

Economic Community of West Africa Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Operations, Reflections and Lessons Learnt for Contemporary Multi- National Peace Keeping Operations

By
Howard Winimai Johnette

&
Rotimi Olajide Opeyeoluwa

Department of International Relations and Diplomacy,
Afe Babalola University Ado-Ekiti, Ekiti State – Nigeria

Abstract

This study examines ECOMOG operations in Liberia between 1997 to 2003. The research approach is a qualitative systematic literature review of scholarly papers, policy reports, and materials from diverse websites. In addition, the study examines how the Economic Community of West African States cobbled together an innovative peace enforcement initiative with diverse milestones and challenges which the force grappled with as it strove to ensure peace is restored in Liberia. The outlined significant geo-political ramifications such as the Anglo-Francophone dichotomy within the ECOWAS sub-region and Nigeria's hegemonic posturing which affected the initiative. Similarly, the significance of the military intervening force was to the extent that a hitherto purely economic community grouping could revert to ensuring that peace took place in a fratricidal community with no initial foreign interest. The study concluding remarks pointed to the essential lessons which can be drawn for subsequent operations. The research was able to recommend that the avoidance of a relapse to war as a solution to grieves.

Keywords: Liberia, ECOWAS, ECOMOG, Operation, Nigeria.

Introduction:

Just as the sun was receding on the cold war dynamics in Africa, Liberia imploded into a brutal civil war bearing Thomas Hobbes's (1651) imprimatur of life as 'brutish, nasty and short'. This occurrence was consequence of the end of the hitherto ideological rivalry between the United States of America (USA) and the defunct Union of Social Socialist Republic (USSR). The failure of the war in Liberia to be defined in ideological narrative left Liberia stranded as the US which had backed the Smauel Doe government failed to support it. The accompanying humanitarian disaster and the harsh realities of the opening chapters of the post-Cold War era imposed a compelling need for a third-party intervention given the overwhelming challenges assailing Liberia which was tottering to collapse. The Liberian question was exemplified by displacements, wanton destructions, killings and pervasive insecurity in the face of an advancing and rampaging attacks by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and other splinter groups. This reinforced the "threats posed by violent non-state actors operating in a milieu that can be most aptly described as complex and unpredictable" (Clarke, 2015; 1) and the absence of a global alliance, either through multilateral intervention or the hitherto ideological colourations which only recently ended to deal decisively with the sub-regional threat compelled Africa, particularly Nigeria to champion a sustainable way to deal with the issue at hand by launching ECOMOG.

Regardless, the hope for African despots and "cynical abandonment of dashed expectations exposed the soft underbellies of these countries came to define the opening chapters of the

post-cold war dynamics. This allowed internal opposition, long suppressed by externally backed coercion but now emboldened by the collapse of dictatorships in Eastern Europe to resurface with greater vigor (Fawole, 2000; 4) to spur such scenarios in Africa in places such as Somalia, Ethiopia, Zaire, Angola and Liberia. Thus, the challenge to both single-party authoritarianism and military rule on the continent drew considerable inspiration from the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, the disintegration of the Soviet bloc, and the fall of the erstwhile immovable communist dictators in Eastern Europe. Having been stripped of their former external backers in power, their previous claim to a monopoly of violence changed swiftly as non-state actors with access to independent resources and weapons of their own insisted on change in the power configuration of these respective countries. Fawole again asserted that “the rise of warlordism and the intensity of the conflict are directly traceable to this factor, with the consequences that orthodox conflict resolution strategies of diplomacy and peaceful mediation have become ineffectual” (Fawole, 2001; 4).

The war in Liberia elicited the miseries of pains, deaths, destruction and outcries as well as dashed hopes, internally displaced persons, refugees, rape, and sadness that needed to be mitigated. It was a chapter in the nation’s annals that was too traumatic to explain which many people always want to forget but with festering miseries. Lives changed forever after the war as is with Liberia itself. Before the war, the country was governed by a despot, Samuel Doe, and by the end of the war, the political structure changed hands. A former rebel leader, Charles Taylor took over the reins of power and by the second round of war, he was swept out of power (Gbowee, 2011). The “new violence” as Chris Allen (1999) has aptly described it animated discussions in the 1990s and as with other diverse challenges took root in Africa. Indeed, the intractability of the war animated several actors within and beyond Africa, but in the latter, the responsibility was entirely its own. Nigeria’s military President, Ibrahim Babaginda made a case for military intervention as a matter of urgency. It was at Nigeria’s behest that an ECOWAS Standing Mediation Committee (SMC) of five countries was established including, Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Mali, and Togo to mediate in intra-regional conflicts before they become too combustible to handle. The SMC resolved to dispatch a ceasefire monitoring group called ECOMOG into Liberia to, among other things, keep peace, restore law and order, ensure compliance with the ceasefire to enable the establishment of an interim government, and conduct elections to establish a democratic government (Aning, 1999: 29).

Conceptual clarification

ECOWAS- The Economic Community of West African States, a group of fifteen West African nations under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States. ECOWAS is an international regional organization established by the Treaty of Lagos in May 1975 to promote economic integration as well as trade cooperation, and self-reliance. The ECOWAS treaty was signed with a mandate to promote cooperation among member states and thus create an economic block.

ECOMOG - The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) was a West African multilateral armed force established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). ECOMOG was a formal arrangement for separate armies to work together. It was largely supported by personnel and resources of the Nigerian Armed Forces, with sub-battalion strength units contributed by other ECOWAS members.

Liberia- Officially the Republic of Liberia and Africa's oldest republic that was colonized by the American Colonialization Society. Liberia is a country on the West African coast. It is bordered by Sierra Leone to its northwest, Guinea to its north, Ivory Coast to its east, and the Atlantic Ocean to its south and southwest. It has a population of around 5 million and covers an area of 43,000 square miles (111,369 km²). The country's official language is English; however, over 20 indigenous languages are spoken, reflecting the country's ethnic and cultural diversity. The capital and largest city is Monrovia.

Peace - Peace is the converse of war. Peace exists only in the absence of war. The philosophical definition of peace according to John Jacques Rousseau in his book *State of Nature* conceptualizes the peaceful origin of state existence in man where there is no desire until man's desire to have and to own and subsequently became corrupted by desire. According to the University of Peace, peace is a political conduction that makes justice possible.

Civil war

Civil war is a term used to describe a conflict within a country where different groups or factions fight against each other. It's like a war between citizens of the same country. Civil wars often arise from political, social, or ethnic divisions and can result in significant destruction and loss of life. It's a complex and challenging situation that can have long-lasting effects on a nation's stability and development. Civil war is a war between the citizens of the same state, government, or country, often brought about as a result of a disagreement over its future direction or in an attempt to take control of the existing state.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchored on the theory of collective security as it is a fundamental mechanism of modern security. Many see it as a bulwark against abuse in the international system, matter of fact, subscribers of the theory maintain that it best explain perfectly the challenge occasioned by the war and subsequent deployment to stop the continued slide to total anarchy as a result of the third-party intervention. These theories are the most suitable and they adequately capture the variable as stated in this research.

The Theory of Collective Security

Collective Security Proponents: Woodrow Wilson, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, United Nations Year Proposed: Emerged as a response to World War I, the League of Nations was established in 1920. Content: Collective security emphasizes the need for a united international community to prevent and respond to aggression, and maintain peace and security through collective action. While the concept of collective security is ideal, its implementation has faced diverse challenges such as in the failure of the League of Nations to prevent World War II.

The theory of collective security was put into practice during the Liberia civil war through ECOMOG's intervention at the behest of Nigeria and not many thought it was an ideal step citing that the contraption was cobbled together for purely economic reasons. However, Nigeria's involvement in ECOMOG exemplified the application of collective security principles in maintaining regional stability and peace. This demonstrates Nigeria's commitment to upholding collective security interests in West Africa. Collective security is a theory that emphasizes the necessity for a united international community to prevent and

respond to aggression and maintain international peace and security through collective action. It is based on the belief that if all nations commit to the common goal of upholding security, the chances of aggression and conflict can be significantly reduced.

One significant case where the theory of collective security was put into practice was during the Liberia civil war which ranged from 1989 to 1997. The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), comprised primarily of Nigerian troops, played a vital role in the conflict. ECOMOG was deployed to restore peace and stability in Liberia, prevent the conflict from spilling over into neighbouring countries, and protect civilian lives. ECOMOG's involvement in Liberia was a practical application of the collective security theory. Nigeria, being a prominent member of ECOMOG, recognized the potential threats to regional stability and peace that the conflict in Liberia posed. By taking action and leading the ECOMOG intervention, Nigeria aimed to uphold the collective security interests of the West African region and prevent the situation from deteriorating further.

The theory of collective security compelled Nigeria's foreign policy to be enacted due to two key factors. Firstly, Nigeria, as a regional power in West Africa, possessed the capability and resources to lead the ECOMOG intervention effectively. Secondly, Nigeria recognized the importance of maintaining regional stability and peace. Disruptions in neighbouring countries' security often have a spill-over effect, resulting in refugee crises, cross-border violence, and economic disruptions. Similarly, the theory of collective security emphasizes the importance of united international action to prevent and address aggression, conflict, and threats to international peace. It began with the League of Nations and found a more concrete implementation under the UN system. Nigeria's involvement in the Liberia civil war through ECOMOG exemplified the application of this theory in a regional context where Nigeria recognized and acted upon the collective security interests of West Africa. While the theory of collective security has faced challenges and limitations in practice, it continues to be a significant framework for promoting peace and security at both regional and global levels. Many states and international organizations still believe in the power of collective action to prevent and address conflicts, making collective security a concept with substantial support.

In summary, the theory of collective security suggests that countries should join forces to prevent aggression and maintain peace. It originated after World War I with the establishment of the League of Nations. In the case of the Liberia civil war, ECOMOG, a regional peacekeeping force, was involved in bringing stability to the region. Nigeria's foreign policy was guided by the principle of collective security, which motivated them to support ECOMOG's intervention in the conflict. This demonstrates Nigeria's commitment to regional peace and security.

Liberia in the Pre-War Era

In the years leading to the outbreak of war in Liberia, the country was regarded as relatively peaceful and stable but beyond the calm on the surface, the country was plagued with dissension, rumblings and occasional coup which bloodily cracked down by the ruling government. The government reinforced its grip on the political rein by imposing severe measures which ultimately undermined democracy, civil liberties and inclusivity. Before the onslaught, once commentator referred to Liberia as “a wonderful, beautiful, mixed-up country struggling mightily to find itself” (Sirleaf: 2009). The terrifying political condition galvanized many to challenge the government of Samule Doe but he was able to ride the storm by turning

the state into a police state. However, beyond the domestic challenge(s) on the international front, Samuel Doe was riding the storm using the ideological firestorm between the US and USSR to make tepid reforms and justify his iron-grip style by labelling his opponents as socialists inclining on turning the country to the socialist block.

According to Wikipedia, the Liberian economy had relied heavily on the mining of iron ore before the Civil War. Liberia was a major exporter of iron ore on the world market. By the 1970s, iron mining accounted for more than half of Liberia's exports. The indigenous ethnic people of Liberia lived all as one. Liberia became a member of the World Bank in 1962 and received its first loan two years after which was used on the construction of the road from Monrovia to Roberts Field Airport.

In the pre-war years, Liberia was torn between economic and political divide with ethnic coloration creating a dangerous gulf between the aborigines and settlers and like most African states, Liberia's diverse composition became a trigger for rounds of crisis. In general, the country and its ruling government interpreted any opposition to its draconian rule as a grave threat to its continuing rule, thus labelling it a threat to national security. It was under this situation that some infiltrators staged a coup in which failed. The government unleashed a massive crackdown and with attendant implications such as widening the already faultline. Samuel Doe became a massive purge of state institutions such as the civil service and the security forces.

Thus, the stage was set for people of other ethnicities to flee persecution. The changing dynamics within the country made many that were persecuted to embrace the rebel movement thus the momentum was swift. The fear that Liberia was going to implode became real when on Christmas eve of 1989, the NPFL crossed into Liberia with an avowed commitment to take over the capital. That move provoked unjustified security crackdown on innocent civilians who were summarily executed as spies. It became a recurring ordeal for security organizations to invade, arrest and in some cases, kill in the name of the government.

During this period, Liberia descended into chaos, political instability and a trail of bloodbath in its wake, hitting the country and paving the way for the civil war to be a reality. Before that step, there were rigged elections, an election which the Samuel Doe government had thought would buy it time but it turned out that the government did not factor the resolve of the people. Even though the elections held, it was dismissed as a scam by local and international observers and this sustained the opposition to the government. The government further responded by making more and more arrests. The highly charged atmosphere made possible by some of the cocktail of factors mentioned helped spark the war.

Liberia In the War Years

The war in Liberia plunged the country into an unimaginable turmoil with attendant deaths and destructions. The country was given up to itself by the international community as the West quickly evacuated its nationals both through airlifts and through the sea. The perception was clear to the discerning to every extent: the refrain was that Africa should clean the Augean stable.

However, since the dawn of time, there was no Aboriginal that ever served as president until 1980, when Samuel Doe, through a coup took over the mantle of leadership. This was the bone of contentment for Samuel Kanyon Doe who was born in Tuzon, Grand Gedeh County Liberia.

He was the first president of tribal descent (Krahn). With the Johnson rebel movement inside Monrovia and controlling a substantial part of the capital and Charles Taylor's NPFL in grip of the surrounding countryside, Samuel Doe became a virtual prisoner in the Executive Mansion and this situation ensured that the United States and some foreign powers to call on him to 'resign in the interest of peace'. The grim nature of the war took a turn for the worst when a splinter group of the NPFL and other rebel movements continued with their subversive actions with implications both to national and sub-regional security (Opeyeoluwa, 217: 2020). Inspired by the notion of state inviolability by enshrined in the Westphalia Treaty of 1648 where principles such as state autonomy, territorial integrity and non-interference laid the groundwork for sustainable political order were assaulted, the political leaders within the West African sub-region began to have a re-think on the inevitability of a military intervention (Faith, 2023).

Liberia and December 24th, 1989

The war in Liberia started in December 1989 with the formation of two rebel groups, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) based in the country's north-western counties and the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) based in the south-east. The NPFL, led by Charles Taylor, quickly gained the advantage and it looked as if the government's days were numbered. This was evident by the fact that by August 1990 the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) had entered the fray with the primary objective being to disband the rebel forces and attempt to bring some stability to the battle-torn country. ECOMOG was a regional security force created by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) designed to intervene in interstate, domestic, and internal conflicts within the member states of ECOWAS. Throughout the 6 years of conflict, ECOMOG found itself in the middle of a conflict that was riddled with shifting alliances, warlordism, and an unclear national interest, making the task of implementing peace an ever more difficult task. It is often difficult to decipher and reason as to why a nation or state becomes involved in a civil conflict, and ECOMOG's intervention in Liberia was no different. Nevertheless, it is the primary objective of this essay to critically discuss and assess the factors responsible for ECOMOG's intervention in the Liberian Civil War between 1997 and 2003.

The earliest seeds of Liberia's civil war are to be found in the wake of the events that unfolded on December 24, 1989, when the anti-Doe National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor invaded Liberia from the Ivory Coast to overthrow Doe thereby starting the first civil war. Military actions were being formed against Doe headed by Charles Taylor. Doe was not able to tackle this coup as he had done with the previously attempted ones. Charles Taylor's mandate was to restore the country from Doe's harsh reign and democratic abuses. Charles Taylor had a second in command Prince Johnson. They had a split in the heat of the war making them part ways. Prince Johnson became a commander and his leader as the head of the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL). This led to the outbreak of two warlords in the country with Prince Johnson tackling both Taylor and Doe. Doe charged up his army to back off the rebels to remain behind Taylor's lines as he could sense danger not far from home. At this point, America started evacuating its citizens from the country from the nearby beach as the people of Liberia were terrorized resulting in many fleeing their homes to neighbouring countries to seek safety. As things got worse, over 500,000 thousand Liberians fled the country and many others were internally displaced.

Gradually, Taylor was approaching the mansion where Doe reside, and eventually, Doe was killed. Doe was captured and executed by Prince Johnson on 9 September 1990. They achieved their goal of taking control of Liberia in 1997, but conflicts with warlords resumed in just two years. The rebels, known as LURD, aimed to overthrow Taylor's regime

The Liberian war and ECOMOG intervention

ECOMOG was a peacekeeping force in West Africa that included troops from various countries like Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Nigeria, Sierra Leone, and Mali. They intervened in Liberia to stop the conflict and protect their nationals. ECOMOG's mission was to establish peace, form an interim government, and hold elections. Some speculated that the participating countries had different motivations, like supporting the Doe government or preventing regional destabilization. The intervention was also driven by concerns for the well-being of West African nationals in Liberia.

The situation got intense on October 15 1992 when Taylor launched "Operation Octopus" and attacked ECOMOG positions in and around Monrovia. This operation was his final attempt to gain control of Monrovia from the ECOMOG peacekeeping force. Initially, the operation caught ECOMOG off guard, but they eventually regained control and pushed back the attack. The NPFL, Taylor's group, suffered heavy losses and lost important territories, including the strategic port of Buchanan. The decision to launch this operation was influenced by political and military factors. Taylor didn't recognize Amos Sawyer's interim government and saw ECOMOG as the main obstacle to his complete control over the country. He believed that ECOMOG's response to his attacks was weak, so he assumed they wouldn't respond strongly to Operation Octopus. Another factor was the creation of ULIMO, which Taylor thought was formed by ECOMOG to undermine his authority. This operation had significant consequences. It showed the NPFL that engaging ECOMOG in conventional battles was futile, leading them to focus on guerrilla tactics instead. It also fostered an alliance against the NPFL and diminished their international support. ECOMOG's response received some criticism as well. It's really interesting how these political and military considerations shaped the course of events in Liberia.

It was like a siege, with fighting happening all over the city and nearby areas. Many people had to flee their homes and seek refuge in the central city. Unfortunately, those who didn't cooperate with the NPFL were often executed. The NPFL even used young boys and teenagers, some of whom were intoxicated, to attack Monrovia. They were promised the loot of the city, including houses. It's hard to say exactly how many people were killed, but estimates suggest that thousands lost their lives. ECOMOG has been carrying out bombing and strafing raids using Nigeria's Alpha jetson Taylor's territory since late October. These raids have targeted various locations, including the port of Buchanan and areas around Gbarnga, Kakata, Harbel, and Greenville. Unfortunately, precise information about the targets and casualties is not available due to restricted access for independent observers. However, NPFL officials report that hundreds of civilians have been killed and wounded. It is concerning that ECOMOG has not conducted investigations into these attacks on civilians and hospitals. There have been reports of the NPFL using the civilian population as a shield for its military activities, which is a violation of international humanitarian law. Despite this, ECOMOG still has a responsibility to protect civilians. Operation Octopus lasted for almost a month, with areas like Gardnersville, Barnesville, New Georgia, and Caldwell heavily affected. Many people were displaced and

sought refuge in the central city. The number of casualties is difficult to estimate, but the World Health Organization reported up to 3,000 deaths.

The Turn Around

ECOMOG had to come up with a new plan and a change of strategy due to the urgency of the situation. They decided to join forces with other Liberian factions, ULIMO and the AFL, to combat the NPFL. However, the human rights records of these factions were questionable at best. The AFL, known for its horrific abuses in the 1980s and during the war in 1990, including massacres and devastation in Monrovia, was thoroughly discredited. ULIMO, an offshoot of the AFL, also faced allegations of attacks on civilians, looting, and executions of suspected NPFL sympathizers.

It's unclear what the formal connections between the AFL and ULIMO are, but many of ULIMO's leaders were former AFL commanders, and hundreds of AFL soldiers joined ULIMO. ECOMOG initially supported the AFL's right to defend itself but eventually allowed it to operate alongside multinational troops. Although ULIMO claims to operate independently, there is evidence of some coordination. It seems that ECOMOG doesn't do much to rein in the excesses of these factions.

There have been allegations that ECOMOG is arming ULIMO and the AFL, but it's difficult to trace the origins of their weapons. ULIMO claims to have captured arms from the NPFL, while the AFL says they had stockpiled weapons during the Doe regime. According to ECOMOG field commander Maj. General Adetunji Olurin, a peacekeeping force is supposed to act as an "impartial arbiter." However, he explained that they were compelled to change their role into "peace enforcement." After they were able to restore the first peace and Charles Taylor invaded thereby disrupting two years of distilled peace this dragged ECOMOG back into the war front and began a reversed role from peacekeeping to aggressive military force to meet up with the current unfolding circumstances. ECOMOG moved from peacekeeping to peace enforcement.

Conclusion and Recommendations

In mitigating the challenges posed by insecurity, especially in most war-torn societies certain remedial steps are both necessary and expedient. The war in Liberia between 1997-2003 plunged the country into a cycle of bloodbath and wanton destruction of infrastructure with existential consequences for both the country and the West African sub-region. Recall that in the build-up to the formation of the ECOMOG intervening forces, there were some mis-steps in part because of the novelty of the idea in Africa and partly because of Anglo-Franco dichotomy and intra-state politics within ECOWAS, as well as some legal hindrances which almost suffocated the idea at infancy.

Some commentators have also maintained that for such a contraption to make fully in the fully, there is need to move from rhetorics to practice to will take the entire picture into consideration. Politics aside, the security architecture and the role of peacekeepers ought to be taken more seriously. Of course, the agitation for African solution to African problems made much a novel security initiative commendable but there were some unclear mis-steps that were both unnecessary and unacceptable. Extraordinary measures require fortitude and political will that were missing at the beginning.

Fundamental principles as adopted since Westphalia such as (s) sovereignty (b) legal equality (c) Non-intervention came under intense scrutiny. These principles should not be an excuse to stay out when a state is plunged into a needless bloodbath. Luckily, in the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide, the international system as another protocol called the Responsibility to Protect (R2P), which can be activated as a necessary early warning system to prevent a bloodbath.

Other steps step in redressing the factors which led to the flare-up is the need to open the political space. Recall that political alienation of some ethnic groups provoked the war, the need for the country to be all embracing of all peoples of different ethnic groups, creed and religion will stave off possibility recourse to violence.

Another point is the sustainability of democracy in Liberia. Once democracy is in force and play the political space will be open to a free and periodic elections as dictated by the constitution. In that way, nobody or groups of people can allege foul play. Democracy allows for healthy competition of power as against in the build-up of the war, where the gun was used to capture the state and power in a most bizarre and brazen manner. Another point is the need for improved education. When a people are given access to quality education such a people are trained and it enhances quality participation and an enhanced and enlightened citizenry. In the build-up to the war in Liberia, lots of the political actors such as Samuel Doe and his cohorts that were the then political elites were mostly uneducated. Education is key and of great importance in the build-up of a virile and strong nation.

Another recommendation is the need for massive infrastructure in national assets and diversification of the national economy. During the war, Liberia witnessed the destruction of critical national infrastructure, hence the need to rebuild in the post war era. We equally recommended the need for diversification of the economy from mainly the extractive sector to others such as tourism, ICT, and agriculture, such a move will increase the wealth base of the country and more funds will accrue to the country.

Another very important recommendation is the need for a national conference and national reconciliation conference modelled after what obtained in the immediate aftermath of apartheid governance in South Africa. Such a conference will act as a road map for the healthy future devoid of rancour and ill wind which could plague the future. Another area of recommendation is poverty reduction. Poverty plays a devastating role in conflict and war-torn societies and Liberia was not an exception, hence the need for government to enhance that poverty is tackled aggressively by floating sound policies across critical sectors which will enable the youth to grow in wealth and productivity.

Another aspect that needs to be worked upon is the National Defence Policy of Liberia. Before and during the war, the Liberian Armed Forces was thoroughly lacking in professionalism. It is about time that the Armed Forces in Liberia are trained to be apolitical and professional. Never again should be Armed Forces of Liberia engaged in politics or taking sides, except by respecting the Constitution and with the people of Liberia.

We recommend that corruption should be tackled headlong. Recall that before the war, Liberia, especially under the late despot, General Samuel Doe was not only rabidly corrupt and a violator of human rights, the country spiraled under the weight of many contradictions such that Liberians in the diaspora such as Ellen Sirleaf Johnson and many others who spoke out of

love for country was branded traitors and many of such patriotic citizens were killed. We recommended that there must be a distinction between national security and regime survivability. One can love one's country and still speak out against excessiveness of government.

Finally, as a post war healing mechanism, successive governments in Liberia since the time of President Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, George Weah and Josphe Boakia should ensure that a sustained policy of rural development. In such a manner, the need for rural-urban drift will be mitigated and opportunities will become widespread. When opportunities are liberalized such will have far-reaching and positive impact on the economy.

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