DIPLOFOUNDATION

UNIVERSITY OF MALTA

Governance and Conflict in the
Mano River Union (MRU) States
Sierra Leone a Case Study
1980 - 2011

MOMODU ADAMA WURIE

A Thesis submitted, to Diplo- Foundation, University of Malta in partial fulfillment

for the award of the degree of Master in Contemporary Diplomacy

June, 2012

DECLARATION

This thesis is my original work and has not been accepted for any academic qualification other than that of which it is now been submitted.

Signature:……………………………………. 　　　Date:…………………………………………

DEDICATION

This piece of work is dedicated to the loving memory of my late parents; Alhaji Abdulraman Wurie and Haja Zainab Kamara Wurie, (may their souls rest in perfect peace). A show of deep appreciation, especially my mother who strived hard to see me educated.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The objective of this study would not have been accomplished without the generous input and contributions made by certain individuals, groups, organizations and institutions during the period of rigorous academic work. It is inevitable that I would first and foremost register my unreserved thanks and appreciation to the Almighty God for enabling me to successfully complete this course.

My thanks and appreciation goes to professor Emeritus and retired Indian Diplomat, Ambassador Kishina Rana, without whose supervision and guidance this work would not have been brought to fruition. I am very grateful and indebted to him for his critical comments and innovative ideas which served as a source of inspiration for me to carry on with the work.

I also wish to thank the tutors and lecturers of DiploFoundation for the constant support I received from them, I am so grateful.
.
My sincere and heartfelt thanks and appreciation goes to Dr. Abubakar Kargbo, former lecturer, whose guidance and critical perception helped to shape my political thoughts, the result of which is this humble work.

I wish to express my sincere thanks and appreciation to Dr Mohamed Lahai Samura, Sierra Leone's former ambassador to Libya, who actually encouraged me to enroll for this program.

My thanks and appreciation also goes to Mr. Joseph Daugal, Sierra Leone Honorary Consul to Malta, who had also been instrumental during the period of my study. I am very grateful to him.

I must here pay tribute to the MRU Secretariat in Freetown for providing the necessary materials, which contributed immensely to the success of this work.

Finally, I would like to tender my unreserved thanks and appreciation to Sheriff Bah and Diana Marchesi, colleagues, who also made meaningful contribution to this research.

ABSTRACT

The MRU states (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) experienced more than two decades of bitter conflicts. With the exception of Guinea which was spared a full-scale civil war, the other three neighbouring MRU states went through violent civil conflicts which resulted in massive human suffering, social dislocation and the destruction of the region's economy.

Despite their different political backgrounds, MRU states came to share a similar political destiny characterized by bad governance which bred shared grievances and conflicts that resulted in shared catastrophic results across the sub-region. Bad governance, therefore, has been the major stumbling block to socio-economic growth and development in the sub-region.

Fanning the flames of the conflicts was years of poor diplomacy and foreign policy of leaders of the region whose eventual shift in policy approach became pivotal in resolving the conflicts.

The sustenance of current peace and stability in the sub-region requires an integrated approach in promoting democratic good governance, economic liberalization, substantive citizenship and strengthened state-civil relations.

MRU states must therefore collaborate with regional partners and the international community to consolidate democracy and bolster sub-regional integration and socio-economic growth and development.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AFL   Armed Forces of Liberia

APC   All People's Congress

AU   African Union

CIA   Central Intelligence Agency

CPE   Complex Political Emergency

ECOMOG   ECOWAS Monitoring Group

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

FAN   Forces Armés du Nord

FLGO   Forces de Libération du Grand Ouest

FPI   Front Populaire Ivoirien

HRW   Human Rights Watch

ICG   International Crisis Group

IMF   International Monetary Fund

ISU   Internal Security Unit

LURD   Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy

MJP	Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
MPCI	Mouvement Patriotique de le Côte d'Ivoire
MPIGO	Mouvement Populaire Ivoirien du Grand Ouest
MRU	Mano River Union
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
PDCI	Parti Démocratique de la Côte d'Ivoirien
PDG	Partie Democratique de Guinée
PRC	People's Redemption Council
RDA	Rassemblement Democratiqué Africain
RDR	Rassemblement De Républicains
RFDG	Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques de Guinée
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SSR	Security Sector Reform
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TWP	True Whig Party

ULIMO-K   United Liberation Movement for Democracy-Kromah

UN   United Nations

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNOWA   United Nations Office in West Africa

US   United States (of America)

INTRODUCTION

Background and Context

The MRU, a sub-regional grouping of four states in the West African region that share common socio-economic and cultural ties with each other, was at war with itself for almost two decades. The union derived its name from the Mano River which has its source in Guinea and splits between Liberia and Sierra Leone. It was established in 1973 as a Customs Union which involves a certain degree of cooperation particularly in the industrial sector. In October 1980, the Republic of Guinea was admitted as a member and Côte d'Ivoire joined the union in May 2008.

With the exception of Liberia, the other three MRU states were colonised by Britain and France respectively. Bad governance over the years, to a very large extent reduced the political space that would have promoted democratic good governance. Characterised by rampant corruption, centralisation of governance, marginalisation of the opposition, lack of freedom of the press and access to information, these states, with the exception of Guinea which was spared a full-scale civil war, experienced more than two decades of bitter intra state conflicts that resulted to rebellion. The result was massive human suffering, social dislocation, and the destruction of what was once a flourishing regional economy (Bangura, 2009, pp. 3 – 5).

Although events leading to the conflicts started in December 1989 in Liberia, March 1991 in Sierra Leone, and December 1999 in Côte d'Ivoire, however their root causes can be traced back to the inability of these states to promote good governance in their respective body politic. After independence, the new elite did not ensure the establishment of the necessary state institutions and

structures to promote better governance but instead practiced an authoritarian form of government that alienated the critical mass of their respective population.

However, another school of thought is of the view that these countries did not succeed in promoting better governance because they were dependent states whose economies were manipulated by the developed northern countries. These countries, it is argued have been very reluctant to ensure a new international economic order requested by the developing countries in the south. The fact remains that success of good governance is to a greater extent determined by the economy of a particular state.

If the respective countries in the sub-region that constitute the MRU had practiced good governance over the years, it could have been argued that the conflict in Liberia could have hardly had a negative spill over effect in neighbouring MRU states. Conflict was therefore bound to ensue and spill over because of the bad governance that characterised these states. Perhaps one conflict might be exploited to start another conflict elsewhere but that does not mean that there were no seeds of conflict sown as a result of the failure to promote better governance.

The conflicts in the MRU States had a socio-economic and political impact on Guinea. Socio-economically, Guinea had to host up to one and half million refugees from both countries and became a fertile ground for recruiting fighters (Solomon, 2004, pp. 3 − 4). Politically, it led to accusations and counter-accusations traded between Guinean and Liberian authorities over support for opposition dissidents which resulted to bloody cross-border raids into Guinean territories carried out by Liberia and supported by the Revolutionary United Front rebel forces (RUF) in Sierra Leone. Guinea retaliated by bombarding positions in both Sierra Leone and Liberia along their common borders, thereby embroiling the country into a Mano River War.

As conflicts consumed the MRU region for more than two decades, the union's aspirations of economic cooperation had become that of competition as revealed by the pattern of the conflicts.

Côte d'Ivoire initially served as a staging point for the destabilization of Liberia, while Liberia in turn exported terror to neighbouring Sierra Leone, Guinea and later back to Côte d'Ivoire; and both Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire much later became supporters of rebel forces that drove Charles Taylor out of power in Liberia (McGovern, 2008, p.1).

Statement of the Problem

Although Liberia was never colonized, however it had shared an amazing number of commonalities in bad governance with her three neighbouring MRU states before the outbreak of the conflicts that engulfed the sub-region. Prominent among them were: lack of an efficient delivery system; no respect for the rule of law and human rights; marginalization of minority groups; dominance of one tribe in the political system (tribalism); lack of free, fair and transparent elections; lack of decentralization of political power; little or no freedom of the press and access to information; weak or non-existent of separation of powers; weak private sector and civil society; security forces not under the control of the civilian government; and lack of gender parity (Sawyer, 2004, pp. 438 – 440).

The one-party system of governance which Africa's 'founding fathers' (the likes of Siaka Stevens, Sekoú Touré and Félix Houphouët-Boigny) embraced as the panacea for Africa's problems in the post-independence years of the 1960s, soon became a repressive tool of governance that alienated the masses and caused deep political conflicts. The results were civil wars which caused 'massive economic regression as well as humanitarian disasters, not only in the (MRU) countries themselves but in the surrounding sub regions, which also suffered from massive refugee flows, arms proliferation, and lost trading opportunities' (Cohen, 2000, p. 2).

Bad governance, which has over the years impacted the socio-economic and political spheres of the MRU States and led to civil wars that brought massive destruction of life and property, has been the major stumbling block to economic development in the MRU sub region.

Aims and Objectives

The major objective in this work is to relate the practice of bad governance to the emergence of intra-state conflicts, and to show how governance and mutual cooperation among the four MRU member states could be improved to ensure political stability and socio-economic development in the sub-region and beyond.

The aim is:

- to investigate why the MRU States resorted to bad governance;

- to analyse the governance environment in the MRU States and the mutual commonality

  of interest among member states; and

- to give a critical assessment of the role of the state in building the necessary democratic institutions and structures, including civil society by promoting good governance that will go a very long way to mitigating conflict and thereby ensure political stability and socio-economic development.

Hypothesis

That the intra-state conflicts that characterised the MRU States (Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone) over the years, have been by-products of bad governance practised by successive governments in their respective states.

This was achieved through the politics of exclusion and rampant corruption by state officials, courtesy of the one-party state where parliaments were either dissolved or turned into rubber stamps. Autocratic rule failed to guarantee the rule of law while ensuring inequitable development due to the mismanagement of public resources. The absence of accountability and transparency became the hallmarks of state failure.

This hypothesis seeks to prove among other things that good governance is not only the bedrock of political stability and socio-economic development, but also has a potential of mitigating conflict in any society, particularly in multi-ethnic societies such as those of the MRU States.

Scope and Limitation

The work will cover more than three decades (1980 – 2011) across four countries; a period that will ensure a critical analysis of the topic under review.

Literature might be problematic since there is very little research done on this topic. However, this will be remedied by extensive use of literature on the MRU member states, in addition to reports by institutions such as the TRC in Sierra Leone among others in the sub region.

Probable Significance of the Study

The importance of the study cannot be over-emphasised because it will among other things, identify elements that constitute the practice of bad governance on the part of the member states of the MRU and recommend ways of improving governance structures and thereby minimizing bad governance practices that had characterised these states under review. The study will also show the link between bad governance and intra-state conflict and thus will increase awareness of the need to practise democratic good governance that will lay down firm foundation for the socio-economic development of not only the MRU States but the wider region as a whole.

CHAPTER 1

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON GOVERNANCE IN THE MRU STATES

Introduction

The events under review in this study (1980 – 2011) have their sources in governance practices dating back to the colonial era. This chapter therefore traces some historical background on governance that shaped the pattern of post-independence politics in three of the four MRU member countries. While Britain's system of 'Indirect Rule' in her former colonies differed from that of France's policy of 'Assimilation', both systems however left a shared legacy that influenced post-colonial politics in both Anglophone and Francophone West Africa (Nelson, 2003, p. 3).

Liberia does not share the colonial legacy with her three neighboring MRU states. However, the practice of minority rule for almost a century and a half in Africa's oldest republic left a similar legacy with related outcomes.

This historical perspective on governance explores how the four MRU member countries, though coming from different political backgrounds, came to share a similar political destiny characterized by shared grievances and conflicts which resulted to shared catastrophic results across the sub-region (Sawyer, 2004, p. 444).

LIBERIA: Reign of the Oligarchs

Unlike neighboring Guinea, Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire which went under colonial rule, Liberia was never colonized. The country became an independent sovereign state on July 26, 1847 following the resettlement of liberated Black American slaves in its coastal region in the 1820s.

Comprising only five percent of the population, the Americo-Liberian settlers monopolized power and suppressed the indigenous inhabitants, whom they had met on the land, creating a settler-dominated social order. Such an unequal relationship which marginalized the indigenes in the distribution of political power and economic resources created deep-rooted resentment among native Liberians (Outram, 2012, p. 699).

The TWP formed in 1870 became the symbol of political control and domination for almost a century and a half. Aided by the Christian churches and the Masonic Order, this minority settler elite became the dominant force that controlled the political and socio-economic fabric of Liberian society. Under the repressive regime of President William Tubman, the ethno-linguistic gulf between the settlers and the natives widened as indigenous ethnic tribes became more marginalized while Americo-Liberians entrenched themselves in a virtual monopoly of power over state institutions (Conteh-Morgan *et al*, 1995, pp. 7 – 9).

A National Unification Policy was introduced in the 1940s with the aim of addressing the growing rift between the two polarized communities. However, hopes of national integration were short-lived as constitutional amendments made on the voting rights of women and indigenous ethnic groups were limited to only owners of real estate or other property, thereby disenfranchising the majority of the indigenous people. The failure of the policy in addressing the political and socio-economic disparities between the settler elite and indigenous Liberians increased the resentment and internal discontent (Conteh-Morgan *et al*, 1995, pp. 7 – 9).

The authoritarian rule of William R. Tolbert who succeeded Tubman following his death in office in 1971 was characterized by widespread mismanagement, favoritism and massive corruption. His unpopular economic reforms in the face of the economic difficulties of the 70s which saw a sharp rise in the price of rice, the staple, became unbearable and led to a mass protest that culminated into the 'rice riots' of 1979. The riots were crushed by Guinean troops who intervened from neighboring Guinea at the request of Tolbert. The grievances manifested in those riots galvanized nation-wide

support in redressing the ethnic balance in the political system, which resulted to the military takeover of power a year later.

The coup d'état of 20th April 1980, led by Master-Sergeant Samuel Kayan Doe, an indigenous Liberian resulted in the death of Tolbert and 13 other senior members of his government, bringing to an end the 140-year reign of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy.

GUINEA: Socialism that never was

Post-colonial governance in Guinea evolved from a highly centralized system of French colonial administration, characterized by repression and a policy of 'assimilation'. While the former was aimed at dismantling existing indigenous tribal administrative structures, the latter qualified a tiny minority of Africans to become French citizens. The choice for French colonies was between attaining internal self-governance, while France retains foreign policy and defence, or total independence and cutting off all ties to France.

Guinea under the PDG and its charismatic leader, Ahmed Sekou Toure, who had been in the forefront of anti-colonial rule strikes in the 1950s through the RDA (an umbrella political party representing all sub-Saharan French colonies), opted for total independence from France. Declaring his country's independence in 1958, Toure said: 'We prefer poverty in freedom to wealth in slavery'. True to their word, the French did not just leave Guinea taking away with them everything French; they also cut off all economic ties with the newly-independent nation (Malinga, 1985, pp. 56 – 64).

On assuming the mantle of leadership, Toure embarked on a series of revolutionary policies based on a Marxist ideology which saw him nationalizing foreign companies and appropriating farmland from traditional landlords. In his drive to turn Guinea into an African Socialism, Tourè adopted 'from Marxism everything that is true for Africa' while rejecting 'the principle of the class struggle' as not relevant to Africa. According to him, a 'democratic nation' is 'one in which the programme

of work, the power it exercises, are determined not by the interests of a class, of a fraction of the people, but exclusively by the interests of the people in its entirety' (Leslie, 1960, pp. 15 – 19).

Little did he realize that, true socialism cannot be built without resources and a working class. Tourè's African Socialism soon became a single-party dictatorship over which he presided as an autocrat. Co-opting trade unions and outlawing strikes, Tourè's regime ruthlessly suppressed free expression and political opposition by using state terror and a network of informant apparatus which saw the imprisonment, torture and execution of thousands of people with dissenting views. Thousands others were forced to flee.

Toure's failed policies to Africanize Marxism became evident in the collapse of the economy. His favouritism of his Mandingo tribesmen while denouncing members of the Fula ethnic group (the largest in the country) as hostile to his regime did not help matters. Widespread persecution of Fulas led to mass arrests, detentions and deaths while many others were forced to go into exile.

The 1977 riots saw the liberalization of commerce, a major reversal of economic policy which marked the beginning of the end of a socialism that never really was, and the rebirth of a free-market capitalist economy.

At his death in 1984, Sekou Toure's 26-year dictatorial repressive rule left Guinea heavily indebted and impoverished.

COTE D'IVOIRE: 'Houphouëtism'[1]

The history of Côte d'Ivoire as a sovereign state is rooted around the personality of one man, Felix Houphouët-Boigny, whose dominance over the affairs of that country could be traced to the mid-1940s when he became an elected member of the French National Assembly and founding father of the PDCI. From the country's independence in 1960 to his death in office in 1993, Houphouöt-

---

[1] This is a kind of Pan-Africanism promoted by the country's founding father, Felix Houphouët-Boigny.

Boigny was the epicenter of political life in a country lacking political opposition and strong governance institutions.

Wielding wide-ranging powers, Houphouët-Boigny dictated the make-up of all governance institutions including the Supreme Court, army, national assembly and other state decision-making bodies. The absence of democratic governance principles in his rule cemented his 'father-figure' status of the nation which enabled him to consolidate his hold on to power.

Under the reign of Houphouët-Boigny, Ivoirians across the ethno-regional divide were co-opted in the PDCI and offered positions in various government institutions and provided with 'financial resources and different kinds of services in return for electoral and political support' (Diallo, 2005, pp. 6 – 7). That Côte d'Ivoire, under 'Houphouëtism' enjoyed relative political stability and economic prosperity amidst an often-troubled West African sub-region, is hardly disputed (McGovern, 2011, p. 103).

At his death in 1993, Houphouët-Boigny's personalization of politics which deprived the nation of the much-needed institutions of governance meant to ensure democratic transfer of power and political stability, created a succession conflict that resulted to the polarization of the nation.

That event became indicative of the theory that, 'states whose legitimacy is based on the charisma of an individual are bound to disintegrate when they go' (Akindés, 2003, p. 23). The display of managerial skills in maintaining social balance while ensuring economic prosperity in a multi-ethnic and diverse Côte d'Ivoire could have left the name Felix Houphouët-Boigny, etched on the plinth of the continent's state and democracy builders; but for his 'monolithic political policies' which excluded democratic governance institutions whose absence became factors of state collapse and a complete reversal of decades of his economic gains (Kamara, 2005, p. 3).

SIERRA LEONE: Patrimonial Rule

Modern Sierra Leone was founded as a settlement for freed slaves in 1787 and became a British Crown Colony in 1808 with the appointment of a governor whose rule later extended to the hinterland, annexed as British Protectorate in 1896. The colony which covered the Freetown Peninsula area was made up of the Creoles, comprising repatriated slaves from the United Kingdom, Nova Scotia, Jamaica and others from freed slave ships (recaptives). The Protectorate included indigenous ethnic groups, majority of which are the Themne of the northern region and the Mende in the south and eastern parts of the country. The Creoles established a highly educated and elitist society made up of professionals in law, medicine, teaching, commerce and the clergy which formed the bulk of the civil service in the British colonial territories of West Africa (Hirsch, 2001, p. 23).

Thanks to such control over colonial bureaucracy and commerce, the Creoles developed an attitude of superiority over indigenous Sierra Leoneans whom they regarded to be 'uncivilized' and thus, Creoles' unwillingness to participate with the natives in the political process of the country (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 2003, p. 129).

The 1924 Constitution which paved the way for the direct participation of the indigenes in political power altered the landscape of colonial politics and heightened political tension between a growing Protectorate population and a diminishing Creole minority. The Creoles became subdued at about the time of the country attaining independence in 1961. However, colonial ethnic animosities between the two communities which had already created a mind-set, took a sharp turn in polarizing the Protectorate along tribal lines between the two major ethnic groups who came to see 'politics as a contest in which the objective was to seize control of the state and use it for the good of one's ethnic group' (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 2003, p. 129).

This was reflected in the formation of the two main political parties: the SLPP which was Mende-dominated, and the predominantly-Themne APC, a pattern which remains true to this day. However, the first post-colonial SLPP Government of Sir Milton Margai (the first Prime Minister, and a Mende) did bridge the tribal gaps by forming an all-inclusive government made up of all major ethnic groups including the Creoles (Gberie, 1997, pp. 45 – 46).

However, to the dismay of many northerners within the SLPP, Sir Milton's death in 1964 saw power being transferred to his brother Sir Albert Margai, bypassing John Kerefa-Smart, a northerner and senior SLPP member widely expected to have succeeded Sir Milton. Kerefa-Smart would subsequently be dismissed from the SLPP Government.

Sir Albert's policy of favouring his Mende tribesmen in top civil service appointments played neatly into the hands of the northern APC opposition which had always accused the SLPP of promoting 'Mende hegemony'. His attempt to turn the nation into a one-party state was however cut short by the 1967 polls in which the SLPP lost to the APC, thanks to an inherited British-style democracy characterized by the rule of law with a vibrant opposition, and a functioning parliament. Although it was not until a year later that the victorious APC was allowed to assume office, that landmark event however demonstrated the height of democratic governance attained by the populace in maintaining a pluralistic political system amidst the threat of authoritarianism (Sesay, 2007, p. 9).

On assuming power, the APC under its leader Siaka Stevens formed a government of 'National Coalition' which included SLPP members. The coalition government was however dismantled shortly after its formation, only to be replaced with an all-APC government. The country adopted a Republican Constitution in 1971 in which Stevens made himself an executive president. In 1973, it was transformed into a *de facto* one-party state, and by 1978, a *de jure* one-party state; events that solidified the position of his party in government. What to follow next were 17 years of misrule

with the institutionalizing of a 'staggeringly corrupt patrimonial system' where patronage to loyal clients were dished out to ensure political continuity (Adebajo, 2002, p. 81).

By the early 80s, such patrimonial rewards were dwindling due to the weakening state of the economy. Anticipating the effects it was bound to have on his power base, Stevens in 1985 decided to pass on the mantle of leadership to his hand-picked successor, Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh. Inheriting a nation whose 'kitty is empty' means putting the patron-client relationship under enormous strain as there were very limited favours the new regime could offer in exchange for electoral support. The result was a massive loss of support which set in motion a chain reaction that led to the disintegration of governance structures and eventual state collapse (Sesay, 2007, p. 11).

Despite their different colonial systems of governance, post-independent MRU States shared a similar pattern of governance which left a shared legacy of marginalization characterized by years of repressive one-party dictatorship. Such authoritarian regimes produced a generation engulfed in deep-seated resentment and grievances among people pitted against one another along ethno-tribal lines across the MRU region.

It could be argued that bad governance was characteristic of most African states immediately after independence because of the influence of the African Socialist philosophy propounded by African leaders such as, Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, Ahmed Sekou Tourè of Guinea, Julius Nyerere of Tanzania, Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, Milton Obote of Uganda just to catalogue a few. The new African elites immediately after independence thought that socialism was an alternative to competitive liberal politics. Socialism however, did not become the panacea to solving the problems of the African continent; rather it further led to bad governance and underdevelopment. How such a pattern of bad governance bred conflicts that devastated the sub-region will be discussed in the next chapter which seeks to analyze a review of literature on how state failure is inextricably linked with conflict.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

Several analysts have examined the root causes of the conflicts in the four member states of the MRU. This includes Kaplan who has taken an afro-pessimistic approach while Collier has focused on 'greed'-driven economic wars (Kaplan, 1994, pp. 44 – 76; Collier, 2006, p. 22). What emerged as a general consensus at the end however is the issue of bad governance as the crucial factor that characterised the states under review.

What is the nexus between governance and conflict, in other words, how could violent conflict become a product of bad governance? The answer to this question forms the basis of this chapter on related literature review that seeks to give a critical theoretical analysis of the nexus between governance and conflict as posited by various authors on the issue.

We may first look at the concept of governance, so as to get a holistic picture of the key elements that might have been absent to form the basis for conflict relations within the MRU States.

Good Governance and Conflict

In addressing the issue of governance, the 1989 World Bank Report on Africa stated that 'underlying the litany of Africa's development problem is a crisis of governance'. According to the World Bank definition, good governance is 'the exercise of political power to manage a nation's affairs' (World Bank, 1989, pp. 60 – 61).

Good governance includes among others, an efficient public service and independent judiciary system and legal framework to enhance contract, the accountable administration of public funds, an independent public auditor responsible to a representative legislature, respect for the rule of law and human rights at all levels of government, a vibrant civil society, pluralistic institutional structure, a free press, elimination of corruption etc (World Bank, 1989, pp. 60 – 61).

In his paper titled 'Governance, Democracy and Development in the Third world', Adrian Leftwich argues that concrete democratic good governance has three main components or levels ranging from the most to the least: Systemic, Political and Administrative.

From the systemic point of view, governance as a concept is wider than that of government, which conventionally refers to the formal institutional structure, and location of authoritative decision-making in the modern state. Governance, on the other hand, refers to a looser and wider distribution of both internal and external political and economic power. Governance thus denotes the structures of political and crucially economic relationships and rules by which the productive and distributive life of society is governed. In short, it refers to a system of political and socio-economic relations or, more closely, a regime.

In the political sense however, good governance implies a state enjoying both legitimacy and authority derived from a democratic mandate and built on the traditional liberal notion of a clear separation of legislative, executive and judicial powers. And whether presidential or parliamentary, federal or unitary, it would normally, involve a pluralist policy characterized by a freely representative legislature, subject to regular elections with the capacity at the very least to influence and check executive power and protect human rights.

From a narrow administrative point of view, good governance means an efficient, open, accountable and audited public service which has the bureaucratic competence to help design and implement

appropriate policies and manage whatever public sector there is. It also entails an independent judicial system to uphold the law and resolve disputes arising in a largely free market economy.

According to Mark Malloch Brown, governance is recognised as a bedrock issue of development. Without transparency and accountability and the capacity to develop the policies and laws to enable a country to manage its markets and political life in an open but just way, development is not possible. Beyond the hardware of governance institutions and legal frameworks governments must get this software right. This is perhaps the trickiest business, as examination of government policies and executions would attest to the fact that often policies based on the best of intentions will prove counterproductive. And with the forces of globalization bearing down on government from above, and society increasingly bearing up from below, even the strongest of governments are showing signs of stress (Brown, 1999, p. 4).

In his article titled 'Good Governance: A Path to Poverty Eradication', Cheema defines governance as a set of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages economic, political and social processes at all levels through interaction among the government, civil society and private sector. It is a way in which a society achieves mutual understanding, agreement and action. Governance comprised the mechanisms and processes through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, indicate their differences and exercise their legal rights and obligations (Cheema, 1994, p. 4).

Governance

Governance as a political concept has been treated by academics in the fields of political science and public administration since the 1960s. These academics pose fundamental questions about the legitimacy and effectiveness of a political system. Does it effectively solve the problems that modern political systems are to solve? How democratic is its decision making procedures? How democratic and inclusive can they be? The literature often takes a normative approach to assess the

capacity and ability of different levels of government whether it is local, regional and national to govern effectively and democratically.

What is meant by Governance?

The term governance describes the process whereby elements in society i.e. institutions and civil society wield power and authority and influence and enact policies and decisions concerning public life and socio-economic development. At the heart of the concept of governance is the construction of effective, accountable and legitimate governing arrangements within the diverse institutional setting of the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Although the term governance means different things to different people, many authors and commentators have given different definitions of governance. Among these definitions, the Asian Development Bank leans towards adopting governance as centred on 'the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development' (McCawley, 2005, p. 2).

This concept of governance includes accountability for economic and financial performance, and regulatory frameworks relating to companies, corporations and partnership. In other words, governance is about the institutional environment in which citizens interact among themselves and with government agencies to sort out their social, economic and political concerns within a system.

Creating an enabling environment characterized by good governance is crucial for a country's socio-economic development as national economic policies are tied to governance. Hence it could be argued that the quality of governance is to a very large extent a determinant factor that will enable governments to have the capability to implement effectively the policies they have chosen.

If the standards of government are poor, setting policies right will not be sufficient for successful development. On the other hand even if the policies of government are right, without adequate good governance practice, growth and development will definitely elude the populace. Improving governance or sound development management remains crucial for all governments, institutions and organizations.

It is perhaps, for the above issue that the Bank is focused on the key elements of an effective and efficient delivery system. That is to say, for any sound economic policies to be successfully implemented in a country, such policies must be underpinned by equally sound governance practices. This primarily concerns norms of behaviour that help ensure that governments do not only actually deliver to their citizens on promises made but also fulfil their commitments to international financial institutions. Good governance includes moral and ethical principles that will influence those in power to conduct government businesses in the most transparent manner.

It could be argued that there is perhaps no direct correlation between the political system of government on the one hand and rapid economic growth and socio-economic development on the other, since successful development has taken place in various countries with different level of growth and political systems (Ellis, 1996, p. 262).

In a blog posting, Herbert (2007) argues that such 'high-performing economies' are characterized by 'stability in broad policy directions, flexibility in responding to market signals, and discipline in sticking with measures necessary for meeting long-term objectives despite short term difficulties'.

The importance of democracy and good governance in any polity cannot therefore be overemphasized, as Budge and Hans Keman put it, a central democratic self-justification is that system that makes the state more responsive to the wishes of the people, and gives them the opportunity to change rulers if they so desire. This could be done through direct or indirect democracy, the latter characterized by regular election in which the citizens can choose between

competing candidates for Government office (Budge *et al*., 1993, p. 5). The beauty of democracy lies in the ability for the masses to change leadership as and when it is scheduled or when deemed necessary through a laid down process.

In general terms, governance is therefore about providing opportunities and environment for the citizens to actively participate in the affairs that concern their well-being, giving their views without restrains in the running of public affairs while abiding by laid down rules, policies, guidelines and procedures. However, the effective implementation of such policies largely depends on the level of governance credentials found within a country. To Herbert (2007) 'Hence, "getting policies right" may not, by itself, be sufficient for successful development, if standards of governance are poor'.

It therefore stands to reason that promoting sound governance principles becomes vital in achieving national development goals. The capacity of the government to develop institutions that could adequately address governance issues is a necessity for all developing countries and of much importance is following the rules, policies, guidelines and procedures so developed in order to develop a system of monitoring and control.

Although the establishment of good governance policies is necessary for development, nevertheless, focus should also be given on the application and effectiveness of good management principles. The policies may be well developed and created, the same template may be given to all developing counties (though differences in background and resources noted), application and result will definitely differ.

What makes the difference is the degree of application of good management principles, in other words, the elements of good governance. Therefore concerns are always placed on applicability of the elements of good governance and not on the existence of the policies.

The solution sought for developing countries as far as socio-economic development is concerned, is for the developed economies to help ensure that the elements of good governance are strictly adhered to, without which development is not foreseen in the near future.

This is contrary to what has been happening in most African countries, where ruling parties continue to rule by fair or foul means. Even in these countries that have successfully gone through fair electoral processes, the expected dividend will only be obtained if the elements of good governance are followed by viable public institutions.

At regional level, the experience so far, especially within the West African region, according to Herbert (2007) 'does not establish any direct correlation between the political environment, on the one hand, and rapid socio-economic growth and development, on the other'. Although it is argued that Ghana has been steadily forging ahead over these years as a result of its relatively conducive political environment, however this does not mean that good governance has been fully achieved, for it is a process.

During the period under review the MRU states were guilty of bad governance, such as one party system of governance as practiced in Liberia under the TWP, Sierra Leone under the APC from 1968-1992, and in Guinea under both Sekou Tourè and Lansana Contè. The situation was also compounded by state failure to deliver basic needs which in the case of Liberia led to the Doe coup precipitated by the 'rice riots' of 1979. In Guinea, several popular 'economic uprisings' were brutally suppressed by the gendarmerie. Côte d'Ivoire's 'governance of exclusion' created as a result of the failure to open the political space to allow equal participation led to a rebellion. In Sierra Leone, it resulted to 11 years of war.

Focusing on Sierra Leone as a case study, the next section of this review will touch on varying misconceptions about the causes of the war in that country, in an attempt to get into the heart of the

matter of how failing governance institutions sowed the seeds of resentment which later produced the fruit of rebellion.

Nexus between Governance and Conflict

The nexus between governance and conflict has been established by several authors including HO-Won Jeong. Since the creation of the state is to among other things, ensure participation in the decision making process, promote security of its citizens etc., state failure to ensure participation, promotion of security and delivery of basic needs to its citizens, such as access to health, education, job opportunities, shelter, infrastructure, etc will lead to frustrations and subsequently to conflict. It will be otherwise if a state promotes the provision of the basic needs of its citizens which will go a very long way to mitigating conflict.

Post-independence governance in Africa enjoyed a monopoly of power under one-party rule in relative peace and stability in the decades following the attainment of self-rule. That was before armed movements emerged to wrestle for political power, with Hissen Habré's FAN in Chad in 1979 setting the pace that was to be followed by others. By the 1990s, armed insurrections had toppled incumbent governments in several African countries (Clapham, 1998, p. 4).

What are the origins of such a phenomenon in the politics of modern Africa?

Conflict, according to Goodhand and Hulme, is 'a struggle between individuals or collectivities over values or claims to status, power and scarce resources in which the aims of the conflicting parties are to assert their values or claims over those of others' (Goodhand and Hulme, 1999, p. 14). To Douma, the 'intrinsic and inevitable aspect' of conflict is part of human nature (Douma, 2004, p. 8) that is deeply rooted in societal norms and thus cannot be regarded as separate from 'ongoing political and social processes' (Goodhand, 2001, p. 7).

Conflicts are not necessarily violent as they can be managed through mediation and negotiations in resolving the elements that created them. However when ignored or mismanaged, conflicts can escalate and become violent.

The pattern of conflicts which has over the years shifted from interstate to intrastate, has given rise to CPEs combining both 'transnational and internal' features of warfare to form what Goodhand refers to as 'hybrid conflicts' (Goodhand, 2001, p. 7). The complexities of CPEs lie in the formative ideologies of armed insurgencies created along radicalized religious and ethno-political agendas, with their *modi operandi* in terrorizing civilians who make up the bulk of war casualties.

In Africa, the emergence of CPEs could be linked to weak and failing states characterized by predation and abuse of power. Such predatory and abusive power created a history of oppression and exploitation that gave way to armed struggles, sometimes out of sheer desperation. As Christopher Clapham puts it: 'only extreme conditions are likely to induce people to attempt anything as risky and costly as guerrilla warfare.' In dividing African insurgencies into four broad categories (liberation, separatist, reform and warlord), Clapham argues that 'blocked political aspirations', a feature of all insurgencies, found a place in the advent of multi-party democracy which frown upon one-party dictatorship, regarded as the cause of Africa's governance problems. As governance failure gave way to state collapse, insurgencies emerged 'as the authentic expression of popular alienation' (Clapham, 1998, p. 4).

However, to the economist Paul Collier, such rebellions are nothing such of 'the ultimate manifestation of organised crime' driven by greed and predation (Collier, 2006, p. 3), building on a point made by Grossman who opined that 'in such insurrections the insurgents are indistinguishable from bandits or pirates' (Grossman 1999, p. 269).

One school of thought also relate the root causes of conflict to vicious Cold War era Superpower competition whose strategies became very instrumental in starting conflicts as Abdalla Bujra pointed out:

> The rivalry and competition took various forms: supporting governments, overthrowing Governments, supporting/opposing political parties, covert activities in support or opposition of one super-power or another was a very powerful force in the political survival or demise of an African government (Bujra, 2002, p. 9).

Another argument is one that links the cause of conflict to natural resources in relation to environmental degradation and over-population, which gives rise to 'environmentally driven praetorian regimes' (Kaplan, 1994, pp. 44 – 76).

However as argued by Andrea Edoardo Varisco, armed insurgencies in a country have very little to do with the presence or absence of natural resources:

> Countries like Norway and Botswana are peaceful states with abundance of natural resources, conversely Sierra Leone or the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) are countries rich of natural resources which experienced armed conflicts. On the other hand, Japan is a peaceful state whose wealth completely relies on foreign natural resources, while Haiti and Uganda are countries deficient in natural resources that experienced armed conflicts (Varisco, 2010, p. 41).

Collier's 'organized crime' theory of rebellion, like others, misses the base of the argument: governance failure results to the collapse of state institutions including the security apparatus which incubates all sorts of rebellion, 'organized crime' inclusive. The issue therefore is not only about the outcome of rebellions but rather their causes which are deeply rooted in governance structures.

A Case of Misconceptions

It has been argued that lack of adequate understanding of the origins of the Sierra Leone conflict led to the wrong diagnosis of its root causes which hampered efforts in resolving it. Widespread misconceptions about the fundamental causes of the war have been centred on theories of resource

warfare driven by greed not grievances, as well as other arguments on new barbarism, and revenge. While some of them might have had a part in prolonging the war, however, its root causes could be found elsewhere as this section will show.

The huge presence of alluvial diamonds in Sierra Leone may tend to give credence to the resource-driven warfare theory as the root cause of the war; an argument supported by Johan Galtung who believes that 'wars are often fought over resources' (Varisco, 2010, pp. 41 – 42). Varisco on the other hand argued that for such resources to become a cause of war, they must be 'lootable, distant and diffuse'.

Therefore

> a country with a high presence of alluvial diamonds should experience numerous wars and conflicts. Statistical data seem to confirm this expectation: countries with secondary diamonds production for example are more prone to experience an outbreak of a civil war, their risk of having a conflict increases by 85%, and their probability of ethnic wars by more than 200%. Angola, Sierra Leone and many other countries can be considered good examples confirming this trend (Varisco, 2010, p. 43).

This background feeds on the 'greed' argument emphasized by Collier who dismisses outright the role of grievance as a cause of war. To him, Sierra Leone is a classic example to prove his theory that armed uprisings are nurtured not out of the desire for political power, but rather for purely economic gains.

> When the main grievances – inequality, political repression, and ethnic and religious divisions – are measured objectively, they provide no explanatory power in predicting rebellion. These objective grievances and hatreds simply cannot usually be the cause of violent conflict. They may well generate intense political conflict, but such conflict does not usually escalate to violent conflict (Collier, 2006, p. 22).

Collier's emphatic view on economic motives as the primary cause of the war is rather simplistic. The importance of diamonds in fuelling and perpetuating the war cannot be over-emphasized. However, to see the war wholly in this light, while 'de-legitimising grievance' and 'dismissing every rebellion as the work of criminals' is way off the point (Keen, 2002, p. 1).

If Collier's argument is anything to go by, then every country with easily extractable natural resources should be fighting. As this is not the case, it therefore stands to reason that his 'greed not grievance' discourse ignored the fundamental background conditions which reveal why a country endowed with natural resources would go to war while another with the same amount of resources would not. Such a weakness therefore makes Collier's argument short-sighted in understanding the primary motives and timing of the Sierra Leone war.

In the same vein, Hirsch described 'Sierra Leone's misfortune' to mean 'diamonds' which he believed were 'a major factor of war' (Hirsch, 2001, p. 25); a point reechoed by Keen who labeled the country 'unlucky' in possessing 'very valuable' alluvial diamonds (Keen, 2005, p. 8).

Gberie takes the argument further to assert that the RUF had no political desire for social justice but rather an obsession for the control of the diamond fields. 'Governance or democracy', was therefore 'not the issue' (Gberie, 2009, p. 82). However in an earlier work, Gberie had criticized Keen for suggesting exactly the same. Acknowledging that there was money to be made in resource-rich Sierra Leone, Gberie had however argued that for 'any serious money to be made out of resource exploitation', the RUF needed to control swathes of land for a long period of time. 'This they failed to do' (Gberie, 1997, p. iv).

Convinced of this fact seven years into the RUF incursion, one cannot help but question Gberie's explanation of 'exploitation of diamond' as the 'primary motivation' (Gberie, 2009, p. 82) of the rebellion especially after he had warned against dismissing the 'political motive of the insurgents' (Gberie, 1997, p. 145). One is therefore left wondering whether Gberie's u-turn analysis could have

been influenced by popular international policy responses to the so-called 'blood diamond' conflict. That diamonds fuelled and perpetuated the war is an undeniable fact, however to label them as the primary cause of the war is way off the point; a point that Gberie had written extensively in support of.

Kaplan's use of the Sierra Leone war to illustrate anarchy as a fact of life in his 'Coming Anarchy' article was a complete misguided conception as that war 'was not an enactment of violence for its own sake, nor does it demonstrate that Africans are, by nature, barbaric' (Kargbo, 2006, p. 27). This point became evident as the country successfully organized two nation-wide multi-party elections amidst the war.

Another misconception about the cause of the war is one attributed to Charles Taylor's NPFL incursion in Liberia. It is believed that the RUF incursion was a border war orchestrated by Taylor as a revenge on Sierra Leone for refusing him a base to launch his insurgency while allowing the country to be used as an ECOMOG base (Conteh-Morgan, 2006, p. 100). Such a notion though is far from the reality as the RUF invasion had been planned long before the Liberia insurgency of 1989. The so-called 'spill-over effect' is ascribed by some scholars to the existence of a mutual agreement reached between NPFL's Taylor and RUF's Sankoh in which the latter was to help the former in his rebellion in Liberia; a deal that was to be later reciprocated in Sierra Leone (Abdullah, 1998, pp. 220 – 1; Bundu, 2001, p. 50; Bangura, 2004, p. 17).

It is worth noting however that even if such a mutual pact had not existed between the two rebel leaders, the RUF insurgency would have still taken place. It is therefore a misconceived idea that the RUF incursion was exclusively a Charles Taylor-imposed war. His vital support in facilitating the progress of the war should not be interpreted to mean orchestrating it.

Heart of the Matter[2]

Having examined some of the misconceptions about the causes of the Sierra Leone war, this section will now explore how the breakdown of the elements of good governance constituted factors of state failure that became the root cause of the conflict. Put simply, it is bad governance resulting from leadership failure that is at the heart of the matter.

The situation is perhaps best expressed by Adebayo Adedeji, the former Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa who remarked that

> Civil wars and civil strifes are but violent reactions to the pervasive lack of
> democracy, the denial of human rights, the complete disregard of the
> sovereignty of the people, the lack of empowerment and accountability and,
> generally bad governance (Adebajo,2002, p. 15).

In Sierra Leone, bad governance revolved around a single-party authoritarian patronage system presided by Siaka Stevens and his APC party, and financed from 'kickbacks in mining concessions, diverting of taxes and foreign aid, and income from diamonds' which benefitted a tiny party elite (Brinkerhoff and Goldsmith, 2002, p. 18). The formal state was transformed into a 'shadow state' as it became deeply involved in extracting resources from the private sector. Leading an informal business network of both internal and external clients, Stevens and his cohorts benefitted enormously while alienating the rest of the population. William Reno argued that 'Stevens' failure to protect state power from private interests reinforced the notion of danger and chaos emanating from society' (Reno, 1995, p. 186).

The result was gradual disintegration of state institutions leading to eventual state collapse. The centralization of power under the Stevens regime which abolished local governments and stamped out all forms of political and civic opposition through state-managed violence, created a political

---

[2] This title differs from Smillie I *et al* (2000) The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Security. *Ottawa: Partnership Africa Canada*, which argued that the war was caused by 'the theft of Sierra Leone's diamonds', p. 2.

climate of repression which degenerated into revolutionary dissident activities to be transformed into a rebellion (Bangura, 2004, p. 29).

The country's economic difficulties of the 70s and 80s were exacerbated by rampant state corruption, economic mismanagement and embezzlement of public funds. Weak performance of the economic sector coupled with the effects of the 'shadow state' accelerated the decline of state institutions which also witnessed steep price increases in basic foodstuffs including rice, the country's staple. Amidst such collapse of state provision in the country, the great question of the day became 'how to survive on a daily basis in an increasingly precarious environment' (Kargbo, 2006, pp. 23 – 27).

The biggest driving force behind the Sierra Leone war was perhaps the combined exploitation and social exclusion of a largely uneducated and down-trodden youth population used as thugs by politicians in perpetrating organized violence against political opponents, only to be later dumped and be forgotten. That was, until the middle-class youth came on the scene to sow a 'culture of resistance' that changed the character and composition of 'youth-life'.

The new comers, mostly university students, became the voice of a betrayed and rejected youth crying for a change of single-party rule and endemic corruption. In an interview with David Keen, one such student who was also a former member of the Ghadafi's 'Green Book' study group said it all

> At elections, you hire youths, bring them to a constituency, drug them, go to polling
> station. Many of the hired youths will vote themselves, and some normal voters will
> be scared away. They would hire the youths, and then fire them after the election,
> with no provision, no education. Some were detained at Pademba Road [prison].
> Lots left and later regrouped. Lots of our leaders went to Libya to train with Foday
> Sankoh (Keen, 2005, p. 65).

Indeed, such 'radical students' who were expelled from university later found their way to Libya where they underwent military training and became the nucleus of the RUF insurgency. These disgruntled youths later returned to 'wreak vengeance on a state which they perceive as a source of their marginalization and despair' (Gberie, 1997, p. 145).

The notion that the Sierra Leone war was a result of greed over diamonds may be tempting in the midst of the economic difficulties which created political tensions in the country. However, such tensions could never have escalated into conflict if the country's existing governance institutions were firmly rooted in democratic principles of checks and balances. In its place instead was a one-man authoritarian rule which undermined such institutions of governance for personal power and wealth.

In summing up its findings on the causes of the conflict, the Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission concluded that, while there were many attending factors 'that explain the causes of the civil war', the heart of the matter however 'was years of bad governance, endemic corruption and the denial of basic human rights' (TRC, 2004, p. 2).

The Sierra Leone case is not unique in a region where an elite-based political system thriving on pervasive corruption, marginalization and repressive rule had been a key feature of governance since independence. Social exclusion created a 'crisis of youth' that made up the vast majority of rebel recruits in the wars of the Mano River region.

It could therefore be argued that the Mano River conflicts shared a commonality deeply rooted in bad governance practices centred on personality cult which repressed and excluded the mass majority of the populations across the region.

In Liberia, the recruitment of socially-excluded semi-illiterate urban youth into the AFL to replace the patrimonial military set the pace for state disintegration. The 'lumpen military youth' who were never transformed into a professional army later seized power in a coup détat that ushered in the

brutal regime of Samuel Kanyon Doe which became an instrument of state collapse (Sawyer, 2004, p. 443 – 4).

Endemic corruption and ethnic tensions inherited from the post-independence repressive regime of Sekou Tourè did not make Lansana Contè any better a leader in Guinea, following the death of Tourè. Contè's lack of commitment to democratic governance saw the imprisonment of opposition leader Alpha Conde in 1998 which triggered general unrest and culminated into dissident activities along the Guinea – Liberia – Sierra Leone border region in 2000 and 2001.

In Côte d'Ivoire, the succession crisis created by Felix Houphouët-Boigny's one-party authoritarian rule saw the emergence of the concept of 'Ivoiritè' which partitioned the country along the north – south tribal divide and resulted to a violent conflict. Some of the main protagonists of this conflict were the socially-excluded youthful combatants of the Young Patriots, Forces Nouvelles and other militia groups (Gibert; 2007, p. 12).

Inheriting a government whose institutions of state were to a large extent still rooted in democratic governance, the Stevens' regime in Sierra Leone had every opportunity to strengthen such institutions to ensure good governance. However, rather than improving governance, Stevens for a combination of reasons, chose to embark upon a path of state destruction to mirror governance pattern in the sub-region. How such a regime which enjoyed a leveled political playing field as an opposition came to embody the destruction of all democratic state institutions while in office, would be the topic of discussion in the next chapter, which will also examine how the effects of bad governance created a conducive environment for the wars of the MRU region.

CHAPTER THREE

MAKING REGIONAL WARRIORS

Introduction

A key demographic feature of the MRU states has been an exceptionally young population with significant percentages of the adult population between the ages of 15 and 24. This 'youth bulge' is meant to be a blessing in terms of an increased supply of labour in boosting the economy of a

nation, provided there is a functioning labour market with the capacity to absorb such labour supply. However, given the poor economic performance in a sub-region where endemic corruption and bad governance practices had weakened all institutions of governance especially in the economic sector, the youth bulge turned out to be a liability in the sub-region (Urdal, 2004, pp. 7 – 8).

In the report of the UN Secretary – General's High-Level Panel on Threats, Challenges and Change, an African woman is quoted asking: 'how have we let what should be our greatest asset, youth, become a threat to our security (UNOWA, 2005, p. 9)?'

The answer to that question is discussed in this chapter which seeks to analyse how serious governance failings in each MRU member state contributed in marginalizing the vast majority of their populations especially the youth who were left to 'languish in a twilight zone of unemployment and despair'. This condemnation to crippling poverty and hopelessness produced a climate of dissent which degenerated into armed rebellions across the sub-region (HRW, 2005, p. 63).

COTE D'IVOIRE: '*Ivoirité*'[3]

That immigrants played a key role in Côte d'Ivoire's post-independence massive economic growth is acknowledged by indigenous Ivoirians. The immigrant community, made up of West Africans particularly from the Sahel, first came to the country through forced migration organized by French colonial masters to be utilized as forced labour on cocoa and coffee plantations. Under Félix Houphouët-Boigny who saw integration as a key element of economic development, immigrants

---

[3] The term 'Ivoirité', which literally translates to 'Ivorianess', has a xenophobic connotation in its usage in differentiating between Ivoirians with native ancestry as opposed to those of migrant ancestry.

were given access to the land and later became landowners themselves under his popular slogan that 'the land belongs to the person who toils it' (Konate, 2005, p. 12).

Thanks to a booming agricultural sector, the policy attracted more immigrants who were welcomed to cultivate cocoa on unused land; a policy that brought prosperity to all as tax revenues from cocoa exports were used to create jobs in a public sector dominated by native Ivoirians. Houphouët-Boigny's politics of co-option, distribution and integration was instrumental in bringing together ethnically and linguistically heterogeneous groups with differing political, cultural and religious traditions. Côte d'Ivoire is composed of some 60 ethnic or language communities, divided into four major groups: the Northern Mandé, Southern Mandé, Kru and the Akan. These communities are further divided according to distinct environmental, economic, linguistic and cultural patterns into four groups of East Atlantic, comprising the Akan; the West Atlantic comprising the Kru; the Voltaic; and the Mandé (Konate, 2005, p. 2).

Despite the varying differences, the policies of Houphouët-Boigny were able to ease multi-ethnic and cultural tensions while ensuring economic prosperity and political stability. This is not to say that ethnic divisions along cultural and historical lines never existed in the country. In fact the 1970s witnessed a series of events in the country in which native Ivoirians vent out their dissatisfaction over what they saw as an invasion by neighbouring countries to steal away their country's financial resources. However, such dissatisfaction never became a source of open conflict and identity politics until the death of Houphouët-Boigny which created a succession crisis in which identity became crucial in winning political power.

Houphouët-Boigny's legacy of one party hegemony deprived Côte d'Ivoire of viable political institutions meant to ensure democratic transfer of power. The result was a bitter war of succession between Henri Konan Bédié, president of the National Assembly and Prime Minister Alassane Daramane Ouattara following Houphouët-Boigny's death on 7 December 1993.

The proclamation of Bédié as president led to a split within the ruling PDCI with the creation of a breakaway faction called the RDR to be headed by Ouattara. The stage was now stage for a Bédié – Ouattara political showdown which culminated in the birth of 'Ivoirité' (Ivorianness); a prelude to the armed conflict and the partitioning of the country (Kamara, 2000, p. 2).

Intended by Bédié to disqualify Ouattara from contesting the presidential race, the concept of 'Ivoirité', which separates between Ivoirians of 'pure blood' and 'multi-century origin' and Ivoirians of 'mixed' origin whose Ivoirianness was by circumstance, was propagated by Ivoirian intellectuals belonging to Bédié's Akan tribe. In other words, 'Ivoirité' was nothing less than an 'Akan philosophy' of nationality based on the conviction that southern ethnic groups are 'true Ivoirians' whereas 'the northerners' are 'Ivoirians by chance' (Diallo, 2005, p. 9).

What followed next were constitutional amendments on the electoral laws which stipulated that a candidate must be Ivoirian by 'origin', and must have also lived in the country continuously for five years. It became apparent that such constitutional amendments were specifically aimed at disenfranchising Ouattara as a presidential hopeful. Bédié also embarked on a national identification campaign to differentiate between Ivoirians and foreigners which further widened the gulf between the north – south divide.

However, it was the implementation of a new land regulation which stipulated that only native Ivoirians can be land owners that precipitated the violence which was to follow as the new law led to the forceful eviction of migrant farmers from their plantations and the confiscation of their properties. The exercise resulted to violent clashes which left hundreds of migrants dead. Bédié's rule was thus characterized by political repression and massive economic corruption. Laurent Gbagbo would also later adopt the same identification programme under the FPI to bolster his political power base (Diallo, 2005, p. 9).

The rejection of Ouattara combined with the xenophobic violence against northern ethnic groups became the rallying point for northerners' support of Ouattara whose rejection was interpreted as their very own exclusion in a country they call home. It is along similar lines that the Akan people of the south came to see Bédiè as a champion fighting against 'foreign invaders' on ancestral land; a similar notion held by Gbagbo's ethnic Kru people who also rallied around him in defence of their fatherland. Thus, ethnic identity became the symbol of political competition as the country's main political parties campaigned along ethnic lines rather than on political ideologies; a recipe for ethnic conflict.

The use or rather misuse of the north – south ethnic divide as a political tool in the politics of the sub-region remains a formidable threat to the peace and stability of the wider West African region. In the Sierra Leone war for instance, the Mende of the east and south of the country blamed the Themne of the north for starting the war with the purpose of destroying Mendeland which bore the brunt of the 11 year-civil war. Feeding on this was President Tejan Kabbah who on a visit to Makeni, the heartland of the north publicly said northerners owed an apology to east and southerners because Foday Sankoh, leader of the RUF, was a Themne from the north (Bundu, 2001, p. 245).

A similar pattern emerged in Côte d'Ivoire where Bédié's use of the concept of 'Ivoirité' as a political weapon against northern 'foreigners' whom he saw as a political threat personified by Ouattara turned out to be the source of the armed conflict which ripped the country apart along ethno-regional lines.

The exit of Bédié from the political scene following a military coup in December, 1999 did not make the situation of identity politics any better as his successors employed the same rhetoric of 'Ivoirité' as a political ticket to gain power. On assuming power, General Robert Guéi, was able to manipulate the Supreme Court to have the candidacy of Ouattara ruled out on grounds of his 'dubious origin' on the eve of the 2000 general elections; a point to be later picked on by Laurent

Gbagbo who in an indirect reference to Ouattara's background had warned that, 'if someone wins an election with a stolen identity card, he will rule the country with stolen money' (Kamara, 2009, p. 9).

In fact it was during Gbagbo's reign that the religious undertone of the concept of 'Ivoirité' became more prominent as the country's main religious leaders, Muslims and Christians became directly drawn into the political rhetoric, further fanning the flames of the conflict. In the words of Imam Boubabar Fofana, the spokesperson of the Superior Council of Imams of Côte d'Ivoire, 'We, Muslims have no qualm giving our support to Alassane … People should not upbraid us with our support because it is as legitimate as the support the Baulé people give to Bédié, and the support that the Bété people give to Gbagbo as well' (Konate, 2005, p. 13).

On their part, Christian congregations took an open stance in opposing Ouattara's candidacy through the bishops of Côte d'Ivoire who argued that 'there are some candidacies that raise more problems than solve them. For the sake of the country, which is dear to any Ivoirian, be it naturalized or native, we pray so that these leaders should be brave and wise enough to reconsider their stand and pull out of the political race' (Konate, 2005, p. 14).

Such an immersion of religion into politics along ethno-regional lines became indicative of the distance political leaders bent on attaining power by all means, could go in dividing a people born on land for all. The result on Côte d'Ivoire was the balkanization of the country by no fewer than 10 armed groups recruited along ethno-regional lines, with youthful combatants, majority of whom were below the age of 25 (McGovern, 2011, p. 108).

To base one's 'Ivoirianness' on 'multi-century origin' in a relatively young nation-state like Côte d'Ivoire is in itself baseless on the grounds that, being born under colonial rule before the country attained sovereign rule in 1960 gives so-called 'pure Ivoirians' just half a century of 'Ivoirianness', the same as children of migrant workers born in the country in the same year. Thus before the eyes

of the law, neither of the two groups can claim superiority over the other on the basis of birth (Konate, 2005, p. 13).

It could therefore be argued that the concept of 'Ivoirité' was simply a wrong political strategy employed by political leaders in the absence of strong institutions of governance in a nation once dominated by the personality of an individual whose exit from power set in motion the wheels of state disintegration resulting to armed conflict.

GUINEA: Politico–Military nexus

Often referred to as 'the last man standing' in a sub-region engulfed in wars, Guinea was able to weather the regional crisis and prevent the country from sliding into a full-blown war. This was partly due to a strong national identity forged by autocrat Sekou Touré, the nation's founding leader who tried to create an African Socialism out of the Guinean peasantry. That is not to say Lansana Conté, who succeeded Touré in 1984 stayed out of the wars of his neighbours. In fact it was Conté's military support for LURD, a warring faction in the Liberian war that brought the conflict to his doorsteps in 2000 and 2001 as his country became home to up to a million refugees and a recruiting base for various armed groups (Berman *et al*. 2005, p. 279).

An in-depth understanding of how Conté became a sponsor of another man's war would require an analysis of the politico – military relations in a country where decades of bad governance had allowed political leaders to manipulate the 'armed forces to their own political ends, allowing insubordination to develop' as senior ranks were bought off 'with patronage opportunities' (ICG, 2010, page i). Such bad governance practices created deeply-divided and politicized armed forces along ethnic lines, and resulted in gross indiscipline and insubordination especially among the rank and file.

The Guinean Army was once a highly disciplined and professional state institution which played an integral role in shaping Touré's post-independence revolutionary dream for their part in grass-root

agricultural and infrastructural projects. That was before Touré became rattled by events in West Africa in which the army played an instrumental role in unseating Presidents Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana in 1966 and Modibo Keita in Mali in 1968 respectively. Fearing a similar fate befalling him, Touré embarked on a systematic campaign of terror, ethnic divisions and clientelism within the armed forces in an effort to weaken and subdue that institution. His tactics included imprisonment and executions of senior military officers perceived to be a threat to the regime. He also ensured that conditions of service were drastically reduced, thereby keeping the majority of the armed forces in poverty. Although the campaign proved a success in keeping the armed forces docile, it however created deep-seated resentment and distrust in military – political relations which culminated into the military takeover of power following the death of Touré in 1984 (ICG, 2010, p. 3).

Under Lansana Conté who seized power as a colonel and later transformed himself into a civilian president, military - political relations became diffused as senior military officers were appointed to key institutions of governance as ministers, governors and prefects (ICG, 2010, p. 6).

However, Conté's favouritism of senior officers from his ethnic group alienated the rest of the army and created discontent which degenerated into the February 1996 mutiny. In the aftermath of the mutiny, many officers were dismissed or forced to resign, while others were imprisoned. The mutineers headed by Gbagbo Zoumanigue, a former Youth and Sports Minister, fled the country and later formed the nucleus of the RFDG, a Guinean dissident group. Backed by NPFL and RUF fighters, the RFDG launched a series of attacks in Guinea between 2000 and 2001.

That particular event became a turning point for Guinea as Conté took up a more prominent role in the wars of his neighbours; a move that was to have serious security and economic implications for his country and the sub-region. He formed an alliance with LURD who fought alongside the Guinean army in repelling RFDG attacks along the country's southern borders with Sierra Leone and Liberia. In return for their assistance, LURD received massive military support in the form of

arms and training bases inside Guinea; a support that contributed towards LURD's successful assault on Monrovia that eventually brought down the Taylor regime (ICG, 2005, p. 21).

On the home front, Conté embarked on a campaign of mobilizing thousands of young Guinean volunteers who were recruited into local militias and given arms to counter the RFDG, despite their lack of military training. Of the estimated 10,500 Young Volunteers recruited during the height of the cross-border incursions, only some 3,500 were integrated into the regular army. The remaining 7,000 who never went through a formal disarmament process became scattered across the region especially in and around the country's border region with Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone, where their services as mercenaries were been sought after by various regional warring factions (Milner, 2005, pp. 49 – 50).

The involvement of Guinea in the wars of its neighbours provided cross-border trade opportunities in looted goods and gun-running as its military became entrenched in pillage. A case in point is that of the Guinean military incursion into the Sierra Leone border village of Yenga in 2001 in pursuit of RUF forces. To this day, more than a decade since the end of the war, the military has refused to pull back from an area known for its artisanal gold panning.

Guinea also benefitted hugely from arms trafficking within the region's porous borders. The country's role as a regional arms merchant became evident in a UN Panel of Experts Report in which one Mohamed Yansané, a Guinean agricultural engineer was implicated in illicit arms deals through end-user certificates issued by his company, Pecos. Further evidence later emerged that the country's 'ministry of defence organized the delivery of small arms, ammunition and the mortar rounds used by the LURD insurgency that killed many Liberian civilians in Monrovia in July 2003' (ICG, 2005, p. 16).

To Conté, the involvement of his military in the regional wars where they served as either peace keepers or combatants in support of one warring faction or the other, eased military pressure on

him. Complaints about low pay and poor conditions of service became subdued as soldiers were now able to pay themselves from the spoils of their neighbours' wars. The politico – military networks which benefitted a tiny group of Guineans gradually came to an end following the return of peace to Liberia and Sierra Leone. To Guinea however, it signaled the start of a breakdown of the politico-military nexus as indicated by the frequent military unrests which averaged once a year between 2005 and 2008 (ICG, 2005, pp. 7 – 8).

Conté's years of misrule were characterized by his use of certain sections of the armed forces for political gains while alienating the bulk of the armed forces. To redress the imbalance, he ended up exploiting the wars of his neighbours in favour of his military.

It could therefore be argued that were it not for bad governance practices, the Mano region wars presented Guinea a unique opportunity in stemming the tide of violence across the region with its military playing the neutral role of policing the porous borders in the spirit of the MRU guiding principles. Such a scenario could have produced a different outcome of those wars.

`LIBERIA: Ethno–political contest

Ethnicity is an integral part of the culture of a people. In Africa, it defines socio-economic and political institutions and therefore becomes a tool for community development. However when exploited for political power, ethnicity can become a source of violence which could degenerate into civil wars. That was the case in Liberia where a history of ethno-political exploitation finally gave way to a civil war characterized by multi-warring factions created along ethnic lines with each fighting for supremacy.

Ethnic marginalization lie in historic fault lines dating back to the creation of the modern state of Liberia in 1822 by freed slaves from America who assumed an ethnic identity as American-Liberians. This tiny group forming less than five percent of the country's population came to see the state as exclusively theirs. They also saw themselves as 'civilized and superior' over indigenous

Liberians who they regarded to be 'inferior and backward'. The naming of the country and its capital including national public holidays and even the national ode which reads: 'The Love of Liberty Brought Us Here', is all indicative of the beliefs of the American-Liberians that, founding principles of their new state were rooted in slave ancestry and American ideals whose only link with Africa was its geographical location (Mgbeoji, 2003, p. 4).

This notion of freed slaves being superior over native Africans was also a source of tension in neighbouring Sierra Leone where repatriated 'Black British' freed slaves came to look low upon indigenous Sierra Leoneans as 'inferior' (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 2003, p. 129).

In Liberia, this tiny minority of American-Liberians formed an elite group that dominated the socio-economic and political affairs of the state which excluded the numerous indigenous ethnic groups of the country.

To the native Liberians, this period marked the beginning of the many injustices they would have to suffer at the hands of the American-Liberians which included dispossession of their lands, denial of citizenship, forced labour and total exclusion from participating in institutions of governance. That American-Liberians who were denied such basic rights in America would choose to subject their fellow Black brothers and host to similar inhuman treatment, was completely incomprehensible to the native Liberians. The result was deep-seated anger and ethnic animosity which became underlying factors that laid the foundations for the civil war (Asiedu, 2004, p. 74).

The presidency of William R. Tolbert who succeeded President William Tubman in 1971 was no better than those of his predecessors as it was characterized by massive corruption and nepotism which further excluded native Liberians from participating in institutions of governance. The socio-economic and political problems of the 1970s culminated to the Rice riots of 1979 following a 50 percent increase in the price of a bag of rice, the country's staple. Such a steep increase angered

many Liberians especially the natives whose social exclusion meant they could not afford the new price.

The aftermath of the riots which were quelled with the help of troops from neighbouring Guinea, left a number of students dead with hundreds more injured. That incident however became a watershed in the history of the country, setting the stage for the final showdown between American-Liberians and their native counterparts. To the natives, the socio-economic problems of the country were a direct result of long standing bad governance practices by the American-Liberian oligarchy which created unequal economic opportunities in the country (Conteh-Morgan *et al.* 1995, p. 8).

These developments created a conducive environment for a group of 17 native Liberian military officers of the AFL headed by Samuel K. Doe to invade the Presidential Palace on 12 April 1980 and assassinate President Tolbert, bringing to an end 133 years of American-Liberian minority rule.

An understanding of how the Doe regime triggered Liberia's ethno-political conflict would require a brief analysis of the country's native ethnic groups geographically divided into coastal tribes which include Gbandi, Kru, Loma and Vai and those of the hinterland comprising Krahn, Gio, and Mano. Of these groups, only four took centre stage: Gio, Mano, Mandingo and Krahn. The smallest of all ethnic groups, the Krahn, composed of about 5 percent of the total population and were not very highly educated.

Despite this handicap, the group rose into prominence following the ascendancy in power of Doe, a fellow tribesman. For instance, in the new junta government of the PRC, majority of the cabinet posts went to the Krahn-speaking region. Such an unequal representation became more prominent in the appointment of Krahn people to head major institutions of governance, including the armed forces. This led to the birth of 'new Krahn ethnicism' which gave way to the politicization of ethnicity.

The Mandingoes were regarded as foreigners from neighbouring Guinea and make up about four percent of the ethnic population of Liberia. However under Doe, the Mandingo also rose into political prominence and formed an alliance with the Krahn; an alliance that angered the Gio and Mano who had been very instrumental in the coup that brought Doe to power and who now felt alienated. This alienation caused deep-seated resentment among the Gio and Mano against the Mandingo.

The ethnic polarization between the Krahn/Mandingo and the Gio/Mano played neatly into the hands of Charles Taylor who chose to launch his 1989 rebellion from Nimba County, the heartland of the Gio and Mano. Capitalizing on ethnic animosity, Taylor was able to recruit from among the Gio and Mano who warmly welcomed the anti-Doe rebellion. Doe on the other hand consolidated his support among his ethnic Krahn backed by the Mandingo. Krahn-dominated AFL's counter-attack against NPFL forces in Nimba County which targeted Gio and Mano widened the ethnic gulf as more and more Nimba people drifted towards Taylor's NPFL.

After suffering a heavy military blow at the hands of the NPFL in mid 1990, the AFL went on a killing spree in Monrovia, targeting Mano and Gio people. The Mano and Gio in turn retaliated by summarily executing Krahn and Mandingo civilians in other parts of the country. One of the most gruesome tit-for-tat ethnic killings took place in a church in Monrovia where 30 Krahn and Mandingo soldiers massacred some 600 mainly Mano and Gio people in their sleep (Conteh-Morgan *et al*. 1995, p. 11).

In an attempt to correct bad governance practices of the TWP, Doe became far worse than his predecessors. It could therefore be argued that the ethno-political contest which resulted in ethnic bloodletting was the legacy of the American-Liberian hegemony characterized by the long absence of democratic institutions of governance.

SIERRA LEONE: Role of the '*Shadow State*'[4]

Governments whose political survival depend on informal networks through which public resources meant for all are diverted towards a selected few in exchange for political support, are bound to disintegrate once the flow of such state resources is affected. A predatory political system of this nature gives rise to Reno's concept of 'Shadow State' in which politics is linked to corruption as political leaders get directly involved into market structures to enhance political power and create private wealth. Building on Max Weber's earlier observation on a functionally indistinct private and official spheres whereby 'political power is considered part of' a leader's 'personal property', Reno maintains that for such a patronage system to become an effective tool of political control, 'the ruler must prevent all individuals from gaining unregulated access to markets'. This strategy is meant to force people to first get the leader's blessings before gaining access to goods and services that are meant for all (Reno, 2000, p. 45).

In Sierra Leone, Reno's analysis explored how the system helped 'strengthened Steven's rule' while depriving 'state institutions of resources' meant to 'serve the country's people'. Steven's 17 year-personalized rule under the APC was characterized by the informalization of the state which gravely weakened all official state institutions of governance. The effect was a gradual disintegration of state institutions which created the conditions that eventually led to the outbreak of the civil war (Reno, 1995, p. 80).

Steven's corrupt patrimonial system of governance became evident shortly after assuming office in 1968 following the reversal of a military coup which had stopped him from being sworn in as Prime Minister after the 1967 elections in which the incumbent SLPP lost to the opposition APC. In order to consolidate his grip on power, he employed fraudulent and violent tactics through the use of

---

[4] '*Shadow State*' is a concept used by William Reno to explain the 'relationship between corruption and politics'. For more on shadow states, see Reno W (2000) Shadow States and the Political Economy of Civil Wars. In Berdal M *et al.* (eds.), *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, *IPA, Lynne Rienner Publishers*, p. 44.

party thugs to intimidate opposition party members. The tactics worked well in drastically reducing opposition party membership in parliament (Gberie, 1997, p. 48).

Having secured an APC majority in parliament, the charismatic and former Trade Union leader now moved to expand his control on other state institutions. In the armed forces, there was to follow a series of dismissals and forced retirement of prominent officers belonging to the south and eastern-based Mende ethnic group of the SLPP. Military leadership was then passed on to Themne and Limba officers from the north, the heartland of Steven's ruling APC. From thence, recruitment into the army became an exclusive affair for APC big-wigs who now had to decide who goes to the army; a system that greatly diminished military standards as 'character of all shades were now recruited irrespective of prevailing military requirements' (Koroma, 1996, p. 18).

In 1974, Stevens instituted a paramilitary force, the ISU which was largely made up of school drop-outs and APC thugs and functioned like an armed-wing of the APC. The Unit soon became synonymous with crime itself due to its activities of vandalism and intimidation of party opponents. Altering the structural make-up of the country's armed forces in his favour became an earlier indication of Steven's resolve in dismantling all state institutions of governance to ensure his continued stay in power.

The judiciary was another state institution that was manipulated by Steven, thanks to his sweeping powers made possible by the 1978 one-party constitution which gave him the right to send a Supreme Court judge to retirement either at the age of 55 or 62 or 66. Such powers meant that senior judges, including the Chief Justice and Anthony-General were dependent on him for their continuation in service. Presidential interference and patronage under the Steven era did not spare the civil service where appointments and promotions, including scholarships for further studies were maintained through bribery and party affiliations.

Perhaps the most destructive of the patrimonial rule of Steven was his plunder of the economy as the award of contracts and licenses favoured his cronies, majority of who were unscrupulous Lebanese businessmen who ran shady deals and colluded with politicians to defraud the nation. Such a corrupt and exploitative system of governance degenerated to a point where Jamil Mohamed Sahid, an Afro-Lebanese businessman whose business empire spanned diamond mining, fisheries, tourism and manufacturing industries, was tasked by Stevens to pay the salaries of a government ministry. Courtesy of his powers in the shadow state, Jamil was even allowed to participate in cabinet meetings (Gberie, 1997, p. 55).

Confident of his shadow state powers, Jamil never hesitated to unleash a squad from his 500-strong private security force on a politician following a dispute between the two men. The armed attack on the politician's residence by Arab gunmen acting on the orders of Jamil left many people wondering whether "Stevens was in fact the client of 'the White President'" (Reno, 1995, p. 151).

Such governance failings which put the security of the state at risk never seemed to have bothered Stevens so long as he continued to accumulate wealth through Jamil's business empire at the expense of the suffering masses, thanks to the prevailing atmosphere of violence which subdued all forms of organized opposition or dissent.

That was before the rise of university students alongside other civic society organizations who Stevens failed to bring under the sway of his regime. This group assumed the role of the opposition in resisting the APC regime, and in 1977 organised demonstrations which attracted massive support especially from day workers, lower civil servants, teachers and traders (Ofuatey-Kodjoe, 2003, p. 131).

Understanding the driving force behind the informal opposition would require a brief analysis of how a chunk of the country's youth population became an integral part of this opposition. The involvement of the youth in the politics of Sierra Leone came as a result of the power struggle

between the APC and SLPP, in which the youth were used as party thugs to do the dirty works of politicians. Poorly educated and largely unemployed, these so-called 'lumpens' who were notorious for their anti-social behavior, had always been socially-excluded. Their only worth therefore was to be mobilized by politicians into party youth wings to carry out acts of violence against opposition members especially at around elections time. Once the dirty work is completed, the marginalized youth always fall 'back to the wings, waiting for another assignment' (Abdullah, 1998, p. 207).

Such blatant misuse of the country's youth by the political class began to change with the arrival of middle-class youth, mostly university students who came to the rescue. Gradually, the down-trodden youth culture of violence was transformed into a rebellious one where political consciousness created a platform of opposition to APC misrule which culminated to the 1977 nation-wide riots. The riots forced Stevens to call up a general elections a few months later. Although the elections were followed by the declaration of a one-party state in 1978 which made Stevens a Life President, however, the actions of the informal opposition succeeded in revealing the fragility of the APC regime.

The economic downturn of the 1980s made dire by IMF-imposed austerity measures, coupled with the informalisation of key state industries exacerbated by the effects of the shadow state, affected both the political and economic governing institutions in the provision of basic services especially on health delivery and education. The effects were an influx of school leavers and drop-outs to bolster a swelling army of unemployed youth where talk of a revolution gradually began to gather momentum in the mist of growing economic difficulties.

Many argue that by the time Stevens handed over power to his handpicked successor, Joseph Saidu Momoh, the country was already heading towards state collapse. On assuming office in 1985, Momoh announced of inheriting a nation whose 'kitty is empty' (Gberie, 1997, p. 57). In replacing the Lebanese with Israelis in his own network of the shadow state, Momoh did little in stopping a

disintegrating state from collapsing. This was the scene that precipitated the March 1991 insurgency of the RUF with the motive of unseating the Momoh-led APC government.

The onset of the war was followed by two military coups. These events, it could be argued, were products of a marginalized youth who needed a change of political leadership following years of APC's blatant misuse of political power for individual enrichment which led to a gradual decline of the standard of living for majority of Sierra Leoneans as 70% of the working population became unemployed (Conteh-Morgan, 2006, p. 99).

The same pattern could also be applied to the rise of similar insurgencies in neighbouring MRU states where the personalized rule of leaders like Stevens, Tolbert, Touré, and Houphouët-Boigny became synonymous with government itself. By regarding the 'states' like their personal properties, these leaders (three of whom died in office) dominated the political landscape and subjected their populations to decades of single party misrule which left no room for political rivals. The net effect of such undemocratic system of governance was the gradual disintegration of state institutions that paved the way for the wars of the sub-region.

The RUF rebellion like others in the sub-region produced bands of young fighters including government-funded militias who roamed freely across the borders of the sub-region and formed alliances with neighbouring armed groups in pursuit of wars of symbiosis in which 'an enemy's enemy becomes an enemy'.

These uneasy alliances created by regional Heads of State to pursue wars of revenge form the basis of the next chapter which explores sub-regional foreign policy and diplomatic relations in an attempt to find out why Heads of State of the MRU who were meant to promote unity and cooperation for the common good of their populations ended up tearing them apart.

CHAPTER FOUR

DIPLOMACY AND FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

West Africa's 'founding fathers' succeeded in privatizing the region's political arena into their personal authorities at the expense of weak institutions of governance thanks to rampant corruption, exploitation, illegitimacy and inefficiency. In the Mano River region, long and bitter feuds between leaders such as Houphöut-Boigny and Doe, Taylor and Conté, and by extension Gbagbo had profound effects on sub-regional foreign policy. The results were a wave of shifting alliances based on personal relationships forged among leaders which influenced the foreign policies of individual states towards the conflicts of the sub-region (Adebajo, 2002, p. 48).

The nature and scope of this wave of shifting alliances made the conflicts complex, multi-layered and personal. For instance, Houphöut-Boigny in 1989 supported Taylor against Doe in Liberia, and Taylor in turn supported Sankoh against Momoh in neighbouring Sierra Leone in 1991 as well as lending a hand to both Ivoirian and Guinean dissident groups opposed to Gbagbo and Conté. Gbagbo and Conté would later provide support for Liberian rebels fighting against Taylor. Analysing such foreign policies in which leaders lent support to rival warring factions across the sub-region for a combination of political, economic and ideological reasons forms the topic of this chapter which also examines how the involvement of such external actors in the internal affairs of member states hampered diplomatic efforts at resolving the conflicts.

LIBERIA

Liberia, through Charles Taylor's insurgency became the epicenter of sub-regional insecurity. The 'domino effect' of that country's war on her MRU neighbours was dictated by regional politics and personal connections dating back to the repressive rule of Samuel K. Doe. Although Doe's major problems were domestic, however his poor diplomatic relations with a number of countries within

the sub-region and beyond which had left him with fewer friends in diplomatic circles would prove to be a major factor that contributed to his demise.

The PRC's mishandling of diplomatic relations started in the circumstances that surrounded the execution of Adolphus Benedict Tolbert, son of President William Tolbert who was assassinated in the 1980 coup led by Doe. Tolbert, whose wife, Désirée Delafosse was the adopted daughter of President Felix Houphöut-Boigny of Côte d'Ivoire, had sought protection in the Ivoirian Embassy shortly after the execution of his father. While his safety was being negotiated between Houphöut-Boigny and Doe, Tolbert was handed over to the French Embassy for better protection.

Despite Doe's pledge to guarantee his safety, junta soldiers in contravention of international law, invaded the premises of the French Embassy and captured Tolbert who was to suffer a similar fate like his father. That incident resulted in France's severing of diplomatic ties with Liberia. Côte d'Ivoire followed suit. To Houphöut-Boigny who was deeply angered by Doe's action, severing of diplomatic ties alone was never going to be enough. He would get his own day to square things up with Doe (Cohen, 2000, pp. 126 – 127).

Doe's brutal coup had also angered President Stevens of neighbouring Sierra Leone, a close ally of the slain Liberian leader. The close diplomatic ties enjoyed between the Tolbert and Stevens administrations led to the creation of the MRU by the two countries, a point that demonstrates how good foreign policy and diplomatic relations could bring about mutual cooperation and socio-economic growth and development. The assassination of Tolbert led to the souring of diplomatic ties between the new Doe regime and Freetown, a state of affairs that degenerated to the temporary closure of their borders. It would take the mediation efforts of Guinea's President Touré to diffuse the diplomatic tension between the two neighbours.

Another diplomatic blunder of the regime was Doe's undiplomatic dealings with Libya, one of the foremost countries to recognize the new Liberian regime and to readily establish diplomatic ties

between the two states. As Libyan interests started to grow in a country that was already home to United States interests including a major CIA station, the American government became worried of the situation. Playing on U.S. concerns, Doe never hesitated to trade off Libya in exchange for U.S. financial and diplomatic support for his government. Doe's reopening of diplomatic relations with Israel to appease Washington to the chagrin of Tripoli, further strained diplomatic ties between his country and Libya which led to the expulsion of Libyan diplomats and resulted to Libya's severance of ties to Liberia. Libya's Ghadaffi was to join the likes of Houphöut-Boigny in having a score to settle with Doe (Ellis, 1999, p. 158).

While it could be argued that Doe's actions were in the interest of his country, however in a region where the central role of the leader as the sole formulator of foreign policy has been consistently enhanced, his personal interaction and communication at heads-of-state level could have produced cooperative, rather than conflictive relationships. His undiplomatic approach in handling foreign policy resulted in strained diplomatic ties and interpersonal conflicts which took on a multilateral dimension that attracted other foreign governments and culminated to the 1989 NPFL's incursion in Nimba County through Côte d'Ivoire. That country proved a geographically strategic base for Taylor's NPFL forces whose convoys were been escorted by 'Ivoirian gendarmes … leaving no doubt of the [Ivoirian] official attitude to the war' (Ellis, 1999, p. 178).

Ghadaffi's score-settling with Doe came through military training for Taylor's NPFL fighters in Libya where they also benefitted from a cache of weaponry and financial support to launch the insurgency. In Burkina Faso, Taylor enjoyed the patronage of Blaise Compaore as the Burkinabe city of Po became a training base and recruitment site for the NPFL whose ranks were also filled by Burkinabe troops. Although he had maintained that his reasons for supporting Taylor was to get rid of Doe's 'hopelessly repressive and corrupt' regime (Cohen, 2000, p. 157), Compaore's real motives could however be best analyzed through a network of internal and regional political alliances. Taylor was alleged to have played an active role in the assassination of Thomas Sankara

under Compaore's orders. Compaore was to later introduce Taylor to Ghadaffi and to convince the Libyan leader that Taylor had got what it takes to unseat Doe. Compaore who was tied to Houphöut-Boigny through his marriage to Chantal Terrasson, a protégée of the Ivoirian president, also became persuaded into supporting Taylor's insurgency to overthrow Doe as revenge for Tolbert's murder (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2009, p. 267).

It therefore stands to reason that Taylor's diplomatic support from key regional players both as a warlord and president became the dynamic that characterized the wars of the sub-region. His personal support for the RUF in Sierra Leone yielded dividends in the late 1990s and early 2000s when RUF fighters backed by Guinean dissidents played a key role in repelling anti-Taylor Liberian dissidents operating from neighbouring Guinea. A similar pattern emerged in the Ivoirian conflict in which Taylor lent support to a number of Ivoirian rebel groups. Taylor's Liberia therefore became the field of rival cross-border alliances cultivated by warring factions at regional levels (Solomon, 2004, p. 6).

As a president, Taylor's shrewd diplomacy created both allies and enemies, some of whom were key regional players involved in diplomatic initiatives in resolving the conflict. Eventually, both foes and friends would later see reason for Taylor's exit from power being the cornerstone for the return of peace and stability to the sub-region. Thus, the warlord-turned president eventually became a victim of his own foreign policy and diplomatic approaches towards his MRU neighbours.

SIERRA LEONE

Perhaps of all the neighbouring countries in the sub-region to have suffered most from the Liberian civil war was Sierra Leone. To some, the Sierra Leone war was imposed by Charles Taylor who was seeking out revenge on a country which had refused him permission to use its territory to launch his uprising. The country's decision to become a base and launching pad for ECOMOG

attacks on Taylor's positions in Liberia became the tipping point. While such claims are an over-simplification of the root causes of the Sierra Leone war which has already been discussed elsewhere, nonetheless, Taylor's role in the RUF movement should not be ignored. In fact, many doubted whether the RUF insurgency would have been launched in March 1991 and 'achieved as much as they did without Taylor's support' (Kargbo, 2006, p. 23).

It could therefore be argued that the diplomatic and foreign policy of successive governments in Sierra Leone towards the sub-region and Liberia in particular had a bearing in shaping the wars of the Mano River region. When Taylor first arrived in Sierra Leone in 1998 on a Burkinabe diplomatic passport to ask President Momoh for permission to allow the use of Sierra Leone by Liberian dissidents to launch the NPFL rebellion, he was refused, detained and later set free; an event that would later have a negative impact on the country. Ignoring the wider sub-regional ramifications of his decision to let go of Taylor, Momoh could barely raise a finger on the issue even when in 1990 a secret diplomatic dispatch from the Sierra Leone High Commission in Nigeria reported Sierra Leonean dissidents working with Taylor and plotting a similar insurgency for Sierra Leone (Gberie, 1997, p. 74).

As thousands of Liberian refugees flooded Sierra Leone, Momoh hardly contemplated the security threats such an influx could have on his country. Committing his country's army to an ECOWAS intervention force and allowing Freetown to be used as a rear-base further enraged Taylor who was clearly opposed to the ECOMOG initiative and the use of Sierra Leone as an operational base. Taylor openly stated his dislike for the Momoh regime and threatened to attack the country, a threat though downplayed by the SLA, became a reality in March 1991. To Momoh, Taylor had simply being 'ungrateful'. Taylor's dislike for the Freetown regime was compounded by the government's decision to co-opt ULIMO forces, trained and armed in Sierra Leone to fight alongside the SLA against the RUF. ULIMO forces would later make their way back into Liberia to confront Taylor's NPFL fighters.

Though Sierra Leone had every reason to oppose Taylor's NPFL forces for obvious reasons, if however President Momoh had acted differently with Taylor while under his detention in 1989, the outcome of events in the sub-region could have been different. Judging the poor state of diplomatic relations between the two states, Momoh hardly contemplated the fact that it was in the interest of his own country to prevent Taylor from carrying out his planned actions. In the end, it was the prospect of witnessing the dethroning of an unfriendly neighbouring government that got the upper hand; an example of how ill-conceived foreign policy and diplomatic relations between nations have the potentials of tearing both nations apart.

Taylor's tenure of office as president of Liberia between 1997 and 2003 witnessed increased support for the RUF in clear violations of a UN arms embargo. The support would result in the RUF being drafted in cross-border raids against anti-Taylor Liberian dissidents operating from Guinea. Counter-attacks from Guinean troops against the RUF led to the occupation of the Sierra Leone village of Yenga in 2001 by Guinean forces. Despite intense diplomatic negotiations between then President Kabbah and his late Guinean counterpart, Guinea refused to pull its troops out of Yenga. Today, negotiations are still on-going between Presidents Koroma and Condè to resolve the matter.

The Yenga issue remains a major diplomatic challenge for leaders of the MRU in promoting regional harmony. The fact that Yenga has remained under occupation for more than a decade demonstrates the weak state of diplomacy and foreign policy within member states of the union in resolving conflicts, reflecting a similar state of affairs of the 1980s that eventually plunged the sub-region into crisis. In 2007, Kabbah and Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia made a joint diplomatic trip to Guinea to meet their counterpart in an effort to resolve the Yenga issue. Conté never met them. He instead dispatched his Prime Minister to receive the delegation at the Guinean border town of Guékédou where nothing was resolved. The failure of such combined sub-regional diplomacy to impact on a member state to conform to established protocols could become a source of tension which could once again undermine the peace and security of the sub-region.

GUINEA

Guinea has a history of interventionist foreign policy towards its MRU neighbours dating back to the Sekou Tourè era. In 1971, a Guinean army contingent was sent to neighbouring Sierra Leone to protect the government of Siaka Stevens following an abortive coup attempt in that country. Eight years later, another contingent was to be in Liberia to restore peace and order following nation-wide riots which had crippled the regime of William Tolbert.

While the Liberian intervention was to assist a friendly neighbouring regime in need, Guinea's intervention in Sierra Leone was to honour a bilateral defence pact signed between Tourè and Stevens. This explains why Guinean troops would return to Sierra Leone to support the government of Joseph Momoh in 1991 shortly after the outbreak of the RUF rebellion (Bundu, 2001, p. 74).

The same however could not be applied to Samuel Doe, despite rumours that he was being assisted by Guinean troops following the outbreak of Taylor's NPFL insurgency two years earlier. Instead President Contè responded by deploying Guinean troops along Guinea's border with Liberia as a security precaution against NPFL forces in the wake of an influx of Liberian refugees crossing into Guinea, an action interpreted negatively by Taylor who accused Contè's troops of attacking his NPFL positions. Hence the birth of the mutual mistrust between the two men which would later have negative consequences on sub-regional diplomacy when Taylor became the president of Liberia; a state of affairs which mirrored the antagonism that had existed between Côte d'Ivoire's Houphöut-Boigny and Liberia's Samuel Doe. Taylor's accusations against Contè proved accurate when it emerged that Alhaji Kromah, an ally of Contè had become the leader of ULIMO-K, an anti-Taylor dissident splinter group, been trained and armed by Guinea (Ellis, 1999, p. 179).

Understanding Contè's foreign policy and diplomatic approach in the Liberian crisis would require a brief analysis of the political, security and ethnic dynamics of the sub-region. Ethnic groups found in the region where Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone meet share a lot of linguistic and cultural

similarities that cut across national boundaries, making the movement of people among the three countries easier. With Liberia and Sierra Leone engulfed in war, Guinea became the safe haven which attracted thousands of refugees fleeing from both countries. The influx created a security crisis for the host country where 'guns and war booty were traded freely' and refugee camps became recruitment centres for various warring factions across the sub-region (Ellis, 1999, p. 179).

Contè feared that if left unchecked, the situation could feed on internal political disputes within the country which could threaten his own political survival. Added to the internal threats were sub-regional security fears as Taylor enjoyed military and diplomatic support from Guinea's historical rival and neighbor, Côte d'Ivoire. Fearing that Guinean dissidents could also benefit from such regional support, Contè came to the conclusion that his backing for ULIMO-K and other anti-Taylor rival groups was in the interest of his country's national security (Kamara, 2001, p. 5).

Contè's actions would later be justified between 2000 and 2001 when the RFDG, a Guinean dissident group backed by Taylor's NPFL forces and RUF fighters launched a series of cross-border raids in a number of Guinean towns along the country's southern border with Sierra Leone and Liberia. It would take the combined efforts of Guinean troops and LURD forces backed by Young Volunteer militias to fight off the incursions.

The animosity between the two leaders soon became an open source of diplomatic tension which drew in other regional actors such as Blaise Compaore of Burkina Faso whom together with Taylor was accused of supporting the then jailed Guinean opposition leader Alpha Condè, now current president of the country. To Contè, it was all about a wider diplomatic conspiracy involving Liberia, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone rebels to destabilize his country. When it was therefore suggested that an ECOWAS monitoring force be deployed in the joint borders of the three countries, Guinea opted out citing political and diplomatic biasness of the regional leaders of the ECOWAS initiative (Milner, 2005, p. 11).

The failure to overcome such fears and distrust amongst regional leaders became a major setback in reaching diplomatic solutions on the conflicts of the sub-region. It could therefore be argued that had both leaders cultivated personal ties as well as amicable diplomatic relationship in the interest of their two nations, widespread destruction and suffering across the sub-region could have been minimized.

CÔTE D'IVOIRE

To many observers, the Ivoirian civil conflict was deeply rooted in the country's weak national identity and social cohesion. While such domestic problems cannot be disputed, however the country's diplomatic and foreign policies especially in the sub-region also played a key role in the making of the Ivoirian war. Côte d'Ivoire's involvement in the civil war in Liberia and by extension in Sierra Leone was motivated by combined personal, economic, ideological and political reasons. Under Felix Houphöut-Boigny, Côte d'Ivoire and by extension Burkina Faso provided Charles Taylor's NPFL much needed logistical and political support that played a significant role in advancing Taylor's war efforts (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2009, p. 267).

Houphöut-Boigny's personal motivation that got him involved in the Liberian war stemming from the sworn enmity that had existed between him and Doe has already been discussed elsewhere. However, understanding his political and ideological motives requires a brief analysis of the geo-political nexus of the sub-region. As France's most prominent ally in the region and coupled with its massive economic performance, Côte d'Ivoire assumed the undisputable leadership role of the Godfather of Francophone West Africa and became a sub-regional rival to Anglophone's 'Big Brother', Nigeria. Houphöut-Boigny was able to cement his hegemonic role through his vast network of diplomatic friendships, business partnerships and marriage alliances in the sub-region and beyond (Ellis, 1999, p. 159).

Samuel Doe's personal friendship with Nigeria's President Ibrahim Babangida which was formed after the former fell out with his traditional ally the U.S., created a new regional division of forces. Nigeria became Doe's main regional ally while Houphöut-Boigny increased his power base in the anti-Doe camp drawing support from allies such as Burkina Faso, Libya and France. While benefitting Taylor immensely, such broad political connections and diplomatic facilities however brought security concerns to Anglophone West African leaders who feared that Taylor's use of dissident mercenaries from the sub-region could have wider destabilizing effects.

Regional concerns therefore led to the formation of an ECOWAS monitoring force, ECOMOG in which five ECOWAS member states (Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria and Sierra Leone) contributed troops headed by a Ghanaian field commander. The initiative which was spearheaded by Nigeria and supported by the US angered Houphöut-Boigny who complained to his French allies that Washington's support of Nigeria in playing the role of regional police was unacceptable. Aided by Compaore, Houphöut-Boigny's response was to galvanize more support for Taylor's NPFL thereby turning the Liberian war into a 'surrogate fight between Côte d'Ivoire/Burkina Faso and Nigeria/Ghana' (Cohen, 2000, p. 155).

The ECOWAS initiative headed by Nigeria could have achieved better results had it received widespread diplomatic support from western powers. Nigeria, which could have played its 'big brother' mediating role had remained suspended from the Commonwealth for poor governance practices under a dictatorial military regime. The legality of Nigerian and by extension, the ECOWAS initiative in getting involved in the internal affairs of member states was therefore under scrutiny. The irony of the initiative in which an undemocratic state tries to restore democratic rule in another state received lukewarm western diplomatic support which seriously undermined the effectiveness and efficiency of sub-regional diplomacy in resolving the crisis.

The role of ECOMOG as a genuine peace broker would also soon be compromised as the force itself became drawn into the economic opportunities created by the conflict which eventually made

it a party to the conflict itself. At the political level, such a situation hampered diplomatic efforts in resolving the conflict as key regional actors tasked with bringing peace to the region were in fact the same ECOMOG-contributing nations who were also benefitting from a fast-growing war economy (Solomon, 2004, p. 6).

Under Henri Konan Bediè who succeeded Houphöut-Boigny as President in 1993, Ivoirian foreign policy remained much the same, in favour of Taylor and Sankoh. However a key notable difference in diplomatic approach between Bediè and his predecessor on the case of Sierra Leone was the former's drive towards a negotiated settlement in that country's civil war. The Bediè regime provided accommodations and logistics in Abidjan for Sankoh to leave his jungle headquarter Camp Zogoda in Sierra Leone in order to participate in peace talks with the Freetown government of Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah. Such diplomatic efforts proved influential in the signing of the Abidjan Peace Accord on 30 November 1996 between the SLPP-led government and the RUF (Bundu, 2001, p. 54).

Though the peace process would soon be derailed with the arrest of Sankoh in Nigeria on firearm charges a couple of months later, however the event showed how a shift in foreign policy could become pivotal in restoring sanity despite the complications of Nigeria's dominant role in the sub-region.

Côte d'Ivoire's foreign policy and diplomatic alliances in the sub-region shifted further under the presidency of Laurent Gbagbo whose opposition to Taylor led to the formation of new alliances with anti-Taylor Liberian dissident groups such as LURD and MODEL. Gbagbo would later order his own militia, the FLGO to fight along MODEL forces against NPFL fighters in Liberian territory. Taylor responded by supporting the creation of two Ivoirian rebel groups: MPIGO and MJP which had NPFL and RUF fighters in their ranks (The Advocates for Human Rights, 2009, p. 268).

To the north of the country, the main Ivorian rebel group, the MPCI which had been created in neighbouring Burkina Faso had the support of Compoare who was opposed to Gbagbo's foreign policy and the new political alliances in the sub-region, amidst Ivorian fears that Burkina Faso was plotting to destabilize the country. By becoming a base for arms smuggling and a springboard for sub-regional destabilization, Côte d'Ivoire was eventually sucked into the chaos and anarchy it had helped to create. In the absence of strong foreign policies and concerted diplomatic approaches among regional leaders in tackling the Liberian issue, the conflict degenerated into a vicious circle of violence. First initiated in Côte d'Ivoire to destabilize Liberia, the violence which was to spread to two of Liberia's neighbours would later return to engulf its source in Côte d'Ivoire, leaving a union once founded on principles of economic integration and peaceful co-existence in complete tatters.

It was largely when major compromises on fundamental diplomatic and complex issues of governance were reached at both domestic and sub-regional levels that relative peace and stability returned to the sub-region, bringing in new hopes of revitalizing the aspirations of the MRU. However for it to realize its full potentials, the union has to evolve into a more highly functioning institution where member states must convert inter-personal competitive discord into an integrated cooperative approach built on sound institutions of governance at local, national and regional levels.

In a new global order where individual states cannot afford to operate in isolation, it is therefore incumbent upon MRU member states to develop mechanisms for nurturing vibrant and cordial foreign policies and diplomatic relations if the sub-region is to benefit from the wider global governance system. Promoting such diplomatic symbiotic relationships is central to enhancing sustainable peace and security in order to stimulate growth and socio-economic development in the sub-region. It therefore stands to reason that, member states have no alternative but to cluster together as a single formidable diplomatic bloc in pooling their resources together through the

establishment of viable socio-economic programmes and sound institutions of governance designed to complement one another in promoting the aspirations of the union for the benefit of its people.

A classic example of how weak foreign policy and poor governance could lead to state destruction is the case of Sierra Leone, a country which bore all the hallmarks of great economic prosperity at independence, as the next chapter reveals.

CHAPTER FIVE

GOVERNANCE IN SIERRA LEONE: A CASE STUDY

At independence in 1961, Sierra Leone's impressive development prospects were characterized by a rich and diversified natural resource base comprising diamonds and other mineral resources, a vibrant agricultural sector, a rich human resource base and a functioning democracy. The country was therefore classified as a 'favourable political geography' and the place to be for someone in search of an African country 'with the physical, social and economic infrastructure appropriate to success as an independent state' (Clapham, 2003, pp. 9 – 10).

Within a year of attaining self-rule, the nation under Sir Milton Margai embarked upon a ten-year development plan. Under the massive socio-economic and infrastructural development scheme, pipe-borne water supply was provided to 21 provincial towns across the country which also saw the construction of feeder roads, market places, schools and health centres. Driven by strong export growth and low inflation, thanks to viable mining and agricultural sectors, the economy throughout the first decade of independence maintained an average growth of 4.0 percent (Gberie, 1997, p. 45).

Politically, a functioning and effective system of governance was upheld by the SLPP under Sir Milton whose policy of decentralization through local governance which made effective use of traditional rulers, helped strengthen a sense of national unity among the various ethnic groups in the country. Such political and socio-economic success was to prove short-lived in the face of a change of government that ushered in the APC.

The APC's 23-year misrule first under Stevens and later under Momoh witnessed the systematic destruction of the country's institutions of governance and a gradual reversal of the nation's economic fortunes. While relative economic growth continued in the first half of the 1970s, however the rest of the decade leading up to the 1980s and 90s saw a gradual depreciation of the

exchange value of the currency with a fast-growing inflation rate. By the time the APC were forced out of office in the early 90s, the economy was in the doldrums with an inflation rate of 180 percent and about 80 percent of the population living below the poverty line, as the wheels of development grounded to a halt (Bangura, 2011, p. 11).

Sierra Leone became a classic example of how bad governance and economic mismanagement by corrupt and wicked African ruling elite could destroy the genuine aspirations of citizens for effective participation on the national development of a country which bore all the hallmarks of great economic prosperity at independence. The result of such an oppressive and exploitative social system was national degeneration and decadence that culminated to the 11 year-civil war that devastated the country.

The recent 2007 election in which the ruling party lost to the opposition showed a little light of democracy, as the populace was allowed to decide the country's leadership through ballot. Tremendous efforts have since been made to create an environment that is characterized by good governance, which includes the adoption of Acts of Parliament that led to the setting up of governance institutions and structures.

It has however been argued that to avoid such institutions from being reduced to lame ducks, more resources should be invested to ensure their effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability. Such a situation will augur well for the promotion of a good governance environment that will lay the foundation for progressive development. The irony however, is that as a donor-dependency state, the country has to prioritise its spending between strengthening of governance institutions and service delivery, a scenario that imposes a heavy burden on the country on the one hand while ensuring good governance on the other hand.

Sierra Leone's foreign policy and diplomatic relations with neighbouring MRU states has had both merits and demerits on governance in the country. On the plus side was Stevens' cordial foreign

policy approach towards his country's two neighbouring states: Liberia and Guinea. His warm bilateral relationship with Tolbert in Liberia led to the creation of the MRU between the two states to be later joined by Guinea.

Such cooperation among the three leaders did not only ensure peace and stability but also promoted inter-state socio-economic growth and development. Stevens' defence pact signed with Touré of Guinea had served the interest of Sierra Leone in restoring peace and security to that country. That Guinean troops sent to Sierra Leone during the war to honour such bilateral ties lost their lives, is indicative of the role of good foreign policy and cordial diplomatic relations in promoting sub-regional peace and stability.

These leaders' exit from power ushered in new foreign policy approaches among the three states which impacted negatively on Sierra Leone. First, Momoh's poor diplomatic relations with Doe meant the former's failure in acting decisively on Taylor while under detention in Sierra Leone by completely ignoring the ramifications of the fugitive's destabilizing intentions. Taylor and by extension Campoare and Houphöut-Boigny became the pillars of Sankoh's RUF rebellion.

While it has already been argued elsewhere that the main causes of the civil war were largely internal, however it is worth noting that had the fraternal diplomatic relations once enjoyed by neighbouring states been preserved by successive leaders in these countries, the likes of Sankoh would have found it very difficult if not impossible to build pillars of his own on which to mount his rebellion.

To prove this point, a shift in foreign policy in Côte d'Ivoire under Bedié saw Sankoh being brought to the negotiating table for peace talks which paved the way to ending the country's civil war. It could therefore be seen that the Sierra Leone conflict was also a product of weak foreign policy and diplomatic relations among MRU states.

Governance Environment since 1996

Since the democratic elections in 1996 that led to civilian rule after the rebel war in Sierra Leone under the SLPP's President Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, no doubt Sierra Leone has made some progress in ensuring better governance. Since the end of the eleven-year civil war in 2002, successive governments including the SLPP and currently the APC led by Dr. Ernest Bai Koroma have been creating the necessary structures and institutions of governance through the adoption of numerous Acts of Parliament regulating specific governance areas.

Sierra Leone is among one of those MRU member states that have promoted democratic good governance since the inception of the democratic elected government after the military rule that lasted from 1992 to 1996. Since then Sierra Leone has been creating the necessary governance institutions and structures, such as, the National Commission for Democracy, Independent National Electoral Commission, Anti-Corruption Commission, Independent Media Commission, Political Party Registration Commission, Political Parties Act, Office of the Ombudsman, Human Rights Commission, and the Youth Commission. The government of Sierra Leone has also adopted several Acts of Parliament, bordering on the budget, setting up of a public Broadcaster, promotion of gender parity through the adoption of the Gender Acts. Currently the Government has adopted the Public Elections Act of 2012 and is on the move to adopt a Freedom of Information Act.

There are Acts of Parliament that deal with Financial Accountability, Private Sector, Decentralisation, Gender, Youth, etc. Government also continues to capacitate the institutions and structures already established. For example, in order to enhance the capacity of the Anti-Corruption Commission with both the legal and financial empowerment, the power to adjudicate was given to the Anti-Corruption Commission through the Anti-Corruption Commission Act of 2008.

It has been argued that in its efforts to promoting democratic good governance in Sierra Leone more emphasis should be put on the social accountability, which includes the broad range of actions and strategies that citizens can use to hold the state into account as well as actions on the part of civil society, media and the government itself, that promotes these efforts. Social accountability in Sierra

Leone presupposes the strengthening of the 'demand side' of good governance and accountability by empowering citizens and civil society organisations with adequate and appropriate information of voice platforms and negotiation skills to engage the state and its development partners, including international donors and private sector on accountability issues.

Since 2004 when the Local Government Administration Act 2004 was adopted it has been argued that such governance tool should be provided with among other things, a cogent decentralisation policy that will ensure that elections into local councils are done through non partisan basis, access to adequate resources and devoid of political interference. Public delivery system should be improved. Strict rules should therefore be laid down not only to enforce compliance through a more robust tracking mechanism but also to ensure transparency and accountability; which will go a very long way to minimising leakages.

It is recommended that this should be pursued vigorously through the strengthening of the procurement and monitoring units in various government departments. In this regard also the Office of the Auditor-General should be provided with adequate material and financial resources to ensure its efficiency and effectiveness. The media environment should be further improved to ensure access to information that will not be inimical to state security. There is need for an Access to Information Act that will engender an independent media landscape. Gender parity should also be ensured in all spheres of activity in the country; even against the background of the adoption of the Gender Acts, such as the Domestic Violence Act of 2007(Act no.20 of 2007); Devolution of Estate Act 2007(Act no.21 of 2007) and The Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act 2007(Act no.22 of 2007) The empowerment of women in Sierra Leone should be a continuous process since for far too long there had been a wide gap between women and men.

The above governance issues remain crucial and to a very large extent will only impact the country depending on the availability of the adequate resources to ensure the efficiency, effectiveness and sustainability of the good governance process.

In this regard, the government, as well as the people of Sierra Leone and the donor community has to do more. Good governance in Sierra Leone must be anchored in the conscious and genuine efforts of its people, across regional, ethnic and party lines. Divisive party ideologies constitute the greatest challenge to good governance in Sierra Leone. Unless it is reconciled with the objectives of national interests it will nullify all institutions and structures set up to enhance the governance process in the country.

Dependency is another key challenge to the governance process. The international community should ensure that the type of aid given to Sierra Leone should enable it to gradually reduce the dependency syndrome. The pattern of aid must change so that Sierra Leone cannot only have the opportunity to invest on its people for socio-economic and eventually political development but also minimise conflict. Such a scenario will be enhanced by a radical change of attitude on the part of Sierra Leoneans as encapsulated by the Agenda for Change, Second Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP11) 2008-2012. A critical review of the governance environment in Sierra Leone depicts that the country is not only relatively doing well but far ahead of other MRU states.

More on how such a success story could be enhanced is discussed in the final chapter which concludes this study and gives recommendations on overcoming regional multiple challenges on governance and development in order to attain political and socio-economic development for the citizens of the MRU.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The previous chapters have shown that despite the euphoria which greeted independence in the West African sub-region more than half a century ago with hopes and aspirations that the end of colonial rule would usher in a dawn of economic growth and prosperity however, economies have in fact regressed from their pre-independence levels. The political elite at independence received from their colonial masters a relatively good socio-economic environment, but was compromised by bad governance which was characterized by rampant corruption and the politics of alienation. Post-independence nationalist aspirations of building up stable and democratic political systems of governance were quickly transformed into a theory of one-party authoritarian rule with misguided policies that undermined the peace and security of the region.

Power, which has been regarded as personal property by political leaders has also become both a tool with which to 'steal from the state' and a weapon against political opponents (Falola, 1996, p.13). Thriving on appropriating state resources meant for national development to party followers in the forms of jobs and cash in return for electoral support, political leaders became the architects of state destruction. The corruption that emanated from this patron-client relationship seriously compromised the effectiveness and efficiency of state institutions thereby laying the foundations for collapsing states in the sub-region.

Rather than relinquishing power, greed-driven leaders embarked on instituting repressive policies in which the use of violence becomes a means of political entrenchment. Such 'criminalisation of the state' which became a common feature of governance in the MRU states characterized by oppressive and exploitative political misrule resulted into armed resistance movements which plunged the sub-region into a bloody conflict (Veen, 2004, p.155). The aphorism that power tends to corrupt therefore becomes an essential truth in a sub-region where power has been used as a weapon to intimidate and stifle individual freedoms while allowing political leaders to perpetuate

themselves and amass wealth at the expense of the sufferings of the masses (Hodder-Williams, 1984, p.110).

The MRU states went through British and French colonization processes. At independence, their respective socio-economic environment was relatively good. However, the new elites did not have a comprehensive programme to continue where the colonialists left them but instead abandoned democratic good governance for the politics of exclusion. This situation led to conflict and military interventions. These countries were not able to satisfy their respective population and led to state failure to be followed by a civil war in Liberia, a rebel war in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire and long period of military rule in Guinea.

Despite the return of relative peace and stability in the sub-region, MRU states remain very fragile. The questions this begs therefore are, first how can MRU states ensure the sustainability of such peace and stability in order to avoid a return to hostilities? What role can organizations such as the ECOWAS, the AU and the UN play towards strengthening peace and security as well as promoting socio-economic development in the sub-region? Indeed what lessons can the rest of Africa including the developing world in general and the international community in particular learn from the tragedies of the sub-region?

Recommendations

Attaining all of the above should be underpinned by key ingredients such as democracy, good governance, economic liberalization, substantive citizenship and strengthened state-civil relations. Newly independent nations, the MRU states inclusive, have not been able to bring about democratic good governance over the years because they lacked the necessary conditions such as a largely educated public, political culture and a level of economic development. This was against the backdrop that majority of the population was not only illiterate but their value systems were to a

very large extent diametrically opposed to the concept of democratic good governance, even the Westminster model.

That democracy, or rather the lack of it was at the core of the conflict could hardly be disputed in a region where the fundamental right to vote without intimidation has always been compromised and the legality of the fairness of elections questioned. As the bedrock of democracy, the right to vote in elections conducted in a free and fair manner under conducive atmosphere should therefore be protected if disputes arising from the conduct of elections are to be prevented. In addition to their traditional role of election monitoring and supervision, regional organizations and the international community as a whole must also ensure that electoral machineries are built upon a system of justice characterized by impartiality, credibility, effectiveness and independence.

However for national electoral commissions to operate under such principles there has to be in place sound institutions of state governance 'capable of ensuring peace, stability, the rule of law, and the protection of basic human rights' (Clapham, 2003, p.25). Regional organizations and the international community in partnership with MRU member states and civil society organizations should work in unison in strengthening state institutions by instilling a culture of respect for fundamental human rights and democratic principles that guarantee equitable participation and distribution of political power and national resources. To that end, former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Abass Bundu rhetorically asks, 'which army chieftain would have a reasonable excuse to want to overthrow' a government founded on such democratic principles of governance (Bundu, 2001, p.288)?

The role of good governance in national development cannot be over-emphasized as socio-economic growth can only be sustained under a climate of peace and stability. The linkage between peace, development and democracy is perhaps best expressed by former UN Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros Ghali: 'Without peace, there could be no development. Without both peace and development, democracy could not take root'. To Boutros Ghali, democracy however, is the

foundation upon which sustainable peace and development could thrive and thus, any 'development that did not benefit from the freedoms of thought, assembly and expression that democracy provides would slowly fall behind those societies and economies that benefitted from democratic creativity' (Bundu, 2001, p. 287).

A total population estimated at 39,615,472 with a youthful majority indicates that MRU states have the potentials for enormous economic growth (Bangura, 2009, p.5). A concerted effort through an effective foreign policy mechanism built on mutual trust and respect for national sovereignty is therefore needed for member states to integrate and better coordinate both political and economic policies aimed at pooling resources together in order to stimulate socio-economic growth and development in the sub-region. To strengthen such sub-regional cooperation, there has to be in place an effective state regulatory framework through which the economy can be managed according to market principles rather than the direct involvement of the state.

Such clear separation of powers which helps to instill public confidence in the institutions of state has to be the guiding principles of governance in fragile states like those of the MRU for the sustenance of democracy, peace and development in the sub-region.

Although tremendous progress has been made in consolidating peace and rebuilding state institutions across MRU member states, however some of the causes of the civil wars are still visible today. In Sierra Leone where 'pre-conflict socio-political institutions, practices, networks and players have been preserved and even reinforced', there is vital need for nurturing a 'capable enough state' with the capacity to respond to its citizens' needs and rights (Brown T *et al.*, 2005, pp. 11 – 13).

Promoting such a scenario in the MRU states entails sensitizing the citizenry of these states on the need to imbibe democratic good governance principles. This presupposes a lot of civic education to

educate the massive illiterate public (65% for Sierra Leone) effecting an efficient, effective local governance process anchored on decentralisation.

In Liberia, little progress has been made in promoting inclusive governance as key positions of government and decision making remains under the control of the tiny Americo-Liberian minority. The opening up of the political space to include native Liberians therefore becomes imperative in transforming weak governance practices in order to strengthen national peace and security.

Decades of bad governance and misrule in Guinea has left the armed forces which had massive influence on political power, with the tendency to operate with gross insubordination to civilian rule. SSR must therefore be among the priority in improving the country's institutions of governance.

Although peace was finally returned to Côte d'Ivoire following Ouattara's ascend to power in 2011, this does not however signify the end of internal divisions in a country where the exploitation of ethnicity for political gains has left the nation carved up along ethno-religious lines. For peace to be consolidated, state policies aimed at promoting strong social cohesion and national identity must take centre stage.

Such centre stage must be underpinned by substantive citizenship through relevant civic education geared towards an effective change in mentality on civic rights and responsibilities across all strata in society which should become a prerequisite for sound governance. A positive change on societal norms and value systems is therefore needed to enhance social empowerment thereby creating a solid base for citizen voice.

The common experiences of civil society organizations across the sub-region could be better integrated to complement state policies for peace building and democratic governance for the mutual benefit of all MRU member states. Civil society and the private sector should be promoted and MRU states should ensure on the one hand governments are held accountable and on the other

hand the creation of jobs so as to make the large population of the youths in these states employable and have the necessary skills.

Strengthening state-civil society relations therefore becomes imperative in reaching that common approach. The UNOWA in collaboration with its AU and ECOWAS partners must therefore coordinate activities in order to consolidate democracy and bolster sub-regional integration and socio-economic growth and development.

Such an environment as already stated will only become an objective reality if these countries reduce to a very large extent their dependency syndrome. Not that they do not have potential but perhaps the impact of globalization on these states tends to marginalize them and thus the further strengthening of the dependency syndrome. In this regard, while the rationale behind regional groupings such as the MRU cannot be over emphasized, its foundations must however be built on solid democratic good governance environment which also entails the international community's cooperation including the international financial institutions and multinationals.

BIBLOGRAPHY

Abdullah I *et al*. (1998) The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone: A Revolt of the Lumpenproletariat. In Clapham C [ed] *African Guerrillas*. London: James Currey.

Abdullah I (1998) Bush path to destruction: the origin and character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone. *The Journal of Modern African Studies,* 36 (2), pp. 203 – 235. Cambridge University Press.

Adebajo A (2002) Building Peace in West Africa: Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea-Bissau. *International Peace Academy Occasional Paper Series*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc.

Akindés F (2003) Houphouëtism. *African Sociological Review*, 7 (2), Dakar: CODESRIA. 2 Available at http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/idep/unpan016414.pdf [accessed 20 Mach 2012].

Asiedu K (2004) *Comprehending the Ethnic Dynamic of the Liberian Civil War Conflict*. MA dissertation. Simon Fraser University. Available at http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/7709/b3724789x.pdf [accessed 25 April 2012].

Bangura A K (2009) Using E-clustering to Reinvigorate the Mano River War. *GLOBELICS09.* Session 5. Available at http://hdl.handle.net/1853/35665 [accessed 2 June 2012].

Bangura A (2011) *Sierra Leone's Economic Record 1961 – 2010*. A briefing Paper by EPRU, Sierra Leone Ministry of Finance and Economic Development, *Sierra Leone Conference on Development & Transformation*. Available at http://www.sierraleonetransformation.org/?q=node/69 [accessed 28th March 2012].

Bangura Y (2004) The Political and Cultural Dynamics of the Sierra Leone War: A Critique of Paul Richards. In I. Abdullah [ed] *Between Democracy and Terror: The Sierra Leone Civil War*. Dakar: CODESRIA.

Berman E G *et al*. (2005) Armed Groups and Small Arms in ECOWAS member states (1998 – 2004). In Florquin N *et al*. [eds] *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*. A Small Arms Survey Publication, Geneva. Available at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/book-series/armed-and-aimless.html [accessed 25 April 2012].

Brinkerhoff D W *et al*. (2002) Clientelism, Patrimonialism and Democratic Governance: An Overview and Framework for Assessment and Programming. *USAID Office of Democracy and Governance, IQC # AEP-I-00-00-00005-00, Task Order No. 4801-003-01*. Available at http://www.abtassociates.com/reports/2002601089183_30950.pdf
 [accessed 28 March 2012].

Brown M (1999) *Governance- A Bedrock of Development*. Choice Magazine, UNDP.

Budge I *et al*. (1993) *Parties and Democracy: Coalition Formation and Government Functioning in Twenty States*. USA: Ford University Press.

Bujra A (2002) African Conflicts: Their Causes and Their Political and Social Environment. *Development Policy Management Forum, Occasional Paper*, No. 4. Available at

http://notunprojonmo.com/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/African-Conflicts-Their-Causes-and-their-political-and-social-env.pdf
[accessed 28 March 2012].

Bundu A (2001) *Democracy by Force? A study of International Military Intervention in the Conflict in Sierra Leone from 1991 – 2002*. USA: Universal Publishers.

Clapham C (1998) Analysing African Insurgencies. In Clapham C [ed] *African Guerrillas*. London: James Currey.

Clapham C (2003) Sierra Leone: The Political Economy of Internal Conflict. *Clingendael Conflict Research Working Paper Series*, No. 20. Available at http://www.clingendael.nl/publications/2003/20030700_cru_working_paper_20.pdf [accessed 2 June 2012].

Cohen H J (2000) *Intervening in Africa: Superpower Peacekeeping in a Troubled Continent*. Macmillan Press Ltd.

Collier P (2006) *Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and their Implications for Policy*. UK: Oxford University. Available at http://users.ox.ac.uk/~econpco/research/pdfs/EconomicCausesofCivilConflictImplicationsforPolicy.pdf [accessed 2 April 2012].

Conteh-Morgan E *et al*. (1995) Ethnopolitical violence in the Liberian Civil War. *The Journal of Conflict Studies*. 15 (1), Canada: The Gregg Centre for the Study of War and Society, University of New Brunswick. Available at http://journals.hil.unb.ca/index.php/JCS/article/view/4593 [accessed 23 March 2012].

Conteh-Morgan E (2006) Globalization, State Failure, and Collective Violence: The Case of Sierra Leone. *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 11(2). Grassroots Publishing Company. Available at http://www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol11_2/11n2C-M.pdf [accessed 28 March 2012].

Diallo Y (2005) From Stability to Uncertainty: A recent Political History of Côte d'Ivoire. *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology Working Papers*, Working Paper No. 74. Available at http://www.eth.mpg.de/pubs/wps/pdf/mpi-eth-working-paper-0074.pdf [accessed 20 March 2012].

Dooma N (2005) White Noise: The Issues surrounding the coverage of African Conflicts on Dutch Television. *MA dissertation*, UK: Cardiff University.

Ellis S (1996) Africa's Future and the World. In Ellis S [ed] *Africa Now: People, Policies, Institutions*. The Hague: Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, London: James Currey and Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Ellis S (1999) *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*. C. Hurst & Co. Ltd.

Falola T (1996) Africa in Perspective. In S. Ellis (ed.), *'Africa Now: People, Policies, Institutions'*, The Hague: Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs, London: James Currey and Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.

Gberie L (2009) An Evaluation of the Role of Diamonds in postwar Sierra Leone. In Gberie L [ed] *Rescuing a Fragile State: Sierra Leone 2002 – 2008*. Ontario: LCMSDS Press of Wilfrid Laurier.

Gberie L (1997) War and State Collapse: The Case of Sierra Leone. *MA dissertation*, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University.

Gibert M V (2007) Monitoring a region in crisis: the European Union in West Africa. *European Union Institute for Security Studies*, Chaillot Paper No. 96. Available at http://www.iss.europa.eu/publications/detail/article/monitoring-a-region-in-crisis-the-european-union-in-west-africa-1/ [accessed on 7 April 2012].

Goodhand J *et al*. (1999) From wars to complex political emergencies: Understanding Conflict and peace building in the new world disorder. *Third World Quarterly* 20 (1): 13 – 26. UK: Routledge, part of the Taylor and Francis Group.

Goodhand J (2001) Violent Conflict, Poverty and Chronic Poverty. *CPRC Working Paper 6*. Manchester: Chronic Poverty Research Centre. Available at http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1754535 [accessed 3 April 2012].

Grossman H I (1999) Kleptocracy and Revolutions. *Oxford Economic Papers*, 51, 267-83. Available at http://www.webpondo.org/dmejia/GrossmanKleptoracynRevolution.pdf [accessed 3 April 2012].

 Herbert M (2007) Good Governance *Mwesigye Herbert* blog, 7 March. Available at http://mwesigyes.blogspot.it/2007/03/good-governance.html [accessed 2 April 2012].

Hirsch J L (2001) Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy. *International Peace Academy*, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc.

Hodder-Williams R (1984) *An Introduction to the Politics of Tropical Africa*. UK: George Allen & Unmin Publishers, Ltd.

Human Rights Watch (2005) Youth, Poverty and Blood: The Lethal Legacy of West Africa's Regional Warriors. 17 (5) A. Available at www.child-soldiers.org/document/get?id=1234 [accessed 4 April 2012].

International Crisis Group (2010) Guinea: Reforming the Army. *Africa Report* No. 164. Available at http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/west-africa/guinea/164%20Guinea%20---%20Reforming%20the%20Army.pdf [accessed 5 April 2012].

International Crisis Group (2005) Stopping Guinea's Slide. *Africa Report* No. 94. Available at
http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/africa/westafrica/guinea/Stopping%20Guineas%20Slide.pdf [accessed 2 April 2012].

Kamara T (2000) Côte d'Ivoire: Implications of the December 1999 coup d'état. *UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research,* WRITENET Paper No. 01/2000. Available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/3ae6a6c74.pdf [accessed 17th March 2012].

Kamara T (2001) Guinea: Confronting Insecurity in the midst of unstable neighbours. *UNHCR Centre for Documentation and Research,* WRITENET Paper No. 8/2000. Available at http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/pdfid/3ae6a6cb4.pdf [accessed 17 March 2012].

Kaplan R (1994) The Coming Anarchy: How Scarcity, Crime, Overpopulation and Disease are Rapidly Destroying the Social Fabric of Our Planet. *Atlantic Monthly*, 273 (2).

Kargbo M S (2006) *British Foreign Policy and the Conflict in Sierra Leone, 1991 – 2001*. Peter Lang Publishers, 2006.

Keen D (2005) *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone*. UK: James Currey Ltd.

Keen D (2002) Since I am a dog, beware of my fangs: Beyond a 'rational violence' framework in the Sierra Leone War. *Crisis States Programme Working Paper No. 14.* London: Development Studies Institute, LSE. Available at http://www.crisisstates.com/Publications/publications.htm [accessed 9 April 2012].

Konate S A (2005) The Politics of Identity and Violence in Côte d'Ivoire. *West Africa Review,* No. 5. Africa Resource Center, Inc. Available at http://www.africaknowledgeproject.org/index.php/war/article/view/311_accessed_7th_April_2012 [accessed 10 April 2012].

Koroma A K (1996) *Sierra Leone: The Agony of a Nation*. Freetown: Androemeda Publications.

Leslie J (1960) Towards an African Socialism. *International Socialism* (1st series), No.1. Available at http://www.marxists.org/archive/sedgwick/1960/xx/africansoc.htm [accessed 17 March 2012].

Malinga P (1985) Ahmed Sékou Touré: An African Tragedy. *The African Communist*. No. 100. Available at http://www.webguinee.net/bibliotheque/histoire/malinga/pmalinga.html [accessed on 22nd March 2012].

Mano River Union. Available at http://manoriveruniononline.org/about.html [accessed on 18th March 2012].

McCawley P (2005) Governance in Indonesia: some comments. *Asian Development Bank Institute.* Discussion Paper No. 38. Available at http://www.adbi.org/files/2005.09.dp38.governance.indonesia.comments.pdf [accessed on 2nd April 2012].

McGovern M (2008) Rivitalizing the Mano River Union. *A briefing paper for the Peacebuilding Commission.* International Peace Institute. Available at http://www.peacebuildingcommission.org [accessed 25 March 2012].

McGovern M (2011) *Making War in Côte d'Ivoire*. C. Hurst & Co. Ltd.

Mgbeoji I (2003) *Collective Insecurity: The Liberian Crisis, Unilateralism, and Global Order.* Canada: UBC Press, Vancouver British Columbia.

Milner J (2005) The militarization and Demilitarization of Refugee Camps in Guinea. In Florquin N *et al*. [eds] *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*. A Small Arms Survey Publication, Geneva. Available at http://www.smallarmssurvey.org/publications/by-type/book-series/armed-and-aimless.html [accessed 25 April 2012].

Nelson S (2003) Mano River Union Conflict Assessment and Peace building Results Framework. *USAID*, Task Order No. 748-01. Available at http://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/PNACX061.pdf [accessed on 25 March 2012].

Ofuatey-Kodjoe W (2003) Sierra Leone. In Boulden J [ed] *Dealing with conflict in Africa: The United Nations and Regional Organizations.* Palgrave, Macmillan.

Outram Q (2011) Recent History. In *Africa south of the Sahara 2012*, Europa Regional Surveys of the World. UK: Routledge.

Reno W (1995) *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge University Press.

Reno W (2000) Shadow States and the Political Economy of Civil Wars. In Berdal M *et al*. [eds] *Greed & Grievance: Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*, IPA, Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc.

Richards P (1996) *Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*. James Currey Ltd.

Sawyer A (2004) Violent Conflicts and governance challenges in West Africa: the case of the Mano River basin area. *Journal of Modern African Studies,* 42(3), pp. 437 – 463. Cambridge University Press. Available at http://www.arts.ualberta.ca/~courses/PoliticalScience/474A1/documents/SawyerViolentConflictsGovernanceChallengesWAfrica.pdf [accessed 12 March 2012].

Sesay A (2007) Does One Size fit All? *Discussion Papers 36*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet.

Sierra Leone Truth & Reconciliation Commission (2004) Summary of the Findings and Core Recommendations. Available at http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/DB906313CC25E745C12572E5004E40FB-Full_Report.pdf [accessed 3 April 2012].

Smillie I *et al*. (2000) The Heart of the Matter: Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Security. Ottawa: Partnership Africa Canada.

Solomon C (2004) Regionalization of Domestic Conflicts in the Mano River Basin. *African Renaissance*. Available at

http://www.hollerafrica.com/showArticle.php?artId=66&catId=1&page=2 [accessed 15 March 2012].

The Advocates for Human Rights (2009) A House with Two Rooms: Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia Diaspora Project. *The Advocates for Human Rights*. Available at http://www.theadvocatesforhumanrights.org/Final_Report.html [accessed 7 April 2012].

The World Bank (1989) Sub-Saharan Africa: From Crisis to Sustainable Growth. *A Long-Term Perspective Study*. Washington D.C.: The World bank. Available at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/1999/12/02/000178830_98101901364149/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf [accessed 3 April 2012].

UN Office for West Africa (2005) Youth Unemployment and Regional Insecurity in West Africa. Available at http://www.uneca.org/itca/youth/Documents/unemployment-insecurity%5B1%5D.pdf [accessed 7 April 2012].

Urdal H (2004) The Devil in the Demographics: The Effect of Youth Bulges on Domestic Armed Conflict, 1950 – 2000. *World Bank Social Development Papers,* Conflict Prevention and Reconstruction, Paper 14. Available at http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2004/07/28/000012009_20040728162225/Rendered/PDF/29740.pdf [accessed 15 April 2012].

Varisco A E (2010) A Study on the Inter-Relation between Armed Conflict and National Resources and its Implications for Conflict Resolution and Peace building. *Journal of Peace, Conflict and Development*. England: University of Bradford. Available at http://www.peacestudiesjournal.org.uk/dl/3-Article7Final.pdf [accessed 2nd April 2012].

Veen R (2004) *What Went Wrong With Africa: A Contemporary History*. Amsterdam: KIT Publishers.