesty, Review of present Constitution, Date of next Elections and national Electoral Commission; Part Four has in it – Post-Conflict Military and Security Issues, Transformation and New Mandate of ECOMOG, New Mandate for UNOMSIL, Security Guarantees for Peace Monitors, Encampment, Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. Others include Restructuring and Training of Sierra Leone Armed Forces, Withdrawal of Mercenaries, Notification of Joint Monitoring commission and Notification of military Commands; Part Five – Humanitarian, Human Rights and Socio-Economic Issues, Release of Prisoners and Abductees, Refugees and Displaced Persons, Guarantee of the Security of displaced Persons and Refugees. Others include Guarantee and Promotion of Human Rights, Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Violations, Humanitarian Relief, Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction, Special Fund for War Victims, Child Combatants, Education and Health[21].

The Lome Peace Agreement offered RUF members some ministerial positions in government and blanket amnesty which gave them immunity from prosecution for war crimes. The RUF leader Sankoh was ironically put in-charge of the country's strategic mineral resources including diamonds and also given the position of the Vice President of the Republic. Many in Sierra Leone were not happy with the context of the Lome Peace Accord that gave blanket amnesty to the ex-combatants and included rebel representatives in government.

The accord notwithstanding, in January 1999, the rebels staged a comeback, an invasion of the capital Freetown that saw the unleashing of terror and mayhem on the civilian population. By the time the rebels were beaten back by ECOMOG troops, some 5000 civilians had been killed, hundreds of homes destroyed and an estimated 3000 children abducted and taken into the jungles. The January invasion also saw the amputation of limbs of thousands of civilians and displacement of several thousands more[22]. But it became increasingly clear that the intervention force was not up to the task. For one thing Nigeria, which carried the financial burden of ECOMOG operations, was no longer prepared to bankroll what as becoming an unpopular overseas adventure, in the eyes of people back home[23].

That accord also collapsed ten months later in May 2000 with the rebels holding hostage some 500 UN Peacekeepers and resuming hostilities. The rebels also captured more territory from the government. Since the situation has remained fluid with a demoralized UN Peacekeeping Force withdrawing from all rebel-held areas. It was the resilience of the Nigerian troops and the swift intervention of British forces that saved the government from imminent overthrow and helped to maintain a semblance of normalcy in the country[24].

NOTES

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CHAPTER THREE

3.0 HISTORICAL REVIEW OF PEACEKEEPING

The use of force by a third party in the process of resolving a conflict within a state or between two states has now become commonplace. Although peacekeeping has not been clearly stated in the Charter of the United Nations (UN) the UN initiated peacekeeping first in 1946 as an overall measure to manage and control conflicts. The adopting of the peacekeeping by the UN was based on the explanation of Chapter VI and VII of the UN jurisdiction to work towards the creation of an environment appropriate for International Peace and Security. The UN peacekeeping started as a small Observer Group in the Balkans in 1946 and later in Palestine and Indonesia. It was to observe, monitor, supervise and report on agreements and hostilities or accomplish ceasefire. That was accomplished by governments represented on UN Commission in the area concerned[26].

The first example of the use of fact-finding and reporting mission arose on a Greek complaint that Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia were actively supporting the guerrillas operating in the northern part of Greece. In April 1946 the Security Council formed a commission which found evidence confirming the Greek complaint, but a minority report by Poland and the then Soviet Union contested this. The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) called on Albania, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia to stop aid to the guerrillas. UNGA then established a UN Special Commission on the

Balkans (UNSCOB); with the military attaches from the embassies and consulates of the member-states of the Committee in the region acted as military observers. During its four years of existence, UNSCOB submitted regular reports to the UNGA which led to the adoption of several resolutions, resulting in the termination of external assistance to the guerrillas[26].

Other examples of observer missions are the UN Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) to supervise the ceasefire line in Kashmir and the UN Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) to supervise the armistice lines between Israel and neigbhouring Arab States. The UNTSO continues to perform an important role in the Middle East. It keeps the Security Council informed of incidents and other developments that threaten peace. It is able to conduct low-level diplomacy to diffuse and prevent the escalation of minor crisis.

The UN uses military observers to a great extent and advantage on many other occasions, examples are in Yemen 91963 – 1964) under UNYOM, also in Lebanon 91958) under UNOGIL, and in Dominican Republic (1965) under UNDOMREP. Each of these missions played a useful though a varied role in furthering the process of peaceful resolution of those conflicts.

The UN Security Council also initiated a peacekeeping operation to take care of Israeli and Syrian crisis at the Golan Heights under the UN Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF). The revival of peacekeeping as an essential element of the diplomatic process in the Middle East was decided by the Security Council on the initiative of its non-permanent members after the initial USS-USSR sponsored call for a ceasfire went unheeded. Also, there was a peacekeeping force in Lebanon under the UN Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) which significantly curtailed with varied degrees of success, the escalation of PLO raids into Israel and further Israeli retaliation.

When fighting broke out between the Dutch and Indonesians in West Iran in 1962, it was immediately followed by negotiations to end hostilities. A group of UN Military Observers implemented ceasefire and also had the difficult task of collecting Indonesian infiltrators. The UN then assumed temporary administration of the territory through the UN Security Force in West New Guinea – West Iran (UNSFIG). We also had the UN Operation in Congo (ONUC) in 1960 – 1964. The experience of peacekeeping does not end with the UN but also regional organizations had contributed in this regard. Organizations like the Organization of American States (OAS), Organization of African Unity (OAU), the

Commonwealth all at various stages initiated and formulated peacekeeping force to handle crises in their respective regions.

For instance, the OAS employed peacekeeping force to deal with the civil war in the Dominican Republic in 1965. This application of peacekeeping mechanism to end hostilities in the Dominican Republic though in spite of some political difficulties in the earlier phases, was more than justified to the end results. The cause of the conflict was political, social and economic. The OAS then established the Inter-American Peace Force (IAPF) which was mandated to end the fighting, control the rival armed civilian and military factions, protect human life and property and create conditions to enable an OAS Committee, which was established to deal with the political crisis, to start negotiation. This operation was successfully accomplished and a duly elected government was installed but the IAPF remained long enough to help integrate and reorganize the Dominican Security Forces.

According to Prof. Ali Mazrui (1980), "the Organization of African Unity (OAU) has effectively used military observers to report on specific outbreaks of conflict and to monitor ceasefires. As in the case of the UN, these regional organizations have found observation and monitoring effective systems in support of diplomatic measures to manage conflict. The OAU attempted in 1978 to introduce a peacekeeping force to end the

civil war in Chad. But, in that case, only Nigerian troops were withdrawn some four months later. The OAU renewed its efforts to introduce a new peacekeeping force toward the end of the year with troops from Senegal, Zaire (now Democratic Republic of Congo) and a small contingent from Nigeria. The force faced difficulties in achieving effective strength and carrying out its mandate and resulted, eventually in failure …"

The Commonwealth has also been actively considering the use of peacekeeping. This was during the Nigerian civil war 1967 – 1970, the Commonwealth considered sending a peacekeeping force to end the crisis but Nigerians, like most Africans at that time were suspicious of peacekeeping because they feared that it might work against them as they believed what it did when the Patrick Lumumba government, which they supported, was overthrown in the early stages of ONUC. For this and other reasons, no peacekeeping operations was established. However, in the case of the Rhodesian crisis, the Lancaster House Conference in London of 1980, did agree on a Commonwealth Monitoring Force to monitor the ceasefire during the transition phase when elections were held. Additionally, the presence of Commonwealth Electoral Observers helped enormously in the peaceful transfer of power from a White Minority to a Black Majority rule in Rhodesia, now called Zimbabwe. This is a clear experience of peacekeeping at the regional level.

We also have the experience at the subregional level with the establishment of ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990 to return peace and stability in Liberian crisis staged by Charles Ghankey Taylor. The UN Secretary General himself called for a sharing of responsibility as stipulated in the UN Charter, so that regional organization attempt at conflict management will be part of a first stage of strategies which will apex in the involvement by the UN, so that the UN involvement will be effected to enhance regional efforts.

There is a difference in the application of peacekeeping force in Liberia by ECOMOG. Its application ranged from total suppressive action to the use of minimum force in the control of violence. In UN peacekeeping, peace enforcement plays no part. The weapons of achieving the objectives are those of negotiation, mediation, quiet diplomacy and tact[26]. The Liberian crisis has provided a pointer to a possible future trend of events. ECOWAS was able to evolve the necessary consensus to continue the ECOMOG operations in spite of the initial concern of some of the states that the operation was dominated by the Anglophone States and especially by Nigeria. The member-states of some of ECOWAS, in approving the deployment of ECOMOG into Liberia, stated that "they were motivated by humanitarian considerations and what

was described as the lack of consideration for the lives and rights of innocent civilians, by non-parties to the dispute"27.

ECOMOG was assembled and deployed in August 1990, a ceasefire had not yet been agreed upon by the warring factions. The ceasefire agreement was signed several months later at the end of a meeting of the two factions in the Liberian crisis, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) led by Charles Ghankey Taylor and Prince Yomi Johnson respectively. The two groups met in Bamako for two days in November, 1990. At the end of ECOMOG operation in Liberia an election was conducted under a free and fair situation which brought Mr. Charles Ghankey Taylor as the new elected President in 1997.

ECOMOG then moved to crisis ridden Sierra Leone where there was a breakdown of law and order. The ECOMOG consists armed forces from Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Nigeria and Senegal. The concern on the crisis of Sierra Leone has even captured the UN which have now taken over from ECOMOG, the task of returning peace and security to Sierra Leone. The UN have now sent troops from Bangladesh, Ghana, Guinea, India, Jordan, Kenya, Nigeria and Zambia, to meet the ECOMOG troops to improve the peacekeeping operation in that country. The UN troops

commanded by Nigeria's General Mohammed Garba is the largest deployment of UN troops in the world[28].

3.1 MILITARY ASPECTS OF PEACEKEEPING

The military aspects of peacekeeping involves a military commander who is the Field Commander, but he is guided and restricted by the political and economic interests of his masters who set up the peace mission. Again, he will be constrained by the resources available to him. All these are non-military objectives which the Field Commander has to devise ways of achieving. The military aspects of peacekeeping will be explained further under the sub-headings of Strategy, Tactics and Logistics – each of them has sub-headings.

3.1.1 Strategy. In 1956, as commander-designate of the first international peacekeeping force, General E.L.N. Burns, contemplated his strategy for a divisional size force. The strategy behind this is as follows:

3.1.2 Mandate. The mandate for the UNEF was instrumental in establishing the main strategy used by subsequent forces, i.e. peacekeeping by inter-positioning of UN forces. If the force was not to fight its way between the belligerents, but was to secure and supervise the cessation of hostilities, the only strategy available to it was, with the consent of the parties to the conflict, to physically impose a presence between to ensure that hostilities did not continue.

3.1.3 Command. The command is the source of control by the Field Commander, to which the commander at the peacekeeping will report the happenings in the field. When the peacekeeping is under the UN, the command is usually with the Security Council or the Secretary General. These two are the normal command at the UN.

3.1.4 Intelligence. In a two-party dispute between sovereign states, political considerations impact at the international diplomatic level and have little influence on a force commander's strategy and its application. However, when the conflict is multiparty, communal, or faction-oriented, the local political climate can have an impact on the strategy and its application by the force commander. Although military intelligence has never been an acceptable fact of peacekeeping, the force commander must have current and accurate knowledge of the political and military aims of all disputing parties.

3.1.5 Capabilities. There must be a correlation between the composition of the peacekeeping force and its commander's strategy. Based on this, it is clear, that, the foreign policy changes in troop – contributing nations an UN non-military considerations can transform a force into one incapable of effecting its commander's strategy in fulfillment of a mandate.

In summary, while peacekeeping force has used military offensive and defensive strategies, the only strategy developed by peacekeeping commanders and the principal one used by all forces, has been interposition. Peacekeeping forces have had other tasks such as maintenance of law and order, negotiation; observation, investigation and reporting but none of these can be claimed as a strategy.

3.1.6 Tactics. After the Force Commander has selected his strategy, his subordinate commanders and staff must determine the tactics to be used by the peacekeeping units which are operating in contact with the disputing parties. They are crucial to effective operations.

The mandate and the commander's strategy constitute the framework for the conduct of peacekeeping operations. The tactical and operational questions most frequently relate to the sue of force and freedom of movement.

In peacekeeping just like in war, there is a requirement for an effective chain of command that link from Commander to his units. In peacekeeping command, language can be a major problem. Some units may have only two or three personnel who are fluent in the official language of the force, orders are less likely to be misconstrued if they are not retranslated and retransmitted. The ideal is to have no intermediate headquarters between that of the force commander and his units.

In general when discussing peacekeeping tactics has not revealed any major problems. Rather, there are a number of lesser problems which require attention but which are not critical, except under emergency conditions. The two problems of the use of force and the freedom of movement relative to force mandate, many people argue that, for political reason the mandate must be ambiguous.

3.1.7 Logistics. The issue of logistics in peacekeeping is even more serious than strategy and tactics. This is because of the multinational nature of the force and other factors, there must be a proper coordination. This is especially in the deployment stage, logistic and administrative considerations may have a greater effect on the peacekeeping operation than strategy and tactical factors.

Contingency planning in war takes precedence, but in peacekeeping, little operational planning can be done before the force mission is defined and as units operate independently, military proficiency will enable each to comply with the force commander's hostility devised plan. Conversely, material requirements are predictable, but precise volumes may not be known until the force size is determined, while requirements, their sources and movement can be planned in advance.

The administrative and logistical contingency planning, at the force level, has been virtually non-existent during the history of UN

peacekeeping. This is because the military headquarters of a force does not exist prior to its inception.

The contingency planning task must fall to the civilian staff of the office of General Services at UN Headquarters which is established to support only existing UN commitments.

Finally, this section described and analyzed military problems of peacekeeping and offered basic recommendations for their solutions. Because of the natural overlap of operational recommendations dealing with the sections on strategy, and tactics these are summarized under the categories of mandate, command and the selection of operational units, with a final summation of the major recommendation on matters of logistics.

In conclusion, peacekeeping has contributed significantly in bringing about international peace and stability. Law and order is restored and a lot of wars and conflicts were settled. This can be viewed from the UN level, regional level such as OAS, OAU and the Commonwealth level.

The experience of peacekeeping has not ended at regional level. This is because we have subregional organizations such as ECOWAS that initiated peacekeeping force in Liberia and Sierra Leone just in the 1990s.

The international political, economic and social system is disturbed by the frequent and extent of wars and conflicts at various parts of the

world which the UN have proved to be incapable of managing and resolving due to a host of factors which cannot be discussed here, hence the increasing prominence of regional and subregional roles in conflict management and control at regional and subregional levels. The present conflicts internationally, have undergone transformation and sophistication and this implies that the measures to manage and control these conflicts must be transformed and be equally sophisticated to properly and equally handle them and maintain international peace and security.

3.2 ECOWAS AS A REGIONAL POWER

Before the 20th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) then Nigerian leader, late General Sani Abacha, jetted out to Cote d'Ivoire. "… Late General Abacha paid a similar one day visit to Mali and Gambia four days later to hold normal discussion with leaders of two countries. Diplomatic watchers were to link late General Abacha's rule with the crisis in Sierra Leone which dominated discussion at the August 28 to 29 ECOWAS Summit months after the summit of the Heads of State and Chairman of Subregional Organization immediately dispatched then Foreign Affairs Minister, Chief Tom Ikimi to South Africa for further discussion on the Sierra Leonean issue. Indeed, Nigeria is now going through the rigours of being a regional power. Those diplomatic shuttlers were said to pave the

way for the success recorded at the just-ended summit. For the 20th Summit of the ECOWAS leaders at the Abuja Secretariat of the Community was indeed crucial. Top on the agenda of the meeting expectedly was the issue of the overthrow of the democratically elected government of President Tejan Kabbah in Sierra Leone by the Major Koromah-led junta and the ECOWAS plan of action on it. On May 25, 1997, a coup that attracted condemnation from the international community polarized the rank of the regional leaders not in the outright rejection of the military putsch, but in the collective efforts on what should be done to bring peace to that country. The peaceful resolution of the Liberian crisis spearheaded by Nigeria was a victory for ECOWAS unprecedented in the history of subregional peace efforts in the world[29].

Analysts are quick to contrast the success with the failure recorded in Yugoslavia by regional organizations as well as in Somalia where there was no success. Also in some part of Asia the subregional groups have not been able to stem the tide of violence.

It was under this background that the ECOWAS summit on the Sierra Leonean crisis was opened in Abuja. From the onset, it was clear that the summit was going to be explosive as the ECOWAS leaders canvassed on position on how to resolve the crisis in Sierra Leone.

On one side of the spectrum were countries such as Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Togo, Burkina Faso and Liberia. They clearly opposed the use of force against the Major Koromah regime while on the other side were Nigerian leading others namely Gambia, Guinea, Benin Republic, Senegal and so on which believes that no efforts should be spared in reinstating President Kabbah. Even before the conference kicked off, Ghana speaking through the Deputy Foreign Minister had voiced opposition to the use of armed action to resolve the Sierra Leone crisis.

President Gnassignbe Eyadema of Togo who spoke diplomatically warned ECOWAS to avoid armed conflict saying, "we know how and when war began but we don't know how and when it will end".

Ousted President Kabbah who was the cynosure of all eyes at the summit was specifically invited in a bid to underscore ECOWAS leaders not to hesitate to use force against the coupists that Sierra Leone looked up till the ECOWAS leaders to restore peace and legitimate government to the country. The people of Sierra Leone are defenseless since the face of the violence and thuggery of the military regime in Freetown. This self-serving clique has no reason and no rationale for its existence.

Nigeria that set the tone at the opening of the summit stated clearly that the threat to peace in Sierra Leone endangers the peace and stability of the subregion. Head of State and ECOWAS Chairman, late General

Abacha said the prompt resolution of the crisis in that country was a matter of vital interest, which should be pursued collectively for the benefit of the entire subregion. He said Nigeria is prepared to work with others in the realization of those objectives. Late General Sani Abacha stated that, "it is our duty and great privileges as leaders to take decisions that will shapen the destiny of our subregion". And it would be a great pity if the leaders were now to squander the success so far achieved, "though self-reliance and steadfastness of purpose because we have suddenly lost courage in our collective strength".

Gambia's President, Yahaya Jammeh rested behind Nigerian saying no effort must be spared in restoring legality and constitutionality to Sierra Leone' adding that ECOWAS must guard against indecisive politics …[30]

The Nigerian Journal of International Affairs (Vol. 127, No. 3 & Vol. 36 No. 9) gave an extensive composition of ECOMOG and its activities to fully grasp its operations and excerpt is given below.

3.3 COMPOSITION OF ECOMOG

On the 24 August 1993 ECOMOG forces consisting of a battalion group from Nigeria landed on the shores of Freetown with the mandate to put an end to the hostilities and to restore law and order. The force was later joined by troops from Ghana, Guinea, Gambia, Senegal and Mali[31].

3.3.1 Gambia Contingent. The Gambia Contingent (GAMCON) is company strength. The GAMCOY was equipped with personal rifles, signal sets and medical orderlies. The logistics outfit for the GAMCOY is very small due to their strength in Operation Liberty. However, the lack of standardization in weapons, equipment, logistics, medical facilities and delay in the payment of operation allowances have great effect on the morale of the troopls[32].

3.3.2 Ghana Contingent. The Ghana Contingent (GHANCON) was about brigade strength. The GHANCON include some Navy and Air Force personnel. The equipment of GHANCON includes heavy mortar and Armoured Personnel Carriers (APC). The payment of operation allowances to the GHANCON rations, medical facilities and spares are made available to the contingent from the home government. The problem with the GHANCON was the non-standardization of communication equipment and weapons with that of Nigerian Contingent (NIGCON). The GHANCON logistics back-up, vehicle workshop, medical facilities and the payment of operation allowances was better organized. These postures usually affect the morale of other contingents when they make a comparative analysis. Cases of indiscipline among the officers and soldiers are dealt with within the units no matter the magnitude[33].

3.3.3 Guinea Contingent. The Guinea Contingent (GUCON) was battalion strength. A language barrier is the major problem, as many of them could not speak English Language. The few interpreters are concentrated in the ECOMOG headquarters. There are disparities in their weapons, equipment and uniforms when compared with other contingents like NIGCON, GHANCON and Mali Contingent (MALICON) which make servicing assistance from other contingent difficult. There are cases of indicsipline among the troops, but these acts are covered on the excuses of language difficulties. The contingent is paying her troops monthly while some contingents are paying their troops quarterly. The GUCON main weapon was the multi-barrel artillery gun. Most of other contingents saw the weapon for the first time.

3.3.4 Mali Contingent. The Mali Contingent (MALICON) Operation Sandstorm was a group consisting of a small force. MALICON was faced with the problems of vehicles, communication equipment and logistics back-up. MALICON are French-speaking troops, so language barrier could not make them mix fully with other English speaking contingents like NIGCON, GHANCON among others. The problems faced by MALICON are inadequate vehicles, communication equipment and logistics back-up.

3.3.5 Nigerian Contingent. The Nigerian Contingent (NIGCON) arrives Sierra Leone with a battalion group as part of ECOMOG Forces. The

battalion could not cover her areas of responsibilities (AOR) effectively due to lack of adequate troops, logistics, communication and medical facilities. These shortcomings necessitated the need to reinforce the unit with more battalions. Two more battalions were added and at present NIGCON is about a division strength, and it was supported by Navy and Air Force. The Force faced the problems of delay in the payment of operation allowances, insufficient rations, vehicle spares and this gave rise to cases of indiscipline as soldiers were sometimes caught looting and engaging on trading. These acts have negative effect on NIGCON and it could be solved if the peacekeeping efforts are harmonized by ECOWAS.

3.3.6 <u>Senegal Contingent</u>. The Senegal Contingent (SENCON) was a battalion strength with its organic weapons. The logistics outfits of SENCON are controlled directly from the home government. The delays in delivery of some suppliers have great effect on the troops. During the "Operation Octopus" launched by the NPFL on 15 October,1992, ECOMOG Headquarters had to direct NIGCON to supply the SENCON with some ammunition for their small arms. Cases of indiscipline among the contingent is low, this could be as a result of the prompt payment of operation allowances to its troops and the dependent on ECOMOG Headquarters for logistics back-up.

3.4 TECHNICAL PROBLEMS

3.4.1 Logistics. In Operation Sandstorm, it was difficult to effect repairs on a broken down vehicle or equipment belonging to another contingent. This was so because of the non-availability of enough spares. There was a problem of irregular re-supply of rations to the contingents. While some contingents received both composite and raw rations, some received only raw rations. The payment of operation allowances for some contingents are delayed while some contingents received theirs regularly. The medical facilities which are available often run out of drugs, or sometimes they are faced with problem of insufficiency. The sick or wounded sometimes buy their drugs from the open chemist after prescription. All these pose problems to commanders in field.

3.4.2 Equipment. The equipment in ECOMOG inventory varied according to the Table of Tools and Equipment (TOTE) of the different countries contributing troops. The equipment variations are in personal weapons like self-loading riffles (SLR), Kalashnikov and support weapons like mortars, anti-tank recoilless riffles, rocket propelled grenades (RPG) machine guns (MG). Vehicles and other personal equipment also varied from one contingent to another. The Nigerian contingent had artillery pieces like the 105mm Pack Howitzer (PH) guns, 122mm Howiter (D-30) and the Field Howitzer 155mm, (FH-177B) guns. It also had ZSU-23-4

Shilka anti-aircraft guns. At the start of the operation, most of the troops were not familiar with the equipment of their fellow comrades in arms whom they would operate with side by side for a period of time.

The implication of the non-standardization of ECOMOG equipment was that servicing assistance is restricted only to the users of such equipment. For example, Ghana contingent would be handicapped to assist Nigerian contingent to service her artillery guns, especially when not committed. Similarly, the Malian contingent would find it difficult to render any assistance to Sierra Leone technically in the field due to the variation of equipment. If there were common TOTE for troops from all the countries, or a centralized equipment source, it would give room for mutual servicing assistance among the troops and units in Sierra Leone. The UN Missions, for example, always give guidelines as to what equipment troops are required to bring with them. This is applicable to all the UN Peacekeeping Operations[34].

3.4.3 <u>Training</u>. The ECOMOG Peacekeeping Mission is the second military operation to be carried out by ECOWAS since inception in 1973. There are differences in the level of training of the individual countries and this affected their performance in the subregional peace operation. There are problems of accidental discharges, poor weapon handling and poor tactical handling of situations by the troops. Operation of this nature,

especially being the second for West African Armed Forces, there is the need to harmonize the training. A joint military training is essential. The joint training could go beyond the joint military shooting competitions organized by the International Commission for Military Sports (CISM). Nigeria/Ghana military exercise could be held, Mali/Sierra Leone joint Field training exercise (FTX) could be conducted, while military representative from other West African countries are invited as observers. This approach would harmonize our military training in the subregion. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), similar subregional organizations usually conduct NATO military exercises involving member-countries and others as observers. The aim of such exercises could be to harmonize training and equipment. The ECOWAS could harmonize military training in the subregion by conducting such military exercises at least once in 5 years[35].

There is the need to make maximum use of our military establishment regularly. Officers and soldiers could be sent on courses in fellow West African countries. For example, Ghana could send 10 Officers to Nigeria, while Nigeria too should send same number to Ghana to attend the same or similar course. Same approach too could be done between Mali and Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea.

3.4.4.<u>Morale and Discipline</u>. The morale of troops are very low due to late payment of operation allowances, insufficient ratio and lack of medical facilities. There are cases of indiscipline among the troops in Sierra Leone, such as extortion of money and values from motorists, trading by soldiers and palm wine tapping to mention a few. These were as a result of late payment of operation allowances and to some extent insufficient ration to troops[36].

3.4.5 <u>Efficiency</u>. The peacekeeping efforts would not enhance combat efficiency. The non-availability of spares, the unserviceable equipment and vehicles by individual countries makes the ECOMOG operations in Sierra Leone highly inefficient.

3.4.6 <u>Over-dependence</u>. The over-dependence by the economically weak countries on the economically viable ones, for example, Nigerians were calling on the Federal Government to reduce her spending on ECOMOG operation while Ghana Government threatens to pull out its troops from the operation. However, the problem of over-dependence could be reduced to the barest minimum by working out modalities. This could include weak countries to pay or contribute less, while the economically viable countries like Nigeria, Ghana and others could pay or contribute more than countries like Gambia, Guinea ad Mali.

3.4.7 Fear of Domination. There could be the fear of domination and dictation of action on ECOWAS by the highest contributors. The weaker countries' views could be taken with less seriousness, especially if it is in contrast with that of the ECOMOG's financier. the UN and US Affairs easily come to mind. It is known that US is the highest financier of UN, hence she dictates to the UN her wishes. However, these fears could be alleviated by ECOWAS, if all the members have equal vote irrespective of their contributions to the organization[37].

3.4.8 Language Barrier. Language barrier is one of the factors militating against ECOMOG operation in Sierra Leone. For example, the French-speaking troops from Mali and Guinea find it difficult to communicate effectively in English language. While on the other hand, the English-speaking troops from Nigeria, Ghana among others do not understand French. This problem could be overcome by the use of interpreters, while efforts could be made to teach French and English languages to our troops in the subregion as part of military training. Subregional exercises among member-state could also assist in Language Training[38].

3.5 DEFENCE PACT

Some of the trooping contributing countries have defence agreement with their colonial masters. This to some extent affect their

approach to subregion. For example, the French-speaking countries like Mali and Guinea with France. There is the possibility that France would not want her colonies in the subregion to join their military equipment or supplies with other non-France allied in the subregion. However, less economic and military dependence on France by Francophone countries through encouragement and assistance by richer countries within the subregion would reduce the problem.

3.6 ECOWAS' FINANCIAL STRENGTH

ECOWAS member-countries' financial contribution was deficient in maintaining peacekeeping efforts in the subregion. Rather than allowing the individual member-countries to finance her contingent, ECOWAS could sought assistance from other regional organizations like the UN, OAU, the United Arab Leagues (UAL), European Union (EU) and others for financial and logistics supports. ECOWAS is handicapped in providing the experienced manpower requirements to coordinate the resource. Hence, it favourved the decentralization through the individual countries. ECOWAS has no subregional military forces that could have provided the experienced manpower it required[39].

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CHAPTER FOUR

4.0 THE LIBERATION OF SIERRA LEONE

Major F. Ojo of the Nigerian Army gave an account of how President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was restored in his book, "How We Captured Freetown February, 1998.

Recently, the guns boomed at the Nnamdi Azikiwe International Airport, Abuja as the then Head of State, late General Sani Abacha, who was also ECOWAS Chairman received with full honour President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on his arrival from Conakary.

The honour reserved for visiting Heads of State had more than a traditional ring of truth and symbolism around it. The guns salute to the count of 21 amidst visible shared renewed confidence and smiles on the faces of late General Abacha and the visiting President Kabbah brought closer home at that one important moment. The public appreciation of the dramatic achievement of Nigeria-led ECOMOG who a fortnight earlier overthrew the illegal junta of Major Johnny Koromah in a successful military operation.

President Kabbah could hardly conceal gratitude as he was greeted by several high Nigerian government officials who turned out at the Presidential wing of the airport accompanying the late Head of State, General Sani Abacha. Present at the airport were Service Chiefs and the

ECOMOG Force Commander, Major General Timothy who just flew in from his operational headquarters in Monrovia[40].

Chief Tom Ikimi was inside Freetown to congratulate the victorious ECOMOG troops led by the Ground Commander, Colonel Metekishi Maxwell Khobe. Chief Ikimi's mission was also to assess the situation on the ground in the newly liberated capital – Freetown. As an envoy of the ECOWAS Chairman including the important assignment of helping to decide when the constitutionally elected Kabbah should go back and rightly assume power after the long 9 months nightmare of the people of Sierra Leone.

The dramatic events witnessed in Sierra Leone over some weeks. Troops from neighbouring countries which successfully dislodged the junta of Major Koromah has no parallel in the political and military development of this subregion. President Kabbah was elected to replace a predecessor military government of Brig. Gen. Maada Bio was unexpectedly overthrown by Major Johnny Paul Koromah in a coup. He was formerly in detention awaiting trial for an earlier allegation of plotting a coup. It turned out that this was no ordinary coup. The coup leaders immediately formed an alliance with rebel fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Corporal Foday Sankoh. Foday Sankoh and the RUF whose track record of atrocities and mayhem had long struck horrors in most Sierra Leoneans in

the hinterland enjoyed special relations with Liberia's former rebels of the NPFL. Since 1991 the regular troops of the Sierra Leonean army had proved unable to defeat the RUF rebels in war. In the meantime, what started as a mutiny among young elements of the army as a result of the pressure of fighting the rebels ended up as a full-fledged coup against the government of retired General Joseph Momoh. President Momoh stopped short of stamping out the mutiny which later became a coup on the grounds – that fighting in the capital to preserve his power, would do nothing but destroy innocent lives and the capitals, so quietly he went into exile in Conakry.

So, in came the military government of Captain Valentine Strasser. All this time, the rebel RUF war continued unabated with the army still unable to turn the tables against Sankoh even as the military controlled the government. The RUF rebels themselves made the countryside ungovernable as they profited from illegal diamond mining and the world publicity that their activities continued to attract. In order for the Sierra Leonean Army to resist forcefully the RUF rebels, Guinea and Nigeria sent in troops and back-up fire just to relieve the army of security duties in the major towns so that it could concentrate its energies to beat the RUF[41].

Many people had become convinced that returning the country to a democratically elected government might in fact be a way out of the war

as a new government with a democratic mandate would be in a stronger position to reach a peace agreement with the support of most people.

President Kabbah eventually won elections decided in a run-off. The run-off went on as voters defied rampaging uniform men who fired over their head in some parts of the capital. Because the RUF rebels proved unwilling to allow in peacekeeping troops and disarm the peace agreement signed in Abidjan came unstruck the Kabbah government was forced to rely more on the militiamen of the Kamajor hunters of his Mende ethnic group who had earlier assisted the army. Some army officers complained of President Kabbah's heavy reliance on the Kamajor and this disaffection was later to turn into the coup of 25 May, 1997.

Several dramatic developments quickly followed. ECOWAS and the OAU disappointed by the sudden turn of events opposed the coup and Nigeria trained troops before now based in Sierra Leone in the dual capacity as ECOMOG and under bilateral agreement with President Kabbah's government were put on alert[42].

The coup makers released Koromah from prison along with all imprisoned hardened criminals. The then announced an alliance with rebels of the RUF as Foday Sankoh invited them to join the junta. In a flash, armed men and looters descended on the capital. They looted banks, commercial houses and private homes and killed people who were

fleeing for safety to signal their new authority. The capital, Freetown, had been taken over by total madness as law and orders broke down as never known in any coup.

Many people had believed long before the May 25 take-over that there had been cooperation between elements of the army and the rebel RUF leadership designed to seize power from the elected Kabbah government and to impose the regime of terror. With the turn of events, rebel fighters abandoned their positions in the countryside and swamped Freetown as residents fled in fear. The army was left in no position to protect lives and property. The large number of rebels and the unruly soldiers only encouraged Major Koromah to resist all appeals to step down. The trigger-happy rebels itched for a fight and things became complicated as Major Koromah himself become hostage to the RUF plans to eventually take-over completely.

Though the AFRC junta boasted of ending the war by incorporating the rebels in a people's army, general insecurity persisted in Freetown and in the countryside. In June, following appeals to the junta to step down, ECOMOG gunboats fired warning shots into some of their positions. The rebels and elements of the army reacted by cutting off ECOMOG troops deployed in Freetown.

The AFRC pretending to respond to international pressure including UN Security Council sanction which were being policed by ECOMOG agreed to negotiate. The Committee of Five and the representatives of Major Koromah agreed to continue negotiations towards effective and prompt implementation of the peace plan. The ECOWAS Peace Plan for Sierra Leone provides for the reinstatement of the legitimate government of President Kabbah within a period of six months. The immediate cessation of hostilities, cooperation of the junta with ECOMOG in order to peacefully enforce the sanctions, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants, the provision of humanitarian assistance, return of refugees, immunities and guarantees to the leaders of the May 25, 1997 coup d'etat and modalities for broadening the power base in Sierra Leone[43].

The meeting also renewed its appeals to the international community to provide appropriate humanitarian assistance to the refugees and displaced persons and to facilitate their return, reiterated its appeal to the international community to provide adequate assistance to Sierra Leone's neighbours who have recorded an increased influx of refugees into their territory. They expressed its appreciation to the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity (OAU) for their cooperation with ECOWAS. They appealed to them for material, logistic and financial

support to ECOMOG to enable it carry out the mandate given by the authority of Heads of States of Government and the UN Security Council[44].

The Committee thanked General Lansana Conte, President of the Republic of Guinea, Head of State, and the Government and the People of Guinea for the excellent facilities put at their disposal and for the hospitality accorded to all the delegations.

The AFRC pretending to respond to international council sanctions that were being policed by ECOMOG agreed to negotiate. They later backed out the Conakry Peace Agreement on the demand to disarm with the excuses that it was unrealistic to ask them to surrender power to President Kabbah on April 22[45].

In the meantime, they wee busy arming themselves. As ECOMOG operations in Liberia down-sized, it became obvious. Thus, the AFRC felt the situation favoured them as they enjoyed the open support of the government of President Taylor. Therefore, the temptation to engage ECOMOG before it was fully deployed in Sierra Leone increased.

The junta planted landmines at various points around Freetown to hinder ECOMOG's movement. They had acquired assault on ECOMOG to stop them from deploying the junta's propaganda machinery and busied it with abusing anybody who did not agree with their hold on the country. At frequent intervals they phone the BBC to cry 'wolf' suggesting ECOMOG

was planning to attack them. By the first week of February the AFRC junta had clearly decided that it was time to push against ECOMOG[46].

ECOMOG had then deployed in large areas around the international airport at Lungi and dominated the entire surroundings to permit its aircraft to operate. The AFRC believing that it had advantage attacked the ECOMOG camp in the first week of February. The attack signalled the start of the offensive planned by ECOMOG. A week after, ECOMOG troops fought their way into the capital, the State House and inflicted a defeat on the Major Koromah junta. The battle for Freetown took seven days with ground and air assaults.

The AFRC troops and RUF rebels proved no match for ECOMOG, thousands of residents welcomed the victorious ECOMOG troops into Freetown cheering them. In no time, ECOMOG had secured the whole of Freetown and members of the public joined in arresting members of the deposed government.

In a daring move, ECOMOG jets forced two helicopters carrying senior members of the deposed junta trying to flee to land in Monrovia, and arrested the rebels. After their defeat in Freetown and with Major Koromah on the run, remnants of the junta forces joined by the RUF had carried their fights to other towns. The Kamajor militiamen who had

become allies to ECOMOG in the recent fighting had continued to fight them back[47].

The picture of ECOMOG as liberating force was illustrated around the diamond mining town of Bo, where residents who had fled the fighting between the Kamajors and the junta force followed ECOMOG troops as they made their entry into the town to take it over. The deposed Major Koromah was his own enemy from day one. There were signs long before they struck that Sierra Leone had been fed up with coups. The fact was reflected in the opposition and boycotts that remained in effect by a large segment of the population until the overthrow by ECOMOG. The deadly alliance between Koromah and the RUF rebels was the second factor that contributed to their rejection.

But the great mystery about the elements within the Sierra Leonean Armed Forces which were behind the junta, is what gave them the confidence that they could defy or even take on ECOMOG or Nigerian troops. The irony war across the battleline in Sierra Leone before the war, was that Major Koromah's forces were up against battle-tested officers and soldiers known to ECOMOG, especially to Nigerian commanders, but for a long time up till the May 25 Major Koromah coup, Nigerian troops served as a training team using a full-size battalion between ECOMOG and the troops allied to the RUF, they fought with greater motivation to dije to the

fact that the fighting was one home grounds with psychological advantage, the scales still tilted against them. For they were not only fighting against ECOMOG supported by superior Nigerian firepower but against Nigerian commanders and troops who had in fact trained the. Several ECOMOG-Nigerian soldiers in the battle for Freetown fought not only to dislodge the junta but psychologically to teach the Sierra Leone military a lesson that 'you don't pick a fight with your trainer and expect to win easily'.

Major General Victor Malu, the former Force Commander of ECOMOG who was partly responsive for the battle plan to dislodge the junta, was in fact the Chief of Staff and Director of Operations in ECOMOG between 1992-93 when ECOMOG fought a successful war against the former NPFL rebels. Several Sierra Leone contingents served in ECOMOG since its inception in 1990 including serving under General Malu's command[48].

Among the national contingents in ECOMOG, Sierra Leone troops have often been considered the least professional soldiers. During the 1990 fiesta, then ECOMOG Field Commander, Major General Joshua Dogonyaro (rtd.) almost court-marshaled the most senior Sierra Leone Commander for his failure to push NPFL in a decisive battle against NPFL.

Ghanaian and Nigerian troops had to be rushed to assist the Sierra Leonean soldiers to hold the line.

Yet another fact that motivated ECOMOG troops against the AFRC forces including the rebel RUF is the lessons learnt from operations that a decisive push against a rebel force in the end saves time and resources. This is one thing that sealed the fate of Major Koromah's mutinous soldiers of the ousted junta and their rebel collaborators.

4.1 THE RETURN OF PRESIDENT AHMED TEJAN KABBAH

After a successful take-over of Freetown and full control of Sierra Leone by ECOMOG forces in February, President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was reinstated to power on March 10, 1998, a month to the scheduled time of April 22, 1998.

On assuming duty, President Kabbah sentenced 4 civilians including Foday Sankoh, the rebel leader to death on treason charges in December 22, 1998. Others include 5 journalists namely Mildred Hanciles, Prince Nico, Amadu Jailoh, Manbso Nbomba Turay and Conrad Roy. This action was what precipitated the resumption of rebellion by the RUF. The government extended the imposed curfew in Freetown from 10.00pm to 6.30am instead of the previous midnight to 6.00am – amid wide fears of advance on Sierra Leone by the rebels. ECOMOG forces and civilian militia patrols steeped up security in and around Freetown[48].

Although ECOMOG and the government backed Kamajor militia group have claimed recent success against the rebel alliance, fighting continued and thousands of people have been killed, raped and maimed by the rebels in a revenge against the government of Sierra Leone and ECOMOG. The government had accused president Charles Ghankey Taylor of Liberia of giving support to the rebels who operate out of remote jungle bases.

Apparently worried by the events in Sierra Leone, Nigeria consulted her regional allies in the first week of January 1999 as both rebels and government claim control of key points of Freetown. This was as a result of series of rebel advances. On January 7, 1999, Nigeria's then Head of State, General Abdulsalam Alhaji Abubakar met the ECOWAS Executive Secretary, Mr. Lansana Konyate to discuss the situation. General Abubakar also held discussions with President of Guinea on the issue especially as Guinea is the second largest contributor of forces to ECOMOG after Nigeria[49].

The battle between rebels and ECOMOG continued with heavy shelling that caught deep into rebel ranks preventing them from retreating. Although the rebels had later taken the State House on 5 January, ECOMOG forces controlled strategic places especially the airport and the main army barracks. More than 200 rebels were killed in Jini, a place

about 17 kilometers east of Freetown, between Sunday 3 January 1999 to Tuesday 5 January 1999. Realizing the need to re-enforce ECOMOG, President Tejan Kabbah sought for more troops to Freetown. Nigeria also did it. In London, Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook confirmed that Britain had contacted her "key allies" in Europe and the United States urging them to provide logistics and financial support to the Nigerian forces in Sierra Leone[50].

4.2 PEACE INITIATIVES

There were series of diplomatic efforts at resolving the fractious war in Sierra Leone. Togo brokered the initial effort. The Togolese Foreign Minister, Mr. Joseph Koffigoh and his Ivorien counterparts Mr. Amara Essy headed for Freetown from Abidjan enroute Conakry to meet President Tejan Kabbah, Mr. Foday Sankoh and detained leader of the Revolutionary United Front and Mr. Bockarie who rejected Kabbah's ceasefire considering a truce in an effort to reduce the crisis[51].

4.3 ECOMOG REGAINS CONTROL OF FREETOWN

The agile forces under ECOMOG fought gallantly before gaining control of the State House from the rebel forces fighting the government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah on Monday January 11 1999. Much of Freetown lay in ruins after retreating rebels' murder civilian, started fires and looted shops.

On January 7 1999, Sierra Leone's President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah and rebel leader Foday Sankoh have agreed to a ceasefire and further negotiations. President Ahmed Kabbah had confirmed this with a cassette-tape which bore a message from Sankoh to his men ordering them to stop fighting at once to save innocent lives.

The Peace Plan proposed by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah with the rebels was supported by Sierra Leone's Parliament. The Parliament has decided that the accord continues to provide a viable framework for the resolution of the conflict. President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah made it clear that the framework for peace talks with the rebels would be the Abidjan Peace Accord signed in 1996 by him and Sankoh which sought to recognize the RUF as a bona fide political movement after five years of armed insurrection. The Parliament has recommended that the accord should be updated to a comprehensive framework reflecting current realities on the ground[52].

4.4 CEASEFIRE AND LIBERIAN INVOLVEMENT IN THE SIERRA LEONEAN CRISIS

After a record of heavy casualty figures on the parts of both the ECOMOG,RUF and the civil populace of Freetown, the waltzing group reached an agreement for a ceasefire. The Peace move was initiated by President Tejan Kabbah and brokered by President Charles Ghankey Taylor

of Liberia. The United States at the instance of Mr. Sheffer, an envoy of the US Secretary of State, Madeleine Albright, supported this. Mr. Sheffer was in Sierra Leone to show US support to ECOMOG, discuss on amnesty and humanitarian issues. The RUF according to Mr. Taylor, agreed to the ceasefire for his intervention.

However, it was clear that the rebels in Sierra Leone received serious supports for President Taylor of Liberia. The British Foreign Secretary, Mr. Robin Cook, confirmed Liberia's support to the rebels when he said, "we believe that there is very credible evidence that they are supporting the rebels". Although Mr. Charles Taylor has denied Liberian Government's involvement in the crisis, he has confirmed that some Liberians are fighting among the Sierra Leonean rebels as mercenaries. But one other reasons to believe Taylor's involvement is his confession that "with our knowledge of Sankoh is part of the problems in Sierra Leone and should be part of the solution".

Mr. Charles Taylor's involvement in the internal affairs of Sierra Leone earned him a serious warning from Nigeria and calls for the international court to charge him for crime against humanity, aiding and abetting terrorism, gross human rights violations and other charges.

Thursday, January 13, 1999 in a terse statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nigeria warned Liberia and other countries to

stop supporting the Sierra Leonean rebels. The Federal Government of Nigeria stated that it is regrettable that the RUF rebels in their misadventure continue to receive active support from a number of countries, some of which are members of ECOMOG and the OAU. According to the government, the actions and policies of these countries not only subvert the principles and collective decision of the subregion and other Organizations, but also jeopardize bilateral relations among states[53].

From the above excerpt of Mausah, we can clearly see the immense contributions made by Nigeria and other allied West African countries in bringing about peace in the region. This is undoubtedly a bold step and a new dimension in the politics of global peacekeeping.

4.5 LESSONS

The events of Sierra Leone and the historical background of Sierra Leone conflict are replete with lessons even though the conflict has not been concluded. The lessons that are being drawn here therefore, are with respect to the aspect of ECOMOG peace enforcement up to 2000.

The first objective of Nigerian troops involvement in Sierra Leone was to relieve the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone of some internal security duties to enhance the retention of Sierra Leone contingent in ECOMOG. The second objective was to safeguard the ECOMOG Forward Operation Base (FOB) in Sierra Leone, that is, land, air and sea ports[54].

This then graduated to the present state of conflict. To restore legitimate government, ECOMOG troops and to flush out the AFRSL and RUF rebels from Freetown. Since the events in Sierra Leone are still unfolding, the lessons will therefore be limited to th stage of the conflict as at 2000. The lessons are:

4.5.1 <u>National Interest</u>. Nigerian government led ECOMOG to Sierra Leone, I believe, without any goals and objects at least. No country in the world, whether developed, developing or underdeveloped engages in such costly operations without any goals and objectives of the nation, whether overtly or covertly at heart. But there is Nigeria, earlier in Liberia and now in Sierra Leone wasting huge human and materials resources without any take home gains. Much as Nigeria is operating as a component of the whole body of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone, its national interest need be clearly defined to all Field Commanders before they depart the shores of Nigeria. The Commanders needed a briefing of what our national interest is. By this, they will be in position to assess the situation in the overall interest of either the cause or the interest of their country. Personal interest need not be allowed to override the role and status of whoever is in command of the contingent. Many Commanders are fighting in Sierra Leone without knowing their national interest in the conflict. The same is

applicable in other developing countries involved in conflicts in other parts of the world.

4.5.2 <u>Planning and Staffing</u>. The nerve-centre of any military operations in the headquarters (HQ). When HQ is set up, it must be properly staffed with officers and men with requisite knowledge of the ground and qualifications. Where people that lack the experience and knowledge are deployed in sensitive posts, the consequences cannot be over-emphasized. HQ need to plan in advance for the arrival and reception of troops for reinforcement and when on the ground before launching them to operation. Where troops are launched straight from ship or aircraft to the theatre of operation is contrary to the professional teaching. This created disaster in the battlefield.

4.5.3 <u>Respect for due Process of Democracy</u>. Leaders need ensure that they get into leadership position through the democratic process free and fair. Anything to the contrary leads to conflict within that country. When in power, there is need for leaders to keep to the number of terms allowed by the constitution and not attempt to stay a day longer than necessary. Most crises in Africa and developing world today is as a result of this.

4.5.4. <u>Dialogue</u>. As observed in 1999, Sierra Leone President, has accepted to negotiate with rebels unconditionally. This shows that

dialogue is the answer to all conflicts and there is need to pursue it instead of resorting to war. No conflict has ever been resolved in the battlefield. After all said and done, the warring parties must negotiate and dialogue for peace to reign and the conflict to be resolved.

4.5.5 Intelligence. Intelligence is described as processed information. If the saying that a "general who goes into battle without intelligence support is like a blindfolded boxer in the ring" is true, inception of ECOMOG force in Sierra Leone proves the point. Not much intelligence information about the enemy was passed to the lower level. Even when little information about the enemy was known, it was kept off from the Field Commanders by higher headquarters only to be passed on when it was too late. Sometimes intelligence information is not taken serious by higher headquarters at Sierra Leone. Example was when it was known that rebels will invade Freetown by Christmas 1998, no action was taken to prevent the invasion by ECOMOG. The formation of HQ ECOMOG in Sierra Leone precluded the intelligence which was inadequately staffed. What was available of intelligence staff tried their best within their limits.

4.5.6 Communications. In all military operations and most especially in conflict situation as in Sierra Leone, success is heavily dependent on communications. Lateral and horizontal communications need to be effective. This also means communication among Army, Navy

and Air Force. A situation which communication is lacking between sub-unit and unit levels and their next higher headquarters spells disaster to the troops.

4.5.7 <u>Logistics Support</u>. The success of any logistics plan depends on resources available and continuous flow of resources and supplies. For any logistics support to be successful, it must be carefully planned to the minutest detail and necessary data must be made available to the logistics team. Funding plays a major role in meeting urgent requirements. Close liaison between staff branches is very important and coordination of efforts would reduce problems. The decision to send troops outside Nigeria must be followed by adequate preparation of the unit and provision of all the requirements necessary to conclude the operation. There is need to launch units only when they are fully kitted an medical requirements be given adequate attention.

4.5.8. <u>Training</u>. The Sierra Leone officers and men were not properly trained as professional army, hence they were unable to stop the initial rebel incursion into Sierra Leone through their border with Liberia. Politicians deliberately kept the army in that form to avoid coup. But unfortunately, it backfired because there was no adequate training and improvement on their military equipment.

4.5.9.Disinvestment. Destabilization of a democratically elected government leads to disinvestment in the country affected like Sierra Leone. The Western countries would not invest in an unstable country. Destabilization of an elected government leads to wanton destruction of lives and property, refugees, rapes, displaced people, crime and burning of houses.

4.5.10 Reduced Level of Education of Citizens. During any conflict, educational institutions are closed and many educational infrastructure are damaged and students are forced to fight against their wish. This reduces the level of education in the affected country like Sierra Leone and thwarts the nation's progress.

4.5.11**Disruption of Economic Activities.** In any country in which exists conflicts, political uncertainty, economic ruptures, social dislocation, agricultural and industrial stagnation, and structural dismemberment are generated. The pamutations and combinations of these factors in turn generate hunger, starvation, disease, poverty and crime in a country like Sierra Leone.

The lessons highlighted above are applicable to any developing country in the world that may be involved in a conflict or conflict resolution, such as the ones we are witnessing now in Sierra Leone.

NOTES

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41. Ibid

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46. ECOMOG Magazine, Vol. 2, No.1, September, 1992 – September, 1993. The Peace Maker.

47. Ibid

48. Ibid

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CHAPTER FIVE

5.0 DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUMMARY

5.1 DISCUSSION

Nations engage in various activities for the sake of national interest. These activities could be at domestic or international milieu. One of such activities at international level was Nigeria's involvement in ECOMOG operations in Sierra Leone. The interest of a national ways guides its foreign policy. But we saw Nigeria in Sierra Leone without national interest at heart. This was evidenced by the fact that our Field Commanders in Sierra Leone were not briefed or put on the track of the Nigeria's national interest.

Before nations set out for any military operations, proper planning and staffing of the operational framework is very necessary. Planning in terms of needed personnel, equipment, time for training and logistical requirements are considered. People of right knowledge and experience are employed and deployed in the battlefield. If proper planning and staffing is defective, this calls for disaster. This was not the case of Nigeria in Sierra Leone. There was inadequate staff.

Our leaders, such as those in Sierra Leone do not respect due process of democracy. Furthermore, these leaders do not keep to the

number of terms allowed by the constitution. They should not attempt to stay a day longer than necessary. Anything contrary to this ill invite political crisis in the country as we saw in Sierra Leone.

President Alhaji Tejan Kabbah of Sierra Leone accepted an unconditional dialogue with the rebels. This was supposed to usher peace in the country if not for the recalcitrance of the RUF rebels.

Intelligence defined as processed information is needed if any military operation is to succeed. This was lacking in the case of our ECOMOG troops, especially the lower levels of commands. The higher commanders hoarded information. These lower level commanders were therefore fighting blindly.

Americans say "Ain't got no communication, ain't got nothing", hence communications which is very vital in operations was not available and where it was available, was not adequate.

All military operations can only be successful with logistics backing. Where transportation, fuel, food, water and medicines are not available for a force in the field, that spells doom for it. ECOMOG troops lacked logistics support and their monthly emoluments were very low compared to their counterparts in the Sierra Leone. This could call for low morale of troops.

Sierra Leone troops were mainly guerrillas. This means ECOMOG troops who are conventionally trained soldiers fought with guerrillas who employed unconventional tactics. ECOMOG troops were left to guess rebel activities.

Destabilization of a country repels investment. No country will like to invest in a conflict-ridden nation. That was why most business communities had to leave Sierra Leone.

A country involved in a conflict has many side effects. Most schools closed and young men are made to fight war. This then sets back the clock of education. The reduction in the level of education causes rise in illiteracy, poverty, hunger, disease and level of crime. Sierra Leone is experiencing all these right now.

5.2 CONCLUSION

This project has x-rayed the crisis in Sierra Leone which has been attributed largely to political, economic and social reason that led the emergence of rebel groupings and their nefarious, objectionable and ignoble activities. The role played by Nigerian-led ECOMOG in uniting the war-torn country is highly recommended in the restoration of democracy in Sierra Leone[55].

All said and done, Nigerian did not imbue the Field Commanders of ECOMOG any national interest. That means Nigerians went to fight in

Sierra Leone without any national objectives either short-term or long-term. Huge human and material resources were wasted in war in a far away country without any take-home gains.

Proper planning and staffing of the ECOMOG operational HQ was lacking. Men with prerequisite knowledge and experience were not sent for the operations. ECOMOG HQ did not plan in advance for the arrival and reception of troops for reinforcement. Troops were launched straight from ships or aircraft contrary to professional teachings.

Sierra Leonean did not respect the process of democracy. It is against democratic principles for any leader to get into leadership position through dubious and unorthodox means and ways. Moreover, Sierra Leonean leaders did not keep to the terms allowed by the constitution, thus leaders stayed longer in power than necessary. This invited outcry by political opponents and this consequently led to rebel activities in the country[56].

President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah accepted an unconditional dialogue with the rebels. This was supposed to usher peace in the country if not for the recalcitrance of the rebels.

There was lack of intelligence for the lower level commanders. Where the intelligence was available, it came late. That means that the lower level commanders fought blindly.

Success in any military operation, such as in Sierra Leone, was dependent on effective communications. Communications were not available between levels of command laterally and horizontally. Also effective communication was lacking between Army, Navy and Air Force, thus spelling disaster.

Success of any logistics plan depends on resources available and continuous supplies to the field troops. Funding played an important role. Close liaison between staff branches is very important. Decision to send troops to Sierra Leone was not followed by an adequate preparation of the troops and provision of all the requirements necessary to conclude the operation[57].

Sierra Leone Army was not properly trained as professionals. This was why they could not repel the initial incursion from Liberia into Sierra Leone. Politicians deliberately kept the Army in that form for fear of coup. But this backfired because they lacked training and equipment.

Foreign investors abhor conflict. Thus, any country involved in conflicts looses its investments and repels any investor intending to engage in business. The conflict seriously affected Sierra Leonean economy[58].

In a conflict-ridden country like Sierra Leone, reduced level of education of citizens is very apparent. Young men are forced to leave

school and fight in the war. Educational institutions and also educational infrastructure are closed or destroyed[59].

5.3 IMPLICATIONS

Lessons learnt from this work could be used by any developing country to guide it in tackling problems the lessons highlighted.

A nation would take its national interest serious when embarking on such costly adventures.

Proper planning and staffing would be carried out by a nation wen launching its troops into war or conflict for effective and successful operations.

Political leaders in developing country would learn to know that to be out of step of constitutional provisions could be disastrous.

The study will bring home the point to politicians that dialogue is very important especially an unconditional one.

Importance of gaining intelligence about your enemy in a battlefield cannot be over-emphasized.

Uses of communication between levels of command and among Army, Navy and Air Force are very imperative.

Logistics support for any operation is the sine quo non for success in battle.

Military training would not be denied to military or abandoned by any government for political expedition as this might backfire.

Destabilization in a country precludes foreign investment.

Countries could do all they can to prevent conflict. This is because conflict could cause reduced level of education, economic ruptures, social dislocation and political uncertainty.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations were made for any developing country involved in conflict or conflict resolution:

a. National interest should be unveiled to Field Commanders before setting out of our shores.

b. Proper planning of operations and staffing of the HQ should be made.

c. Our leaders should respect due process of democracy.

d. West African leaders should always engage in dialogue before and during conflicts.

e. Intelligence on battlefield should be readily available to battle commanders.

f. Effective communication should be available in the battlefield.

g. Logistics supports should be readily available to the troops.

h. Nations should always train their armed forces.

i. There should be peace in our nations in order to lure investment, avoid political, social and economic disasters.

j. Troops' welfare should be accorded importance.

k. There should be standardization of weapons and training.

5.5 SUMMARY

This write-up began with historical background of Sierra Leone. This was followed by looking at the origin of the Sierra Leone crisis. We then continued by historical review of peacekeeping under UN and narrowed to subregional peacekeeping, such as ECOMOG. Under ECOMOG, we glanced at the contingents in Sierra Leone. At the end of this we brought the lessons that emanated from the ECOMOG operations. Finally, we arrived at discussions, conclusion, implications, recommendations and summary.

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