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African Solutions to African Problems: Learning from ECOMOG's Experiences in Liberia and Sierra Leone

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A minor dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of

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JANUARY 2008
I confirm that I have seen the final version of Judith V. Mwandumba's dissertation and that it is submitted for examination with my approval.

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DEDICATION

To my lovely Mum and the rest of my family for always being there!
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My sincere thanks and gratitude go to my supervisor and lecturer, Dr. John Akokpari, whose tremendous help, encouragement and constructive criticism, led to the successful completion of this thesis.

I am also greatly indebted to Prof. Annette Seegers for her enormous assistance during the early stages of this work.

To my dear friends; Japhta, Marion and Lizzie – I say thank you for always being there. I also thank my family for their love, prayers and for believing in me.

Most importantly I thank God, the Almighty, for this wonderful opportunity!
ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on the notion of African solutions to African problems. It examines efforts made by African sub-regional organisations in ending conflicts in their regions. Following a review of literature on conflict, peace operations and intervention in Africa, the thesis argues that Africans are now determined to solve their own problems. This stand has gained prominence following the demise of the East-West rivalry, which has resulted in the loss of Africa’s strategic importance to the world’s super powers. This has consequently affected the super powers’ response to Africa’s conflicts. As opposed to intervening militarily in African conflicts, the international community (in particular the USA, Britain and France), prefer to play an enabling role. To this end, they have introduced a number of programmes, which provide training to African military forces, including funding and the provision of technical assistance. On the whole, the thesis argues that sub-regional African forces have the capacity and will to manage their conflicts; however problems of funding, inexperience, inadequate resources, and lack of political unity affect their operations. ECOMOG, a sub-regional military force in West Africa and the first of its kind on the African continent, is used to illustrate the possibilities of Africans crafting solutions to the continent’s problems. Using Liberia and Sierra Leone as case studies, the thesis further argues that the experiences of ECOMOG - its successes and failures - in the two countries offer valuable lessons for future military and humanitarian interventions in African sub-regions.
ACRONYMS

ACDL  Association for Constitutional Democracy in Liberia
ACOTA  African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance
ACRF  African Crisis Response Force
ACRI  African Crisis Response Initiative
AEC  African Economic Community
AFL  Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC  Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AMIS  African Mission to Sudan
AMISOM  African Union Mission to Somalia
APC  All People’s Congress
ASF  African Standby Force
AU  African Unity
BMATT  British Military Advisory Training Team
CAAU  Constitutive Act of the African Union
CPP  Conflict Prevention Pool
ECCAS  Economic Community of Central African States
ECOWAS  Economic Community of West African States
ECOMOG  Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
EO  Executive Outcomes
FBC  Fourah Bay College
GPOI  Global Peace Operations Initiative
IAF  Inter African Force
IGAD  Inter-Governmental Authority on Development
IGADD  Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification
IGNU  Interim Government of National Unity
INPFL  Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
LDF  Lofa Defense Force
LNTG  Liberian National Transitional Government
LPC  Liberian Peace Council
MISAB  Mission to Monitor the Implementation of the Bangui Agreements
MOJA  Movement for Justice in Africa
NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NMG Neutral Monitoring Group
NMOG Neutral Military Observer Group
NPFL National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP National People’s Party
NPRC National Provisional Ruling Council
OAU Organisation of African Unity
OMIB Observer Mission to Burundi
PAL Progressive Alliance of Liberia
PCASED Programme for the Co-ordination of Assistance for Security and Development
PMAD Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence
PNA Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression
PRC People’s Redemption Council
PSC Peace and Security Council
RECAMP Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de Maintien la Paix
RUF Revolutionary United Front
SADC Southern African Development Community
SLA Sierra Leonean Army
SLPP Sierra Leone People’s Party
SMC Standing Mediation Committee
SPLM Sudan people’s Liberation Movement
SSD State Security Defense
TWP True Whig Party
UDP United Democratic Party
ULIMO United Liberation Movement for Democracy
UN United Nations
UNAMSIL United Nations Assistant Mission in Sierra Leone
UNOMIL United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
UNSC United Nations Security Council
U.S.A United States of America
TNG Transitional National Government
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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 Introduction

The primary responsibility for the maintenance of peace and security the world over rests with the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).\(^1\) However, following the end of the Cold War, the world witnessed a decline in peacekeeping operations carried out under the banner of the United Nations (UN). This was evident both in the number of troops and funding available for such operations.\(^2\) This decline had a huge impact on Africa, a continent with a long history of conflicts. Having lost its strategic importance to the East and the West, Africa was left to fend for itself, to find solutions to its problems. Thus, when faced with a conflict situation “the states at risk and the regional organisations immediately concerned had to look for other options, and in most cases these turned out to be the regional forces.”\(^3\) In the African context, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) provides a good example of how a sub-regional organisation, with limited resources and experience in peacekeeping operations, undertook to provide an ‘African solution to an African problem’ in Liberia and Sierra Leone. When conflicts broke out in the two countries, members of ECOWAS set up the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to end the fighting. This happened when the international community showed little interest to intervene in the conflicts. Thus, the operations of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone have come to epitomise the strengths and problems associated with African intervening forces in regional conflicts and offer valuable lessons for other sub-regional organisations on the African continent.

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1.2 Topic and Objectives

The debate about ‘African solutions to African problems’ has been ongoing.\(^4\) Within Africa, there has always been a desire to have Africans manage their own conflicts and take a lead role in interventions.\(^5\) Though not successful, the intervention in Chad by Nigeria and the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) in the 1980s came to be seen by many as an important step in the right direction. In the 21\(^{st}\) century, however, Africa is yet to realise its dream of an all-African force. This has been difficult to achieve partly because of the challenges - financial and material among others - which have proved to be beyond the continent’s control. Hence, as conflicts proliferated on the continent, Africa found itself relying on the international community for intervention more and more.\(^6\) This stand was bound to change following the demise of the East-West rivalry. Since then, Africa’s importance diminished, and so did the foreign military interventions in her conflicts. Of particular importance were events in Somalia in 1993 and Rwanda in 1994; these marked a decline in international peacekeeping operations, especially on the African continent. Following the experiences in Somalia and Rwanda the international community, specifically Western nations, hesitated to intervene in conflicts which do not threaten their vital interests.

The absence of the international community in African peacekeeping thus, created a vacuum and sub-regional organisations in Africa have had no choice but to fill the void.\(^7\) The West African sub-regional grouping ECOWAS, is a good example in this regard. When civil war broke out in Liberia and Sierra Leone between 1989-1997 and 1991-2000 respectively, and while the UNSC and some Western nations delayed in reaching a decision about the conflict, ECOWAS went ahead to tackle the conflicts which posed a serious threat to peace and security in the region. Led by Nigeria, the region’s aspiring

hegemon, ECOWAS set up a standing mediation committee (SMC) in 1990 following the outbreak of the Liberian conflict. The SMC in turn established a cease-fire monitoring group, ECOMOG which was an ad hoc operation designed specifically to deal with the civil war in Liberia and later Sierra Leone. Nigeria played a vital role in Liberia and Sierra Leone throughout the conflicts, and as one author puts it, "it became ECOMOG's driving force and major pillar." Its long held interests and aspirations as the region's hegemon consequently led to what many perceived to be hegemonic peacekeeping.

1.3 Justification of Study
The selection of Liberia and Sierra Leone as cases for this study stemmed from a number of considerations. Both countries are members of ECOWAS and have had experiences of military coups which have been a major destabilising factor for a good part of their history. Not only were their civil wars tricky and intractable, they also had the highest degree of spillover evident by subsequent conflicts that plagued the region. In addition, civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone witnessed the emergence of warlordism - the major characteristic of which was severe plunder of society and economy. In both cases warlords built up power and wealth by dealing in the exploitation of the countries' considerable natural resources which helped finance their wars. Laremont argues that "war in Africa quickly becomes complicated when material resources - such as diamonds or petroleum-become available to combatants." This was true in the cases under study where warlords controlled a large share of resource rich areas and indulged in illegal sale to purchase arms and other war equipment. With this background, the study explores the activities of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone and argues that much can be learned from the experiences of ECOMOG, which may help shape future peacekeeping efforts by other regional organisations in Africa. For instance, the African Union (AU), currently working towards the establishment of an African Standby Force (ASF) by 2010, could

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9 Ibid.
10 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 7 p. xi.
11 Ibid.
13 Ibid., p. 131.
learn and benefit from ECOMOG's experiences.\footnote{Vanessa, Kent and Mark Malan, *The African Standby Force Progress and Prospects* found at http://www.trainingforpeace.org/pubs/iss/asr123.pdf.} The study focuses on ECOMOG because it represents the first sub-regional initiative by Africans to find solutions to their problems using their own men, logistics and financial resources. While some may argue that the intervention by the Nigerian and the OAU force in Chad in the 1980s was the first of such initiatives, its ineffectual peacekeeping operation in that country does not warrant it as a success at the regional level.\footnote{See Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4.} ECOMOG, despite facing daunting challenges and huge shortfalls, was able to intervene in Liberia and Sierra Leone, hence worthy of attention. As some commentators put it “the ECOMOG operation constitutes a good example of regional peacekeeping to solve African problems.”\footnote{Karl P. Magyar and Earl Conteh- Morgan (eds.), *Peacekeeping in Africa: ECOMOG in Liberia* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 1998) p. 5.} ECOMOG also illustrates how regional peace operations in the African context deal with the problem of intractable and protracted conflicts as the ones understudy. This study adds to the growing body of literature on the subject matter under discussion.

### 1.4 Conceptual Definitions and Terminologies

Regional peace operations and hegemonic peacekeeping are the main focus of this study. Regional peace operations refer to such operations as peacekeeping, peace enforcement and peacemaking that are undertaken by formal regional or sub-regional organisations.\footnote{See lillie Cilliers and Greg Mills (eds.), *Peacekeeping in Africa* Vol 2 (Braamfontein: the South African Institute of International Affairs, 1995).} Hegemonic peacekeeping refers to “a situation where a powerful state with global or regional interests is able to shoulder greater military and financial burden than other less powerful states in a multilateral intervention.”\footnote{Adekeye Adebajo, “In Search of Warlords: Hegemonic Peacekeeping in Liberia and Somalia,” *International Peacekeeping* 10:4 (Winter 2003) pp. 62-81.} For the purposes of this study peacekeeping is defined as “the containment, moderation and/or termination of hostilities between or within states, through the medium of an impartial third party intervention, organized and directed internationally, using military forces and civilians to complement the political process of conflict resolution and to restore peace.”\footnote{Jakkie Cilliers, “Peace Support Operations” in Jakkie Cilliers and Greg Mills (eds.), *Peacekeeping in Africa* Vol 2, p. 58.} Peace enforcement
refers to “the intervention of troops from an external state or states into a situation of conflict with the purpose of imposing peace.”\textsuperscript{21} Peacemaking refers to the “diplomatic effort intended to move a violent conflict into a nonviolent dialogue, where differences are normally settled through representative political institution.”\textsuperscript{22}

1.5 Research Questions
This study addresses the following related questions: (i) what were some of the causes of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean civil wars? (ii) What were the strengths and weaknesses of ECOMOG’s intervention in Liberia and Sierra Leone? (iii) What can be learned from these interventions by other sub-regional organisations in Africa?

1.6 Methodology and Research Design
This study is an explorative as well as descriptive account of ECOMOG’s operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone. It did not involve field work; rather it drew extensively on relevant empirical studies based mainly on literature reviews. This was augmented by internet sources and other relevant ECOWAS, AU and UN reports.

1.7 Limitations and Scope of Study
This work is limited to the study of ECOMOG’s operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone within the specified period; 1989-1997 and 1991-2000 respectively. It explores the notion of ‘African solutions to African problems’ as understood within the African context and as exemplified by the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The strengths and problems associated with this notion are also explored.

1.8 Theoretical Framework: Conflict and Intervention
There have been a number of conflict cases across the world. While this study focuses specifically on conflicts in Africa, there have been numerous reports of conflict cases from as far as the Americas, Asia and the Pacific region, Europe and the Balkans and the

\textsuperscript{21} Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4 p. 4.
\textsuperscript{22} "Peacemaking-Overview" The Conflict Management Toolkit (John Hopkins University, School of Advanced International Studies, Conflict Management Program), accessed on 25 October 2007 at \url{http://www.sais-jhu.edu/cmtoolkit/approaches/peacemaking}. 
Middle East. As conflicts continued to proliferate in the aftermath of the super power rivalry, the UN found itself involved in the world’s hot spots more and more. However, this role by the UN has not always been successful. Efforts at conflict management and resolution in cases such as Bosnia, Somalia, and Rwanda have been unsuccessful largely due to the unwillingness of parties to cooperate. Despite such drawbacks, the UN has continued its role as the global policeman. In this vein, a number of UN missions have been sent to intervene militarily or otherwise (for instance to observe elections, ceasefire agreements, demobilisation, disarmament and re-integration processes) in conflict zones such as Eritrea, Angola, Guatemala, Haiti, Afghanistan, Cambodia, India and Pakistan, East Timor, Bosnia, Kosovo, Cyprus, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, and Israel and Palestine. Apart from the UN, some regional organisations have also intervened militarily in conflicts, witness for instance the activities of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) in Kosovo and the AU’s African Mission to Sudan (AMIS).

As far as conflicts are concerned, there have been interventions on various levels by third parties. While the UN and other regional organisations have successfully and unsuccessfully intervened in the domestic affairs of other states, the question that has always guided their interventions has been the extent to which a particular conflict situation merits intervention. This comes against a backdrop of the right to national sovereignty, territorial integrity and the related principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of another sovereign state. These issues have for long been so important in the study of international relations. Despite many ambiguities surrounding it, intervention has been used around the world as a modality for the resolution and management of conflicts. It is interesting to note that oppressive regimes have systematically relied on the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention to stop other

states from intervening in their domestic affairs. The ongoing conflict in the Darfur region of Western Sudan is a good example of how oppressive governments can capitalise on the principle of non-intervention to their advantage. However, the principles of sovereignty and non-intervention have triggered debates from numerous quarters. For instance, Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo once asked "why does sovereignty confer absolute immunity on any government who commits genocide and monumental crimes of destruction?"28 Such reactions from the world have seen the principle of non-intervention being revisited. While some scholars argue that states should not intervene in the domestic affairs of other states, the reality is that intervention is both necessary and appropriate in order to maintain international peace and security. Today, military intervention for humanitarian ends and conflict resolution has increased dramatically and the two questions that have gained prominence in as far as intervention is concerned are: who should intervene and when is intervention necessary?29

It has been argued that in order to intervene, the major powers, whose military resources are always needed in any significant deployment, have to agree. This point is often influenced by either overwhelming humanitarian needs or when the major powers want to protect their vital interests.30 Traditionally, interventions into conflicts have always been authorised by the UNSC, however, some states have intervened militarily without the consent of the UNSC; the American invasion of Iraq in 2002 is a good example. The danger with such interventions is that the intervening state may be seen as pursuing its own parochial or selfish interests. On the other hand, interventions that are authorised by the UNSC and involve a multinational force are deemed to have more legitimacy.31

30 See Oliver, Furley and Roy May (eds.), ibid.
31 Charles Hauss, (Chip) “Military Intervention,” in Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess (eds.), *Beyond Intractability*. 
When is intervention necessary? Furley and May argue that certain circumstances warrant unilateral humanitarian intervention by groups of states and regional actors in internal conflicts.\(^\text{32}\) They contend that such cases could be "when there have been human rights abuses so egregious as to violate the norms of international law, when a government has collapsed and is spiralling into a state of anarchy, when the intervention aims to safeguard democracy when a democratic regime has been violently and illegally overthrown against the will of its domestic populace and when the conflict is regarded as a threat to international/regional peace and security."\(^\text{33}\) Whether intervention succeeds or fails largely depends on a particular conflict case. Most interventions however, have at least one common goal; ending the short-term crisis.\(^\text{34}\) It should be noted that interventions in such places as Kosovo and East Timor, Liberia and Sierra Leone have helped end humanitarian disasters in which warring factions brutally abused the human rights of many people, especially civilians. There is also little doubt that interventions have at times made intractable conflicts worse than they otherwise would have been (or indeed the opposite). However, it is worthy noting that a number of interventions across the world have had benign intentions namely; to end human rights abuses and see to it that parties cease fighting and lay down their arms.

Finally, it should be noted that the conditions that warrant intervention (as discussed above) were present in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. These should be viewed as the criteria upon which humanitarian intervention may be based as evidenced by ECOMOG's interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone.\(^\text{35}\)


\(^{33}\)Ibid., p. 15.

\(^{34}\)Charles Hauss, “Military Intervention” op cit. note 29.

\(^{35}\)See Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 32.
1.9 Literature Survey

Conflicts continue to ravage significant sections of the developing world and Africa is no exception. Violent conflicts, specifically intrastate in nature, have been a common occurrence on the continent in the post-Cold War world. Warfare has been disastrous not only on individual countries and their people, but also on the continent as a whole. “Weak economic growth, the AIDS pandemic, the degradation of Africa’s physical environment, and the spread of humanitarian crises in Africa combine to create a depressing regional portrait.” With the decrease in international intervention in African conflicts, African policy makers and scholars are now searching for ways to effectively respond to conflicts. This however, is not a new thing on the African political landscape. Boutros-Boutros Ghali, former Secretary General of the UN once argued in his report An Agenda for Peace that regional security arrangements should be utilised to lighten the peacekeeping burden shouldered by the UN. On his part, Dr Salim Ahmed Salim, former Secretary General of the OAU stressed that “OAU Member States can no longer afford to stand aloof and expect the International Community to care more for our problems than we do, or indeed to find solutions to those problems which in many instances, have been of our own making. The simple truth that we must confront today is that the world does not owe us a living and we must remain in the forefront of efforts to act and act speedily, to prevent conflicts from getting out of control.”

It is thus apparent that the UN cannot be the only initiator of peace operations. Africans need to take part specifically at a time when there is increasing reluctance of key members of the UNSC and other Western powers to intervene in African conflicts. The realisation that Africans have been left to manage their conflicts has seen the former take

38 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit note 7 p. 1.
on greater responsibilities for peacekeeping in their regions. In Africa, the continent’s five main sub-regions have been working toward achieving peace and security. Initially created for economic purposes, these sub-regional organisations: the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the East, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Maghreb Arab Union in the North, the Southern African Development Community (SADC), and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) have over time given more attention to issues of security and conflict management.

In West Africa, the region’s organisation ECOWAS, was primarily created to promote economic integration, however, as conflicts continued to proliferate, it began to assume a more prominent conflict management role. This was mainly due to the realisation that peace and security are major prerequisites to economic integration. When civil war broke out in Liberia in 1989, the Doe regime and the world at large had expected the United States, which had been a close ally of Liberia during the Cold War, to intervene militarily. However, the USA never intervened not only because it disapproved of Doe’s policies (one of which was rampant corruption), but also because Liberia had lost its strategic importance to the USA following the demise of the Cold War. As the conflict raged on, many people left the country to seek refuge in neighbouring countries notably Sierra Leone and Guinea. With no prospects for international intervention, members of ECOWAS decided to respond to the conflict. A Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) comprising Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Sierra Leone and Guinea was established in 1990 which eventually created ECOMOG. ECOMOG intervened militarily in the Liberian conflict and when the conflict spilled over to Sierra Leone, the force was also deployed to help bring peace to that country.

43 See Jakkie Cilliers and Greg Mills (eds.), ibid.
44 Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8.
46 Ibid.
47 Ibid.
ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia was the first of its kind by a sub-regional organisation on the African continent. Following this intervention regional organisations, both in Africa and beyond have continuously been encouraged to pursue an active role in maintaining peace and security.48 The UN in particular continues to encourage and support regional and sub-regional peace operations. While many have commended the positive steps that ECOMOG took in its Liberian and Sierra Leonean interventions, there have been criticisms specifically on the conduct of its peacekeepers. Ellis, for instance contends that ECOMOG peacekeepers were as murderers as they were mercenaries who did more harm than good and prolonged the conflict especially in Liberia.49 However, other scholars argue that while pointing out the shortfalls of ECOMOG, it is imperative that critics avoid a one sided analysis of the interventions. Adebajo, for instance, argues that there is need to balance both views because not all of ECOMOG's activities were negative. He contends that there is need to equally address the “positive achievements and enormous sacrifices of the peacekeepers.”50 In the same vein, this thesis argues that no peace operation is without mistakes as such ECOMOG's activities - both positive and negative - should be seen as providing valuable lessons for other sub-regional organisations on the African continent.

It has generally been argued that regional organisations make a huge difference to the settlement of conflicts. However, it is important to bear in mind that the road for them is not smooth. While there are numerous advantages for having sub-regional forces as peacekeepers, the challenges facing them are equally overwhelming. In the case of Africa, the notion of having Africans to take care of their own conflicts has the following advantages. Firstly, member states in a region are the ones most likely to suffer the direct consequences of instability; as a result, they are more likely to provide a timely response to such conflicts.51 What is more, the contagion effect of African conflicts is as worrying as it is saddening. Francis notes “these brutal intra-state conflicts have led to state

50Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 7 p. 11.
51 See Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45.
collapse and their contagion effects threaten the national and regional security of the sub-region mainly due to the influx of refugees and the proliferation of small arms.\textsuperscript{52} Thus, regional organisations have more to lose if they just sit back and watch civil wars as they proliferate. Commenting on the Sierra Leonean conflict, one ECOMOG chief of staff argued “we had to put out the fire in order to stop it from extending to our own houses.”\textsuperscript{53} Secondly, it has been argued that regional organisations provide legitimacy, recognition and a credible platform for co-operation among regional states.\textsuperscript{54} Though there are exceptions to this view, it is generally assumed that warring parties in a region feel comfortable negotiating a peace settlement with a sub-region or regional body as opposed to other outsiders who are seen as intruders often with ulterior motives for intervention. Thirdly, regional bodies are better placed to respond to conflicts since they have local knowledge and are familiar with the history and culture of a particular area in the region.\textsuperscript{55} These factors help regional bodies to respond better to conflicts in their regions and treat them with the urgency they require.

However, the notion of African solutions to African problems is not without challenges. The advantages of regional security rarely reflect the reality on the ground as there are a number of challenges to regional security in Africa. In general, African peacekeepers face political, structural, financial and planning problems which negatively affect their operations.\textsuperscript{56} Most members in sub-regional bodies are financially handicapped; as a result they fail to contribute effectively to regional security.\textsuperscript{57} Thus, lack of adequate resources is one of the biggest problems affecting regional peace operations and it is one of the issues regional organisations have to deal with in the foreseeable future. Worthy pointing also is the fact that “close proximity sometimes generates tension and reduces the spirit of impartiality between neighbours, to the extent that they may become part of

\textsuperscript{52}David J. Francis, \textit{The Politics of Economic Regionalism: Sierra Leone in ECOWAS} (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), ch. 2 p. 39.
\textsuperscript{53} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{op cit.} note 45 p. 92.
\textsuperscript{54} See David Francis, \textit{The Politics of Economic Regionalism: Sierra Leone in ECOWAS}.
\textsuperscript{55} William Nhara, “The OAU and the Potential role of Regional and Sub-regional Organisations” \textit{op cit.} in note 42.
\textsuperscript{57} Ibid.
the problem rather than the solution." This is especially true in cases where some members of a regional organisation offer to support different factions in the conflict. Another problem concerns the presence of a hegemon whose power and influence might affect the military planning and decision making in the operation. This situation may not be appreciated by other members in the organisation, Nigeria's hegemonic ambitions in ECOWAS and its activities in ECOMOG serve as good examples.

Another challenge facing regional peace operations involves lack of a clearly defined mandate which might deprive the regional force of legitimacy. Lack of political will among member states in a sub-regional organisation is another worrying factor. Because of this, members may fail to agree on a common policy and arrive at a political consensus; this may undermine the autonomy of the organisation. Furthermore, African regional organisations and their forces lack equipment to aid them in their missions. They also lack experience, hence without proper training and training facilities, they lack the expertise needed in their operations. In the long run all these undermine the authority of African sub-regional organisations involved in peace operations.

In sum, while the challenges facing sub-regional organisations are daunting, it is equally important that African states take initiatives for maintaining their own peace. In the absence of a Western commitment to conflict resolution in Africa, it remains imperative that Africans take a step further in peace support operations in their regions. It is important that other sub-regional organisations in Africa learn from the experiences of ECOMOG as this will help shape their future peace operations. States in their respective sub-regions need to establish common ground for successful implementation of peace operations. This means sub-regional organisations have to deal with the challenges that stand in their way so as to make peace operations a success. Without stability African

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58 William Nhara, "The OAU and the Potential role of Regional and Sub-regional Organisations" op cit. note 42 p. 102.
61 Ibid.
states will continue to fight their wars and suffer further marginalisation from the rest of the world.

1.10 Chapter Outline

This study is structured into six chapters. Chapter one outlines the problem to be investigated exploring the objectives and significance of the study, the research methodology, theoretical framework, and the literature review. Chapter two looks at regional and sub-regional peace operations in Africa with special emphasis on African responses to African conflicts. It also examines the role played by the West in African conflicts. Chapter three examines the political history of West Africa and traces the history and birth of the region’s organisation - ECOWAS and its security apparatus - ECOMOG. Chapter four examines the Liberian civil war by outlining the causes of the conflict and the intervention by ECOMOG. Chapter five analyses the Sierra Leonean civil war, its background and the role ECOMOG played in that conflict. Chapter six deals with the experiences of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone and in particular, highlights the important lessons that other African intervening forces can learn from ECOMOG for their future intervention in African conflicts. The section on general conclusion concludes the study and offers some general suggestions on African peacekeeping and peace enforcement.
CHAPTER TWO

REGIONAL AND SUB-REGIONAL PEACE OPERATIONS IN AFRICA

2.1 Introduction

The end of the super power rivalry witnessed an increase in the number of intrastate conflicts in Africa. As many have argued, "the end of the Cold War marked the turning point in international peacekeeping in Africa when strategic interest faded, and Africa ceased to be a stage where the East and the West could play out their rivalries using surrogate African states in bids for dominance or influence." This became obvious from the 1990s and failure of the international community to respond to conflicts in Liberia, Somalia and later Rwanda bears testimony to this. Writing on the conflict in Liberia, Vogt argues that "the conflict occurred at the time when Security Council members were busy implementing one of the most expensive military interventions to force Iraqi withdrawal from Kuwait." However, there was little effort on the part of the international community to help in Liberia. The UN argued that being an internal conflict, it could not intervene in Liberia since its Charter prevented it from intervening in the internal affairs of states, while on the other hand, the Gulf war being interstate warranted intervention. While this argument holds, some have argued that the gross human rights abuses targeted at innocent civilians in Liberia were enough to prompt a UN intervention. The Liberian case is one of the many examples that tell the tale of how the international community (especially members of the UNSC) has become more and more indifferent to conflicts taking place in Africa. This stance has forced sub-regional organisations in the region to find ways of managing and resolving their conflicts. It is worthy noting though that major conflicts in Africa have seen a considerable decline in recent years and that efforts are being made toward ending some

64 Ibid., p. 47.
65 Ibid., p. 47.
66 Ibid.
of the continent’s worst conflicts. Nevertheless, continued violence and insecurity in some parts of the region threaten millions of people. In this regard, regional and sub-regional organisations in Africa now see the need for responsibility sharing with the UN for the effective management of conflicts.

In Africa, efforts have been made and continue to be made by the regional body, the AU, and the continent’s sub-regional organisations with the specific objective of enhancing the management and resolution of conflicts. Below we look at some of the efforts by Africans at conflict resolution in Africa.

2.2 African Response to African Conflicts
There has always been a general belief among policy makers in Africa that Africans themselves are better placed to respond to their problems. This is the case because such responsibility ensures Africans of finding solutions to their problems. To this end, a number of organisations in the region have over the years made efforts towards ending conflicts. Below, we look at selected examples of such organisations:

2.2.1 The OAU
Established in May 1963 the OAU became Africa’s first regional body. Its central objective was to foster African unity and to create a mechanism to resolve disputes among African states. As a body, it made several attempts at peacekeeping and conflict prevention but the body registered minimal successes specifically because of its principle of non-intervention in the domestic affairs of its member states. Despite being guided by the principle of non-intervention, the OAU still managed to some extent, to get involved in ending conflicts in Africa. The OAU undertook to resolve conflicts through

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68 Ibid., p. 27.
70 Ibid., p. 30.
the following: fact finding missions, mediation and peace support missions; for instance, in 1993 it successfully carried out a fact finding mission in the Republic of Congo. The body was also involved in conflict management initiatives in Burundi, Somalia and Zaire just to mention a few. The OAU had also involved itself indirectly in conflict zones through special envoys in Liberia and Somalia. In addition the OAU used a system of adhoc visits and meetings for instance in the Angola and Sudan conflicts.

While the OAU Charter prevented it from interfering in the domestic affairs of states, the regional body, for the first time in its history, deployed military personnel in a peace support mission in Chad. In 1981 the OAU deployed an Inter African Force (IAF) to help end the conflict in Chad. Despite the poor showing, many came to see the operation as a useful learning experience. The OAU also deployed military personnel in a peace support mission in Rwanda (1991-1993). It deployed a Neutral Military Observer Group (NMOG) to monitor the demilitarised zone between the contending parties in that country until it handed over the operation to the UN.

The OAU also fielded Observer Missions in Burundi (1993-1996) and Comoros (1997-1999), as well as an OAU Liaison Mission in Ethiopia. Coning points out that following the assassination of Burundi’s democratically elected president in October 1993 the OAU

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74 Ibid.

75 Ibid.


78 Cedric de Coning, “The Role of the OAU in conflict Management in Africa: The OAU’s contribution to conflict prevention and Resolution in Africa.”

organized a mission known as the OAU military Observer Mission to Burundi (OMIB).\textsuperscript{80} Though it partly managed to minimise tensions, deteriorating conditions in the aftermath of the Buyoya coup of 25 July 1996 forced the OAU to withdraw the mission in August of the same year.\textsuperscript{81} It should be mentioned that a number of OAU’s efforts were unsuccessful for a number of reasons such as; financial, logistical and material, but still they served as important lessons for subsequent organisations in the region.

2.2.2 The AU

The AU was launched in Durban, South Africa on 9 July 2002 replacing the OAU.\textsuperscript{82} Among its many objectives is the promotion of peace, security and stability on the continent.\textsuperscript{83} Like its predecessor, the AU believes in non-interference by any member state in the internal affairs of another, however, there is an exception to this rule. The Constitutive Act of the African Union (CAAU) stipulates “the right of the Union to intervene in a Member State pursuant to a decision of the Assembly in respect of grave circumstances, namely war crimes, genocide and crimes against humanity”.\textsuperscript{84} As a result of this principle, the AU has so far registered remarkable successes and plays an increasingly critical role in conflict resolution in Africa. Below are few selected cases of AU’s activities in the region:

The AU deployed its first peacekeepers to Burundi in 2003. For some time, Burundi had been facing political crises and the situation continued to degenerate by the day. Boshoff\textsuperscript{85} writes that fighting became worse in the country days before the power hand over in the Burundian transitional government. Against this background, the AU decided to deploy troops to Burundi and on 3 February 2003 the African Mission in Burundi (AMIB) was

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\textsuperscript{80} Cedric de Coning, “The Role of the OAU in conflict Management in Africa: The OAU’s contribution to conflict prevention and Resolution in Africa,” op cit. note 73.

\textsuperscript{81} Ibid.


\textsuperscript{83} Constitutive Act of the African Union, Article 3 Objective (F) found at \url{http://www.au2002.gov.za/docs/key_au/au_act.htm}.

\textsuperscript{84} Constitutive Act of the African Union, Article 4 Principles g and h.

approved. While meeting a lot of challenges in Burundi, AMIB managed to prevent the situation from getting out of hand until it handed over the mission to the UN. The AU also deployed peacekeepers to the Western Sudan region of Darfur in 2004. The African Union Mission in Sudan (AMIS) as it is called was deployed in response to the gross humanitarian abuses in Darfur.\(^{87}\) It is important to note that since 2004 the AU was the only foreign intervener in the conflict, but while trying to do its best in Sudan, the mission was faced with the same problems that have come to characterise African peacekeepers. Limited resources - both financial and material - have been a major setback. Despite the challenges, the presence of AMIS in Sudan deserves some credit.

Another development worthy highlighting is the African Union Mission to Somalia (AMISOM) which the AU’s Peace and Security Council (PSC) authorised in January 2007.\(^{88}\) It was agreed that AMISOM would deploy for a period of six months to be replaced afterwards by a UN led force.\(^{89}\) The AU has ambitious plans in as far as security of the region is concerned. The regional body is currently working towards developing an African stand-by force, comprised of contributions from five sub-regional organisations by 2010.\(^{90}\) The idea of a standby force has been commended by many since it represents the continent’s best opportunity to resolve its problems.\(^{91}\) The AU has also played advisory roles, for instance in 2005, it supported democracy in Togo following the death of president Gnassingbe Eyadema, Africa’s longest serving dictator.\(^{92}\) While all these initiatives and plans are for the good of Africa, they are often met with challenges which affect their success. Nevertheless, the AU, unlike its predecessor, should be commended for its pro-active role in conflict resolution.

\(^{86}\) Ibid., p. 1.
\(^{91}\) Ibid.
\(^{92}\) Ibid.
2.2.3 Southern African Development Community (SADC)

At the sub-regional level, African organisations have also made efforts at conflict resolution and SADC is one of them. "Established for the purpose of harmonizing subregional economic policies, the Southern African Development Community (SADC) has increasingly come to be regarded as a security arrangement."\(^93\) Though controversial, two military interventions have taken place under the umbrella name of SADC.\(^94\) The first intervention took place when fighting broke out in the DRC in 1998; Zimbabwe, Angola and Namibia sent troops to the war torn country. It should be noted that these three countries never got a SADC mandate at the time of intervention, "however, the deployment only received a SADC mandate ex post facto."\(^95\) Malan argues that the involvement of the three SADC states was endorsed at a meeting of SADC defence ministers in Harare on 18 August 1998 long after the intervention.\(^96\) It should further be noted that the interventions were not without problems; the intervening countries have been blamed for getting involved in the conflict with the sole purpose of furthering their own interests.\(^97\)

The second intervention under SADC took place in September 1998 when South African and Botswana military forces intervened in Lesotho to assist the government following domestic unrest emanating from disputed elections.\(^98\) Like the DRC intervention, this one also received a SADC mandate after the troops had already been deployed.

2.2.4 Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)

IGAD is a sub-regional organisation in the Horn of Africa. It was founded in 1996 on the basis of IGADD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Desertification).\(^99\) Its goals were initially economic; encouraging greater co-operation so as to achieve economic integration. As time went by, the organisation became involved with promoting

\(^95\) Ibid., p. 67.
\(^96\) Mark Malan, *Regional Power Politics Under Cover of SADC- Running Amok with a Mythical Organ* p. 6.
\(^97\) Bjorn Moller, op cit. note 67 p. 67.
\(^98\) Mark Malan, op cit. note 93 p. 7.
\(^99\) Bjorn Moller, op cit. note 67 p. 69.
peace and security in the region. Though not successful, IGAD has been active for quite some time in the Sudan and Somali peace processes. As far as Sudan is concerned, “IGAD has established a permanent secretariat for the Sudan peace process in Nairobi, appointed special envoys and hosted negotiations between the government of Sudan and the Sudan People’s Liberation Movement (SPLM).” These efforts have been followed by a number of meetings with the aim of trying to bring the warring parties to the negotiating table. In Somalia, IGAD has for along time taken various mediation efforts aimed at unifying the warring factions in the Transitional National Government (TNG).

The above are just selected cases which show efforts that Africa has made in conflict resolution thus far. While most of the organisations were created primarily for economic integration, increased conflict cases on the continent and the reluctance of Western nations to intervene militarily in Africa’s conflicts saw them change their mandates to include conflict resolution and management. The international community now prefers to do other roles in the region and it is to this that we now turn.

2.3 International Response to African Conflicts (enabling role played by the West)

A number of scholars have argued that disturbing events in Somalia, Rwanda and Angola led Western powers to desist from intervening militarily in African conflicts. Instead a number of donor states particularly the United States of America, Britain, France and the Nordic countries are in varying degrees assisting African countries with funding and training to enable them embark on peace support operations on their continent. The 1990s saw the USA, Britain and France develop policies to enhance the capacities of African countries’ peacekeeping capabilities. The programmes included classroom

100 Ibid., p. 69.
101 Ibid., p. 71.
102 Ibid., p. 71.
103 See Oliver Furley and Roy May, Peacekeeping in Africa and Margaret Aderinsola, “Co-operations Between the UN and the OAU in the Management of African Conflicts” in Mark Malan (ed.), Whither Peacekeeping in Africa?
104 See Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4.
instruction, field training, and the provision of military equipment.\textsuperscript{105} The following section looks at initiatives taken by the USA, Britain and France in promoting peace and security in Africa.

2.3.1 The USA
The catastrophe in Somalia in October of 1993 is regarded as the turning point for America's intervention in African conflicts.\textsuperscript{106} As many have argued "president Clinton's Decision Directive of May 1994, urging 'African solutions for African problems,' was an attempt to signal both America's determination to steer clear of entanglements in African conflicts and also to promote new initiatives by African states to secure and maintain peace both in inter-state and intra-state crises."\textsuperscript{107} To fulfill this, the USA embarked on a number of programmes some of which included the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) and African Contingency Operations Training Assistance (ACOTA). Below we explain in details the objectives of these programmes.

In 1996, the USA proposed the idea of an African Crisis Response Force (ACRF). This however, was not successful and the concept was later changed to African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) the following year.\textsuperscript{108} ACRI seeks to promote peace and stability on the continent and to help African nations to prevent conflicts which continue to plague the continent.\textsuperscript{109} Its main objective is to enhance the capacity of African nations to better perform peacekeeping tasks and also to encourage self-reliance.\textsuperscript{110} Unlike the ACRF, ACRI is not designed to create a standing force; rather “peacekeepers from a number of African nations trained under this programme will stand ready in their nations of origin for rapid deployment to areas of crises as needed.”\textsuperscript{111} Through this programme,

\textsuperscript{105} Other countries such as Denmark and Norway have established formal programs to develop African peacekeeping capacities, and many more have contributed on an ad hoc basis. For a brief overview see Eric G. Berman and Katie E. Sams, Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities, pp. 333-58.
\textsuperscript{108} See Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4.
\textsuperscript{110} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{111} Ibid.
the USA sought to train up to 12,000 troops drawn from various African countries over a five-year period. This programme was to be reinforced by provision of equipment, logistical and financial support from the USA and other donor countries. ACRI-trained troops are deployed following a request from international organisations such as the UN, or the AU or sub-regional organisations such as ECOWAS or SADC, and decision regarding deployment is the responsibility of ACRI partner nations. In addition, ACRI-trained troops can participate in a multinational peacekeeping exercise in Africa or beyond. Upon its inception, each country selected to participate in the programme was to receive an initial equipment package designed to support a battalion. Some of the countries that have participated in the initial battalion training since 1997 include: Benin, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Malawi, Mali, Senegal and Uganda. It appears the programme has already been put to good use; some of ACRI-trained troops from Mali, Ghana and Senegal have taken part in peacekeeping missions either under ECOWAS or the UN.

In July 2002, a follow-on programme to ACRI named African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) was announced by the US state department. Among other things the programme includes “training, technical and maintenance assistance, and the provision of some field equipment.” It seeks to provide a much modified programme than ACRI. The USA is also keen on assisting sub-regional organisations; ECOWAS being one example. In 2002 the USA pledged training assistance for ECOMOG and further promised its assistance to ECOWAS to set up military bases for the speedy deployment of troops in conflict zones.

112 Ibid.
113 Ibid.
114 Ibid.
115 Ibid.
116 Ibid.
118 Ibid.
120 Ibid., p. 206.
121 Ibid
122 Ibid., p. 207.
Other initiatives on the part of the USA include a $600 million Global Peace Operations Initiative (GPOI), which President Bush announced in June 2004. The primary purpose of the GPOI is to train and equip 75,000 military troops majority of them Africans, for peacekeeping operations by 2010. GPOI incorporates previous programmes for Africa, such as ACRI and ACOTA. Under this programme, “the United States will work to enhance and support the command structure and multilateral staff of ECOWAS and the AU.”

2.3.2 Britain

Since its withdraw from Africa, Britain has adopted a low key approach to the continent however, the country still supports initiatives that intend to improve the capacity of African militaries in peace operations. To this end, Britain has been involved for sometime in “helping to train a number of African countries in preparation for deployment on peacekeeping duties.” It has also sponsored a series of workshops and peacekeeping map exercises in Harare, Cairo, Addis Ababa and Accra just to mention a few. One of the renowned operations undertaken by the British was operation BLUE CRANE in 1999 which was an example of a British-led peacekeeping exercise. The operation included filed training exercise and saw the participation of 4,000 peacekeepers from Angola, Botswana, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Denmark, France, Germany, and the USA contributed funding and logistical assistance to the exercise. Except for London’s robust response to events in Sierra Leone, British peacekeeping policy towards Africa contained very little in the way of materiel. Britain has also taken part in bilateral

123 The Henry L Stimson Centre: Peacekeeping in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities, House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Africa Friday, October 8 2004.
125 Ibid, p. 6.
126 Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4 pp. 32-33.
128 Ibid., p. 201.
129 See Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4.
peacekeeping training with a number of African states and subregional groupings. For instance, British Military Advisory and Training Teams (BMATTs) provided short-term peacekeeping training programmes for Zimbabwean troops that had deployed with the UN forces in Angola, and Ghanaian troops that deployed with ECOMOG in Liberia. BMATT established regional teams; in Southern Africa it was set up in Zimbabwe in 1995 (but closed in 2001) and in West Africa in Ghana in 1996. In 1995 BMATT (South Africa) was also established to oversee the transformation of post-apartheid armed forces. In 2001, the African Peacekeeping Training Support Programme was expanded into a well modified programme known as the Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP). The CPP seeks to "place a high priority on supporting programmes aimed at developing the capabilities of African and regional organisations to undertake peace operations."

2.3.3 France

France has also taken part in helping Africans master the techniques of keeping their own peace. This is shown in the Renforcement des Capacités Africaines de Maintien la Paix, (RECAMP) peacekeeping programme, which provides individual training at regional centres rather than intensive training of entire units. The origins of RECAMP resemble those of ACRI. Like the USA, France had initially proposed a standing African force to foster peace and security on the continent; however, African countries were not very receptive to the idea, and Paris never pushed very hard. The RECAMP programme aims to increase the military capacity of African countries to engage in peace-keeping operations on their own continent. Among other things the RECAMP programme includes "the creation of a training centre for peacekeeping at Zambakro in the Ivory Coast, the pre-positioning of equipment for peacekeeping battalions, and the organisation of Franco-African tactical peacekeeping Field training exercises."

132 Ibid p201
133 Ibid p202
134 Ibid p202
135 Ibid p203
136 Ibid p203
138 See Berman and Sams, Peacekeeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities, op cit. note 77 p. 297.
school at Zambakro, in the Ivory Coast was opened on 7 June 1999 and provides such courses as “military observers, battalion command post, multinational brigade command post and train the trainers courses.”\(^{140}\) As of 2002, 545 officers from 36 different African countries had graduated at the peacekeeping school.\(^{141}\) The importance of providing equipment in programmes such as RECAMP cannot be overlooked. African armies, while showing excellent capacity for peacekeeping, lack necessary equipment and support for peacekeeping operations. Thus, by providing them with equipment, these programmes help channel African peace operations in the right direction. Under RECAMP, France undertook to establish depots to expand the whole programme. By August 2002, France had established depots in Dakar, 1998, Libreville, 2000 and Djibouti in 2001.\(^{142}\) Each depot is equipped with vehicles, radios, generators, uniforms and tents.\(^{143}\) Of particular importance to note is the fact that this equipment has been used to assist several peacekeeping operations such as “the mission to monitor the implementation of the Bangui agreements (MISAB) in the Central African Republic (CAR) in 1998, the ECOMOG operation in Guinea-Bissau in 1999 and the Senegalese troops under the UN mission in the DRC”.\(^{144}\)

Apart from efforts shown by the USA, Britain and France, other Western countries have also been involved in training Africans for their own peacekeeping. The G-8 countries created an Africa Action Plan in 2002 to advance African peacekeeping efforts with financial and programmatic support.\(^{145}\) In general, it should be pointed out that the above mentioned programmes are in line with the West’s plans of helping African armies keep their own peace.\(^{146}\) The message from the West is that Africans should take charge of

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\(^{140}\) Ibid., pp. 203, 221 also note that the peacekeeping school is now located in Koulikouro- Mali.
\(^{141}\) Ibid., p. 203.
\(^{142}\) Ibid., p. 203.
\(^{143}\) Ibid., p. 204.
\(^{144}\) Ibid., p. 204.
\(^{145}\) The Henry L Stimson Centre: Peacekeeping in Africa: Challenges and Opportunities, House International Relations Committee, Subcommittee on Africa Friday, October 8 2004.
\(^{146}\) Oliver Furley and Roy May (eds.), op cit. note 4.
their own peacekeeping operations and that the international community should be there to provide financial, material and logistical support for their success.147

2.4 Conclusion

Regional organisations have become increasingly important on the African political landscape. The foregoing sections have outlined efforts made by organisations in Africa to resolve political crises; however, these have not been easy and on the larger part have met with varying degrees of success. On the whole, efforts made by African organisations in as far as conflict resolution is concerned need to be commended as positive steps in the right direction. The chapter has also addressed some of the programmes initiated by Western nations specifically the USA, Britain and France. These programmes are geared towards training African militaries to acquire skills that will enable them to effectively participate in peacekeeping operations on their continent and beyond. In addition, the programmes also provide financial and logistical assistance to African forces. The literature covered thus far shows that the programmes have already born fruits on the continent.

From the foregoing it can be argued that African organisations have the capacity to carry out peacekeeping operations on their continent. Many of the states are willing to play a significant role in peace operations however; inadequate resources and poor training remain some of their major draw backs. This means that Africa’s success in conflict resolution and management on the continent will continue to rely on the active participation of the international community for some time to come. Such reliance on external assistance in some cases might deny African organisations the freedom to decide on the strategic and operational aspects of any operation they may wish to undertake. If Africans cannot fund their own operations, those who can might have a strong influence on the whole mission and might take advantage to further their own interests. This may prove costly on African sub-regional organisations. While these fears are real, it should be remembered that until such a time that African organisations come to carry out peace operations without the involvement of the West (for financial reasons or otherwise),

peacekeeping and conflict resolution on the continent will remain a collaborative effort with the West playing a decisive role.
CHAPTER THREE
WEST AFRICA IN PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction
The West African sub-region is made up of sixteen countries; Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d’Ivoire, The Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo. All the countries are members of ECOWAS except for Mauritania which withdrew in December 2000. One of the poorest in the world, the sub-region has more than 250 million inhabitants spreading over some 5 million square km and has an average per capita income of less than $500. Huge inequalities in terms of natural resource and wealth distribution are most evident among countries and citizens respectively. Security issues have been the most contentious in the sub-region with a number of countries having experienced long periods of civil wars and military coups. In this chapter, we take a historical approach to understanding events in the region. We first look at the political history of West Africa, the economic conditions and the subsequent formation of ECOWAS as a vehicle to economic integration. The chapter also provides an overview of the evolution of ECOMOG as a security apparatus for the sub-region and looks at the conduct of its operations in West Africa.

3.2 Political History of the Region
West Africa, like other parts of Africa, had been under colonial rule; Britain, France, Portugal, and German had colonies in this region. Britain controlled the Gambia, Sierra Leone, Ghana and Nigeria throughout the colonial era. France had Senegal, Guinea, Mali, Burkina Faso, Benin, Côte d’Ivoire and Niger under the confederation of French West Africa. Portugal had Guinea Bissau while Germany had Togoland (now Togo), but was forced to divide it between France and Britain following its defeat in the First World War. The UN office for West Africa found at http://www.un.org/unowa/unowa/bckgrdnew.pdf accessed on 26 October 2007 note that Cape Verde is sometimes included due to its membership in ECOWAS.

150 Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8 p. 3.
151 Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), in ibid p. 3.
World War.\textsuperscript{153} Liberia was the only country that remained independent despite losing much of its territory to the colonial powers.\textsuperscript{154} In the aftermath of the Second World War, nationalist movements arose across the region, most notably in Ghana under the Pan-Africanist Kwame Nkrumah. In 1957 Ghana, under Nkrumah, became the first sub-Saharan colony to achieve its independence and by 1974 the rest of West Africa had gained independence.\textsuperscript{155}

Since independence, West Africa has suffered from the same problems as much of the African continent. Dictatorships, corruption and military coups have been rampant in the region. The security problem in the region is compounded by the multi-ethnic nature of states most of which were put together by the colonial powers (France, Britain, Portugal and Germany). This was done to serve the colonialists' administrative and economic interests.\textsuperscript{156} The colonialists paid no attention to the long-term effects of grouping together people with diverse ethnic backgrounds and cultures. At independence, the different nationalities which make up West African states found themselves scattered across the sub-region. Such a situation made civil unrest inevitable and West Africa has been one of the world's most unstable regions. Many nations have been plagued by a number of bloody civil wars that have resulted in huge outflows of refugees, rebels and arms across borders.\textsuperscript{157} Some of the civil wars include: the Nigerian civil war (1967-1970), Liberia (1989 and 1999) and Sierra Leone (1991-2001) to mention a few.\textsuperscript{158} Niger and Mali have had to grapple with a Tuareg rebellion and Côte d'Ivoire is yet to find peace following a conflict that began in 2002. The above conflicts and the continued security threats in the region have made it difficult for countries to fully provide security.


\textsuperscript{157} Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8 p. 1.

\textsuperscript{158} Ibid.
to their citizens and threaten to slow down the sub-region’s efforts to economic integration.

Economically, the sub-region remains predominantly agricultural and commodities such as cocoa, coffee, cotton, palm produce, rubber and groundnuts make up for primary exports. In addition, West Africa is one sub-region endowed with abundant natural resources and minerals such as gold, diamond, petroleum, uranium, iron ore and bauxite. However, states in the region have failed to develop their economies despite attractive natural resources. Political instability, accompanied by undemocratic governments has been a major setback in economic growth and development. Development is further threatened by the HIV/AIDS pandemic which has become a growing problem particularly in Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia and Nigeria. Famine has also become a problem in parts of Mali and Niger.

3.3 ECOWAS as a response to the Economic situation

The idea for a West African community goes back to President William Tubman of Liberia who made the call in 1964. Following this, an agreement was signed between Côte d’Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone in February 1965. However, this did not amount to anything and in April 1972, General Yakubu Gowon of Nigeria, and General Gnassingbe Eyadema of Togo, re-launched the idea. They drew up proposals and had two of their ministers (one from each country), tour 12 countries in the sub-region to sell the idea of a West African community. In all the 12 countries visited, the responses to the proposal were positive. Efforts at establishing a West African community continued until 1975 when the idea came into reality in the name of

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160 Ibid.
162 Ibid.
163 See Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), *op cit. note 8*.
164 Ibid.
165 Ibid.
ECOWAS. ECOWAS was founded on 28 May 1975 with the signing of the Treaty of Lagos in Nigeria.¹⁶⁶ Fifteen West African countries signed the treaty.¹⁶⁷ ECOWAS was conceived as a means toward economic integration and development.

The sub-regional body aims to “promote co-operation and integration in economic, social and cultural activity, ultimately leading to the establishment of an economic and monetary union through the total integration of the national economies of member states.”¹⁶⁸ In addition, ECOWAS aims to raise the living standards of its peoples, maintain and enhance economic stability, promote relations among member states and contribute to the progress and development of the African Continent.¹⁶⁹ Its headquarters is in Abuja, Nigeria. The current ECOWAS chairman is President Tandja Mamadou of Niger with Dr. Mohamed Ibn Chambas, a Ghanaian born, as its current executive Secretary.¹⁷⁰ On the whole, ECOWAS’s integration policies and programmes reflect the existing economic conditions in its member countries and significant developments on the international scene.¹⁷¹ The creation of ECOWAS was a major achievement for the sub-region and had two important implications. Not only did it show that differences in language, culture, and economic development do not necessarily hinder cooperation, it also served to show that cooperation between small and big countries is both possible and healthy.¹⁷²

While ECOWAS was primarily created to promote economic integration, disturbing events in several of its member states made it realise that economic cooperation and integration could only be achieved in an environment of peace and cooperation.¹⁷³ Political stability and democratic environments came to be regarded as major prerequisites to successful regional integration. To this end, members of ECOWAS

¹⁶⁶ Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), in ibid.
¹⁶⁷ For countries that signed the Treaty refer to the introductory section.
¹⁶⁹ Ibid.
¹⁷¹ ECOWAS Treaty above.
¹⁷² Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8 p. 32.
¹⁷³ Ibid., p. 44.
adopted a Protocol Relating to Non-Aggression (PNA) in April 1978 that forbade aggression among member states. It also encouraged member states to settle disputes peacefully. 174 For instance, Article 5(2) of the PNA states that “any dispute which cannot be settled peacefully among Member states shall be referred to a Committee of the Authority. In the event of failure of settlement by the aforementioned Committee the dispute shall finally go to the Authority.” 175 A subsequent Protocol Relating to Mutual Assistance on Defence (PMAD) was signed in Freetown, Sierra Leone on 29 May 1981 and became effective in 1986. 176 Through PMAD, ECOWAS member states adopted the idea of collective defence in which an attack against one means an attack against the Community. This allows members to give mutual aid and assistance for defence. 177 The Protocol also provides for collective response where a member state faces internal armed conflict with active support from outside. This is the case because such conflicts pose a great threat to peace and security of other member states. 178

The ECOWAS treaty has undergone several revisions. The revised ECOWAS treaty of 1993 expanded the functions of the organisation to include “the establishment of a common market through the liberalisation of trade by the abolition, among member states, of customs, of non-tariff barriers in order to establish a free trade area at the Community level; the adoption of a common external tariff and a common trade policy vis-à-vis third countries and the removal, between member states, of obstacles to the free movement of persons, goods, service and capital, and to the right of residence and establishment.” 179 In the political sphere the revised treaty provides for a West African parliament, an economic and social council and an ECOWAS court of justice. 180

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174 Ibid., p. 44.
176 Ibid
178 Ibid see also Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8 p. 44.
179 Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) [Revised] Article 3: Aims and Objectives No 2 d (i, ii and iii) found at http://www.chr.up.ac.za/hr_docs/african/docs/other/ecowas5.doc accessed on 15 November 2007.
180 Information on ECOWAS found at
treaty also provides for active participation of civil society and nongovernmental organisations in its institutions. This is done to improve the efficiency of the organisation to enable it respond better to political, economic and social issues in the region.

Subsequent security-related agreements include “the ECOWAS Conventions on Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters and on Extradition signed in Dakar on 29 July 1992 and in Abuja on 6 August 1994, the Declaration on the Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation and Manufacture of Light Weapons, adopted by the ECOWAS Heads of State in Abuja on 30-31 October 1998 and the Programme for the Co-ordination of Assistance for Security and Development (PCASED), held in Bamako on 24 March 1999.” These are some of the provisions and arrangements that ECOWAS has made, the whole list of which cannot be fully covered here. It should be noted that while ECOWAS has made such progress thus far (for instance when compared to other sub-regions in Africa), this has come at a price. For instance, the long time Anglophone-Francophone rivalry has been a major stumbling block to collective efforts in the region. West African states have in particular been suspicious of Nigeria’s hegemonic ambitions and aspirations in the region. Such suspiscious have led the two camps (specifically the Francophone camp) into signing other agreements - economic and security - with members of the same camp. While this has been done to offset Nigeria’s power and ambitions, it has proved costly to ECOWAS since member states tend to have other priorities different from those of the organisation. What is more, mutual suspicion between the Anglophone and Francophone camps further undermines regional solidarity.


181 Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8 p. 47.

182 Information on ECOWAS

Collective security issues in West Africa have also been plagued with difficulties arising in part "from smaller states’ fear that hegemons such as Nigeria could abuse the power granted to them."\(^{184}\) Thus, where security issues are at stake, distrust between Community members based on this history becomes more apparent. Despite the in house squabbles, ECOWAS still remains one of the most powerful sub-regional organisations on the African continent.

### 3.4 Birth and Evolution of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG)

ECOMOG is a non-standing military force that was set up by member states of ECOWAS. It was set up to deal with the security problems that followed the collapse of the Liberian state in 1990.\(^{185}\) ECOMOG was thus established on an adhoc basis as a multinational peacekeeping/peace enforcement force, and became the first such group to be established by a regional body.\(^{186}\) The formation of ECOMOG as a force to respond to the conflict in Liberia stemmed from the fact that no international efforts to the conflict were forthcoming, either from the UN - the global peacekeeper, or any of the big Western powers. As events in Liberia unfolded, many had expected the USA - a country that had had closer ties with Liberia especially during the Cold War period to come to her rescue. However, the former distanced itself from the conflict and refused to become involved.\(^{187}\) Perceiving little strategic interest in Africa following the end of the Cold war, and distracted by events in the Gulf, the USA avoided a high profile role in the Liberian conflict.\(^{188}\) Thus, the vacuum created by the UN and the USA coupled with the grave human rights abuses emanating from the war saw the formation of ECOMOG. This explains the primacy of ECOWAS as the most active international organization throughout the Liberian conflict.

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\(^{184}\) Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), op cit. note 8.


\(^{187}\) Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa* op cit. note 45.

\(^{188}\) Ibid.
3.5 From Standing Mediation Committee to ECOMOG.

On 24 December 1989 Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia, (NPFL) invaded Liberia from Côte d’Ivoire to topple Samuel Doe. Following the invasion, the country descended into a civil war which soon culminated into heavy blood shed. Taylor’s NPFL proved to be a serious contender to Doe’s regime and all attempts by the latter to suppress it proved futile. As the situation deteriorated, Doe rushed to Lagos on 7 May 1990 to ask his friend, General Ibrahim Babangida, the then leader of Nigeria for assistance. Babangida through ECOWAS proposed the establishment of a five-member SMC with a mandate to mediate in the civil war. The first members of the SMC were Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Mali and Togo. As fighting continued, the situation in Liberia deteriorated and Taylor refused possible alternatives to a peaceful settlement. In addition, there were huge outflows of refugees to neighbouring countries which threatened the peace and stability of the entire region.

Members of ECOWAS tried hard to prevent the war from spreading throughout the sub-region. Following an SMC meeting of August 1990, a decision was made to establish a peacekeeping force. The peacekeepers were to come from the five SMC states as well as Guinea and Sierra Leone. The mandate of the newly established ECOMOG force was “to supervise a cease-fire, oversee the establishment of an interim government in Liberia following Doe’s resignation and organize and observe elections after twelve months.” However, as we shall see in the following chapters, the planning proved different from the real situation on the ground. The Liberian elections, which ECOMOG was to organise after twelve months, only took place after seven years.

Two things are worthy of our attention in as far as ECOMOG’s first deployment is concerned. In the first place, the decision to deploy an ECOMOG force to Liberia was received with mixed feelings. The Liberian civil war, and the subsequent ECOMOG intervention, added to the ever present Anglophone-Francophone rivalry which was to

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190 Ibid., p. 43.
191 Ibid., p. 61.
192 Ibid., p. 61.
193 Ibid., p. 61.
affect the running of the operation. In addition, while Anglophone countries under the auspices of the ECOWAS SMC favoured a military intervention, Francophone members, with the exception of Guinea (the only Francophone member of the SMC), were opposed to military intervention. They preferred mediation. This was to prove costly as the conflict progressed.

Secondly, the intervention brought back fears about Nigeria’s aspiring hegemonic role in the region. As already pointed out, Nigeria took the lead role in the formation of ECOWAS and later the SMC which gave way to ECOMOG. The lead role that Nigeria assumed and its support for a military intervention was a constant worry to Francophone states. Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire in particular, interpreted ECOMOG intervention in Liberia as an Anglophone exercise in regional domination, and Nigeria’s ambitions as the region’s hegemon. They were thus determined to frustrate her efforts. We shall return to details of this rivalry later in the subsequent chapters.

3.6 Conclusion
This chapter has provided an overview of the political and economic history of West Africa. We have discussed the evolution of ECOWAS as a vehicle to economic integration, and ECOMOG as a security apparatus to respond to conflicts in the region. Although ECOWAS and ECOMOG have encountered several difficulties, they have been hailed as success stories both within and outside Africa. As Ero argues “the fact that ECOWAS, a body created for the purpose of enhancing economic and political cooperation could transform itself into a security apparatus for its entire region should be hailed as an innovative and significant development in Africa”. This is indeed a major achievement. ECOMOG in particular has been labelled a future model for African

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194 See Adekeye Adehajo, Building peace in West Africa, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau op cit. note 45.
196 Ibid.
197 Ibid.
peacekeeping. Since the 1981 intervention of an Inter-African Force in Chad under the auspices of the OAU, no other sub-region had established a peacekeeping force to respond to internal conflicts. This makes the West African sub-region the first ever on the African continent. The intervention by ECOMOG in Liberia marked an important turning point in the practice of peacekeeping by subregional organisations. Many of them began taking an active role in security issues.

The chapter has also discussed some of the challenges facing ECOWAS especially, the Anglophone-Francophone rivalry and the fears about Nigeria’s perceived hegemonic role. While such challenges cannot be avoided, the onus remains on member states in the sub-region to work together towards achieving their goals. While ECOWAS members (especially from the Francophone camp) might want to lessen Nigeria’s influence in the region, they also need to face the reality that the former remains one of the most powerful in the sub-region - politically and economically. ECOWAS members should realise that for any organisation to operate effectively and efficiently, there is need for a lead nation to set the ball rolling for others to follow. As Aboagye argues “realistically, ECOMOG’s experiences, as well as those in Central and Southern Africa, underscore the indispensability of lead nations which can provide political, diplomatic, and economic leverage towards conflict management and resolution.”200 In the case of West Africa, Nigeria is better placed to assume this lead role. It is also up to the lead nations to make sure that their actions do not send contradicting messages. Nigeria’s commitment to truly champion the needs of ECOWAS -and not her own - will go a long way in bringing the rest of the sub-region together in matters that require their undivided attention. Consensus over political and economic matters will steer ECOWAS in the right direction to better integrate the community economically and respond to its conflicts.

CHAPTER FOUR
LIBERIA

4.1 Introduction

In order to understand the roots of the Liberian civil war and the circumstances under which ECOMOG intervened, it is important that we explain the political, social and economic problems facing prewar Liberia. These problems place the civil war in a historic context and help explain the long duration that it took for a peace settlement to be negotiated.

In this chapter, we provide a background to the civil war that broke out in Liberia in December 1989 and the subsequent intervention by ECOMOG forces. This chapter traces the root causes of the conflict to a number of factors. These include; the exclusionary and oppressive rule of the Americo-Liberian elites, the brutal rule of Master-Sergeant Samuel Doe, the personalisation of power and manipulation of ethnic diversity and deteriorating economic conditions. These factors combined, brought about a civil war that ravaged the Liberian society and its economy for many years.

4.2 Liberia at a glance

Liberia is one of Africa’s smallest countries. Its population of 3,195,931 covers an area of about 111,370 sq km. It is bordered by Sierra Leone to the west, Guinea to the north and Côte d’Ivoire to the east. The history of Liberia is unique to Africa as it is one of only two African nations not colonised by the Western powers in the scramble for Africa. The country was founded in 1824 by freed African-American slaves who started arriving on the West African coast in 1822; this group later came to be known as Americo-

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203 Ethiopia is another African country that was never colonised.
Liberians. Although not an official American colony, the country had developed close links with the USA especially since the arrival of the freed slaves on the west coast, and their subsequent independence on 26 July 1847. For instance, Liberia’s national flag, motto, and seal were modeled along the lines of the American flag and so was their government. In addition, the capital city, Monrovia was named after John Monroe - the American president. The closer ties between the two countries lasted until the demise of the super power rivalry. Thus, the out break of the civil war in 1989 coincided with American retreat from the continent and indeed Liberia. Like the rest of Africa, Liberia is characterised by vast ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity. There are sixteen ethnic groups that make up Liberia’s indigenous population. They include: the Bassa, Belle, Dei, Gbandi, Gio, Gola, Grebo, Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn, Kru, Loma, Mandingo, Mano, Mende and Vai. Before the outbreak of the civil war, the country was divided into thirteen administrative counties with Monrovia as its capital.

The civil war had devastating effects on the country's economy which prior to the war, had been buoyed by rubber, diamond, timber, iron ore exports as well as foreign direct investment. There appears to be some hope for the war torn country though. With a new democratically elected government in place since January 2006, Liberia seeks to reconstruct its shattered economy. However, change should not be expected overnight. The country still faces poor economic performance due to a fragile security situation, devastation caused by the war, lack of infrastructure, and necessary human capital to help put the country on the road to recovery. The section that follows looks at some of the root causes of the Liberian civil war.

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206 Ibid.


210 Ibid.
4.3 The Americo-Liberian Rule
The structure that had been created by the Americo-Liberians since the establishment of Liberia and their treatment of the indigenous population is central to understanding the country’s civil war. Americo-Liberians made up about 5 per cent of the population while indigenous people comprised about 95 per cent.\textsuperscript{211} From the time they arrived in Liberia Americo-Liberians, although representing a small percentage of the population, began a systematic oppression of the local inhabitants.\textsuperscript{212} This class established a system fraught with corruption, nepotism, marginalisation and oppression of the indigenous population.\textsuperscript{213} The new immigrants viewed the indigenous people as primitive and inferior, and sought to civilise them.\textsuperscript{214} However, “in spreading this ‘civilisation’, the Americo-Liberians established a feudal oligarchy that suppressed the indigenous population with impunity for more than a century—ironically imposing on the local inhabitants the slavish oppression from which they themselves had only been liberated.”\textsuperscript{215} Politically, the country was a one-party state ruled by the True Whig Party (TWP) which had been established in 1869.\textsuperscript{216} This party monopolised political power, restricted voting rights of indigenous Liberians and dominated all sectors of Liberia since independence. Indigenous people were underrepresented in the national legislature and the TWP was the only party that produced all the Liberian presidents from the time the country was founded until its overthrow in a 1980 coup.\textsuperscript{217}

Economically the system was designed to serve the interests of the Americo-Liberians. Indigenous Liberians, who had been deprived of land, were heavily taxed while the settlers themselves, despite owning large shares of plantation land, refused to pay tax.\textsuperscript{218} The settlers also subjugated the indigenous people to forcible recruitment as slaves.\textsuperscript{219} The Americo-Liberians made no efforts to establish a national concept of development.

\textsuperscript{211} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Liberia’s Civil War} \textit{op cit. note 7} p. 21.
\textsuperscript{213} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Liberia’s Civil War} \textit{op cit. note 7} p. 21.
\textsuperscript{214} Abiodun Alao \textit{The Burden of Collective Goodwill} \textit{op cit. note 205} p. 5.
\textsuperscript{215} Ibid., p. 6.
\textsuperscript{216} Stephen Ellis, \textit{The Mask of Anarchy} \textit{op cit. note 49} p. 45.
\textsuperscript{218} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Liberia’s Civil War} \textit{op cit. note 7} p. 21.
\textsuperscript{219} Ibid.
The hinterlands, where many indigenous Liberians resided, were largely underdeveloped characterised by poor roads and communication systems. Economic and social policies were fraught with problems since indigenous Liberians were never included in developmental agendas. In addition, “the government focused on resources which sustained the Americo-Liberian oligarchy. For example, when the Firestone contract was signed in 1926, the concentration was on rubber and, when mining came into vogue in the 1950s, the emphasis switched to mining.” Thus, it can be argued that the ruling class in Liberia paid no attention to economic activities that addressed indigenous people’s concerns. The money generated from rubber and mining was not used to benefit everyone, rather it was used to satisfy and develop the minority.

Socially, the settlers did not integrate into an African society. They referred to themselves as ‘Americans’ and were recognised as such by local Africans. Failure to integrate with the rest of society was evident in politics, religion and education. Americo-Liberians set themselves apart as a civilised class. While indigenous Liberians were denied citizenship, they could only be considered citizens after embracing the Americo-Liberian civilised life style such as adopting Christianity and denouncing paganism. This however, did not automatically guarantee social equality as social segregation between the two groups still remained. Thus, for 133 years of Americo-Liberian rule, indigenous people in Liberia put up with the marginalisation, exclusion and oppression. This created deep seated resentment in the minds of indigenous Liberians.

4.4 Reformation Years

As resentment to the Americo-Liberian rule grew stronger, President William Tubman embarked on a reformation programme to address political, economic and social imbalances. Started in the 1940s, Tubman’s program aimed at unifying the settlers and the indigenous people by bridging the gap between them and broadening indigenous

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222 Ibid., p. 7.
223 See [http://www.state.gov/r/pa/er/eb/bgn/6618.htm](http://www.state.gov/r/pa/er/eb/bgn/6618.htm) above.
225 Abiodun Alao et al, op cit. note 3 p. 16.
people's political participation.\textsuperscript{226} He set up a National Unification Council in 1954 with a mandate to wipe out any policies that brought divisions in the country. He stated that “Americo-Liberianism must be forgotten, and...a new era of justice...and equal opportunities for everyone...regardless of tribe...or economic status should be the goal.”\textsuperscript{227} He encouraged indigenous people to take pride in their culture, art and languages. He also granted indigenous people voting rights and broadened their representation in the legislature and their access to the civil service.\textsuperscript{228} The president built roads, schools and hospitals, particularly in the hinterlands; the areas mostly neglected by his predecessors. However, some commentators have strongly argued that these reforms were not truly humane; rather they were motivated by political factors one of which was Tubman’s urgent need to prop up his weakening support base.\textsuperscript{229}

Whatever the reasons behind Tubman’s reforms, they came a little too late as seeds of rivalry and hatred had already been sown in the minds of indigenous people. Besides, much as the programmes created employment opportunities for indigenous Liberians, the socio-economic divide within the society still existed. For instance, in 1971 when President Tolbert succeeded Tubman, only 4 per cent of Liberians controlled more than half of the country’s wealth.\textsuperscript{230} Oppression of indigenous people, specifically those who understood and questioned Tubman’s economic policies continued. This was despite the promises made by the president; to end all the ‘wrongs’ afflicted on indigenous people.\textsuperscript{231} Indigenous Liberians later came to realise that the benefits of Tubman’s reforms - whether political, economic or social - had a selective impact on the population with the settlers still enjoying a larger share of the national cake.\textsuperscript{232}

\textsuperscript{226} Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 7 p. 21.  
\textsuperscript{227} Abiodun Alao, op cit. note 205 p. 6.  
\textsuperscript{228} Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 7 p. 22.  
\textsuperscript{229} Abiodun Alao et al, op cit. note 3 p. 16.  
\textsuperscript{230} Ibid., p. 17.  
\textsuperscript{231} For instance the Christie concession gave mining rights to the Liberian Mining Company at very low terms, as a result, there was opposition from some indigenous Liberians, following this president Tubman harassed and jailed any visible opponents to the trade agreements. See Abiodun Alao etal, op. cit note 3 p.17.  
\textsuperscript{232} Ibid., p. 17.
When Tubman died in 1971 he was succeeded by William Tolbert who promised to continue with the reformation programmes. However, with time, it became apparent that Tolbert failed to live up to his promise.\textsuperscript{233} Things started turning sour for his regime from the mid 1970s. During this period, government experienced a severe economic crisis following a huge collapse in the prices of rubber and iron ore (two of Liberia’s main sources of foreign exchange).\textsuperscript{234} The drop in prices had serious repercussions on the Liberian economy. Not only did it prompt anti-government feelings, but it also resulted in the price increase of local rice- Liberia’s staple food.\textsuperscript{235} This provoked riots from the general population. In retaliation, government took to task members of opposition notably, the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) and the Progressive Alliance of Liberia (PAL).\textsuperscript{236} Domestic and international pressure continued to mount on the Tolbert regime as many people demanded for a change in government. On 12 April 1980 the 133 years of Americo-Liberian rule came to an end when Samuel Kanyon Doe and 16 other members of the Liberian armed forces invaded the Executive Mansion and toppled president Tolbert’s government.\textsuperscript{237}

\textbf{4.5 The Doe Regime}

The 1980 coup ushered in Samuel Doe as Liberia’s new head of state. While the impacts of Doe’s coup were to be felt years later, many indigenous Liberians saw it as a beginning of a new chapter. What they did not know was the fact that the current regime and its leadership were to bring untold suffering to the country. With time, Doe proved to be no different from his predecessors; ‘same taxi, different drivers’ became a common slogan to describe the political leadership in Liberia.\textsuperscript{238}

\textsuperscript{233}Ibid., p. 17.
\textsuperscript{234}Abiodun Alao \textit{The Burden of Collective Goodwill} op cit. note 205 p. 7.
\textsuperscript{235}Ibid., p. 7.
\textsuperscript{237}Abiodun Alao et al, op cit. note 3 and Abiodun Alao, \textit{The Burden of Collective Goodwill} op cit. note 205.
\textsuperscript{238}See Adekeye Adebajo \textit{Building Peace in West Africa}, op cit. note 45.
On 12 April 1980 the coup plotters entered the Executive Mansion and assassinated president Tolbert and a few others. Doe declared war on the Americo-Liberian elite immediately after seizing power. He claimed that his coup meant an end to the elites’ privileged position in the Liberian government, and expelled the remaining Americo-Liberians from their positions of power. The first signs of his ruthlessness and brutality were seen on 22 April when he publicly executed thirteen True Whig government officials on a Monrovian beach in what came to be known as the “Liberian Beach Party.” Such brutality was to characterise Doe’s rule in Liberia. Together with his fellow coup plotters, they formed the People’s Redemption Council (PRC) with Doe as its chairman. He released from prison members of MOJA and PAL and offered them positions in government. He increased the salaries of soldiers and promoted those in lower ranks to captains, majors and generals; this was done mainly to consolidate his support within the army.

Doe realised that to stabilise his regime and prevent the collapse of the country’s economy and administration, he had to engage the services of the remaining Americo-Liberians. To this end, he released all political prisoners, returned their confiscated property and included them in his cabinet. He encouraged those that had fled the country in the aftermath of the coup to return home. Doe also co-opted other ethnic groups into an alliance with the Krahns to avoid an uprising against them. One such group co-opted by his government was the Mandingo – a group of Muslim traders who for centuries had dominated trade in Liberia. Doe wanted to benefit from the Mandingo’s informal cross border trade. While Doe tried to bring the people of Liberia together, he was still lacking in some respects. The army, for instance, was still filled with his own

244 Ibid., p. 26.
indigenous Krahns many of whom took up senior positions. This became a great source of controversy and resentment to his regime.

4.6 Oppression, Exploitation of Ethnic Allegiances, Corruption and Economic Decline

As time went by, signs of frustration could be seen amongst the population. Doe’s response to this was suppression and elimination of any potential opposition. A few years after taking power, many of his former coup plotters were either assassinated or forced into exile. As Adebajo comments, “the Liberian revolution had started to devour its own children.” Human rights abuses proliferated against those who challenged his rule; civil society groups, students and journalists experienced Doe’s wrath. The press was heavily censored and newspapers that reported anything negative about government were closed down. The heavily dominated Krahn army carried out all sorts of oppression against the people with impunity. With time, people came to realise that “the new lease of life which many indigenous Liberians anticipated, did not materialise, as Doe, in whom they placed this expectation, was more interested in entrenching himself in power.”

In 1984 Doe announced his plans of returning Liberia to civilian rule. Elections were held in 1985 and Doe won amidst allegations of intimidation, rigging and harassment. As one observer notes, “the October 1985 elections were as unfree as they were unfair.” But even under civilian rule, Doe’s brutality and repressive policies still remained.

In November 1985 Thomas Quiwonkpa, a Gio from Nimba county, and one of the 1980 coup plotters and former commander in the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), returned to Liberia from exile in the USA. His aim was to topple Doe but unfortunately his coup attempt failed. In retaliation, Doe sent his Krahn dominated army to Nimba county where it killed many Gios and Manos and burnt down their villages. Adebajo contends that this incident set a bad precedence for the exploitation of ethnic allegiances which was to

247 Ibid., p. 27 and Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45 p. 45.
248 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa in ibid.
250 Ibid., p. 12 and Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War op cit. note 7 p. 28.
251 Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War in ibid pp. 28-30.
characterise the civil war. The Gios and Manos bore hatred and resentment towards the Doe regime and they waited for the right time to stage their revenge. This partly explains why this group heavily rallied behind Taylor when he invaded Liberia. Following Quiwonkpa’s failed coup, major changes were made in the AFL. The Gios and Manos were removed from the army and this deepened ethnic divisions within Liberia as the Krahns disproportionately enjoyed senior positions both in the army and civil service. This was in spite of the fact that the Krahns made up a mere 5 per cent of the population. Thus, the fruits of indigenous rule were not equally shared within the Liberian society and this added to further resentment and hatred towards Doe regime and his Krahn ethnic group.

Corruption under the Doe regime was as rampant as under the Americo-Liberians. Like his predecessors, Doe used illegal means to acquire wealth; this had serious impacts on the economic wellbeing of Liberians. It is argued that revenue from the country’s resources went to Doe’s personal accounts instead of government coffers, and the same was true of U.S food assistance. The Doe regime increased employment in the public sector and gave jobs to many of its political supporters. Patron-client politics and the personalisation of power reached their peak in Doe’s Liberia. These practices had serious implications on the economy; while they did much to keep Doe in power, they diverted funds that could have been used for the good of all of Liberians. Instead they benefited only a few. In addition, the Doe regime spent a fortune on defence. Following the 1980 coup, maintenance of internal security became his priority.

The above practices by Doe and his officials were at the expense of important issues such as health and education, and they contributed to further economic decline. What is more, the Liberian foreign debt was as huge as its domestic debt and the government struggled...
to pay civil servants.\textsuperscript{259} Financial assistance from the U.S.A which was of huge importance to the Doe government began to decline.\textsuperscript{260} All these created pressure on the Doe government and the growing opposition against his government made the security situation unstable. Thus, as the war drew nearer, it became clear to Liberians that Doe failed to deliver on his promises. His rule had not been different from that of his predecessors; he used ethnic differences to his advantage and oppressed other groups. As one author puts it, "the Doe regime is remembered for its atrocities against Liberian citizens, which included looting, rape, arson, fluffing, arbitrary arrests, and summary executions by the Armed Forces of Liberia."\textsuperscript{261} Just like the 1980 coup which toppled Tolbert, Taylor's invasion of Liberia gave Doe a dosage of his own medicine.

4.7 The Civil War

On 24 December 1989 a group of about 168 NPFL fighters under the leadership of Charles Taylor crossed into Liberia's Nimba county from Côte d'Ivoire. They sought to overthrow the Doe regime and establish a democratic government.\textsuperscript{262} The forces had been trained in Burkina Faso and Libya, and both countries assisted the rebel group with arms during the war.\textsuperscript{263} Taylor - an Americo-Liberian - had personal relationships with the heads of Libya, Burkina Faso, and the Ivory Coast. He once served under Doe as chief of General Services Agency (GSA) but the two fell out following Taylor's alleged embezzlement of U.S. $900,000.\textsuperscript{264} Following this development, Taylor escaped to the U.S.A where he was arrested, but somehow he escaped from Massachusetts prison and returned to Liberia to lead a coup against Doe.\textsuperscript{265}

The support Taylor received from the heads of Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire and Libya was as a result of his personal relationship with them, and also their relationships with Doe. Ivory's Félix Houphouët-Boigny supported Taylor because he had scores to settle

\begin{footnotes}
\item[259] Ibid., p. 15 and Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Liberia's Civil War} op cit. note 7 p. 27.
\item[260] Adekeye Adebajo, in ibid op cit. note 7.
\item[263] Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45 p. 48.
\item[264] Ibid., p. 46.
\item[265] Ibid., p. 46.
\end{footnotes}
with Doe following the latter's killing of Adolphus Tolbert. Tolbert was husband to Boigny's adopted daughter and son of William Tolbert, the Liberian president Doe assassinated.\textsuperscript{266} As for Burkina Faso, Blaise Compaoré's relationship with Taylor goes way back; the former once helped the latter by securing his release from a prison in Ghana.\textsuperscript{267} With Libya, Muammar Ghadafi's support for the anti-Doe faction was two-fold; firstly, it was one way of punishing Doe for closing down the Libyan embassy and supporting U.S. anti-Libyan policies. Secondly, Ghadafi was against pro-US governments in Africa, he therefore supported all movements that sought to topple them.\textsuperscript{268}

Once in Liberia, Taylor and his group enjoyed the support of Nimba citizens many of whom had suffered heavily under the Doe regime. Retaliating to the coup, Doe sent the Krahn dominated army to Nimba county where it raged terror against the Gio and Mano citizens; villages were burnt down and innocent civilians executed.\textsuperscript{269} However, unlike other attempted coups to the Doe regime, this particular rebellion proved hard to suppress. Following the terror tactics employed by the AFL, the NPFL, which also included fighters from Burkina Faso, Gambian and Sierra Leonean, resorted to the same strategy. This plunged the country into a vicious war characterised by a brutal massacre of civilians.\textsuperscript{270} Liberians started fleeing to other countries notably Sierra Leone, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. The situation continued to deteriorate and on 7 May 1990 Doe appealed to Nigeria and Togo for help.\textsuperscript{271} This subsequently led to the intervention of ECOWAS and later ECOMOG.

Before looking at ECOMOG's intervention three things are worthy our attention; firstly, contrary to conventional warfare in which civilians do not fight, factions in the Liberian civil war deliberately targeted civilians.\textsuperscript{272} Secondly, the use of children as fighters and
perpetrators of violence was another disturbing development. Several children who had lost their parents or had been displaced by the conflict joined the war. Thirdly, the conflict saw the proliferation of numerous warring factions and their warlords. Some of them were: the NPFL, the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), a splinter group from NPFL led by Prince Johnson, the Krahn dominated AFL, the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), made up of Krahn and Mandingo politicians. This however later split into two; ULIMO-J led by Roosevelt Johnson, and ULIMO-K led by Alhaji Kromah; the Liberian Peace Council (LPC) led by George Boley a Krahn, and the Lofa Defense Force (LDF), led by Francois Massaquoi from Lofa county.

As can be seen from the above, the factions were formed along tribal lines and while they might have been interested in taking power, self-enrichment was often their major goal. This brought further chaos to the already chaotic Liberian state. As one observer puts it, "none of the faction leaders spelled out their ideological reasons for waging the war...neither did they provide a coherent plan for fundamentally changing Liberia's political and economic structures and society." As the war progressed, more factions emerged which ultimately complicated the subsequent peace process. With time, the warlords built up huge economic empires for themselves. The need to finance the war resulted in the exploitation and plunder of the country's rich resources. It is argued that Charles Taylor, the most powerful warlord, drew millions of dollars from the export of diamonds, gold timber and rubber to Western firms. Thus, by controlling resource rich areas warlords in Liberia became very powerful. Their wealth and influence made them an important part to the peace process.

273 Ibid., p. 21.
274 Ibid., pp. 20-22 and Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45 pp. 46, 47.
275 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 47.
277 See Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45.
4.8 ECOMOG’s Intervention

ECOWAS’s initial response to the conflict was the setting up of the SMC to mediate in the conflict. However, mediation failed and ECOWAS had to send a military force to Liberia.\(^\text{279}\) On 25 August 1990 ECOMOG forces were dispatched to Liberia.\(^\text{280}\) ECOMOG’s mandate was “to supervise a cease-fire, oversee the establishment of an interim government following Doe’s resignation and organize and observe elections after twelve months.”\(^\text{281}\) Charles Taylor, who controlled a large share of Liberia’s territory, was heavily opposed to ECOMOG arguing that the force was Nigeria’s way of propping up the Doe regime. Despite his threats and opposition, ECOMOG forces still landed in Monrovia.\(^\text{282}\) Also opposed to a military intervention in Liberia was the francophone block, particularly Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire who argued that the intervention only served to further Nigeria’s parochial interests and hegemonic ambitions in the region. Perhaps it is important to understand some of the reasons that informed Nigeria’s support for a military intervention. Below are some of them:

In the first place, Nigeria, more than any country, played a bigger role in the establishment of ECOWAS. Consequently, when the civil war broke out, it shouldered a great burden of the operation in terms of troops and funding. This naturally gave her a lead role in determining ECOMOG’s policies.\(^\text{283}\) Secondly, some Nigerian citizens residing in Liberia were being killed by NPFL forces and others held hostage. As a result, General Babangida saw it fit to send troops to Liberia. Thirdly, some commentators have argued that Nigeria intervened to prevent Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire and Libya from forming an anti-Nigerian alliance and also limit Libya’s influence in the region.\(^\text{284}\) Nigeria believed Taylor’s victory would have destabilising effects in the region; it thus saw it fit to take a pro-active role in Liberia.

\(^{279}\) See Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45.
\(^{281}\) Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War op cit. note 7 p. 61.
\(^{282}\) W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, op cit. note 14 p. 119.
\(^{283}\) Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 7 p. 48.
ECOMOG operations were fraught with difficulties right from the beginning. Burkina Faso, Côte d’Ivoire and Senegal were opposed to the intervention for fear of Nigeria’s hegemony. Mali and Togo refused to contribute troops to ECOMOG, with Togo arguing that the intervention could worsen the situation. In addition, Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire armed Taylor and his rebel group; they also gave him access to their ports. ECOMOG also suffered from logistical, communications, and financial problems. These were to affect its operations during the war. Many troops arrived without weapons and Nigeria, as stated earlier, had to come to their rescue. Once in Liberia, ECOMOG had to change its mandate from being peacekeepers to peace enforcers. This was so because when the force arrived in Monrovia, the Liberian state had already collapsed and there was no peace to keep. The change in mandate was later to prove problematic because the force had not prepared for the new task.

Despite facing problems, ECOMOG still intervened. Top positions in the force were split across the board to minimise problems with the intervention. ECOMOG’s first force commander was General Arnold Quainoo, a Ghanaian, his deputy came from Guinea, the chief of operations came from Sierra Leone and the chief of personnel and camp commandant came from Gambia. The chief of staff, chief logistics and chief intelligence officer were Nigerians. Upon reaching Liberia, ECOMOG came under fire from NPLF forces; as a result, ECOMOG leaders increased the number of troops. The force managed to expel Taylor’s forces from the capital; however, it compromised its neutrality by fighting NPLF alongside the INPFL and AFL. This added to the tension and hatred that Taylor already had for ECOMOG, particularly, Nigeria. Taylor in particular criticised Nigeria of trying to impose a democratically elected government in

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286 Ibid., p. 77.
287 See Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War op cit. note 7.
288 Ibid., p. 75.
289 Ibid., p. 75.
290 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45.
Liberia when it could not afford or implement one in its own country.\textsuperscript{291} This fact was also true of the majority of states that contributed troops to ECOMOG.

By November of 1990 ECOMOG still lacked the support of other francophone countries. Despite this, the force registered some positive developments; it established an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) headed by Amos Sawyer.\textsuperscript{292} Sawyer was exiled head of Association for Constitutional Democracy in Liberia (ACDL)\textsuperscript{293}. The interim government did not include leaders of warring factions. The IGNU was to govern Liberia while awaiting elections.\textsuperscript{294} The establishment of an IGNU further widened the rift in ECOWAS with francophone states arguing that they had not consented to its creation. Taylor dismissed it as a ‘puppet’ government to be run by ECOMOG.\textsuperscript{295}

Following the creation of the IGNU, an ECOWAS summit was held in Bamako. It called for “a cease-fire agreement between the factions, election of an interim government, creation by ECOMOG of a buffer zone to separate the belligerents, cessation of arms purchase and disarmament of factions.”\textsuperscript{296} At another meeting held in Togo, in February 1991, the NPF, INPFL and the IGNU signed the Lomé agreement.\textsuperscript{297} A stalemate followed as Taylor and the NPLF insisted on the creation of a new interim government before disarmament, while the IGNU argued for the opposite - disarmament before establishing a new interim government.\textsuperscript{298} This situation lasted until October 1992. During this time, ECOWAS embarked on a number of mediation efforts which were held in Bamako, in November 1990, Lomé, February 1991 and Monrovia, March 1991.\textsuperscript{299}

\textsuperscript{292} Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 pp. 52-53.
\textsuperscript{293} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{294} Ibid. pp. 52-53 and W. Ofuatey-Kodjo “The Impact of Peacekeeping on Target States Lessons form the Liberian Experience” op cit. in note 14 p. 119.
\textsuperscript{295} Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 53.
\textsuperscript{296} Ibid., p. 53. 
\textsuperscript{297} Ibid., p. 53.
\textsuperscript{298} Ibid., p. 53.
\textsuperscript{299} W. Ofuatey-Kodjo, p. 119.
These attempts failed mainly because the NPFL and the IGNU could not come to an agreement on issues raised at the Bamako summit.\textsuperscript{300}

Efforts at finding peace were intensified for the rest of 1991 but with no success. For instance, no agreement was reached at meetings held in Yamoussoukro.\textsuperscript{301} The Yamoussoukro agreements called for “the deployment of ECOMOG to all parts of Liberia, the encampment and disarmament of factions under ECOMOG’s supervision, the creation of a buffer zone on the Liberia–Sierra Leone border and the monitoring of all airfields and seaports by ECOMOG to stem the flow of arms.”\textsuperscript{302} These were never implemented. Taylor refused to disarm under the supervision of ECOMOG, preferring the UN instead. He also demanded that UN forces take over from ECOMOG.

While Taylor played the main ‘spoiler’ in the peace agreements, other factors at sub-regional level also played a role. For instance, failure of Yamoussoukro agreement was due to continuing divisions within ECOWAS.\textsuperscript{303} In addition, lack of coordination within the forces was also a major problem. Reports were rife that Nigerians never included other contingent commanders in military planning and a lack of international support for ECOMOG also affected its operations.\textsuperscript{304} In October 1992 ECOMOG forces suffered heavy casualties when NPLF forces attacked it under ‘Operation Octopus’.\textsuperscript{305} This attack caught ECOMOG forces off guard and in retaliation, ECOMOG bombed NPLF positions.\textsuperscript{306} The bombings resulted in heavy casualties and this tarnished the force’s image. The question of ECOMOG’s neutrality resurfaced when its forces fought with AFL and ULIMO in an attempt to prevent Taylor from taking over Monrovia.\textsuperscript{307}

Following operation Octopus, Nigeria, increased ECOMOG force to 16,000 majority of which were Nigerian.\textsuperscript{308} This force managed to seize Taylor’s strongholds which

\textsuperscript{300} Ibid., p. 119.
\textsuperscript{301} Ibid., p. 119.
\textsuperscript{302} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45 p. 53.
\textsuperscript{303} Ibid., p. 53, 56.
\textsuperscript{304} Ibid., p. 53, 56.
\textsuperscript{305} Ibid., p. 55.
\textsuperscript{306} Ibid., p. 55.
\textsuperscript{307} Ibid., p. 55.
\textsuperscript{308} Ibid., p. 55.
having failed to secure an agreement through negotiations, the ECOWAS Joint committee decided to impose sanctions against the NPFL. ECOWAS called for the cooperation of the UN; consequently, an arms embargo was imposed on Liberia. In July 1993 further peace talks were held in Geneva. Cooperation of the UN, ECOWAS and the OAU produced the Cotonou agreement. It called for a cease-fire, disarmament, encampment and demobilisation of the factions. This was to be jointly monitored by representatives of the warring factions, ECOMOG and the UN under the United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL). UNOMIL called for the formation of a transitional government which was to rule for six months while awaiting elections. However, implementation of the Cotonou accords met with difficulties. Continued fighting hampered the disarmament programme and attacks on OAU and ECOMOG soldiers forced the UN to withdraw its observers and reduce the size of the peacekeepers. As fighting continued President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana, who was ECOWAS chairman at the time, attempted to save the situation. He called for a meeting with leaders of Liberia’s three leading factions in Akosombo. It called for immediate cease-fire, encampment, disarmament and elections, but like other agreements before it, this one also failed.

The final attempt to end the war came from Nigeria’s Sani Abacha. In August of 1995 he got the factions together and agreed to form a council which was to lead the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG). The warlords and their members got top positions in the council and as Adebajo argues, it marked the beginning of appeasement as the only way to end the war. The new council was sworn in on 1 September 1995. Events took a different turn when fighting broke out between ULIMO-J and ECOMOG;

309 Ibid., p. 55.
310 W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, “The Impact of Peacekeeping on Target States Lessons form the Liberian Experience” op cit in note 14 pp. 119-120.
311 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 56.
312 W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, op cit. in note 14 p. 120.
313 Ibid., p. 120.
314 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 57.
315 Ibid., p. 58 and W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, op cit. note in note 14 p. 120.
316 W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe, p. 120.
317 Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 60.
318 Ibid.
this stalled the entire peace process\textsuperscript{319}. Nevertheless, things took a positive turn again in August 1996 when Abacha, after assuming the ECOWAS chairmanship, called all factions to Abuja to sign what became known as Abuja II.\textsuperscript{320} Though fraught with problems, it managed to bring about a cease-fire and disarmament. International assistance was made available this time and the USA provided funds for the disarmament programme. Elections were held in July 1997 and Taylor emerged president.\textsuperscript{321} The 1997 election marked the end of the long journey to peace in Liberia.

\subsection*{4.9 Conclusion}

The civil war that broke out in Liberia in December 1989 ended with the election of Charles Taylor as the new president. The road to peace had been a long and torturous one. It brought untold suffering specifically on the civilian population. Huge outflows of refugees to neighbouring countries threatened the security of the entire West African sub-region.

The Liberian conflict was characterised by the signing of numerous peace agreements many of which were broken before implementation. The road to peace had met several obstacles. In the first place there were divisions within ECOWAS. Some ECOWAS members notably, Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire opposed the intervention arguing that it was a vehicle to further Nigeria's hegemonic dreams and ambitions. As a result, they refused to support the force and instead gave their support to Taylor. This allowed Taylor to use the divisions within ECOWAS to his benefit. Within ECOMOG, lack of coordination among troop contributing countries affected its operation. In addition, lack of neutrality on the part of the peacekeepers did a great harm to their reputation; when ECOMOG forces fought alongside AFL and INPFL, they lost the trust of Taylor and the international community.

Secondly, Taylor played the chief 'spoiler' during the entire period of the war by either refusing to implement the peace agreements or violating them. This stalled the peace

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{319} W. Ofuamey-Kodjoe p. 120, 121.
\item \textsuperscript{320} Adekeye, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45 p. 60.
\item \textsuperscript{321} Ibid., p. 60.
\end{itemize}
process. Thirdly, proliferation of numerous factions made it difficult to negotiate a peace settlement. With different ideological reasons for waging the war, each party went to the negotiating table with its own ideas different from the others. While some factions observed the cease fire agreements, others violated them by continued fighting. These defeated efforts at finding peace. Liberian resources also played a huge role in the conflict. Faction leaders controlled resource rich areas and benefited from illegal trade, thus, some of them deliberately violated the peace agreements so as to keep the cash flowing.

Finally, lack of adequate funding was a major handicap to ECOMOG operations. During the early stages of the war, the international community, specifically the UN and the USA, denied ECOMOG of necessary resources which would have eased the operation. Instead the ECOMOG force relied on Nigeria for troops and finances. During the operation, some states contributed troops without weapons and Nigeria had to come to their rescue. While Nigeria provided the bulk of weapons and finances, they were not enough for the kind of conflict like the one in Liberia. This shows that the involvement of the international community - financially or otherwise- would have helped the ECOMOG force in its operations.

Despite the shortfalls of ECOMOG and the challenges it encountered, it helped bring peace to Liberia. Being the first operation by a sub-regional organisation, ECOMOG sent an important message to the world; that an African solution to African problems is possible. Given enough resources, Africans have the capacity and will to keep their own peace. However, the operation in Liberia also brought to light some of the challenges that African peacekeepers have to deal with before they embark on peace operations, chief among which include adequate funding.
CHAPTER FIVE
SIERRA LEONE

5.1 Introduction
A violent armed conflict broke out in Sierra Leone in March 1991 when a small group of fighters entered its territory from Liberia. Known as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), the group was under the leadership of Foday Sankoh, a photographer and one-time Corporal in the Sierra Leonean army. Majority of the fighters were citizens of Sierra Leone, but were supported by the Liberian warlord Charles Taylor. The civil war had devastating effects; it claimed the lives and property of many citizens and also contributed to socio-economic and political problems. The civil war was characterised by some of the most brutal tactics, the RUF in particular embarked on a systematic and deliberate killing and amputation of human limbs. The war also witnessed massive employment of children as fighters. McIntyre argues that “the use of children as soldiers in government, paramilitary and rebel forces in the Sierra Leone conflict was one of the most highly publicised cases of child rights abuse in recent years.” In addition, the conflict in Sierra Leone experienced unprecedented plundering of the country’s resources especially diamond, which became the main financier and motivator of the war. Negotiating a peace agreement proved difficult as warlords wanted to continue benefiting from resources under their control.

In this chapter, we explain the root causes of the civil war and efforts made at regional and international levels to end the war. Our emphasis is on ECOMOG – the regional force. Like many conflicts in Africa, the war in Sierra Leone could be attributed to a combination of interrelated economic, political, social, cultural and external factors. These were characterised by bad governance, specifically during the reign of the All

322 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45.
324 Ibid., p. 13.
People’s Congress (APC), rampant corruption and mismanagement of state resources, deteriorating economic conditions and worsening socio-economic inequalities within society. We begin by looking at the country context after which we discuss the causes of the civil war. ECOMOG’s intervention in Sierra Leone is also discussed.

5.2 History and Country Context
Sierra Leone is a former British colony. The country gained independence from Britain on 27 April 1961. It is bordered by Guinea on the north and north east, Liberia on the south, and the Atlantic Ocean on the west. It covers an area of 71,740 sq km and has a population of about 6,144,562, with the youth making up a larger percentage. The country has numerous African ethnic groups which make up 90% of the population. The two largest ethnic groups are the Mende and Temne; the former dominates the South and eastern parts of the country, while the latter dominates the Northern Province. Other minority groups are the Limbas, Vais, konos and the Creoles.

Economically, Sierra Leone is a poor nation with tremendous inequality in income distribution; however, the situation was made worse by the civil war that ravaged the country’s resources. Rich in minerals such as diamonds, titanium ore, bauxite, iron ore and gold, Sierra Leone has for the larger part relied on the mining sector especially diamonds for its economic base. Despite an abundance of mineral wealth, the country’s economic and social infrastructure is not well developed; this poses great obstacles to development. Though majority of the population engages in subsistence agriculture, mineral exports remain the back bone of Sierra Leone’s economy. The civil war had destroyed the country’s formal economy and dealt it a serious blow. Thus, successful

326 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, op cit. note 323 p. iii and Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45 p. 79.
327 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, in ibid p. 13, 14.
328 Information on Sierra Leone found at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sl.html accessed on 27 November, 2007. The population figures are according to July 2007 estimates
329 Ibid.
331 Information on Sierra Leone found at https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/sl.html
332 Ibid.
333 Ibid.
334 Ibid and also David Keen, Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone (New York: Palgrave, 2005) chp 2.
growth and development of the economy largely depends on the maintenance of domestic peace. Despite the war coming to an end, government faces a number of challenges, chief among which is the high rate of unemployment particularly among the youth and ex-combatants.335

5.3 Independent Sierra Leone
Since its independence, Sierra Leone was ruled successively by the Margai brothers, Milton and Albert under the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP). This continued until 1967 when the SLPP lost the election to the APC headed by Siaka Stevens.336 Sir Milton Margai of the SLPP headed the first post-independence government (1961-1964). He established one of the best regimes in the country characterised by a flourishing democracy which included; political pluralism, press freedom and political tolerance.337 Sir Milton allowed the existence of several parties; the National Peoples Party (NPP), the United Democratic Party (UDP) and the APC, were all allowed to contest in elections.338 The country also enjoyed “a functioning parliamentary system, an independent judicial system and the most developed educational infrastructures of which Fourah Bay College (FBC) was a good example.”339 Milton formed an inclusive government made up of major ethnic groups; this political strategy created a stable and democratic Sierra Leone.340

When Milton died in 1964 his brother Albert succeeded him.341 Some commentators have argue that Albert, who ruled the country from 1964-1967, lacked the visionary leadership that had characterised his brother’s regime.342 “Instead of building on the democratic credentials of his predecessor, Sir Albert took decisive steps not only to over-centralize political power, but also to annihilate any form of organized political opposition in the

336 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45 p. 81.
country. For instance in 1965 he attempted to introduce and implement one-party rule but stern resistance from the population forced him to abandon the idea. He was also accused of corruption and favouring the Mende by appointing them in senior positions in the army and the civil service. As a result of these and other unfavourable policies, Sir Albert was highly criticised during his three year reign. In 1967 he lost the election to the APC under Siaka Stevens. This underscores the first cause of the civil war.

5.4 Siaka Stevens’s Rule
Siaka Stevens came to power in 1967. A military coup however, prevented him from assuming the reigns of power in the same year but a countercoup handed power back to Stevens and the APC the following year. The APC rule which dates back to 1968 has been described as one of the worst in the country’s history. Not only was the regime corrupt and inept, but it also lacked democratic principles. In 1971 parliament declared Sierra Leone a Republic and Siaka Stevens became the nation’s first president. Things began to change soon after this as Stevens sought to prolong his stay in power while removing any opposition to his rule. For instance, in 1978, Sierra Leone adopted a new constitution making the country a one-party state. This paved way for undemocratic tendencies that characterised the entire APC rule. The one-party state denied space for healthy competition since other parties were not allowed in the country. Politically, the environment favoured the APC and gave it power to run Sierra Leone. Like Doe in Liberia, Stevens relied on repression and intimidation of the opposition. He imprisoned, forced into exile and executed his political opponents. The president was granted enormous powers to hire and fire public officials and courts could not rule fairly since they were heavily manipulated by the ruling APC. In his attempt to wipe out any form of opposition, Stevens employed a series of techniques. He introduced harsh laws, for

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348 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, op cit. note 323 p. 18.
349 Ibid., p. 14, 15.
350 Ibid., p. 18.
351 Ibid., p. 15.
352 Ibid., p. 15.
instance, press freedom existed only in name and opposition newspapers were banned from circulation.\textsuperscript{353} Stevens and the APC took steps to weaken civil society groups in the country; “trade unions, agricultural cooperatives, and business professional organisations were brought under the sway of government.”\textsuperscript{354} All this was done to curb any opposition to the APC.

Stevens and the APC were also accused of tribalism and nepotism. It is worthy noting that while these elements were also noted during the SLPP rule, they were worse under Stevens. During its reign, the SLPP had favoured the Mende in the south and when the APC took over, it favoured the Temne in the north. As a result, most government positions went to the Temnes.\textsuperscript{355} Keen writes that once the APC took power, the Mende were removed from top positions - specifically cabinet posts and the army, and were replaced by the Temne.\textsuperscript{356} Outside the Temnes, government positions went to other groups who were loyalty to the party. Thus, a patrimonial system was introduced in which state appointments were not based on merit but on connections with government.\textsuperscript{357} Another criticism leveled against the APC regime was rampant corruption and mismanagement of state resources. This saw leaders and their supporters getting rich by embezzling public funds meant for social services such as health and education.\textsuperscript{358} With time, the effects of corruption and poor fiscal management by the APC regime began to produce negative results for the majority of the population. There was a decline in the economy characterized by huge unemployment and inflation.\textsuperscript{359}

Under Stevens the economy went into decline. Together with his business partners, many of whom were Lebanese, they exploited the country’s diamond revenues and the money went to their personal accounts.\textsuperscript{360} Members loyal to the APC indulged in the illicit mining and smuggling of diamond as Stevens offered them immunity. There was also a

\textsuperscript{353} Ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{354} Adekeye Adebayo, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45 p. 81.
\textsuperscript{355} Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, op cit. note 323 p. 15.
\textsuperscript{356} David Keen, \textit{Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone} op cit. note 334 p. 15.
\textsuperscript{357} Ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{358} Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, p. 15.
\textsuperscript{359} Ibid., p. 15.
\textsuperscript{360} Adekeye Adebayo, op cit. note 45 p. 81.
huge decline in revenues for Sierra Leone’s main exports: diamonds, iron ore, coffee and cocoa.\textsuperscript{361} This led to huge inflation and an increase in the price of commodities, especially food. Thus, deteriorating economic conditions were another major factor responsible for the civil war in Sierra Leone; they led to worsening socio-economic inequalities between the rich and the poor.\textsuperscript{362} The youth, who were badly affected by declining economic conditions, viewed the APC led government as being insensitive to their needs. Majority of the youth were illiterate and unemployed; as a result, they could not benefit from the national cake and were frustrated by government and its policies.\textsuperscript{363}

Back in the days of colonial rule and the SLPP, Sierra Leone’s education system had enjoyed a good reputation in Southern Africa. However, this reputation went into decline under the APC regime. This led to growing discontent among youths in schools and colleges over poor conditions.\textsuperscript{364} A number of students could not afford the rising fees as a result they dropped out of school and those who could afford complained of poor quality.\textsuperscript{365} Scholarships that were meant for all Sierra Leonean students regardless of political affiliation were not granted on merit, but connections with the ruling elite. As one student commented, “the Sierra Leone scholarships were given to APC supporters and relatives. You must have a relative within the education system, or give a bribe. They politicised the hierarchy of the university.”\textsuperscript{366}

The above is clear testimony of how bad the situation had become. Students at the FBC staged demonstrations to show how frustrated they were with the regime. The effects of economic decline provide a useful background not only to understanding the civil war in Sierra Leone, but also the huge numbers of youths fighting in the conflict. When civil war broke out, this group provided a pool for recruitment especially for the RUF. Joining the RUF was for many an opportunity to voice out their grievances and a vehicle to better economic prospects for the future, it was also a way of ensuring their security and

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{361} Ibid., p. 81.
  \item \textsuperscript{362} Ibid., p. 79.
  \item \textsuperscript{363} Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, op cit. note 323 p. 19.
  \item \textsuperscript{364} David Keen, op cit. note 334 p. 27.
  \item \textsuperscript{365} Ibid., p. 27.
  \item \textsuperscript{366} Ibid., p 27. from an interview Keen had with a former student of Fourah Bay College.
\end{itemize}
survival.\textsuperscript{367} Writing on the tremendous use of young people in the Sierra Leonean conflict, one author argues that “the Sierra Leonean case bears testimony to the fact that states that fail to answer to young people sow the seeds of rebellion. A fine line exists between a marginalised person and a potential recruit. Poverty, oppression, anger and hopelessness, insecurity and violence both push and pull children and youth across this line.”\textsuperscript{368}

5.5 General Joseph Momoh’s Rule

In 1985 General Joseph Momoh succeeded Stevens. Momoh was Stevens’s army chief\textsuperscript{369} The succession was mainly as a result of Stevens’s old age, a decline in the economy and divisions within the APC.\textsuperscript{370} Like Tolbert in Liberia, Momoh lacked the political skills that had helped his predecessor prolong his stay in power even under intense opposition from the general population. He also failed to end the Lebanese monopoly on Sierra Leone’s resources leading to their continued exploitation of the country’s rich resources.\textsuperscript{371} Diamond exports declined while smuggling increased considerably. State spending on health and education declined in addition, government suspended the payment of salaries for the civil service especially teachers and the military.\textsuperscript{372} Despite attempting policies to improve the economic situation, Momoh was unable to wipe out rampant corruption that had become a major characteristic of Sierra Leonean politics.\textsuperscript{373} Patronage politics continued under Momoh; his Limba kinsmen were appointed in top positions in the civil service.\textsuperscript{374} All these led to the general suffering of the people; for instance in 1990, UNDP Human Development Report ranked the country 126 out of 130.\textsuperscript{375} The developments were so frustrating that some quarters in the name of the RUF decided to take matters in their own hands.

\textsuperscript{367} David Keen, p. 19 and Angela McIntyre (ed.), Invisible Stakeholders: Children and War in Africa op cit note 339 p. 74.
\textsuperscript{368} Angela McIntyre (ed.), Invisible Stakeholders in ibid p. 3.
\textsuperscript{369} Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit note 45 p. 81.
\textsuperscript{370} Ibrahim Abdullah and Ismail Rashid, “Rebel Movements” in Adekeye Adebajo and Rashid Ismail (eds.), West Africa’s Security Challenges Building Peace in a Troubled Region, op cit note 8 p. 178.
\textsuperscript{371} Ibid., p. 81
\textsuperscript{372} David Keen, op cit. note 334 p. 32.
\textsuperscript{373} Ibrahim Abdullah and Rashid Ismail, “Rebel Movements” p. 178.
\textsuperscript{374} Ibid., p. 178.
5.6 The Civil War

The civil war erupted in March 1991 when a small group of fighters called the RUF attacked Bomaru, a small village in eastern Sierra Leone. The RUF had its origins in the radical student movements at FBC which had been formed to end the APC rule and were inspired by the revolutionary ideas of Ghadaffi’s Green Book. The RUF was led by Foday Sankoh, a photographer and former army Corporal who had been jailed for his role in an attempted coup against Stevens in 1971. The bulk of RUF were disaffected youths who were affected by abject poverty and unemployment. Like Taylor’s NPFL, Sankoh and the RUF had been trained in Libya and Burkina Faso, the latter also gave Sankoh some fighters to help the RUF. Many commentators have argued that the conflict in Sierra Leone was an extension of Taylor’s war in Liberia in 1989. While other factors were behind the war in Sierra Leone it is said that Taylor helped form the RUF by providing them with fighters and weapons.

Why did Taylor support the RUF? While the Liberian warlord might have several reasons for supporting the Sierra Leonean rebels, three main motives are worthy our attention. Firstly, Taylor was annoyed with Sierra Leone by allowing its country to be used as ECOMOG’S headquarters and air-base. He therefore thought of forcing Sierra Leone to withdraw from ECOMOG by helping the rebels, and at one point he declared that “Sierra Leone would taste the bitterness of war.” Secondly, Taylor was helping his friend Sankoh assume the reigns of power and finally he sought to profit from the diamond trade with Sierra Leone.

The RUF in Sierra Leone lacked a clear, developed ideology. Their revolutionary message was contradicted by their actions of terror characterised by abduction, maiming, amputation, murder, exploitation and rape. Children were abducted to serve as soldiers.

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376 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, p. iii.
377 Ibid., p. 16.
378 David Keen, Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone op cit. note 334 p. 37.
379 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa op cit. note 45p. 82.
380 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, op cit. note 323 p. iii and David Keen, op cit. note 334 p. 36.
381 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla p. iii and Adekeye Adebajo, op cit. note 45 p. 82.
382 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, ibid p. iii and Adekeye Adebajo, ibid., p. 82.
383 David Keen, Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone p. 39.
in their group. Young boys and girls fought on the front lines, the latter were also used as ‘wives’ to commanders.\(^{384}\) Intimidation and torture were used to discourage children from escaping.\(^{385}\) As a result of its cruelty, the RUF, unlike the NPFL, was less famous in Sierra Leone and there were heavy criticisms both at home and abroad regarding their tactics. Sankoh, the group’s leader did not succeed in mobilising support against the Momoh government.\(^{386}\) Within Sierra Leone, people began to question how a group, claiming to be fighting on their behalf, would commit such atrocities. Thus, majority of Sierra Leoneans were alienated from the RUF and their cruelty gained them negative popularity as the most notorious group in country. But by using terror tactics, the RUF sought to instill fear in the people which would lead to easy and quick compliance.\(^{387}\) The RUF invasion of 1991 caught the APC regime off guard.\(^{388}\) The Momoh government failed to put up significant resistance. The situation was made worse by the declining economic conditions and corruption. Momoh sent the State Security Defense (SSD) to fight the rebels; however this force was poorly equipped and it retreated after severe losses.\(^{389}\) Next, government deployed the Sierra Leonean Army (SLA), but though it managed to hold back the rebels, it could not defeat them.\(^{390}\) This was mainly because the SLA was poorly equipped and trained, thus it could not defeat the RUF who were well trained and armed.\(^{391}\) Within a short time after invading Sierra Leone, the RUF was able to gain control of large areas in the country especially those rich in diamond. The RUF leader and his group started exploiting the resources of the area. Diamonds were sold to neighbouring Liberia and Guinea in exchange for arms and more were smuggled across the borders.\(^{392}\)


\(^{385}\) David Keen, *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone* p 42.

\(^{386}\) Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa* op cit. note 45 p. 83.


\(^{388}\) Ibrahim Abdullah and Rashid Ismail, “Rebel Movements” op cit. in note 8 p. 186.

\(^{389}\) Ibid., p. 186.

\(^{390}\) Ibid., p. 186.

\(^{391}\) Adekeye Adebajo op cit. note 45 p. 83.

\(^{392}\) David Keen, *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone* pp. 48-49.
Failure to defeat the RUF created a military stalemate and some quarters saw this as an opportunity to stage a coup. In 1992 a group of young officers in the SLA, apparently frustrated by government’s failure to deal with the rebels and its neglect of their military and financial needs, launched a military coup against the Momoh regime. They promised to end the war as quickly as possible and lead the country back to multiparty democracy. Led by a twenty-seven year-old Captain Valentine Strasser, they established the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Across the country, people celebrated at the news of the coup. They praised the coup plotters as liberators from the oppressive regime. The NPRC began on a promising note with a determination to introduce positive changes. It tried to negotiate a peace deal with the RUF involving broader government participation but Sankoh refused. Following this, the NPRC made significant advances against the rebels between 1992 and 1993. However, the positive steps taken by the NPRC did not last long. Within a short time, the army became involved in diamond-mining activities which diverted their attention from the conflict. The army also committed atrocities against the civilian population. This behaviour earned them the name ‘sobels’ - meaning soldiers by day and rebels by night.

The RUF grew stronger as the conflict progressed and the NPRC proved unsuccessful in defeating the group. By 1995 the rebels controlled a large share of the country’s territory especially the diamond rich areas. Realising that the situation was getting out of hand, Strasser hired some mercenaries from a South African private firm - Executive

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393 Ibrahim Abdullah and Rashid Ismail, “Rebel Movements” op cit. in note 8 p. 186.
394 Adekeye Adeabajo, op cit. note 45 p. 84.
395 Ibid., p. 84 and Ibrahim Abdullah and Ismail Rashid, “Rebel Movements” p. 187.
396 Adekeye Adeabajo. Building Peace in West Africa p. 84.
397 Severine Rugumamu and Osman Gbla, Studies in Reconstruction and Capacity Building in Post-Conflict Countries in Africa op cit. note 323 p. 16.
398 Adekeye Adeabajo, Building Peace in West Africa p 84.
399 Ibid., p. 84.
400 Ibid., p. 84.
401 Ibid., p. 79.
403 Adekeye Adeabajo, Building Peace in West Africa p 84.
404 Ibid., p. 84.
Outcomes (EO) to recapture land and some mines from the rebels.\textsuperscript{405} By August 1995 EO got back the land and mines.\textsuperscript{406} As the conflict raged on, the economic situation got worse. During this period, military spending consumed a large percentage of government spending.\textsuperscript{407} Government failed to service its debt and in order to continue getting financial aid, it hard to follow some policies which included laying off some of its civil servants.\textsuperscript{408} This led to countrywide suffering and the people of Sierra Leone were once again challenged with a replica of the APC regime. Another feature noted during this time was rampant corruption within the NPRC members. Pressure mounted on the NPRC as the local population and the international community called for elections and a return to civilian rule. In January 1996 some NPRC members led by Brigadier-General Julius Maada Bio staged a coup and ousted Strasser.\textsuperscript{409} However, enormous pressure from domestic and international community forced Bio to hold elections. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, former UN official and SLPP member, won the 1996 elections and became to be recognised by the international community as the lawful leader of Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{410}

The new regime faced several coup attempts but it survived them and managed to register some positive developments.\textsuperscript{411} EO and the Kamajors exerted huge pressure on the RUF and by October of 1996 they repelled them from their positions.\textsuperscript{412} This led to the signing of a peace agreement - the Abidjan accord- between the Kabbah regime and the RUF on 30 November 1996.\textsuperscript{413} It called for the “establishment of a Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG) to disarm the factions, the withdraw of Executive Outcomes, and the repatriation of all foreign troops from Sierra Leone.”\textsuperscript{414} Under this agreement, the RUF was to become a political party and amnesty for war crimes was to be granted to its members.\textsuperscript{415}

\begin{footnotes}
\textsuperscript{405} Ibid., p. 84.
\textsuperscript{406} Ibid., p. 84.
\textsuperscript{407} Ibid., p. 84.
\textsuperscript{408} Ibid., p. 84.
\textsuperscript{409} Ibid., p. 84-85
\textsuperscript{410} Ibid., p. 85.
\textsuperscript{411} Ibid., p. 85.
\textsuperscript{412} Ibid., p. 86. The Kamajors were a local defense group made up of local hunters, see p82
\textsuperscript{413} Ibid., p. 86.
\textsuperscript{414} Ibid., p. 86.
\textsuperscript{415} Ibid., p. 86.
\end{footnotes}
5.7 ECOMOG’S Intervention

On 25 May 1997 Kabbah was toppled by the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) under the leadership of Major Johnny Paul Koromah. Following this development, president Kabbah fled to exile in Guinea and asked for the help of Nigeria in restoring him back to power. The AFRC extended an olive branch to the RUF and invited it to share power with the new regime. Sankoh was appointed Koromah’s deputy and together, they continued with the looting and exploitation of the country’s rich resources and grave atrocities against the civilian population. Their regime was no better than that of their predecessors, and unlike the NPRC coup, there was huge opposition to the AFRC. Majority of the population called for Kabbah’s return. Widespread protests against the AFRC resulted in public demonstrations in Freetown. Apart from stiff opposition at home, the AFRC regime was not recognised by the international community; for instance, the Commonwealth still recognised Kabbah as the lawful leader of the country and invited him to a summit. The OAU too did not recognise the AFRC and were not allowed to attend its summits. Koromah, on his part, justified the coup on the grounds that Kabbah was neglecting the SLA in favour of the kamajors, and that he was also promoting ethnic tensions by practicing ethnic based politics.

ECOWAS became involved in Sierra Leone from as early as 1991 following the RUF invasion. Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea sent troops to Sierra Leone to assist the country in repelling the rebels. ECOWAS heads, particularly Abacha of Nigeria, took an active role in trying to bring peace to the war torn country. He conducted a number of meetings, which among others, recommended the imposition of sanctions on the AFRC. Despite the numerous attempts by ECOWAS, Koromah refused to cooperate with the regional

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417 Adekeye Adebajo *Building Peace in West Africa* p. 87.
418 Ibid., p. 87.
420 David Keen, *Conflict & Collusion in Sierra Leone* op cit. note 334 p. 211.
422 See Ibrahim Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror*, op cit. in note 400.
423 Adekeye Adebajo, *Building Peace in West Africa* p. 82.
424 Ibid., p. 87.
body. In August 1997 the force in Sierra Leone came to be known as ECOMOG II.\textsuperscript{425} It is instructive to note that while Guinea and Ghana contributed troops to ECOMOG II in Sierra Leone, majority of them were from Nigeria. This factor in itself brought problems similar to those experienced in Liberia, such as lack of consultation within the force.\textsuperscript{426} In spite of this, the force began fighting the military regime. The UNSC passed a resolution which imposed an embargo on oil and arms trade on Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{427} This however, had limited success.

Like the civil war in Liberia, the Sierra Leonean civil war saw the signing and flouting of peace agreements. In October 1997 talks were held in Guinea between representatives of ECOWAS and the AFRC.\textsuperscript{428} These talks resulted in the Conakry agreement which called for Kabbah’s return as the country’s president.\textsuperscript{429} Koromah, who earlier had agreed to abide by the agreement, broke his promise and insisted on staying in power as a result, fighting continued between the military led government and Nigerian troops.\textsuperscript{430} It is worthy noting that some ECOWAS members were not pleased with the way Nigeria handled the situation in Sierra Leone. It is said that at an ECOWAS extraordinary summit in Lomé, Senegal and few other members “expressed unease at what they regarded as Nigeria’s unilateral actions, saying that ECOMOG was there to enforce the embargo and not to employ force against the junta.”\textsuperscript{431} Such complaints affected ECOMOG’s operations as displeased members refused to send troops to help the force. However, despite heavy criticism, Nigeria-led ECOMOG forces managed to overthrow the military government and President Kabbah was reinstated in March 1998.\textsuperscript{432} Severe criticisms were again leveled against Nigeria’s unilateral intervention in reinstating Kabbah; Burkina Faso’s Blaise Compaoré questioned Nigeria motives especially when it used force to have Kabbah reinstated.\textsuperscript{433} It can therefore be argued that the problems

\textsuperscript{425} Ibid., p. 87.
\textsuperscript{426} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{428} Adekeye Adebajo, above p. 88.
\textsuperscript{429} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{430} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{431} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{432} Ibid., p. 88.
\textsuperscript{433} Ibid., p. 89.
ECOMOG had encountered in the Liberian debacle, resurfaced in Sierra Leone. Apart from complaints about Nigeria's conduct during the war, there were also issues of poor funding and the continued hostilities between the Anglo-phone and Franco-phone camps. Like in Liberia, Nigeria remained the sole financier of ECOMOG II. Things became difficult for the force because "it had to rely on the same weapons, old uniforms and other equipment which had earlier been used in Liberia." To further add to the growing problems, some ECOWAS members refused to contribute troops to ECOMOG II; this made success difficult. It was clear that countries like Liberia and Burkina Faso, had favoured the RUF right from the time of its intervention, thus, any actions by Nigeria were seen as jeopardising the RUF's prospects of taking over the country. They were bound to oppose Nigerian actions in Sierra Leone to ensure RUF's victory.

Fighting continued between the rebels and ECOMOG forces. In January 1999 the rebels invaded Freetown but were forced to withdraw following Nigeria's heavy bombing. Nigerian soldiers suffered serious fatalities in this encounter and in retaliation, Nigerian forces went on a rampage, killing rebel suspects and their sympathisers. This earned them heavy criticism with many arguing that the Nigerian forces were as murderers as they were mercenaries. As the war progressed, major changes were to take place in ECOMOG II and domestic events in Nigeria were to change the composition of the force. For instance, when Olusegun Obasanjo became president of Nigeria, he made it clear that he would withdraw his forces from Sierra Leone. This development came about as a result of huge domestic problems and the realisation that it was only Nigeria bearing the blunt of the war - financially or otherwise- while the whole world stood by. This led to the involvement of the British led UN mission and another attempt by ECOWAS at finding peace in Sierra Leone, known as the Lomé accord.

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434 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa p. 89.
435 Ibid., p. 95.
436 Ibid., p. 95.
438 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa p. 97.
439 Ibid., p. 97.
440 Ibid., p. 97.
Negotiations leading to the signing of the Lomé accord began in May 1999 in Togo. On 18 May 1999 a cease-fire agreement was signed between the Kabbah led regime and the RUF-AFRC team.\textsuperscript{441} During the peace talks in Lomé the RUF demanded “positions in the transitional government, amnesty for their war crimes, departure of foreign troops and the establishment of a neutral peacekeeping force.”\textsuperscript{442} ECOWAS leaders played a crucial role in the negotiations at Lomé notable among these were; Obasanjo, Taylor and Blaise Compaoré, the three forced Sankoh to sign the peace agreement.\textsuperscript{443} On 7 July of the same year, the Lomé agreement was signed between Kabbah’s government and the RUF-AFRC. The UN, OAU and the Commonwealth were present and they played a crucial role. Representatives of Benin, Burkina Faso, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Nigeria, Britain and the USA were also present.\textsuperscript{444} While Abuja II had solely appeased warlords and their followers in Liberia, the Lomé agreement was no different. Sankoh’s death sentence was lifted and the RUF was to enjoy the privilege of being a political party and some of its members were to get cabinet posts in a government of national unity.\textsuperscript{445} In addition, an amnesty for war crimes was offered to the rebels and Sankoh and Koromah were given important positions in government. Disarmament of the RUF and the AFRC was to take place under UN supervision and so were the elections scheduled for the future.\textsuperscript{446}

Two things regarding how the peace agreement was reached deserve our attention. Firstly, as with Abuja II, the warlords and the junta in Sierra Leone were appeased so as to have them sign the peace agreement. Secondly, fewer alternatives were available for ECOMOG once Nigeria indicated that it would withdraw its troops from the conflict zone, as a result, ECOWAS leaders were forced to make political deals with affluent warlords in exchange for military peace.\textsuperscript{447} By August of 1999 Nigeria started withdrawing its troops from Sierra Leone. Realising that such a move would create a vacuum, the former UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, suggested to the UNSC that a

\begin{flushleft}{\footnotesize \textsuperscript{441} Ibid., p. 97.}\textsuperscript{442} Ibid., p. 97.\textsuperscript{443} Ibid., p. 98.\textsuperscript{444} Ibid., pp. 98-99.\textsuperscript{445} Ibid., pp. 98-99.\textsuperscript{446} Ibid., p. 99.\textsuperscript{447} Ibid., p. 99.\end{flushleft}
UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone take over from ECOMOG.\textsuperscript{448} In October, the UN agreed to send peacekeepers to help restore order and disarm the rebels. The first contingent began arriving in December.\textsuperscript{449} In February 2000 the UNSC increased the force, it totaled 13,000 troops.\textsuperscript{450} The Lomé agreement was not short of problems, like the Liberian peace agreements, it had to suffer from ‘spoiler’ tactics. Sankoh complained that his members were not being given government positions as per the Lomé agreement.\textsuperscript{451} His actions incited violence leading to clashes between the UN troops and the RUF in May 2000. Some peacekeepers were taken hostage and the peace accord consequently collapsed.\textsuperscript{452} Elsewhere in Sierra Leone, reports were rife about the rebels continued rampage on civilian communities and the country’s resources. In response to the situation, Britain launched a military intervention between May and June 2000 to help bring stability.\textsuperscript{453} ECOWAS agreed to send a rapid force (mainly Nigerian) to help the UN mission and the USA helped by training troops from Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal which later participated in the UNAMSIL.\textsuperscript{454}

5.8 Conclusion

The civil war in Sierra Leone finally came to an end in 2002. The hard work done by the ECOMOG/UN force should be commended. Nigerian led ECOMOG managed to restore the government of the democratically elected Kabbah after it was overthrown in a coup. Like Liberia, Sierra Leone saw the signing and flouting of peace agreements as ‘spoilers’ wanted to get their way. Again like Liberia, appeasement was at play in Sierra Leone, warlords and their followers were given important positions in a transitional government in exchange for a lay down of arms and a return to normalcy. The problems that had plagued the force in Liberia resurfaced in Sierra Leone namely; lack of political will among ECOWAS members, inadequate funding and problems and fears of Nigerian hegemony. However, despite all the challenges encountered along the road to peace,

\textsuperscript{448} Ibid p. 100 it is worthy noting that since 1998, a UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) had worked alongside ECOMOG, but with only 50 peacekeepers, it played a minimal role.

\textsuperscript{449} Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa p. 100.

\textsuperscript{450} Ibid., p. 100.

\textsuperscript{451} Ibid., p. 101.

\textsuperscript{452} Ibid., p. 101.

\textsuperscript{453} Ibid., p. 101.

\textsuperscript{454} Ibid., p. 101.
ECOMOG managed to register remarkable successes. The activities of ECOMOG in Sierra Leone should therefore be seen as providing valuable lessons for other African sub-regional forces.
CHAPTER SIX

ECOMOG IN LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE: LESSONS FOR FUTURE INTERVENTION BY OTHER AFRICAN SUB-REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

The ECOWAS/ECOMOG experience in Liberia and Sierra Leone is a rare attempt not only at conflict resolution in post-Cold War Africa, but also an attempt at African solutions to African problems. As far as ECOMOG is concerned, two important observations are worthy our attention. Firstly, the force was the first of its kind among African sub-regions, and secondly, it was the first force in Africa to have worked with the UN where the latter assumed the role of secondary partner. In the last two chapters, we have discussed how ECOMOG worked at ending conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Our discussion shows that the road to peace in both countries was a long and hard one. ECOMOG, despite great controversies surrounding its operations, achieved the goals set out in Liberia and Sierra Leone by ending the civil wars in both countries and restoring the elected government in the latter. For a makeshift force that it was, ECOMOG richly deserves credit for the speed and effectiveness with which it intervened in the two countries. At the time of its intervention in Liberia, the rest of the world stood by and watched as people in that country continued to be massacred. Even the USA – a country with closer ties to Liberia than any other African country, limited its involvement to assisting mediation efforts.

In this chapter, we look at some of the lessons that other sub-regional military forces in Africa can learn from ECOMOG’s experiences. While there are a number of criticisms leveled against ECOMOG, it is important that we do not lose sight of the circumstances at the time of intervention. There were grave human rights abuses and huge outflow of refugees threatened the stability of the entire subregion. It is also worthy noting the sacrifices the force made given the poor conditions under which it operated.

As one author argues, "ECOMOG has certainly encountered controversy in its activities... however, if judged by the criteria of intent, commitment, and innovation, there is much to commend the effort." The valuable lessons that can be learned from ECOMOG’s activities in Liberia and Sierra Leone will help shape other sub-regional organisations and the success of their efforts would be an important step towards the achievement and maintenance of peace and security in Africa. Below we explain some of the useful lessons that can be learned from ECOMOG’s experiences;

Firstly, there is need for a clear mandate for the force. ECOMOG experiences show that any intervening force needs a clear mandate to make its operations successful. When the Liberian conflict broke out, ECOMOG forces were dispatched to that country with a mandate as peacekeepers. However, when the force arrived in Liberia there was no peace to keep. The force met fierce opposition from Charles Taylor whose forces opened fire on the ECOMOG force. As a result, ECOMOG had to change its mandate from peacekeeping to peace enforcement, the latter for which the force was not prepared. Thus a clear mandate will help guide the operations of any force and if there are any changes to be made, for example increasing the number of troops, these will be provided for within the mandate. While ECOMOG changed its mandate to that of peace enforcement, and, while Nigeria supplied more troops to the force, they were not enough for the new task it sought to undertake. As we have discussed in the preceding chapters, this had serious implications throughout the war.

Secondly, unanimity of purpose by troop contributing countries is very crucial. For any intervening force to achieve its goals there is need for a common agreement and political unity among its members specifically on crucial matters. In the case of ECOMOG, members of ECOWAS were divided and they disagreed on how to resolve the conflict both in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Francophone members, notably Burkina Faso and

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460 Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War p 61.
461 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa p. 66.
Côte d’Ivoire, preferred peacekeeping and mediation in Liberia and Sierra Leone, while Anglophone members led by Nigeria, preferred a stern approach to the situation and favoured peace enforcement.\(^{462}\) As a result, the two groups were torn apart with Burkina Faso and Côte d’Ivoire refusing to provide their troops to ECOMOG. They instead helped arm the rebels and granted them access to their borders and ports through which they received their arms.\(^{463}\) By refusing to support ECOMOG, they denied the force of the much needed men and material to help end the war in the two countries. Lack of unanimity was also evident within ECOMOG itself. There were complaints that Nigeria made all important decisions regarding the operation without consulting other contingents in the force.\(^{464}\) This led to mistrust, tension and in some cases, other contingents were forced to withdraw their troops. These divisions affected the force in its quest to end the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone.\(^{465}\) Thus, unity of purpose by intervening troops is vital to the success of any operation without which, members of the sub-regional organisation are bound to encounter serious problems like those of ECOWAS.\(^{466}\)

Thirdly, it is important to have a proportional force composition. Our discussion on Liberia and Sierra Leone shows that Nigeria shouldered the greater burden of providing men, funds and weapons for the entire operation. While this could not be avoided given the economic conditions of other troop contributing countries and the size of their militaries, it allowed Nigeria to exploit its status and run the show on its own.\(^{467}\) This irritated other ECOWAS members especially from the Francophone camp who argued that Nigeria was using the interventions in Liberia and Sierra Leone to further its hegemonic ambitions. Contributing troops proportionately has the following advantages; it helps the force to adopt a multilateral approach to decision making since all contingents are deemed crucial and entitled to contribute ideas, and it also reduces the monopoly of power one contingent might have over others.\(^{468}\) In Sierra Leone, Guinea’s ECOMOG

\(^{462}\) See Adekeye Adebajo in ibid and Adekeye Adebajo, Liberia’s Civil War

\(^{463}\) Adekeye Adebajo Building Peace in West Africa

\(^{464}\) Ibid.


\(^{467}\) See Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa and Herbert Howe, “Lessons of Liberia…”

\(^{468}\) See Oliver Furley and Roy May: Peacekeeping in Africa op cit. note 4.
deputy force commander had complained about Nigeria’s monopoly of command posts and its unilateral decisions.\textsuperscript{469} In response, ECOMOG’s force commander, who happened to be Nigerian, argued that “when Nigeria has about 90 percent of the fighting force, I don’t know how another country can come and command the troops.”\textsuperscript{470} This is clear testimony of what is likely to happen in the event that one country fields more troops than others in a multilateral intervention. Some commentators contend that “the composition of any force should be such as not to lead to the conclusion that the force is merely an instrument of a particular nation’s foreign policy.”\textsuperscript{471} In addition, a proportional force will help share the burden of intervention and will also portray the level of its commitment to the warring parties, the sub-region and the international community.\textsuperscript{472}

The fourth lesson concerns the consent of warring parties to the conflict. Any intervening force needs to realise the importance of seeking consent from the warring parties before intervening in a conflict. This has its own advantages. It helps the parties to recognise the intervening force, and if accepted, it might hasten the peace process.\textsuperscript{473} However, this is not automatic as warring factions may refuse an intervening force. In the case of ECOMOG, no consent was sought from the factions in Liberia and Sierra Leone; this proved disastrous especially in Liberia, where upon arrival the force met heavy resistance from Taylor’s forces.\textsuperscript{474} The situation in Liberia and Sierra Leone was even complicated because warlords had become so wealthy and powerful from their control and sale of the countries’ rich resources. It was important for the intervening force therefore to obtain consent from them since they had become an important party to negotiations. However, ECOMOG seemed to disregard this fact. In the Liberian case, Draman and Carment argue that members of the SMC were very impatient with the warring parties; there were little negotiations between the SMC and the factions, and even when the former failed to obtain consent of all parties, it went on to deploy ECOMOG.\textsuperscript{475} The same was also true for Sierra Leone where no consent was obtained. On ECOMOG’s intervention in Liberia, the president of Guinea, one of the architects of the ECOWAS Peace Plan argued that “we do not need the permission of any party involved in the conflict to implement the

\textsuperscript{469} Adekeye Adebajo \textit{Liberia’s Civil War} op cit. note 7.
\textsuperscript{470} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 91.
\textsuperscript{471} Olivier Furley and Roy May: \textit{Peacekeeping in Africa} op cit. note 4 p. 234.
\textsuperscript{472} \textit{Ibid.}, p. 234.
decisions reached in Banjul. So, with or without the agreement of any of the parties, ECOWAS troops will be in Liberia.\textsuperscript{476} Thus, lack of consent from the warring factions made ECOMOG’s operations difficult.

Adequate funding is another important factor for any force before embarking on an operation. Funding was a major problem for ECOMOG. For instance, the SMC established a Special Emergency Fund whose aim was to source about $50 million from African states and other donors.\textsuperscript{477} However, given the dire financial state of most countries, especially ECOMOG members, this goal was never achieved, and members had to rely heavily on Nigeria. As argued earlier, the international community deprived the force of adequate funds as a result; it was difficult for ECOMOG to effectively run its operations in Liberia and Sierra Leone.\textsuperscript{478} While the UNSC is calling for burden sharing with sub-regional organisations, it is vital that it provides those bodies with adequate funds and resources to aid them in peace operations. ECOMOG forces also complained that in addition to getting meager allowances, they would go unpaid for long periods. This might be one reason that led some of them into looting the resources in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Huge disparities were noticed between the ECOMOG forces and the UN forces in Liberia; while the former received meager allowances and starved, the latter enjoyed fat allowances.\textsuperscript{479} Lack of adequate funding also affected purchase and maintenance of equipment, as such the ECOMOG force found it difficult to defeat the heavily armed rebels who indulged in illegal sale of their countries’ rich resources to purchase arms and other war equipment.

Discipline and proper conduct of any intervening force is crucial since it determines the extent of its success and the extent to which factions in a conflict accept it. Cases of corruption and grave human rights abuses especially after Operation Octopus were

\textsuperscript{473} See Howe Herbert, “Lessons of Liberia…”
\textsuperscript{474} Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45
\textsuperscript{476} Rasheed Draman and David Carment, “Managing Chaos in the West African sub-Region…” p. 18.
\textsuperscript{478} See Adekeye Adebajo, \textit{Building Peace in West Africa} op cit. note 45.
\textsuperscript{479} Ibid., p. 91.
leveled against ECOMOG. This tarnished the image of ECOMOG forces as they came to be seen as another faction in the war. What is more, there is also need for the force’s neutrality in order to gain the trust and confidence of warring parties. The ECOMOG force however, compromised this by fighting along side the INPFL and AFL in Liberia. In addition, “ECOMOG forces also provided ULIMO-K, ULIMO-J and the LPC with arms, ammunition, intelligence, transport, and free passage to help press the war against Taylor.” There were also reports that ECOMOG forces, like the factions they were fighting, indulged in the looting of resources in Liberia and Sierra Leone. This undermined the credibility of the force. Thus, ECOMOG’s conduct and lack of neutrality gained the force little respect in the eyes of Taylor and other factions who demanded that the force be replaced by a UN mission.

Military capability of any intervening force is another crucial factor. For an intervening force to be successful in defeating the warring factions, it needs to be well trained and equipped. The experiences of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone illustrate the military deficiencies of troop contributing countries. Many of the soldiers making up the ECOMOG force lacked proper training for peacekeeping as well as peace enforcement; as such they found it hard to defeat the rebels, many of whom had received good training in Libya and Burkina Faso. Given the topography of Liberia and Sierra Leone, ECOMOG forces had difficulties fighting a guerrilla warfare in which the rebels were good at; as a result, a number of ECOMOG troops were easily abducted and taken hostage. Howe argues that “any intervening force should be able to judge whether their own political and military capabilities are equal to the proposed task.” In the case of ECOMOG, it was evident that the force was not well equipped and trained for peace enforcement.

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481 Adekeye Adebajo, Building Peace in West Africa
483 Ibid., p. 157.
484 See Adekeye Adebayo, Building Peace in West Africa
Finally, issues surrounding sub-regional hegemony need to be sorted out before intervention. The Liberian and Sierra Leonean cases demonstrate how states that are powerful militarily and economically can assume a hegemonic role in a multilateral intervention.\textsuperscript{486} Nigeria, the most powerful state in ECOMOG ran the show in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Its unilateral decisions and heavy handedness approach to the situation were for the greater part a source of irritation to fellow troop contributors. The perception among some ECOWAS members and the warring factions in Liberia and Sierra Leone was that Nigeria was using ECOMOG to project itself as the regional hegemon. Francophone countries vehemently opposed the intervention which they viewed as a tool for furthering Anglophone domination in the region.\textsuperscript{487} While fears of hegemons are true and founded, members of sub-regional organisations in Africa should realise that in any military interventions, there is need for a lead player to mobilise the force.\textsuperscript{488} In the case of ECOWAS, Nigeria, given her status was a good candidate to assume that position. However, to avoid problems arising from sub-regional hegemons, “subregional military forces should have a centralized structure whose authority would lessen the influence of a major contributor.”\textsuperscript{489} This and the above factors will help them succeed in their peace operations.

Conclusion

The ECOMOG initiative, the first of its kind in Africa, was a significant milestone in African politics. While fraught with numerous challenges such as operational, logistical, lack of political unity, just to mention a few, it came to represent a bold attempt in implementing African solutions to African problems. This is important especially in the post-Cold War period when the international community has distanced itself from conflicts in Africa. The vast lessons to be learned from ECOMOG cannot be underestimated; they are important guides for future sub-regional intervening military forces on the African content. ECOMOG initiative is indicative of the fact that with adequate

\textsuperscript{486} See W. Ofuatey-Kodjoe “The Impact of Peacekeeping on Target States Lessons form the Liberian Experience” op cit. in note 14

\textsuperscript{487} Rasheed Draman and David Carment, “Managing Chaos in the West African sub-Region” op cit. note

\textsuperscript{488} p. 24, 26.

\textsuperscript{489} Ibid, p. 28.

\textsuperscript{489} Herbert Howe, “Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peacekeeping” p. 174.
funding, proper training and political unity, African forces have the capacity to find solutions to their own conflicts.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

The activities of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra Leone are a clear testimony to the fact that African solutions to African problems are possible. As the preceding chapters have shown, African sub-regional organisations have been making efforts to manage their own conflicts. The thesis has outlined efforts undertaken by the OAU, AU, SADC, IGAD and ECOMOG in resolving conflicts. The international community, in particular the USA, Britain and France have overtime shifted their roles from intervening militarily in African conflicts to playing an enabling role. This has taken the form of training African forces, providing funds, equipment and other resources. Thus, in an era where interest in African states and their conflicts is fading, Africans remain solely responsible for their own peace and security. The literature reviewed shows that Africans have the will and capacity to manage their own conflicts and ECOMOG remains a good example for other sub-regional forces to emulate. However, a number of pressing problems make African efforts at conflict resolution difficult. Some suggestions are offered, which could improve African peace operations.

In the first place, the UNSC which is calling on sub-regional organisations to assist in sharing the burden of peacekeeping and peace enforcement should be in the fore front to provide adequate resources. As the Liberian and Sierra Leonean cases have shown, the intervening force lacked adequate resources and had to rely on Nigeria for the entire duration of the operations. Thus, the UNSC has the duty to provide funds, equipment and other logistical requirements to lighten the burden of the intervening force and make the operation successful.

Secondly, the delay in securing a mandate from the UNSC is another problem that needs urgent attention. While an intervening force might be prepared to enter a conflict zone, it is made to wait for authorisation from the UNSC. For instance, when the Liberian conflict broke out, the UNSC was made aware of the grave human rights abuses and the proliferation of refugees to other countries. However, the UNSC took long to respond and ECOWAS had to proceed without the mandate. If forces intervene without UNSC’s blessings, they stand to face stiff opposition from the warring factions. The UNSC’s
mandate legitimizes intervention in a conflict and thereby limits suspicions about the intentions of a force in a particular conflict.

Thirdly, where the UNSC has to work with the intervening force, it is crucial that it sends adequate troops to the conflict zone. In the Liberian case, the UNSC sent about fifty observers whose presence did not assist much given the chaotic situation in that country.

Another point to be taken seriously concerns political unity for an intervening force. ECOWAS and ECOMOG were plagued with serious political divisions, which affected the force's performance. Future sub-regional military forces should aim at political unity as this will help them to adopt unanimous decisions regarding the operation.

In addition, sub-regional military forces need to have a clear mandate before intervening in a conflict. This will help guide what role they should play, either peacekeepers or peace enforcers.

Finally, African military forces should be given adequate training in peace operations to help them acquire the necessary expertise. The inexperienced ECOMOG force faced a number of challenges in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Thus adequate training will help make the force efficient and effective in the conflict zone and enhance its ability to contain conflicts.
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