DEMOCRACY AS A PATH TO PEACE AFTER WAR: A CASE STUDY OF SIERRA LEONE

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(10636417)

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LEGON SEPTEMBER 2019
DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of an original research conducted by me, under the supervision of Dr Daniel Dramani Kipo-Sunyehzi. I further declare that no part of it has been submitted anywhere else for any other purpose, and that all sources referred to have been duly acknowledged.

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ALICE DE-GRAFT MENDS DR. DANIEL DRAMANI KIPO-SUNYEHZI
( STUDENT ) ( SUPERVISOR )

DATE...................................... DATE......................................
DEDICATION

This work is dedicated first to God Almighty, whose protection was with me throughout the dissertation and my study period at the Legon Centre for International Affairs and diplomacy (LECIAD). It is also dedicated to Mrs. Sylvia Mends and Leslie Martey, whose encouragement and support kept me going during my study period.
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My first acknowledgement is to God, whose favor and protection helped me complete my dissertation. My deepest gratitude also goes to the De-Graft Mends, Amponsah and Martey families for their support, guidance and prayers.

I would like to say thank you to my supervisor, Dr Daniel D. Kipo-Sunyehzi, whose guidance and suggestions enabled me to complete this work. I wish to also thank the staff and faculty at LECIAD for their kind advice and support.
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<tr>
<td>APC</td>
<td>All People’s Party</td>
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<tr>
<td>AFRC</td>
<td>Armed Forces Revolutionary Council</td>
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<td>AU</td>
<td>African Union</td>
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<td>AUEOM</td>
<td>African Union Election Observer Mission</td>
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<td>CSO</td>
<td>Civil Society Organisations</td>
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<td>DDR</td>
<td>Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration</td>
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<tr>
<td>ECOMOG</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group</td>
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<td>ECONEC</td>
<td>ECOWAS Network for Electoral Commissions</td>
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<td>ECOWAS</td>
<td>Economic Community of West African States</td>
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<td>EO</td>
<td>Executive Outcomes</td>
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<td>ECSL</td>
<td>Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>EU</td>
<td>European Union</td>
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<td>HI</td>
<td>Humanitarian Intervention</td>
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<td>HRC-SL</td>
<td>Human Rights Commission of Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>ICISS</td>
<td>International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty</td>
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<td>IL</td>
<td>International Law</td>
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<td>IO</td>
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<td>NECSL</td>
<td>National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>NGC</td>
<td>National Grand Coalition</td>
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<td>NPRC</td>
<td>National Provisional Ruling Council</td>
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<td>Acronym</td>
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<tr>
<td>OAU</td>
<td>Organization of Africa Unity</td>
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<td>PLP</td>
<td>Peace and Liberation Party</td>
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<td>PPRC</td>
<td>Political Parties Registration Commission</td>
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<td>RUF</td>
<td>Revolutionary United Front</td>
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<tr>
<td>R2P</td>
<td>Responsibility to Protect</td>
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<tr>
<td>SADF</td>
<td>South African Defence Force</td>
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<tr>
<td>SLPP</td>
<td>Sierra Leone People’s Party</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Sierra Leone Army</td>
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<tr>
<td>UN</td>
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<td>UNDP</td>
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<td>UNIPSIL</td>
<td>United Nations Integrated Peace building Office in Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>UNOMSIL</td>
<td>United Nations Observer Group in Sierra Leone</td>
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<td>UNSC</td>
<td>United Nations Security Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>USA</td>
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<td>USSR</td>
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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the Sierra Leonean Civil War that broke out in 1991 and lasted until 2002. The study traces the causes of the war, its effect on the country and the efforts that have been made so far to practice democracy in the post-war era. The methodology that was applied in this study comprised the use of qualitative research approaches to review secondary data on the subject matter as well as the analysis of primary data obtained through interviews. The findings show that the causes of the war can be directly and indirectly linked to pre-colonial factors including development disparities between the capital, Freetown, which the British treated as a Colony and the other regions which they treated as a Protectorate. This chasm deepened into the post-independence years and divided the country along ethnic lines. Coupled with the malaise that bedeviled the country’s economy, the war inevitably broke out soon after its neighbor, Liberia, went up in flames. The study established, as per the conclusions of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), that women, children and the youth were most affected by the war. The study also found that the country has made great strides in deepening democracy after the war period. And, finally, the study concludes with some recommendations including the need for the country to strengthen its pro-democracy institutions, starting with the National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (NECSL).
CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background to the research problem

The West African State of Sierra Leone, between the years 1991 and 2002, was involved in one of the most protracted conflicts on the continent of Africa. This conflict claimed the lives of over fifty thousand people. The warring factions perpetrated all sorts of violence and violated the human rights of the citizens with acts of rape, murder, torture, maiming, recruitment of child soldiers and other atrocities. These acts of impunity led to efforts by the international community to intervene in the crisis due to its protracted nature and human rights violations. Efforts were made by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through the ECOWAS Monitoring Ceasefire Group (ECOMOG) to bring the conflict under control. Subsequent to that, various diplomatic endeavours ensued which led to the signing of internationally recognized accords like the Lomé Peace Accord in 1999 until the end of the war in 2002.

This study focuses on Sierra Leone’s peace through democracy, post-war. It seeks to look at efforts made by the state itself after the interventions to ensure that its adoption of democracy helped it to stabilize. The analysis also includes efforts by the international community to ensure that Sierra Leone maintained its peace through the practice of democracy. Using the post-war period of as a reference point, this study seeks to assess how the pursuit of democracy after the war has stabilized the country.
1.1 Statement of the Problem

The Mano River region comprising Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia witnessed scores of political conflicts in the 1990s. The states in this sub-region within West Africa were unable to effectively manage their domestic politics, resulting in violent conflicts in Liberia (starting from December 24, 1989) and Sierra Leone (starting from March 23, 1991). This consequently created instabilities in other states such as Guinea and neighbouring Côte d’Ivoire. These issues, thus, compelled some regional and world leaders through ECOWAS and other international organizations to push for an intervention in Sierra Leone to deal with the crisis.

The conflict in Sierra Leone was fueled by dissatisfaction among the youth who felt that the country’s diamond resources were not benefiting them. Led by Foday Sankoh, they accused the government of corruption, marginalization of the youth, among others, and thus wanted a change in leadership. At the early stages of the conflict, it was viewed by the international community as an internal issue per the principle of sovereignty as enshrined in the UN Charter, where Articles 2(4) and 2(7) mandate all states to protect their citizens and manage their internal conflicts without interference from other states. However, as time went by and efforts by the state failed to resolve the crisis, it became apparent that the international community needed to intervene to prevent more humanitarian disasters.

This prompted the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS through ECOMOG to intervene. In fact, efforts were made both militarily and diplomatically, like the ECOMOG forces pushing the rebel forces out of the cities and through the Lomé and Abidjan accords. All these efforts, however, did not end the conflict. This then prompted the UN Security Council to establish the United
Nations Mission on Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) to intervene. Britain also sent in their troops before the conflict finally ended in 2002. As a matter of fact, after the conflict ended, some troops still remained for a while before they left like UNAMSIL which left in 2006.

Asangna attributes the conflict to political reasons such as indirect rule reliant on traditional authority and paternalism; the abolishment of a multi-party system in 1978, the absence of a strong central government, failed development strategies, the misuse of state resources and flawed post-independent political structure. These assertions, thus, raise questions about how leaders emerged in the country and what they did with the power they acquired.

Several scholars have written about the causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone and the parties that helped in resolving it. However, there is a huge literature gap on how the state is doing post-war, especially on its road to peace through a return to democracy. This study therefore seeks to add on to the literature on how Sierra Leone is doing with the return to democracy as a means of ensuring peace, post-war. What is significant about this study is that it combines both primary and secondary data to analyze the current situation in the country.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To examine the causes of the Sierra Leonean Civil War.
- To examine the effects of the Sierra Leonean Civil War.
- To examine how Sierra Leone returned to democracy after the Civil War.
- To examine how Sierra Leone is consolidating democracy after the Civil War.
1.3 Research questions

- What were the causes of the Sierra Leonean Civil War?
- What were the effects of the Sierra Leonean Civil War?
- How did Sierra Leone return to democracy after the Civil War?
- How is Sierra Leone consolidating democracy after the Civil War?

1.4 Scope of the Research

This study focuses on two important epochs in the recent history of Sierra Leone, that is, the period between 1991 and 2002 when the Civil War was fought and 2002 and 2018 when the country experienced two electoral turnovers. It particularly discusses the causes and effects of the war and how the country has stabilized, after the war, through democracy.

1.5 Rationale of the Study

This study seeks to add on to the body of existing literature on how Sierra Leone is doing upon its adoption of democracy in the aftermath of the war. It also seeks to provide basis for further research in this area as not much research already exists on it.

1.6 Theoretical Framework

The theory undergirding this study is the theory of liberal democracy. This theory is used because of the focus on the democratic processes that have taken place in Sierra Leone after the war. According to Adrian Oldfield in an article titled “Liberal Democratic Theory: Some Reflections on Its History and Its Present” the theory first emerged in 17th Century England. Back then, it provided explanations for why medieval Christendom declined and gave way for
the Reformation Age. The theory basically talks about the need for states to observe principles of liberty, human rights and freedoms. John Locke is generally regarded as the father of liberal democratic theory. Other political thinkers of his era who subscribed to liberalism included Montesquieu, the French philosopher.

Modern day democracy takes its roots from the liberal traditions. Montesquieu first propounded the principle of ‘separation of powers’ which Western democracies adopted and have maintained to date. Liberal democracy presently dominates the world, especially after what Samuel Huntington described as the third wave of democracy in his 1991 book, “The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century.” Around Africa and particularly in the West Africa sub-region, most countries started democratizing in the early 1990s. Countries that constitutionally elected new governments included Benin (1991); followed by Mali (1992); and Ghana (1993). This process continued into the New Millennium by which time majority of the countries including Togo, Niger, Nigeria etc. had all enacted new constitutions.

Thus, by the time Sierra Leone’s conflict ended in 2002, liberal democracy was pervasive and fast entrenching itself in the West Africa sub-region. It is important to mention that most West African states, prior to the re-democratization process, had suffered serious instabilities through coups d’état but finally stabilized upon their adoption of democracy. The liberal democratic theory is, therefore, used in this study to explain the processes that Sierra Leone went through to stabilize and consolidate its democracy to the point where it has now achieved the two-turnover-test as prescribed by Huntington.
In other words, liberal democracy is utilized here as a conflict resolution mechanism in a post-war situation where a completely destabilized state has now reorganized itself into a fledgling democratic state. Liberal democracy requires that governance institutions are strengthened to act independently. This study will therefore look at some of the institutions that are helping to consolidate the country’s democracy.

1.7 Literature Review

A myriad of literature exists on the Sierra Leonean conflict, its resolution and the state of the country after the war. These works, though sometimes contradictory, provide a good basis for analyzing the Sierra Leonean conflict and its aftermath. Scholars like Clotilde Asagna, and Kwaku Mawuena espouse the viewpoint that conflicts engulfed the African continent after the Cold War ended in 1991 due to the continent’s dependence on the United States (US) and Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) for aid. They argue that the client state system where corrupt leaders were maintained in exchange for allegiance with a superpower was responsible for this situation. Asangna particularly argues that Africa in the 20th and 21st centuries lacked state structure and political institutions. This is the situation that consequently led to the colonization of the continent by the Belgians, British, French, Portuguese and Spanish.

It is important to mention that the process of decolonization in the late 1950s and early 1960s came with its own lingering challenges. Thus, Ken Ahorsu shares the view that the troubled colonial heritage of Africa is a self-reinforcing fault line that makes the continent susceptible to conflicts.
With regard to the Sierra Leonean conflict, Asangna and Ahorsu disagree on the exact causes of the conflict. While Asangna blames political factors for the conflict, Ahorsu blames Africa’s colonial heritage entirely for all the conflicts on the continent. Despite the diverging views, however, both agree that political mechanisms inherited from British rule still accounted for political instability in Africa, including the experience of Sierra Leone.

The Sierra Leonean conflict received interventions from both ECOWAS and the UN. It was not the first time a country received such international intervention. According to Patrick M. Regan, third party interventions in intra-state conflicts started somewhere in 1944. He defines intrastate conflict as “sustainable armed conflict between groups within a state with a minimum of 200 fatalities.” Regan asserts that the minimum of 200 fatalities demonstrates the intensity and potential for escalation of the conflict. Regan also concedes that the minimum of 200 is short of what is used when defining a war. This serves as a good definition in this study for what intra-state conflict is as many define it in several ways.

Regan again, also classifies intrastate conflict into three. They include the ethnic conflicts (groups that identify with a common or distinct ethnic group or culture), religious conflicts (act in defense of religious beliefs), and ideological differences (groups with different political and economic ideologies). He accordingly classified the Sierra Leonean conflict under the third class, that of political and economic ideologies.

Regan maintains that, for any third-party intervention to be successful, the cause of the conflicts and the protagonists should be known. This helps in resolving the conflict. An example can be
cited in the case of Sierra Leone where the intervention was done to restore a legitimate government of the state. The researcher also says that military intervention in conflicts is just and that economic sanctions do not succeed as much as the former do.\textsuperscript{19}

Regan provides a good definition and his classification of intervention into successful and unsuccessful provides a good groundwork for assessment of this study. Regan also explains why knowing the causes of any conflict helps with intervention. He provides a justification for intervention which is the protection of people.\textsuperscript{20}

Kabia M. John, posits that humanitarian intervention is no longer about giving people food and shelter during crisis but now includes the prevention of crisis in itself, including the protection of innocent or civilian lives. Kabia further indicates that it also involves the provision of protection for victims of war especially women and children, the use of nonviolent strategies and when to use military force. The researcher explains and mentions the changes the theory has gone through in order to save lives and serves as a good basis for understanding the Sierra Leonean intervention which this study looks at.\textsuperscript{21}

Alexander K.O. Frimpong talks about ECOWAS being forced to assume two new tasks: that of managing conflict and promoting democratic governance. Frimpong talks about sovereignty as responsibility, which allows regional neighbors to get recalcitrant leaders to do the right thing. He also talks about the ECOWAS management initiatives and then the successes and failures or challenges and finally concludes by making recommendations like working to reduce the prevalence of conflict and putting in mechanisms to prevent conflicts, so they do not reoccur.\textsuperscript{22}
On the issue of intervention by ECOWAS in states such as Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Cote d’ Ivoire, Kabia mentions its transformation from economic to security organization and asserts that ECOWAS’ transformation has been positive and progressive. He finally concludes by stating that humanitarian intervention is sometimes a good enough justification for the violation of the sovereignty of states and regional organizations like ECOWAS are legitimate and necessary for the maintenance of security in the sub region.²³

Kabia and Regan both agree that intervention in a state is good but disagree on the reasons for intervention. Kabia believes it is very good as it maintains security in the sub region and to protect civilians whereas Regan believes it is necessary due to the failure of economic sanctions over the years in troubled states. Odobo et al talk about how ECOWAS has evolved to conflict management and security frameworks due to the myriad of socio-political crisis in the West African region. They argue that it has made some achievements in conflict management but needs to address issues of poverty, human rights abuses, election issues, corruption and other factors which they say are responsible for the conflicts in the sub region.²⁴ Odobo and Frimpong both agree that ECOWAS has evolved positively in its role as a security organization. They also agree that some changes need to be made. Kabia and Odobo give thumbs up to one of the parties that intervened in the crisis in Sierra Leone; that is ECOWAS.

Jeremy I. Levitt asserts that, in order to reduce the fatalities of conflict, the international community, especially the UN, should be swift in reacting to unconstitutional takeover of power so as to build good democracies. He mentions the ECOWAS intervention in Sierra Leone for
instance and analyzes its basis for intervention on conflicts of its member states. He explains that
democratic states sometimes work together to defend democracy and the rule of law using
treaties, laws and the African Union (AU) and ECOWAS security mechanisms. He also asserts
that humanitarian intervention does not necessarily need Security Council authorization.\textsuperscript{25}

Levitt also states that both the AU and ECOWAS have moved from non-interference to pro-
intervention in its member states’ affairs. He also says that collective security has enforced
conflict resolution in states like Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d’Ivoire and others and that although
AU and ECOWAS both seek to maintain peace and achieve security, their mechanisms differ.
Levitt introduces another organization that intervened in the conflict in Sierra Leone to be
examined, that is the UN. He also talks about unconstitutional changes in government, politics
and leadership, why intervention, all issues this paper seeks to address.\textsuperscript{26} Levitt agrees with
Frimpong and Odobo on changes in the ECOWAS security mechanism but mentions its differing
mechanisms.

Boniface-Yao Gebe talks about how the 1978 protocol on non-aggression did not foresee
international systematic changes of the post-Cold War era. The 1981 mutual assistance on
defense protocol, according to him, was also contradictory and inconsistent with the political
developments in the sub region. Perhaps, only the 1991 protocol on conflict prevention,
resolution, management, peace and security was future-looking. He therefore recommends new
policy directives for institutional and capacity building, especially for conflict prevention and
consolidation of democracy.\textsuperscript{27} Gebe mentions the changes within ECOWAS just like Frimpong
and Odobo. He also agrees with Frimpong that conflict prevention should be priority for
ECOWAS and adds that consolidation of democracy should also be added to the functions of ECOWAS as Frimpong argues that it has failed to prevent conflict in its member states or the recurrence of conflicts in the other states.

J. L. Holzgrefe argues that those against the concept of humanitarian intervention do so based on articles 2(4) and 2(7) of the UN Charter which prevents states from using force against each other. Those for humanitarian intervention also argue that the provisions in article 2(4) are not absolute and do not apply if it is not against a state’s integrity. He also states that others are of the view that article 2(4) disappeared when the security council failed at protecting people’s human rights and thus states are entitled to do so. Holzgrefe also mentions one criticism that scholars that are against the intervention in Sierra Leone cite as reason for why they disagreed with the intervention.

On the issue of basis for intervention, Goldman argues that democratic and non-democratic states do not possess the same level of sovereignty. To him, illegitimate governments (that is undemocratic governments) do not possess sovereignty by the simple fact that they are not vested with power by the citizens. This, to him, is a legal basis for democratic states like the United States to intervene militarily in such areas under certain circumstances. Thus, the absence of equality in itself is basis for a right to intervention. Goldman mentions politics and political leaders but with a twist. To him, Sierra Leone’s continuous coups d’état in itself was enough justification for intervention as they were not democratically chosen.
Holzgrefe discusses the two schools of thought on intervention. He mentions those who agree on intervention on humanitarian grounds and those who disagree due to article 2(7) of the UN Charter. This mention of the opposing sides helps better understand the views of scholars on humanitarian intervention as a concept. Goldman is a scholar who agrees with the intervention in state conflicts. He argues that democratic governments are legitimate and thus can intervene militarily in conflicts that deal with illegitimate government (that is governments not chosen through democracy and elections). Thus, to him a democratic legitimate government qualifies to intervene in an illegitimate government not chosen by its citizens or one trying to take power from a legitimate government.

Punam Chuhan-Pole and Manka Angwafo talk about how well Sierra Leone is doing post war. They mention that over centralization in Freetown was one of the reasons why the conflict began as those outside the city were abandoned. They assert that decentralization is currently ongoing and that donations from donors have them right on track in being self-sufficient as a state and capable of managing their own affairs.

Lucy Scott also questions whether the British intervention in Sierra Leone was actually successful. According to her, some problems existed when they were in the country and some of those problems still exist now. Scott talks about some ex-combatants not receiving any compensation, the fact that the issues that caused the conflict still exist like unemployment and exclusion of some people and other issues of concern. Scott asked what the criterion for a successful intervention was and asked that enormous interference not be confused with enormous humanitarian success.
Mary Kaldor and James Vincent, talk of Sierra Leone being a weak state even after international intervention. They also talk about weak institutions and civil societies, high youth unemployment and the fact that an economic growth has not changed the poor state of the country and thus a regional instability could lead to an ignition of another conflict. Kaldor and Vincent both agree on the fact that Sierra Leone is still a weak state and that the problems it had before the intervention still exists and that care should be exercised as the conflict could reoccur just as Ahorsu and Frimpong have noted.

Danny Hoffman asserts that civilians are specifically targeted by rebels because of the provisions and incentives awarded them due to the humanitarian intervention factor. Hoffman states that although regional bodies and the international community do this to protect civilians, it has rather become a motivating factor for the targeting of innocent people. Danny, thus, calls it the “unfortunate consequence of humanitarian intervention.” Hoffman’s point is very important as it is believed that benefits accrued and atrocities committed against civilians are almost mostly “forgiven” during the quest for peace thus it is also a very important motivator for conflict.

Captain Mashudu Godfrey Ramuhala classifies military intervention on the continent into two; successful and unsuccessful interventions. Ramuhala describes interventions in Sierra Leone for instance, as successful interventions and that of Rwanda and Darfur as unsuccessful interventions. The researcher described continuous conflict, late intervention and unsuccessful interventions as the reasons that accounted for the unsuccessful intervention and successful interventions and a willingness to intervene at the right time as the reason for the success in the successful countries.
Ramulala agrees with Chuhan-Pole’s assertion that Sierra Leone is an example of a successful intervention by the international community. Virginia Page Fortna also posits that the intervention by the international community helps maintain peace in states that have conflicts and helps avoid a slide back. Thus, peacekeeping contributes to the stability of countries in times of conflict.\(^{39}\)

Isiaka Alani Badmus and Dele Ogunmola, say that although UN’s intervention was belated it doused tensions and suspicions due to its neutral third-party position. They, however, argue that although the international community can provide assistance, only Sierra Leoneans can revitalize their economy and rebuild the country.\(^{40}\) Seybolt posits that for an intervention to have short-term effectiveness, it depends primarily on factors within the control of the intervener, rather than factors inherent to the conflict which Badmus, Kuzmina and Autessere disagree with.\(^{41}\) Badmus and Ogunmola, Kuzmina and Autessere are all of the view that intervention in Sierra Leone was good but, ultimately, the onus was on Sierra Leoneans themselves to end conflict totally and retain peace.

Olga Kuzmina mentions some necessary factors sufficient for successful UN peace operations and groups them into three main areas. These include administrative factors (like competent leadership and internal and external coordination among others); local factors (like the credibility of forces and security of parties); and addressing the real causes of the conflict.\(^{42}\) Severine Autesserre says that peacebuilding, primarily, relies on the actions, interests and strategies of the domestic entities. Autessere believes international interventionists seek to make peace prevail but often do not make the intended impact.\(^{43}\)
Eve Massingham builds on humanitarian intervention in a positive way and says that it promises intervention for the world’s vulnerable. Again, she alludes to the fact that there is a universal acceptance that “certain un-civilization,” as she puts it, constitutes a threat to world peace. Massingham criticizes the responsibility to protect, which according to her is just an improvement on the theory of humanitarian intervention. But she does not provide a real assessment of human intervention as the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) is not always required for intervention.44

1.8 Methodology

Academic research, according to Allyson Hughes, can be approached from three main methodologies: qualitative (observational or interview data); quantitative (numeric data) or mixed methods (use of both types)45. In the view of Nima Shakouri qualitative research is presently enjoying popularity because of the realization that words and pictures appear to be more informative than numbers.46 However, Timo Savela, in a contrary view argues that quantitative methods are superior because they are inherently reductive and mitigate personal biases.47 From the perspective of Hughes, a combination of both methods yields better results because they draw from the advantages of both methods. This is in the sense that whereas quantitative analyses employ descriptive and inferential statistics, qualitative analyses produce detailed expressive and prescriptive data. The disadvantage of this method, however, is that it is time-consuming and inappropriate where resources are limited. For this study, the methodology employed was qualitative and that is because of the nature of the topic which required that the issues are distilled in a manner that brings out a comprehensive understanding of the post-war democratic reforms in Sierra Leone.
1.8.1 Sources of Data

This study makes use of two main sources of data: primary and secondary. The primary data was sourced from interviews that were conducted with officials of the Sierra Leonean High Commission in Ghana, Sierra Leonean nationals residing both in Ghana and Sierra Leone, Civil Society, Non-Governmental Organisation, as well as some academicians and pro-democracy activists in Sierra Leone. These respondents were selected using purposive sampling method. The rationale for using this sampling technique was to select persons with relevant knowledge and expertise on Sierra Leone and international relations or politics who could answer the research questions. The researcher used interview guide to interview the study respondents. The secondary data, on the other hand, was gathered from the books and journals at the Balme Library (University of Ghana), and the Library of the Legon Centre for International Affairs and Diplomacy (LECIAD), also at the University of Ghana. In addition, relevant journals were consulted from online databases as well as online news portals.

1.8.2 Data Analysis

The primary data for this study was analysed through the use of narrative analysis techniques. This is because the study employed a qualitative methodology that involved the conduct of interviews with interview guide. With regard to the secondary data, they were analysed using evaluation techniques to test for their relevance for the study. Nahid Golafshani recommends that evaluation techniques usually ensure validity and reliability of information. This is because the evaluation techniques involve a process of sifting relevant information within the context of the research being undertaken.
1.9.3 Ethical Issues

Maximum caution was exercised to ensure that all the data used for this study was of high quality and relevance to the topic. All the authors whose works were used are duly cited and the data sources duly acknowledged. For the interviews, those who agreed to respond to them were clearly told what the purpose was, and they freely participated and shared their viewpoints. However, in view of the sensitive nature of some of the information, especially those relating to the war, also the fact that some of the respondents are public officials, the identities of the respondents have been protected in which elements of confidentiality and privacy were adhered to in the study. John Cresswell\textsuperscript{49} recommends that confidentiality and privacy are essential in research and they must always be respected to engender confidence for future engagements.

1.9 Organization of the Study

The study is presented in four chapters. Chapter one constitutes the introduction and research design. Chapter two provides an overview of the conflict and its intervention in Sierra Leone. Chapter 3 provides an analysis of the findings of this study and finally, chapter four presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations.
Endnotes

2 Sierra Leone’s civil war factbox, the world news on 8th January 2008.
5 Ibid.
6 UNAMSIL is the United Nations mission in Sierra Leone, present in the state between 1999 and 2006 to protect civilians.
7 USCR country report. Sierra Leone: statistics on refugees and other uprooted people, June 2001. Report from the US committee for refugees and immigrants
10 Ibid.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid.
14 Asangna, Clotilde, op. cit.
15 Ibid.
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24 Odobo et al, op. cit.
26 Ibid.
29 Ibid.
30 Goldman, S. E “A right of intervention based upon impaired sovereignty” World Politics 156, No. 3, 1994, pp. 124-129
31 Holzgreve J. L., op. cit.
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34 Kaldor, Mary & Vincent, James “Evaluation of the UNDP’s assistance to conflict affected countries, a case study of Sierra Leone,” 2006
Ibid.
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38 Captain Mashudu Godfrey Ramuhala “Post-cold war military intervention in Africa”, Thesis submitted to the University of Stellenbosch, March 2010
42 Kuzmina, Olga “Determinants of success of the UN peace operations in a stateless terrain: the lessons of Sierra Leone and Somalia” Thesis submitted to the Central European University, 2016
45 Mixed Methods Research https://www.psychologicalscience.org/observer/mixed-methods-research
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CHAPTER TWO

OVERVIEW OF THE CONFLICT AND INTERVENTIONS

2.0 Introduction

This chapter presents brief definitions of conflict and intervention and also reviews the conflict in Sierra Leone and the efforts that were made by the international community to restore peace. Accordingly, a brief history of Sierra Leone is also analyzed for a better understanding. Thereafter, there is a discussion on the various interventions that took place in the course of the war.

2.1 Definition of Conflict

Conflict has always been part of human existence as families, communities and nations have all been involved in one conflict or the other. Indeed, conflict is part of man’s everyday life and it is viewed as a ‘necessary evil’ by scholars such as Stelian et al.\(^1\) However, on the international scene, the two World Wars (1914 -1918 and 1939 – 1945 respectively) are recognized as the ones that have had the most devastating effects on all of humankind. Over the years, the methods and weapons used for engaging in wars, worldwide, have changed but their effects are still devastating, particularly with the advancement in biological and nuclear weapons. Wherever there is a gap between people’s expectations and the power dynamics, conflict is bound to occur.

Conflict is basically divided into two types: interstate conflicts and the intrastate conflict. Interstate conflict is conflict between two or more states, mostly by their armies. Intra-state conflicts on the other hand, refer to conflicts between warring factions in one state (that is within a state’s
border) and this conflict type is this study’s interest as Sierra Leone’s conflict was between the government and an internal rebel faction.

Levy posits that more intra-state conflicts are on the rise globally. He provides evidence that before the Cold War ended, inter-state conflicts were more prevalent compared to that of intra-state conflicts. He attributes the changes to democratization, power changes, political integration, and economic integration.²

### 2.2 Definition of Intervention

The concept of intervention has been in existence for a long time and has received a lot of attention and research in recent times. Since its emergence worldwide as an area of study, scholars like Levy have been of the view that the nature of conflicts changed after the Second World War ended; an era which saw a rise in intra-state conflicts.³ Indeed, there is no universally accepted definition for intervention. Various scholars have defined it in many ways. According to Khosla,⁴ it includes the provision or withdrawal of various forms of assistance, the attempt to alter domestic-state society relations, and their convention-breaking nature. Druckman also defines intervention as any action undertaken to change the course of a conflict process.⁵

The non-existence of a common definition, however, does not mean some basic characteristics do not exist. Most definitions of intervention include the use of military force; seeks some force of political restructuring; and does not include permission from the conflict state. These characteristics, however, lack one thing: the use of sanctions which is now relevant.
The concept of intervention is widely understood to mean the use of the military to instill force in a state’s conflict or between states. The concept also includes all diplomatic measures adopted, be it mediation, peace agreements and others during a conflict. The concept of intervention is in itself a contentious area as already stated above. Some examples of interventions by the international community in both inter-state and intra state conflicts include that of Liberia, Libya, Syria, Iran and others. Some reasons given for intervention include the maintenance of regional peace like that of ECOWAS in Liberia, for humanitarian reasons like Syria, to remove authoritarian leaders, prevent human rights abuse, prevent future threats to world peace and others. Intervention is done either by states, sub regional bodies or international organizations.

2.2.1 Humanitarian Intervention

Humanitarian intervention as a concept has gained a lot of prominence on the international stage, especially with the atrocities against civilians during conflicts. Irrespective of the prominence of the concept, there is still no universally accepted definition of the concept. Depending on the area of study (whether law, politics or others), it is defined to mean different things. Most of the existing definitions, though depending on the area of study agree on three key areas. These are the threat of, or use of force, second, the purpose, which is to protect innocent civilians and third, interference in the internal conflict of a sovereign state.

For the purpose of this study, Humanitarian intervention is defined as a means for the prevention or stoppage of the violation of human rights in a state, where the said state is either incapable or unwilling to protect its own people, or is actively persecuting its own citizens. This can either be unilaterally or collective. Ndubuisie states that humanitarian interventions come in during acts
that shock the conscience of the world. The word humanitarian, according to the Cambridge dictionary, refers to a person who is involved in or connected with improving people’s lives and reducing suffering. Intervention is the act or fact of becoming intentionally involved in a difficult situation according to the Cambridge dictionary. Merriam Webster includes “so as to prevent harm or improve functioning” to its definition, a point that is of importance to this study. Scholars like Greenwood are of the view that intervention involves the use or threat of force (that is through military means). Humanitarian intervention is defined as coercive action by other states using force or threat of force in another state without the consent of the affected government and with or without the consent of the Security Council for the purpose of preventing or halting massive violations of human rights or international humanitarian law. This was evident in Sierra Leone.

The International Commission on Intervention and State Sovereignty (ICISS) defines humanitarian intervention as action taken against a state or its leaders with or without its consent for humanitarian or protective purposes. According to both definitions as stated above, the state the intervention is going to take place in must have its sovereignty breached for the purpose of stopping or preventing human rights violations.

Hugo Grotius, father of the just war theory advanced the concept of humanitarian intervention. Changes in the international system after the Cold War brought about several interstate conflicts especially in Africa as the Soviet Union and United States divide was no longer there. The former bipolar divide did not exist anymore and thus the former powers decided not to intervene in the domestic affairs of states anymore.
The UN realized that inter states conflicts could not be solved by the affected states alone and the crimes against people was getting out of hand and thus the role of humanitarian intervention began. Even though the UN charter prohibits the use of force and intervention of other states in the internal affairs of states, it however provides leeway for states to intervene if it concerns crimes against humanity like genocides. It also asks that the UNSC gives authorization before force in the form of humanitarian intervention can be employed in a state. Article 24(1) and chapter VII of the UN Charter provides legitimacy for such actions to be taken with the aim of ensuring peace and security.\textsuperscript{14}

Boutros Boutros Ghali,\textsuperscript{15} former UN General-Secretary in his 1992 report titled, Agenda for Peace stated that the Cold War and the ideological differences between the USSR and the US showed the need for all states to meet threats for the sake of security in the world. He stated that although the UN was powerless during the era of the Cold War and the use of the veto by the UNSC, the end of the Cold War era called for cooperation between regional bodies and the UN to maintain and achieve world peace and stability. Again, Kofi Annan, another former Secretary-General also called for a united front on the issue of humanitarian intervention.\textsuperscript{16}

Humanitarian intervention focuses on the questions of when and how intervention in conflicts can achieve humanitarian benefits. It argues that an intervention can be justified only when decision makers are reasonably sure that it will do more good than harm. Humanitarian intervention as a concept has received a lot of debate. It is argued by some that interference in states done for humanitarian intervention has been detrimental to some states like Libya. There have also been interventions in states in the name of humanitarian intervention with and without
the UNSC authorization by regional bodies. Some also believe that the concept contravenes a state’s sovereignty with others. The report by the advisory committee on issues of international public law on the use of force for humanitarian purposes defines it as the threat or the use of force by one or more states within the territory of another state with the sole aim of halting or preventing large scale serious violations of fundamental human rights which are taking place or appear to be eminent especially right to life. Humanitarian intervention is not meant directly to protect or promote civil and political rights or socio-economic rights. Individuals, regardless of nationality in cases where the threat of force or use of force is carried out without either the prior authorization of component UN bodies or permission of the legitimate government of the country in the territory of which intervention is taking place. Humanitarian intervention differs from other human rights enforcement methods, for example, interventions where the nationals of the intervening states are saved is not humanitarian intervention.

2.3 Political History of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is located on the South West Coast of Africa between Guinea and Liberia. The country as at July 2014, had a population of about 5,743,725 people, inhabiting a land surface of about 71,740 sq. km. (27,699 sq. miles). Sierra Leone has a lot of ethnic groups. Some include the Temne, Mendes, Sherbros, Vais, Kissis, Mandingos, Limba, Kono, Kriole, Loko and other majority groups like some refugees from the Liberian civil war and small numbers of Europeans, Lebanese, Pakistanis, and Indians.

The Republic of Sierra Leone was founded in 1789 as a haven for freed slaves by some British philanthropists. These freed slaves lived peacefully with the indigenous population of the area
who occupied the land at that time. According to Asagna, the name Sierra Leone is from the Portuguese words “Serra Lyoa” meaning Lion Mountain (due to the wild topography and mountainous nature of the land). The name was given in 1462 by Portuguese explorers led by Pedro de Cintra. The state of Sierra Leone was ruled by the British, under the Westminster governance model with the queen as the head of state until 1961 when it became independent under the leadership of Sir Milton Margai (the first prime minister) and his party, the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP). Sierra Leone had been a British colony since 1808 and a British protectorate since 1896, and finally disengaged the British monarch as the head of state of Sierra Leone in 1971.21

After the British gave full authority to the people of Sierra Leone, their first prime minister, Sir Milton Margai continued with the leadership style. He, however, did not follow through with his promise of including the citizens in decision making. When he died in 1964, he was succeeded by his brother, Albert Margai. In 1967, Albert Margai and the SLPP lost the parliamentary election to the opposition All People’s Congress (APC) led by Siaka Probyn Stevens. Siaka Stevens, however, could not assume leadership of the country immediately. This was because he was overthrown in a coup, even before he was sworn-into power, on 21st March 1967 after winning the elections.22

The coup caused Mr. Stevens to go into exile in Guinea for a year. He was however, restored back to power though an uprising in 1968. He used the Westminster model to govern the country until he later changed it from that decentralized system to a centralized one and made himself president.23 Mr. Stevens’ experience with the overthrow and fears of plots against him led to the
use of constitutional legislation in 1971 to turn Sierra Leone into a highly centralized state with the power to make all decisions. Chiefdoms who had previously shared power with the politicians were left with almost no power in decision making. Seven years later, Sierra Leone became a one-party state with the APC as the only legally recognized political party. He also became the first president of the state and abolished the prime minister position. In 1985 when he decided to retire, he handed over power to Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh, APC general secretary, instead of calling for general elections.  

2.4 The Civil War
2.4.1 Major Actors
Several parties played important roles in the Sierra Leonean conflict. These parties included Siaka Stevens, Joseph Momoh, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh, Valentine Strasser, Executive Outcomes, the Kamajors, Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) through ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the UN and the UNSC through the UNAMSIL, Britain, Charles Taylor, Johnny Paul Koromah and Tejan Kabbah.

2.4.2 Genesis of the War
Scholars such as David Francis have attributed varied reasons as the causes of the conflict in Sierra Leone. Among the factors that precipitated the conflict is the ‘natural resource curse’ which in this instance is diamond. Sierra Leone is endowed with enormous natural resources. However, the practice of previous governments sharing and controlling most of the diamond resources, with very little benefit to all Sierra Leoneans, formed part of the basis for the conflict. The situation whereby very few people had access to the nation’s resources fueled the conflict as
the citizens believed the resources belonged to all of them. Thus, they believed they should all be entitled to its benefits. Unemployment, poor working conditions and poor conditions of service as opposed to the opulent lifestyles of the few leaders with access to the diamonds all fueled discontentment amongst the citizens. The assertion that the diamonds was a cause of the conflict was proved valid as the takeover of diamond mines by the RUF rebel groups helped in its funding and rendered Momoh’s government cash strapped. This obviously meant that the diamond was quite instrumental in the eruption of the conflict.26

Another factor raised by Nuamah and Zartman is poverty. Various scholars view this to be one of the very causes of the eleven-year conflict in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone was not a wealthy state before the war. But, the way and manner the economic situation in the country rapidly deteriorated, coupled with unemployment, the inability to pay the salaries of workers, limited access to basic needs, especially among the youth, all formed part of the dissatisfaction. Declining prices in goods and export reductions, the IMF and World Bank’s economic reforms which led to the devaluation of the currency and ultimately more foreign debts all motivated the unrest in the state. Thus, one distinguishing feature of this particular conflict was the ‘loot and keep’ mechanism that sustained the war for over a decade.27

The institution of the one-party system and the dissatisfaction that it generated was another trigger of the conflict. The decision to ban all parties and make the state a one-party state didn’t auger well for a state that was a perfect example of democracy to Africa in its formative years, especially as the leader who made it so was actually voted into power by the same people they were trying to suppress. This, coupled with the reduction in power by the chiefdoms, that is, the
traditional leaders, through the centralization of power by Siaka Stevens caused a lot of dissatisfaction that eventually culminated in the conflict.\textsuperscript{28}

Corruption was another cause of the conflict, according to Odobo et al.\textsuperscript{29} This is a very critical issue that generally plagues Africa. Corruption, paternalism, bribery et cetera, were all part of the causes of the war. Siaka Stevens, even after he left office, still controlled most of the country’s resources, and some citizens, elites and leaders were still loyal to Steven’s party because of the continued benefits they enjoyed. This angered the vast majority of citizens who felt the resources belonged to all the citizens but only a few were benefitting from them.

The colonial mechanism of the British was another cause of the Sierra Leonean conflict; a fact Ahorsu agrees with. To him, the over reliance on the indirect rule of both British and Sierra Leonean traditional leaders meant the centralization did not sit well with the people. Some were satisfied with the centralization as they believed the traditional leaders were too powerful and corrupt. Others also believed that decentralization was best as the chiefs were representatives of the citizens and thus, represented their interests. Also, the process by which the British handed over the political, defense and industrial units to the elites, all formed part of the basis of the conflict.\textsuperscript{30} Stevens, upon accession to power also added on to tensions as he refused to sign the independence constitution in 1961. This was due to his belief that Milton Margai was still under the control of the British. To cap it all, democratic elections that were meant to produce leaders, acceptable to the people, rather led to a government that was very undemocratic. Support from outside forces and leaders like Muamar Al Ghaddafi and Charles Taylor were also instrumental in fuelling the conflict.\textsuperscript{31} Even though Ghaddafi always denied involvement in the conflict, there
is some evidence which shows that he operated training camps which trained many of the military that partook in the conflict was a cause of the conflict.\textsuperscript{32} Again, it has to be pointed out that Charles Taylor did not like the Sierra Leonan leadership, as he believed that Sierra Leone had interfered in his country’s conflict. Taylor, a rebel leader himself, was trying to gain power in his own state of Liberia but the Sierra Leone’s interference in Taylor’s conflict gave him a hard time. Thus, it is believed that he helped the war to get back at the Sierra Leonan government. Others also believe that Charles Taylor partook in the war due to the financial benefits he derived from the diamonds.\textsuperscript{33}

2.4.3 Breakout of the War

Dissatisfaction in Sierra Leone began sometime before the 1990s. But, the RUF’s control of large territories in eastern and southern Sierra Leone which had large diamond reserves in 1991 sparked the war.\textsuperscript{34} The government’s ineffective response to the action by the RUF led to the first military coup in 1992.\textsuperscript{35} This coup was organised by the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) led by Strasser, a military officer. Strasser held on to power, but succumbed to pressure by the citizens to conduct an election as he had promised when he first took office. Thus, he announced that there will be multi-party elections (the first since 1967). But, continuous rebel action by the RUF led to the Sierra Leone army starting a military campaign to push the rebels to the border by 1993.\textsuperscript{36} However, the RUF recovered and renewed the fighting.

In 1995, Strasser hired Executive Outcomes, a South African mercenary company to help the government soldiers fight off the RUF.\textsuperscript{37} But, in January 1996, Strasser was ousted in a palace coup led by Julius Maada Bio. Bio organised presidential and parliamentary elections the
following month and they were won by Ahmed Tejan Kabbah (after a run-off in March). That same year, the RUF and the new government of Kabbah signed the Abidjan Peace Accord with the concession that the government would no longer hire the services of the Executive Outcomes group and RUF would also disarm and demobilize.\textsuperscript{38} The RUF, however, did not keep to its end of the bargain and fighting recommenced.

In 1997, the army once again staged a coup and established the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) led by Paul Koroma as the new head of state. He joined forces with the RUF to regain Freetown. Koroma’s government declared the war over, but looting, rape and murder still continued. These actions led to the intervention by ECOMOG who retook Freetown from the rebels and gave it back to the government.\textsuperscript{39} World leaders also decided in 1999 to intervene, diplomatically, to promote peace through facilitating negotiations between the RUF and the government.\textsuperscript{40} The Lomé Accord was signed with RUF leader, Sankoh, who was given the vice presidential position in return for the end of the war and the introduction of the UN peacekeeping force to ensure the disarmament process was monitored. The RUF again, showed unwillingness in the disarmament process and started advancing towards Freetown again.\textsuperscript{41} All this time, the murder, maiming, rape and recruitment of children as soldiers continued and human rights abuses were rampant.\textsuperscript{42} The UK, thus, decided to intervene and defeated the RUF until President Kabbah finally declared the war over in 2002.

2.5 Military Interventions
2.5.1 Executive Outcomes (EO)

Executive Outcomes was a South African Private Military Security Company which fought on the side of the Sierra Leone government from 1995 to 1997. Approximately 2,000 former
soldiers of the South African Defense Force (SADF) who were previously involved in counter insurgency operations, but were laid off after apartheid ended in South Africa, were employed by EO. During their tenure, EO realized that they needed to present an aura of legitimacy in order to garner the support of the international community. This, they tried to accomplish by claiming to only be contracted to internationally recognized governments while providing intelligence to the international community. Despite these attempts at legitimacy, they were never able to shake the stigma of being a mercenary organization within the eyes of the international community.\textsuperscript{43} EO fought on the government’s side and helped them fight off the rebels. In fact, their involvement helped the government retain control and ward off the rebels for a while. But, due to the high costs of maintaining EO and the rebels’ insistence that they leave before diplomatic talks could be concluded, the government had to terminate its contract with EO.

2.5.2 ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)

ECOMOG is a West African armed force established by ECOWAS. Initially, it was a formal arrangement for separate armies of the various member states to work together. The Anglophone ECOWAS members established ECOMOG in 1990 to intervene in the Liberian war. In Africa, ECOMOG was the first credible attempt at a regional security initiative. After its intervention in Sierra Leone, some of the successes it recorded included the following:

- The establishment of the National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace to see to the negotiation process to bring peace to Sierra Leone.
- ECOMOG intervention in Sierra Leone in 1997 led to the reinstatement of deposed president, Kabbah, twice, and also drove the rebels from the capital twice before the arrival of UN forces.
• ECOMOG soldiers also helped in the various peace agreements that were signed during the conflict like the Lomé and Abidjan Peace Accords.

ECOMOG, however, met some setbacks as they lost soldiers and also had inadequate resources and funding to sustain their operations in the Sierra Leone. Nigeria, a leader in the ECOMOG force decried the expensive nature of the intervention and decided to halt the ECOMOG operations at some point in time. This led to the introduction of other forces to help cope with the situation. But, even that, sight cannot be lost of the fact that the ECOMOG intervention demonstrated how regional organizations like ECOWAS can deal with intra-state conflicts.

2.5.3 United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL)

UNAMSIL was established and mandated by the UNSC in 1999 and successfully completed its mandate in December 2005. Its mandate was to help in the disarmament process in Sierra Leone and to enforce the Lomé Peace Agreement. The UN peacekeepers entered Sierra Leone in 1999 to an unstable ceasefire and they supported the peaceful transition from conflict and coups d’etat to democratic rule. According to the UN, more than 75,000 ex-fighters were disarmed by UNAMSIL (including 7,000 child soldiers). They also helped the state to hold (national and local government) elections, helped to rebuild the country’s police force and also stopped the illicit diamond trade and helped regulate it. They also assisted the return of more than half a million refugees who voluntarily wanted to go back home as well as internally displaced persons.

They helped restore the authority of the legitimate government and all other social services in areas that had been previously controlled by rebels; recruited and trained about 4,000 police personnel with the help of a team of officers from Commonwealth countries; and constructed and
renovated dozens of police stations. UNAMSIL monitored and trained dozens of Sierra Leoneans in human rights and was instrumental in setting up the Special Court for Sierra Leone to put on trial those who were responsible for war crimes. The mission also assisted the government in setting up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC), tasked with healing the wounds of war by bringing together perpetrators and victims of atrocities. Working together with other UN agencies, the mission launched quick-impact and income-generating projects to provide jobs to thousands of unemployed youths and ex-fighters and basic services to local communities. UNAMSIL troops reconstructed schools and clinics, launched and funded agricultural projects and sponsored free medical clinics in far-flung areas, they finally withdrew in 2005. In May 2000, the mission nearly collapsed when the RUF kidnapped hundreds of peacekeepers and renounced the ceasefire in a move that endangered the credibility of UN peacekeeping. This led to the bringing in of more troops to monitor the ceasefire and began disarming fighters from both sides.

2.5.4 British Intervention

By May 2000, British military were deployed in an operation called operation Palliser. They were to protect and evacuate almost 500 British nationals, to secure the use of the Freetown airport, to provide technical advice to UNAMSIL, and to help stabilize the situation in Sierra Leone.

The British also stationed a battleship, HMS Ocean, with 400 Royal Marines off the coast of Sierra Leone, to make it clear that the UK would not stand aloof if the RUF threatened Freetown. Some members of The Royal Irish Regiment and a Sierra Leonean officer were taken hostage by
a group known as the West Side Boys.\textsuperscript{48} The hostages were eventually released and the British helped to end the long civil war. They stabilized the country and the conflict and helped with the ceasefire that ended the war. They also extended their mandate which was initially to evacuate commonwealth citizens to saving UNAMSIL from collapse. They shifted power from RUF who controlled about half of the state back to government including Freetown.\textsuperscript{49}

2.5.6 The Kamajors

The Civil Defence Forces, popularly known as the Kamajors were a group of local people who were protecting the citizens of Sierra Leone from abuse by the RUF and the government. Believed to hail from the Mende tribe, and with mystical powers, some of their leaders were accused of corruption, pilfering, human right abuses and others. They, however, fought on the side of government whenever there was the need to. This included, for instance, the timely and successful reinstallation of President Kabbah in 1998 following the fall of the junta. They also fought together with ECOMOG forces and the UN peacekeepers in the quest for preserving security and stability in the state. They are hailed as heroes by some people whereas others believe their activities were similar those of the rebels. Their leader Sam Hinga Noman and some other members of the group were indicted by the Sierra Leonean Special Court.\textsuperscript{50}

2.6 Diplomatic Interventions

2.6.1 Abidjan Peace Accord

The Abidjan Peace Accord was an agreement signed between Kabbah and Sankoh in 1996 in Cote D’Ivoire. Some stipulations in the agreement included the pulling out of EO (within five weeks after the arrival of a neutral peacekeeping force). The RUF was also supposed to give up
their arms which it failed to comply with. The government, however, asked EO to leave before the peacekeepers came because of financial constraints on its side.\textsuperscript{51}

2.6.2 Conakry Agreement

The AFRC and ECOWAS signed the Conakry Peace Plan on the 23\textsuperscript{rd} of October 1997 which, among others, included the immediate cessation of armed hostilities, the reinstatement of Kabbah’s government within six months, immunities for the leaders of the junta, cooperation between ECOMOG and the junta on DDR.\textsuperscript{52}

2.6.3 Lomé Agreement

The Lomé Agreement was signed in 1999. It is significant, however, to mention that this agreement established a roadmap to end the conflict including the setting up of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). It was in that spirit of reconciliation that a power-sharing arrangement was brokered between Kabbah and the RUF. In the agreement, Sankoh was made vice president and head of the commission in charge of the nation’s diamond resources. Sankoh was also pardoned for treason in exchange for him and his rebels to disarm and demobilize.\textsuperscript{53} However, this agreement saw some of protests by citizens and international human rights groups abroad. In the end, Sankoh and his rebels refused to commit to the agreement.

2.6.4 Abuja Agreement

The Abuja Agreement was the last peace agreement signed between the RUF and the government before the end of the conflict. The first Abuja Agreement was signed in November 2000 but reviewed in May 2001. The agreement reiterated the ceasefire the RUF and the
government had agreed to. It also emphasized the role of UNAMSIL as a surveillance organization to prevent violations of the agreement by both parties. Other issues agreed on included the free movement of people, goods and humanitarian aid by international humanitarian organizations, especially by the removal of road blocks, the Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) process, the withdrawal of the rebels, the release of all RUF detainees and the return of refugees into the state.\textsuperscript{54} The RUF was also given all the assistance it needed to become a political party. This agreement was successful as it led to the end of the war and the declaration of the state to be war free in 2002.

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the conflict and the various military and diplomatic interventions. On the military side, the discussions focused on the interventions by groups such as EO, ECOMOG, UNAMSIL, the British and the Kamajors whilst on the diplomatic side, it looked at the various peace agreements that were signed including the Abidjan Agreement, Conakry Agreement, Lomé Agreement and Abuja Agreement. It is important to take note of the fact that all the interventions were critical in bringing the conflict to an end.
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CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH FINDINGS

3.0 Introduction
This chapter discusses the major findings that were made in the course of this study. It looks at
the causes and effects of the Sierra Leonean civil war by relying heavily on the work of the Truth
and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) as well as views from some Sierra Leoneans and other
expert opinions. The chapter also discusses Sierra Leone’s return to democracy through the
conduct of political parties’ elections and solicits the views of respondents on how the country is
consolidating its democracy.

3.1 Causes of the Civil War
After the war ended in Sierra Leone, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was set up
to look into the causes of the war and help heal the wounds of the people.¹ Indeed, it was not the
first time a TRC was set up on the continent. South Africa’s TRC which was established in 1996
after the end of apartheid was the first to set the tone for such commissions.² Other countries
such as Ghana similarly set up a TRC in 2002 to investigate abuses perpetrated during past
military regimes.³

As noted in chapter two, the Lomé Peace Agreement was catalytic in ending the civil war. It was
that agreement that made provisions for the setting up of the TRC. According to Article XXVI of
the Lomé Peace Agreement:

   A Truth and Reconciliation Commission shall be established to address impunity, break
   the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human
rights violations to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation.\textsuperscript{4}

In order to actualize the process of reconciliation, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000 was adopted in February 2000. However, it was not until July 2002 that a seven-member commission was set up to commence work. The TRC worked for a period of two years beginning from November 2002 and ending in October 2004. Section 6 (2a) of the TRC Act defined the function of the commission to include the following:

\textit{To investigate and report on the causes, nature and extent of the violations and abuses referred to in subsection (1) to the fullest degree possible, including their antecedents, the context in which the violations and abuses occurred, the question of, whether those violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorization by any government, group or individual, and the role of both internal and external factors in the conflict.}\textsuperscript{5}

In identifying the historical antecedents of the conflict, the TRC mapped out four distinct epochs that included the colonial period; the era of party politics; the post-independence rule of the SLPP; and the aftermath of the 1967 elections. These four periods, if analyzed carefully, provides a latent context for understanding the factors that triggered the civil war.

Referencing the period of colonization, this is what the commission said about the British:

\textit{Rather than constructing a unified Sierra Leonean state, the colonial government effectively created two nations in the same land. The colonial capital Freetown, known as the Colony, and the much larger area of provincial territory, known as the Protectorate, were developed separately and unequally.}\textsuperscript{6}
The commission expressed the view that the dichotomy created by colonial rule persisted into the independence period and this created a lot of challenges for the country. For example, the commission raised the issue of how the British developed customary law in the Colony but neglected the development of same in the Protectorate, thus creating two separate legal systems that persist till day. It further cited examples of how the British educated the people of the Colony and neglected those of the Protectorate. Furthermore, the colonialists weakened the chieftaincy and traditional institutions of the country and this created deep-seated ethnic animosities.

Commenting on the processes that led to independence, the commission noted that:

*In 1947, a new Constitution was proposed in order to prepare Sierra Leone for independence. This Constitution amalgamated the Colony and the Protectorate into a single political entity, but divided their elite representatives into opposing factions, each dedicated to protecting the interests of its own people. In due course these factions formed themselves into narrow, regionally based political parties with little or no national agenda.*

In the view of the commission, by the time Sierra Leone became independent, it had become divided on partisan and ethnic lines. The rivalry that emerged between the SLPP and the APC created fault lines of tension across the country, creating a state of fragile peace in the post-independence era.

To the extent of the above, the commission also indicated that:
The SLPP majority party formed the first post-colonial government in 1961. The 1962 elections then revealed the depths of ethnic and regional polarisation in Sierra Leone and the superficiality of the ideological differences between the opposing parties. The SLPP retained power by winning most of its seats in the South and East of the country, which were predominantly populated by Mende people.

According to the commission the public image of the SLPP as a Mende government further polarized the country and resulted in notions of cronyism in many state institutions. This shook the foundations of the state as it struggled to find its feet as a newly independent state.

The fourth historical causal factor the commission identified was that:

The elections of 1967 were scarred by bitter power struggles based on ethnicity, personality and party affiliation. Although the APC won the most seats, the leadership of the SLPP stoutly refused to concede defeat. The resultant standoff signalled a watershed in the political fortunes of the country and ultimately led to the destruction of the multi-party system.

The commission found that the intervention by the military, in sabotaging the swearing-in of the APC Prime Minister, and the declaration of martial law dealt a heavy blow to the stability of the country. This is because a section of the military, mainly junior-ranking officers, sensing that the intervention was designed to favour the SLPP also staged a coup that ultimately destabilized the cohesion of the country. It introduced the military into the politics of Sierra Leone.
Speaking to some experts and some Sierra Leonean citizens for the purposes of this study, one respondent who is a Sierra Leonean development worker identified the immediate causes of the civil war:

As political intolerance, gross violation of fundamental human rights of people, bad governance, corruption, tribalism, sectionalism, injustices and a culture of impunity.

Another respondent, a staff of the Sierra Leonean High Commission in Accra noted that:

the causes of the war were dependent on the various players of the war and focus of the war was not constant. It kept on changing, including players and the objectives. According to the respondent, Ghaddafi played a role in setting up youth camps where young Sierra Leoneans were trained as rebel fighters.\(^9\)

A Sierra Leonean soldier who was interviewed revealed that the war started:

when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) with support from special forces of Charles Taylor’s National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) intervened to overthrow the Joseph Momoh government. According to the soldier, the intent of the RUF was to take over the rich alluvial diamond mines. Therefore, I can say that the presence of diamonds in Sierra Leone was one of the factors that triggered the civil war.\(^10\)

### 3.2 Effects of the War

On the effects of the war, the TRC found that:

Women and girls became the targets in the brutal conflict in Sierra Leone. They suffered abduction and brutality at the hands of their perpetrators. Their vulnerability was deliberately exploited in order to dehumanise them. Women and girls were raped, forced
into sexual slavery and endured other acts of sexual violence, including mutilations, torture and a host of other cruel and inhumane treatment.\textsuperscript{11}

The commission received testimonies to the effect that women were taken from their homes and villages by force and those who refused to comply with their captors were put to death. In captivity, these women suffered several abuses in the hands of the rebels. Over time, some of them managed to escape but it did not end up quite well with them as they fell prey to the guiles of aid workers who were supposed to protect them. Some of the girls, as young as 12 years, were forced, out of hunger, to exchange their bodies for food.

In view of the above, the commission noted that:

{
\textit{While peace has returned to Sierra Leone, many of the wounds of war still remain open.}

Women and girls bear the scars of their horrible experiences. Many have borne children as a result of rape and sexual slavery. These mothers are shunned and punished by society for giving birth to ‘rebel’ children.

Children were also adversely affected by the war and the commission noted that:

\textit{Like women, children were violated and abused by all of the armed factions involved in the Sierra Leonean conflict. They suffered abductions, forced recruitment, sexual slavery and rape, amputations, mutilations, displacement, drugging and torture. Children were also forced to become perpetrators and were compelled to violate the rights of others. Thousands of children were killed during the conflict in Sierra Leone.}

According to estimates by the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs (MSWGCA) more than 15,000 children suffered separation from their families and communities in the course of the war. As a result, many of them became refugees in countries like Liberia,
Guinea, Gambia, Côte d’Ivoire and Nigeria. Some of them also became internally displaced persons while others were used as fighters by the armed groups. All the warring factions were found to have been guilty of this phenomenon of child abuse.

On the part of the youth, the commission also established that:

*Forty-five percent of Sierra Leone’s estimated population of 4.5 million are youths, falling within the age bracket of 18 to 35 years. Members of this age group were major perpetrators and victims of violations and abuses during the conflict. The Commission examined the nature, causes and extent of the acts perpetrated and suffered by youths; the impact of these acts on them; and the current interventions geared towards addressing the youth question in Sierra Leone.*

One of the respondents for this study, a Sierra Leonean teacher, noted that:

*the presence of amputees in the country often serves as a reminder of the war. Some of the wounded soldiers are still in trauma. The respondent further revealed that:*

*the development plans of the country are still undermined by the war. Sometimes, there are suspicions on government actions.*

Another respondent, a student, also pointed out that:

*the economic impact of the war is still visible to date. The educational system is still struggling and has not been doing well since the war. The student added that:*

*even though there is peace at the moment, people still live in fear whenever elections are near.*

The official from the High Commission in Accra expressed the view that:
the physical scars of the war are not visible anymore, but it has led to a heightened awareness of security issues among the populace. The official further revealed that:
the war led to forced migration which led to some loss of human resource and skills.

The soldier respondent described the effects of the war this way:
the war lasted for 11 years and it enveloped the whole country; left over 50,000 dead; broken economy; amputation of children, women and the aged; displacement of people and damaged dwellings.

Another respondent, a Sierra Leonean teacher, lamented that the war has led to:
huge unemployment in all sectors of the economy, institutional breakdown and the marginalization of women and the youth.

The views of the teacher were supported by another respondent, a Ghanaian university lecturer, with expertise in international relations who reflected that:
the war has had a lasting impact on the country’s development process due to the breakdown of law and order as well as relations of trust and social cohesion.

3.3 The Return to Democracy

As stated in chapter one, the theory underpinning this study is liberal democracy. It is therefore important to analyze in this chapter, how Sierra Leone has been able to retrace its steps back to peace and stability after the war, on the basis of its practice of democracy. It has to be established that several factors accounted for the decision of the people of Sierra Leone to return to democracy. The first among these factors has to do with the role of the international community. Indeed, given the fact that the entire global political system is gravitating towards democracy,
and also given the fact that Western countries were more involved in the resolution of the conflict, Sierra Leone had little choice than to follow the path of democracy.

Another important factor for Sierra Leone’s return to democracy had to do with the fact that, by the time the civil war ended majority of the countries in the ECOWAS sub-region had taken to the path of democracy. As this study found out, ECOWAS mandates all members to practice democracy, and that all efforts be put in place to enforce this. This injunction is boldly spelt out in Article 58 (g) of the revised ECOWAS Treaty with the inclusion of assistance to member states for the observation of democratic elections. Article 2 of the ECOWAS collective security mechanism specifies that the organization has the mandate to ensure that democracy and good governance, human rights protection and the rule of international humanitarian laws are all adhered to. This includes the consolidation of legitimate democratic government (article 2a), electoral preparation and supervision (ECOWAS institutional capacity for peace building, article 42) and support democratic institutions. Article 45 of the ECOWAS institutional capacity for peace building also reiterates this by stating that ECOWAS restore political authority where the government is absent or eroded.

The above, thus, explains why the ECOMOG twice put Tejan Kabbah back to office when he was deposed. Another article worth noting is article 43 of the ECOWAS institutional capacity for peace building which states that ECOWAS be involved in the preparation, organization and supervision of elections in the sub region and democratic institutions. This is witnessed by the cooperation with Sierra Leone in terms of election observers, experts and support in their return
to democracy post war. The observation of democratic elections is also enshrined in that same article.

3.3.1 Post-War Elections

Ever since the war ended in Sierra Leone, there have been four elections. The first was held in May 2002 and it was won by SLPP’s Tejan Kabbah. He garnered 1,373,146 which amounted to 70.1% of the votes. The second contender, Ernest Bai Koroma of the APC secured 426,405 which constituted 22.4%. The third place was occupied by former warlord, Johnny Paul Koroma who stood on the ticket of the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP) and got 33,084 constituting 3.0% of the votes. The participation of Paul Koroma was quite significant as it signaled the fact that even the former combatants had embraced democracy.

The second election was held in 2007 and this proved to be a major test for the country’s democracy. As it turned out, the incumbent president was ineligible to contest as he had exhausted his two terms of office. The SLLP therefore fielded its vice president, Solomon Berewa, as the presidential candidate and he came face to face with APC’s Bai Koroma. In the first round Bai Koroma polled 815,523 (44.34%) whilst Berewa polled 704,012 (38.28%). Berewa was followed by Charles Margai who gained 255,499 votes (13.89%). As per the Sierra Leonean Constitution, where none of the candidate’s polls 55% there has to be a rerun. And so this meant Bai Koroma and Berewa had to face off in a runoff. The rerun took place in September and Bai Koroma emerged victorious with 950,407 votes (54.62%) whilst Berewa received 789,651 (45.38%). The victory of Bai Koroma translated into a first electoral turn-over for Sierra Leone as, for the first time in the country’s history, an incumbent government
peacefully handed over power to an opposition party. Thus, the country passed the first of Huntington’s two-turnover-test for democratic consolidation.

In November 2012, Bai Koroma maintained his presidency by beating off the challenge of Julius Maada Bio in the first round of the elections. Bai Koroma received 1,314,881 votes (58.7%) as against 819,185 votes (37.4%) by Bio who stood on the ticket of the SLPP. The outcome of the election was generally peaceful as both sides readily accepted the results. Sierra Leone received international praise for the efforts to consolidate democracy.

In March 2018, the international applause for Sierra Leone got even louder when the presidential elections recorded yet another electoral turnover. For the second time, power changed hands from an incumbent administration to an opposition party as Bai Koroma ended his two terms. SLPP’s candidate, Bio, beat the APC candidate, Samura Kamara, to clinch the presidency after two rounds of voting. In the first round, Bio shot into the lead with 1,097,482 (43%) followed by Kamara’s 1,082,748 (42.7%) and the third place going to Kandeh Yumkella of the National Grand Coalition (NGC) who managed 174,014 (6.9%) of the votes. This necessitated a second round of voting in the same month of March in which Bio polled 1,319,406 (51.8%) and Kamara 1,227,171 (48.2%). The declaration of Bio as winner and the concession of defeat by Kamara calmed a lot of nerves as tensions had risen across the country. There were concerns that the outcome could turn violent. But, in the end, the situation was brought under control as Bio took the Oath of Office on April 4, 2018.
Answering questions on why Sierra Leoneans chose the path of democracy after the war, the staff of the High Commission had this to say:

The country decided to embark on a democratization process after the war out of necessity due to the negative effect it had on the country and its citizens. This necessity led to the president then, deciding to hold an election even before the war ended: and this election had a high voter registration turn out and votes. Besides, the continent had been practicing democracy and those countries were doing well comparably.

According to the development expert:

Factors that led the country to democratize include the creation of liberal institutions like the human rights commission and the national commission for democracy. Also, the successful outcome of the DDR (disarmament, rehabilitation and the resettlement process) as well as the emergence of the civil society organizations and the media played a role in raising awareness about democracy.

In the view of the Ghanaian university lecturer:

the active role of the international community, including ECOWAS and the UN has been very crucial in the post conflict reconstruction.

The above viewpoint was supported by the Sierra Leonean teacher who added that:

UN support to the country from peacekeeping, peace consolidation to the strengthening of national human rights and democratic institutions was critical in getting the country to pursue democracy adding that, there was massive support from friendly nations around the world that brought development country.
Sharing a perspective on why Sierra Leone chose the path of democracy after the war, the soldier respondent indicated:

_The country wanted to demonstrate to itself and the world that the core value of democracy and human right are not only good in and of themselves, but also the most promising path to peace and security in an increasingly turbulent country. Democracy reduces the likelihood of internal armed conflict because it gives citizens avenues to channel dissent through non-violent means and manage violence through respect for rule of law and human rights._

The student also opined that:

_there were thousands of deaths during the war and properties worth millions of Leones destroyed. Sierra Leoneans wanted peace; thus, democracy was the only way out._

### 3.4 Consolidation of Democracy

As part of the interviews for this study, the respondents were asked how Sierra Leone is consolidating her democracy. Some of the questions centred on the role the media and civil society organizations (CSOs) are playing in the post war era.

One of the respondents, a Sierra Leonean journalist, credited the media for the contributions they are making to deepen the democracy of the country. The journalist noted that:

_The media and CSOs are now able to carry out their functions without fear or favour._

_The media is now the mouthpiece of the voiceless. They are now the agents of change as they raise awareness of political corruption. In fact, a whole commission exists now for_
the media’s right to access information and the freedom of information law exists. This is making the media contribute much to consolidating the democracy of the country.

Other respondents agreed with the position of the journalist. For example, the soldier concurred that, they are faring well according to the democratic principle; that is to say they have freedom of speech and it is working well.

The student also expressed the view that:

In Sierra Leone, there is free press unlike other countries. Although to some extent it can be limited in particular situations, the media in Sierra Leone and civil groups are very active and open and they ensure that democracy remains through different means.\textsuperscript{12}

The official from the High Commission gave a historical background of the resurgence of the media in Sierra Leone:

In the days of the war, there was only one radio station instituted by ECOMOG. It was called Radio Democracy and it was used to disseminate information on progress made and also to discourage the rebel factions. Then private radio stations came in post-war and now they have become more diverse and vocal.

Making a comparison between Ghana and Sierra Leone, the official indicated that:

Ghana has more radio liberties than Sierra Leone. Certain areas cannot be broached in Sierra Leone. However, blogging has increased in recent times and they have changed the dynamics a bit and introduced fake news which attracts a charge and even sentencing in Sierra Leone. But, as you know, social media is hard to control.
However, there were other respondents who disagreed that the media is doing well. One of them, an elderly fellow retorted that, *this is the worst period for CSOs and the media. The president is a democratically elected dictator and he is behaving like leaders in the 80s and 90s.* One respondent explained that, *the international community is really helping the country; without them the country would have returned to war many times over.* Another respondent, the development expert, agreed with the elderly fellow. According to the expert:

*The media is very weak and under resourced. Civil society is mostly donor supported and by extension externally driven. There is very limited local opportunity to mobilize funding for local organizations; hence there is weak low civil society effectiveness.*

Commenting on the future of democracy in Sierra Leone the student noted that:

*Sierra Leone is more democratic now than it was before. With the right leaders who seek the interest of the country and with visionary leaders, Sierra Leone will emerge one of the most democratic nations in Africa.*

Sharing in the optimism of the student, the development expert opined that:

*In future, Sierra Leone will move away from its fragile state to a more stable one. It could be a more mature democracy with the model of democracy fully in place through democratic consolidation approaches.*

Also, on another optimistic note, the soldier pointed out that:

*In my country, democracy starts and ends with the bedrock principle that government must always strive to perfect their own adherence to fundamental norm of human rights*
and democracy, even in the face of serious security pressure. In other words, if the current leaders practice what they preach, democracy will be entrenched.

However, some of the respondents were rather pessimistic about the future of the country’s democracy. The elderly fellow gloomily said that:

the future of democracy in Sierra Leone looks bleak. We have lost all the gains we made in almost 20 years after the war.

Another respondent, a Sierra Leonean political activist, lamented that:

the country’s democracy is shaky sometimes, especially with what is happening recently. But democracy is enshrined in the Constitution and so we have no option than to abide by it.

The Ghanaian lecturer offered an advice that:

the country can only consolidate the gains made so far, particularly in the rotation of political power, if they empower the citizens to demand accountability.

When they were asked to identify some of the institutions that can preserve the country’s democracy, majority mentioned the National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone (NECSL), the body responsible for elections in Sierra Leone. Perhaps, because of the high importance that was attached to this institution, it will be important to look at in detail. According to the NECSL website, the NECSL has always existed since the mid-20th century under the name Electoral Commission (EC), with technical and support staff even under military rule. The EC was renamed to NECSL after the passage of the National Electoral Commission Act 2002. Under the Act, the NECSL has the independence of appointing its own staff. It is the sole authority under Section 33 of the 1991 Constitution, Act Number 6 and Section 28 of the Chieftaincy Act of
2009 mandated to prepare and conduct elections and referenda in the country. The Public Elections Act of 2012 also provides the mandates and requirements needed for the conduct of peaceful, free and fair elections. The NECL is composed of five-member commission headed by chairperson. They are selected by the president in consultation with the other political parties and subject to approval by the parliament.\textsuperscript{13}

Other institutions that came up for mention included the Political Parties Registration Commission (PPRC), the Sierra Leone National Commission for Human Rights (NCRH-SL) and the Independent Media Commission. There were others who also identified trade unions, student unions, army, national security, and the judiciary as vanguards for Sierra Leone’s democracy. Surprisingly, parliament was not mentioned by any of the respondents and that raises critical questions about the impact the Sierra Leonean parliament is having on the country’s democracy.

3.4.1 The Role of the International Community

The international community showed support for Sierra Leone not only during the war and post conflict peace but also continues to do so under its current democratic dispensation. The international community, having realized how important democracy has been to world peace and its benefits in human rights protection continues to support elections and democratic processes and institutions post war in Sierra Leone. These fall in line with international laws like the AU constitutive act, the African Peer Review Mechanism, the charter on democracy, elections and governance and others. From these mandates, the study made the following findings (the most recent activities). The UN has supported elections in Sierra Leone post war and continues to do so, their most recent involvement being through the United Nations Development Program.
(UNDP) multi donor program called Support to the National Electoral Commission. This program was launched in April 2017 with funding from the United Kingdom (UK), Ireland and the European Union (EU) delegation.

Another project by the international community aimed at improving and enhancing democracy in Sierra Leone is their support for the National Elections Watch (NEW), a civil society group that educates people on elections and also performs observer purposes during elections. This civil group has been in existence since 2002 and it has played a part in all the elections post conflict. The EU and UK again supported a constitutional review process which had the aim of increasing the democratic process in the state and national cohesion, as well as aligning the state’s 1991 constitution to international human rights laws. This went through the presidency, then parliament in November 2017 but was largely rejected.

The African Union (AU) is also committed to ensure good democracy is practiced in Sierra Leone. This they have shown by liaising with the NEC, the presidency and political parties through the African Union Election Observer Mission (AUEOM). This is in line with the AU’s agenda 2063 which aims to ensure good governance, democracy and respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law on the continent.

Apart from the ECOWAS observer team, known for observing elections in West Africa, there is another organ called the ECOWAS network for electoral commissions (ECONEC). This mission was able to resolve the most recent issues in Sierra Leone where the opposition party APC (who have a majority in parliament) refused to take their oaths for parliament. ECONEC and the
ECOWAS parliament both intervened to resolve this issue and restored peace and order in the state. For this issue, the special representative of the UN secretary general for West Africa and the Sahel, Dr. Ibn Chambas, also intervened.

The Sierra Leone conflict, as well as the other regional conflicts that plagued the sub region led to ECOWAS establishing the Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security, which was adopted by the ECOWAS Authority of Heads of State and Government in Lome, December 10, 1999. With a view to strengthening the ECOWAS Mechanism which has become ECOWAS’ foundational sub-regional security framework, ECOWAS leaders in 2001 signed the Protocol on Democracy and Good Governance supplementary to the protocol establishing the mechanism for conflict Prevention, Management and Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security. The Supplementary Protocol is viewed as a robust instrument that takes into account the underlying (political) triggers of instability, conflicts and insecurity in West African states which were largely overlooked by the ECOWAS Mechanism. Problems relating to implementation of the preventive aspect of the 1999 Mechanism especially late response to crisis informed the establishment of the ECOWAS Conflict Prevention Framework (ECPF) in 2008. The emphasis according to the framework is not to prevent conflict per se (since conflict is a natural phenomenon), but to ensure that it does not escalate into violence.

3.5 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the causes of the Sierra Leonean civil war. It was established, according to the proceedings of the TRC, that there were some pre and post-colonial factors that belied the
conflict. These included the dichotomies that the colonial power, Britain, created in favouring development in the Colony as against that of the Protectorate. Post-colonial events including the dispute that engulfed the 1967 election further polarized the country and worse of all, the declaration of the country as a one-party state. These factors coupled with the economic despondency of the early 1990s are served as triggers for the war. The chapter also revealed that women, children and the youth were most affected by the conflict and that some of them are still living with dark memories of the war. Finally, it was also established that the country has made a lot of strides in its effort to pursue democracy. Although there are still some challenges, the country has already witnessed two changes of government and that is a positive sign that the country is gradually consolidating its democracy.
Endnotes

1 Sierra Leon Truth and Reconciliation Commission http://www.sierraleonetrcc.org/
6 Ibid.
7 Ibid.
8 Ibid.
9 Interview with an Official of Sierra Leone High Commission in Accra. September 2, 2019
10 Questionnaire filled by Sierra Leonan soldier. September 7, 2019.
11 TRC Report., op. cit.
12 Questionnaire answered by Sierra Leonan student. September 5, 2019
13 National Electoral Commission of Sierra Leone http://necsl.org/
14 OAU/AU Treaties, Conventions, Protocols and Charters https://au.int/ar/treaties
CHAPTER FOUR

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.0 Introduction

This study was carried out using the theory of liberal democracy to account for the post-war democratization process in Sierra Leone. The theory was used because of the explanations it offers on how states stabilize when they adopt democratic principles and practices. It was established that Sierra Leone emerged out of the civil in 2002 at a time when almost all the countries in the West African sub-region were democratizing and therefore had very little option than to join the process. More so, Sierra Leone received a lot of support from the international community (particularly Western countries which by and large subscribe to liberal democracy as a system of government).

The study highlighted the significance of the military interventions that were made by ECOMOG and UNAMSIL as well as the diplomatic interventions that were sponsored particularly by ECOWAS that finally resulted in the resolution of the conflict. It came to light that in the post-World War II era, there have been increases in intra-state conflicts and this has necessitated the need to for interventions to protect lives. The study went further to investigate the causes and effects of the Sierra Leonean as well as the efforts which have been made in the post war era to consolidate democracy in the country.
4.1 Summary of Findings

This study has established that the causes of the Sierra Leonean Civil War were multifaceted and date back to the colonial times. The conduct of the colonial master, Britain, in developing the Crown territory, comprising Freetown and the neglect of the other regions that formed the Protectorate, were identified as some of the causes of the war. The British invested more in the educational and legal systems of the Colony and did not pay attention to that of the Protectorate. This caused a dichotomy between the two territories and brewed a lot of dissatisfaction. In addition to that, the British also undermined the power and influence of the chiefs and traditional authorities in the country and this created a lot of tensions.

A second cause that was identified was that in the 1940s, as the country started agitations for independence, it got embroiled in partisan politics and this created a lot of challenges because of divisions that erupted along ethnic lines. This was due to the fact that some of the parties were regionally-based and did not profess a national agenda. For the two major parties, the SLPP and APC, even though they had a wider reach, the rivalry between them was so intense that it sometimes degenerated into political violence among their supporters. Thus, by the time the country became independent, it was highly polarized.

The third cause that came to light in this study was that, the reign of the SLPP in the post-independence era deepened the chasms between the citizenry. This had to do with the fact that because the government was dominated by people from the Mende ethnic group, the government was labeled by some to as a “Mende Government”. This led to perceived marginalization of non-Mende populations. There were allegations of widespread corruption and nepotism that affected
the development of the country. Many people became dissatisfied about the state of affairs and tensions started simmering.

Fourthly, the elections of 1967 and its aftermath were also found to have been contributory factors to the war. This is because the refusal of the SLPP to concede defeat to the APC after the latter won the election further heightened the political temperature of the country, leading to the first military intervention. That military intervention, unfortunately, set the tone for two more interventions within a space of one year and became a catalyst for future coups. But, it has to be further mentioned that the decision of Siaka Stevens, after taking office, to turn the country into a one-party state also exacerbated the fragile stability of the country resulting hushed undertones of anger and pent up feelings there were certainly going to explode sometime in the future.

Besides the above-mentioned factors, which can be described as remote factors that gradually built up to the war, there were other immediate factors including the war that broke out in Liberia in 1989. Due to the fact that the two countries share a common border, the instability in Liberia directly affected the stability of Sierra Leone. The Liberian war happened at a time when the economic situation in Sierra Leone had become dire and the youth were disenchanted. Therefore, seeing their contemporaries in arms, they also decided to go explode up in arms.

Charles Taylor who was the main warlord in the Liberian war had an axe to grind with the Sierra Leonean government because of the support the latter is believed to have offered the Liberian government. Taylor therefore decided to teach the Sierra Leonean government a lesson by
supporting the RUF rebels. Indeed, both Taylor and Sankoh were alleged to have been trained at secret camps in Libya under the aegis of Gadaffi.

The diamonds in Sierra Leone were also an immediate factor in the war. As the evidence shows, when the RUF struck, their primary interest was to take over the rich alluvial diamond regions. This allowed them to control the diamond trade and amassed a lot of wealth through the sale of the diamonds. The diamonds generated enough resources for the RUF to sustain the war for its entire duration.

Regarding the effects of the war the study found out that women were particularly affected by the atrocities that were perpetrated by the warring factions. The combatants took advantage of the women’s vulnerabilities and abducted them as sex slaves. Those who resisted were put to death. For those who were able to escape to rescue centres, they still fell victim to the machinations of unprofessional aid workers who forced them to exchange sex for food rations. In some cases, underage girls were compelled to offer sex before they could be assisted. Two decades after the war, most those young girls, now women, are living with grim memories of the war. Those who got pregnant gave birth to fatherless children who have now become a burden.

Children also suffered as a result of the war. The study found that thousands of them became either internally displaced or refugees in nearby countries. For those who were captured by the rebels, their fate was worse. The boys were used as child soldiers whereas the girls were used as sex slaves. These children missed out on education and a well-guided childhood and worst of all, some of them were subjected to limb amputations.
Another group of people who suffered from the war were the youth, with emphasis on young men, who out of disillusionment and frustration readily joined the rebels. They took up arms to fight because of the lack of employment opportunities which had dUCKed them into hopelessness. Those who refused to fight or those who were captured by opposing factions were subjected to also subjected to limb amputations and till date, there are several of them across the country.

But, beyond the causes and effects of the war, this study also looked at some of the processes that were taken to stabilize the country, particularly focusing on the conduct of elections. It was found that there have been four elections since 2002 and quite impressively, the two main political traditions, SLPP and APC, have each won the elections two apiece. This positively shows that, according to Huntington’s two-turnover-test concept, the country is fast achieving democratic consolidation. All the elections so far have been largely peaceful, even if occasionally marked with tensions. Majority of the people who were interviewed for this study identified the NECSL as the most important institution driving the democratic process in Sierra Leone.

4.2 Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions can be drawn:

- That the breakout of the civil war in Sierra Leone was due to several factors that date back to the colonial era, through the early post-independence era, and into the early 1990s. Indeed, the country’s inability to overcome its colonially-induced ethnic tensions, coupled with its economic despondency, eventually precipitated the war.
That those who suffered most in the war were women, children and the youth. These persons were subjected to varying degrees of war crimes including abductions, sexual violence and other forms of physical harm. Some of the people still live with horrendous memories of the war till date.

That the intervention of the international community was catalytic in restoring peace to the country and assisting her to retrace her footsteps back unto democratic rule. Most particularly, ECOWAS and the UN deserve special mention for the untiring efforts that they put in to salvage the country.

That the country is currently making enviable strides in its quest to consolidate democracy in spite of some lingering challenges. The NECSL, particularly, is playing a crucial role in ensuring that peaceful and credible elections are held in the country.

4.3  Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of this study, the following recommendations can be made:

Firstly, there is the need for the country to strengthen its pro-democracy institutions starting with the NECSL which many people regard as the main vanguard of the country’s democracy.
• Secondly, there is the need for the national mass campaigns on unity to bridge the gap along the lines of ethnicity. In this wise, traditional authorities must be respected and accorded a place in the governance of the country.

• Thirdly, the legislative arm of government must work hard and win the recognition of citizens as a key player in the country’s democracy. This is based on the fact when respondents were asked to name the key institutions that can further the country’s none mentioned parliament.

• Fourthly, the government must judiciously utilize the resources from diamonds in a manner that will benefit all in society and reduce the economic burden of the population. This will ensure that disenchantments would be reduced to the barest minimum and not incentivize people to take to arms.

• Finally, the international community must continue to support the country to consolidate her democracy through ECOWAS, AU and the UN. This support can be in the form of continuous monitoring of elections as well as development support to alleviate the high burden of poverty as a least developed country (LDC). Part of the support must also be geared towards assisting the civil society space to grow.
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