

Sierra Leone

Population: 5.2 million

Life expectancy: 45 years

National capital: Freetown

Independence from UK: 27 April 1961



Abstract

Since 1991, Sierra Leone has experienced a brutal civil war, with the rebel movement, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), fighting against three successive governments. The eruption of violence resulted in the spillover of the Liberian civil war. The conflict has been fueled by extensive foreign military support to the conflicting parties, engaging foreign mercenaries and private militias. The struggle for political power, leading to the control of the country's natural resources, diamonds in particular, has been at the core of the Sierra Leonean war. The main victim is the civilian population, suffering from RUF fighters' looting and pillaging and from the precarious conditions as refugees. The settlement process has been difficult, due to the RUF's unclear political positions, the underlying support of external powers, the instability of Sierra Leonean governments and constant violations of cease-fires. The ECOMOG has played a leading role in the international response, supported by major donors. Finally, the conflicting parties started negotiations, leading to the Lomé peace agreement in July 1999, providing for disarmament and demobilization, power sharing arrangements and amnesty for fighters on both sides. The main challenge remains the implementation of the peace agreement's provisions aiming to achieve a dual transition, to peace and to democracy. The transition to peace is to be achieved through current power sharing arrangements, offering the rebels a legitimate access to the country's natural resources and to political power. However, the blanket amnesty for fighters having committed atrocities against the civilian population would endanger the future of peace, which remains fragile without any justice for the victims. Recent detentions and killings of UN peace keepers have seriously endangered the peace process. The future of the whole sub-region depends on the transition process in Sierra Leone.

“Diamonds, Mercenaries and Civilian Targets” -The brutal war in Sierra Leone

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The brutal civil conflict in Sierra Leone (1991-96, 1997-99) is unique in the scale and grotesque nature of attacks on civilian populations. The crisis has resulted in the death of thousands of civilians and in more than one million refugees¹ in and outside the country. The Sierra Leonean conflict erupted as a direct spillover of the Liberian civil war across the border and illustrates the challenges of the regional force ECOMOG in West Africa. External interventions have played a fatal role in the escalation of the Sierra Leone civil conflict as well as in the negotiation process, which could not be completed without the commitment of neighboring Liberia and Burkina Faso to the peace agreement. The current peace process, based on power sharing and on the gradual demilitarization of a society, faces up to the major challenge of dual transition, to peace and to democracy, requiring an integrated approach and support by the international community. The international community has a lot to learn from the lessons for its failure to tackle the challenges of dual transition in Liberia in 1997. A genuine peace process has to take into account the complex situation in the whole sub-region.

In 1898, a British protectorate was proclaimed over the hinterland of the coastal colony of Sierra Leone, which had been under British administration since 1787. Since independence within the Commonwealth in 1961, Sierra Leone has endured a series of military regimes and rebellions in struggles over economic and political power. A Constitution in 1978 enshrined a one-party system of the ruling All People's Congress (APC). The government was repeatedly accused of mismanagement of public funds and failure to improve the deteriorating economy. In 1991, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched a rebellion to overthrow the APC government, paving the way to the RUF's protracted war against three successive regimes (See Chronology).

¹ The war killed an estimated 20,000-50,000 people and forced up to half of the 4.5 million population from their homes (IRIN, July 1999).

Agents

Conflicting parties² in the Sierra Leonean civil war are illustrated in Table 1:

Acronym	Name	Established	Represents	Affiliation	Support	Conflict with
RUF	Revolutionary United Front	1991	Mostly the Nimbas, Makeni Bikolo/ illicit diamond miners, marginalized youth	Ousted leaders of Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and their sympathizers (since 1994) Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) in 1998.	Liberia, Burkina Faso Libya, with the backing of France, mercenaries from the Ukraine and other Eastern European countries	The Sierra Leone government ECOMOG, and the Kamajors militia/ terror against the civilian population
SLA/ AFRC	Renegade faction of Sierra Leone Army, led by Major John Koromah/ Armed Forces Revolutionary Council	1997	John Koromah's loyalists	RUF	Liberia, Burkina Faso Libya, with the backing of France, mercenaries from the Ukraine and other Eastern European countries	The Sierra Leone government, ECOMOG and the Kamajors militia
Kamajors	Kamajors rural militia	1994	Mostly the Mende ethnic group	The Sierra Leone government, ECOMOG/ supported by civilian populations		RUF / AFRC
SLPP's government	Sierra Leone People's Party	1996	Predominantly by activists of the Mende ethnic group in the eastern and southern part of the country	Kamajors and ECOMOG	ECOMOG (Nigeria, Ghana and Guinea), the UK and the US Mercenaries from mainly South Africa (Executive outcomes EO) and the UK (Gurkhas)	RUF/AFRC

² Reportedly, also two other armed groups, the National Front for the Restoration of Democracy and Sierra Leonean Initiative for peace had been fighting against the Sierra Leone government in 1994.

The traditional structure of antagonism in Sierra Leone is complex. However, the current conflict stems predominantly from external influences and individual political and economic interests, instead of structural antagonisms between different ethnic groups. The Sierra Leonean conflict has hardly any ethnic or religious dimension, common to many other civil wars (Zack-Williams 1999). However, different colonial policies³ favoured some ethnic groups, such as Mende. (Reno, 1995; West African Magazine, 1991). The rebellion emerged, however, directly from the social inequalities prevailing in Sierra Leone.

International involvement in the Sierra Leone conflict has aggravated the sufferings on the battlefield. Liberia, Burkina Faso and Libya have supported RUF and ACRC, by providing arms and other equipment. Mercenaries from the UK⁴ and South Africa⁵ fought on the side of ECOMOG, trained Kamajor fighters and provided security for government controlled mining industries and also for senior government officials. Also, “sobels”⁶, disaffected members of the armed forces have engaged in acts of looting, banditry and indiscriminate killing. Similarly, mercenaries from the Ukraine and other Eastern European countries fought on the side of RUF rebels and provided security for the mining industries under rebel command (Africa Confidential, 20 October 1998; 22 January 1999 and 6 February 1998).

The ECOWAS and the ECOMOG have played a key role in recent political negotiations and military interventions in Sierra Leone. The ECOMOG has provided training and supplied arms to the Kamajors militia who are fighting on the side of the government⁷

³ The goal of British rule was to protect the mineral resources of Sierra Leone from the expansionist policy of France without spending too much financial resources in the administration of the colony.

⁴ “Gurkha” mercenaries, who had previously served in the British army, have helped the Sierra Leone government in the operations against the RUF since 1995.

⁵ The Sierra Leone government engaged a South Africa-based security firm, Executive outcomes (EO) in 1995.

⁶ “Sobel” designates the combination of soldiers and rebels.

⁷ In 1996, there were clashes between the government forces and the Kamajors (traditional fighters reconstituted as an auxiliary defense force), who had proved highly successful in repelling rebel attacks, apparently prompting resentment from members of the armed forces (Clapham 1999).

against the RUF. The ECOMOG holds the key responsibilities for disarming and demobilizing combatants as well as training the new Sierra Leonean army. However, ECOMOG officers have also been accused of taking part in the lucrative illegal diamond business while abandoning their roles as peace-keepers. Also, international humanitarian groups have complained that shelling by ECOMOG led to a high number of civilian casualties (Human Rights Watch 1998, 1999).

The UN presence in Sierra Leone has significantly expanded since February 1998. In July 1998, the UN Security Council approved a measure to establish the UN Observer Mission to Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The UN provides major support to the setting up of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and National Human Rights Commission according to the Lomé peace agreement and to the registration of ex-combatants (IRIN, 6 August 1999). The UN peace-keeping mission (UNAMSIL) has faced serious difficulties with detention and killings of its personnel in May 2000 (IRIN, May 2000).

Since May 1998, the United Kingdom (UK), the European Union (EU)⁸ and the United States (US) have issued several statements denouncing human rights violations committed by the ACRC/RUF in Sierra Leone. In July 1999, the EU and the US were commending the progress in Lomé peace process and urged parties to keep their commitment to its implementation. In the EU and the US have given logistical and financial support to ECOMOG and humanitarian relief to thousands of refugees and displaced persons. Meanwhile, France has been accused of supplying weapons to RUF rebels through Burkina Faso and Liberia (Africa Confidential 1998-99). Facing the detention of UN personnel in rebel areas, the UK has provided strong military support to the Sierra Leonean government (IRIN May 2000). The EU has condemned the violations of the Lomé peace accords.

⁸ The EU has provided electoral assistance in 1996, and through the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), it has been the most important donor of non-food humanitarian aid (worth 20 m ECU since 1993).

Motivation

The roots of the Sierra Leonean crisis date back to the corrosive effects of the personalized and monolithic rule of the All People's Congress (APC) government, which led to the destruction of civil society and democratic accountability. The oppressive state apparatus established patron-client relationships, described as a "shadow state". Violence and political intimidation were central for dealing with local populations, deprived of major developmental efforts and welfare provisions. The network of informal markets was set up in the quest to control the diamond-rich Kono district (Zack-Williams 1999). Despite the huge benefits of the mineral industry, in the hands of politicians, powerful chiefs and Lebanese traders, the ordinary Sierra Leonean standard of living continued to decline throughout the 1980s. Economic decline, together with the perceived social, political and economic injustice provoked an anti-government movement, made up of different déclassé elements of society (Zack-Williams 1999). The demilitarization of society and especially the reintegration of child soldiers⁹, seriously affected and traumatized by war, constitutes the main challenge to the success of the peace process.

The tradition of rebellious youth culture, known for its anti-social behavior¹⁰, dates back to the 1940s, and became part of the university student protest against the APC government in the early 1980s (Abdullah 1998; Abdullah & Muana 1998). Student protests exposed the fragility of the regime and initiated the politicization of youth with anti-imperialist slogans¹¹ (Abdullah 1998; Abdullah & Muana 1998). The subsequent guerilla training experience in Libya and close connections with the Liberian National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor, contributed to the formation of the RUF, initially appropriating most of the strategy and tactics from the Liberian

⁹ UNICEF has estimated that 3,000 children are with the RUF and 1,500 with the Kamajors (IRIN June 1999).

¹⁰ Marijuana smoking, reggae music, petty theft and violence are constitutive elements of the youth culture in Freetown.

¹¹ Khaddafi's Green book, together with other "revolutionary" texts inspired the marginalized youth and "intellectuals", who did not have any clear theoretical guide for their struggle (Abdullah 1998), and contributed to the establishment of illegal connections with Libya. Finally, in 1987-88, a few groups of young Sierra Leoneans, such as Foday Sankoh, Abu Kanu and Rashid Mansaray, were recruited for guerrilla training in Benghazi, Libya (Abdullah & Muana 1998).

experience¹² (Richards 1996). However, the RUF failed to gain popular support¹³ in the border region, despite the local population's violent political opposition to the APC regime, mainly because of the brutality and looting of RUF fighters, and their Liberian allies¹⁴ (Abdullah 1998). Subsequently, civilians' "double alienation", both from the APC regime and the RUF, paved the way for the emergence of the popular Kamajo militia¹⁵, proven to be a decisive factor in the war (Abdullah & Muana 1998). Fighting and mutiny took place mainly in rural areas, but the massive assault on Freetown in January 1999 brought atrocities and pillage to the capital and highly increased the number of casualties in war (Human Rights Watch 1999).

At the level of individual mobilization, the "freedom-fighter" mantle was coupled with the reversal of social hierarchy by means of violence, perceived by urban youth as a necessary route to heroism. Alluvial diamond mining and a parallel smuggler's economy attracted disaffected youth, despairing at the malaise of economic and political exclusion but bristling with an overweening determination for prosperity. They constituted a reserve army of fighting men, attracted by the simplistic "emancipatory" rhetoric¹⁶ of the RUF, and motivated by the acquisition of wealth by looting (Abdullah 1998; Abdullah & Muana 1998). In order to succeed, the peace settlement would have to provide a mix of incentives and disincentives for ending the conflict greater than the benefits, which the fighters apparently have enjoyed from its continuation (IRIN, July 6, 1999)

The dispute concerned the distribution of political and consequently, economic power in Sierra Leone. Disruptive successions of civilian and military rules exposed the fragility of the state structures. The state is perceived as the main source of distribution, given that

¹² RUF leader Foday Sankoh hoped to repeat the successful incursion of the NPFL into Nimba county where the local population was an ardent opponent of Doe's regime, in eastern Sierra Leone where the Kailahun people were long-term opponents of the APC regime (Abdullah & Muana 1998; Richards 1996).

¹³ The RUF was mainly supported by its "natural" allies, the illicit diamond miners in the southeast of Sierra Leone. They shared a common concern about the control of diamond sources in the region.

¹⁴ The dependence on Liberian support was fatal to the RUF, as Liberians view the looting of villages as a "reward" for their support (Abdullah & Muana 1998).

¹⁵ Kamajo militia had a superior knowledge of the terrain and the support of local populations.

¹⁶ RUF's political message, manifested in the propaganda pamphlet "Footpaths to Democracy", was simply that the country was very rich in mineral wealth controlled by few Lebanese and business men with political connections and that the lasting solutions of the country's chronic economic and political problems could be found through an explosion of destructive violence (Abdullah & Muana 1998).

political power leads to the control of the country's natural resources. The main victim of the bloody dispute is the civilian population, which has experienced horrible atrocities since 1991 (Human Rights Watch 1999). The RUF set no limits to its use of violence for social destabilization and has never presented any recognizable political platform, except ill-defined revolutionary rhetoric and persistent calls for the withdrawal of foreign troops and the recognition of the RUF as a political organization. Consequently, following the 1997 coup, the ACRC/RUF alliance failed to implement any political restructuring of the state despite several years of struggle for power, instead, they further consolidated the rule of terror and economic ruin of Sierra Leone. Moreover, the weakness of conflicting parties¹⁷ and the importance of external interventions have had a major impact on the fragile outcome of any attempt at settlement. The Lomé peace agreement provides for power sharing between the government and the RUF, offering rebels a legitimate access to political power and natural resources. Power sharing arrangements, without the electoral process and accountability through investigation of war crimes, have raised concern over the future of democratic transition and peace in Sierra Leone (IRIN, 18 June 1999). Power sharing does not involve any ideological divergence, instead, it addresses the legitimate access to strategic resources and to political power for the RUF and other factions. The future of the peace agreement thus depends on perceived benefits and disincentives to fight for different militia groupings. The implementation of the peace agreement is also challenged by the fact that rebels control as much as two-thirds of the country, including the main mineral-rich areas, and access to humanitarian assistance has been very restricted in those areas¹⁸.

Charles Taylor in Liberia and Blaise Compaore in Burkina Faso have allegedly aimed at controlling diamond smuggling and logging in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Burkina Faso and Guinea. Liberia and Burkina Faso have provided training and arms to RUF rebels. France's alleged support for rebel training stems from its historical competition with the UK and the US for regional hegemony (African Confidential, 22 January 1999,

¹⁷ The RUF has never been a formidable military force, but more a peculiar guerrilla movement without any significant national following or ethnic support, and it has largely remained a bandit organization mainly driven by the survivalist needs of disaffected combatants. Similarly, the Sierra Leone state has been largely dependent on external support- ECOMOG, mercenaries, donors-to sustain despite rebel attacks.

¹⁸ Some 20,000 have died in areas under the rebel control (AFP, July 7, 1999).

Afrikontakt Ltd, 1998-1999 and AFP, 1999). The role of regional powers, especially Liberian, Burkina Faso and Guinea, in the conflict, and consequently, in its resolution is crucial. Therefore, the conclusion of the Lomé peace agreement was made possible by the regional commitment to the peace process. Similarly, donors have initiated various initiatives, such as “The Contact Group on Sierra Leone”, to coordinate aid efforts and contribute to reconstruction and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. However, the speculations of the Liberian support to rebels continue, leading to further suspension of donor support. The Liberian government has asked for an independent inquiry on the matter.

Instruments

The use of violence as a means of achieving political and economic power is deeply rooted in the Sierra Leonean political culture (Ferre 1998). The communication channels established through the Sierra Leone-Liberia border region have been crucial to the escalation of the conflict. The region is a forestry enclave with considerable scope for clandestine smuggling, logging and diamond digging activities (Abdullah & Muana 1998). The local terrain offered many ambush and refuge points, and secluded access to weapons supply routes from Liberia. In some areas, rebel commanders even emptied some regular settlements of their local civilian population (Richards 1998). The rebellion used sophisticated radios for communication, but subsequently, the South African EO helped the government to locate the RUF base camps by tracking their radio communications (Abdullah & Muana 1998). Significantly, the international community has not done much to intervene in diamond smuggling from the rebel areas, even though this source of revenue could have been clearly identified. The exploitation of natural resources enabled the rebels to purchase sophisticated equipment for guerrilla fighting. Recently, the international community has focused on the illegal diamond trade as a source of conflict (IRIN, July 2000).

The Lomé peace agreement was signed by the conflicting parties and their regional allies, namely by Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Liberia and Togo in July 1999. The current peace agreement does not differ very much from the previous agreements, which were never

implemented due to lack of genuine commitment by the conflicting parties. However, the context of the current peace process is different from the 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord, which was never implemented. The accord's provisions included a cease-fire to be monitored by the international community, the demobilization of RUF combatants, the restructuring of the army, the withdrawal of mercenaries, and the creation of conditions needed for the RUF to register as a political party. Despite the similarity of the peace agreement provisions, certain factors have been in favor of a more serious commitment of the parties to a peaceful solution: first, the perception of the RUF has changed and it has been recognized internationally as a negotiating partner. Second, since the assault on Freetown in January 1999, the government has realized that it cannot win the war militarily, since the rebels control some two-thirds of the country. Third, the commitment of the Nigerian civilian government to maintain the same number of ECOMOG peacekeepers has become unlikely, and urged the government to find a negotiated solution. Also, international pressure and the integration of neighboring Liberia, Burkina Faso and Guinea in the peace process have improved prospectives for a regional solution, needed to ensure peace in the sub-region (IRIN, 6 July 1999; BBC, 20 August 1999). The Sierra Leonean peace process has affected Liberia, suffering from rebel incursions possibly by Liberian fighters, disenchanted by Charles Taylor and excluded from the benefits of the peace agreement (IRIN, August 1999).

However, several problems and doubts remain to be addressed in the implementation of the agreement. Power sharing between the government and the rebel forces became the main issue in the search for a peaceful solution. The rebels were in a position of force vis-à-vis the government in controlling two-thirds of the country and therefore, any agreement with no benefits, including legitimate access to political power and to natural resources, to the rebels would have certainly been unsustainable. However, the recent hostage taking and killing of the UN personnel and sporadic rebel activities in the unstable border region between Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone (IRIN, August 1999) reflects the importance of a regional solution to the conflict and integration of all parties, including minor militia groups into the dividends of the peace agreement.

However, power sharing, especially if based on blanket amnesty, with rebel forces having carried out a deliberate policy of mutilation and terrorism against the civilian population appears to be an unbearable solution in the long run (IRIN, 6 July 1999). The UN and the EU have both expressed reservations about a general amnesty included in the Lomé peace agreement. There is no peace without justice and therefore, the establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, together with the National Human Rights Commission, could play a crucial role in healing war-time trauma and contribute to national reconciliation.

The establishment of an effective disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program for some 33,000 ex-combatants (IRIN, 9 July 1999) remains the major challenge to the peace process. The deployment of UNOMSIL and ECOMOG-led peace-keeping forces has to be accompanied by efforts to improve the relations between the militia and local communities, having suffered from atrocities, and to demilitarize the whole society, in which looting and pillaging have become a way of life.

At the regional level, ECOWAS efforts to discuss recent developments in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone (IRIN, 26 August 1999) stresses the need for an integrated approach to conflicts in the border regions. At the overall level, the Nigerian role in sub-regional peace-keeping continues to be important despite its willingness to diminish the financial burden of peace-keeping activities (IRIN, 12 July 1999). Moreover, the Sierra Leonean case shows how neighboring countries, mainly Liberia and Burkina Faso, often play a crucial role in the continuation of combats to the extent that no solution can be found without their compliance. This raises the question of international sanctions against external forces fueling the civil conflict or the integration of regional actors in the negotiations if direct conflicting parties are dependent on them. The cooperation of the international community is crucial for the sustainable settlement of the Sierra Leone protracted conflict.

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Chronology

- **1990:** Outbreak of the Liberian civil war. Estimated 125,000 Liberians took refuge in Sierra Leone. Some 500 Sierra Leonean troops joined the ECOMOG, dispatched to Liberia.
- **1991:** Deployment of troops on the Liberian border. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) initiate the civil war.
- **1992:** The National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC) ousted the All People's Congress (APC) government, in power since 1978, from power. ECOMOG units along the border between Sierra Leone and Liberia. The RUF demanded the withdrawal of all foreign troops.
- **1994:** The NPRC government offer of negotiations rejected by the RUF.
- **1995:** The RUF prepared to negotiate with the government. The UN and the OAU appeals for peace negotiations. The OAU negotiations with RUF representatives.
- **January-July 1996:** Legislative and presidential elections in February, leading to the establishment of civilian rule by Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, the government announced that the RUF had agreed to a cease-fire.

- **November 30, 1996:** Abidjan Peace Accord: RUF forces were to be demobilized and the movement was to be reconstituted as a political organization, while all foreign troops were to be withdrawn from the country and replaced by foreign observers. Establishment of a National Commission to monitor the peace agreement. The agreement failed to bring an end to the war: RUF leadership subsequently became fractured; its leader Sankoh was “deposed” and incarcerated in Lagos.
- **February-March 1997:** Departure of foreign mercenaries. Repatriation of refugees from Liberia commenced.
- **May 25, 1997:** Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) ousted President Kabbah.
- **October 27, 1997:** Conakry Peace Accord to restore civilian rule. Key issues concerned the cease-fire, the future role of Nigerian peacekeepers, the disarming of Sierra Leonean troops, and the release of RUF leader Foday Sankoh.
- **February-March 1998:** ECOMOG launched a major offensive and unseated the AFRC. Concern over the catastrophic humanitarian situation in Sierra Leone. Kabbah reinstated, leading to the restoration of civilian rule.
- **June-July 1998:** The UN Security Council lifted the embargo on arms sales to President Kabbah’s government, while tightening sanctions against the rebel soldiers. AFRC/RUF troops continued to terrorize civilians. UN observation force to Sierra Leone.
- **October 1998:** Some AFRC/RUF collaborators sentenced to death. Foday Sankoh sentenced to death on charges of treason, appealed to the High Court.
- **November 1998-February 1999:** Charles Taylor’s offers to mediate in the Sierra Leone crisis, while denying his alleged involvement in the conflict. *January 1999:* massive rebel attack on Freetown leading to major atrocities in the city.
- **March-April 1999:** Exploratory contacts between the RUF and regional mediators took place in Togo. Fighting continues. Refugee camps suffer from an extremely precarious situation. Peace forum discusses eventual power-sharing arrangement in April.
- **May-June 1999:** Ceasefire agreement on May 24. Popular protests against power sharing between the government and the RUF. Sankoh liberated.
- **July 7, 1999:** Signature of the Lomé peace agreement by president Kabbah, the RUF and neighboring Liberia, Burkina Faso, Nigeria, Togo. The agreement provides for the RUF to become a political party and grants it four cabinet posts and four deputy ministerial posts. Sankoh becomes chairman of a commission for the management of strategic resources, national reconstruction and development and enjoys the status of vice president; amnesty for fighters on both sides for offenses committed since 1991; creation of Truth and Reconciliation Commission and National Human Rights Commission; review of the Constitution and creation of independent Electoral Commission; disarmament and demobilization under ECOMOG and UNOMSIL supervision; reintegration of ex-fighters. Total death toll estimated at some 20,000 to 50,000 and half of the 4.5 million population displaced (Human Rights Watch). Establishment of a program for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR), to be implemented within six weeks. The international community protest against blanket amnesty for human rights violators.
- **August 1999:** Renegade soldiers of the AFRC take 40 UN observers and civilians hostage to protest against their perceived marginalization in the Lomé agreement, which they later recognized following the views of their leader Johnny Paul Koromah. Delays in disarmament. Sankoh has not returned to Freetown due to “security concerns”. Census on war amputees. Plans for phased withdrawal of 12,000 Nigerian troops from Sierra Leone.
- **May 2000:** Detention and killing of UNAMSIL troops in rebel areas. UK military support to Sierra Leonean government.