



Centre for
Human Rights and
Restorative Justice

HISTORY REFERENCES

Sierra Leone Truth Commission

Abstract

Notes on discussions of history, as well as a list of coding themes and references to history in the Sierra Leone Truth Commission.

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Researcher Notes

Report details:

- published in 2004
- pdf has 1829 pages
- two chapters on history
 - chapter is 409 pages
- according to NVivo's text search, the word history (using stems) is referenced 519 times, representing 0.31% coverage
- after deleting references from the bibliography, notes or headers, there are **85 broad references** to history in the content of the report
- detailed discussions breaking down the history and cause of the conflict

History is referenced in the report in the following ways:

- commission objective to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international law to prevent recurrence of violence
 - not a complete or exhaustive record of the conflict
- commission concluded that of the information that they gathered aligned with popular views and other facts departed from it
 - had to debunk myths and untruths about the conflict
- story of Sierra Leone's youth who drove the resistance and bore the brunt of the backlash, but youth were also the bulk of all fighting forces
- determine shameful period of violence caused by a failure of leadership in government, civil, and public life
- "right to the truth includes a duty to remember"
- trying to preserve the collective memory and guard from revisionism
- truth not a history of battles but of personal stories and accounts
- society cannot simply deny or block out its past
- nations unity depends on shared identity
- truth brings catharsis to society
- combatants of the Revolutionary United Front drove majority of abuses and violations
- need to also look at economic dispossession not just the violations of civil and political rights
- colonial strategy divided the nation, created ethnic divisions, affected access to education, and defined social, political, and economic regressions for the whole population
- created a child friendly version of the report - wanted to educate them without traumatizing them
- international community dismissed the conflict as "another example of tribal conflict in Africa"
- special attention in the report to the needs of women and girls - why was so much violence perpetrated against them?
- acts of summary justice were directed or encouraged by civilians - personal feuds and finger pointing

- historical divisions along ethnic and religious lines that still exist today
- need an annual unifying celebration - a national Day of Reconciliation
- historically the army turned against its people
- rape remains a silent war crime in Sierra Leone
- secrecy and authoritarianism obscured the truth

History and truth are discussed in the following ways:

- commission wants to create an impartial history
- not claiming to present the true history, but rather trying to create an impartial account and debunk myths
- idea the people have the right to know the truth and need to what happened
- idea of the personal truth of witnesses and that secrecy and authoritarianism obscured the truth

*References of history and truth appear under the highlighted coding theme/section **True** starting on page 60

Links to Data Visualization

This section contains links to all data visualization for the Sierra Leone report.

Word Frequency Cloud

- [word frequency cloud](#)
- [excel sheet of word frequency cloud findings](#)

Word Trees

- [history](#)
- [women](#)
- [children](#)
- [youth](#)
- [forgive](#)
- [victim](#)
- [truth](#)
- [reconciliation](#)
- [land](#)

*NVivo software can only edit word trees by changing the central search term and branch sizes. Word trees includes references from bibliography, headers, and notes that cannot be edited out using NVivo software. Researchers will need to manually remove unsightly branches using editing software (e.g., paint, photoshop, etc.)

History Hierarchy Coding Chart

- [history hierarchy coding chart](#)
- [excel sheet of history hierarchy coding chart results](#)

History Coding for the Sierra Leone Report

The following chart breakdowns the child nodes used for coding history references based on themes and discussions surrounding history in the Sierra Leone report.

History	All references or discussions of history in Sierra Leone report
Collective memory	References or discussions of collective memory or remembrance
Colonialism	References or discussions of colonialism
Economy	References or discussions of economy, economics, etc.
Education	References or discussions of education
Ethnicity	References or discussions of ethnicity, ethnic division, or ethnic lines
Human Rights	References or discussions of human rights, human rights abuses or violations, and human rights codes
Impunity	References or discussions of impunity
Military	References or discussions of the military or soldiers
Nation	References or discussions of nation, nations, national identity, nationalism, national unity etc.
Politics	References or discussions of politics, political views, political parties or political leaders
Responsibility	References or discussions of responsibility for the conflict and/or atrocities committed during it
Truth	References or discussions of truth, debunking myths, etc.
Victims	References or discussions of victims of violence or human rights abuses
Women	References or discussions of women and girls
Youths	References or discussions of youths or children

History References

This section contains all references to history from the Sierra Leone report.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 85 references coded [0.46% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The first objective of the Commission, as established by the Act, was to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone. The Parliament of Sierra Leone recognized that such a record would form the basis for the task of preventing the recurrence of violence.⁹ Several of the themes focused on by the Commission comprise the historical record of the conflict. The Commission does not claim to have produced the complete or exhaustive historical record of the conflict. The Commission is however satisfied that it has provided an essential version of the armed conflict, which includes an account of its main events and how it started. At times, this story accords with popular views of the conflict. At other times, the Commission's record of the conflict departs from popular history and debunks certain myths and untruths about the conflict.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

The core of the historical record is to be found in the chapter titled "Military and Political History of the Conflict".¹⁴ This chapter endeavours to tell the story of the conflict by charting its key events and dynamics in the military and political spheres. It begins by tracing the immediate causes of the conflict and the convergence of factors that led to the outbreak of hostilities. Thereafter, for the purposes of analysis, the chapter is divided into three distinct components, which are referred to by the Commission as "Phases I, II and III." Each 'phase' assumed a slightly different character, although the common underpinning was the ongoing commission of violations by all warring factions. Phase One is titled "Conventional 'Target' Warfare" and covers the period from the outbreak of the conflict until 13th November 1993. Phase Two is titled "Guerrilla Warfare" and covers the period from 13 November 1993 until 2 March 1997. Phase Three is titled "Power Struggles and Peace Efforts" and covers the period from 2 March 1997 until the end of the conflict on 18 January 2002.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

The last twenty years of Sierra Leone's history is, in large part, the story of Sierra Leone's youths. Youths were the driving force behind the resistance to one party state rule in the 1980s. As students, journalists, workers and activists, they exposed injustices and the bankruptcy of the ruling elite's ideology. They also bore the brunt of the state's repressive backlash. During the conflict, youths formed the bulk of the fighting forces in all the factions.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission commenced its primary findings with the conclusion that the conflict and the independence period preceding it represented the most shameful years of Sierra Leone's history. These periods reflected an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of many of those involved in government, public life and civil society. No enlightened and visionary leaders emerged to steer the country away from the slide into chaos and bloody civil war.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

The second limb of the 'object' of the Commission consists of four elements, the first being 'to address impunity'. Article XXVI of the Lomé Agreement listed this as the first of the functions of the proposed the TRC. The reference to impunity is somewhat enigmatic, given that the Lomé Agreement, in granting pardon and amnesty to the perpetrators of human rights and international humanitarian law violations and abuses, constitutes one of the more striking grants of impunity in recent history. The paradox of the Lomé Agreement, and of the Truth and Reconciliation Act 2000 that was adopted to give effect to certain of its provisions, is that it both enshrines impunity and seeks to address it.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

This 'right to the truth' includes a duty to remember: "A people's knowledge of the history of their oppression is part of their heritage and, as such, shall be preserved by appropriate measures in fulfilment of the State's duty to remember. Such measures shall be aimed at preserving the collective memory from extinction and, in particular, at guarding against the development of revisionist and negationist arguments.' Joinet also specifically recognises the right of victims to know, their families and dear ones to know the circumstances of violations and, if death or disappearance is the result, the fate of the victim.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: 'Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.' Further, he explains: 'This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.'³

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

The ‘inalienable right to truth’ is closely related to the ‘right to an effective remedy’ for violations of human rights. The right to an effective remedy is firmly entrenched in all major international law instruments.⁶ ‘Establishing the truth’ has been recognised as an essential part of the right to an effective remedy, as it is a crucial aspect of the guarantee of non-repetition of the original violation or abuse. This link between ‘knowing what has happened’ and ‘avoiding the recurrence of violations in the future’ has been repeatedly confirmed.⁷ Very illustrative in this respect is the innovative case law of the Inter-American human rights institutions, borne in the long and painful history of conflict in South and Central America.

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

Personal and narrative truth. This is a witness’s personal truth which he or she tells either in a statement or at a hearing. This is what he or she believes and should be respected. Often, the individual accounts did not initially appear to contribute significantly to the more general ‘impartial historical record’ that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000 requires of the Commission. But over time, the sheer volume of these accounts provided a complex, multilayered vision of the conflict. This truth is not the history of battles, military leaders and political parties, but rather a series of personal stories and accounts, telling a tale of the suffering, the pain and of the immense dignity of the common people of Sierra Leone. It is, perhaps more than anything else, a vision of the truth that describes the fundamental humanity of the people of this country.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be repaired and prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation’s unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and helps to prevent the past from reoccurring.²¹

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

In designing its policy on confidentiality, the Commission had three major concerns: fulfilling its truth seeking purpose, ensuring the security of witnesses, and addressing its healing mandate. Truth seeking entails that the information collected from witnesses is used for investigation and will appear in the Final Report. Security and healing considerations require the Commission to take into account the personal history of each witness. For instance, some witnesses may wish their information to remain confidential in order to avoid persecution by perpetrators. Some witnesses might require confidentiality because of fear of rejection by their communities.

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

In understanding and analysing the conflict, the Commission deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflected its main phases. To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to

mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, it was considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of the conflict as it was prosecuted by that faction. The phases determined by the Commission for its own purposes were as follows:

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

The major product of a truth and reconciliation commission's inquiry is its Final Report. The Commission's mandate included the creation of an impartial historical record. This required the Commission to be independent from all the actors in the contested history, including government and all political parties. The Commission had to demonstrate that with regard to the perpetration of violations, irrespective of who committed them, it had examined all violations and commented on them in the same balanced way.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to create an authoritative account of the history of the conflict, the Commission had to cover the full breadth of violations carried out during different time periods. It was not enough to look only at violations of civil and political rights; it was also necessary to focus on the structural nature of economic dispossession insofar as they constitute causes of conflict.

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission felt that a brief report would do injustice to the range of issues that account for the conflict in Sierra Leone. While a number of issues triggered the conflict, there were clear structural issues dating back to the time of colonialism. If these issues were not addressed in detail, the Commission would not have met its broad ranging mandate. The individual, factional and institutional fluidities assist an understanding of the dynamics of the war. Without this nuanced interpretation, the real history may have been lost in a summary. A nuanced interpretation required that the narrative be discussed in depth, including the roles and experiences of people, institutions and the respective factions.

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

The publication of a child-friendly report is the first such initiative by a truth commission. The Commission was imbued with a sense of history in undertaking this significant exercise. It was important that the report be accessible to children and that the contents not traumatise them. The Commission is satisfied that its partnership with UNICEF, UNAMSIL and the CPAs in this undertaking has led to the production of an outstanding report that will prove to be an important educational tool for children in Sierra Leone.

Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

Event-specific hearings. The Commission hopes to consider whether particular events served an especially catalytic role in the history of human rights abuse in Sierra Leone.

Reference 18 - 0.01% Coverage

Different kinds of violations – the range of violations that have taken place in Sierra Leone’s history. It is also desired to offer a full picture of the kind of repression suffered by victims so as to flag areas for institutional reform/retraining. This is also important to address violations that elucidate the broader sociopolitical environment that enabled human rights violations.

Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 20 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to “compile a clear picture of the past”³ the Commission devoted considerable resources towards examining the pre-conflict history of the country. These efforts were intended to locate causes of conflict in Sierra Leone’s past,

Reference 21 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the Commission’s study of history was the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone’s constituent groups. The nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – influenced people’s perceptions of the state in which they lived and their own places within it. These perceptions in turn presented the greatest challenge to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They undermined the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC made any genuine effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system. While they claimed to be ideologically different, in reality the two parties shared a brand of politics that was all about power and the benefits it conferred. Tragically these characteristics persist today in Sierra Leone.

Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission was enjoined by statute to give special attention to the needs of women and girls, particularly with regard to sexual violence. Why was so much violence perpetrated against

women? Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone? Did the fact that women endured such a lowly status in the socio-political life make them easy targets? Is it because men perceived females to be mere chattels symbolising male honour that made women the deliberate target of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other?

Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission finds that the conflict and the post-independence period preceding it represent the most shameful years of Sierra Leone's history. These periods reflect an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of all those involved in government, public life and civil society.

Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage

Acts of summary justice were often directed or encouraged by other civilians. These were mostly isolated incidents motivated by unresolved personal feuds and other localised dynamics in the particular deployment areas where they took place. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. ECOMOG or SLA soldiers, RUF fighters or CDF militiamen then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 26 - 0.01% Coverage

The next section covers the findings made in respect of the military and political history of the conflict. These findings are organised per faction. Findings of responsibility are made in relation to the role played by each faction and, in certain circumstances, with respect to individual leaders, commanders, combatants and other role-players.

Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission finds that the presence of peacekeepers in Sierra Leone has contributed substantially to the problem. The Commission recognises that the UN Mission in Sierra Leone has probably enacted the most progressive measures in UN peacekeeping history in order to deal with this problem.

Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

This recommendation is made in the context of Sierra Leone's recent history. The conflict period resulted in the demeaning of human life and dignity. The state must now set the example by demonstrating that it places the highest value on all human life. The abolition of the death penalty will mark an important and symbolic departure from the past to the future.²¹

Reference 29 - 0.01% Coverage

Youths¹¹² were the driving force behind the resistance to one-party state rule in the 1980s. As students, journalists, workers and activists they exposed injustices and the bankruptcy of the ruling elite's ideology. They also bore the brunt of the state's repressive backlash. During the

conflict, youths formed the bulk of the fighting forces in all the factions. The last twenty years of Sierra Leone's history are, in reality, the story of Sierra Leone's youths.

Reference 30 - 0.01% Coverage

477. In the appointment of foreign personnel to staff sensitive post-conflict organisations, great care must be taken to ensure that members undergo sensitisation not only to local conditions but also to the delicate balances that must be maintained in post-conflict endeavours. Such training should engender a good understanding of the history and nature of transitional justice, the history of the country and region in question, and the respect required for local people, customs and traditions.

Reference 31 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably, the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and help to prevent the past from reoccurring.¹¹

Reference 32 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 33 - 0.01% Coverage

Commission devoted considerable resources towards examining the pre-conflict history of Sierra Leone.

Reference 34 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the study contained in this chapter is the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone's constituent groups. Throughout Sierra Leone's history, the nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – has influenced people's perceptions of the state in which they live and their own places within it. These perceptions have in turn presented the greatest challenges to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They have served to undermine the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 35 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to adduce a balanced historical perspective on the conflict, the Commission invited a host of national and international stakeholders to make submissions about the key events of the past. It held public and closed hearings at which individuals, institutions of state, non-governmental organisations and donor agencies were able to express their views and opinions. It substantiated the material from all these testimonies by referring to multiple secondary sources, including books and periodicals on the country, as well as memoirs by Sierra Leoneans. The resultant chapter compiles a concise narrative out of these various resources and reflects contrasting versions of history in an impartial manner to the greatest extent possible.

Reference 36 - 0.01% Coverage

The cumulative outcome of socio-economic divisions, coupled over time with a host of other disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate, would induce people who had lived harmoniously for most of history to become polarised along ethnic and regional lines at moments of crisis. The polarity that is captured in the phrase ‘two nations in the same land’ was an ominous historical antecedent for future civil conflict with ethnic and regional undertones.

Reference 37 - 0.01% Coverage

In its official submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in April 2003, the All People’s Congress (APC) recalled its basis for a major policy shift upon finally assuming power in 1968. The APC stated that the SLPP engineered military intervention of March 1967 had set an ominous precedent for the country. In the wake of that intervention, the APC perceived that the threat to remove it from office by unlawful means was ever present. Accordingly, in the interests of its own survival, the APC felt compelled to place emphasis on internal security rather than on governance.⁵⁰ Indeed, with the hindsight that history permits, it can be seen that the APC used its concerns about internal security as a pretext to stifle the nascent democratic culture.

Reference 38 - 0.01% Coverage

Pujehun District was thus replete with historical antecedents to the conflict, including several periods of mass unrest, which provoked repression and deprivation from the State in response. The District had a well-known history of rebellion, a large pool of exiled and aggrieved youths in Liberia and, ultimately, a volatile security climate. As Foday Sankoh and his RUF ‘vanguards’ plotted their entry into Sierra Leone in March 1991, Pujehun District had the vital characteristics of a ‘gateway’ through which the launch of an insurgency against the incumbent APC would meet with ideological support and find willing recruits.

Reference 39 - 0.01% Coverage

For this reason, the idea of “revolution” in Sierra Leone was popular in Bo. Many inhabitants of the District were even in favour of an armed action to overthrow the APC and scores of youths travelled to Kailahun to volunteer for the RUF in the first few months of the conflict. As in neighbouring Moyamba, a prevailing history of election violence and thuggery had also

reinforced the propensity for conflict in Bo. The centrality and high population of the District made it a natural wartime headquarters for the Southern-based Mende militia known as the Kamajors.

Reference 40 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 41 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC has made any real effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system.

Reference 42 - 0.01% Coverage

Due to its colonial history, most of Sierra Leone's laws were either adopted or adapted from England. Section 74 of the Courts Act 1965 made pre-1880 laws of England automatically applicable to Sierra Leone. Examples of laws adopted pursuant to this section include the Statute of Frauds 1677, the Wills Act 1837 and the Common Law Procedure Act 1852. Post-1880 English statutes that were adopted additionally include the Conveyancing Act 1881, the Settled Land Act 1882, the Perjury Act 1911, the Forgery Act 1913, the Larceny Act 1916 and the Married Women's Maintenance Act (Cap. 100) enacted in 1888.

Reference 43 - 0.01% Coverage

This military and political history is couched in the terms of the Commission's mandate, attempting to present accurately the social and historical "context in which the violations and abuses occurred" and to address "the question of whether those violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorisation by any government, group or individual".

Reference 44 - 0.01% Coverage

In the first place, the Commission has sought to lend an appropriate context to the outbreak of hostilities in Sierra Leone by analysing its most proximate antecedents in this chapter. These factors are included under the rubric of 'The Predecessors, Origins and Mobilisation of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF)'. Thereafter, in understanding and analysing the military and political history, the Commission has deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflects its main phases and captures its main events.

Reference 45 - 0.01% Coverage

To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (the “RUF”), it has been considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of that faction, as well as the manner in which the conflict evolved as a result.

Reference 46 - 0.01% Coverage

During the first three years of armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the defining events in military history were predominantly driven by the agenda of the RUF, or by the respective plans and actions of its predecessors and / or accomplices. On the political front, whilst ostensibly unrelated to the RUF itself, the elevation into Government of a group of junior officers of the Sierra Leone Army, calling themselves the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), can be traced in origin and motivation to the perception on the part of the coup-makers that the Government had failed to prosecute the war efficiently. In other words, it stemmed from a perception that the Government had failed properly to defend the state against RUF incursions into its territories.

Reference 47 - 0.01% Coverage

Three other persons in a cell under Reider’s auspices travelled out of Freetown along with Sankoh in April 1988; the distinguishing factor in their case was that Reider did not tell them in advance about the nature of what awaited them at the end of their journey. Each of Sankoh’s travelling companions thought he was heading to undergo ‘Advanced Capacity Building in Revolutionary Ideology’ and told, variously, that he would be taken to an institution such as the University of Nigeria or the Al-Fattah University in Tripoli to be further lectured and inspired.¹⁰ This invitation came aptly to represent the kind of deceit and mismanagement of human resources that ultimately invoked a vacuum in revolutionary leadership¹¹ and a reversion towards militarism. The narrative of those who accepted their invitations in good faith, but instead underwent guerrilla training in Libya, resonates far more widely when examined under the lens of the subsequent military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Reference 48 - 0.01% Coverage

Saturday 23rd of March 1991 has until now stood as the date on which the first shots were fired in the Sierra Leone conflict; yet in fact it is a misleading milestone in history. What happened on that day was an attack that culminated in the commencement of the conflict, not the first attack of the conflict itself. There is no need to dwell excessively on the semantics of this subtle differentiation, but for a variety of reasons the Commission deems it necessary to place the event itself in an appropriate historical context.

Reference 49 - 0.01% Coverage

The RSLMF officers killed in the attack have also come to symbolise recurring features of the military history of the conflict as it has been recorded by the Commission. Major Foday was targeted on this mission due to a personal vendetta stemming from inter-factional connivance between the NPFL and the SLA soldiers. He is said to have been conducting an inspection of his troops at the time of the attack and had insufficient time or capacity at his disposal to resist the swarms of fighters who entered Bomaru from the surrounding bush. He was eventually shot dead in his house.

Reference 50 - 0.01% Coverage

Nevertheless, this contingent would remain something of a ‘special case’ in terms of the composition of the RUF in the military and political history of the conflict. Their original number would not be expanded during the course of the hostilities, nor would the term be applied to any other group. In the folklore of the RUF movement, as it was later documented in ‘public relations’ texts like *Footpaths to Democracy*,⁶² the vanguards were the founders of the revolution.

Reference 51 - 0.01% Coverage

Foulah advised some of the new recruits – “a fighter without political ideology is a criminal”; in the evening, the RUF cadres would gather together and conduct lengthy discussions about philosophy and ideology; Foulah handed some of the recruits an exercise book in which to make notes on the RUF ideology: causes of the war, eight codes of conduct, eleven principles of leadership, history of the country – Foulah himself had made his own notes in an exercise book during his training in Liberia; the new recruit in turn was intended to absorb the material, or to jot it down, to a sufficient extent to be able to pass it on to others.

Reference 52 - 0.01% Coverage

The original testimonies proffered to the Commission indicate that the events of Wednesday 29 April 1992 have been widely misinterpreted and misunderstood in the broader history of Sierra Leone’s conflict. The crucial feature of this landmark date is that notions of power and control in the military and political spheres converged significantly for the first time since the launch of the fullscale incursion just over a year earlier.

Reference 53 - 0.01% Coverage

During the reign of the NPRC, the Sierra Leone Army encompassed a broader and more diverse mixture of mindsets and capabilities than at any other point in its history. First and foremost, the unprecedented variety was a function of size. The paltry force of between 3,000 and 4,000 soldiers that started the war in 1991 accounted for only a minority of the total force by 1994.

Reference 54 - 0.01% Coverage

Often these actions were directed or encouraged by other civilians. Apparently they were mostly motivated by their unresolved personal feuds; – disputes over land ownership rights between

families and ‘ruling houses’ – were cited as frequent examples. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. On occasion, SLA soldiers or RUF fighters then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 55 - 0.01% Coverage

Of immediate consequence was the rumour that Strasser had changed his mind and wanted to contest the 1996 elections. In order for the incumbent Head of State, who was 31 years of age by that time and had for a lengthy period been the youngest serving Head of State in history, to assume the Presidency through victory in a ballot conducted under the terms of the Constitution, there would have had to be a change made to the provision containing the proposed minimum age. Strasser himself had signed this provision into force, which appears to indicate that, up until a certain point, he

Reference 56 - 0.01% Coverage

1016. The military assault on the capital city, Freetown, quickly evolved into one of the most concentrated spates of human rights abuse and atrocities against civilians perpetrated by any group or groups during the entire history of the conflict. For over two weeks the populace of Freetown and its environs, among which were living thousands of displaced persons from the rest of the country, was subjected indiscriminately to a gamut of different crimes against their persons and destruction of their property.

Reference 57 - 0.01% Coverage

1022. The morale among the young Kamajors was at an all-time low when the AFRC-led troop entered Freetown on 6 January 1999. The base at the Brookfields Hotel was attacked and ransacked within 24 hours of the initial entry and many of its Kamajor inhabitants were captured and killed.⁵¹¹ Thereafter the participation of the Kamajors in the defence of Freetown became something far more peripheral. Their deployment history and elementary training meant they were not suited to the travails of urban warfare in a built-up environment. As a collective force, their main contribution was reserved for the ‘mopping up’ phase that followed the main operation to liberate the city.

Reference 58 - 0.01% Coverage

1045. The volatility of the military situation in Sierra Leone was already at the highest point in its history when the Lomé ceasefire was agreed upon. The parties would require the utmost vigilance over the implementation of the political provisions of the Accord to ensure that any irregularities were not allowed to become the spark for further hostilities.

Reference 59 - 0.01% Coverage

It was in this light that the fuse was lit for the final explosive episode in the military and political history of the conflict as it was directed by the RUF. The three most senior commanders left in

the field were Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Bao. According to RUF members, the individual and collective opposition of these three men in particular had already been made apparent to the political wing through harrowing personal encounters. On one occasion, the Lands Minister Peter Vandy was stripped naked and beaten by Morris Kallon in Makeni.⁵⁸⁹

Reference 60 - 0.01% Coverage

Vol Three A Chapter Three The Military and Political History of the Conflict Page 379 682
1222. The roles played by some of these committees were self-explanatory and warrant mention only insofar as they contributed to the staging of a landmark event in history. Others have attained a more profound significance in understanding the dynamics of the demonstration that subsequently transpired.

1223. The Information and Sensitisation Group, for example, can lay claim to a quite incredible dividend, since it succeeded in instituting what was probably the largest mass demonstration in the country's history. It achieved the feat by bombarding the airwaves with advertisements and related discussion programmes for the whole weekend leading up to the demonstrations. As one of those who responded to the campaign later explained, these media announcements mixed the concept of protest with a certain patriotic imperative:

Reference 61 - 0.01% Coverage

1265. The face-to-face meeting between the respective security cadres of Johnny Paul Koroma and Foday Sankoh represented a convergence of two squads of men whose personal backgrounds and fighting histories were remarkably similar. The inhabitants of Koroma's residence at the time included several of the coup-makers of 25 May 1997, who had subsequently become 'Honourables' in the AFRC regime. Among the most prominent soldiers at the compound on 7 May 2000 were Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Bazzy'), Santigie Kanu (alias "Five Five"), Hassan Bangura (alias 'Papa' or 'Bomblast'), George Adams, Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Cobra'), Alex Tamba Brima (alias 'Gullit') and an SLA officer nicknamed 'Peggy'. The RUF security guards were also all exSLA soldiers and had served alongside many of those they went to confront during the AFRC regime and later in the bush.

Reference 62 - 0.01% Coverage

In the Commission's view, the date of the symbolic burning ceremony at Lungi ought to be commemorated in future years with a unifying annual celebration – a National Day of Reconciliation.⁹⁵⁸ While the Commission does not underestimate the struggle that lies ahead for the people of this nation, it is gratified to acknowledge that since that day there have been no further military hostilities in Sierra Leone. 18 January 2002 saw the closing of this turbulent chapter and its consignment to history: the military and political history of the conflict.

Reference 63 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUF had different sub groups. These groups are examined in more detail in the chapter of this Report on the military and political history of the conflict. The main support for the RUF was the national Patriotic Front for Liberia, which constituted the main incursion force that

invaded Sierra Leone in 1991. The NPFL was not markedly different from the RUF. For the people therefore it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. The major difference for a lot of the populace was that most of the NPFL fighters “spoke with a Liberian accent.” However, it should be noted that many of the RUF fighters were Sierra Leoneans recruited in Liberia. Speaking with a Liberian accent was not conclusive proof that the person was Liberian. For the people however, it was sufficient to distinguish the RUF fighters from their Liberian compatriots.

Reference 64 - 0.01% Coverage

240. AWOL’s story might initially seem somewhat incongruous with the military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone that was to unfold three years later. He never took part in that conflict, nor has he, to the Commission’s knowledge, since perpetrated any human rights abuse against others. Upon closer inspection, though, his story is instructive in understanding the nature of the violations committed in the conflict in Sierra Leone. The Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) is behind the majority of violations and abuses committed during the conflict.¹³⁸ Yet behind the majority of RUF/SL combatants in the conflict is a story of deception and forced recruitment. In turn, behind every forced recruit, including those who did not become combatants is a story of victimisation.

Reference 65 - 0.01% Coverage

People of means, public officials and public institutions were reminders of the “oppressive” regime of zero opportunity under which they had lived for a very long time. The conflict became an opportunity to level the playing field. They began preying on the very people they were supposed to protect. For the first time in modern history, a national army turned against its very public in a civil war.

Reference 66 - 0.01% Coverage

The signs that the army would ultimately consume its benefactors were rooted in the history of the institution.

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces traces its history back to British colonial days. From its inception, the RSLAF has had series of title changes and underwent rapid transformation from the colonial days to date. The original name was the Royal West African Rifles. It was later transformed into the Royal Sierra Leone Rifles, and subsequently the Royal Sierra Leone Regiment. The army served with distinction in both first and second world wars gaining the battle honours of Cameroon, in what was then German West Africa, and Myohaug, in Burma in 1944. Following independence in 1961, the armed forces became known as the Sierra Leone Regiment and finally, the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) after the attainment of republican status in 1971. In 1995, the NPRC military regime renamed it the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AFRSL). President Kabbah on 21 January 2002 renamed it as the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

Reference 67 - 0.01% Coverage

In addition to the above-listed geographically-specific groupings, there were also diverse mechanisms for civil defence that sprung up in different parts of the country under generic terms such as ‘vigilantes’, ‘community defence units’ or CDUs, ‘auxiliaries’ and ‘watchmen’. Each of them played its own distinct role in Sierra Leone’s history and the Commission is mandated to capture such contributions to the greatest extent possible.

Reference 68 - 0.01% Coverage

It has been argued that the conflict in Sierra Leone was the worst in recent history and cannot be explained by reference to any existing phenomena in the country. Many victims want to understand why the conflict was attended by so much violence and abuse. To provide an insight into the psychology of perpetrators, the Commission commissioned some monographic studies in the hope of finding some explanation.¹⁹⁰

Reference 69 - 0.01% Coverage

Phase I encompasses the start of the war in March 1991, the NPRC coup in 1992 and the RUF’s efforts to regroup from the brink of defeat in 1993. Although this is a pivotal period in the history of the conflict, few significant events occurred in the diamond industry. The RUF started its military operations in 1991, but did not gain any significant control over any diamond area before 1992, when it first captured Kono. This period was characterised by the decline of NDMC and the retreat of GGDO from the diamond trade.

Reference 70 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUF launched its insurgency without any independent direction or means, due to the sizeable presence of Taylor’s men among them. As explained in the chapter on the Military and Political History of the Conflict, NPFL fighters outnumbered their RUF counterparts by four to one. In addition, as pointed out by one Sierra Leone researcher, “those Liberian NPFL fighters never took orders from Sankoh, but from Taylor or NPFL commanders”.²⁵ Taylor and his men were in control of operations at the initial stage; indeed, it has even been suggested that the presence of Sierra Leoneans was merely designed to lend an indigenous flavour to the incursions.²⁶

Reference 71 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission, primarily through the testimonies it received from women and girls, seeks to find answers as to why such extraordinary violence was perpetrated against women. Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone, where women were afforded a subservient status to men? Did the low status of women in socio-political life make them easy targets? Or is it because men still perceive women to be chattels, possessions belonging to them, symbols of their honour, making them the deliberate targets of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other? The answers probably lie somewhere in a combination between all of these factors.

Reference 72 - 0.01% Coverage

A paradox exists in Sierra Leone in the realms of women and politics: some women have been political pioneers, whilst the vast majority have languished on the sidelines. This paradox has its origins in the history of how women in Sierra Leone became involved in politics. At the end of World War I, women of Krio origin, born in the Colony,⁸ made their voices heard in the political arena. At the same time, in the Protectorate, a few women wielded political power by becoming Paramount Chiefs or Section chiefs. In Freetown, women of Protectorate extraction, e.g. Mende and Temne, served and still serve as both Section and Tribal Headmen.⁹

Reference 73 - 0.01% Coverage

45. Women made real progress in the political arena, which resulted in some of them holding political office in the 1950s in Sierra Leone. In the process certain politicians made history that impacted on a world beyond Sierra Leone. In 1958, three women – Constance Cummings-John, Lena Weber and Stella Ralph-James – became members of the municipal council while, in 1960, one woman was elected Deputy Mayor of Freetown and another, Nancy Koroma, was elected Mende Headman in Freetown.¹⁵

Reference 74 - 0.01% Coverage

Throughout the history of Sierra Leone, including the post-independence period before the war, women have not enjoyed equal status with men. To a large extent, the laws of Sierra Leone are discriminatory against women. While Sierra Leone is governed by a constitution²⁸

Reference 75 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Reference 76 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUFP was created in the wake of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999 as a political party designed to replace the RUF military movement. In reality it spent several years as a “political

wing” of the RUF movement, while a combatant cadre continued to carry out military operations. More detail on the evolution of the RUF after Lomé can be found in the chapter on the Military and Political History of the Conflict in Volume Three A of this report.

Reference 77 - 0.01% Coverage

The abundant potential of Sierra Leone’s natural landscape is mirrored in its population of just 4.5 million people. The inhabitants of the Provinces represent a culturally and demographically diverse heritage, with seventeen indigenous ethnic groups spread across 149 chiefdoms. The capital city, Freetown, originally a settlement for emancipated slaves, hosts the oldest university in the region and gained a reputation as the “Athens of West Africa”. Most important of all, despite the trials and tribulations of history, Sierra Leoneans are resilient and resourceful, such that each new generation of children of Sierra Leone brings with it fresh hope, fresh direction and fresh human resources for the country.

Reference 78 - 0.01% Coverage

“Adults, who were disgruntled and acted through the senseless and indiscriminate atrocities, were unable to reach what was supposed to be their real targets and decided to take advantage of our vulnerability to exploit and destroy the future base of this nation, which they claimed to have been fighting for... It goes without saying that we the children bore the brunt of the conflict and witnessed the worst episode of man’s ruthlessness probably ever in man’s history.”¹¹⁰

Reference 79 - 0.01% Coverage

After the launch of the armed rebellion, most of the youths who joined the RUF, or who were compelled to join the organisation, were marginalised rural youths. Thus different categories of youths were involved at distinct stages of the conflict history of Sierra Leone. Educated youths were involved in the formulation of ideas for revolution and regime change, instigating the training in Libya. Marginalised urban youths were involved in the bulk of the military training and the launch of the insurgency. Thereafter the bulk of the growing manpower of the RUF consisted of marginalised rural youths.

Reference 80 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission submitted that the Court ought to be the guardian not only of the right to a fair trial, but also of other human rights, including freedom of expression. In the Sierra Leone context, there was an additional factor to consider, namely the right of Chief Hinga Norman, a prominent Sierra Leonean, to speak in a public forum before the TRC, to present his version of and perspectives on a critical period in the country’s history. It was submitted that any objection to the TRC’s request would have to strike a balance, weighing the effects of banning Chief Hinga Norman from speaking against the damage done to his freedom of expression and his right to appear publicly before the TRC. No such proportional assessment was undertaken by the Prosecution.

Reference 81 - 0.01% Coverage

“Sierra Leone finds itself at a special moment in its history. Indeed Sierra Leone has the potential to offer the world a unique framework in the difficult process of moving from conflict to peace. We have two complementary institutions, namely the Special Court and the Commission, that are central to this process. Indeed the President and the Prosecutor of the Special Court are on record stating that the two institutions will work together to uncover the truth and provide the most comprehensive benefits to a post-conflict state.

Reference 82 - 0.01% Coverage

The ruling, in the view of the TRC, has dealt a serious blow to the cause of truth and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. As a citizen of Sierra Leone and as a key role-player in Sierra Leone’s recent history, Chief Hinga Norman has a right to appear before the TRC to tell his story. All equivalent role-players have appeared before the TRC, including prisoners awaiting trial at Pademba Road Prison. ...

Reference 83 - 0.01% Coverage

The suggestion that the Judge is really making is that the TRC could have gone for the quiet option but chose instead the unseemly route of a “televised spectacle”. The Judge cast the TRC’s decision in this regard as being eminently unreasonable. Yet the Judge denied the reader of his Decision the full benefit of the preceding history of negotiations between the TRC and the Special Court.

Reference 84 - 0.01% Coverage

Secrecy and authoritarianism have concealed the truth in little crevices of obscurity in our history. Records are not easily accessible; witnesses are often unknown, dead, unavailable or unwilling. All that often effectively remains is the truth of wounded memories of loved ones sharing instinctive suspicions, deep and traumatising to the survivors but otherwise incapable of translating themselves into objective and corroborative evidence which could survive the rigours of the law.

Reference 85 - 0.01% Coverage

I also wish on behalf of the members of the Sierra Leone Police Force, whom we have accepted inter alia to have been both perpetrators and victims, to express remorse for all the wrongdoings, which we and our personnel did both before and during the war... and to genuinely apologise for all such wrongdoing with a promise that such will never be repeated in the course of our history. As we strive to be a force for good, we do hope that all people within Sierra Leone and beyond who have paid so dearly a price for our past mistakes will continue to help us... so we will forge ahead and be part of the framework to establish a new Sierra Leone, a Sierra Leone which all of us will be proud of, a Sierra Leone which our children will be proud of, a Sierra Leone to which people from all over the world can come and feel safe, can come and work and can come and enjoy themselves...”

History Child Node References

The following section contains history references from the Sierra Leone report organized by the child nodes outlined in History Coding for the Sierra Leone Report. Some references appear under several subheadings since they contained discussions of multiple themes.

Collective Memory

References or discussions of collective memory or remembrance

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 5 references coded [0.03% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

This ‘right to the truth’ includes a duty to remember: “A people's knowledge of the history of their oppression is part of their heritage and, as such, shall be preserved by appropriate measures in fulfilment of the State's duty to remember. Such measures shall be aimed at preserving the collective memory from extinction and, in particular, at guarding against the development of revisionist and negationist arguments.’ Joinet also specifically recognises the right of victims to know, their families and dear ones to know the circumstances of violations and, if death or disappearance is the result, the fate of the victim.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: ‘Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.’ Further, he explains: ‘This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.’³

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be repaired and prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and helps to prevent the past from reoccurring.²¹

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably, the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and help to prevent the past from reoccurring.¹¹

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

In the Commission's view, the date of the symbolic burning ceremony at Lungi ought to be commemorated in future years with a unifying annual celebration – a National Day of Reconciliation.⁹⁵⁸ While the Commission does not underestimate the struggle that lies ahead for the people of this nation, it is gratified to acknowledge that since that day there have been no further military hostilities in Sierra Leone. 18 January 2002 saw the closing of this turbulent chapter and its consignment to history: the military and political history of the conflict.

Colonialism

References or discussions of colonialism

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 7 references coded [0.04% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission felt that a brief report would do injustice to the range of issues that account for the conflict in Sierra Leone. While a number of issues triggered the conflict, there were clear structural issues dating back to the time of colonialism. If these issues were not addressed in detail, the Commission would not have met its broad ranging mandate. The individual, factional and institutional fluidities assist an understanding of the dynamics of the war. Without this nuanced interpretation, the real history may have been lost in a summary. A nuanced interpretation required that the narrative be discussed in depth, including the roles and experiences of people, institutions and the respective factions.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to “‘compile a clear picture of the past’”³ the Commission devoted considerable resources towards examining the pre-conflict history of the country. These efforts were intended to locate causes of conflict in Sierra Leone’s past,

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

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Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

Due to its colonial history, most of Sierra Leone's laws were either adopted or adapted from England. Section 74 of the Courts Act 1965 made pre-1880 laws of England automatically applicable to Sierra Leone. Examples of laws adopted pursuant to this section include the Statute of Frauds 1677, the Wills Act 1837 and the Common Law Procedure Act 1852. Post-1880 English statutes that were adopted additionally include the Conveyancing Act 1881, the Settled Land Act 1882, the Perjury Act 1911, the Forgery Act 1913, the Larceny Act 1916 and the Married Women's Maintenance Act (Cap. 100) enacted in 1888.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

The signs that the army would ultimately consume its benefactors were rooted in the history of the institution.

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces traces its history back to British colonial days. From its inception, the RSLAF has had series of title changes and underwent rapid transformation from the colonial days to date. The original name was the Royal West African Rifles. It was later transformed into the Royal Sierra Leone Rifles, and subsequently the Royal Sierra Leone Regiment. The army served with distinction in both first and second world wars gaining the battle honours of Cameroon, in what was then German West Africa, and Myohaug, in Burma in 1944. Following independence in 1961, the armed forces became known as the Sierra Leone Regiment and finally, the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) after the attainment of republican status in 1971. In 1995, the NPRC military regime renamed it the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AFRSL). President Kabbah on 21 January 2002 renamed it as the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

Economy

References or discussions of economy, economics, etc.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.04% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to create an authoritative account of the history of the conflict, the Commission had to cover the full breadth of violations carried out during different time periods. It was not enough to look only at violations of civil and political rights; it was also necessary to focus on the structural nature of economic dispossession insofar as they constitute causes of conflict.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC made any genuine effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system. While they claimed to be ideologically different, in reality the two parties shared a brand of politics that was all about power and the benefits it conferred. Tragically these characteristics persist today in Sierra Leone.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

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Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

The cumulative outcome of socio-economic divisions, coupled over time with a host of other disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate, would induce people who had lived

harmoniously for most of history to become polarised along ethnic and regional lines at moments of crisis. The polarity that is captured in the phrase ‘two nations in the same land’ was an ominous historical antecedent for future civil conflict with ethnic and regional undertones.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

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Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

Phase I encompasses the start of the war in March 1991, the NPRC coup in 1992 and the RUF’s efforts to regroup from the brink of defeat in 1993. Although this is a pivotal period in the history of the conflict, few significant events occurred in the diamond industry. The RUF started its military operations in 1991, but did not gain any significant control over any diamond area before 1992, when it first captured Kono. This period was characterised by the decline of NDMC and the retreat of GGDO from the diamond trade.

Education

References or discussions of education

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 5 references coded [0.03% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The publication of a child-friendly report is the first such initiative by a truth commission. The Commission was imbued with a sense of history in undertaking this significant exercise. It was important that the report be accessible to children and that the contents not traumatise them. The Commission is satisfied that its partnership with UNICEF, UNAMSIL and the CPAs in this undertaking has led to the production of an outstanding report that will prove to be an important educational tool for children in Sierra Leone

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

477. In the appointment of foreign personnel to staff sensitive post-conflict organisations, great care must be taken to ensure that members undergo sensitisation not only to local conditions but also to the delicate balances that must be maintained in post-conflict endeavours. Such training should engender a good understanding of the history and nature of transitional justice, the history of the country and region in question, and the respect required for local people, customs and traditions.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

Foulah advised some of the new recruits – “a fighter without political ideology is a criminal”; in the evening, the RUF cadres would gather together and conduct lengthy discussions about philosophy and ideology; Foulah handed some of the recruits an exercise book in which to make notes on the RUF ideology: causes of the war, eight codes of conduct, eleven principles of leadership, history of the country – Foulah himself had made his own notes in an exercise book during his training in Liberia; the new recruit in turn was intended to absorb the material, or to jot it down, to a sufficient extent to be able to pass it on to others.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

After the launch of the armed rebellion, most of the youths who joined the RUF, or who were compelled to join the organisation, were marginalised rural youths. Thus different categories of youths were involved at distinct stages of the conflict history of Sierra Leone. Educated youths were involved in the formulation of ideas for revolution and regime change, instigating the training in Libya. Marginalised urban youths were involved in the bulk of the military training and the launch of the insurgency. Thereafter the bulk of the growing manpower of the RUF consisted of marginalised rural youths.

Ethnicity

References or discussions of ethnicity, ethnic division, or ethnic lines

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 4 references coded [0.02% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The cumulative outcome of socio-economic divisions, coupled over time with a host of other disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate, would induce people who had lived harmoniously for most of history to become polarised along ethnic and regional lines at moments of crisis. The polarity that is captured in the phrase ‘two nations in the same land’ was an ominous historical antecedent for future civil conflict with ethnic and regional undertones.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUF had different sub groups. These groups are examined in more detail in the chapter of this Report on the military and political history of the conflict. The main support for the RUF was the national Patriotic Front for Liberia, which constituted the main incursion force that invaded Sierra Leone in 1991. The NPFL was not markedly different from the RUF. For the people therefore it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. The major difference for a lot of the populace was that most of the NPFL fighters “spoke with a Liberian accent.” However, it should be noted that many of the RUF fighters were Sierra Leoneans recruited in Liberia. Speaking with a Liberian accent was not conclusive proof that the person was Liberian. For the people however, it was sufficient to distinguish the RUF fighters from their Liberian compatriots.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The abundant potential of Sierra Leone’s natural landscape is mirrored in its population of just 4.5 million people. The inhabitants of the Provinces represent a culturally and demographically diverse heritage, with seventeen indigenous ethnic groups spread across 149 chiefdoms. The capital city, Freetown, originally a settlement for emancipated slaves, hosts the oldest university in the region and gained a reputation as the “Athens of West Africa”. Most important of all, despite the trials and tribulations of history, Sierra Leoneans are resilient and resourceful, such

that each new generation of children of Sierra Leone brings with it fresh hope, fresh direction and fresh human resources for the country.

Human Rights

References or discussions of human rights, human rights abuses or violations, and human rights codes

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 16 references coded [0.10% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The first objective of the Commission, as established by the Act, was to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone. The Parliament of Sierra Leone recognized that such a record would form the basis for the task of preventing the recurrence of violence.⁹ Several of the themes focused on by the Commission comprise the historical record of the conflict. The Commission does not claim to have produced the complete or exhaustive historical record of the conflict. The Commission is however satisfied that it has provided an essential version of the armed conflict, which includes an account of its main events and how it started. At times, this story accords with popular views of the conflict. At other times, the Commission's record of the conflict departs from popular history and debunks certain myths and untruths about the conflict.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

The second limb of the 'object' of the Commission consists of four elements, the first being 'to address impunity'. Article XXVI of the Lomé Agreement listed this as the first of the functions of the proposed the TRC. The reference to impunity is somewhat enigmatic, given that the Lomé Agreement, in granting pardon and amnesty to the perpetrators of human rights and international humanitarian law violations and abuses, constitutes one of the more striking grants of impunity in recent history. The paradox of the Lomé Agreement, and of the Truth and Reconciliation Act 2000 that was adopted to give effect to certain of its provisions, is that it both enshrines impunity and seeks to address it.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: 'Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.' Further, he explains: 'This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such

must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.’³

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The ‘inalienable right to truth’ is closely related to the ‘right to an effective remedy’ for violations of human rights. The right to an effective remedy is firmly entrenched in all major international law instruments.⁶ ‘Establishing the truth’ has been recognised as an essential part of the right to an effective remedy, as it is a crucial aspect of the guarantee of non-repetition of the original violation or abuse. This link between ‘knowing what has happened’ and ‘avoiding the recurrence of violations in the future’ has been repeatedly confirmed.⁷ Very illustrative in this respect is the innovative case law of the Inter-American human rights institutions, borne in the long and painful history of conflict in South and Central America.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

In understanding and analysing the conflict, the Commission deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflected its main phases. To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, it was considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of the conflict as it was prosecuted by that faction. The phases determined by the Commission for its own purposes were as follows:

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to create an authoritative account of the history of the conflict, the Commission had to cover the full breadth of violations carried out during different time periods. It was not enough to look only at violations of civil and political rights; it was also necessary to focus on the structural nature of economic dispossession insofar as they constitute causes of conflict.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

Event-specific hearings. The Commission hopes to consider whether particular events served an especially catalytic role in the history of human rights abuse in Sierra Leone.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

Different kinds of violations – the range of violations that have taken place in Sierra Leone’s history. It is also desired to offer a full picture of the kind of repression suffered by victims so as to flag areas for institutional reform/retraining. This is also important to address violations that elucidate the broader sociopolitical environment that enabled human rights violations.

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

This recommendation is made in the context of Sierra Leone's recent history. The conflict period resulted in the demeaning of human life and dignity. The state must now set the example by demonstrating that it places the highest value on all human life. The abolition of the death penalty will mark an important and symbolic departure from the past to the future.²¹

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

This military and political history is couched in the terms of the Commission's mandate, attempting to present accurately the social and historical "context in which the violations and abuses occurred" and to address "the question of whether those violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorisation by any government, group or individual".

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (the "RUF"), it has been considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of that faction, as well as the manner in which the conflict evolved as a result.

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

1016. The military assault on the capital city, Freetown, quickly evolved into one of the most concentrated spates of human rights abuse and atrocities against civilians perpetrated by any group or groups during the entire history of the conflict. For over two weeks the populace of Freetown and its environs, among which were living thousands of displaced persons from the rest of the country, was subjected indiscriminately to a gamut of different crimes against their persons and destruction of their property.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

240. AWOL's story might initially seem somewhat incongruous with the military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone that was to unfold three years later. He never took part in that conflict, nor has he, to the Commission's knowledge, since perpetrated any human rights abuse against others. Upon closer inspection, though, his story is instructive in understanding the nature of the violations committed in the conflict in Sierra Leone. The Revolutionary United

Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL) is behind the majority of violations and abuses committed during the conflict.¹³⁸ Yet behind the majority of RUF/SL combatants in the conflict is a story of deception and forced recruitment. In turn, behind every forced recruit, including those who did not become combatants is a story of victimisation.

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission submitted that the Court ought to be the guardian not only of the right to a fair trial, but also of other human rights, including freedom of expression. In the Sierra Leone context, there was an additional factor to consider, namely the right of Chief Hinga Norman, a prominent Sierra Leonean, to speak in a public forum before the TRC, to present his version of and perspectives on a critical period in the country's history. It was submitted that any objection to the TRC's request would have to strike a balance, weighing the effects of banning Chief Hinga Norman from speaking against the damage done to his freedom of expression and his right to appear publicly before the TRC. No such proportional assessment was undertaken by the Prosecution.

Impunity

References or discussions of impunity

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 2 references coded [0.02% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The second limb of the ‘object’ of the Commission consists of four elements, the first being ‘to address impunity’. Article XXVI of the Lomé Agreement listed this as the first of the functions of the proposed the TRC. The reference to impunity is somewhat enigmatic, given that the Lomé Agreement, in granting pardon and amnesty to the perpetrators of human rights and international humanitarian law violations and abuses, constitutes one of the more striking grants of impunity in recent history. The paradox of the Lomé Agreement, and of the Truth and Reconciliation Act 2000 that was adopted to give effect to certain of its provisions, is that it both enshrines impunity and seeks to address it.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: ‘Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.’ Further, he explains: ‘This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.’³

Military

References or discussions of the military or soldiers

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 29 references coded [0.17% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The core of the historical record is to be found in the chapter titled “Military and Political History of the Conflict”.¹⁴ This chapter endeavours to tell the story of the conflict by charting its key events and dynamics in the military and political spheres. It begins by tracing the immediate causes of the conflict and the convergence of factors that led to the outbreak of hostilities. Thereafter, for the purposes of analysis, the chapter is divided into three distinct components, which are referred to by the Commission as “Phases I, II and III.” Each ‘phase’ assumed a slightly different character, although the common underpinning was the ongoing commission of violations by all warring factions. Phase One is titled “Conventional ‘Target’ Warfare” and covers the period from the outbreak of the conflict until 13th November 1993. Phase Two is titled “Guerrilla Warfare” and covers the period from 13 November 1993 until 2 March 1997. Phase Three is titled “Power Struggles and Peace Efforts” and covers the period from 2 March 1997 until the end of the conflict on 18 January 2002.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

Acts of summary justice were often directed or encouraged by other civilians. These were mostly isolated incidents motivated by unresolved personal feuds and other localised dynamics in the particular deployment areas where they took place. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. ECOMOG or SLA soldiers, RUF fighters or CDF militiamen then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader

Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

Pujehun District was thus replete with historical antecedents to the conflict, including several periods of mass unrest, which provoked repression and deprivation from the State in response. The District had a well-known history of rebellion, a large pool of exiled and aggrieved youths in Liberia and, ultimately, a volatile security climate. As Foday Sankoh and his RUF ‘vanguards’ plotted their entry into Sierra Leone in March 1991, Pujehun District had the vital characteristics of a ‘gateway’ through which the launch of an insurgency against the incumbent APC would meet with ideological support and find willing recruits.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

For this reason, the idea of “revolution” in Sierra Leone was popular in Bo. Many inhabitants of the District were even in favour of an armed action to overthrow the APC and scores of youths travelled to Kailahun to volunteer for the RUF in the first few months of the conflict. As in neighbouring Moyamba, a prevailing history of election violence and thuggery had also reinforced the propensity for conflict in Bo. The centrality and high population of the District made it a natural wartime headquarters for the Southern-based Mende militia known as the Kamajors.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

This military and political history is couched in the terms of the Commission’s mandate, attempting to present accurately the social and historical “context in which the violations and abuses occurred” and to address “the question of whether those violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorisation by any government, group or individual”.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

In the first place, the Commission has sought to lend an appropriate context to the outbreak of hostilities in Sierra Leone by analysing its most proximate antecedents in this chapter. These factors are included under the rubric of ‘The Predecessors, Origins and Mobilisation of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF)’. Thereafter, in understanding and analysing the military and political history, the Commission has deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflects its main phases and captures its main events.

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone

(the “RUF”), it has been considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of that faction, as well as the manner in which the conflict evolved as a result.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

During the first three years of armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the defining events in military history were predominantly driven by the agenda of the RUF, or by the respective plans and actions of its predecessors and / or accomplices. On the political front, whilst ostensibly unrelated to the RUF itself, the elevation into Government of a group of junior officers of the Sierra Leone Army, calling themselves the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), can be traced in origin and motivation to the perception on the part of the coup-makers that the Government had failed to prosecute the war efficiently. In other words, it stemmed from a perception that the Government had failed properly to defend the state against RUF incursions into its territories.

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

Three other persons in a cell under Reider’s auspices travelled out of Freetown along with Sankoh in April 1988; the distinguishing factor in their case was that Reider did not tell them in advance about the nature of what awaited them at the end of their journey. Each of Sankoh’s travelling companions thought he was heading to undergo ‘Advanced Capacity Building in Revolutionary Ideology’ and told, variously, that he would be taken to an institution such as the University of Nigeria or the Al-Fattah University in Tripoli to be further lectured and inspired.¹⁰ This invitation came aptly to represent the kind of deceit and mismanagement of human resources that ultimately invoked a vacuum in revolutionary leadership¹¹ and a reversion towards militarism. The narrative of those who accepted their invitations in good faith, but instead underwent guerrilla training in Libya, resonates far more widely when examined under the lens of the subsequent military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

The RSLMF officers killed in the attack have also come to symbolise recurring features of the military history of the conflict as it has been recorded by the Commission. Major Foday was targeted on this mission due to a personal vendetta stemming from inter-factional connivance between the NPFL and the SLA soldiers. He is said to have been conducting an inspection of his troops at the time of the attack and had insufficient time or capacity at his disposal to resist the swarms of fighters who entered Bomaru from the surrounding bush. He was eventually shot dead in his house.

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

Nevertheless, this contingent would remain something of a ‘special case’ in terms of the composition of the RUF in the military and political history of the conflict. Their original number would not be expanded during the course of the hostilities, nor would the term be applied to any other group. In the folklore of the RUF movement, as it was later documented in

‘public relations’ texts like *Footpaths to Democracy*,⁶² the vanguards were the founders of the revolution.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

Foulah advised some of the new recruits – “a fighter without political ideology is a criminal”; in the evening, the RUF cadres would gather together and conduct lengthy discussions about philosophy and ideology; Foulah handed some of the recruits an exercise book in which to make notes on the RUF ideology: causes of the war, eight codes of conduct, eleven principles of leadership, history of the country – Foulah himself had made his own notes in an exercise book during his training in Liberia; the new recruit in turn was intended to absorb the material, or to jot it down, to a sufficient extent to be able to pass it on to others.

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

During the reign of the NPRC, the Sierra Leone Army encompassed a broader and more diverse mixture of mindsets and capabilities than at any other point in its history. First and foremost, the unprecedented variety was a function of size. The paltry force of between 3,000 and 4,000 soldiers that started the war in 1991 accounted for only a minority of the total force by 1994.

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

Often these actions were directed or encouraged by other civilians. Apparently they were mostly motivated by their unresolved personal feuds; – disputes over land ownership rights between families and ‘ruling houses’ – were cited as frequent examples. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. On occasion, SLA soldiers or RUF fighters then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

1022. The morale among the young Kamajors was at an all-time low when the AFRC-led troop entered Freetown on 6 January 1999. The base at the Brookfields Hotel was attacked and ransacked within 24 hours of the initial entry and many of its Kamajor inhabitants were captured and killed.⁵¹¹ Thereafter the participation of the Kamajors in the defence of Freetown became something far more peripheral. Their deployment history and elementary training meant they were not suited to the travails of urban warfare in a built-up environment. As a collective force, their main contribution was reserved for the ‘mopping up’ phase that followed the main operation to liberate the city.

Reference 18 - 0.01% Coverage

1045. The volatility of the military situation in Sierra Leone was already at the highest point in its history when the Lomé ceasefire was agreed upon. The parties would require the utmost vigilance over the implementation of the political provisions of the Accord to ensure that any irregularities were not allowed to become the spark for further hostilities.

Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

It was in this light that the fuse was lit for the final explosive episode in the military and political history of the conflict as it was directed by the RUF. The three most senior commanders left in the field were Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Bao. According to RUF members, the individual and collective opposition of these three men in particular had already been made apparent to the political wing through harrowing personal encounters. On one occasion, the Lands Minister Peter Vandy was stripped naked and beaten by Morris Kallon in Makeni.⁵⁸⁹

Reference 20 - 0.01% Coverage

1265. The face-to-face meeting between the respective security cadres of Johnny Paul Koroma and Foday Sankoh represented a convergence of two squads of men whose personal backgrounds and fighting histories were remarkably similar. The inhabitants of Koroma's residence at the time included several of the coup-makers of 25 May 1997, who had subsequently become 'Honourables' in the AFRC regime. Among the most prominent soldiers at the compound on 7 May 2000 were Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Bazzy'), Santigie Kanu (alias "Five Five"), Hassan Bangura (alias 'Papa' or 'Bomblast'), George Adams, Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Cobra'), Alex Tamba Brima (alias 'Gullit) and an SLA officer nicknamed 'Peggy'. The RUF security guards were also all exSLA soldiers and had served alongside many of those they went to confront during the AFRC regime and later in the bush.

Reference 21 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUF had different sub groups. These groups are examined in more detail in the chapter of this Report on the military and political history of the conflict. The main support for the RUF was the national Patriotic Front for Liberia, which constituted the main incursion force that invaded Sierra Leone in 1991. The NPFL was not markedly different from the RUF. For the people therefore it was difficult to distinguish one from the other. The major difference for a lot of the populace was that most of the NPFL fighters "spoke with a Liberian accent." However, it should be noted that many of the RUF fighters were Sierra Leoneans recruited in Liberia. Speaking with a Liberian accent was not conclusive proof that the person was Liberian. For the people however, it was sufficient to distinguish the RUF fighters from their Liberian compatriots.

Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

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of deception and forced recruitment. In turn, behind every forced recruit, including those who did not become combatants is a story of victimisation.

Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage

People of means, public officials and public institutions were reminders of the “oppressive” regime of zero opportunity under which they had lived for a very long time. The conflict became an opportunity to level the playing field. They began preying on the very people they were supposed to protect. For the first time in modern history, a national army turned against its very public in a civil war.

Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage

The signs that the army would ultimately consume its benefactors were rooted in the history of the institution.

The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces traces its history back to British colonial days. From its inception, the RSLAF has had series of title changes and underwent rapid transformation from the colonial days to date. The original name was the Royal West African Rifles. It was later transformed into the Royal Sierra Leone Rifles, and subsequently the Royal Sierra Leone Regiment. The army served with distinction in both first and second world wars gaining the battle honours of Cameroon, in what was then German West Africa, and Myohaug, in Burma in 1944. Following independence in 1961, the armed forces became known as the Sierra Leone Regiment and finally, the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF) after the attainment of republican status in 1971. In 1995, the NPRC military regime renamed it the Armed Forces of the Republic of Sierra Leone (AFRSL). President Kabbah on 21 January 2002 renamed it as the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage

In addition to the above-listed geographically-specific groupings, there were also diverse mechanisms for civil defence that sprung up in different parts of the country under generic terms such as ‘vigilantes’, ‘community defence units’ or CDUs, ‘auxiliaries’ and ‘watchmen’. Each of them played its own distinct role in Sierra Leone’s history and the Commission is mandated to capture such contributions to the greatest extent possible.

Reference 26 - 0.01% Coverage

Phase I encompasses the start of the war in March 1991, the NPRC coup in 1992 and the RUF’s efforts to regroup from the brink of defeat in 1993. Although this is a pivotal period in the history of the conflict, few significant events occurred in the diamond industry. The RUF started its military operations in 1991, but did not gain any significant control over any diamond area before 1992, when it first captured Kono. This period was characterised by the decline of NDMC and the retreat of GGDO from the diamond trade.

Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUF launched its insurgency without any independent direction or means, due to the sizeable presence of Taylor's men among them. As explained in the chapter on the Military and Political History of the Conflict, NPFL fighters outnumbered their RUF counterparts by four to one. In addition, as pointed out by one Sierra Leone researcher, "those Liberian NPFL fighters never took orders from Sankoh, but from Taylor or NPFL commanders".²⁵ Taylor and his men were in control of operations at the initial stage; indeed, it has even been suggested that the presence of Sierra Leoneans was merely designed to lend an indigenous flavour to the incursions.²⁶

Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUFP was created in the wake of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999 as a political party designed to replace the RUF military movement. In reality it spent several years as a "political wing" of the RUF movement, while a combatant cadre continued to carry out military operations. More detail on the evolution of the RUF after Lomé can be found in the chapter on the Military and Political History of the Conflict in Volume Three A of this report.

Reference 29 - 0.01% Coverage

After the launch of the armed rebellion, most of the youths who joined the RUF, or who were compelled to join the organisation, were marginalised rural youths. Thus different categories of youths were involved at distinct stages of the conflict history of Sierra Leone. Educated youths were involved in the formulation of ideas for revolution and regime change, instigating the training in Libya. Marginalised urban youths were involved in the bulk of the military training and the launch of the insurgency. Thereafter the bulk of the growing manpower of the RUF consisted of marginalised rural youths.

Nation

References or discussions of nation, nations, national identity, nationalism, national unity etc.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 12 references coded [0.06% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be repaired and prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and helps to prevent the past from reoccurring.²¹

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of the country to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period in Sierra Leone' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the Commission's study of history was the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone's constituent groups. The nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – influenced people's perceptions of the state in which they lived and their own places within it. These perceptions in turn presented the greatest challenge to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They undermined the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably, the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and help to prevent the past from reoccurring.¹¹

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How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from ‘bad governance’ and ‘the history of the post-colonial period’ to ‘the urge to acquire the country’s diamond wealth’ and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the study contained in this chapter is the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone’s constituent groups. Throughout Sierra Leone’s history, the nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – has influenced people’s perceptions of the state in which they live and their own places within it. These perceptions have in turn presented the greatest challenges to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They have served to undermine the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to adduce a balanced historical perspective on the conflict, the Commission invited a host of national and international stakeholders to make submissions about the key events of the past. It held public and closed hearings at which individuals, institutions of state, non-governmental organisations and donor agencies were able to express their views and opinions. It substantiated the material from all these testimonies by referring to multiple secondary sources, including books and periodicals on the country, as well as memoirs by Sierra Leoneans. The resultant chapter compiles a concise narrative out of these various resources and reflects contrasting versions of history in an impartial manner to the greatest extent possible.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

The cumulative outcome of socio-economic divisions, coupled over time with a host of other disparities between the Colony and the Protectorate, would induce people who had lived harmoniously for most of history to become polarised along ethnic and regional lines at moments of crisis. The polarity that is captured in the phrase ‘two nations in the same land’ was an ominous historical antecedent for future civil conflict with ethnic and regional undertones.

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

In the Commission's view, the date of the symbolic burning ceremony at Lungi ought to be commemorated in future years with a unifying annual celebration – a National Day of Reconciliation.⁹⁵⁸ While the Commission does not underestimate the struggle that lies ahead for the people of this nation, it is gratified to acknowledge that since that day there have been no further military hostilities in Sierra Leone. 18 January 2002 saw the closing of this turbulent chapter and its consignment to history: the military and political history of the conflict.

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

People of means, public officials and public institutions were reminders of the “oppressive” regime of zero opportunity under which they had lived for a very long time. The conflict became an opportunity to level the playing field. They began preying on the very people they were supposed to protect. For the first time in modern history, a national army turned against its very public in a civil war.

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

“Adults, who were disgruntled and acted through the senseless and indiscriminate atrocities, were unable to reach what was supposed to be their real targets and decided to take advantage of our vulnerability to exploit and destroy the future base of this nation, which they claimed to have been fighting for... It goes without saying that we the children bore the brunt of the conflict and witnessed the worst episode of man's ruthlessness probably ever in man's history.”¹¹⁰

Politics

References or discussions of politics, political views, political parties or political leaders

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 32 references coded [0.16% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission commenced its primary findings with the conclusion that the conflict and the independence period preceding it represented the most shameful years of Sierra Leone's history. These periods reflected an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of many of those involved in government, public life and civil society. No enlightened and visionary leaders emerged to steer the country away from the slide into chaos and bloody civil war.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

Personal and narrative truth. This is a witness's personal truth which he or she tells either in a statement or at a hearing. This is what he or she believes and should be respected. Often, the individual accounts did not initially appear to contribute significantly to the more general 'impartial historical record' that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000 requires of the Commission. But over time, the sheer volume of these accounts provided a complex, multilayered vision of the conflict. This truth is not the history of battles, military leaders and political parties, but rather a series of personal stories and accounts, telling a tale of the suffering, the pain and of the immense dignity of the common people of Sierra Leone. It is, perhaps more than anything else, a vision of the truth that describes the fundamental humanity of the people of this country.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

In understanding and analysing the conflict, the Commission deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflected its main phases. To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, it was considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of the conflict as it was prosecuted by that faction. The phases determined by the Commission for its own purposes were as follows:

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to create an authoritative account of the history of the conflict, the Commission had to cover the full breadth of violations carried out during different time periods. It was not enough to look only at violations of civil and political rights; it was also necessary to focus on the structural nature of economic dispossession insofar as they constitute causes of conflict.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

Different kinds of violations – the range of violations that have taken place in Sierra Leone’s history. It is also desired to offer a full picture of the kind of repression suffered by victims so as to flag areas for institutional reform/retraining. This is also important to address violations that elucidate the broader sociopolitical environment that enabled human rights violations.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the Commission’s study of history was the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone’s constituent groups. The nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – influenced people’s perceptions of the state in which they lived and their own places within it. These perceptions in turn presented the greatest challenge to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They undermined the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC made any genuine effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system. While they claimed to be ideologically different, in reality the two parties shared a brand of politics that was all about power and the benefits it conferred. Tragically these characteristics persist today in Sierra Leone.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission was enjoined by statute to give special attention to the needs of women and girls, particularly with regard to sexual violence. Why was so much violence perpetrated against women? Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone? Did the fact that women endured such a lowly status in the socio-political life make them easy targets? Is it because men perceived females to be mere chattels symbolising male honour that made women the deliberate target of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other?

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission finds that the conflict and the post-independence period preceding it represent the most shameful years of Sierra Leone’s history. These periods reflect an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of all those involved in government, public life and civil society.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

The next section covers the findings made in respect of the military and political history of the conflict. These findings are organised per faction. Findings of responsibility are made in relation to the role played by each faction and, in certain circumstances, with respect to individual leaders, commanders, combatants and other role-players.

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

This recommendation is made in the context of Sierra Leone's recent history. The conflict period resulted in the demeaning of human life and dignity. The state must now set the example by demonstrating that it places the highest value on all human life. The abolition of the death penalty will mark an important and symbolic departure from the past to the future.²¹

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

How did a peace-loving nation become engulfed, seemingly overnight, in horror? What events occurred in the history of Sierra Leone to make this conflict possible? Explanations put forward have varied from 'bad governance' and 'the history of the post-colonial period' to 'the urge to acquire the country's diamond wealth' and the roles of Libya or the Liberian faction leader Charles Taylor.¹ The international community initially dismissed the war in Sierra Leone as just another example of tribal conflict in Africa; another failed state imploding in the context of environmental degradation and acute economic crisis.²

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

Central to the study contained in this chapter is the social and political interaction among Sierra Leone's constituent groups. Throughout Sierra Leone's history, the nature and extent of such interaction – often negative and limited – has influenced people's perceptions of the state in which they live and their own places within it. These perceptions have in turn presented the greatest challenges to the concepts of nationhood and citizenship. They have served to undermine the positive sense of national identity needed to build a strong and unified independent nation.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

In its official submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in April 2003, the All People's Congress (APC) recalled its basis for a major policy shift upon finally assuming power in 1968. The APC stated that the SLPP-engineered military intervention of March 1967 had set an ominous precedent for the country. In the wake of that intervention, the APC perceived that the threat to remove it from office by unlawful means was ever present. Accordingly, in the interests of its own survival, the APC felt compelled to place emphasis on internal security rather than on governance.⁵⁰ Indeed, with the hindsight that history permits, it can be seen that the APC used its concerns about internal security as a pretext to stifle the nascent democratic culture.

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

Pujehun District was thus replete with historical antecedents to the conflict, including several periods of mass unrest, which provoked repression and deprivation from the State in response. The District had a well-known history of rebellion, a large pool of exiled and aggrieved youths in Liberia and, ultimately, a volatile security climate. As Foday Sankoh and his RUF 'vanguards' plotted their entry into Sierra Leone in March 1991, Pujehun District had the vital characteristics

of a ‘gateway’ through which the launch of an insurgency against the incumbent APC would meet with ideological support and find willing recruits.

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

For this reason, the idea of “revolution” in Sierra Leone was popular in Bo. Many inhabitants of the District were even in favour of an armed action to overthrow the APC and scores of youths travelled to Kailahun to volunteer for the RUF in the first few months of the conflict. As in neighbouring Moyamba, a prevailing history of election violence and thuggery had also reinforced the propensity for conflict in Bo. The centrality and high population of the District made it a natural wartime headquarters for the Southern-based Mende militia known as the Kamajors.

Reference 17 - 0.01% Coverage

In examining the history of Sierra Leone through the lens of the mandate of the Commission, a picture emerges of a fragmented, exploited and deeply insecure country. The colonial government was responsible for dividing the land into two nations, one in the Protectorate and one in the Colony, and developing them separately and unequally. The impact of the colonial strategy affected access to education for generations and defined social, political and economic progress, or regression, for the whole population. It bred deep ethnic and regional resentment, the manifestations of which can still be observed, albeit in more subtle prejudices, to the present day.

Reference 18 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC has made any real effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system.

Reference 19 - 0.01% Coverage

This military and political history is couched in the terms of the Commission’s mandate, attempting to present accurately the social and historical “context in which the violations and abuses occurred” and to address “the question of whether those violations and abuses were the result of deliberate planning, policy or authorisation by any government, group or individual”.

Reference 20 - 0.01% Coverage

In the first place, the Commission has sought to lend an appropriate context to the outbreak of hostilities in Sierra Leone by analysing its most proximate antecedents in this chapter. These factors are included under the rubric of ‘The Predecessors, Origins and Mobilisation of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF)’. Thereafter, in understanding and analysing the military and political history, the Commission has deemed it necessary to devise a periodisation of the conflict that adequately reflects its main phases and captures its main events.

Reference 21 - 0.01% Coverage

To the extent that the greatest preponderance of key events in the military and political history of the conflict, not to mention the overwhelmingly majority of violations and abuses stemming from them, were driven by the combatants of the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (the “RUF”), it has been considered appropriate that the periodisation should reflect the evolving character of that faction, as well as the manner in which the conflict evolved as a result.

Reference 22 - 0.01% Coverage

During the first three years of armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the defining events in military history were predominantly driven by the agenda of the RUF, or by the respective plans and actions of its predecessors and / or accomplices. On the political front, whilst ostensibly unrelated to the RUF itself, the elevation into Government of a group of junior officers of the Sierra Leone Army, calling themselves the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), can be traced in origin and motivation to the perception on the part of the coup-makers that the Government had failed to prosecute the war efficiently. In other words, it stemmed from a perception that the Government had failed properly to defend the state against RUF incursions into its territories.

Reference 23 - 0.01% Coverage

Foulah advised some of the new recruits – “a fighter without political ideology is a criminal”; in the evening, the RUF cadres would gather together and conduct lengthy discussions about philosophy and ideology; Foulah handed some of the recruits an exercise book in which to make notes on the RUF ideology: causes of the war, eight codes of conduct, eleven principles of leadership, history of the country – Foulah himself had made his own notes in an exercise book during his training in Liberia; the new recruit in turn was intended to absorb the material, or to jot it down, to a sufficient extent to be able to pass it on to others.

Reference 24 - 0.01% Coverage

Of immediate consequence was the rumour that Strasser had changed his mind and wanted to contest the 1996 elections. In order for the incumbent Head of State, who was 31 years of age by that time and had for a lengthy period been the youngest serving Head of State in history, to assume the Presidency through victory in a ballot conducted under the terms of the Constitution, there would have had to be a change made to the provision containing the proposed minimum age. Strasser himself had signed this provision into force, which appears to indicate that, up until a certain point, he

Reference 25 - 0.01% Coverage

It was in this light that the fuse was lit for the final explosive episode in the military and political history of the conflict as it was directed by the RUF. The three most senior commanders left in the field were Issa Sesay, Morris Kallon and Augustine Bao. According to RUF members, the individual and collective opposition of these three men in particular had already been made

apparent to the political wing through harrowing personal encounters. On one occasion, the Lands Minister Peter Vandy was stripped naked and beaten by Morris Kallon in Makeni.⁵⁸⁹

Reference 26 - 0.01% Coverage

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1222. The roles played by some of these committees were self-explanatory and warrant mention only insofar as they contributed to the staging of a landmark event in history. Others have attained a more profound significance in understanding the dynamics of the demonstration that subsequently transpired.

1223. The Information and Sensitisation Group, for example, can lay claim to a quite incredible dividend, since it succeeded in instituting what was probably the largest mass demonstration in the country's history. It achieved the feat by bombarding the airwaves with advertisements and related discussion programmes for the whole weekend leading up to the demonstrations. As one of those who responded to the campaign later explained, these media announcements mixed the concept of protest with a certain patriotic imperative:

Reference 27 - 0.01% Coverage

1265. The face-to-face meeting between the respective security cadres of Johnny Paul Koroma and Foday Sankoh represented a convergence of two squads of men whose personal backgrounds and fighting histories were remarkably similar. The inhabitants of Koroma's residence at the time included several of the coup-makers of 25 May 1997, who had subsequently become 'Honourables' in the AFRC regime. Among the most prominent soldiers at the compound on 7 May 2000 were Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Bazzy'), Santigie Kanu (alias "Five Five"), Hassan Bangura (alias 'Papa' or 'Bomblast'), George Adams, Ibrahim Kamara (alias 'Cobra'), Alex Tamba Brima (alias 'Gullit) and an SLA officer nicknamed 'Peggy'. The RUF security guards were also all exSLA soldiers and had served alongside many of those they went to confront during the AFRC regime and later in the bush.

Reference 28 - 0.01% Coverage

People of means, public officials and public institutions were reminders of the "oppressive" regime of zero opportunity under which they had lived for a very long time. The conflict became an opportunity to level the playing field. They began preying on the very people they were supposed to protect. For the first time in modern history, a national army turned against its very public in a civil war.

Reference 29 - 0.01% Coverage

A paradox exists in Sierra Leone in the realms of women and politics: some women have been political pioneers, whilst the vast majority have languished on the sidelines. This paradox has its origins in the history of how women in Sierra Leone became involved in politics. At the end of World War I, women of Krio origin, born in the Colony,⁸ made their voices heard in the political arena. At the same time, in the Protectorate, a few women wielded political power by becoming

Paramount Chiefs or Section chiefs. In Freetown, women of Protectorate extraction, e.g. Mende and Temne, served and still serve as both Section and Tribal Headmen.⁹

Reference 30 - 0.01% Coverage

45. Women made real progress in the political arena, which resulted in some of them holding political office in the 1950s in Sierra Leone. In the process certain politicians made history that impacted on a world beyond Sierra Leone. In 1958, three women – Constance Cummings-John, Lena Weber and Stella Ralph-James – became members of the municipal council while, in 1960, one woman was elected Deputy Mayor of Freetown and another, Nancy Koroma, was elected Mende Headman in Freetown.¹⁵

Reference 31 - 0.01% Coverage

The RUFP was created in the wake of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999 as a political party designed to replace the RUF military movement. In reality it spent several years as a “political wing” of the RUF movement, while a combatant cadre continued to carry out military operations. More detail on the evolution of the RUF after Lomé can be found in the chapter on the Military and Political History of the Conflict in Volume Three A of this report.

Reference 32 - 0.01% Coverage

The ruling, in the view of the TRC, has dealt a serious blow to the cause of truth and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. As a citizen of Sierra Leone and as a key role-player in Sierra Leone’s recent history, Chief Hinga Norman has a right to appear before the TRC to tell his story. All equivalent role-players have appeared before the TRC, including prisoners awaiting trial at Pademba Road Prison. ...

Responsibility

References or discussions of responsibility for the conflict and/or atrocities committed during it

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 16 references coded [0.09% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission commenced its primary findings with the conclusion that the conflict and the independence period preceding it represented the most shameful years of Sierra Leone's history. These periods reflected an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of many of those involved in government, public life and civil society. No enlightened and visionary leaders emerged to steer the country away from the slide into chaos and bloody civil war.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

Neither the SLPP nor the APC made any genuine effort to attend to the debasement of the post-independence politics and economy of the country. On the contrary, history speaks of a systemic failure, whereby all the members of the political elite belonged to the same failing system. While they claimed to be ideologically different, in reality the two parties shared a brand of politics that was all about power and the benefits it conferred. Tragically these characteristics persist today in Sierra Leone.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission finds that the conflict and the post-independence period preceding it represent the most shameful years of Sierra Leone's history. These periods reflect an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of all those involved in government, public life and civil society.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

Acts of summary justice were often directed or encouraged by other civilians. These were mostly isolated incidents motivated by unresolved personal feuds and other localised dynamics in the particular deployment areas where they took place. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. ECOMOG or SLA soldiers, RUF fighters or CDF militiamen then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

The next section covers the findings made in respect of the military and political history of the conflict. These findings are organised per faction. Findings of responsibility are made in relation to the role played by each faction and, in certain circumstances, with respect to individual leaders, commanders, combatants and other role-players.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission finds that the presence of peacekeepers in Sierra Leone has contributed substantially to the problem. The Commission recognises that the UN Mission in Sierra Leone has probably enacted the most progressive measures in UN peacekeeping history in order to deal with this problem.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

This recommendation is made in the context of Sierra Leone's recent history. The conflict period resulted in the demeaning of human life and dignity. The state must now set the example by demonstrating that it places the highest value on all human life. The abolition of the death penalty will mark an important and symbolic departure from the past to the future.²¹

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

In its official submission to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in April 2003, the All People's Congress (APC) recalled its basis for a major policy shift upon finally assuming power in 1968. The APC stated that the SLPP engineered military intervention of March 1967 had set an ominous precedent for the country. In the wake of that intervention, the APC perceived that the threat to remove it from office by unlawful means was ever present. Accordingly, in the interests of its own survival, the APC felt compelled to place emphasis on internal security rather than on governance.⁵⁰ Indeed, with the hindsight that history permits, it can be seen that the APC used its concerns about internal security as a pretext to stifle the nascent democratic culture.

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Sierra Leone Army, calling themselves the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), can be traced in origin and motivation to the perception on the part of the coup-makers that the Government had failed to prosecute the war efficiently. In other words, it stemmed from a perception that the Government had failed properly to defend the state against RUF incursions into its territories.

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

Three other persons in a cell under Reider's auspices travelled out of Freetown along with Sankoh in April 1988; the distinguishing factor in their case was that Reider did not tell them in advance about the nature of what awaited them at the end of their journey. Each of Sankoh's travelling companions thought he was heading to undergo 'Advanced Capacity Building in Revolutionary Ideology' and told, variously, that he would be taken to an institution such as the University of Nigeria or the Al-Fattah University in Tripoli to be further lectured and inspired.¹⁰ This invitation came aptly to represent the kind of deceit and mismanagement of human resources that ultimately invoked a vacuum in revolutionary leadership¹¹ and a reversion towards militarism. The narrative of those who accepted their invitations in good faith, but instead underwent guerrilla training in Libya, resonates far more widely when examined under the lens of the subsequent military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

Often these actions were directed or encouraged by other civilians. Apparently they were mostly motivated by their unresolved personal feuds; – disputes over land ownership rights between families and 'ruling houses' – were cited as frequent examples. Residents pointed fingers at other members of their communities with whom they had a history of civil strife. On occasion, SLA soldiers or RUF fighters then executed the alleged wrongdoer without substantiating the accusation.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

It has been argued that the conflict in Sierra Leone was the worst in recent history and cannot be explained by reference to any existing phenomena in the country. Many victims want to understand why the conflict was attended by so much violence and abuse. To provide an insight into the psychology of perpetrators, the Commission commissioned some monographic studies in the hope of finding some explanation.¹⁹⁰

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as

an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Reference 16 - 0.01% Coverage

I also wish on behalf of the members of the Sierra Leone Police Force, whom we have accepted *inter alia* to have been both perpetrators and victims, to express remorse for all the wrongdoings, which we and our personnel did both before and during the war... and to genuinely apologise for all such wrongdoing with a promise that such will never be repeated in the course of our history. As we strive to be a force for good, we do hope that all people within Sierra Leone and beyond who have paid so dearly a price for our past mistakes will continue to help us... so we will forge ahead and be part of the framework to establish a new Sierra Leone, a Sierra Leone which all of us will be proud of, a Sierra Leone which our children will be proud of, a Sierra Leone to which people from all over the world can come and feel safe, can come and work and can come and enjoy themselves..."

Truth

References or discussions of truth, debunking myths, etc.

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 15 references coded [0.09% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The first objective of the Commission, as established by the Act, was to create an impartial historical record of violations and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone. The Parliament of Sierra Leone recognized that such a record would form the basis for the task of preventing the recurrence of violence.⁹ Several of the themes focused on by the Commission comprise the historical record of the conflict. The Commission does not claim to have produced the complete or exhaustive historical record of the conflict. The Commission is however satisfied that it has provided an essential version of the armed conflict, which includes an account of its main events and how it started. At times, this story accords with popular views of the conflict. At other times, the Commission's record of the conflict departs from popular history and debunks certain myths and untruths about the conflict.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

The core of the historical record is to be found in the chapter titled "Military and Political History of the Conflict".¹⁴ This chapter endeavours to tell the story of the conflict by charting its key events and dynamics in the military and political spheres. It begins by tracing the immediate causes of the conflict and the convergence of factors that led to the outbreak of hostilities. Thereafter, for the purposes of analysis, the chapter is divided into three distinct components, which are referred to by the Commission as "Phases I, II and III." Each 'phase' assumed a slightly different character, although the common underpinning was the ongoing commission of violations by all warring factions. Phase One is titled "Conventional 'Target' Warfare" and covers the period from the outbreak of the conflict until 13th November 1993. Phase Two is titled "Guerrilla Warfare" and covers the period from 13 November 1993 until 2 March 1997. Phase Three is titled "Power Struggles and Peace Efforts" and covers the period from 2 March 1997 until the end of the conflict on 18 January 2002.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

This 'right to the truth' includes a duty to remember: "A people's knowledge of the history of their oppression is part of their heritage and, as such, shall be preserved by appropriate measures in fulfilment of the State's duty to remember. Such measures shall be aimed at preserving the collective memory from extinction and, in particular, at guarding against the development of revisionist and negationist arguments." Joinet also specifically recognises the right of victims to know, their families and dear ones to know the circumstances of violations and, if death or disappearance is the result, the fate of the victim.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: 'Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.' Further, he explains: 'This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.'³

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

The 'inalienable right to truth' is closely related to the 'right to an effective remedy' for violations of human rights. The right to an effective remedy is firmly entrenched in all major international law instruments.⁶ 'Establishing the truth' has been recognised as an essential part of the right to an effective remedy, as it is a crucial aspect of the guarantee of non-repetition of the original violation or abuse. This link between 'knowing what has happened' and 'avoiding the recurrence of violations in the future' has been repeatedly confirmed.⁷ Very illustrative in this respect is the innovative case law of the Inter-American human rights institutions, borne in the long and painful history of conflict in South and Central America.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

Personal and narrative truth. This is a witness's personal truth which he or she tells either in a statement or at a hearing. This is what he or she believes and should be respected. Often, the individual accounts did not initially appear to contribute significantly to the more general 'impartial historical record' that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act 2000 requires of the Commission. But over time, the sheer volume of these accounts provided a complex, multilayered vision of the conflict. This truth is not the history of battles, military leaders and political parties, but rather a series of personal stories and accounts, telling a tale of the suffering, the pain and of the immense dignity of the common people of Sierra Leone. It is, perhaps more than anything else, a vision of the truth that describes the fundamental humanity of the people of this country.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be repaired and prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity

depends on a shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and helps to prevent the past from reoccurring.²¹

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

In designing its policy on confidentiality, the Commission had three major concerns: fulfilling its truth seeking purpose, ensuring the security of witnesses, and addressing its healing mandate. Truth seeking entails that the information collected from witnesses is used for investigation and will appear in the Final Report. Security and healing considerations require the Commission to take into account the personal history of each witness. For instance, some witnesses may wish their information to remain confidential in order to avoid persecution by perpetrators. Some witnesses might require confidentiality because of fear of rejection by their communities.

Reference 9 - 0.01% Coverage

The major product of a truth and reconciliation commission's inquiry is its Final Report. The Commission's mandate included the creation of an impartial historical record. This required the Commission to be independent from all the actors in the contested history, including government and all political parties. The Commission had to demonstrate that with regard to the perpetration of violations, irrespective of who committed them, it had examined all violations and commented on them in the same balanced way.

Reference 10 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission felt that a brief report would do injustice to the range of issues that account for the conflict in Sierra Leone. While a number of issues triggered the conflict, there were clear structural issues dating back to the time of colonialism. If these issues were not addressed in detail, the Commission would not have met its broad ranging mandate. The individual, factional and institutional fluidities assist an understanding of the dynamics of the war. Without this nuanced interpretation, the real history may have been lost in a summary. A nuanced interpretation required that the narrative be discussed in depth, including the roles and experiences of people, institutions and the respective factions.

Reference 11 - 0.01% Coverage

In order to “compile a clear picture of the past”³ the Commission devoted considerable resources towards examining the pre-conflict history of the country. These efforts were intended to locate causes of conflict in Sierra Leone's past,

Reference 12 - 0.01% Coverage

To provide for measures of reparation and prevention, it must be clearly known what should be prevented. Further, society cannot simply block out a chapter of its history; it cannot deny the facts of its past, however differently these may be interpreted. Inevitably, the void would be filled with lies or with conflicting, confusing versions of the past. A nation's unity depends on a

shared identity, which in turn depends largely on a shared memory. The truth also brings a measure of healthy social catharsis and help to prevent the past from reoccurring.¹¹

Reference 13 - 0.01% Coverage

Saturday 23rd of March 1991 has until now stood as the date on which the first shots were fired in the Sierra Leone conflict; yet in fact it is a misleading milestone in history. What happened on that day was an attack that culminated in the commencement of the conflict, not the first attack of the conflict itself. There is no need to dwell excessively on the semantics of this subtle differentiation, but for a variety of reasons the Commission deems it necessary to place the event itself in an appropriate historical context.

Reference 14 - 0.01% Coverage

The original testimonies proffered to the Commission indicate that the events of Wednesday 29 April 1992 have been widely misinterpreted and misunderstood in the broader history of Sierra Leone's conflict. The crucial feature of this landmark date is that notions of power and control in the military and political spheres converged significantly for the first time since the launch of the fullscale incursion just over a year earlier.

Reference 15 - 0.01% Coverage

Secrecy and authoritarianism have concealed the truth in little crevices of obscurity in our history. Records are not easily accessible; witnesses are often unknown, dead, unavailable or unwilling. All that often effectively remains is the truth of wounded memories of loved ones sharing instinctive suspicions, deep and traumatising to the survivors but otherwise incapable of translating themselves into objective and corroborative evidence which could survive the rigours of the law.

Victims

References or discussions of victims of violence or human rights abuses

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 8 references coded [0.06% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

This 'right to the truth' includes a duty to remember: "A people's knowledge of the history of their oppression is part of their heritage and, as such, shall be preserved by appropriate measures in fulfilment of the State's duty to remember. Such measures shall be aimed at preserving the collective memory from extinction and, in particular, at guarding against the development of revisionist and negationist arguments." Joinet also specifically recognises the right of victims to know, their families and dear ones to know the circumstances of violations and, if death or disappearance is the result, the fate of the victim.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

In one of the seminal documents of the United Nations on the issue of impunity for human rights violations, Special Rapporteur Louis Joinet has spoken of the inalienable right to truth: 'Every people has the inalienable right to know the truth about past events and about the circumstances and reasons which led, through the consistent pattern of gross violations of human rights, to the perpetration of aberrant crimes. Full and effective exercise of the right to the truth is essential to avoid any recurrence of such acts in the future.' Further, he explains: 'This is not simply the right of any individual victim or his nearest and dearest to know what happened, a right to the truth. The right to know is also a collective right, drawing upon history to prevent violations from recurring in the future. Its corollary is a "duty to remember" on the part of the State: to be forearmed against the perversions of history that go under the names of revisionism or negationism, for the history of its oppression is part of a people's national heritage and as such must be preserved. These, then, are the main objectives of the right to know as a collective right.'³

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

Different kinds of violations – the range of violations that have taken place in Sierra Leone's history. It is also desired to offer a full picture of the kind of repression suffered by victims so as to flag areas for institutional reform/retraining. This is also important to address violations that elucidate the broader sociopolitical environment that enabled human rights violations.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission was enjoined by statute to give special attention to the needs of women and girls, particularly with regard to sexual violence. Why was so much violence perpetrated against women? Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone? Did the fact that women endured such a lowly status in the socio-political life make them easy targets? Is it

because men perceived females to be mere chattels symbolising male honour that made women the deliberate target of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other?

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

Three other persons in a cell under Reider's auspices travelled out of Freetown along with Sankoh in April 1988; the distinguishing factor in their case was that Reider did not tell them in advance about the nature of what awaited them at the end of their journey. Each of Sankoh's travelling companions thought he was heading to undergo 'Advanced Capacity Building in Revolutionary Ideology' and told, variously, that he would be taken to an institution such as the University of Nigeria or the Al-Fattah University in Tripoli to be further lectured and inspired.¹⁰ This invitation came aptly to represent the kind of deceit and mismanagement of human resources that ultimately invoked a vacuum in revolutionary leadership¹¹ and a reversion towards militarism. The narrative of those who accepted their invitations in good faith, but instead underwent guerrilla training in Libya, resonates far more widely when examined under the lens of the subsequent military and political history of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

It has been argued that the conflict in Sierra Leone was the worst in recent history and cannot be explained by reference to any existing phenomena in the country. Many victims want to understand why the conflict was attended by so much violence and abuse. To provide an insight into the psychology of perpetrators, the Commission commissioned some monographic studies in the hope of finding some explanation.¹⁹⁰

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Reference 8 - 0.01% Coverage

I also wish on behalf of the members of the Sierra Leone Police Force, whom we have accepted inter alia to have been both perpetrators and victims, to express remorse for all the wrongdoings, which we and our personnel did both before and during the war... and to genuinely apologise for all such wrongdoing with a promise that such will never be repeated in the course of our history. As we strive to be a force for good, we do hope that all people within Sierra Leone and beyond who have paid so dearly a price for our past mistakes will continue to help us... so we will forge ahead and be part of the framework to establish a new Sierra Leone, a Sierra Leone which all of us will be proud of, a Sierra Leone which our children will be proud of, a Sierra Leone to which people from all over the world can come and feel safe, can come and work and can come and enjoy themselves...”

Women

References or discussions of women and girls

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 6 references coded [0.04% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission was enjoined by statute to give special attention to the needs of women and girls, particularly with regard to sexual violence. Why was so much violence perpetrated against women? Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone? Did the fact that women endured such a lowly status in the socio-political life make them easy targets? Is it because men perceived females to be mere chattels symbolising male honour that made women the deliberate target of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other?

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

The Commission, primarily through the testimonies it received from women and girls, seeks to find answers as to why such extraordinary violence was perpetrated against women. Did the origins lie in the cultural and traditional history of Sierra Leone, where women were afforded a subservient status to men? Did the low status of women in socio-political life make them easy targets? Or is it because men still perceive women to be chattels, possessions belonging to them, symbols of their honour, making them the deliberate targets of an enemy determined to destroy the honour of the other? The answers probably lie somewhere in a combination between all of these factors.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

A paradox exists in Sierra Leone in the realms of women and politics: some women have been political pioneers, whilst the vast majority have languished on the sidelines. This paradox has its origins in the history of how women in Sierra Leone became involved in politics. At the end of World War I, women of Krio origin, born in the Colony,⁸ made their voices heard in the political arena. At the same time, in the Protectorate, a few women wielded political power by becoming Paramount Chiefs or Section chiefs. In Freetown, women of Protectorate extraction, e.g. Mende and Temne, served and still serve as both Section and Tribal Headmen.⁹

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

45. Women made real progress in the political arena, which resulted in some of them holding political office in the 1950s in Sierra Leone. In the process certain politicians made history that impacted on a world beyond Sierra Leone. In 1958, three women – Constance Cummings-John, Lena Weber and Stella Ralph-James – became members of the municipal council while, in 1960, one woman was elected Deputy Mayor of Freetown and another, Nancy Koroma, was elected Mende Headman in Freetown.¹⁵

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

Throughout the history of Sierra Leone, including the post-independence period before the war, women have not enjoyed equal status with men. To a large extent, the laws of Sierra Leone are discriminatory against women. While Sierra Leone is governed by a constitution²⁸

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Youth

References or discussions of youths or children

<Files\\Truth Commission Reports\\Africa\\Sierra.Leone_.TRC-Report-FULL> - § 7 references coded [0.05% Coverage]

Reference 1 - 0.01% Coverage

The last twenty years of Sierra Leone's history is, in large part, the story of Sierra Leone's youths. Youths were the driving force behind the resistance to one party state rule in the 1980s. As students, journalists, workers and activists, they exposed injustices and the bankruptcy of the ruling elite's ideology. They also bore the brunt of the state's repressive backlash. During the conflict, youths formed the bulk of the fighting forces in all the factions.

Reference 2 - 0.01% Coverage

Youths¹¹² were the driving force behind the resistance to one-party state rule in the 1980s. As students, journalists, workers and activists they exposed injustices and the bankruptcy of the ruling elite's ideology. They also bore the brunt of the state's repressive backlash. During the conflict, youths formed the bulk of the fighting forces in all the factions. The last twenty years of Sierra Leone's history are, in reality, the story of Sierra Leone's youths.

Reference 3 - 0.01% Coverage

Rape remains the silent war crime in Sierra Leone and in the world: throughout history, the rape of hundreds of thousands of women and children in all regions of the world has been a bitter reality.¹⁴⁴ Reversing this legacy remains the obligation of every transitional justice institution charged with examining or prosecuting crimes committed during conflict. It is critical to ensuring inclusive and non-discriminatory justice as well as to combating the stigma and blame that are at the core of the shame, isolation and abandonment suffered by women in post-conflict situations. Whilst international humanitarian law has long prohibited rape, it was characterised as an offence against honour and dignity¹⁴⁵. The Fourth Geneva Convention continued the practice of characterising rape as an attack on women's honour. The list of grave breaches of Common Article 3 does not refer explicitly to rape. Again in 1977, in Protocol II while offences of sexual violence were explicitly included, they were characterised as offences against dignity and honour or humiliating and degrading treatment as listed as rape, forced prostitution and any other form of indecent assault. As a consequence, women whether combatants or civilians, have been consistently targeted for sexual violence such as rape, sexual mutilation and sexual slavery, while for the most part their attackers go unpunished.

Reference 4 - 0.01% Coverage

The abundant potential of Sierra Leone's natural landscape is mirrored in its population of just 4.5 million people. The inhabitants of the Provinces represent a culturally and demographically diverse heritage, with seventeen indigenous ethnic groups spread across 149 chiefdoms. The capital city, Freetown, originally a settlement for emancipated slaves, hosts the oldest university

in the region and gained a reputation as the “Athens of West Africa”. Most important of all, despite the trials and tribulations of history, Sierra Leoneans are resilient and resourceful, such that each new generation of children of Sierra Leone brings with it fresh hope, fresh direction and fresh human resources for the country.

Reference 5 - 0.01% Coverage

“Adults, who were disgruntled and acted through the senseless and indiscriminate atrocities, were unable to reach what was supposed to be their real targets and decided to take advantage of our vulnerability to exploit and destroy the future base of this nation, which they claimed to have been fighting for... It goes without saying that we the children bore the brunt of the conflict and witnessed the worst episode of man’s ruthlessness probably ever in man’s history.”¹¹⁰

Reference 6 - 0.01% Coverage

After the launch of the armed rebellion, most of the youths who joined the RUF, or who were compelled to join the organisation, were marginalised rural youths. Thus different categories of youths were involved at distinct stages of the conflict history of Sierra Leone. Educated youths were involved in the formulation of ideas for revolution and regime change, instigating the training in Libya. Marginalised urban youths were involved in the bulk of the military training and the launch of the insurgency. Thereafter the bulk of the growing manpower of the RUF consisted of marginalised rural youths.

Reference 7 - 0.01% Coverage

I also wish on behalf of the members of the Sierra Leone Police Force, whom we have accepted inter alia to have been both perpetrators and victims, to express remorse for all the wrongdoings, which we and our personnel did both before and during the war... and to genuinely apologise for all such wrongdoing with a promise that such will never be repeated in the course of our history. As we strive to be a force for good, we do hope that all people within Sierra Leone and beyond who have paid so dearly a price for our past mistakes will continue to help us... so we will forge ahead and be part of the framework to establish a new Sierra Leone, a Sierra Leone which all of us will be proud of, a Sierra Leone which our children will be proud of, a Sierra Leone to which people from all over the world can come and feel safe, can come and work and can come and enjoy themselves...”