

**SUSTAINING PEACE IN SIERRA LEONE:
ASSESSING INDIGENOUS CAPACITY
TO MAINTAIN STABILITY AND PEACE
IN PARALLEL WITH THE UNAMSIL DRAWDOWN**

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Table of Contents

ABOUT THE PROJECT	ii
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	iii
1. INTRODUCTION.....	1
2. UNAMSIL DRAWDOWN.....	4
3. SOCIO-ECONOMIC AND HEALTH ISSUES	7
3.1. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	7
3.2. HIV/AIDS	9
3.3. LITERACY AND EDUCATION	11
4. ISSUES OF GOVERNANCE.....	14
4.1. CORRUPTION.....	14
4.2. LOCAL GOVERNANCE	16
4.3. DIAMONDS AND MINING RESOURCES	18
4.4. JUDICIAL AND LEGAL REFORM	22
5. PROGRESS ON REINTEGRATION OF FORMER COMBATANTS	25
6. REGIONAL THREATS	29
7. PROGRESS IN ENHANCING THE CAPACITY OF LOCAL SECURITY FORCES	33
7.1. REPUBLIC OF SIERRA LEONE ARMED FORCES (RSLAF).....	33
7.2. SIERRA LEONE POLICE (SLP)	37
8. ISSUES OF IMPUNITY AND JUSTICE	42
END NOTES	45
SIERRA LEONE CHRONOLOGY.....	47
ACRONYMS	50
REFERENCES.....	52

About the Project

This report, *Sustaining Peace in Sierra Leone: Assessing Indigenous Capacity to Maintain Stability and Peace in Parallel with the UNAMSIL Drawdown*, is the product of a working group of seven students in Master's Degree programs at the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University. Throughout the fall of 2002, the working group engaged in a weekly seminar to discuss issues related to the topic of nation building and carried out research on the case of Sierra Leone, including interviews in country. That research is the subject of this report.

In support of this project, the working group drew upon primary and secondary sources, including interviews with policymakers from Washington, DC and New York City, and field research in Freetown, Bo, Kamakwie, Kenema, Koidu and Makeni, Sierra Leone from 25 October through 1 November 2002. This report incorporates information gleaned from dozens of sources, including numerous Sierra Leonean government ministry officials as well as H.E. President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah; representatives from several UN agencies, including UNAMSIL; US Embassy officials; officials seconded to the Government of Sierra Leone from the Government of the United Kingdom; representatives from many of the international NGOs and donor organizations working in the country; and military sources and civilian analysts. The views expressed are exclusively those of the members of the working group and are not necessarily shared by the individuals or organizations consulted.

The working group expresses its sincere gratitude to the many people who made this report possible. In particular, we wish to thank Sylvia Fletcher at UNDP in Sierra Leone for her support in crafting and realizing this project, Ambassador Peter Chaveas for his hospitality and insight and Sheka Mansaray, Advisor to the President of Sierra Leone, for arranging meetings that would otherwise have been impossible. We also thank UNDP staff in Freetown, Bo and Makeni for their tremendous assistance. Finally, we would like to thank our instructor and mentor, Eric P. Schwartz, for his dedication, patience and wisdom.

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Executive Summary

Sierra Leone's nascent peace continues to face numerous challenges, many of which have been kept at bay by the presence of United Nations peacekeepers. The planned drawdown of UNAMSIL requires strong attention to both pre-war and new threats to the country's security, and necessitates a dual approach.

First, the international community, including UNAMSIL for the immediate future, must stay engaged. There is an inherent risk in UNAMSIL's drawdown plan; once begun, its momentum may result in more rapid withdrawal than is prudent, joined by concurrent disengagement of the international community. This must not be permitted to happen. The international community has invested too much, and the people of Sierra Leone have suffered too long, for such an outcome.

Second, and more crucial to the country's long-term future, Sierra Leone's political leaders, both in and out of government, must meet the challenge being posed by the international community and manifest a level of commitment to national development that they thus far have not fully demonstrated. There is a tension in the relationship between the commitments of the international community and those of the government. As the international community is limited in what it can do and how long it can remain fully committed to Sierra Leone, a delicate balance must be struck between support and encouragement from donors, met with commitment and efforts by the government. Sierra Leone must not be left vulnerable to renewed conflict, but neither can it embark upon a culture of dependency.

Both the donor community and the Government of Sierra Leone must appreciate that the critical challenges to security go far beyond building military and police capacity, however essential those objectives may be. Progress on governance and socio-economic issues – including corruption, country-wide local government authority, economic development, and curbing the looming HIV/AIDS crisis – will play a vital role in enhancing the capacity of the government to meet the most fundamental challenges it faces.

While we share the UN's perspective on the importance of building military and police capacity, our interest in such socio-economic issues is also emphasized in this report, in conjunction with an analysis of more conventional security challenges.

Analysis and Recommendations

UNAMSIL Drawdown

We believe that UNAMSIL's plan for adjustment, drawdown, and withdrawal (ADW) of forces is reasonable, although the projected date of December 2004 may be too soon for final withdrawal. On the one hand, the drawdown applies constructive pressure to the Government of Sierra Leone to develop its indigenous security capacity and extend its authority. On the other hand, the final withdrawal date may be premature, as the government might not yet have developed the capacity to manage potential internal and regional threats. For this reason, we believe that UNAMSIL should consider maintaining a small force (500-2,000) with rapid reaction capability for several years beyond 2004.

Furthermore, certain national forces, such as those from Pakistan, are fairly considered more capable, trustworthy, and popular than others; efforts should be made to ensure that such forces provide the bulk of this remaining presence. Of course, this is not to suggest the exclusion of other national forces that provide valuable balance.

Recommendations to UN Security Council Members:

- **Retain a small but substantial UNAMSIL force (500-2,000) with rapid reaction capability through phase 4 of the ADW plan.** Consider postponing withdrawal for several years beyond 2004 to continue to deter external and internal threats and maintain security in order for the Government of Sierra Leone to consolidate reforms.
- **In the composition of the remaining troops, the bulk should be provided by nations, such as Pakistan, that have demonstrated both effectiveness in maintaining security and in winning the support of Sierra Leoneans.**
- **Ensure that benchmarks related to governance, DDR, control of diamond mining, and external threats are accorded their due weight in the UNAMSIL drawdown.** Prior to each phase of the ADW plan, the Security Council should consider progress on each of these issues. We affirm the Secretary General's Fifteenth Report that defines the completion of the first three threats as "priority tasks," and that it is "imperative they that be accomplished before UNAMSIL's departure." Also of importance is "progress towards the resolution of the conflict in Liberia." However, there is understandable concern that increasing the capacity of the police and army will constitute the primary factor influencing the pace of the withdrawal.

Socio-Economic and Health Issues

There are several cross-cutting socio-economic issues that, while not considered benchmarks in determining the pace of UNAMSIL withdrawal, indirectly impact the capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone to maintain peace and stability. Economic development is fundamental to stability and to shifting the country from dependency to self-sustainability. Lack of economic growth and creation of new jobs could lead to increased frustration among jobless populations, particularly marginalized youths, who account for a significant percentage of the population. Development will be challenged by a looming AIDS crisis in the country – the HIV/AIDS infection rate has reached the tipping point of 5%, a level at which the disease becomes prone to rapid spread across the population – as well as by a devastated educational system that has failed to school the majority of the population – the youth – now coming of age.

Recommendations to the Government of Sierra Leone and the donor community:

A number of the following recommendations for socio-economic reforms have been made by other analysts, officials and representatives of private voluntary organizations. We reiterate them in this section not only to emphasize their importance, but also to stress their connection to the security issues that are the focus of much of this study. Given limited resources and, in some cases, technical capacity, the Government of Sierra Leone would have to work in close conjunction with international donors to implement these recommendations.

In particular, donors and the Government of Sierra Leone should focus additional efforts in the following areas:

- **Youth – by, for example, promoting public works infrastructure that employ young people.** The government and donors should build upon examples of NGO-coordinated reintegration projects in which ex-combatants construct public facilities, such as police stations and roads.
- **Natural Resource Development Beyond Diamond Mining, such as rutile, bauxite and gold.** With the support of donors, the government should be prepared to refurbish many of these sites themselves. The government should look to systems such as the ones in place in Botswana, where mines are joint ventures of the government and private investors.
- **Foreign Investment Climate** – through additional support of anti-corruption measures, a clear Investment Code, simplified licensing procedures for mining, and greater budgetary transparency.

- **HIV/AIDS** – through expanded engagement of all sectors of society in the work of the Multi-Sector HIV/AIDS Programme. This should include all of the ministries, local governments, donors, civil society organizations (such as faith-based organizations (FBOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)), as well as private sector actors.
- **Adult Literacy Training for Promising Candidates Entering the Police and Military Forces** – the success of these programs could then help develop similar programs for other areas, preferably at the provincial level, including but not limited to civil service jobs, farm management, etc.

Recommendation to Security Council Members:

- **In considering the pace of UNAMSIL drawdown and, in particular, the issue of final withdrawal, the Security Council should request a Secretariat assessment of progress on these socio-economic issues, as well as determination of whether gaps in progress create serious potential for instability.** Such determination should be a factor in judgments about UNAMSIL withdrawal.

Issues of Governance

One of the most commonly cited root causes of the civil conflict in Sierra Leone is the general dissatisfaction with the government among the population, stemming from feelings of marginalization and isolation from government authority in Freetown. Factors cited for this discontent include the gradual consolidation of government and power in Freetown, coupled with corruption and resulting in a general sense of disenfranchisement at the local level. Local government structures were simply unable to provide basic services. Throughout the 1990s, there were general breakdowns of government authority, civil society and economic development.

The consolidation of state authority throughout Sierra Leone is identified by the Secretary General as a benchmark whose achievement is “imperative... before UNAMSIL’s departure from Sierra Leone.” This may, in fact, be the most significant challenge confronting the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community.

Recommendations (both to the Government of Sierra Leone and to the international donor community):

- **Anti-Corruption** – both to promote good governance and the perception of good governance, the Government of Sierra Leone should take additional measures to strengthen anti-corruption efforts. One measure would be to

provide prosecutorial powers to the Anti-Corruption Commission.

- **Local Governance – the government should take a number of actions to demonstrate and manifest its commitment to capable local government. These include:**
 - Enacting a local governance reform statute and holding elections for district council and town councils as soon as possible;
 - Clarifying responsibilities of each level of government;
 - Developing a funding mechanism for distribution of national monies to district levels;
 - Delegating ministerial authority and delivery of government goods and services to the local level, to the extent there is capacity to do so;
 - Democratizing the paramount chief system over time, and after elections.

- **Judicial and Legal Reform – with the support and involvement of the international donor community, the government should:**
 - Prioritize the recruitment of fair, impartial, and trained magistrates and judges, including through training and capacity building programs, as well as improvement of salaries and benefits packages;
 - Rehabilitate court facilities, including housing for court officials, and build and rehabilitate prisons;
 - Provide funding for the Ministry of Justice and the Office of the Attorney General to hire additional prosecutors and develop a public defenders office.

- **Control over Diamond Areas – the Government of Sierra Leone should:**
 - Reconsider the recently renewed system of granting diamond licenses via local chiefdoms. This structure is vulnerable to corruption and limits the central government’s oversight authority;
 - Invest in the ability of Mines Monitoring Officers (MMOs) to police the country's diamond mining and certification process. Consider expanding the force size beyond current goals, improving infrastructure such as on-site housing and communications and making MMOs part of the Sierra Leone Civil Service;
 - Focus enhanced attention on the dealer level during legal enforcement of the certification process.

Progress on Reintegration of Ex-Combatants

By facilitating reintegration into society and providing viable economic opportunities for ex-combatants, this population group will be much less likely to resort to violence in the future. Many observers have indicated that their evaluation of the security situation in Sierra Leone hinges predominantly on the success of the DDR program. Funding shortfalls have left over 20,000 ex-combatants, many of whom are located in volatile border regions, waiting to participate in reintegration programs. An additional shortcoming of the reintegration program is the apparent disconnect between the skills needed by ex-combatants and those being provided.

Recommendations to the Government of Sierra Leone and the donor community:

- **The Government of Sierra Leone must immediately address the inadequacy of DDR programs in Kailahun and other areas where there still remains a significant shortfall.** The government, with the support of international donors, should also find ways to compensate implementation partners for providing services in these harder to reach locations.
- **The NCDDR should work to implement an ongoing qualitative evaluation that tracks ex-combatants who have gone through the reintegration program.** By doing so, NCDDR will be able to modify or eliminate particular programs that do not meet their ultimate goals.
- **The NCDDR and implementing partners must improve the correlation between skills-training programs and demand for those skills.** The Government of Sierra Leone must determine ways to encourage ex-combatants to enter agriculture and participate in public works programs.

Regional Threats

The ongoing political and social turmoil in Liberia and new concerns over recent upheaval in Ivory Coast, reinforce the apprehension that Sierra Leone will never be completely safe from a return to conflict as long as it is surrounded by such unrest.

Recommendation to the Government of Sierra Leone:

- **The Government of Sierra Leone should ensure that the RSLAF has the material supplies needed for mobility and communication,** to facilitate a comprehensive and capable patrolling of the border.

Recommendation to UNAMSIL:

- **During drawdown phases 2 and 3, UNAMSIL should increase the opportunities to test the RSLAF's ability to conduct border patrols and provide security on its own.** This should be done with the understanding that a redeployment of larger UNAMSIL support could be quickly implemented, should an uncontrollable crisis arise.

Progress on Enhancing Security Forces

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) are the two government institutions authorized to provide security within Sierra Leone and to protect its borders. The UNAMSIL drawdown plan is contingent upon their increased strength, both in numbers and capabilities, to prevent a security vacuum from developing in the country.

Recommendations to the donor community:

- **IMATT should continue for the next ten years.** The British Government deserves great credit for its willingness to take on the responsibility of training the RSLAF. But it is a job that is far from over. To decrease the risk of a military coup, improve hardware assets, and increase professionalism within the ranks, IMATT needs to remain in place both as trainers and embedded in RSLAF positions. IMATT is a visible presence – and deterrent – to both external and internal rebel groups.
- **IMATT officers should be placed in advisory roles at the company level outside of Freetown.** Commanders must recognize that training must filter all the way down the ranks. Even the most junior service members must appreciate civilian control of the military.
- **International donors must give attention to the needs of the police.** Neither the CCSSP nor the Government of Sierra Leone budgets can sufficiently provide for the repair and construction of police stations, barracks and other required facilities. In addition, more funds must be made available to the government to increase the salaries of the rank and file police force and to pay for the expansion of the OSD. It would also be beneficial to provide adult educational support and literacy training for SLP officers and new recruits.
- **Sharpen CivPol's role in Sierra Leone.** An institutional focus on the provinces and on more professional development and advanced policing skills training could

make an important contribution to the future of the SLP – especially because supervisory and management skills have been found to be lacking at the police station level. The Secretary General’s Fifteenth Report recommended expanding the authorized strength of CivPol to 185 to help with professional development of the SLP. However, increasing the number of CivPol will not guarantee effectiveness of their assistance unless there is critical improvement in the selection of CivPol officers, a systematic training program, and better integration with existing police development programs.

Recommendations to the Government of Sierra Leone:

- **Improve RSLAF mobility.** Response time is the key to engaging and eliminating military or paramilitary threats to Sierra Leone. Whichever force is quicker, has better communications assets, and can arrive on scene with overwhelming force, will dominate any low-intensity conflict. The British contribution to this cause has been significant, but it must continue if the RSLAF is to retain the advantage upon the departure of UNAMSIL.
- **Sharpen the RSLAF mission.** RSLAF soldiers should focus their training on national defense first and internal security (i.e. policing) a distant second. This will diminish the likelihood of civil-military conflict, and could enhance the reputation of the military as a non-political and professional force. Soldiers should also be actively trained in rules of engagement in civil conflict so that they do not abuse human rights when they come into contact with civilians.
- **Prioritize quality over quantity in recruitment of police officers.** The goal of 9,500 officers for the police force is ambitious. Whether or not it proves necessary, the SLP and the Government of Sierra Leone should not lower recruiting standards for police officers in order to meet an arbitrary target.
- **Expand the Operational Support Division (OSD).** It is critical that, as UNAMSIL draws down, the OSD has sufficient presence in areas UNAMSIL will vacate. Therefore, as the SLP expands, the initial priority should be adding 500 new OSD officers to ensure that each police station has access to a sufficient number of armed officers. An expanded OSD would reduce the need for the SLP to seek assistance from the RSLAF in responding to internal security threats. Expansion of the OSD should not be accomplished by simply shifting general duty officers into the OSD. Recruitment of new general duty officers, as needed, remains important as well.

1. Introduction

After a decade of civil conflict, devastation of infrastructure, and extreme poverty, Sierra Leone appears to have turned a corner. The role of the international community has been critical to stabilizing the security situation, assisting a return to democratic governance, and enhancing the capacity of local authorities to provide security across the country and extend government services. With the civil war declared officially over on 18 January 2002, and peaceful elections having taken place in May 2002, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) has made significant progress in reasserting its authority.

In response to these favorable conditions, the United Nations has commenced a two-year plan to reduce and ultimately withdraw the UNAMSIL peacekeeping mission. The UNAMSIL drawdown will proceed according to the achievement of key security benchmarks described in the Secretary General's Fifteenth Report on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (5 September 2002). The primary benchmark is the capacity of the Sierra Leone army and police to provide security. Other critical benchmarks include the re-integration of ex-combatants, consolidation of government authority, restoration of control over diamond mining, and "progress towards resolution of the conflict in Liberia."

Our report, drawn from research that was conducted in Sierra Leone, the United States, and in consultation with international experts, is designed to assess specific security concerns threatening the long-term stability of post-war Sierra Leone. We have examined the benchmarks defined in the Fifteenth Report by gauging both the current status and the future outlook of these key concerns. Additionally, we have identified some issues not specifically mentioned in the report that we believe may pose significant security threats if not adequately addressed. In weighing the balance of the threats to Sierra Leone's stability, we identify internal security risks resulting from a range of domestic weaknesses, which we believe are of equal or perhaps even greater concern in the foreseeable future than the external threats posed by regional instability. While we advocate a continued vigilance on both sets of risks, we suggest that concern over these external dangers should not take precedence over domestic weaknesses – nor should they be used as an excuse for failing to address these weaknesses. With strong internal stability, we believe Sierra Leone will be increasingly capable of repelling and withstanding attempted assaults on its sovereignty.

Furthermore, in weighing the internal risks, we believe that socio-economic issues should warrant at least the same degree of attention as the conventional security issues (such as building capacity of the security forces) that are generally believed to be most worrisome. In particular, we encourage the Government of Sierra Leone, with the support of the international donor community, to vigorously act on issues such as the termination of corruption, integrity in government and the creation of a climate conducive to economic

investment and development, as well as the engagement of youth through education and economic opportunities. We also believe that the government must give greater attention to containment of the looming HIV/AIDS epidemic, through interventions that include education, prevention and care.

We believe that these risks – which involve issues that were not included as “benchmarks” in the Secretary General’s Fifteenth Report – may pose the greatest threat to the internal stability of Sierra Leone. Left unaddressed, they will result in enormous social costs that could derail the return of sustainable peace and economic prosperity. Both the lack of economic opportunity and the perception of corruption were at the core of public marginalization that contributed to the eruption of conflict a decade ago. Of Sierra Leone’s current population, 50% is under the age of 18; left unengaged, this segment of society could become a major source of unrest. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS, currently around 5%, threatens to undermine every sphere of development, including discouraging foreign investment, weakening the strength of the army, and imposing a huge economic burden on the government.

For each of these reasons, we believe that progress in the socio-economic areas described above should play a role in determining the pace of the UNAMSIL withdrawal from Sierra Leone.

In addition to these threats, we express concern over the ability of the GoSL to adequately consolidate its authority throughout the country, which is identified in the Fifteenth Report as a benchmark. The challenge here includes, *inter alia*, extending local government access to civil society and regulating the country’s natural resources. Until the delivery of goods and services is extended to even the most remote regions of the country, and citizens are more engaged in the process of governance, the GoSL is at risk of losing the support of its people. Until the vast potential of natural resources is adequately harnessed, the government will lack the revenue needed to implement the very programs that will help consolidate its authority.

We are encouraged by improvements within the armed forces and police, though the process of training, education and capacity building must continue. With the support of the international community, the Government of Sierra Leone must seek to address poor living conditions, low salary, and lack of equipment if recent and planned improvements in training and recruitment are to endure.

Our recommendations, and the focus of our report, are three-fold. First, we offer recommendations relating to the UNAMSIL drawdown plan. In particular, as UNAMSIL conducts its drawdown, and the presence of foreign peacekeeping troops diminishes over the next two years, it is crucial that no “security vacuum” arises to threaten plunging the country back into conflict, as the Fifteenth Report warns. Second, we offer a range of recommendations addressed to the Government of Sierra Leone, which are designed to

promote the conditions that would permit the UNAMSIL drawdown over time. Such a focus is appropriate because it is the country's peace to maintain, and the people should have the strong guidance of their leadership while working together to rebuild their nation. Finally, we offer recommendations to the international community, designed to encourage and better focus their continued commitment that is so critical to consolidating the fragile peace. It is only through a comprehensive approach and a unified effort, in which all these sets of issues are addressed, that the possibility of a sustainable peace will become a reality for Sierra Leone.

2. UNAMSIL Drawdown

We believe that UNAMSIL's plan for adjustment, drawdown, and withdrawal (ADW) of forces is reasonable, although the projected date of December 2004 may be too soon for final withdrawal. On the one hand, the drawdown applies constructive pressure to the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) to develop its indigenous security capacity and extend its authority. On the other hand, the final withdrawal date may be premature, as the Government might not yet have developed the capacity to manage potential internal and regional threats. For this reason, we believe that UNAMSIL should consider maintaining a small force (500-2,000) with rapid reaction capability for several years beyond 2004.

The Secretary General's Fifteenth Report lays the groundwork for the phased withdrawal of the UNAMSIL Mission over the next two years. The report describes the marked progress achieved in the security situation and recommends adjustments in the "current size, composition, and deployment of the Mission" according to key security benchmarks. The pace of the UNAMSIL drawdown will be primarily determined by the "progress in building up the capacity of the Sierra Leone police and army." Additional "priority tasks" to reduce security threats include: "reintegration of ex-combatants, consolidating State authority throughout the country, and restoring effective government control over diamond mining." According to the report, it is "imperative that [the tasks] be accomplished before UNAMSIL's departure from Sierra Leone." An additional key benchmark is "progress towards the resolution of the conflict in Liberia."¹

While progress toward these benchmarks has been significant, much more needs to be done both in the areas identified by the UN as well as in key socio-economic areas that we believe warrant greater attention. The body of this report assesses the benchmarks identified in the Fifteenth Report, and other factors that will impact upon the security situation, which we believe should ultimately affect the timing of the UNAMSIL drawdown.

In brief, measuring whether the RSLAF and SLP have sufficient capacity will be based on testing how these forces perform in maintaining security in the localized absence of UNAMSIL forces. Our analysis below suggests cautious optimism towards the capacity of Sierra Leonean security forces to gradually meet these objectives in regard to current threats. However, making progress towards the other benchmarks identified in the Fifteenth Report may require substantially more time than two years. And failure to make such progress could itself change the threat environment confronted by Sierra Leone security forces.

The remainder of this section focuses on the ADW plan itself, outlining its four phases of drawdown and the implications for the security situation in Sierra Leone. United Nations

Security Council Resolution 1436 urges UNAMSIL to complete the first two phases of the ADW plan to withdraw 4,500 soldiers by May 2003.² Based on our understanding, implementation of the remainder of the ADW plan raises particular concerns, given possible limitations on UNAMSIL force mobility in the face of military threats.

UNAMSIL's ADW plan calls for a reduction of forces in four phases:

Phase 1 – Adjustment: reduce forces by 600 soldiers no later than November 2002, by not replacing certain units that are scheduled to depart, such as the Bangladeshi artillery unit. This “pruning” phase signals to the Government that UNAMSIL has started to draw down, and encourages efforts to bolster indigenous security institutions.

Phase 2 – Initial Drawdown: as urged by UN Security Council Resolution 1436, reduce forces by 3,900 down to a total of 13,000 by the end of May 2003; shift from five sectors to three, consolidating headquarters and reducing the number of battalions from 16 to 12.

Part 1: Draw down from 16,900 to 14,500 troops in January 2003. This phase reconfigures battalion headquarters from five sectors to three. The observation period lasts from February to March 2003 in anticipation of local elections in April.

Part 2: Draw down from 14,500 to 13,000 troops in May 2003. Forces from the center sector will be decreased and reconfigured. Phase 3 will not begin before June 2003, and will probably be moved to August 2003, to ensure enhanced capacity of SLP and RSLAF to maintain stability as UNAMSIL departs.

Phase 3 – Final Drawdown: most likely beginning in August 2003, draw down forces from 13,000 to 2,000 troops and reduce from three sectors to one – a Freetown/Lungi peninsula sector. This phase is contingent on the Government of Sierra Leone's capacity to maintain security through the extension of the SLP and RSLAF.

Part 1: This phase will hollow out the center sector of UNAMSIL troops. The plan requires that 1,000 more SLP officers be trained by the start of this phase. In addition, the RSLAF should continue its “right-sizing,” reducing from 13,500 troops to 10,500 troops. The density of SLP and RSLAF forces should be sufficient to deter and take action in case of violence. At this stage, retaining the mobility of UNAMSIL troops will be critical to respond to instability.

Part 2: This will be the most significant drawdown of UNAMSIL troops, as the forces gradually withdraw from the eastern sector and reduce their presence in Freetown, and RSLAF takes increased responsibility for border control. The decision to reach this phase must be taken with great care. By this time, the SLP and RSLAF will have had a chance to demonstrate their respective capacities;

indeed their performance should inform the decision to move ahead with the drawdown. It is important to note that, at this stage, UNAMSIL is expected to have reduced its ability to respond to threats outside its sector. We therefore favor maintaining at least two companies (250 troops each) that can respond rapidly to potential unrest anywhere in the country.

Phase 4 – Withdrawal: Anticipated withdrawal of troops by the end of 2004. While favoring a rapid adjustment and phase down, we have reservations about implementing a complete withdrawal within two years. The current pace of the ADW plan pressures the GoSL and Sierra Leone security forces to rapidly improve their capacity. However, maintaining a small rapid reaction force (500-2,000) for several years beyond 2004 may also be necessary. Such a force would be critical to deterring external and internal threats and to buying more time for consolidation of reforms.

Concerning the composition of UNAMSIL, certain national forces, such as those from Pakistan, are fairly considered more capable, trustworthy, and popular than others; efforts should be made to ensure that such forces provide the bulk of this remaining presence. Of course, this is not to suggest the exclusion of other national forces that provide valuable balance.

Recommendations

- **Retain a small but substantial UNAMSIL force (500-2,000) with rapid reaction capability through phase 4 of the ADW plan.** Consider postponing withdrawal for several years beyond 2004 to continue to deter external and internal threats and maintain security in order for GoSL to consolidate reforms.
- **In the composition of the remaining troops, the bulk should be provided by nations, such as Pakistan, that have demonstrated both effectiveness in maintaining security and in winning the support of Sierra Leoneans.**
- **Ensure that benchmarks related to governance, DDR, control of diamond mining, and external threats are accorded their due weight in the UNAMSIL drawdown.** Prior to each phase of the ADW plan, the Security Council should consider progress on each of these issues. We affirm the Secretary General's Fifteenth Report that defines the completion of the first three threats as "priority tasks," and that it is "imperative they that be accomplished before UNAMSIL's departure." Also of importance is "progress towards the resolution of the conflict in Liberia." However, there is understandable concern that increasing the capacity of the police and army will constitute the primary factor influencing the pace of the withdrawal.

3. Socio-Economic and Health Issues

There are several cross-cutting socio-economic issues that, while not considered benchmarks in determining the pace of UNAMSIL withdrawal, indirectly impact the capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone to maintain peace and stability. This subsection will examine those areas we believe pose the greatest threat to stability in the long run, where targeted action now could reap considerable improvements in the future. We emphasize that the major responsibility for action in these areas rests with the Government of Sierra Leone, which is the primary focus of our recommendations in this section. However, given the relationship between socio-economic issues and security in Sierra Leone, we offer one recommendation to members of the Security Council, as follows:

- **In considering the pace of UNAMSIL drawdown and, in particular, the issue of final withdrawal, the Security Council should request a Secretariat assessment of progress on these socio-economic issues, as well as determination of whether gaps in progress create serious potential for instability.** Such determination should be a factor in judgments about UNAMSIL withdrawal.

Again, while we believe this recommendation is supported by the analysis that follows, the recommendation does not diminish the importance of Sierra Leone government action on the socio-economic issues described below.

3.1. Economic Development

Pre-war mismanagement followed by more than a decade of civil war has caused a significant degradation of Sierra Leone's economy. The country once exported agricultural products and minerals, but is now dependant on food assistance and is subject to marine poaching and diamond smuggling. Current GDP is about 700 million USD; with a population of 4.7 million, the country's GDP per capita is 126 USD.³ Sierra Leone ranks at the bottom of the UNDP human development index. While tremendous natural resources offer the promise of national wealth, poverty and corruption hamper Sierra Leone's economic development (see section 4.1 on Corruption and 4.3 on Diamonds and Mining Resources). Some progress, however, is evident. UNAMSIL's presence and governmental reforms have stabilized the economy and permitted conditions for consolidation of governmental authority and resettlement of displaced populations. Inflation has dropped to nearly 0%, and the current economic growth rate is over 6%, although questions remain whether that is sustainable.

Economic development is critical to stability and to shifting the country from dependency to self-sustainability. Lack of economic growth and creation of new jobs could lead to

increased frustration among jobless populations, particularly marginalized youths, who account for a significant percentage of the population. Without alternatives, some might be recruited to become paid fighters in neighboring countries, or embroiled in Sierra Leone insurgencies, replicating a cycle of violence. Economic development would also expand government revenues, increasing resources available to the government for support of the military and police, and for the extension of its authority and the increase in its services. Foreign investment will only begin to increase with confidence in Sierra Leone's stability and potential for growth.

Continued economic growth depends on improvements in several key areas. Agriculture engages 75% of the working population, and restoring agricultural productivity will significantly improve the economic base. Creating tradable surpluses in cash crops (beyond coffee and cocoa), restoring livestock populations, and rebuilding the fishing infrastructure are all urgent needs. A concerted effort to develop the agriculture sector will also provide employment for many people, in particular ex-combatants and those currently pursuing illegal diamond mining.

Resumption of other forms of mining will also contribute to restoring Sierra Leone's economy. Before the civil war, tax revenues from mining accounted for 20% of the GDP; but by 2000, mining had stagnated and revenues only accounted for .1% of the GDP, and are only now slowly rising.⁴ Moreover, mining has the potential to employ several hundred thousands of workers and generate substantial revenue. Also critical to development are improvements in physical infrastructure, particularly water access, electricity, roads and communications. Of equal importance are steps to improve fiscal management by the government, restoration of a tax regime, and reforms to open up the economy. Adoption of an Investment Code, combined with confidence in the government, anti-corruption efforts, and decreased risk of a coup (by increasing loyalty within the armed forces, as discussed in section 7.1 on the RSLAF), will facilitate increased foreign investment, which will be desperately needed as UNAMSIL's indirect financial contributions and donors' assistance diminish.

The Secretary General's Fifteenth Report and the National Recovery Strategy, formulated by the GoSL and international actors, acknowledge these challenges. Certain initiatives embraced by the GoSL, such as the Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF), offer positive contributions to increasing transparency in budgetary planning. Furthermore, international donors reaffirmed their commitment to key development projects at the Consultative Group Meeting for Sierra Leone in Paris in November 2002. While contributions from the UK and US are substantial, more support is needed to meet shortfalls in the assistance requested, particularly for refugee resettlement. All together, international donors have provided a little more than half of the nearly 100 million USD requested for the 2002 UN consolidated inter-agency appeal; particular shortfalls lay in support for HIV/AIDS programs, vaccinations, water access, sanitation, physical infrastructure, and economic development.⁵

Recommendations

- **International donors should stay engaged in Sierra Leone to enable its vulnerable transition from dependency to self-sufficiency.** Sustained commitment made now provides a critical investment in Sierra Leone's future stability at a discount of the cost for peacekeeping interventions; shortfalls in assistance inhibit the full potential of Sierra Leone's economic development.
- **The Government of Sierra Leone ought to take measures to encourage foreign investment:** support anti-corruption measures (see section 4.1 on Corruption), enact a clear Investment Code, simplify licensing procedures for mining, and institute greater budgetary transparency, all of which will create increased incentives for foreign investment.
- **The Government of Sierra Leone should consider organizing public works infrastructure projects that employ youth.** The GoSL should build upon examples of NGO-coordinated reintegration projects in which ex-combatants construct public facilities, such as police stations and roads.
- **Diversify Cash Crops.** We support the approach of the GoSL to aggressively re-start the agricultural sector, and further encourage the assessment effort directed at the diversification of cash crops, as identified in the National Recovery Strategy.⁶

3.2. HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS could become the largest threat to the development of a stable society in Sierra Leone. A recent national survey estimated the prevalence rate of HIV/AIDS in Sierra Leone at roughly 5% of the population, a rise of 2% since 1997. This increase is of significant concern because a 5% infection rate is generally the tipping point at which HIV/AIDS will spread exponentially throughout the population. While Sierra Leone has remained one of the few sub-Saharan countries not to face an immediate crisis of HIV/AIDS in the 1990s, it now must focus on this issue as not only a public health problem but also a threat to economic development, security and stability. HIV/AIDS poses a serious threat to the economic vitality of any country. Studies have shown that countries with high prevalence of HIV/AIDS suffer from long-term development and economic slowdowns. In Sierra Leone, where the development and economic conditions are very fragile, a rise in the incidence of HIV/AIDS could potentially have disastrous effects upon the country.

The growth of HIV/AIDS is attributable to several aspects of the decade-long conflict. The migration of people – more than half of the population was displaced or fled to neighboring countries – and the rebel army’s use of rape as a weapon may have been the leading causes of the recent surge in HIV/AIDS. The thousands of peacekeeping troops brought into Sierra Leone, many of whom are from states with high infection rates, such as Zambia, Kenya and Nigeria, may also have contributed to the spread of the disease.

Another concern is the prevalence of HIV/AIDS in the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). Armies with serious health problems become quite vulnerable; a high prevalence of disease inhibits the army’s ability to grow and remain strong and ready for action. Estimates place the infection rate between 25-60% in the RSLAF.⁷ IMATT has described HIV/AIDS as the number one security threat facing the army. While the RSLAF is still in a very fragile stage, any health problem could be devastating to the rebuilding process and the deployment of troops. The prevalence of HIV/AIDS among the RSLAF could significantly weaken the capacity of the armed forces and in turn, the security of the country. In addition, the RSLAF, as major carriers of the disease, threaten the population because the army is deployed throughout the country.

A recent survey funded by UNICEF, “Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Adolescent Survey Report,” conducted by the Government of Sierra Leone’s Central Statistics Office gave the following figures about public HIV/AIDS awareness:⁸

- 58% have had sex by the age of 18;
- 2% have had an HIV/AIDS test;
- 55.1% do not know that healthy people can carry HIV;
- 55% do not know that everyone is vulnerable to HIV infection;
- 13.5% use condoms;
- 10.5% know that a condom is an important means to prevent HIV/AIDS;
- 75% in rural communities do not know where to obtain a condom;
- Less than 50% would abstain from sex in order to not contract HIV/AIDS;
- 34% of rural respondents would not stick to one partner to prevent HIV/AIDS.

The results, while startling, demonstrate the need to educate the population of Sierra Leone, in particular the youth and RSLAF, who are most at risk.

In response to the growing concerns about the prevalence of HIV/AIDS among its population, the Government of Sierra Leone is currently developing a Multi-Sector HIV/AIDS Programme, under the leadership of the National HIV/AIDS Council, chaired by President Kabbah. Supported by several donors, this program will encompass a full spectrum of interventions including education, prevention, treatment, and support. In addition, the United States Department of Defense currently funds a program for HIV/AIDS education for the RSLAF. Thankfully, the spread of HIV/AIDS can be deterred. The disease has not reached disastrous proportions, and catastrophe can be

prevented with proper education and the widespread availability of condoms.

Recommendations

- **Expand engagement of all sectors of society in the work of the Multi-Sector HIV/AIDS Programme.** This should include all of the ministries, local governments, donors, civil society organizations (such as faith-based organizations (FBOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs)), as well as private sector actors.
- **The Ministry of Education should modify the curriculum to include HIV/AIDS prevention programs in all public and private schools.**
- **Continue working with donors to fund HIV/AIDS prevention educational programs within all districts and towns throughout the country.** Examples, such as the US Department of Defense-funded program, should be multiplied and expanded to include more people.
- **The President of Sierra Leone should continue a policy of dedicated commitment to the issue.** Using the power of the bully pulpit, the President has the ability to increase public awareness of the disease, and raise the profile of HIV/AIDS as a priority security issue.
- **Using targeted methods, disseminate a clear and succinct message about HIV/AIDS.** By utilizing civil society networks, such as programs run by the Ministry of Youth and Sports, and guiding information dissemination, the government should ensure that a consistent message reaches all Sierra Leoneans in an appropriate and trustworthy manner.

3.3. Literacy and Education

Education is not a sufficient, but necessary condition for prosperity in a country. Ten years of conflict and the poor governance system that preceded it have left a legacy of a decayed educational system. The illiteracy rate in Sierra Leone is at 70%.⁹ Only 40-45% of primary schools are currently functioning, and many of them are in great need of repair.¹⁰ Given that adolescents and juveniles comprise approximately 50% of the population of Sierra Leone,¹¹ this poor educational system is a significant barrier to development in the country and one that, if not remedied, will have repercussions for decades to come.

Although not addressed in the Secretary General's Fifteenth Report, adult illiteracy and a

devastated educational system in Sierra Leone seriously hinder the population's capacity to carry forward development and reform projects underway across the country. Eventually, this lack of education may increase the appeal of violence as a means of prospering. As the current generation of teenagers matures, there does not seem to be hope that this situation can abate.

More directly relevant to the security sector, we found that the Sierra Leone Police and the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces are struggling to fill recruitment quotas because applicants do not meet minimal education standards. Each force is also coping with high illiteracy rates among their ranks (the SLP is reportedly 20% illiterate), although the numbers are significantly lower than that of the general population.

From the perspective of building peace and security in the country, education is critical for a number of reasons. First, education occupies the time and imagination of young people, who were recruited in large numbers by rebel factions during the war. Second, education correlates with development – it teaches the skills, especially literacy, necessary to bring people into the work force. Education is also the mechanism for teaching ethics. As one official in Bo told us, education provides an ethical grounding that will give young people the necessary tools to consider the repercussions before they take action. He blamed the general willingness of youth to participate in violent conflict on the lack of moral education and idleness. Finally, improving education in Sierra Leone is one step toward bridging the enormous gap that exists between the elites and the rest of the population in the country, which compounds the sense of marginalization felt by the people living up-country.

While several education and literacy projects are currently underway in Sierra Leone, they are overwhelmingly focused on primary school education, and do not serve teenagers and young adults, many of whom missed a decade's worth of schooling or whose education was interrupted, if they had access to it at all. In addition, educational projects are focused on the long-term development of the educational system in Sierra Leone, including the rebuilding and renovating of physical structures. This is indeed necessary, but additional measures to provide some education to those older children and young adults who never received it, is also needed. The one notable exception is UNESCO's Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools (CREPS) project, which consolidates six years of primary school into three for adolescents who never attended school.

Recommendations

- **Donors should emphasize adult literacy training for promising candidates entering the police and military forces.** Given that a countrywide adult literacy program would be difficult, if not impossible to mount, we recommend that both

the Government of Sierra Leone and international donors provide literacy training for the two prominent security institutions. The success of these programs could then help develop similar programs for other areas, preferably at the provincial level, including but not limited to civil service jobs, farm management, etc.

- **Expand UNESCO's Complementary Rapid Education for Primary Schools (CREPS) project.**

4. Issues of Governance

It is clear that many Sierra Leoneans have long felt little connection to governmental authority in Freetown. At the same time, as central authority was consolidated over the years, local government structures could not provide basic services. These factors, combined with widespread corruption, created a sense of alienation that has been a contributing factor to instability and conflict.

The establishment and restoration of government authority at both the national and local level in Sierra Leone is fundamental to meeting the needs of local populations, and thereby maintaining security and stability throughout the country. Indeed, the United Nations has set the consolidation of State authority as one of its five primary benchmarks. The Fifteenth Report states, “as UNAMSIL draws down, it is important to ensure that effective civil authority is restored throughout the country in order to facilitate the maintenance of law and order and establish structures that can deliver basic services to the people.” At present, government authority continues to be impaired by corruption, weak local government structures, a fractured judicial system and negligible control over diamond resources.

4.1. Corruption

While many may argue that the elimination of corruption is a longer-term development challenge rather than an immediate security concern, the history of Sierra Leone has demonstrated that this problem must not be ignored even in the short term. Although in the near future, corruption may not be the spark that ignites renewed conflict, the prevalence of corruption in Sierra Leone creates an environment vulnerable to rapid deterioration – as local businesses, foreign investors, and citizens can quickly lose faith in perceived corrupt government institutions. True stability can only be realized when the citizenry develops trust in its government and that government is held accountable for its actions.

Anti-corruption measures were not cited in the Fifteenth Report as a benchmark for assessing progress; the long-term nature of the problem does not lend itself easily to “benchmark” status. Although corruption is generally not eliminated quickly, neither is it an insurmountable obstacle. The Government of Sierra Leone has begun to establish institutions and processes that seek to reduce the opportunities for corruption and apply sanctions to those who transgress. The expectation is that, if the government demonstrates a willingness to punish corruption, officials will be deterred from participating in such activities. Likewise, these measures are meant to instill confidence in the government and legal authorities on the part of the citizenry.

In 2000, the Government of Sierra Leone, with support from DFID, established the Anti-

Corruption Commission (ACC). This agency is responsible for investigating corruption cases, but does not have the authority to prosecute; that responsibility is delegated to the Attorney General. It is troubling that the authority of the ACC is so limited. Some have criticized the Attorney General for not moving quickly enough on cases being referred by the ACC. Providing prosecutorial power to the ACC would address this concern.

The recent record would seem to support consideration of this modification. Thus far, over 600 cases have been investigated by the ACC. Of those, only 30 have actually gone to court, and a smaller number have resulted in convictions.¹² Considering the reported prevalence of corruption in Sierra Leone, this figure seems low.

At the same time, the ACC and the Attorney General should be recognized for the cases that have been brought to justice. The ACC played an integral role in the prosecution of a High Court judge for accepting bribes, the arrest of the Income Tax Commissioner for soliciting a bribe, and the arrest of the former Transportation Minister for smuggling diamonds. Such cases, when publicized widely, can provide an important deterrent.

Substantial progress has been made in the area of public awareness. In public focus groups, although 94% of respondents indicated that they felt that corruption was rampant and widespread in Sierra Leone, 87% of respondents indicated that they would report a corrupt practice and 57% of respondents indicated that they were aware of the activities of the ACC. The major complaint from those in the survey who were familiar with the ACC was that they had little confidence in the people who had been put in place to head the commission.¹³

While the ACC's mission is to investigate the higher profile cases of systemic corruption, the petty, day-to-day corruption that most citizens deal with is left unchanged. The government is implementing stricter accounting practices in order to decrease the opportunities to practice corruption, and should continue efforts to deter and punish petty corruption. At the same time, reducing the corruption that is perpetrated by front line civil servants and the police will also require adjustment of pay scales so that the government is providing a living wage. Work on the issue of petty corruption is important, as it is this kind of activity of which the public is most aware, and which fuels distrust of government.

Recommendations

- **The GoSL should provide prosecutorial powers to the ACC.**
- **The GoSL should increase pay for police officers and other front line government workers to a level that is sufficient to meet basic needs.**

- **Donors should insist upon evidence of transparency in all their dealings with all government agencies.** Funding must be tied to progress being made in the reduction of corruption.

4.2. Local Governance

The Government of Sierra Leone recognizes the need to broaden the authority of local governments and has been drafting legal changes that will facilitate the decentralization of government throughout the country. These efforts have been a top priority of various international agencies, including the United Nations Development Programme.

Since the end of the civil war, the GoSL has made a priority of filling local government positions. Through the support of UNAMSIL, UNDP, and DFID, all ministerial and district officers are now in their respective posts. Representatives from the line ministries also have returned to the districts. However, work at the local level is undermined by the fact that most, if not all, district leaders face inadequate office, staffing, and logistical conditions. The Minister of Local Government and Rural Development also lacks the communication and logistical support to enhance relationships between the national government and local leaders, which slows the government's capacity for decentralization and reform of local governance.

Current plans for the development of local government are predicated on a return to the system of district and local councils (suspended in 1972), as well as traditional Chiefdoms. Central to the discussion of local governance in Sierra Leone is the relationship among the national government, the Chiefdoms, and the district and town councils. At present, there are 172 local governments in Sierra Leone. In the Western area, these include the city of Freetown, five area councils and one district council. In the remaining three provinces, these include four town councils, twelve district councils and 149 chiefdoms. The central government also has appointed representatives at the provincial level, further complicating issues of jurisdiction and responsibility. District, area, and town councils overlap with and, in most instances, encompass chiefdoms. How these multiple entities interact and deliver on their responsibilities will impact the maintenance of peace and stability throughout the country.

District and local councils were reestablished in 2000, and are currently run by appointed officials. The national government has announced that district elections will take place during 2003, the exact date pending local governance reform legislation. Once elections are held, these councils should have autonomous powers with funds from the national government to deliver basic government services such as health and education. Because there is no provision for revenue collection among the councils, the national government must be prepared to help fund each council, enabling them to fulfill their mandate. UNDP has proposed setting up a Common Fund, which would receive and distribute national

and international monies to councils according to objective-oriented formats.

Paramount Chiefs provide the most accessible level of government for citizens, although their role in service delivery is ambiguous and not standard across chiefdoms. Paramount Chiefs are able to react to local concerns, which may have been overlooked by district councils or the central government in Freetown. They are able to enforce local laws and customs, in addition to promoting economic development in their Chiefdoms. In total, there are 159 Paramount Chiefdoms across Sierra Leone. At present, there are 86 sitting Paramount Chiefs, and elections are currently underway to fill the remaining 63 vacancies that are now being held by Regent Chiefs (interim placeholders appointed by the President). A delineation of responsibilities between Chiefs and democratically elected councils is necessary, but should occur only after the current round of elections has taken place in order to ensure some stability in the government.

Reform of the Chiefdom selection process should be considered as well, since the current selection process is not open or democratic. Prior to the conflict, there were some disputes between the youth, many of whom ultimately took to arms, and the older chiefs. To encourage the rule of law, inclusiveness and better representation of public will, the government should consider certain reforms such as abolishing requirements that a candidate be from the “ruling house,” and setting education standards and term limits. Ultimately, this allows citizens to choose among candidates who are qualified not because of their lineage but rather because they have the skills and the ability to best represent the will of their constituents.

Recommendations

- **Hold elections for district and town councils as soon as possible.** Parliament should work to promptly pass the local governance reform statute.
- **Local government reform should include an appropriate reorganization of the districts within the existing provinces.**
- **Clarify the responsibilities of each level of government.** Coordinate the role of the Chiefdoms within the national and district council structures, specifically clarifying the responsibilities that each level provides to the population. This currently seems unclear both as a matter of law and practice. Streamlining these roles will provide more efficient service delivery to Sierra Leone citizens and will clear up any uncertainty that current exists among the government actors.
- **Develop and implement a funding mechanism for the distribution of national monies to the district and town councils such as the Common Fund proposed by UNDP.** Without a mechanism to raise revenue and distribute funds through the

district and town councils, the desired structure will fail.

- **Delegate ministerial authority and the delivery of government goods and services to the local level, to the extent there is the capacity to do so.** The central government must begin to rely upon districts, town councils, and Chiefdoms to carry out governance responsibilities given that the above recommendation is successfully enacted and implemented.
- **Democratize the Paramount Chief system.** After the elections for the Paramount Chiefs, initiate reforms such as qualification standards for education and literacy, term limits, checks and balances on power, and the abolishment of “ruling house” requirements. While the Chiefdom system has served as an integral part of Sierra Leone governance over the years, a democratically enhanced process would better serve the residents and empower them to participate in government.

4.3. Diamonds and Mining Resources

In the Fifteenth Report, the restoration of government control over diamond mines warrants its own benchmark status. This is an accurate reflection of the seriousness of the issue, as Sierra Leone’s rich diamond resources have been the cause of so much of the country’s historic and continued ills, yet simultaneously offer the possibility of such great remedy.

The decade of war in Sierra Leone is widely recognized to have been as much a struggle for control of the country’s diamond fields as a politically or socially motivated conflict, despite RUF claims to the contrary. The willingness of Liberian president Charles Taylor to arm and supply the RUF, in exchange for the mining of aptly named “blood” diamonds, allowed the RUF to remain a well-equipped and motivated combat force. Additional export of illegally mined diamonds, many of which passed through dealers in the towns of Bo and Kenema willing to buy from known combatants, found their way to Europe for resale in jewelry shops around the world. Last November’s *Washington Post* report that diamonds were smuggled from Sierra Leone on behalf of Al Qaeda¹⁴ demonstrates the potential global implications of not controlling the diamond fields.

Diamonds also represent a potentially huge source of income to the Government of Sierra Leone, which is badly lacking in the revenue needed to successfully carry out its National Recovery Strategy. The government’s official certification system, started in 2000, has increased the yield of legitimate diamond exports to a total of over 30 million dollars so far this calendar year, a substantial improvement over the 1999 figure of just over one million dollars.¹⁵

However, while the exact figure is unclear, it is estimated that almost 50% of the country's diamonds are still passing over borders illegally, significantly reducing the government's revenue and raising fears of continued diamonds for arms transactions among the many warring rebel factions in the region. Thus, while the newly regulated export system is certainly an improvement over the sorry state of legal exports during the war years, the new figures still represent only a part of what Sierra Leone is capable of generating.

Control of the Diamond Mines

While it is true that the Government of Sierra Leone is somewhat limited in the resources needed to fully implement a rigorous system of control, many of us were struck by the almost resigned acceptance within some government offices of the hurdles they face. This is particularly significant in light of concerns over unemployed youth, as we have highlighted throughout our report. Many aimless young people, ex-combatants among them, are drawn to the diamond fields by the allure of "easy" profit. This places strains on the already fragile capacity of the local towns and concentrates large numbers of disenchanting and potentially volatile people in one place.

There is some validity to the argument made by various officials that the unregulated diamond mining activities at least provides occupation to restless individuals who otherwise may find more dangerous ways to vent their frustrations. However, we suggest that a better outlet would be legitimate skills training that provides a more reliable source of long-term economic security.

Our research suggests that new certification systems are working best at the final accounting and export stages. There are still problems of corruption within the official accounting system, but it appears that the majority of diamonds that makes it through the system and to the Government Gold and Diamond Office (GGDO) bureau in Freetown are successfully registered, taxed and exported.

However, earlier on in the diamond producing process, at the level of the miners and the middleman dealers in the diamond provinces, there are still great problems with the lack of government control and legal enforcement. On the streets of Bo and Kenema, considered the center of the diamond trading business, many of the dealers display the appropriate license certificates on their walls. However, there are concerns that some are also continuing to participate in the smuggling of illicit gems. Additionally, at least one of them admitted to us that he will buy his diamonds from anyone who walks in off the street – whether they are licensed for mining or not. This might include the hundreds of ex-combatants who are still thought to be mining in nearby Tongo Fields.¹⁶

While it is likely that these ex-combatants are mining as individuals rather than as an organized group searching for sources of revenue to re-arm, their presence leads to

regular skirmishes over land rights and does increase the likelihood that some of these diamonds are making their way out of the country and into the hands of still mobilized combat groups in the region, such as the Liberian rebel faction LURD or Taylor's own AFL.

Mine Monitoring

To combat the illicit mining, the Sierra Leone Ministry of Mineral Resources has recently created a new force of Mines Monitoring Officers (MMOs). MMOs were in place in small numbers before the war, but affected little obvious control, possibly because there were too few of them. The Ministry is currently planning to create about 500 new MMO slots; just over 100 are now out in the field. The Ministry admitted to us that they are having problems finding the funds to train, pay and outfit the MMOs with the basic necessities of their job, such as communications devices and bicycles.

Making it more difficult for the MMOs to do their work is the lack of infrastructure in towns such as Tongo, in the heart of the rich diamond area known as Tongo Fields. Because of the shortage of housing, the MMOs must base themselves hours away in Kenema, and therefore make the journey to the fields only a few, sporadic times a week.¹⁷ Additionally, because of low pay and limited benefits, there are genuine concerns that there is already and will continue to be a high level of corruptibility among the MMO force.

In an attempt to create greater local oversight of the licensing process, the power to grant mining licenses has recently been given to the regional Paramount Chiefs. This program was in effect before the war and even then was subject to allegations of corruption. One of the goals of the paramount licensing system is to get some of the proceeds from official diamond sales back to the communities from whence the diamonds originally came; while this is an admirable goal, some question whether all the Paramount Chiefs – many of whom were dislocated during the war and therefore may have a more tenuous feeling of obligation to their constituencies – will actually put the allocated funds back into community projects.

We agree with the UNAMSIL drawdown's phase two structure of maintaining a robust presence in the diamond-mining region. International forces are needed to serve as a deterrent while the government continues to extend its reach over all its natural resources, and the police further their ability to maintain civil order.

While it is our assessment that control of diamond mining areas by the Government of Sierra Leone is improving, and the licensing process is increasing revenues and stemming some illegal flow, it is not likely that the situation will be fully regulated for years to come, as the funds and infrastructure needed to expand control to the appropriate level will take time to secure. In fact, full regulation may be an impossible benchmark to reach.

Because diamond mines are alluvial, or surface deposits, and are often in remote locations that can be discovered without much exploration, they have historically been out of governmental control for frequent periods since they were discovered in the 1930's, even during the best of economic times. However, the presence of UNAMSIL in the main diamond areas, while not specifically assigned to mine security duties, has brought a stability that allows the government's nascent control an opportunity to develop.

Other Mineral Resources

Sierra Leone's economic future does not lie solely in its diamond fields; although the Fifteenth Report pays little mention to other mining resources in Sierra Leone, before the war, other elements prevalent in Sierra Leone, such as rutile, bauxite and gold, were all mined for export. In contrast to the alluvial diamonds, these minerals are all deep mined, and can therefore only be accessed by companies that have the equipment and manpower necessary for such a large production. This allows for much better monitoring and regulation than shallow diamond fields, which remain a free-for-all. Unfortunately, most of these mines were badly damaged or completely destroyed during the conflict. Foreign investors have expressed interest in restarting these ventures, but have reportedly been scared off by the extensive investment needed to repair the infrastructure. To coax investors back in, the government might consider undertaking some of the rehabilitation on its own, which likely would require donor support; the up front expenditure may pay off in the long term.

Recommendations

- **The Government of Sierra Leone must address the urgent need for employment and educational opportunities for its youth.** There should be other options developed for all citizens, especially young ex-combatants, to draw them away from illegal mining.
- **Additional funding should be allocated to the training and dispatching of more Mines Monitoring Officers.** The goal of 500 officers should be reached promptly, and more should be considered in light of the discovery of new diamond fields, such as the ones near Kamakwie, which were just becoming known as our research was underway in Freetown.
- **Consideration should be giving to putting the MMOs under the government's civil service program,** which by extending benefits would encourage loyalty and combat corruption.
- **Infrastructure should be enhanced to assist the MMOs in doing their jobs.**

For example, permanent housing should be built for them on site, so that a presence may be maintained at all times. Communications equipment is also needed.

- **MMOs should focus not only on illegal mining, but on purchasing violations by mid-level dealers as well.**
- **The structure of Chiefdom authority for the granting of diamond licenses should be reconsidered.** There is an increased risk of corruption, and deviation in standards during both the granting of licenses and the spending of profits. The control of such a vital resource should remain fully in the hands of the central government.
- **The international community should support and ensure the success of the Kimberley Process** of international diamond authentication, to stem the flow of illicit export.
- **The Government of Sierra Leone should concurrently focus on rapid reestablishment of their other natural resources, particularly rutile, bauxite and gold.** The Government should be prepared to refurbish many of these sites themselves, with donor support. The Government should look to systems such as the ones in place in Botswana, where mines are joint ventures of the government and private investors.

4.4. Judicial and Legal Reform

The absence of judicial and legal reform alone does not pose an immediate threat to the stability of Sierra Leone. It is, however, one crucial aspect of government reform and the consolidation of authority that must take place in order to ensure peace and stability over time. Access to a fair and impartial judiciary is a hallmark of democracy; and the people of Sierra Leone must feel that a competent and fair judiciary, which combines the intricacies of customary and statutory law, exists as a responsible, respectable, and coherent system.

The judicial system in Sierra Leone is arranged with Magistrate Courts at the lowest level. In ascending order, higher level courts include the High Courts, the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court. Within the system, there are currently only fourteen magistrates responsible for the application of the law throughout the provinces. Among the High Court, the Court of Appeals, and the Supreme Court, there are currently twenty judges who handle all cases above the magistrate level. Judicial coverage is primarily focused in Freetown and has been virtually non-existent for the past ten years in the other

parts of the country. While progress has been made on expanding the court system across the country, much work still needs to be accomplished.

The largest impediments to a functioning judicial system are recruitment of trained personnel, lack of facilities such as courthouses and prisons, and immense logistical constraints. Qualified candidates are few and far between, while the low salaries fail to attract those who meet the requirements. Since the recruitment of magistrates has been difficult, the government is now appointing justices of the peace, who have fewer qualifications, to handle magistrate duties. Currently, the rehabilitation of court facilities is being funded in Bo, Kambia, Makeni, and Magburaka, and there are plans to construct facilities in the other districts as well. Prisons were mostly destroyed during the civil war and are also in dire need of repair. The government, working with various international aid agencies, has rehabilitated a number of prisons throughout the country, but the need is still great.

Many Sierra Leonean laws are outdated and the dual systems of customary and statutory laws often conflict. Existing statutes are based on the British common law system from the 18th and 19th centuries. They need to be updated to reflect the current political and economic system in Sierra Leone. The Law Reform Commission, a body mandated by the Constitution to keep rules of court and legal statutes under constant review and to ensure regular publication of Sierra Leonean case law, has not functioned since 1992, while law reports were last published in 1973.¹⁸ The revision of outmoded and unresponsive regulation of both public and private sectors is needed to encourage economic development in the country and to spur foreign investment. Clarity, consistency, and probity in the application of laws, regulations, taxation, and banking arrangements does not currently exist but remains essential for foreign investment.¹⁹ In addition, the government should work to harmonize and codify customary and statutory laws in order to remove the contradictions between the two.

All branches of the Office of the Attorney General and the Ministry of Justice of the Sierra Leone government are grossly understaffed and under-trained, while staffs are low paid. They are thus highly susceptible to corruption. The ministry, with twenty prosecutors, is not only responsible for bringing to justice those accused of criminal infractions but is also responsible for the prosecution of cases referred by the Anti-Corruption Commission. The responsibilities placed upon just twenty people for an entire country are enormous; we were told that cases consistently are not heard, standard legal processes are ignored, and cases that should be prosecuted are not.

Additional obstacles exacerbate the general ineffectiveness of the ministry. Public defenders do not exist; accused who cannot afford an attorney are left to defend themselves. Prosecutors and police generally have limited investigatory experience, thus leading to questionable cases and accusations. The courts lack a case tracking system that could allow the government to monitor the progress and organize the judiciary in a

systematic manner. It is apparent that the Ministry of Justice deserves immediate attention to address its lack of personnel and the obstacles that prohibit access to a competent and coherent judiciary.

Recommendations

- **Prioritize the recruitment of fair, impartial, and trained magistrates and judges.** This includes the provision of training programs, capacity building, and the improvement of salaries and benefit packages for these employees. Of these priorities, magistrates and judges who would serve the districts lacking a coherent judicial presence must be the first considered.
- **Rehabilitate court facilities, including housing for court officials throughout the country.** This includes enhanced logistical support focusing on transportation, communication, and office equipment.
- **Reconcile discrepancies between statutory and customary law by reinstating the Law Review Commission mandated by the Constitution.** This Commission should study the relationship between the two legal systems and restructure the current system consistent with ongoing local government reform.
- **Dedicate additional funds for the construction and rehabilitation of prisons, especially up-country.** This should include logistical support as well as training of prison officers in human rights standards and rules relating to the treatment of prisoners.
- **Fully fund the Attorney General's Office to hire additional prosecutors and develop a public defenders office.** The government should use these funds to train attorneys and pay them respectable wages in order to deter corruption and provide incentives to hold prompt and fair trials.

5. Progress on Reintegration of Former Combatants

The reintegration of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone has been the focus of considerable effort by the Government of Sierra Leone and the international community. The premise of these efforts is that, by facilitating reintegration into society and providing viable economic opportunities for ex-combatants, this population group will be much less likely to resort to violence in the future. The primary mechanism for reintegrating former combatants has been the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) program, managed by the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR), established in 1998. Many observers have indicated that their evaluation of the security situation in Sierra Leone hinged predominantly on the degree of success of the DDR program.

The current DDR program was initiated in May 2001 following the Abuja II Accord. The NCDDR has indicated that as of January 2002, the disarmament and demobilization components of the DDR program were officially completed. Although at the outset of the program it was estimated that a total of 45,000 combatants would participate, a final total of 69,463 ex-combatants have actually gone through the disarmament and demobilization stages and are eligible for reintegration assistance. Upon disarming, ex-combatants are given identification cards and are expected to register at a reintegration office in their home region, where they are paid a reinsertion allowance of 150 USD.

In terms of reducing the presence of arms in the countryside, the DDR program has reportedly been relatively successful. With the understanding that no disarmament program could expect to eliminate all of the available arms, the goal of the first two components of the DDR program was to *reduce* the capacity of rebel elements to wage war. Caches of arms still exist in some locations around the country, but in fewer numbers than before.

Actual demobilization, however, is much more difficult to quantify than disarmament. While comparing the number of arms handed in to weapons estimates is a relatively straightforward exercise, actually determining whether an ex-combatant has severed ties with military leadership is much more difficult to ascertain. Simply participating in a demobilization program still does not ensure that an ex-combatant has been fully demobilized.

CDF Demobilization

One of the remaining questions regarding the DDR process has been the degree to which the Civil Defense Forces (CDF) in particular have actually been demobilized. Many of our sources indicated that the CDF command structure is still very much intact. The Kamajor division of the CDF based in Mende country still holds significant power and

has, in some cases, hindered the efforts of the police in restoring state authority.

Although this threat may not result in renewed conflict, it does provide an environment in which ex-combatants might very easily mobilize should they decide there is the imperative to do so. This threat may be accentuated by the perception among some CDF members that they should be prepared to engage in combat should a threat to the country emerge. Whatever the sympathies of the CDF, the simple existence of a military faction not under government control can serve as a destabilizing factor. Although President Kabbah has appointed the Kamajor leader, Chief Hinga Norman, as the Minister of the Interior, there is the fear that this gesture might not prevent the Kamajors from undertaking coercive action. While many view the Kamajors as defenders of the people, they are also considered responsible for committing numerous atrocities.

Reintegration

Reintegration is the most difficult phase of the DDR process to implement successfully or to measure. Considering that in some estimates true reintegration can take five to ten years, the NCDDR is quite ambitious in expecting that a six-month training program will be sufficient.²⁰ Although the NCDDR has committed to providing reintegration assistance to all eligible ex-combatants, it is impossible to expect full reintegration as a result of this program. The pertinent question is whether or not the reintegration assistance provided will be sufficient to prevent the degree of disaffection that could impact security.

Thus far, an estimated 55,820 ex-combatants have registered for reintegration programs. Of those, 34,472 have actually been placed in such programs. The shortfall of over 20,000 is most strongly felt in the areas of Kailahun, Kono, Bo, and Bombali. This is a result of several factors, including a lack of implementing partner capacity and funding shortfalls.²¹ Kailahun, a former RUF stronghold on the Liberian border, is the location with the worst record, with only 4% of those registered having been provided reintegration opportunities, and 8,007 still waiting to be serviced. Without a rapid concerted reintegration effort, there is the danger that many former RUF members could serve as a destabilizing element both in that region and in neighboring Liberia.²²

Skills Training

One of the shortcomings of the reintegration program is the apparent disconnect between the skills needed by ex-combatants and those being provided by the reintegration training. Many ex-combatants are still being trained in professions for which there is questionable demand, such as carpentry, auto mechanics or plumbing. In the existing structure, nongovernmental organizations, local NGOs, and private sector institutions deliver training programs.²³ Some organizations are better than others in determining the most appropriate skills to provide for the economic environment.

A recent World Bank assessment found that although 77.4% of reintegrated ex-combatants stated that they were satisfied with the reintegration opportunities provided to them, only about half of them had actually found employment.²⁴ The average wage for such combatants was approximately 24 USD per month. The assessment points to the poor economic environment as the reason for this lack of placement.²⁵ Although the economic system is beyond the control of the NCDDR, there remains the possibility that a contributing factor to this lack of placement is a mismatch between the skills training and the market demand for such labor. Altering the training offerings might improve the placement rate.

While identifying job opportunities for the numerous unemployed civilians is already an enormous task, it is compounded by the lack of skills possessed by most ex-combatants. As of May 2002, 39% of ex-combatants had registered for formal education programs and 33% had registered for vocational skills training and apprenticeship programs. Although surveys indicate that approximately 33% of ex-combatants were formerly farmers, only 22% of participants were registered in agricultural programs.²⁶ Reasons for this appear to be the lack of access to land and lack of cash support. Many ex-combatants have chosen to sign up for training programs that provide a cash incentive. The NCDDR has recognized this deficiency and has implemented incentives that aim to attract greater participation in agriculture.²⁷ Such efforts should be further strengthened.

It is encouraging that the reintegration program has initiated a partnership with the Employment Information and Service Center, an employment services organization promoted by the Ministry of Labor and the International Labour Organization, to undertake a preliminary labor market analysis examining the link between the demand and supply needs of the economy.²⁸ As the findings of this effort become known, it will be important for the NCDDR to adjust its programs accordingly.

Only 4% of reintegration participants are involved in public works programs, despite the great need in Sierra Leone for the rehabilitation of public infrastructure. While the NCDDR has attempted to encourage demobilized soldiers to participate in public works programs, the response has been disappointing. Many ex-combatants find such projects unacceptable. The projects are sometimes located in areas where no ex-combatants are located, and while the NCDDR has been able to provide labor, there is a significant shortage of tools and materials.²⁹ Although these obstacles are significant, it seems that the NCDDR may be missing an ideal opportunity to capitalize on the labor resources of an existing program to help jump-start much needed public works projects. While the Sierra Leone Roads Authority has integrated some ex-combatants into road repair projects, such efforts could be significantly expanded.

UN Benchmark

Completion of the reintegration program is one of the five benchmarks set forth in the UN Secretary General's Fifteenth report. The Report indicated that the DDR program could be considered a success only if the full 55,000 registered former combatants went through the reintegration process. While numbers are important, it is equally important that any benchmark examines the actual absorption of ex-combatants into new economic opportunities. This highlights the need for better tracking of reintegrated ex-combatants.

Although numerous ex-combatants are currently involved in reintegration programs, the real test of this program will come when the training programs have ended and the new trainees are searching for employment opportunities. If the Sierra Leone economy is unable to absorb this large influx of workers, desperate ex-combatants could conceivably pose threats to stability. The NCDDR expects to complete the reintegration phase by the end of 2003. Therefore, it will be vitally important that over the next two years the UN closely monitor the degree to which true reintegration has occurred.

Recommendations

- **The Government of Sierra Leone must immediately address the inadequacy of DDR programs in Kailahun and other areas where there still remains a significant shortfall.** The government, with the support of international donors, should also find ways to compensate implementation partners for providing services in these harder to reach locations.
- **The Government of Sierra Leone must reassess the degree to which there still remains a CDF threat due to nonparticipation in DDR activities.** Targeted programs should be developed to pull in these non-participants into the DDR activities.
- **The NCDDR should work to implement an ongoing qualitative evaluation that tracks ex-combatants who have gone through the reintegration program.** By doing so, NCDDR will be able to modify or eliminate particular programs that do not meet their ultimate goals.
- **The NCDDR and implementing partners must improve the correlation between skills-training programs and demand for those skills.** The GoSL must determine ways to encourage ex-combatants to enter agriculture and participate in public works programs.
- **International donors should prioritize the DDR program and make up its nine million USD funding shortfall.**

6. Regional Threats

One of the five core benchmarks listed in the Fifteenth Report is the mitigation of the continued threat to Sierra Leone from the regional instability surrounding the country. The ongoing political and social turmoil in Liberia and new concerns over recent upheaval in Ivory Coast, reinforce the apprehension that Sierra Leone will never be completely safe from a return to conflict as long as it is surrounded by such unrest.

Primary concern over the civil war in Liberia and the regional political designs of its leader, Charles Taylor, is understandable: the spark that first ignited Sierra Leone's war in 1991, and the fuel that then sustained it over the next decade, was provided by Taylor himself.

Taylor supported the RUF combatants by furnishing weapons, safe haven and even fighters from his own forces, in exchange for illicitly mined diamonds. His backing both created the RUF and allowed it to remain a viable fighting force for a full decade; his political machinations contributed to the failing of peace agreements that kept the legitimately elected Sierra Leone government from maintaining control. Taylor's direct involvement in the Sierra Leone conflict did not abate until international sanctions imposed in 1999 defused his financial ability and inclination to perpetuate the conflict.

The two-year civil war in Liberia, which pits Taylor and his Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) against a rebel faction called the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), flared again this summer; fighting has been most active very near or on the border Liberia shares with Sierra Leone. Former RUF and CDF fighters, finding themselves without occupation in a post-war Sierra Leone, have reportedly joined both the AFL and the LURD, increasing the flow of combatants back and forth over the border.

The fighting has forced approximately 30,000 refugees from Liberia into Sierra Leone, creating a potential for humanitarian disaster, and straining the capacity of the Government of Sierra Leone to rebuild infrastructure in villages that were seriously damaged during the war. Concerns have also been raised that LURD fighters are using refugee camps to rest, re-supply and recruit.

This past August, there were several large incursions into Sierra Leone territory that required a military response from both the RSLAF and international forces. During that time there were reports of abductions by LURD of Sierra Leonean villagers who were forced to work as "porters" in LURD camps.³⁰

Although development NGOs are making their way back into war torn areas, these periodic incursions mean the recovery and rebuilding process will be slower there than in

the rest of the country, an unfortunate situation that further perpetuates the isolation of these regions from Freetown and increases the likelihood of volatility.

Within Liberia, there is a faction of several hundred remaining RUF combatants, under the command of long-time leader Sam Bockarie. Knowledge of their ability and inclination to restart the conflict in Sierra Leone is contradictory and inconclusive; however, there is a genuine concern that Bockarie and his men are still adequately armed and organized, and are only lacking in opportunity because of the heavy presence of the international community within Sierra Leone. Rumors that Bockarie's faction had plans to disrupt the presidential elections in May of this year³¹ never materialized into action. There is, however, more support for the belief that Bockarie and Charles Taylor have a continued quid pro quo: that Bockarie will assist Taylor in combating the LURD in exchange for support of a new attack in Sierra Leone when the time appears ripe.

Recent renewal of a civil war in Ivory Coast adds additional pressure to the already shaky balance of West Africa. Long considered the stabilizing anchor of the region, Ivory Coast's descent into upheaval is already placing stress on its neighbors in terms of refugee flow. Additionally, there is speculation that former RUF and CDF fighters have joined in the Ivory Coast combat. If peace is re-established in Ivory Coast, these fighters will once again find themselves searching for "employment;" the presence of this ever moving and increasingly experienced cadre of mercenaries cannot be good for the security in the region as a whole.

Securing the Border

In assessing this multitude of external threats, it becomes clear that the enduring peace in Sierra Leone rests to a great extent on the ability of the country to secure and protect its border regions. There have been improvements in several key areas that make current conditions less worrying than they were in 1991, at the start of the war, when Sierra Leone was rightly perceived by observers to be an "open door" because of the already dilapidated state of its governance.

The international sanctions on arms, diamond exports and travel placed on Liberia over the past two years have had some effect in limiting Taylor's ability to support factions that would threaten Sierra Leone's peace, as well as straining his own war-making capabilities. New rules governing the international export of diamonds from the region, recently adapted as part of the Kimberley diamond certification process, have helped restrain the ability of Liberia to sell both its legal and illicitly obtained gems, and makes it harder (though by no means impossible) for them to be traded for arms.

The renewed fighting in Liberia has also preoccupied Taylor and further reduced the resources he has available to support insurgencies against his neighbors. As long as the conflict in Liberia continues as what experts have described as a "slow burn," with

neither the LURD nor Taylor defeating the other, they predict that Taylor will be unable to fully dedicate himself to his larger goals of regional hegemony.

Most importantly, under training by the British-led IMATT team, the RSLAF has become more capable of policing its own border than it was in 1991 (see section 7.1 on RSLAF). When the LURD attempted to raid border villages in the Kailahun district this past August, the RSLAF was dispatched and successfully repelled the heaviest of the attacks. This quick and effective response, while admittedly bolstered by the presence of some international troops, does show a newly enhanced ability by the RSLAF to respond to external crises. While some LURD raids still continue, they are smaller in magnitude and show little sign of having an extended reach beyond those villages immediately on the border.

These combined improvements in the present security situation give cause to believe that if regional conditions remain at their present threat level, they will at some point be containable by the RSLAF without much additional assistance from UNAMSIL. However, were any of the aforementioned threats to magnify, such as a push from Bockarie, a larger and more determined incursion from the LURD, or renewed threats from Charles Taylor himself, it is as yet unproven whether the RSLAF would then be capable of containing the threat on its own. Given the unpredictability of the region, it is imperative that international observers, specifically IMATT and UNAMSIL personnel, be satisfied with the level of competency of the RSLAF before international assistance is fully withdrawn.

Recommendations

- **IMATT training of the RSLAF should remain robust** for the 10-year period, as recommended in section 7.1 of this report. Training should continue to focus on preparation for independent border control by the RSLAF.
- **During drawdown phases 2 and 3, UNAMSIL should increase opportunities to test the ability of the RSLAF to conduct border patrol and security on its own.** This should be done with the understanding that that a redeployment of larger UNAMSIL support could be quickly implemented, should an uncontrollable crisis arise.
- **UNAMSIL should retain a small but substantial force (500-2,000) with rapid reaction capability through phase 4 of the ADW plan** (see section 2 on UNAMSIL Drawdown). This may be necessary to maintain stability should the RSLAF show signs of weakness or internal strife, or should threats from Liberia or Ivory Coast magnify in severity.

- **The Government of Sierra Leone should ensure that the RSLAF has the material supplies needed for mobility and communication**, to facilitate a comprehensive and capable patrolling of the border.
- **The international community should continue to seek diplomatic solutions to regional conflicts in Liberia and Ivory Coast.** Robust sanctions against Liberia should remain in place; alleged sanctions violations should be rigorously investigated and addressed; peace agreements should seek to integrate all warring factions as fully as possible, to diminish the threat that bands of ex-combatants will again seek refuge in Sierra Leone or other stable areas of the region.
- **The international community should ensure the success of the Kimberley Process of international diamond authentication.** This will further stem the illicit flow of “conflict” diamonds and remove one of the key motivations for perpetuating chaos in the region.
- **The Government of Sierra Leone, NGOs and the international community should focus attention on the rebuilding of infrastructure in the border regions.** Efforts should be made to reconnect these villages both physically and psychologically with the nation. Fighting marginalization will help tighten porous borders.

7. Progress in Enhancing the Capacity of Local Security Forces

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) are the two government institutions authorized to provide security within Sierra Leone and to protect its borders. The UNAMSIL drawdown plan is contingent upon their increased strength, both in numbers and capabilities, to prevent a security vacuum from developing in the country.

7.1. Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF)

The development of the RSLAF is critical to the security of Sierra Leone. Not only is the army responsible for ensuring the protection of Sierra Leone, but the institution itself has a history of threatening the security of the state. Thus, while this section emphasizes the importance of enhancing military capacity, many of the issues discussed below relate to civil-military affairs in general and civilian control of the military in particular. An army that is well trained, well equipped and well treated is more capable of providing real security to the country and less likely to undermine civilian leadership.

The robust presence of UNAMSIL troops over the past two years has given the RSLAF the space to improve its capabilities under training provided by the British International Military Assistance and Training Team (IMATT). As a result of that effort, a more effective force, numbering 13,500, is now deployed throughout the country.ⁱ

Challenges

Challenges to the institution are numerous. First, there is the challenge of civil-military relations, and the need to assert and sustain civilian control over the military. For many soldiers, this remains a new concept. The RSLAF has trained soldiers on the importance of civilian control, but efforts must continue to ensure it pervades even the lowest ranks.

The RSLAF must also overcome public mistrust and suspicion. Public relations suffer from recent memories of army transgressions; the war generated widespread distrust of defense forces, making more difficult the prospect of re-establishing a professional army in Sierra Leone. Inevitably, if the army becomes involved in internal policing, as occurred in Sierra Leone's past, the institution risks becoming a player in Sierra Leone's political disputes. This is an outcome to be avoided, and it is therefore important that the missions of the army and police are clearly distinguished from one another.

Related to these issues is the question of soldiers' loyalty to the government and chain of command. Even as training and remuneration for the average soldier has improved, an army revolt is still considered a real and dangerous threat to security. At present, soldiers receive food rations, medical coverage and housing in barracks in addition to pay of

ⁱ Note that, prior to 2002, the armed forces were known as the Sierra Leone Army (SLA). In order to denote the transformation that took place within the forces when IMATT began its training program, the army considers itself a new institution and is now the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

approximately 60 USD per month. Reliability of pay increases morale, but the salary levels and other living conditions are considered sub-optimal, particularly up-country.

Loyalty is also affected by the recruitment of ex-combatants. The RSLAF brought them into the system to train and keep them from rebelling again. This group presents a potential risk to institutional loyalty that warrants continued attention by commanding officers and the GoSL.

Funding of the armed forces remains a primary concern. Due to difficult economic circumstances, procurement for the RSLAF has been minimal. Given current conditions, the RSLAF is not expected to procure equipment except through donors, and it is very difficult to maintain what equipment it already has in its inventory. Fortunately, the United Kingdom remains strongly committed to improving RSLAF capabilities, and continues to donate uniforms and other equipment, including logistical and communications supplies, ammunition, infantry weapons, and importantly, transportation assets. However, if the government fails to budget sufficiently for the military, maintenance of donated equipment will falter, and eventually the capability of the RSLAF will be degraded. We believe this is a priority area for donor support.

The army is currently larger than it needs to be and resources are thinly stretched across a large and inefficient force. The RSLAF has troops stationed in every district in the country, including many holdovers from the previous Sierra Leone Army as well as officers who should be retiring.

An effort is underway to improve the professionalism of the RSLAF by streamlining personnel to a total strength of 10,500 and implementing a new recruitment strategy. A force of 10,500 is reasonable, given the tasks of patrolling the border and reinforcing the police during a crisis. In this downsizing effort, those over the retirement age of 55 are released, requests to separate from the service are granted liberally, and recruiting standards have been raised. The reduction in personnel will cut costs and improve the overall competence level of soldiers, thereby allowing a smaller force to carry out the current mission. The army is simultaneously seeking to bring in 400 young, healthy, competent recruits per year, of whom 100 must be officers, to improve the overall quality and effectiveness of the force.

The army is also deeply affected by the growing HIV/AIDS problem in the country. The RSLAF infection rate could range from 25-60%; 15-20 soldiers on average are lost each month to the disease (see section 3.2 on HIV/AIDS).³²

Performance Objectives and Capacity

With the help of the British-led IMATT, the new RSLAF has made significant progress toward developing the capacity to defend the country from a wide range of security

threats, but self-sufficiency is a long way off and requires firm commitment to further international training. Fortunately, IMATT planners have targeted key areas to improve the RSLAF, but meaningful change takes time and resources to implement.

In the immediate future, the RSLAF must be able to step up as UNAMSIL draws down. First and foremost, this requires providing border security. Secondly, the RSLAF might be called on to assist the police in providing a safe environment internally.

Given the trajectory of RSLAF capability improvements, we believe the RSLAF can effectively control minor border incursions that might result from Liberian unrest (see section 6 on Regional Threats). Platoon-size foot patrols will not completely close off the porous border with Liberia, but it should provide important warning of any organized contingent crossing into Sierra Leone. With functional communications equipment, the patrol force might then be reinforced to effectively respond to the threat. The RSLAF, working as appropriate with international organizations such as UNHCR, must also be better trained to ensure effective screening of border crossers to prevent unregulated entry of insurgents seeking refuge and/or entering to recruit additional fighters.

The withdrawal of UNAMSIL forces from the eastern sector, then, must be timed according to the progress of RSLAF forces in the region. RSLAF must bolster its ability to patrol, mobilize rapidly to an area of concern, and communicate effectively with headquarters and other backup assets.

Because of the poor state of roads in Sierra Leone, RSLAF response to an outbreak of internal violence or advancing insurgents can be expected to be slow. However, with some coordination and training, the RSLAF should be able to develop capacity to control major roadways in the face of threats, taking over the UNAMSIL roadblocks currently in place. Although such control will not prevent pockets of unrest, it might contain conflicts within a small area and prevent violence from spreading.

UNAMSIL Drawdown

Although much work remains, it is possible, given current threats, to transfer many national defense duties to the RSLAF. The current UNAMSIL drawdown plan shifts responsibility to the RSLAF and SLP in phases. In view of the current commitment from the United Kingdom to train and otherwise engage, we are confident that the RSLAF can develop the ability to address external and, as a last resort, internal threats during and after the drawdown of UNAMSIL troops. Nevertheless, the RSLAF needs more time to develop its capabilities fully. A residual UNAMSIL response force in Freetown will increase time for further progress in both the RSLAF and other key benchmarks areas, particularly the police. Should progress in these other benchmarks stall, the ability of the RSLAF to address threats might be diminished.

The drawdown plan allows sufficient time to prepare the RSLAF, provided that a sizeable IMATT presence remains in a training role, and officers remain embedded within the rank structure of the RSLAF itself until the RSLAF is able to address all external security threats itself. The IMATT presence ensures progress is made within the RSLAF, acts as a deterrent to and warning of revolt from within the military, and deters other kinds of military or paramilitary threats until the RSLAF is completely prepared to address them itself.

Recommendations

In order for the RSLAF meet the challenges of the UNAMSIL drawdown, it must improve in several important operational and administrative areas.

- **IMATT should continue for the next ten years.** To decrease the risk of a military coup, improve hardware assets, and increase professionalism within the ranks, IMATT needs to remain in place – to continue training and to remain embedded in positions. IMATT is a visible presence, and a deterrent to both external and internal forces that would threaten stability.
- **The RSLAF should increase combined patrols with UNAMSIL troops as they withdraw.** There is real value in encouraging interaction with international forces. Joint missions could expose RSLAF officers to different models of professionalism, leadership, institutional culture, etc. that will benefit the RSLAF in the long-term.
- **Sharpen the RSLAF mission.** RSLAF soldiers should focus their training on national defense first and internal security (i.e. policing) a distant second. This will have the effect of improving civil-military relations. Soldiers should also be actively trained in rules of engagement in civil conflict so that that they do not abuse human rights when they come into contact with civilians.
- **Place IMATT officers in an advisory role at the company level outside of Freetown.** The company-level placement of IMATT officers provides them a daily view of deployed units and ensures that training filters all the way down the ranks. Even the most junior service members must appreciate civilian control of the military.
- **Improve RSLAF mobility.** Response time is the key to engaging and eliminating a rebel threat in Sierra Leone. Whichever force is quicker, has better communications assets, and can arrive on scene with overwhelming force, will dominate any low-intensity conflict. The British contribution to this cause has been significant, but it must continue if the RSLAF is to retain the advantage

upon the departure of UNAMSIL.

- **International donors must assist RSLAF development** by investing in the maintenance and replacement of vital war-fighting assets.

7.2. Sierra Leone Police (SLP)

The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) is the national force responsible for law enforcement and the maintenance of internal security. It was significantly weakened during the conflict and is now striving to reassert its authority across the country. During the civil war, the SLP remained loyal to the elected Kabbah government, which resulted in their being targeted and largely destroyed when the rebels attacked Freetown in 1999. Approximately 900 SLP officers were killed during the ten-year war, and a considerable number suffered amputation.

The present strength of the Sierra Leone Police is about 6,600 officers. The main body of the SLP is comprised of unarmed general duty officers who are supported by specialist branches such as the Criminal Investigation Department (CID), traffic police, and the Operational Support Division (OSD), the 2000-strong armed element of the SLP. In addition to providing mobile, armed support to the general duty officers, the OSD is responsible for policing crowds and large assemblies, acting as bodyguards for key government personnel and visiting VIPs, and providing security for vital government facilities. In the case of a riot or an outbreak of violence, the OSD officers would be the ones responsible for bringing the situation under control.

The SLP is currently deployed throughout the entire country, though their presence is somewhat sparse in former rebel strongholds. Its main headquarters are in Freetown, and there are command centers in each of the country's four provinces. Within each province, a number of districts have their own police command.

Sizing the Force

Through the recently released National Recovery Strategy for Sierra Leone, the SLP and the Government of Sierra Leone have established a goal of expanding the police force to a size of 9,500 officers over the next three years. This means the SLP must recruit and train an average of 1,000 new officers per year – a 40% increase over last year's recruiting numbers.

It is important to note that the 9,500 target for the size of the Sierra Leone Police is not based on an assessment of the internal security situation in Sierra Leone or its policing needs. Rather 9,500 officers is believed to be the pre-war size of the SLP. Up to 15% of the pre-war uniformed police force was full time support staff (clerks, typists, cooks,

etc.). Thus, it is not necessarily clear that a force of 9,500 officers is required to return to the pre-war policing level. At its current force level, the SLP maintains roughly 1.2 officers per 1,000 people. This is comparable to other African nations such as Zambia and Uganda. To determine the proper size of the SLP, an assessment of Sierra Leone's security challenges and policing requirements needs to be completed as soon as possible.

Recruitment

The SLP currently is not meeting its recruiting targets. Compensation for SLP officers starts at approximately 60 USD per month, similar to the pay of an enlisted soldier in the RSLAF. Despite additional benefits, such as housing and a rice allowance, a number of our interlocutors considered this salary too low to attract high caliber recruits. The SLP requires a significantly higher degree of competence and professionalism from its officers than the RSLAF requires from private soldiers. As one senior government official remarked, "It is difficult to find educated recruits who will respect human rights, avoid corruption, and fight crime on 60 USD a month."

Moreover, SLP is finding it difficult to recruit officers who meet minimal educational standards. The domestic chaos brought about by the civil war severely disrupted the country's education system – further reducing the number of educated citizens of recruitment age, which is 18-30 (see section 3.3 on Literacy and Education). As a result, entrance qualifications for the police academy have been reduced and the proportion of new recruits with poor English language and literacy skills has increased.

New police recruits currently pass through the Police Training School, which is operated by the SLP in Hastings outside of Freetown. The UN Civilian Police (CivPol) indicates these facilities have the current capacity to train about 600-800 recruits a year. The United Kingdom is offering donations of equipment and supplies to expand the training school. Currently there are plans to add twenty classrooms, eight to ten temporary quarters, and 60 staff barracks, bringing the total training capacity to 1,000 per year, to meet the UN planning requirements. In addition, there are plans to create training centers in the provincial capitals of Bo, Makeni and Kenema, with accommodations for 70 and two classrooms each. There is a concern among expert observers that, in trying to reach its 9,500 target under present conditions, the GoSL will sacrifice the quality of the recruits for quantity. This would be a serious mistake.

Challenges

The performance levels of the Sierra Leone Police remain extremely uneven. Even basic policing skills vary considerably across the force, with the highest skilled officers being found in Freetown, and their lower skilled counterparts located in the provinces. The high rate of illiteracy among the SLP is a major contributor to poor performance. Estimates vary, but it is commonly accepted that 15-20% of the total force is illiterate, with illiteracy particularly high among female officers, as well as among those who joined the SLP between 1972-1984. These deficiencies are compounded by the failure of the SLP to maintain specialist skills such as forensics, handwriting analysis, etc. When experts in critical fields retire or die, they are not being replaced.

Many of the SLP's facilities across the country were damaged or destroyed during the civil war, and as a consequence police officers continue to work and live in deplorable conditions. In rural areas, a single building could serve as the police station, court, clinic and classroom for the local school. The UK has aided the SLP in replacing stocks of equipment, including radios, weapons and uniforms lost in the war. Nevertheless, transportation and communications are still major constraints in the discharge of the responsibilities of the police.

One relatively bright spot for the Sierra Leone Police is how they seem to be perceived by the public. Unlike the army, the SLP as an organization was not involved in any of the coups against the government, and is not suspected of committing atrocities during the civil war. As a result, the SLP is reportedly perceived more favorably than the RSLAF. Some Sierra Leoneans complain of low-level corrupt practices by the SLP – indeed, unable to feed their families on their paycheck alone, many SLP officers resort to acts of petty corruption (like shakedowns and extra judicial “fines”) to supplement their income, which damages their public image. While such petty corruption should be punished and does risk eroding positive images of the police that the public may now have, we were also told that citizens are beginning to recognize that the SLP improves the safety and security of Sierra Leone.

International Support

Both the United Kingdom and the UN CivPol program are aiding the rebuilding and transformation of the SLP. In 1998, at the request of the President, retired senior police officer Keith Biddle was dispatched from the United Kingdom to Sierra Leone to provide emergency assistance to the SLP. This initial assistance was then transformed into the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP), which provides longer-term training, support and advice to the SLP. Officer Biddle stayed on as Inspector General of the SLP. Though the CCSSP has enabled the SLP to make considerable progress, it does have two noticeable drawbacks: its work is largely Freetown focused (where police skills are actually the highest), and its budget does not

provide for the construction or maintenance of police facilities.

The 60-man CivPol component of UNAMSIL is in country to “advise and assist”³³ the SLP; their vague mandate has left some CivPol elements in Sierra Leone without a clear sense of mission. To date, CivPol efforts in Sierra Leone have not been considered particularly effective. CivPol members have introduced professional development and advanced skills training programs for SLP officers in the provinces, but these programs have been instituted on an ad-hoc basis subject to the skills of the CivPol officers assigned to the particular locale. Aside from the problem of an imprecise mandate, CivPol has been hindered by the quality of its personnel; many CivPol officers lack the appropriate background or expertise to provide the necessary assistance to the SLP. CivPol personnel in Sierra Leone come from 17 different countries, many with different standards and procedures. In some cases it has proven necessary to conduct refresher courses in basic police work for newly arrived CivPol officers. These weaknesses are particularly worrisome given the UNAMSIL drawdown plan’s dependence on well-trained police officers and increased reliance on CivPol to conduct training.

The UN Security Council recently authorized the expansion of CivPol’s mission in Sierra Leone and increased the number of personnel to 185. In the future, CivPol will assist the SLP with the recruitment of police cadets, provide advice on strategic and operational planning, and help devise a deployment plan that will increase security in the areas scheduled to be vacated by UNAMSIL troops. This expanded CivPol mission is supposed to increase its coordination with the CCSSP, but recent experience suggests coordination may exist more in theory than in practice.

Aside from the British government and the UN CivPol program, major donors have largely neglected the Sierra Leonean Police. This has occurred due to misperceptions. Many donors wrongly associate the SLP with the Sierra Leone Army, and are wary of funding an organization that they believe took part in the atrocities of the war. In addition, many believe that the UK is meeting all of needs of the police. It is also possible that donors have shied away from the police because, given the significant contributions being made by the UK, it would be difficult to claim ownership of a police-related project.

Recommendations

- **Prioritize quality over quantity in recruitment.** The goal of 9,500 officers for the police force is ambitious. Whether or not it proves necessary, the SLP and the GoSL should not lower recruiting standards for police officers in order to meet an arbitrary target.
- **International donors must give attention to the needs of the police.** Neither the CCSSP nor GoSL budgets can sufficiently provide for the repair and construction

of police stations, barracks and other required facilities. In addition, more funds must be made available to the GoSL to increase the salaries of the rank and file police force and to pay for the expansion of the OSD. It would also be beneficial to provide adult educational support and literacy training for SLP officers and new recruits.

- **Expand the Operational Support Division (OSD).** It is critical that, as UNAMSIL draws down, the OSD has sufficient presence in areas UNAMSIL will vacate. Therefore, as the SLP expands, the initial priority should be adding 500 new OSD officers to ensure that each police station has access to a sufficient number of armed officers. An expanded OSD would reduce the need for the SLP to seek assistance from the RSLAF in responding to internal security threats. Expansion of the OSD should not be accomplished by simply shifting general duty officers in to the OSD. Recruitment of new general duty officers, as needed, remains important as well.
- **Sharpen CivPol's role in Sierra Leone.** An institutional focus on the provinces and on more professional development and advanced policing skills training could make an important contribution to the future of the SLP – especially because supervisory and management skills have been found to be lacking at the police station level. The Secretary General's Fifteenth Report recommended expanding the authorized strength of CivPol to 185 to help with professional development of the SLP. However, increasing the number of CivPol will not guarantee effectiveness of their assistance unless there is critical improvement in the selection of CivPol officers, a systematic training program, and better integration with existing police development programs.

8. Issues of Impunity and Justice

Two institutions were established in Sierra Leone to address impunity for crimes committed during the war. The Special Court was created in an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone signed 16 January 2002 to prosecute those individuals who “bear the greatest responsibility”³⁴ for atrocities committed during the war. The 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement provided for a Truth and Reconciliation Commission, enacted on 22 February 2000, to undertake a nation-wide healing process for victims. The two institutions differ in scope and intent, thus each has a very different impact on the promotion of peace and stability in Sierra Leone.

Both the Special Court and the TRC warrant mention here as institutions that will help in the process of building a sustainable peace in Sierra Leone. Although they are not benchmarks to determine security in Sierra Leone, both were mentioned in the Fifteenth report as important factors in the country’s post-war development. Their efforts could lay the groundwork for a more peaceful society over time. The Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission will help bring justice to the victims of the war as well as contribute to the reintroduction of systemic justice and trust in the rule of law. To neglect any of these areas will ultimately undermine the great strides in development being made now.

The Special Court

The Special Court, a hybrid system under the joint jurisdiction of international law and Sierra Leonean domestic law, has a three-year mandate to prosecute those who most responsible for committing and ordering war crimes during Sierra Leone’s civil conflict, in the period from 1996 to the present. It is widely anticipated that the Special Court will indict no more than two-dozen such individuals. Some observers anticipate that this could help address broad factors of instability in the region, if Liberian President Charles Taylor is indicted.³⁵ Others believe the Court’s indictments will serve as a deterrent against future instability in the country; potential insurgents or coup leaders might reconsider initiating a conflict if they perceive legal prosecution to be a credible threat. Still others fear the Court will disrupt the fragile peace in the country, and hamper the reconciliation and reintegration processes underway. The Special Court thus faces the difficult task of trying to be representative in targeting individuals from the various parties in the conflict guilty of war crimes, while still prosecuting only the most egregious offenders. There is also concern that the indictment of some, Johnny Paul Koroma in particular, could cause loyalists within the armed forces to revolt in his defense.

Realistically, there is a potential threat for backlash among some factions within the RSLAF against proceedings of the Special Court, but the likelihood is difficult, if not

impossible, to gauge. More importantly, whatever the reaction, a groundswell of support for any war criminal is unlikely to occur long after the initial indictment. Given that the Special Court has a three-year mandate, UNAMSIL, as it follows the scheduled drawdown plan, will have a significant presence in country during the period when most, if not all of the indictments are issued. The benefits of justice, and the potential deterrent power far outweigh the potential threats.

Many concerns expressed by people with whom we met, and reports we read, seem to stem from the broad range of powers of the court. However, it is important to note that thus far, Special Prosecutor David Crane has relinquished many of those powers. First, Mr. Crane has publicly stated that he will not exercise the Court's right to try juveniles. Rather, he will seek to prosecute those who forced children to commit crimes by establishing "crimes against children" as war crimes.³⁶ Similarly, he has made clear that, although legally entitled to do so, he will not subpoena any information from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which many in the human rights community feared would undermine the latter's ability to do its job.³⁷

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission

The goals of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are to "to create an impartial record of violations of human rights and humanitarian law, to address impunity, to help the victims, to promote healing and reconciliation and to prevent a repetition of the abuses."³⁸ In addition, many are hopeful the commission will help facilitate or expedite the reintegration of ex-combatants, which, as noted in section 5 of this report, has proven more challenging than other aspects of the peace-building process.

Unlike the Special Court, which has the resources to carry out its mandate, the TRC is facing several serious institutional challenges. Thus far, the international community has only provided approximately 1.1 million USD towards a budget of 7 million USD.³⁹ This appears to be due to concerns about the impartiality of the appointed Executive Secretary, Ms. Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff, daughter of a former prominent political figure. If funding is not forthcoming, the TRC will not be able to proceed with its plans to conduct hearings across the country and produce a report by August 2003.

There has been much discussion concerning the apparently contradictory goals of the Special Court and TRC. Some observers argue that reconciliation cannot go forward while some ex-combatants are being prosecuted at the national level. Indeed, the National Recovery Strategy suggests that, implemented together, the Special Court and Truth and Reconciliation Commission may actually undermine efforts at peace in Sierra Leone.⁴⁰ A recent study by a youth-run NGO, the Post-Conflict Reintegration Initiative for Development Empowerment (PRIDE), indicates that education and sensitization to the different missions of each institution significantly mitigates fear or opposition to either institution.⁴¹ Several projects are underway, including radio programming by Talking

Drum Studio and focus group sessions conducted by NGOs like PRIDE. In fact, PRIDE found that young ex-combatants are particularly enthusiastic about the work of the TRC; they believe it will help facilitate their return to home communities. Additionally, once they learn that the Special Court will not prosecute lower ranking soldiers, they support its efforts as well.

Although it does not directly impact the security of Sierra Leone, the TRC has the potential to greatly reduce tensions at the local level across the country. If the PRIDE report is correct, the TRC can help facilitate ex-combatant returns. Moreover, by giving victims a voice and an opportunity to record their experiences, it will provide an official, permanent record and address “one of the potential destabilizing factors that could undermine the consolidation of peace, namely, the perceived lack of support provided to victims of the conflict in contrast with the assistance provided to ex-combatants.”⁴²

Recommendations

- **Additional educational campaigns must be conducted to sensitize the population to the activities of the Special Court and the TRC.** The GoSL must ensure that every citizen knows about and understands the goals and purpose of the two institutions.
- **UNAMSIL should not leave until it is confident that it can do so without destabilization resulting from action by the Special Court.**
- **The international community must meet its pledge for funding the TRC.** If objections over appointed officials in the TRC are obstacles to funding, then we recommend that the Government of Sierra Leone work closely with victims and the international community to appoint a more neutral Executive Secretary and seek to appoint other qualified individuals to serve as investigators. The international community must make an effort to work with the government and move beyond this impasse.

End Notes

- ¹ See “Fifteenth Report of the Secretary-General on UNAMSIL,” 5 September 2002.
- ² United Nations Security Council Resolution 1436, 24 September 2002.
- ³ USAID, Sierra Leone Overview, <http://www.usaid.gov/country/afr/sl/#od>.
- ⁴ National Recovery Strategy, Sierra Leone 2002-2003, p. 55.
- ⁵ United Nations Consolidated Interagency Appeal for Relief and Recovery, Sierra Leone 2003, p. 12. <http://www.reliefweb.int/appeals/2003/files/sle03.pdf>.
- ⁶ National Recovery Strategy, Sierra Leone 2002-2003, p. 14.
- ⁷ Interview with IMATT officials, 30 October 2002, who placed this rate around 25%; however, others believe it to be much higher.
- ⁸ See UNICEF Press Release at <http://www.unicef.org/emerg/Country/SierraLeone/PR020902.htm>.
- ⁹ US State Department Bureau of African Affairs, “Country Background Note: Sierra Leone,” January 2002. www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm.
- ¹⁰ National Recovery Strategy, pp. 36-37.
- ¹¹ CIA World Fact Book 2002, *Sierra Leone*.
- ¹² The Government of Sierra Leone, *Government Reaction To ICG Africa Report No. 49 of 12 July 2002 on Sierra Leone*. <http://www.slhc-uk.org.uk/pressrelease.htm>.
- ¹³ The Anti-Corruption Commission, *Annual Report 2001*, p. 27.
- ¹⁴ Douglas Farah, “Al Qaeda Cash Tied to Diamond Trade,” *Washington Post*, 1 November 2001.
- ¹⁵ Figures provided by Ministry of Mineral Resources, 31 October 2002.
- ¹⁶ Lansana Gberie, “War and Peace in Sierra Leone: Diamonds, Corruption, and the Lebanese Connection,” Partnership Africa Canada, November 2002.
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- ²⁰ World Bank, *Assessment of the Reintegration Program of the NCDDR*, 8 November 2002, p. 27.
- ²¹ Government of Sierra Leone, *National Recovery Strategy*, pp. 29-30.
- ²² The Government of Sierra Leone, *The DDR Program: Status and Strategies for Completion*, 5 November 2002, p. 27.

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- ²³ NCDDR, *Reintegration of Ex-Combatants*, May 2002, p. 3.
- ²⁴ Statistics Sierra Leone, *Survey On Reinsertion & Reintegration Assistance to Ex-Combatants*, October 2002, p. 2.
- ²⁵ World Bank, *Assessment of the Reintegration Program of the NCDDR*. 8 November 2002, p. 57.
- ²⁶ *ibid*, p. 10.
- ²⁷ NCDDR, *Reintegration of Ex-Combatants*. May 2002, p. 6.
- ²⁸ *The DDR Program: Status and Strategies for Completion*, p. 11.
- ²⁹ *Reintegration of Ex-Combatants*, p. 8.
- ³⁰ "Sierra Leone Tightens Security Along Liberia Border," Agence France Presse, 11 August 2002.
- ³¹ Jane's Defense Weekly, 23 January 2002.
- ³² Interview with IMATT officers, 30 October 2002.
- ³³ Second Report of the Secretary-General Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1270 (1999) on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone, 11 January 2000.
- ³⁴ Agreement Between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone on the Establishment of a Special Court for Sierra Leone, Article 1.
- ³⁵ International Crisis Group, "*Sierra Leone After the Elections: Politics As Usual?*" Africa Report No. 49, Freetown/Brussels, 12 July 2002, p. 19.
- ³⁶ Special Court for Sierra Leone, "Special Court Prosecutor Announces He Will Not Prosecute Children," Freetown, 2 November 2002.
- ³⁷ Interview with Human Rights Watch, 31 October 2002.
- ³⁸ "20 Questions and Answers on the TRC," <http://www.sierra-leone.org/trc-20questions.html>.
- ³⁹ Eighth weekly briefing of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, 11 September 2002, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/trcbriefing091102.html>.
- ⁴⁰ National Recovery Strategy, p. 46.
- ⁴¹ Post-Conflict Reintegration Initiative for Development Empowerment (PRIDE), "*Ex-Combatant Views of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court in Sierra Leone*," Freetown, 12 September 2002.
- ⁴² Fifteenth Report, para. 44.

Sierra Leone Chronology

- 1961 27 April. Sierra Leone is declared independent. Milton Margai, leader of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), becomes the first Prime Minister.
- 1967 All People's Congress (APC) leader Siaka Stevens wins elections.
- 1978 APC adopts a one-party constitution.
- 1985 Major-General Joseph Momoh succeeds Siaka Stevens as president.
- 1990 Momoh supports return to multiparty system. Elections scheduled for 1992.
- 1991 23 March. A 100-man force under the leadership of former army corporal Foday Sankoh attacks Sierra Leone in the name of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF).
- 1992 29 April. Junior army officers under the leadership of Captain Valentine Strasser overthrow President Momoh and establish a joint civilian-military government.
- 1995 February. An RUF advance on Freetown is finally halted a few kilometers outside the city. The Strasser government hires a South African security company Executive Outcomes that turn the tide against the rebels.
- 1996 February-March. Local and international pressure leads to presidential and parliamentary elections. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP wins the presidency.
- 1996 30 November. Kabbah and RUF leader Foday Sankoh sign a peace agreement that includes dismissal of Executive Outcomes.
- 1997 25 May. A military coup installs the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), chaired by Major Johnny Paul Koroma. President Kabbah flees to Guinea.
- 1997 1 June. Major Koroma invites the RUF to join the ruling government.
- 1998 January-March. Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) troops attack and capture Freetown. Kabbah is reinstated as President.

- 1998 13 July. The UN Security Council establishes a 40-man observer mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL).
- 1999 January-February. AFRC/RUF forces re-enter Freetown by force. They inflict major destruction and widespread atrocities before being driven out by ECOMOG/CDF forces.
- 1999 7 July. The Lomé peace agreement is signed by President Kabbah and Foday Sankoh. The UN Security Council welcomes the agreement.
- 1999 22 October. The UN Security Council establishes a 6,000 man armed mission in Sierra Leone known as UNAMSIL.
- 2000 7 February. UN Security Council authorizes UNAMSIL expansion to 11,100.
- 2000 6 May. After several incidents indicating its non-compliance with the peace process, the RUF takes hundreds of UN peacekeepers hostage.
- 2000 May. The UK deploys elements of the Parachute Regiment and the Royal Marines to Sierra Leone to evacuate British nationals.
- 2000 17 May. Foday Sankoh is captured by a crowd in Freetown and imprisoned.
- 2000 September. RUF begins raids into Guinea.
- 2000 10 September. In hostage rescue operation, British Paratroops attack, kill and capture dozens in a militia group known as the West Side Boys, providing an important demonstration of resolve.
- 2000 10 November. Abuja Ceasefire Agreement.
- 2001 February-March. Guinean Armed Forces inflicts heavy casualties in the RUF.
- 2001 March. UNAMSIL begins deployment into RUF held territory.
- 2001 30 March. UN Security Council authorizes UNAMSIL expansion to 17,500.

- 2001 4 June. RUF and CDF fighters join the DDR program throughout the country.
- 2002 18 January. President Kabbah declares the civil war over.
- 2002 May. Presidential and parliamentary elections held. Overwhelming victory for President Kabbah (70% of the vote) and his SLPP (83 of 112 seats in parliament.) Resounding rejection of the RUF-P.

Acronyms

ACC	Anti-Corruption Commission
ADW	Adjustment, Drawdown and Withdrawal
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All People's Congress
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
CBO	Community-based Organization
CCSSP	Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CIVPOL	International Civilian Police
CDF	Civil Defense Forces
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development, UK
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
FBO	Faith-based Organization
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GGDO	Government Gold and Diamond Office
GOSL	Government of Sierra Leone
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
ICG	International Crisis Group
IMATT	International Military Advisory and Training Team
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MMO	Mine Monitoring Officer
MOJ	Ministry of Justice
MTEF	Medium Term Expenditure Framework
NACSA	National Committee for Social Action
NCDDR	National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OSD	Organizational Support Division
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
RUF-P	Revolutionary United Front Party
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNDPKO	United Nations Department of Peacekeeping Operations

UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOMSIL	United Nation Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
US	United States
USD	United States Dollars

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Captain Josh Carlisle, IMATT
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