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Power-sharing and Peacebuilding in Sierra Leone

Power-sharing Agreements, Negotiations and Peace Processes

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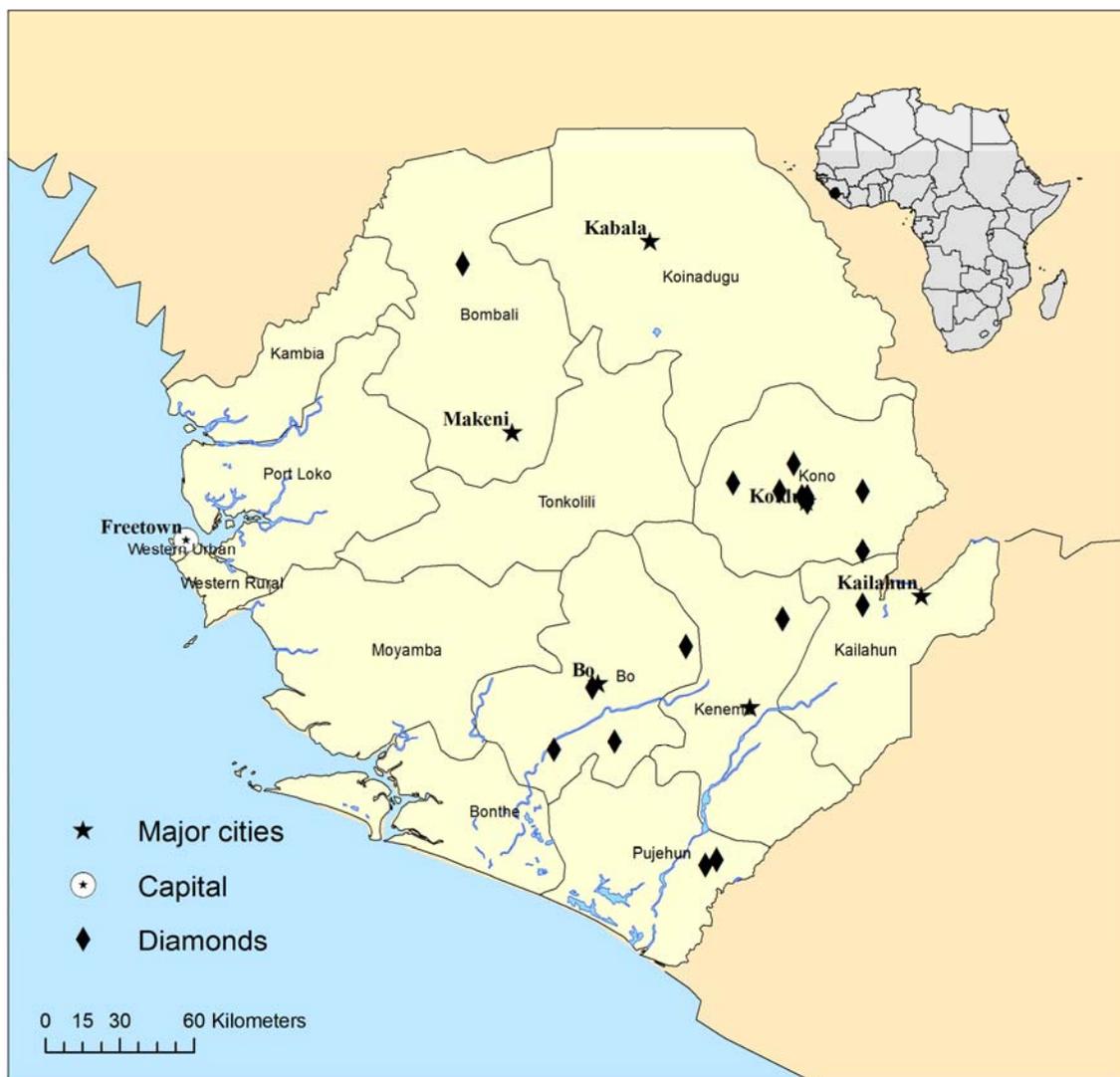
Executive Summary

Sierra Leone experienced an eleven-year civil war during the 1990's between the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the Government of Sierra Leone. The two most important attempts at negotiating an end to the war were the 1996 Abidjan accord and the 1999 Lomé agreement. The 1996 agreement called for a power-sharing Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, inclusion of RUF in the Sierra Leonean army, and withdrawal of foreign troops. Both parties failed to abide by the accord's terms, and the agreement collapsed with a military coup in 1997. West African ECOMOG forces ousted the coup plotters, AFRC, and RUF from Freetown and restored the elected government in 1998. Fighting continued, new negotiations started and a new peace agreement was signed 7 July 1999. The political, military and economic power-sharing arrangement established in the 1999 agreement was intended to last until the next elections (scheduled to take place in 2001). The agreement was an extension of the Abidjan accord, but in addition, the RUF was promised several government posts at the cabinet level and the former leader of the RUF, Foday Sankoh, was made chairman of the government body regulating diamond production. However, the government failed to allocate promised government positions to the RUF due to a lack of trust between the parties, and Sankoh abused his control over diamond mining to empower the RUF with the means to continue pursuing the war. The agreement collapsed after the RUF kidnapped 500 UN peacekeepers in May 2000, leading to large demonstrations outside of Sankoh's Freetown home, where several protestors were shot dead. As a result of the shootings, Sankoh and other members of the RUF were arrested and stripped of their government positions, effectively ending the 1999 Lomé Agreement. A British intervention secured Freetown, and together with the deployment of a large UN peacekeeping mission (UNAMISL), this intervention marginalized the RUF as a fighting force. British troops reorganised and trained a new Sierra Leonean army, while UNAMISL successfully monitored the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of almost 72,500 combatants. International banning of 'conflict diamonds' reduced the RUF's finances. Power-sharing did not seem to play a role in the post-conflict settlement. Rather, credible security guarantees from Britain and the UN, together with the arrest of spoilers and reduction of the RUF's income from diamond smuggling ended the Sierra Leonean war. Free and fair elections were carried out in 2002 and 2007.

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Map of Sierra Leone



Source: Map made by Siri Aas Rustad

List of Abbreviations

AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APC	All People's Congress
AU	African Union
CDF	civil defense forces
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Cease-Fire and Military Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Executive Outcomes
GoSL	Government of Sierra Leone
IA	International Alert
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NCHRD	National Commission for Human Rights and Democracy
NGO	non-governmental organization
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
OAU	Organization for African Unity (now the African Union)
PBC	United Nations Peacebuilding Commission
PMDC	People's Movement for Democratic Change
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SAP	structural adjustment program
SLA	Sierra Leonean Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
UN	United Nations
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

1. Introduction

The aim of this report is to assess the nature and impact of institutions of power-sharing in the Sierra Leone peace process. This case study forms part of the larger project, “Power Sharing Agreements, Negotiations and Peace Processes”, which in addition to a theoretical paper that assesses the merits and demerits of power-sharing in post-conflict societies, includes case studies of Burundi, Kenya, Liberia, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

To provide a meaningful background for the understanding of the context in which the Sierra Leone power-sharing agreements were brokered and implemented, the paper starts with an explanation of the causes and context of the Sierra Leone civil war. It then provides an overview of social, economic, and political factors relevant for the conflict in Burundi, before giving a more detailed description of the main rebel groups and an overview of the civil war. The focus of the second part of the report is more specifically on the characteristics and impact of three major efforts at peace-building. Towards the end of the paper, some elaboration of the current situation and the potential for future conflict is provided, before concluding with remarks about the lessons that can be learned from the experience with power-sharing in the Sierra Leone context.

2. Causes and Context of the Civil War

Unlike many other African intra-state conflicts, Sierra Leone’s conflict was not rooted in ethnic or religious rivalries. The roots of the civil war can instead be found in the gradual withdrawal of the state from rural areas since independence in 1961 and the collapse of the patrimonial system of governance. The thirty-year post-independence period prior to the start of the civil war was characterized by a gradual slide into decay and violence that culminated in the collapse of the patrimonial governance system and social structures and ultimately in civil war. Those who fought in the war did so largely based on a combination of desire for the wealth stemming from natural resources such as diamonds and grievances over the failure of the patrimonialist state (Richards, 1996; Bøås, 2001; Keen, 2005). The RUF’s stated aims of overthrowing the APC government spoke to the long-running grievances of rural people against an overly centralized, corrupt government that had long neglected socio-economic development outside the capital and which had left many feeling disenfranchised and excluded.

The first president of the country, Milton Margai, was an authoritarian ruler whose government did nothing to diversify the mineral-based economy centered on diamonds, gold, iron ore, bauxite, rutile, and timber. After Milton Margai died in 1964, his brother Albert succeeded him as Prime Minister. Corruption was rife under Albert Margai’s leadership, as he ‘saw the state not as a stewardship in the public interest but as the power base for personal gain and aggrandizement’ (Hirsch, 2001a: 28). The popularity of Albert and his party, the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP), declined and Albert lost the 1967 election to Siaka Stevens from the opposition All People’s Congress (APC) party.

As soon as he entered office, Stevens ‘immediately embarked on power consolidation politics by....establishing a wide network of patron-client relationships, at the same time ensuring that those in key positions of power were answerable to him...[and] weaken[ing] virtually all institutions of civil society’ (Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle 1999: 80-81). This culminated in the establishment of a one-party state in 1978, concentrating power fully in the hands of Stevens and the APC for the next 17 years and institutionalizing a patrimonial governance system. The nature and eventual collapse of the patrimonial system by which

Stevens governed the country has been acknowledged by a number of scholars as a strong contributing factor to the outbreak of civil war (Richards, 1996; Bøås, 2001; Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle, 1999; Reno, 2000a,b; Clapham, 1996; Keen 2005; Médard, 1996).

Patrimonialism is a form of personal rule wherein 'access to the state becomes the main way of acquiring economic goods and wealth. And wealth gives access to power' (Médard, 1996: 87). Patrimonial politics are not about ideology or national welfare but are rather about distributing scarce state resources to clients to secure their loyalty to the leader and guarantee the leader's political survival (Bøås, 2001: 698). This is because 'the patrimonial office lacks above all the bureaucratic separation of the "private" and the "official" sphere.... Political power is considered part of [the ruler's] personal property' (Reno, 2000b: 46). Political control and authority are thus based on personal connections that are maintained by distributing state resources such as appointments to political office and mineral resources through patron-client networks, creating what Reno (1998, 2000b) calls the 'shadow state'. The shadow state is a parallel governance system that operates outside formal state institutions and is founded on 'the ruler's ability to manipulate access to resources...to enhance his own power' (Clapham, 1996: 250). In the shadow state, the patrimonial ruler must above all restrict provision of public goods and services in order to ensure that people can and will only seek the personal favor of the ruler, limiting the right to distribute such goods to the ruler and a few loyal followers (Zack-Williams, 1999). This was exactly how Siaka Stevens ruled Sierra Leone (Lord, 2000).

Stevens bankrupted the state by spending half the entire national budget for the 1979-1980 fiscal year to host the 1980 Organization of African Unity (OAU) summit, giving 'wildly inflated contracts that enabled those who were insiders on the scam to walk away with millions' (Hirsch, 2001a: 29). He 'formed his own state company...and sold the most profitable state corporations to himself' (Clapham, 1996: 179) and turned to donors of all ideological leanings 'to balance budgets and finance neopatrimonial exchange' (Bøås, 2001: 708). Loans from international financial institutions 'were distributed to private individuals and squandered by party stalwarts or top civil servants' (Zack-Williams, 1999: 160, fn. 7; see also Keen, 2005), as well as the military, to prevent any attempt to oust Stevens from power. State agencies and functions were centralized in Freetown, facilitating the total appropriation of these resources by Stevens and those loyal to him (Alie, 2000). Those who opposed Stevens' tactics were harassed, killed, or imprisoned, including Foday Sankoh, the leader of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebel group and a former soldier in the Sierra Leonean army who was imprisoned for his role in a failed coup plot against Stevens in 1971.¹ Others were simply excluded from APC payouts; uncooperative chiefs and individuals found that their regions remained neglected by the government and deprived of any developmental efforts (Zack-Williams, 1999).

The IMF and the World Bank tried to impose austerity measures on Stevens' government in the 1980's in the form of structural adjustment programs (SAPs) that required removing subsidies on rice and reigning in the number of public servants on the government payroll. This only 'hurt the less well off individuals...and not the system and its "big men"', because the Bank's and the IMF's attempts were not directed towards the system and its allocation principles' (Bøås, 2001). Furthermore, these SAPs strengthened the shadow state because they forced the retrenchment of the formal state, allowing more

¹ Sankoh and his RUF forces invaded Sierra Leone on 23 March 1991, twenty years to the day after Sankoh was imprisoned for his role in the failed coup in 1971 against Siaka Stevens. He died while in prison in 2003 after having again been accused of planning a coup against current President Kabbah.

resources to be distributed through smaller private patron-client networks since people who were not essential to keeping the ruler in power—such as teachers and most people living in rural areas—could be excluded from these networks (Reno, 2000b). SAP-enforced state withdrawal was also convenient for diamond mining, a key element in the maintenance of the shadow state. Stevens encouraged illicit diamond mining and smuggling in return for favors and loyalty to his regime. Smuggling allowed an elite few to pocket profits which did not need to be shared or used for national development (Clapham, 1996). State authority was gradually withdrawn from the rural Liberian border area to facilitate diamond smuggling, alienating large numbers of people from patrimonial distribution networks and starving state institutions such as the education system of resources necessary to develop the country and serve the needs of the majority of people.

Siaka Stevens' popularity significantly declined through the 1970's until he handed power over to his hand-picked successor and the head of the Sierra Leonean military, General Joseph Momoh, in 1985. Momoh proclaimed a 'New Order' that 'promised economic reform and the eradication of corruption....[to signal] a break with the political and economic legacy of the Stevens regime' (Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle, 1999: 122-123). But Momoh had also inherited a strong patrimonialist system whose beneficiaries were loathe to change. The individuals Momoh appointed to serve in his government came primarily from Stevens' government, and Momoh could not escape the influence of his predecessor. Momoh renegotiated an austerity agreement with the IMF in 1986, agreeing to curb corruption and reduce the informal economy. However, his efforts sparked a failed coup in 1987 that was instigated by elites from Stevens' regime and even Stevens himself (Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle, 1999; Hirsch, 2001a). Momoh reneged on his reform campaign and stopped debt-servicing payments to the IMF and the World Bank in 1989, just as Stevens had done twenty years earlier, ensuring his political survival for two more years. These institutions responded by freezing further payments and this, combined with a general drying-up of aid money at the end of the Cold War, a global reduction in the prices of raw materials, and the continued misappropriation of dwindling state and mineral resources, forced a dramatic reduction of the patrimonial networks maintaining the state. The way was opened for the emergence of the civil war in March 1991, when the RUF entered Sierra Leone from Liberia (Richards, 1996). Momoh was ousted from power in 1992 by army officers dissatisfied with his handling of the conflict with the RUF, having fulfilled the last prophecy of the patrimonial state: 'When the private appropriation of the state by its leader and the ruling class goes too far, it destroys the very economic bases of the state' (Médard, 1996: 95) and thus the state itself.

2.1 National, Social, Political, and Economic Factors

2.1.1 Social Groups

The Sierra Leonean population is divided between twenty different African groups, including the Temne and the Mende, to name some of the larger groups, and a small number of Lebanese, Asians, and Europeans. The country is partitioned into four administrative regions—the Western Area and the Northern, Southern, and Eastern Regions. These regions are further divided into districts and chiefdoms, the basic units of local government. The Western Area (where the capital, Freetown, is located) is and has been historically the most urbanized and developed region in the country, while the Northern region is and has been the poorest and least developed. The eastern region holds many of the lucrative diamond deposits found in the country.

Social cleavages within Sierra Leonean society are thus largely regionally-based, though divisions between the Mende and the Temne ethnic groups also exist. However, ethnic and religious cleavages played no role in outbreak of the civil war, and the RUF was a multi-ethnic entity. While ethnic militias/hunter groups such as the Kamajors (a Mende group) became a major government-supported fighting force during the conflict under the umbrella term of 'Civil Defense Forces', this did not necessarily provoke intergroup divisions between ethnic groups. These groups (and the secret societies to which they are connected such as the Poro and the Bondo) have been in existence for a very long time within the various ethnic groups in the country, and Sierra Leone is known as one of the most religiously tolerant countries in the world.

Political parties are somewhat divided by ethnicity and region, with the All People's Congress (APC) representing the Temne-dominated central-north region of the country, and the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) representing the Mende-dominated south-eastern region of the country. A break-away faction of the SLPP, the People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC), led by the son of Albert Margai, has garnered support particularly amongst young people in Sierra Leone. However, Margai is no stranger to political power, having served in Kabbah's government.

Earlier in Sierra Leone's history, there was a significant divide between the Krios, freed slaves who initially ruled the British colony of Sierra Leone and lived in Freetown, and the indigenous inhabitants of Sierra Leone. This was largely due to the fact that the original colony of Sierra Leone did not extend past Freetown until 1896, when the remaining territory that is now known as Sierra Leone was proclaimed a Protectorate by the British and was ruled separately from the Freetown colony by the British through indirect rule via Paramount Chiefs (Crowder, 1968; Wyse, 1990). However, the Krios were largely removed from political power in the early 1900s, and many remaining Krios left Sierra Leone during the country's civil war. Their political power as a group is thus fairly insignificant, though their language, Krio (an English creole), remains the lingua franca of the country.

2.1.2 Natural Resource Endowment

As has been made famous by Hollywood movies and NGO advocacy campaigns, Sierra Leone is endowed by large deposits of alluvial diamonds, which were used to fund the war (by both sides) and to keep it going, thus earning these diamonds the title of 'blood diamonds'. While Sierra Leone is also endowed with other natural resources, including rutile, iron ore, bauxite, gold, timber, and fish, it is diamonds which have been the most important to the country's economy, its patrimonial networks, and in the outbreak and continuation of the civil war.

Commercial exploitation of diamonds in Sierra Leone first began in 1931, in Kono District in the eastern region of the country, where many of the larger diamond deposits are found. Since that time, the diamond industry in Sierra Leone has been structured around a tributary system, wherein miners receive a share of the proceeds from any diamonds they might discover (Hirsch, 2001a). Most miners toil for hours a day, washing gravel, never finding a diamond and being paid only in food and perhaps a small daily wage. Those who do find a diamond do not generally know the value of the diamond when they sell it, and thus are not fairly compensated.

Because alluvial diamonds are easily exploited from the ground and are generally very small, they are also easily smuggled, thus facilitating corruption and sustaining patrimonial networks. This is evident from official diamond export figures for Sierra Leone, which declined drastically during the years preceding the war, as well as during the war.

There are varying accounts as to the exact amount by which official exports have declined. Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle (1999) claim that 2 million carats were officially exported in the 1970-71 fiscal year, 834,000 carats in the 1978-79 fiscal year, and just 12 carats in 1989 due to private appropriation through smuggling. Keen (2005: 22) puts the figures much higher, claiming that official diamond exports fell from 418,000 carats in 1977 to 13,000 carats in 1990. Hirsch (2001a) frames the decline in monetary terms: 'According to one recent estimate, Sierra Leone in the mid-1990's produced \$300 million to \$450 million worth of diamonds annually, almost all smuggled through Liberia and the Côte d'Ivoire. In all likelihood less than 10 percent of these diamonds passed through the government's official channel' (2001a: 26). In any case, few diamonds were being exported through state channels before or during the civil war.

As outlined in earlier sections of this report, diamonds played a major role in the outbreak of the war because of the social, political, and economic marginalization and exploitation associated with and generated by the diamond industry in Sierra Leone. The war did not break out over the desire to control diamonds. Rather, it is the complex set of social relationships in which diamonds and diamond mining are embedded—particularly agrarian relationships—which were behind the outbreak of the conflict. Many young people in rural areas are excluded from owning land due to informal land ownership laws which keep land in the hands of chiefs, who grant user rights (Unruh & Turray, 2006). Wealth and resources are therefore unequally distributed, sitting mostly in the hands of elderly, elite men. Before the outbreak of the war, chiefs imposed heavy fines on youths as a means to force them to work on the farms and community lands of chiefs, driving many young people out of their communities to try their luck in the diamond mines (Richards, 1995). The RUF successfully capitalized on these kinds of rural grievances in their recruitment drives and in their manifesto, *Footpaths to Democracy*. Moreover, diamonds helped to keep the war going, as all sides sold diamonds to fund their activities (particularly the RUF), and some of the fighting was over control of diamond mining areas.

The role of diamonds in exploitative agrarian relationships and the retreat of patrimonial networks created a large group of disenfranchised, frustrated young people who were recruited to fight by all the parties in the conflict. While much attention has been focused on the issue of so-called 'blood diamonds', the structure of the diamond mining industry remains largely the same as it was before the war, creating the potential for renewed conflict.

2.1.3 Political Structure of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a former British colony and the political structure is influenced by this. The Sierra Leonean law is based on English law and with customary laws indigenous to local tribes. The present constitution came in to force in October 1991. The government is divided into the three branches of the legislative (the unicameral Parliament), the executive (the presidency, with an appointed Cabinet that is approved by the House of Representatives), and the judicial (the Supreme Court). Both the president and the members of the Parliament serve for five year terms. The president is elected by popular vote and is both chief of state and head of government. The constitution also calls for 'a Vice-President of the Republic of Sierra Leone who shall be the Principal Assistant to the President in the discharge of his executive functions' (SL Constitution, 1991: Article 54, 1). There are 124 seats in Parliament; 112 members are elected by popular vote, while 12 are filled by paramount chiefs and elected in separate elections (CIA World Factbook: Sierra Leone, 2007). The 1991 Constitution adopts a single-member district electoral system,

however, during the elections in 1996 a party-list proportional representation system was used (Kandeh, 2004: 171; Keen, 2005: 206, fn 27). This exacerbated the centre-periphery antagonisms in Sierra Leone, and was abolished in the 2007 election. Ernest Bay Koroma from the All People's Congress (APC) has been the president since September 17 (CIA World Factbook: Sierra Leone). The APC is also the largest party in Parliament (59 seats), while Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) has 43 and People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC) has 10 seats (Ibid.)

2.2 Profile of the Revolutionary United Front

The Revolutionary United Front was birthed out of the patrimonial crisis that fueled the outbreak of the civil war. At the head of the group was Foday Sankoh, a largely uneducated former photographer and army corporal who trained with former Liberian president Charles Taylor and other African dissidents and rebels in Libyan revolutionary camps in 1987 and 1988 (Gberie, 2005; Richards, 1996). This led to Taylor's ultimate support for the RUF and its initial incursion into eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia on 18 December 1990, though the civil war officially began on 23 March 1991, when the RUF launched two successful surprise attacks on towns in eastern Sierra Leone.

There are many different and competing views on the nature of the RUF as a rebel group. Richards (1996) labeled the initial core group that formed the RUF as a group of excluded intellectuals 'who had the common experience of being driven to the margins of Sierra Leonean society...and shared the same background—social exclusion for political protest and student activism' (Richards, 1996: 25). The conflict was thus 'fuelled by rural disaffection and orchestrated by "excluded intellectuals"' (Rashid, 2004: 66). Others question this view, particularly in light of the fact that the RUF evolved into a large organization that committed terrible atrocities against unarmed civilians, sought to profit from the diamond mining industry, and largely relied on young people to fill their ranks, often forcing them to join the group (Bangura, 2004). Instead of being created by excluded intellectuals, Abdullah (1998; 2004) views the RUF as an organization that consisted of unemployed and uneducated youths who engage in gangster-like activities and are prone to criminal behavior. Whether ideology had much to do with the creation of the RUF is perhaps questionable, particularly since the primary manifesto of the RUF, *Footpaths to Democracy*, was not put out in printed form until 1995. The manifesto calls for the establishment of democracy, the eradication of corruption, and for free education and health care, amongst other things (Gberie, 2005).

The initial group of the RUF consisted of around 100 individuals from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Burkina Faso. The RUF recruited young people in particular, both forcing youths to join through brutal tactics such as forcing children to kill their parents and appealing to some youths who voluntarily joined the group. The RUF attracted young people who had failed to find jobs after their elementary, secondary, and even university education, as well as those who had received no education at all or who had dropped out of school (Zack-Williams, 1999). These young people, unable to pay for schooling and lacking any other employment or skills training prospects, gravitated towards diamond mining to earn subsistence wages while government workers and diamond traders profited handsomely. This created a vast pool of disenfranchised and frustrated young men who were easily recruited into the rebel forces during the civil war (Keen, 2005; Richards, 1996; Sommers, 1997). Some young people thus welcomed the RUF as an alternative in an economic climate which offered few jobs or educational opportunities, as well as to seek retribution against those who had exploited local communities and young people in the past.

Whereas in Liberia a multiplicity of armed groups emerged during both phases of the civil war (1989-1996 and 1999-2003), the RUF successfully managed to remain a largely unified entity. This does not mean that all members of the RUF were equally supportive of the group, that splinter groups did not emerge, nor that the RUF leadership effectively controlled its rank and file. Several splinter groups did emerge, to include the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (1997) and the Sierra Leone People's Army, but these groups were crushed militarily and completely eliminated by the RUF. The most successful splinter from the RUF resulted from a split between RUF Field Commander Sam Masqita Bokarie (who had also headed the RUF when Foday Sankoh was imprisoned between 1997 and 1999) and RUF leader Foday Sankoh. Maskita eventually fled to Liberia to work for Charles Taylor in the conflict in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire. Liberian police forces killed Bockarie in 2003, likely to prevent him from giving testimony that would incriminate Charles Taylor to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, which had indicted Bockarie on charges of crimes against humanity and violations of international law.

Instead, factionalization occurred on the government side rather than on the rebel side, with the AFRC joining forces the RUF, and with the emergence of the West Side Boys, a group that included elements from both the RUF as well as the Sierra Leonean Army who were loyal to the AFRC leader Johnny Paul Koroma. In addition, several ethnic militias were empowered by the government to fight on its behalf, though these groups did not split into different factions. This is discussed in the next section. Factionalization on the government side in Liberia may have been limited due to the fact that the army was already a Krahn-based faction that after Samuel Doe did not enjoy the leadership of a stronger warlord-patron such as Charles Taylor but rather fell largely under the leadership of ECOMOG.

2.3 Overview of Events during the Civil War: 1991 to 2002

The Sierra Leonean civil war officially began when the RUF, a small rebel group headed by Foday Sankoh, invaded eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia on 23 March 1991. The invasion force included approximately one hundred guerilla fighters primarily from Sierra Leone who had been recruited and trained in Libya and or Liberia. Accompanying the RUF were Liberian soldiers from the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and mercenaries from Burkina Faso. Nigerian and Guinean troops assisted the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) in the counter-offensive (Keen, 2005; Richards, 1996).

By the end of 1991, the RUF controlled much of the diamond-rich southern and eastern regions of Sierra Leone, having quickly overpowered a weak national army that pre-war president President Joseph Momoh had disarmed and stopped funding (Gershoni, 1997). Government soldiers unhappy with conditions on the war front ousted Momoh in a coup in 1992. This undermined the RUF's stated reasons for existence, which were to overthrow the All People's Congress one-party regime of Joseph Saidu Momoh and restore multi-party democracy to Sierra Leone. The RUF did not, however, disappear, but instead continued to fight against the newly installed government (the National Provisional Ruling Council, or NPRC), as the RUF felt that the NPRC paid more attention to Freetown priorities than to the rest of the country (Richards, 1996).

Indeed, the support of ordinary citizens for the new ruling regime dissipated as it quickly became clear that the NPRC was as corrupt as Momoh's administration (Paris, 2004). ECOWAS began leading talks between GoSL and the RUF in early 1992, but the talks failed and hostilities continued. The NPRC contracted mercenaries from Executive Outcomes (a private South African security group) to fight the RUF in return for diamond mining concessions. Despite the successful intervention of Executive Outcomes on behalf of

the government, the NPRC eventually lost control of all territory outside Freetown, and a military coup in 1996 removed the head of the NPRC from power in an effort to reconsolidate the power of the military regime (Abdullah & Muana, 1998; Clapham, 1996; Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle, 1999; Hirsch, 2001a,b).

In February 1996, democratic elections were held, but the RUF chose not to participate. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, representing the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) party, won the presidential election and created local pro-government civil defense forces comprised of ethnic/hunter militias (the largest of which are the Kamajors). The GoSL and the RUF met in Abidjan for talks in February 1996. A ceasefire was signed in March, and discussions continued through July, culminating in the signing of a peace agreement between the GoSL and the RUF on 30 November 1996. However, another military coup in 1997 forced President Kabbah to flee to Guinea. The new ruling junta, called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), was sympathetic to the RUF and invited the RUF to join the government, resulting in stiff opposition at home and abroad. This was indicative of a repeated pattern of collusion between supposedly warring sides throughout the war to derive profits and power (Keen, 2005).

In retaliation for the coup, ECOMOG, the cease-fire and military monitoring wing of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), began attacking the AFRC, finally ousting it in February 1998 and restoring Kabbah and his government to power on 10 March 1998. But the AFRC and the RUF continued to fight against ECOMOG and the re-installed government. Despite the presence of ECOMOG and the reinstatement of the elected government, the RUF controlled much of the country and in January 1999 it launched 'Operation No Living Thing' on Freetown in an effort to reclaim power in the capital. ECOMOG successfully repelled the attack in conjunction with the Kamajors (Conteh-Morgan & Dixon-Fyle, 1999; Fithen & Richards, 2005; Funke & Solomon, 2002; Hirsch 2001a,b; Keen, 2005).

Renewed peace negotiations took place in Togo in May 1999, and a peace agreement was signed in the Togolese capital of Lomé in 1999, granting RUF leader Foday Sankoh amnesty from prosecution for war crimes and a position as Vice President and cabinet minister in charge of diamond production—a lucrative position that Sankoh was very likely seeking all along. A small number of British soldiers and a United Nations peacekeeping mission (UNAMSIL) were sent to the country to enforce the Lomé agreement at the end of 1999, but they were instead drawn into fighting with the RUF and the AFRC. A final ceasefire and demobilization agreement was signed in Abuja, Nigeria in 2001 and UNAMSIL's strength was expanded to 17,500 troops to assist with the demobilization of fighters and in the training of the Sierra Leonean armed forces (Fithen & Richards, 2005; Funke & Solomon, 2002; Keen, 2005; Peters, 2004).

By the time the war was declared over in 2002, between 30,000 and 75,000 people had died and thousands of others had suffered atrocities such as gang rape, sexual slavery, torture, forced enlistment, forced labor, starvation, amputations, mutilations, and looting (Lord, 2000). Half the nation's population was internally and externally displaced, fleeing extreme violence and food insecurity. Much of the military action was directed at civilians, particularly those living in rural areas, despite the fact that the RUF looked to rural people for support. Basic infrastructure such as houses, business, schools, and roads were completely destroyed, while development ground to a halt with the GNP declining by around 5% each year from 1992-1998 (Ibid.).

3. Power Sharing in Context

This section will examine the two peace agreements signed in 1996 (Abidjan Accord) and 1999 (Lomé Agreement) in order to end the Sierra Leonean civil war and institute power sharing. The section will also briefly discuss the failed 1997 ECOWAS Six Month Peace Plan (Conakry Agreement). The discussions of the agreements will start with an overview of the context in which the negotiation took place, thereafter a description of the bargaining back and forth regarding content of the agreement, followed by an elaboration of the power-sharing mechanisms actually agreed to, before the implementation and aftermath of the agreement is described and discussed.

3.1 1996 Abidjan Peace Process

On 16 January 1996, National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) chairman Captain Valentine Strasser was ousted in a coup, one month before national elections were scheduled to take place. The coup was the result of an internal falling-out within the NPRC between Strasser and his colleagues over the impending 1996 elections, and was led by Strasser's defense minister, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. The coup had likely occurred due to Strasser's expressed desire to remain in power and postpone the elections.

According to Hirsch (2001a), Bio was concerned with his political future after the elections and the subsequent end of NPRC rule. Bio was thus determined to reengage the RUF in negotiations to end the war and to receive credit for successfully ending the war. Bio viewed the elections as a means of conflict resolution where his predecessor had seen the elections as a way to fight the RUF (Gershoni, 1997). Gershoni writes that Bio felt the only way for the elections to be carried out successfully was if the RUF joined in (1997: 71). Bio was likely also swayed into negotiations with the RUF by the fact that his sister was a senior RUF member; in fact, she assisted in the 1996 negotiations (Ibid.; Abraham, 2004; Gberie, 2000). The RUF commanders were not, however, unanimous about negotiating with the GoSL.

Funke & Solomon (2002) give a different explanation as to why negotiations began after Bio assumed power in 1996. Strasser had announced that elections would be held on 26 February 1996. Given the close cooperation between the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and the RUF rebels in the looting of civilians and the illicit mining of diamonds (and the 'sobel' phenomenon, wherein soldiers discarded their uniforms at night to loot and pillage), elections would have threatened the profitability of the war for the Army and the political power of the Army and ruling military junta. 'Bio was at pains to refute such allegations and even went so far as to call for government talks with Sankoh' (Funke & Solomon, 2002: 6). Sankoh agreed on a ceasefire but, as Strasser had pushed for, wanted the elections postponed, supposedly to allow the RUF time to prepare to participate in such elections. This could be an indication of "an overlap in interests' (Ibid.) between the RUF and the SLA (see also Abraham, 2004).

In any case, after assuming power, Bio persuaded Foday Sankoh (leader of the RUF) to send a delegation to Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire, to begin a dialogue (Hirsch, 2001a). The two sides met on 25 February, where they agreed to continuing talks and a face-to-face meeting between Sankoh and Bio. The RUF also declared a two-month ceasefire (Gberie, 2000). However, Sankoh and the RUF representatives at the meeting stated that they rejected the elections and would not cooperate with any elected officials in future talks. Sankoh publicly stated that the elections were a UN-sponsored plot to take control of Sierra Leone (Abraham, 2004). However, the elections on 26 and 27 February 1996 went forward as planned upon the insistence of participations at the National Consultative Conference,

convened on 16 February 1996 at the Bintumani Hotel in Freetown. Heavy pressure to carry out the elections as scheduled was also exerted by the British and American governments.

Despite serious intimidation efforts carried out by the RUF and the Army to thwart voters from participating in the election, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was elected president in the 1996 elections, and he quickly appointed the former leader of the Kamajor militia, Hinga Norman, as his deputy minister of defense.

3.1.1 Bargaining over Power-Sharing

On 25-26 March, Bio and Sankoh held talks in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire. Although the only official outcome of these talks was an agreement on continuing talks between RUF and the newly elected Kabbah government,² and that humanitarian supplies could be delivered in RUF-controlled areas, greater concessions were made behind the scenes. According to Hirsch (2001a), Sankoh was promised either the position as deputy chairman of the ruling National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) or vice-president of a new civilian government.³ Granting the leader of RUF one of these positions, would put Sankoh in the centre of power in Sierra Leone.

A month later Sankoh met with president Kabbah in Yamoussoukro. Their opening speeches disclosed discrepant positions and intentions, however, the 23rd of April both sides agreed to a cease-fire and to continue talks (Gberie, 2000). Negotiations then moved to Abidjan. Both sides were distrustful of each other and were 'deeply skeptical of each other's motives...[T]he RUF viewed the government side as too legalistic, while the government believed the RUF was using the talks only to buy time' (Hirsch, 2001a: 51). Sankoh publicly declared in Abidjan that 'he distrusted Kabbah, whom he called a "rogue" and accused of playing a part in mismanaging the country's resources after independence' (Gberie, 2000: 4). Moreover, Sankoh 'consistently blocked the political resolution channel by preconditions to negotiations on the withdrawal of all foreign forces from Sierra Leone' (Gershoni, 1997: 71). The RUF also refused to recognize Kabbah and his government (Funke & Solomon, 2002).⁴

² It is likely that Sankoh agreed to meet with government in future to continue talks only because the RUF at that point in time was at a serious disadvantage militarily, rather than out of any actual desire to resolve the conflict. The Sierra Leonean Army and various Civil Defense Forces (particularly the Kamajors), had attacked and successfully reclaimed territory from the RUF during 1995 and 1996 with assistance and training from Executive Outcomes, destroying several RUF bases and capturing diamond mining fields. Many of the best RUF fighters had also been killed in these attacks (Gberie, 2000).

³ This would mean ignoring the election result, or violating the Constitution. Kabbah refused to make Sankoh the vice president, arguing that the Constitution did not allow the vice presidency to someone who did not participate in the election (Hirsch, 2001a: 52).

⁴ The London-based group International Alert (IA) served in advisory role to the RUF, interested in doing so to receive international recognition for having resolved the conflict. The primary IA agent present at the talks, a Ghanaian named Ayaaba Addai-Sebo, was a former publicist for Liberia's Charles Taylor (head of the Liberian rebel group NPFL) and was thus known to and trusted by Sankoh and the RUF (Abraham, 2004: 202). According to Hirsch (2001a), Sankoh had also been advised by former NPRC members that there would soon be a military coup against Kabbah, and thus there was no need for Sankoh to negotiate at all (Hirsch, 2001a: 51; see also Abraham, 2004). Other individuals present at the negotiations were a representative of the OAU, a United Nations Special Envoy, and a Commonwealth representative, none of whom Sankoh felt acted in a non-partisan manner. Amara Essy, the Ivorian foreign minister headed the negotiations. Essy had traveled to Sierra Leone in February 1996 to convince Sankoh to enter negotiations. Gberie writes that Essy convinced Sankoh to enter negotiations by telling him that "as long as he stayed isolated in the bush, he would be considered a butcher by the world. No one even knows why you are fighting. Once you have explained yourself, you can put the war behind you." (2000: 2)

Negotiations resumed the 6th of May but slowed down because the RUF rejected the election and proposals from the government (Gberie, 2000). The RUF also demanded the withdrawal of all foreign forces in Sierra Leone (Abraham, 2004: 205, Gberie, 2000). This was a legitimate concern for the RUF, given that Executive Outcomes (EO), a private South African mercenary group originally contracted by Strasser, was training the Kamajor militia. The Kamajors and Executive Outcomes had successfully attacked and defeated the RUF on a number of occasions, retaking territory in 1995 and 1996. Requiring the withdrawal of EO, as well as Nigerian army team training the Sierra Leonean Army, would have seriously weakened the government.

This proposal was rejected by the government, as were Sankoh's demands that several ministerial positions be given to the RUF and he be made Vice President of the country, for fear that he would launch a coup from such a position (Hirsch, 2001a; see also Abraham, 2004). Essy felt that Sankoh should have been accommodated in such a position, but Kabbah refused. Sankoh claimed the vice presidency had been promised to him by Bio; if such promises were made, it was likely with the intention of coercing Sankoh to return to the negotiations, as before the 1996 talks he had flatly refused to negotiate with any of the governments, whom he felt were corrupt (ibid). As a result, the talks stopped on 28 May.

Most of the issues were solved, though, and in early September news came that the government had agreed to major economic, political and social reforms. 'The reform proposals went a long way to satisfy the RUF's aspirations for power-sharing – short of immediately entering government' (Gberie, 2000: 5). Two weeks later the RUF dropped demands to be involved in drawing the national budget, after Kabbah threatened the RUF with renewed attacks and war crimes charges (ibid.)

During the summer and early autumn of 1996, the strength of the Kamajors was built up by Executive Outcomes, formulating dissent and frustration within the Army ranks. By mid-October, the Kamajors had nearly defeated the RUF, forcing Sankoh to drop his demands regarding the withdrawal of foreign forces from Sierra Leone (though it was still stipulated in the agreement that EO should leave the country) and pressuring him to accept an agreement (Hirsch, 2001a: 53).⁵ The OAU took a more prominent role in attempting to get the negotiations back on track, mediating between the two parties (Gberie, 2000). Direct contact between Kabbah and Sankoh likely also pushed Sankoh back to the negotiating process, as may have Johnny Paul Koroma's failed coup attempt against the government on 8 or 9 September 1996 (ibid.; see also Abraham 2004).

The first Sierra Leonean peace agreement was signed the 30th of November 1996 by RUF leader Foday Sankoh and President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah in Cote d'Ivoire's capital Abidjan. Among the main aspects of the accord were: amnesty for RUF members; a transformation of RUF into a political movement; various reforms; withdrawal of Executive Outcomes and regional forces; encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of RUF combatants; and the establishment of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace comprising representatives from both the Revolutionary United Front and the Kabbah government. Although not stated in the signed document, it was implied that Sankoh would

⁵ Keen (2005) writes that "during the negotiations leading to the agreement, there was very little participation from representatives of civil society. Notable absentees included the women's organizations that had played a leading role in pushing for democratization and for a peace process' (2005: 158; see also Francis, 2000: 361). Francis writes that the lack of civil society involvement in the peace process "created a credibility gap and limited information flow; as a result the people hardly identified themselves with the provisions of the Abidjan settlement' (2000: 361). Francis further points out that there was a lack of any common purpose amongst the international actors during the peace process (ibid.).

have the chairmanship of a government commission or committee. RUF members would also receive government jobs including deputy ambassador posts (Gberie, 2000: 6). However, Keen (2005: 159) observes that 'the RUF was not given any position in central or local government, something that appeared to reflect its military weakness as well as the fact that multi-party elections had been organized successfully in February 1996 without its participation.'

3.1.2 Power-Sharing provisions within the Abidjan Agreement

The Abidjan agreement did not provide RUF leader Sankoh the position as vice president, which he claimed to have been promised. Instead, sharing of power was to be accomplished in the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, its various subordinate bodies, and by granting Sankoh the chairmanship of one of these bodies. Article 3 of the peace accord explains the mandate and organization of the Commission. The agreement states that 'The parties undertake to comply with the conclusions of the Commission.' (Abidjan Accord, 1996: Article 3).⁶ Such a Commission is a type of power-sharing constraint, resembling a grand coalition. According to Lijphart, a grand coalition can be based on a variety of organising principles, 'such as that of a grand coalition cabinet in parliamentary systems, a grand coalition of a president and other top office holders in presidential systems, and broadly inclusive councils or committees with important advisory and coordinating functions' (1985: 7). The peace agreement also called for other power-sharing commissions, in which both the RUF and the government should be represented, for example the National Electoral Commission.

The Abidjan peace agreement called for a reduction in the Sierra Leonean army as well as that 'members of the RUF/SL who may wish to be part of the country's military can become part of the new unified armed forces within a framework to be discussed and agreed upon by the Commission.' (Abidjan Accord, 1996: Article 9). The accord does not state any specific numbers or quotas of the new armed forces. This type of power-sharing constraint, emphasising broad inclusiveness in the military, is considered very important in postconflict societies (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007; Walter, 2002).

The question of foreign troops was of great concern for the RUF. They demanded that all foreign troops and mercenaries should leave the country, thus diminishing the military capacity of the government (Abraham, 2004: 205). The Abidjan accord also calls for the removal of Executive Outcomes (EO) and other troops, however, only after an international Neutral Monitoring Group has been deployed (Abidjan Accord, 1996: Article 11). The agreement does not state the number of international monitors; hence it is unclear how powerful this third-party enforcement was planned to be. Complying with the provisions within the accord should be controlled and enforced by the parties themselves, with the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity, the Commonwealth and the government of Côte d'Ivoire as moral guarantors (Ibid.: Article 28).

Proportional representation is viewed as an important power-sharing feature. The purpose of power-sharing is to have inclusive decision-making bodies with representatives from relevant groups and parties in a society. As previously mentioned the Abidjan accord establishes various coalitions with members from both the RUF and the government, however, there are no details describing how many representatives, or in what proportion, these members will be. Proportionality is also important regarding (re-)distribution of

⁶ 'The Parties' refer to the government and the RUF.

resources. Article 26 focuses on improving quality of life, especially for the poor in the countryside. However, Sierra Leone's vast natural resources are not mentioned in the text, and the text is too vague to be interpreted as substantial wealth sharing, even though it is an attempt to balance the inequality between the relatively rich Freetown and the poor rural areas.

A 'sunset clause' has been proposed as relevant regarding successful implementation of power-sharing agreements. There is nothing in the Abidjan agreement indicating when these provisions shall be fulfilled or finished. The only vague reference is in article 3; however, it only states that the period the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace is supposed to fulfill its task is 'during the period of consolidating the peace'. There was also no time-frame concerned with the implementation of the agreement (Abraham, 2004: 206).

3.1.3 Implementation and Aftermath

The agreement collapsed with fighting in Moyamba district, Sankoh's attempt to purchase arms in Nigeria, and with the 1997 coup against the newly elected government. The Army accused Kabbah of putting more resources into the civil defense forces (primarily the Kamajors) than into the Army (SLA). The SLA and rebels aligned in opposition to Kabbah, the SLPP (Kabbah's political party), and the CDFs. Francis (2000) writes that the Abidjan agreement failed to address the RUF's security concerns and that 'the RUF leaders feared they would be arrested and charged with capital crimes and therefore resisted implementing the agreement' (2000: 360). The 1997 coup leaders claimed that Kabbah never implemented the Abidjan Peace Accord and had not honored the cease-fire, but it is questionable whether Sankoh and the RUF had ever held intentions to honor the peace agreement. In an intercepted radio communication between Sankoh and his field commanders, Sankoh stated that 'he signed the accord only to relieve the military pressure and that he intended to purchase new arms and continue the war' (Hirsch, 2001a: 54; see also Francis, 2000). Signing the peace agreement had given Sankoh time to do just that.

3.2 1997 ECOWAS Six Month Peace Plan

The 1997 coup that had ousted Kabbah from the presidency only months after the signing of the Abidjan Accords brought the army back into power, this time under the banner of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, (AFRC). The AFRC invited the RUF to form a government, which the RUF accepted. Foday Sankoh was named vice chairman of the AFRC (Hirsch, 2001a).

ECOWAS set up a Committee of Five, consisting of Nigeria, Ghana, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, and Liberia, to begin a dialogue with the junta (Abraham, 2004). ECOWAS's role was supported by the UN Security Council, which had proclaimed the coup as unacceptable (Kargbo, 2000). Discussions began on 18 July 1997 in Abidjan between the ECOWAS Committee of Five and an AFRC/RUF delegation. However, these discussions stalled when junta leader Johnny Paul Koroma stated over Sierra Leonean radio that he would stay in office until 2001 (Hirsch, 2001a).

Over the following months, ECOMOG built up a military presence around Freetown while the UN Security Council invoked sanctions on Sierra Leone, pressuring the junta back to the negotiating table. On 23 October 1997, ECOWAS and an AFRC/RUF delegation signed the ECOWAS Six Month Peace Plan in Conakry. The agreement called for (among other things) the AFRC/RUF junta to step down by April 1998; for a ceasefire to be monitored by ECOMOG with assistance from UN military observers; for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; and for the restoration of the constitutional

government and a broadening of the power base to ensure power sharing. Kabbah agreed to this arrangement on 5 November. Article 5 in the Conakry peace plan states that ‘efforts should be made to ensure that an all-inclusive Government is evolved.’ It further states that ‘The interest of the various parties in Sierra Leone should be suitably accommodated. Accordingly, it is recommended that the new Cabinet should be a cabinet of inclusion.’ (Conakry Peace Plan, 1997: Article 5). These vague formulations are defined as ‘power-sharing formulae’ in the agreement, but the lack of detail makes it difficult to evaluate the power-sharing constraints in the agreement.

The agreement collapsed as the AFRC/RUF junta criticized the key provisions in the plan (in particular, calling for the reduction and removal of Nigerian troops from ECOMOG peacekeeping forces), and stockpiled weapons (Gberie, 2005). Francis (2000) writes that the agreement failed because ‘ECOWAS was hardly perceived by the RUF/AFRC as an impartial mediator’ (2000: 361) and that ECOWAS lacked the mechanisms to enforce compliance with the agreement. ECOMOG responded to the AFRC/RUF breaches of the agreement by launching an assault on Freetown in January 1998 that drove the junta from power in February 1998.

3.3 The 1999 Lomé Peace Process

A combination of international pressures originating from three sources as well as domestic pressure pushed Kabbah and Sankoh back to the negotiating table in 1999. The first source of international pressure to end the conflict came from Nigeria. According to Reno (2001), Kabbah began negotiating again with the RUF to end the war when it became clear that Nigerian troops would likely be pulled out of Sierra Leone after the impending elections in Nigeria in February 1999. Nigerian troops comprised the bulk (approximately 90%) of peacekeeping troops serving under the ECOMOG banner in Sierra Leone, and their departure would leave the Sierra Leonean government vulnerable (Keen, 2005). Nigerian troops had been sent to Sierra Leone by Nigerian dictator General Sani Abacha as a means to ward off international sanctions against his regime (ibid). But significant internal opposition within Nigeria to its involvement in Sierra Leone developed over the high cost of fighting the RUF (estimated to be one million U.S. dollars per day) and the number of Nigerian troops killed since ECOMOG (the majority of the 800 regional peacekeepers killed in Sierra Leone at that time were Nigerians). A lack of needed military hardware and the continued support of neighboring states for the RUF (primarily in the form of arms shipments from Liberia) meant that the Nigerian and other regional troops present in the country could not militarily defeat the RUF (Bøås, 2001; see also Bangura, 2000; Reno, 2001; Williams, 2001). Falling oil prices may have also played a part in pressure for Nigeria to withdraw (Keen, 2005). Withdrawal of Nigerian troops, coupled with the government’s loss of territorial control and control over the army (see below), put the government in a very weak position to win the war militarily. Furthermore, the international community was unwilling to militarily intervene on behalf of the GoSL (Alao & Ero, 2001).

The second source of international pressure came from the British government. The British government had recently been embarrassed by its complicity in the Sandline Affair, wherein weapons and military assistance were provided by Sandline International, a private British military company, to the Kabbah government-in-exile (hosted in Guinea after the 1997 coup), despite the recent UN sanctions that had been levied against Sierra Leone (particularly against the provision of weapons to Sierra Leone). Controversy over the issue erupted once Kabbah returned to power in March 1998, and it was alleged that the British government knew and had approved Sandline’s actions (Hirsch, 2001a). A new peace

agreement was viewed by the British government as means to improve its tarnished reputation and image, but also as a way to more easily give assistance to the government (Alao & Ero, 2001).

British involvement extended to taking the leading role in coordinating all international involvement in the Lomé negotiations process under the guise of the International Contact Group (Williams, 2001). This group first met in London on 5 November 1998 and consisted of representatives from the governments of Belgium, Canada, China, Egypt, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Sierra Leone, Sweden, United Kingdom, United States, the Commonwealth Secretariat, ECOWAS, European Commission, United Nations, and World Bank (ibid). Britain advocated for international involvement in the formulation of the peace agreement to make it easier to convince the RUF to sign the agreement (Alao & Ero, 2001). Britain also tied its £10 million aid program to the pursuit and progress of dialogue, but was not willing to commit troops when Britain was militarily committed in the former Yugoslavia (though it did later in 2000, when the situation deteriorated in Sierra Leone) (Bangura, 2000; Williams, 2001; Francis, 2000). Britain may have also claimed economic reasons when pushing for a negotiated solution to the conflict, as it (along with the U.S. and the U.N.) had fully funded Kabbah's government while in exile in Guinea after the 1997 coup. According to Keen (2005), British Foreign Secretary Robin Cook instructed Kabbah to enter negotiations while Cook was visiting Nigeria. Kabbah's regime had received £30 million in support from Britain. "According to one report, Cook told Kabbah that Britain was not going to spend any more on futile attempts to beat the rebels on the battlefield" (Keen, 2005: 250).

Thirdly, American pressure was exerted on Kabbah to reenter into negotiations. Rashid (2000) writes that the U.S. 'did not want to see a democratically elected government overthrown by a rebel movement with a very dubious record'. Reno claims that the Americans were interested in pushing for such an agreement to 'allow it to appear that the United States had addressed a crisis in Africa while ensuring that it would not have to make a commitment of resources and soldiers to an African problem' (2001: 221), particularly since Sierra Leone is of 'no strategic interest to the United States' (ibid). This is in close alignment with the British position (if the claims above are to be believed), though many in the international community felt that Britain should carry more of the responsibility for Sierra Leone, given that it was the former colonial power in the country (Williams, 2001).

Reno (2001) gives a second explanation for American involvement, writing that the American government truly believed that the two warring sides would actually stick to the terms of the agreement (ibid). Many in Freetown felt that American officials had in actuality drafted the peace agreement that was later signed in Lomé and pressured (perhaps even forced, in conjunction with the British government) Kabbah into signing it (Alao & Ero, 2001; Williams, 2001). The U.S. Special Envoy for Democracy in Africa, Reverend Jesse Jackson, acted as a facilitator in the negotiations, and convinced Kabbah to sign a ceasefire with the RUF on 18 May 1999. This was against the wishes of several cabinet ministers in Kabbah's government, who wanted to delay the signing of a ceasefire to buy time for ECOMOG to confront the RUF and weaken the RUF's negotiating position (Hirsch, 2001a). Both Kabbah and Jackson were present and met at the African-American summit in Accra, from where Kabbah flew alone (without his advisers) to Lomé with Jackson to sign the ceasefire in May. Jackson may have been influenced by Donald Payne, the chairman of the U.S. Congressional Black Caucus and a close associate of Charles Taylor. Taylor was in favor of negotiations rather than increased U.S. military assistance to ECOMOG (Keen, 2005; Rashid, 2000).

Nigeria, Britain, and the U.S. thus played pivotal roles in moving the parties to the negotiation table, perhaps even ‘imposing’ negotiating as the solution onto the parties, as Bangura (2000) claims. Rashid (2000) writes that these three countries were tired of sinking resources into a never-ending conflict. However, many of the other states involved in the negotiation process wanted to punish the RUF rather than negotiate with them, but felt that ‘there was simply no alternative: it was either Lomé or continued war’ (Williams, 2001: 150). In his article, Williams (2001) quotes a representative of the Dutch delegation to the UN Security Council, who expressed concerns over giving a blanket amnesty to the RUF “because we felt that this conveyed a dangerous message, namely, that committing unspeakable atrocities pays. We proposed to include a reference to our concerns in resolutions 1260 and 1270, but we were prevailed upon not to insist because any talk of accountability was likely to prolong the war” (Williams, 2001: 150).

Such desperation can perhaps be seen in the reversal in position by Britain and the United States in particular, from supporting the Kabbah and the Sierra Leonean government in its fight against Sankoh to pressuring Kabbah to negotiate with Sankoh and recognizing the RUF as a legitimate political opposition in 1999 (Reno, 2001; Williams, 2001; Francis, 2000). Kabbah himself attested to the ‘no choice’ option when he stated in an interview regarding the Lomé negotiations that ‘I had grave misgivings about it, and didn’t want to go...But we had no choice. Here were these world powers telling us that “look, now is your chance. If you don’t cooperate, we will never be there for you.” We were in a box’ (Gberie, 2005: 157).

The United Nations also played a role in bringing the two warring sides back to negotiations. UN envoy Francis Okelo met regularly with various RUF members and sympathizers starting in late January 1999 in the West African region as well as in Sierra Leone (Rashid, 2000).

Other West African states also had a stake in pushing dialogue and negotiated resolution of the conflict. Guinea was concerned over the large numbers of refugees and the economic and security burdens they posed. The government of Burkina Faso was pressured to push for negotiations and stop its support for the RUF, as they (along with Liberia) were providing arms to the RUF (Rashid, 2000; Keen, 2005). Liberian President Taylor called for dialogue to deflect criticism that he supported the RUF and in particular the 1998 AFRC/RUF attack on Freetown. Taylor was also concerned that should the Sierra Leonean Army (or CDFs) or ECOMOG take control of eastern Sierra Leone, this would enable dissident Liberian armed groups to attack Liberia (Keen, 2005). Taylor supposedly had a number of allies in the U.S. Democratic Party, but was in danger of losing that support and being faced with sanctions with growing evidence of his support for the RUF (ibid).

Within Sierra Leone itself, domestic pressures were also exerted to forge a new peace agreement. There was recognition that the RUF controlled the main diamond mines in the country, providing revenue for the RUF to pursue the war and denying the government of needed foreign exchange (Alao & Ero, 2001). Williams (2001) further points out that Kabbah’s government did not control an army, nor did it control a large portion of Sierra Leone’s territory. In fact, 70% of Sierra Leone’s territory was outside government control and the main highway leading from Freetown to the rest of the country was under RUF control when Sankoh flew from Nigeria to Lomé in April 1999 to begin talks with his field commanders (Bangura, 2000). Whereas Kabbah and the GoSL had been in the more advantageous position in Abidjan in 1996, the RUF was clearly in a superior position by 1999 (Abraham, 2004). This gave Kabbah (and the international community) little choice but to negotiate a peace agreement since the most of the military powers supporting Kabbah’s

government would soon be withdrawn, leaving the government in a potentially losing battle against the RUF (Abraham, 2004: 151). Neither side (government or RUF) could win the war militarily or on the basis of popular support (particularly the RUF after the 1999 invasion of Freetown) (Bangura, 2000; Reno, 2001; Rashid, 2000). Both parties realized that the conflict was not winnable. Kabbah was still viewed as a legitimate president of Sierra Leone and had international support. However, he knew that rejecting negotiations would lead to loss of this international and regional sympathy. Moreover, it meant continuing violence and instability (Rashid, 2000). The situation for the AFRC/RUF was equally difficult. According to Rashid (2000: 2), 'The alliance could either transform its control over these areas to freedom for its leaders, amnesty for its war crimes and legitimate political power through negotiations, or continue to fight an unwinnable war and be treated as pariahs'.

3.3.1 Bargaining over Power-Sharing

During the first months of 1999 Kabbah met Sankoh regularly.⁷ The two supported the UN envoy Okelo and his attempts to establish contact with RUF. Okelo met with the Revolutionary United Front's spokesman Omrie Golley in Abidjan in late January. This meeting resulted in a communiqué confirming the legitimacy of the Kabbah government but also emphasizing the need to solve the Sierra Leonean crisis by dialogue. Although a step forward, the Freetown press protested, calling for a more favorable military position before negotiations should start (Rashid, 2000).

The RUF and AFRC alliance held consultations in late April 1999 in Togo to prepare for the Lomé talks. Sankoh was released from prison in order to participate in these preparatory meetings. He was transported from Sierra Leone to Lomé by a UN aircraft. After three weeks of talks the groups agreed to a common proposal for lasting peace in the country, resulting in a 59-page proposal entitled *Lasting Peace in Sierra Leone: The Revolutionary United Front (RUF/SL) Perspective and Vision* (RUFSL, 1999). Besides reconciling Sankoh's leadership of the RUF/AFRC the proposal presented to Togolese president Eyadéma on May 13 had the following provisions: the unconditional release of Sankoh from prison, as well as the release of all other prisoners and a blanket amnesty for RUF and AFRC members; the signing of a ceasefire; the establishment of a power-sharing Transitional Government to remain in power for four years, until the next elections; the withdrawal of all foreign forces fighting in Sierra Leone; participation of RUF/AFRC members in a new Sierra Leonean army; and recognition of RUF/AFRC control over certain areas. (RUFSL, 1999; see also Rashid, 2000). Although the preparatory meeting was between the RUF and the AFRC, tensions between the two allies were deep. AFRC leader Koroma was not present at the discussions, in fact, he was held captive by the RUF (Keen, 2005: 255; Rashid, 2000: 3).

The government made similar preparations to negotiate. 7 April the National Commission for Human Rights and Democracy organized a National Consultative Conference 'to reach a popular consensus on how to pursue the objective of peace' (Francis, 2000: 362). The conference gathered participants from the Parliament, paramount chiefs, political parties, civic and women's groups, professional associations, students and trade unions. The conference report (although not publicly released) confirmed the legitimacy of the Kabbah government, supported democracy and called for the Abidjan and

⁷ Sankoh had been sentenced to death for his role in the 1997 coup and was appealing the sentence from prison in Freetown. Kabbah met him in prison, and also allowed others to meet him. Among those were military leaders, foreign diplomats etc. (Rashid, 2000).

Conakry agreements as bases for negotiations. The document further recommended establishing a Commission for the Consolidation of Peace that would include representatives of civil society and political parties; the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission; and a conditional amnesty for the RUF (Francis, 2000; Rashid, 2000). However, the report 'strongly opposed any form of power-sharing with the AFRC-RUF' (Rashid, 2000: 4). Kabbah also rejected any form of power sharing in his opening speech at the conference, and Kabbah's cabinet refused such a proposal, threatening a cabinet revolt in June 1999 if power sharing was implemented (Hirsch, 2001a).

Unlike during the previous two peace processes, there was a significant civil society presence during the Lomé peace process, which also helped push for resolving the conflict. However, though civil society organizations were involved in the peace process and negotiations, they did not really have the power to alter the situation or the timing (Hirsch, 2001a). In addition to the participation in the consultative conference, civil society participation took shape through the efforts of the Sierra Leone Inter-Religious Council. According to Francis (2000), the Inter-Religious Council visited Liberian President Charles Taylor to garner his support for the peace process in Sierra Leone. This was part of a larger pattern of exchange and dialogue between the Sierra Leonean government and that of Liberia (including the exchange of ambassadors and civil society groups and dropping the plan to have Liberia condemned at the United Nations) (Bangura, 2001).

Kabbah and Sankoh met in Lomé 18 May 1999 and agreed to a ceasefire. One week later the negotiating teams from both sides as well as mediators from different countries and organizations gathered in the same city. The negotiations had both open and closed meeting and was centered on three issues: military, humanitarian and political. Each issue was dealt with in separate committees with equal representation from the Sierra Leonean government and the RUF/AFRC. The mediators 'provided the necessary support, advice and communication between the two sides and, when an impasse was reached, they called in Eyadéma and the other West African presidents.' (Rashid, 2000: 5).

The Togolese president Gnassingbe Eyadema, who hosted the negotiations, was chairman of ECOWAS at the time. Though Eyadema was the chairman, he was also interested in gaining personal credit for playing a role in the resolution of Sierra Leone's conflict, particularly since his international reputation was so tarnished (having been one of Africa's long-reigning and oppressive Big Men) (Hirsch, 2001; Rashid, 2000). Lomé was chosen not because the ECOWAS chairmanship was housed there, but as a compromise solution regarding the location of the peace talks.⁸

The talks also included representatives of the presidents of Burkina Faso and Liberia and other West African states (Reno, 2001). Libya was also included in the talks, though the Sierra Leonean government had at first opposed this (Bangura, 2000). Libya was interested in being seen as an African peacemaker, but had also supported the RUF and other rebel groups throughout the continent (Gberie, 2005; Hirsch, 2001a). Unlike the previous two peace processes, most of the parties with an interest to and/or involvement in the conflict were invited to the negotiations. This included supporters of the RUF, such as those from Liberia, Burkina Faso and Libya (Francis, 2000). Representatives of the OAU, ECOWAS and

⁸ Originally, the RUF had wanted the talks to be held in an RUF-friendly country such as Côte d'Ivoire or Burkina Faso, but the Sierra Leonean government refused for this very reason. Kabbah viewed Togo as being heavily influenced by Kabbah-friendly Nigeria, thought the RUF knew that Togo also had strong relations with Côte d'Ivoire (Rashid, 2000). Sankoh also had a strong personal tie to the Togolese president, as his daughter was married to Eyadema's son.

the Commonwealth were in attendance, as were diplomats from the U.K. and the U.S., who apparently played behind-the-scenes roles in informal consultations with the parties (Hirsch, 2001a). Civil society groups were present at the negotiations, most notably the Sierra Leone Inter-Religious Council, but women's organizations were excluded from the negotiations (Hirsch, 2001a; Keen, 2005). Sankoh was also not present at the negotiations, instead granting interviews and living at a luxurious hotel in Lomé, just as he had done in 1996 in Abidjan (Hirsch, 2001a).

The military and humanitarian committees completed their work on June 8, agreeing on a ceasefire; amnesties; humanitarian operations; socio-economic matters; human rights issues; disarmament and demobilization; as well as a new Sierra Leonean army. Questions of Sankoh's freedom and status, the RUF's demand for a transitional power-sharing government and the role of ECOMOG in postwar Sierra Leone remained difficult issues to solve. The RUF/AFRC set up a 'shopping list' of positions they wanted, demands that would have given them substantial control over state apparatus if fulfilled. The RUF/AFRC called for an expanded cabinet with 20 members, where the RUF/AFRC would have 11 ministerial and four deputy-ministerial positions, including the vice-presidency, defense and finance (Abraham, 2004; Hirsch, 2001a; Rashid, 2000). They further wanted six top diplomatic posts, 11 key para-statal offices, the Northern resident minister post, the mayor of Freetown, and head of the postwar reconstruction commission (Rashid, 2000).

Not too surprising, the government rejected these demands. In particular, Kabbah was still opposing the notion of a power-sharing transitional government, arguing that the constitution did not allow for this. In response, the government offered the RUF/AFRC two full ministerial posts and two deputy ministerial posts in a 16 member cabinet, as well as the chairmanship of some committees. The ministerial posts suggested were justice, defense, foreign affairs or finance. Once again protests in Freetown were loud (Rashid, 2000).

Talks and positioning continued during the summer days. June 21 the RUF/AFRC agreed to power sharing within a constitutional framework, with four ministerial and 3 deputy ministerial posts,⁹ only for Sankoh to reject the agreement two days later. The presidents of Togo and Nigeria, Eyadéma and Obasanjo, met June 26, proposing that Sankoh got the chairmanship of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development. However, Sankoh's demands for a transitional government, the vice-presidency and removal of ECOMOG were not withdrawn (Rashid, 2000).

The final agreement was signed 7 July 1999. The pushing and dragging of negotiations resulted in four ministerial and four deputy ministerial posts to the RUF/AFRC, and Sankoh's position as chairman of the Commission for Strategic Resources – giving him status as vice-president. The agreement also stated that ECOMOG should be part of the peacekeeping mission until replacement by UN forces. Apparently, it was at Liberian President Charles Taylor's insistence that the RUF's demand for one-half of the ministerial positions was dropped and that the RUF agreed to the four cabinet positions proposed by the government negotiators (Abraham, 2004). The resident United Nations representative signed the agreement with the stipulation that 'amnesty and pardon shall not apply to international crimes of genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law' (Francis, 2000: 366).

⁹ The agreement also included Nigeria's halt in troop deployment.

3.3.2 Power Sharing Provisions within the Lomé Agreement

Many of the same issues that were on the bargaining table in Abidjan in 1996 were again discussed in Lomé and included in the peace agreement which resulted out of the Lomé talks (Hirsch, 2001a), such as Sankoh's position in the government, power-sharing between the RUF and the government, the establishment of a broad-based government of national unity, the granting of amnesty to the RUF and pardon for Sankoh, and the withdrawal of foreign forces from Sierra Leone. The Lomé agreement can thus be seen in many ways as an extension of the 1996 Abidjan agreement.

The main demand from the RUF/AFRC was a transitional power-sharing government. Their initial proposal for lasting peace in May 1999 included political, military and territorial power-sharing mechanisms (Rashid, 2000; RUFSL, 1999). The government proposal, supporting former agreements from Abidjan and Conakry, contained both political and military power sharing. However, there seems to be a discrepancy between the RUF/AFRC and the Kabbah government's apprehension of the concept of power sharing, and what the literature on postconflict power sharing (Hartzell & Hoddie, 2007), or democracy in divided societies (Lijphart, 1969, 1977), define as power sharing. The government report after the April conference clearly states that power sharing is not acceptable for the government, but the provisions presented in the report are defined as such in the literature. The RUF/AFRC's and the government's comprehension of power sharing relates to a coalition cabinet, with ministerial posts to both parties. Lijphart (1977), however, acknowledges that a grand coalition does not have to be a cabinet; broad based commissions with powerful mandates might also satisfy the need for inclusive government. The Commission for the Consolidation of Peace called for in the Abidjan agreement of 1996 was such a grand coalition.

Disagreements during June negotiations were mainly over political issues. The RUF/AFRC demanded substantial power sharing with many ministerial posts and other positions, while the Kabbah government was reluctant to share power at all. Even though Kabbah rejected power sharing in principle, the disparity soon turned into a discussion of numbers, not of inclusion *per se*.

The final Lomé agreement for Sierra Leone thus included a variety of power-sharing constraints. Among those was a grand coalition cabinet, with four ministerial and four deputy ministerial posts to the RUF (of an 18 member cabinet). The establishment of a Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, to 'implement a post-conflict programme that ensures reconciliation and the welfare of all parties to the conflict, especially the victims of war' (Lomé Agreement, 1999: Article VI), and with the overall responsibility for implementing the agreement, was also an important power-sharing institution. The Commission was to be composed of two members from civil society, and 'One representative each named by the Government, the RUF/SL and the Parliament' (Ibid.). The peace agreement established a number of such commissions with broad representation, for many of these; the agreement prescribed the number of representatives from the various parties. For example regarding the board of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD) (Lomé Agreement, 1999: Article VII) and the Council of Elders and Religions Leaders (Ibid.: Article VII). For commissions where the numbers were not stated, the agreement still emphasized inclusiveness, using wording such as '... with representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF/SL, the Civil Defense forces and ECOMOG' (Ibid.: Article II) regarding the Joint Monitoring Commission, and '... the President shall consult all political parties, including the

RUF/SL' (Ibid.: Article XII) when setting up a new National electoral Commission. All these inclusive commissions provide power-sharing constraints to the 1999 peace agreement.

Nonetheless, probably the most important power-sharing mechanism was granting Sankoh the chairmanship over the CMRRD. While the RUF/AFRC's initial demand for recognition of their control over certain areas was not explicitly addressed in the Lomé agreement, Sankoh's chairmanship was de facto control over the diamond rich areas in the east and north of the country.¹⁰ Sierra Leone is a wealthy country in terms of natural resources. Easily exploitable diamonds made financing the rebellion simple for Sankoh and the RUF. Very little of the diamond export was carried out legally through the government, most was smuggled via Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire (Hirsch, 2001a: 25). Acknowledging this, the Lomé agreement affirms that 'the Government shall exercise full control over the exploitation of gold, diamonds and other resources, for the benefit of the people of Sierra Leone' (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article VII), and that 'all exploitation, sale, export, or any other transaction of gold and diamonds shall be forbidden except those sanctioned by the CMRRD' (Ibid.). Further;

The proceeds from the transactions of gold and diamonds shall be public monies which shall enter a special Treasury account to be spent exclusively on the development of the people of Sierra Leone, with appropriations for public education, public health, infrastructural development, and compensation for incapacitated war victims as well as post-war rehabilitation and reconstruction. Priority spending shall go to rural areas. (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article VII)

Thus, the agreement clearly states that the wealth of the country is the property of the people and that the revenues should be shared among them. Placing the management and administration of natural resources and revenues under one commission gives the leader of that commission substantial power. The establishment of the commission for strategic resources (or anything similar) was not even among the RUF/AFRC's demands (RUFSL, 1999). But it illustrates well how the agreement reflected the situation on the ground, with a military weak government and international pressure to strike a deal, and thus Sankoh's power to instruct that deal.

Another power-sharing characteristic with the Lomé agreement was the inclusiveness of the new Sierra Leonean army. Whereas the Abidjan accord mentioned only the RUF in relation to this military power-sharing, the 1999 agreement stated that 'Those ex-combatants of the RUF/SL, CDF and SLA who wish to be integrated into the new restructured national armed forces may do so provided they meet established criteria.' (Lomé Agreement, 1999: Article XVII, 2).

Sankoh and the RUF repeatedly demanded the withdrawal of foreign troops from Sierra Leone. While president Kabbah agreed to this when he signed the Abidjan agreement in 1996, leading to the Executive Outcome's leave in 1997, the Lomé agreement called for transformation of the ECOMOG forces into supporting the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). To broaden the ECOMOG forces, which was mainly comprised by Nigerian forces, ECOWAS was requested for 'troop contributions from at least two additional countries' (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article XIII). ECOMOG forces and UNOMSIL should together form a neutral peacekeeping force (Hirsch, 2001a: 83), mandated to monitor the military and security situation, and the DDR processes of former

¹⁰ This establishment of RUF control over certain areas of the country can be considered as a power-dividing mechanism (Roeder, 2005).

combatants. Article II of the peace agreement concerns monitoring of the cease-fire. It calls for the establishment of a Joint Monitoring Commission to be chaired by UNOMSIL, and with representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone, RUF/SL, CDF and ECOMOG. The commission was not only entitled to receive and investigate reports of cease-fire violations, but also to 'take appropriate action' regarding such violations (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article II). Thus, the 1999 agreement provided a stronger third-party enforcement of the agreement than the failed agreement in 1996.

One of the criticisms of the Abidjan accord was the lack of a time-frame concerning the implementation of the agreement (Abraham, 2004: 206). The RUF's initial proposal for lasting peace called for a 'Transition Government which shall remain in power for a period of four years' (RUFSL, 1999). The transitional character of the power-sharing constraints was established in the peace agreement when it stated that these government structures should last until the next elections. Article VI about the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace reads: 'The mandate of the CCP shall terminate at the end of the next general elections.' (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article VI, 10), whereas Article XI confirms that next elections will be held in accordance with the Constitution. The constitution prescribes elections every fifth year (CIA World Factbook: Sierra Leone, 2007). Since the last election before the signing of the peace agreement was in 1996, the next election, and consequently the 'sunset clause' for the transitional power sharing, was as soon as in 2001.

3.3.3 Implementation and Aftermath

Francis (2000) points out that during the bargaining and negotiation process that led to the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, the RUF was treated as a single and united entity. However, this was not the case, a fact which probably contributed to the breakdown of the agreement. This is illustrated by the events of December 1999, when Sam 'Maskita' Bockarie, a former RUF field commander, resisted UN demobilization and disarmament efforts and kidnapped two European aid workers, exposing significant rifts within the RUF (though these rifts did not result in full splits and the new emergence of separate factions or independent groups). Francis (2000) writes that Sankoh only represented a 'quasi-political' wing of the RUF (though he retained military influence), while the military wing of the RUF controlled diamond mining areas and was supported by Liberia and Burkina Faso. This military wing continued the military struggle after the signing of the Lomé Agreement. In reality, Sankoh 'had no effective control over the different factions under the control of mini-warlords such as Sam Bockarie' (ibid). The RUF was far from a united group; in fact, throughout the war, several unsuccessful coup attempts against Sankoh occurred (including in March 1997, after the failure of the Abidjan Accord and Sankoh's arrest in Nigeria).

Furthermore, as a bilateral agreement, the Lomé Agreement failed to accommodate the interests of or treat as parties to the agreement the AFRC, ex-Sierra Leonean Army personnel (especially those loyal to former AFRC leader Koroma), and the civil defense forces (CDFs, including the Kamajors) (Abraham, 2004; Alao & Ero, 2001; Francis, 2001). This was based upon the erroneous assumption that 'the government would be able to carry the Kamajors along in the peace deal and that the RUF would be able to convince the Koroma AFRC faction since they had fought as allies' (Alao & Ero, 2001: 123). In fact, deep divisions between the RUF and the AFRC had grown, particularly after the 1998 invasion of Freetown (Rashid, 2000). In addition to civil society organizations during previous negotiations, the CDFs were also not party to the Abidjan or Conakry peace processes and agreements/plans, yet were key actors in the conflict (and did not always cooperate with the government). The creation of a bilateral document at Lomé (as in the previous two peace

agreements) was likely done because ‘the organizers of the agreement realized that getting an agreement between two sides would be easier to accomplish than getting all the numerous stakeholders to come to a united position on the future of the country’ (Alao & Ero, 2001: 123). However, this time the civil defense forces were included in the disarmament and demobilization processes.

Whereas the CDF were included in the DDR processes, the AFRC was not mentioned especially in the peace agreement. According to Keen (2005: 255), soldiers’ access to disarmament, demobilization and reintegration was limited to members of the Sierra Leonean army prior to the 1997 coup. The exclusion of AFRC and their leader Johnny Paul Koroma from the peace negotiations and provisions in the agreement led to fights between them and RUF. To correct for this, Koroma was granted the chairmanship of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (Abraham, 2004: 215; Bright, 2000: 2; Keen, 2005: 256). Former AFRC and SLA soldiers were also allowed to be incorporated into the new army and some were included in the DDR.

The Lomé Peace Agreement was short-lived and failed to successfully institutionalize power sharing in Sierra Leone. While a Joint Implementation Committee was established by the Lomé Peace Agreement to review and assess the application of the agreement (chaired by ECOWAS and included members of the Commission for the Consolidation for Peace), the agreement did not clearly spell out how the Committee was to work or relate to other institutions established within the agreement, such as the CCP (Bright, 2000). Clashes between the RUF and the AFRC, ECOMOG troops, and the Sierra Leonean Army in various locations as well as continued RUF attacks against unarmed civilians continued after the signing of the agreement. The ECOMOG peacekeeping force—staffed primarily by Nigerians—was scaled down and phased into UNAMSIL, which assumed control of the peacekeeping efforts and operation in Sierra Leone. Foday Sankoh vehemently disagreed with the deployment of UNAMSIL, viewing it as illegal and inconsistent with the Lomé Agreement despite the fact that Article XVI calls for the establishment and deployment of a peacekeeping force (Lomé agreement, 1999).

Perhaps the greatest complication arose from the fact that the RUF was not allocated the government positions it claimed that it had been promised in the Agreement. Article IV of the agreement states that ‘the Government of Sierra Leone shall give ministerial positions to the RUF/SL in a moderately expanded cabinet of 18...as follows: (i) one of the senior cabinet appointments such as finance, foreign affairs and justice; (ii) three other cabinet positions’ (Lomé agreement, 1999: Article IV). The GoSL was also required to ‘in the same spirit, make available to the RUF/SL the following senior government positions: four posts of Deputy Minister’ (Ibid.). In actuality, the RUF was allocated the Ministry of Trade and Industry; the Ministry of Land, Housing and Central Planning; the Ministry of Energy and Power; and the Ministry of Tourism and Culture. The RUF was also allocated four deputy ministerial positions in the Ministry of Rural Development and Local Government; the Ministry of Transport and Communications; and the Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Marine Resources. The RUF complained that it had not received one of the ministries promised to it in the Lomé Agreement, while the GoSL took the position that ‘the expression “such as” should not mean “that is” and it could therefore designate any posts considered to be of the same standing as those indicated’ (Bright, 2000: 2). The RUF also complained that it had not been allocated the diplomatic and parastatal positions promised to it. In addition, despite the appointment of Vice President, Sankoh did not return to Sierra Leone until October 1999, when UNAMSIL peacekeeping troops had entered the country, as he distrusted the Sierra Leonean government (Reno, 2001). On 24

February 2000, Sankoh wrote a letter to the various parties to the Agreement, outlining his complaints regarding the failures in implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement, including those just listed as well as the failure of the GoSL to provide funding to assist the RUF in transforming itself into a political party.

Sankoh himself did not fully comply with the agreement. In January 2000 he cancelled all diamond mining licenses and ordered to reapply to the CMRRD those wishing to extract Sierra Leonean diamonds. Alao & Ero comment that 'While on the surface this may indicate a strong attempt to end the looting of gems, the close working relationship the RUF had developed with the Liberian authorities meant that the movement continued to receive direct benefit from diamonds' (2001: 124). According to Bright (2000), Sankoh never really constituted the Commission and funded his own military and political programs by ongoing mining in the diamond areas. Why Sankoh chose to violate 'an agreement that was so blatantly in his favour' (Alao & Ero, 2001: 126) is unclear. Abraham (2004: 218) argues that the RUF was never sincere in the peace negotiations and that Sankoh only participated in the peace process to buy time so he could seize power through violence. In Bright's (2000: 5) words; 'It seems that Sankoh's commitment was not on peace, but to state power and a share in the country's wealth, involving the connivance of some interested neighbours'.

The agreement totally collapsed when the RUF kidnapped 500 UNAMSIL peacekeepers, holding them hostage in early May 2000, along with the RUF's shooting of protestors outside of Foday Sankoh's Freetown home just days after the kidnapping. As a result of the shootings, Sankoh and other members of the RUF were arrested and stripped of their positions in government. The delay in the deployment of UN peacekeepers may have also contributed to the breakdown of the agreement, as did the agreement's assumption that the RUF was genuinely interested in peace and willing to end the fighting in return for power sharing (Abraham, 2004: 213). Additionally, granting Sankoh control over Sierra Leone's diamond resources failed to cut off the RUF's means of pursuing the war (ibid.: 214).

However, although the Lomé agreement failed, a fragile peace was established. British troops, initially intervening to evacuate foreign citizens, defended Freetown from rebels (Alao & Ero, 2001: 128). By early fall 2000 the RUF controlled half of Sierra Leone's territory and 90% of the diamond areas (Keen, 2005: 265). But the rebel forces gradually softened. Keen (2005: 267ff) presents six explanations for this: the RUF was attacked by Guinean forces, causing heavy casualties and the RUF more inclined towards UN peacekeeping; international pressure on the diamond trade banning 'conflict diamonds' reduced the RUF finances; sanctions against Liberia made Taylor distance himself from the RUF and thus the RUF received less supplies; the UNOMSIL turned more successful and in March 2002 it consisted of 17544 peacekeeping troops occupied not only with practical rebuilding of infrastructure but also building trust among the RUF; the British intervention and their retraining of the Sierra Leonean army convinced many RUF rebels that the war was not winnable; and a general feeling of war-weariness among the RUF made the rebels soften and prepared for something else than continued war.

Presidential and parliamentary elections were held in May 2002; Kabbah was reelected as president and his party, the Sierra Leone People's Party, won 83 of 112 legislative seats. The RUF's political party, RUFPP, did not win a single seat in parliament. 24,000 RUF and 37,000 CDF combatants had completed the disarmament program before the elections (Keen, 2005: 268). Even though the peace was fragile, there was no resumption of the war.

4. Potential for Future Conflict and the Current Situation

The August-September 2007 national elections in Sierra Leone raised expectations within academic and advocacy groups of renewed violence and possibly a return to civil war. A recent International Crisis Group report (2007b) points out the fault lines which continue to divide Sierra Leonean society: continued corruption and economic mismanagement; youth unemployment; and the abuse of power by traditional chiefs. The institution of the chieftancy has been revived after the war by the Sierra Leonean government with aid from donors such as DFID and the World Bank, who view reviving the chieftancy as a way to further their decentralization agenda (Jackson, 2007). This has entailed a continuation of the exploitative relationships that contributed to the outbreak of the war in the first place.

It is uncertain whether Sierra Leone would actually slip back into civil war at this point in time, but there is certainly the danger of large scale violence erupting and re-erupting, particularly if the elections are perceived to have been tampered with, if the ruling party (SLPP) refuses to accept a loss at the polls, or if the newly elected president and his government do not, or are unable to, institute the kind of social, economic, and political reforms Sierra Leoneans are demanding (particularly young Sierra Leoneans). The opposition (ALP) won the elections with the help of SLPP party defector Charles Margai, who failed to be nominated as the SLPP's presidential candidate (the outgoing vice president of the country, Solomon Berewa, was nominated instead of Margai). However, both rounds of the elections proceeded relatively peacefully, and the chairwoman in charge of the National Electoral Commission—Dr. Christiana Thorpe, a former nun, school teacher, and Minister of Education—is highly competent and performed her job with integrity. The elections were marked by a few violent incidents; some intimidation of voters and supporters, and outright cheating by the SLPP, but these incidents did not trigger large-scale violence or a return to war. However, it remains to be seen whether the new ruling party—the APC, which ruled during the years prior to the civil war under Siaka Stevens—can deliver on promises to improve conditions in Sierra Leone. Expectations for general improvement continue to remain high among the Sierra Leonean population. This is particularly true amongst young people, many of whom feel that outgoing president Tejan Kabbah and his party, the SLPP, have not delivered on his post-war promises of economic development and youth employment.

Sierra Leone's neighbors also pose a potential threat to the continued stability of the country. If political tensions escalate into full-scale civil war in neighboring Guinea, this may prove to be extremely destabilizing for Sierra Leone (as well as for Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, and the entire West African region). Mass strikes were held in February and June 2006 and January 2007 to protest President Lansana Conté's corrupt and incompetent regime. This forced Conté to appoint a new Prime Minister, but he selected a man who was a long-time ally of the regime, provoking violent demonstrations in February 2007 and the appointment of a non-Conté ally to the post (International Crisis Group, 2007a). But it is not only Guinean citizens who are unhappy with the regime; disaffected soldiers led violent protests throughout the country in May 2007, and have threatened renewed protests if they do not receive their long-overdue salaries, promotions, the dismissal of top military officers, and the reintegration of soldiers dismissed after huge military protests in 1996 over low pay and poor working conditions.

Sierra Leone is one of the two first countries (in addition to Burundi) that have been selected to take part in the United Nation's Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), an advisory body that assists countries in post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction, institution building, and development. The PBC began work in Sierra Leone in June 2006 with the government's

identification of issues for action in terms of peacebuilding and the work of the PCB are youth unemployment, reform in the justice and security sectors, consolidating democracy and good governance, and capacity building. At present, the PBC office in Sierra Leone is working on developing an integrated strategy for peacebuilding.

Lastly, the trial of Charles Taylor, former president of Liberia, is currently ongoing at the International Criminal Court in The Hague. Sierra Leone has its own Special Court intended to prosecute those who violated international humanitarian and Sierra Leonean law during the Sierra Leonean civil war. However, Taylor's trial was intentionally moved out of Freetown and to The Hague, for fear that holding his trial in Sierra Leone could provoke unrest. Whether this is actually the case is unclear (though it might be if Taylor was acquitted rather than convicted), as other Sierra Leoneans have been tried and convicted from all sides of the conflict in the country, to include from the government side (most notably, Hinga Norman, the leader of the Civil Defense Force—though he died before his trial could be completed). While there has been dissent amongst certain groups of supporters for these individuals regarding their trial and conviction, this has not provoked mass violence or a return to civil war. The risk of violence erupting as a result of Taylor's trial and the results of that trial is more likely to occur in or come from Liberia, as many of Taylor's supporters within Sierra Leone left after the end of the war and Taylor is not viewed positively by most Sierra Leoneans today.

5. Conclusion: Lessons Learned About Power Sharing in the Sierra Leonean Case

The eleven-year conflict in Sierra Leone experienced at least three attempts at solving the war. Although the 1996 Abidjan accord prescribed a broad and inclusive Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, as well as amnesty for rebels and the withdrawal of foreign troops, the peace failed. While the Government of Sierra Leone had the upper hand and was the military strongest of the two sides in 1996, this picture was reversed in 1999. This led to substantial concessions for the RUF in the Lomé peace agreement. The Lomé agreement was an extension of the agreement reached in Abidjan three years earlier, but those extensions were quite large. In addition to the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, power sharing was also established through a variety of all-inclusive commissions. Further, the RUF's demand for a transitional power sharing government was met, granting the former rebels four out of 18 cabinet posts and four deputy minister posts. Even more important was probably the decision to give RUF leader Foday Sankoh the chairmanship of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development (CMRRD), with status as Vice President, answerable only to president Kabbah. This position granted Sankoh and RUF complete control over the vast diamond resources in the east and north of the country.

Still, the 1999 power-sharing agreement failed. The Lomé agreement was in many ways a victory for the Revolutionary United Front, but it was also RUF and Sankoh who reneged on the agreement. Interestingly, the power-sharing arrangement with AFRC and Koroma, although not initially part of the Lomé provisions, seemed to hold better than the power sharing with RUF. Abraham (2004: 214) explains that Koroma was 'far more sincere in keeping the peace and disarming than Sankoh'. As the chairman of CCP, Koroma gradually recognized the need for reconciliation and held a successful conference on confidence and trust building for combatants and commanders (Bright, 2000). In fact, it was

Koroma's men who captured Sankoh after his escape from his Freetown house in May 2000 (Abraham, 2004: 216).

There have been many attempts at explaining why the Sierra Leonean peace agreements failed, in particular why the agreement signed in Lomé in 1999 did not hold. Few of the suggested explanation focus on the sharing of power as a reason for the failure. In many ways, Sankoh, and the RUF, bore the responsibility. They were never interested in peace, but in access to state power and wealth. The lack of commitment and support from the international community, especially regarding DDR, also contributed to the break down of the agreement (Keen, 2001: 256). Equally important, it became clear that the UN was not at all prepared for the mission in Sierra Leone, neither at the military level nor on the management at the top (Alao & Ero, 2001). There were also no credible sanctions established, should any of the parties fail to implement the agreement (Ibid.).

Francis (2000: 367) comments that 'civil war peace settlements borne out of desperation and exhaustion can hardly be expected to hold the peace', and he asks; 'How do you ensure the implementation of the accord when the parties are not ready to comply with its terms?' (Ibid.: 368). Ignoring the explanations relating to personalities and internal rivalries in the RUF, a couple of lessons can be drawn from the Sierra Leonean case. First, 'lightly armed peacekeepers should not be sent into a violent or potentially violent situation' (Alao & Ero, 2001: 130). Peacekeepers must have the proper training and equipment, and financial backing to carry out their mandate. Support from the UN Security Council and its member states is also important, Alao & Ero (2001: 130) argue that the UNSC should not mandate peacekeeping troops before it has received 'firm commitments of number of troops and other necessary support from member state'. Even though the initial UN mission in Sierra Leone was criticized for poor management and unprepared troops, the UNAMSIL peacekeeping troops in the country grew to be the largest peacekeeping mission in the world with 17,455 troops stationed. The change in the UN troops was successful and contributed to building trust and confidence. While there was fear that violence would break out once the troops left, this has not happened.

Another lesson from the Sierra Leonean peace processes is the importance of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programs. The international community's failure to fund these programs sufficiently undermined the process of reintegration and reconciliation (Hirsch, 2001a: 95). DDR was initially planned to last for 90 days, due to lack of funding and sufficient resources, it was first reduced to 6-8 weeks, then to 3 weeks of encampment. In the end, it was reduced to 2-3 days, making proper healing and reintegration difficult.

Finally, a lesson to learn is to include all parties to the conflict in the peace process. The AFRC was not included in the Lomé peace agreement, but when AFRC leader Koroma was included in the power-sharing arrangements, being granted the chairmanship of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, AFRC/former SLA combatants calmed down. Including all former combatants in the DDR is also vital.

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7. Appendix: Timeline

- **23 March 1991:** 100 fighters invade Sierra Leone from Liberia under RUF leadership.
- **May 1991:** RUF officially launches war against farmers and villagers.
- **September 1991:** New constitution providing for multiparty system adopted.
- **29 April 1992:** President Momoh ousted in a coup by government soldiers. National Provisional Ruling Council, led by Captain Valentine Strasser, heads government and announces elections will be held.
- **March 1993:** Two battalions of Nigerian troops are moved from Monrovia to Freetown to assist Strasser. Nigerian Alpha jets are based in Freetown for bombing raids against Charles Taylor's NPFL.
- **September 1994:** Nigeria and Sierra Leone enter into a Mutual Defense Pact.
- **6 January 1995:** Strasser offers the RUF a six-point peace plan, threatening increased military action should the plan be refused.
- **10 January 1995:** A delegation of civil society representatives arrives in Liberia for discussions with RUF representatives.
- **1 February 1995:** The NPRC requests the International Committee of the Red Cross to arrange a meeting with the RUF. RUF advances onto Freetown.
- **March 1995:** Strasser enters into a contract with Executive Outcomes (EO) to provide security assistance and to train the Sierra Leone Army. EO also begin to work with and train the Kamajors.
- **27 April 1995:** Strasser lifts the ban on political parties and offers amnesty to the RUF.

7.1 The 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord

- **16 January 1996:** Strasser ousted in military coup by his defense minister, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio. Bio initiates peace negotiations with RUF and promises to hold elections on time.
- **25 February 1996:** Talks begin between RUF and Government of Sierra Leone. RUF insists it will not recognize results of election scheduled for 26-27 February. Two-month ceasefire and future negotiations in a third country are agreed upon.
- **26-27 February 1996:** Presidential and legislative elections held. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah elected president. No voting takes place in rebel-controlled areas, and less than one-quarter of total populace votes. Kabbah appoints former Kamajor leader Hinga Norman as deputy minister of defense. Executive Outcomes continue to train Kamajors.
- **25-26 March 1996:** Bio, representatives of Kabbah, and Sankoh meet in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire to discuss. Ceasefire reaffirmed, as is an agreement to deliver humanitarian supplies to RUF-controlled areas. Sankoh agrees to meet with government in the future to continue talks.
- **29 March 1996:** Kabbah is sworn in as president.
- **22 April 1996:** Talks between Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) and RUF begin in Yamoussoukro, Côte d'Ivoire.
- **23 April 1996:** Kabbah and Sankoh agree on indefinite cease-fire.

- **6 to 28 May 1996:** Three working groups meet in Abidjan and draft peace agreement.
- **29 May 1996:** Negotiations over peace agreement suspended over issue of whether Executive Outcomes and other foreign forces should withdraw.
- **July 1996:** Government announces plan to reduce size of the army as well as its rice rations and pension benefits; army discontent increases.
- **August 1996:** Nigerian and Executive Outcomes attack the RUF to put pressure on it. International Alert (London-based NGO) tries to renew negotiations between Kabbah and the RUF in Côte d'Ivoire.
- **September 1996:** Kabbah is forced to renegotiate the Executive Outcomes fee due to outstanding money owed to EO.
- **9 September 1996:** Coup attempt against Kabbah thwarted. Major Johnny Paul Koroma is arrested.
- **13 September 1996:** Government orders retired soldiers to turn in their weapons.
- **16 September 1996:** Government approves Sankoh's request to return to Kailahun to consult his field commanders about the proposed peace agreement.
- **24 October 1996:** Kabbah and Sankoh meet in Abidjan with Ivoirian President Bedie.
- **15 November 1996:** Government agrees to grant amnesty to RUF fighters in the peace agreement.
- **30 November 1996:** Kabbah and Sankoh sign the Abidjan Peace Agreement.
- **18 December 1996:** Eleven people arrested for plotting second coup against government.
- **19 December 1996:** Commission for the Consolidation of Peace is formally launched in Freetown, with RUF members in attendance.
- **31 January 1997:** Executive Outcomes officially departs Sierra Leone. Cabinet is reshuffled and reduced from 26 to 18 ministries. The Commission for the Consolidation of Peace is unable to develop a disarmament plan because Sankoh fails to appoint RUF representatives to the disarmament and demobilization subcommittee. Peace process falters.
- **3 February 1997:** UNHCR begins repatriation of Sierra Leonean refugees from Liberia; last Executive Outcomes members depart Sierra Leone.
- **6 March 1997:** Sankoh secretly flies to Lagos, Nigeria to purchase arms. He is arrested at Lagos Airport for illegal possession of weapons and is imprisoned in Nigeria. Sankoh claims he was forced to sign the Abidjan Peace Agreement to relieve military pressure and that the Government did not honor the cease fire.
- **7 March 1997:** Nigeria and Sierra Leone renew their 1994 Mutual Defense Agreement.
- **15 March 1997:** RUF commander Philip Palmer announces a decision of some RUF members to remove Sankoh from RUF leadership on the radio. An internal RUF coup attempt fails when four coup leaders are arrested in Kailahun by field commander Sam Bockarie.
- **17 April 1997:** UK and Sierra Leone sign an agreement for British military training of two battalions of the Sierra Leone Army.
- **25 May 1997:** Group of junior army officers stage successful coup against Kabbah. Koroma is released from prison and assumes power as head of the ruling Armed

Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), who invite RUF to share power on 1 June (with Sankoh as vice chairman). Kabbah flees to Guinea to mobilize support while Koroma suspends the Constitution. British company Sandline International defies weapons embargo on Sierra Leone and provides weapons to Kabbah.

7.2 The 1997 ECOWAS Six Month Peace Plan

- **27 June 1997:** ECOWAS foreign ministers meeting in Conakry adopts three-point plan (encompassing dialogue, embargo, and force) to persuade the AFRC/RUF junta to step down. A Committee of Four (composed of the foreign ministers of Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Ghana) is appointed.
- **18-19 July 1997:** Committee of Four meets in Abidjan with AFRC/RUF representatives to try to negotiate a return to constitutional rule.
- **19 July 1997:** Negotiations collapse when Koroma (AFRC chairman) announces plans to stay in power until 2001. ECOWAS imposes embargo and naval blockade.
- **29 August 1997:** ECOWAS Heads of State Summit in Abuja adopts sanctions on petroleum products, arms imports and international travel ban on leaders of AFRC/RUF. Committee of Four is expanded to include Liberia. ECOMOG's official mandate is expanded to include Sierra Leone.
- **8 October 1997:** UN Security Council Resolution 1132 adopted, establishing an embargo on Sierra Leone for weapons and fuel.
- **23 October 1997:** The AFRC/RUF Alliance agrees to restore Kabbah to office within six months in negotiations in Conakry between AFRC/RUF and ECOWAS Committee of Five. Conakry Accords are signed.
- **9 December 1997:** ECOMOG, AFRC/RUF, and civil defense forces agree on fourteen-point disarmament plan.
- **18 January 1998:** Kamajors capture large diamond field from AFRC.
- **18 January through early February 1998:** ECOMOG enters Freetown and drives out RUF fighters in response to RUF attack on ECOMOG. AFRC / RUF alliance is forced from power and out of Freetown.
- **15 February 1998:** AFRC/RUF junta flees Freetown and Nigerian troops take control of the city.
- **10 March 1998:** Kabbah returns to Freetown and to power as President. UN Security Council terminates oil and arms embargo against Sierra Leone.
- **June 1998:** UN Security Council establishes the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) for a period six months. Fighting continues with AFRC/RUF alliance.

7.3 The 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement and Implementation

- **25 July 1998:** Sankoh is returned to Sierra Leone from Nigeria.
- **17 August 1998:** RUF announces it will launch a terror campaign against civilians should Sankoh remain in government custody.
- **23 October 1998:** Sankoh is sentenced to death for treason. The jury rejects Sankoh's argument that he was granted amnesty under the 1996 Abidjan Peace Agreement.

- **December 1999:** RUF begins advancing towards Freetown, gaining control over areas as they go, including diamond mining areas.
- **January 1999:** Members of RUF launch “Operation No Living Thing” on Freetown and seize parts of Freetown from ECOMOG. After weeks of fighting, RUF is driven out of Freetown by ECOMOG.
- **6 January 1999:** AFRC/RUF reenters Freetown by force.
- **January through March 1999:** Kabbah and Sankoh meet regularly to discuss resolving the conflict. Others meet with Sankoh to convince him to end the war; Sankoh accepts the legitimacy of the Kabbah government.
- **27 February 1999:** Elections in Nigeria; Olusegun Obasanjo elected. Domestic pressure in Nigeria mounts for Nigerian forces to be pulled out of Sierra Leone.
- **April 1999:** Sankoh is allowed to travel to Lomé for consultations with his commanders and associates on renewed negotiations.
- **7 April 1999:** National Consultative Conference held in Freetown.
- **25 April 1999:** AFRC/RUF alliance consults and prepares for Lomé talks.
- **18 May 1999:** Ceasefire signed. Talks begin in Lomé, Togo for peace agreement.
- **25 May 1999:** Negotiations start on a new peace agreement. RUF demands a blanket amnesty and ten cabinet positions. The two sides agree to renew most of the provisions of the Abidjan Agreement, including the portions on demobilization and disarmament and the RUF’s transformation into a political party.
- **26 May 1999:** Direct talks between the Sierra Leone government and the RUF begin in Lomé.
- **5 June 1999:** In response to a raid on a Guinean town, the Guinean army sends in troops to Sierra Leone, killing members of the Sierra Leonean People’s Army, a break away faction of the RUF.
- **10 June 1999:** Several ministers threaten a cabinet revolt if President Kabbah agrees to RUF demands for power sharing in a transitional government.
- **26 June 1999:** An RUF delegation leaves Lomé for Sierra Leone to submit a draft peace agreement to RUF commanders on the ground.
- **1 July 1999:** Sankoh rejects initial peace agreement that provided only four ministerial and three deputy-ministerial cabinet posts to the RUF, but later agrees, possibly under pressure from Liberian President Charles Taylor.
- **7 July 1999:** Kabbah and Sankoh sign the Lomé Peace Agreement. RUF members receive government posts and assurances they will not be prosecuted for war crimes. Foday Sankoh becomes Vice President of the country and Minister in charge of diamond production as the head of the Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources, National Reconstruction and Development. However, the RUF does not disarm as stipulated in the peace agreement.
- **3 October 1999:** Sankoh returns to Freetown
- **August 1999:** West Side Boys run looting raids and abduct hundreds of civilians, including a UN delegation.
- **22 October 1999:** UN Security Council authorizes establishment of UNAMSIL and terminates UNOMSIL.
- **November and December 1999:** UN troops arrive to secure the peace agreement. ECOMOG troops are attacked outside of Freetown by the RUF.
- **April and May 2000:** UN forces come under attack from the RUF in the eastern part of the country. 500 UNAMSIL troops are kidnapped.

- **8 May 2000:** RUF closes in on Freetown. 800 British paratroopers are sent to Freetown to evacuate British citizens and help secure the airport for UN peacekeepers. RUF shoots dead civilians protesting outside the Freetown home of Foday Sankoh against RUF violations of ceasefire and peace agreement. RUF leader Foday Sankoh is arrested as a result, removed from his government posts (along with other RUF members), and is handed over to the British. Sankoh is indicted by the Special Court in Sierra Leone for crimes against humanity.
- **10 June 2000:** British team of military trainers and soldiers arrive in Freetown to provide security.
- **18 June 2000:** It is reported that the Liberian government has resupplied and reinforced RUF rebels in eastern Sierra Leone, preparing them to fight rather than allow the UN to take control of diamond-mining areas remaining under RUF control.
- **21 August 2000:** The RUF names General Issa Sesay to replace Foday Sankoh as head of the movement.
- **26 August 2000:** 11 British soldiers taken hostage in Freetown by West Side Boys.
- **September 2000:** British forces carry out successful operation to rescue British hostages.
- **10 November 2000:** Abuja ceasefire signed, but fighting continues. Guinean forces enter Sierra Leone and attack RUF bases from where attacks had been launched against Liberian dissidents in Guinea. RUF had also been raiding refugee camps in Guinea.
- **January 2001:** GoSL postpones presidential and parliamentary elections that were set for February/March because of continuing insecurity.
- **March 2001:** UN troops deploy peacefully in rebel-held territory.
- **May 2001:** Second Abuja agreement is signed to start DDR. Disarmament of RUF begins. British-trained Sierra Leonean Army starts deploying in rebel-held areas.
- **18 January 2002:** War is declared over by President Kabbah. UN declares disarmament complete and agrees to set up war crimes court.
- **May 2002:** Kabbah wins elections and his party (Sierra Leone People's Party, or SLPP) wins majority in Parliament. RUF political wing (RUF-P) fails to win a single seat in Parliament. Truth and Reconciliation Commission begins, as stipulated in the Lomé Agreement.
- **28 July 2002:** British troops leave Sierra Leone after completing their two-year mission to help end the civil war.
- **13 January 2003:** Small group of armed men try to break into the armoury in Freetown, including former AFRC leader Johnny Paul Koroma.
- **29 July 2003:** RUF leader Foday Sankoh dies in prison while waiting to be tried for war crimes.
- **February 2004:** Disarmament and rehabilitation of ex-combatants officially completed.
- **March 2004:** UN-backed war crimes tribunal opens to try senior militia leaders from all sides of the war.
- **May 2004:** First local elections held since the 1960's.
- **June 2004:** War crimes trials begin.
- **September 2004:** UN hands over control of security in capital to local forces.
- **December 2005:** UNAMSIL officially ends as a peacekeeping mission.



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