

Sierra Leone: A Model for a Program for Action for a Culture of Peace

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Introduction

In the past decade, there has been an increase in number and severity of conflicts worldwide (Boulding, 2000). “In almost all cases, these conflicts are intranational in scope, that is, they are fought between groups who come from within the boundaries of a defined state” (Lederach, 1997, p.11), such as Rwanda, Somalia and the former Republic of Yugoslavia, that have grown out of a culture of war and violence. The impetus for wars has historically focused on property, power and control, identity and perception (Lederach, 1997) and the methodology more symmetrical than asymmetrical (Goulding, 2002; Meigs, 2003). Of these, external wars tend to have been motivated by property and resources, and internal wars have focused on power struggles of dictatorial and totalitarian regimes, religious and ethnic factors (Nye, 2003).

In response to these conflicts, the United Nations has deployed international peacekeepers in efforts to abate and, where possible, halt the violence. The success of these missions has been a function of several factors, including the level of violence, the historical relationship of the groups or nation-states in conflict, the clarity of the issues that precipitated the violence, the mandate as defined by the United Nations, and, ultimately the professionalism of the international soldiers assigned to the peacekeeping mission.

Langholtz and Leentjes (2001) suggest that UN peacekeepers are soldiers first, “trained to prevail in combat over a clearly defined foe and the traditional soldier’s psychology ... one of force and intimidation” (p.173). But on peacekeeping missions, the psychology of peaceful intervention differs significantly from the psychology of combat. The mandate of the peacekeeping mission can fluctuate between Chapter VI and Chapter VII of the UN Charter, requiring impartial soldiers from neutral nations to employ either non-violent or violent means of conflict resolution. In reality, impartiality and neutrality are replaced by other motivations such as predatory economic policies (Malone & Thakur, 2001); some UN peacekeepers have ruled by force and intimidation. Far from being peacekeepers, Hedges (2002) suggests that, although immoral, lethal force is necessary in order to prevent violations of human rights, including genocide (Power, 2002).

The primary responsibility of the United Nations is the maintenance of international peace and security; the second is peace building and development of systems and infrastructures that sustain development. In his proposal, ‘*An Agenda For Peace*’, Boutros-Ghali (1992) proposes that peacekeepers should be employed proactively in inter- and intranational conflicts that threaten the economic, social or political stability of a state, the results of which often include violations of human rights. Unfortunately, the success of peacekeeping missions has not always been achieved due to inept policy flowing from the UN Security Council, poor management of the mission

through the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and conflictual operational planning that results in the appointment of key personnel based on geopolitical criteria rather than merit (Malone & Thakur, 2001). Malone and Thakur further postulate:

Timidly masquerading as political neutrality has also led to operational failure to openly confront those who challenge a peacekeeping objective in the field. Echoing Annan's conclusion in the Srebrenica report, the Brahimi panel argues that the UN, while striving to remain impartial, should ditch its long-standing attachment to maintaining a position of neutrality between belligerents. Where one or several parties pursue reprehensible goals in repugnant ways, the UN should no longer extend, directly or indirectly, a seal of moral equivalency in its relations with combatants. If this recommendation is carried through, UN personnel will, in many cases, need to be in a position to protect their mandates rather than allowing the chips to fall where they may (ultimately, the approach adopted in Srebrenica and Rwanda) (p.13).

Parallel with peacekeeping missions, there has been an increase in the resolve of individuals and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to establish and sustain a culture of peace as defined by the United Nations Education Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The resolve of those who champion a culture of peace is to present peace as an alternative to war, prevent conflict from exploding into war and violence, and re-establish peace when violence erupts (Boulding, 2000; Herr & Zimmerman-Herr, 1998; Mayor & Adams, 2000). Decisions to create a culture of war and violence are individual, but they are not made in isolation from the social environments that give them shape, structure and meaning. Likewise, decisions to engage in interpersonal violence are individual, but are not made in isolation from their social environments that give them shape, structure and meaning. The ramifications of such decisions, however, have been exacerbated with the increase in asymmetrical wars and conflicts (Post, 2002; Williams, 2003).

Theoretical models employed to analyze symmetrical wars and conflicts of the Cold War era have become less viable as predictors of contemporary asymmetrical intranational wars and conflicts (La Carte, 2002; Maoz, 2001) such as occurred in Rwanda and Sierra Leone. Lederach (1997) suggests:

in the immediacy of such localized settings which are highly descriptive of the majority of armed conflicts in the mid-1990s, people seek security in increasingly smaller and narrower identity groups. This, it seems, is why the lines of contemporary armed conflict are increasingly drawn along ethnic, religious, or regional affiliations rather than along ideological or class lines (P.13).

In addition, when intranational wars end, combatants are not separated geographically to the same extent as soldiers who are deployed away from their own

nations to engage in combat on foreign soil. In the former, members of social groups who had established communal relationships through marriage or other social contracts before the war are required after the war to reconcile the dissonance that was created through violence perpetrated against members of these social groups by members of the same or other neighboring groups (Agger, 2001). There may be no reconciliation or peace with the constant presence of the stark reminders of the war – their neighbors or relatives who were responsible for heinous violations of human rights.

Given these dynamics, the question remains, is the model for a culture of peace as defined by UNESCO viable for intranational wars. Specifically, does UNESCO's Program for Action apply equally to nation-states that are experiencing internal strife advanced by external economic forces and manifested in the immediacy of the experience, such as exists in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is a nation-state that has experienced internal war and violence since 1991, precipitated by external economic forces and internal greed for resources and power. The purpose of this article is to examine the conflict in Sierra Leone within the context of UNESCO's Program for Action to ascertain if a sustainable culture of peace could be established with the implementation of the eight areas within the Program for Action (Adams, 2000b).

A Brief History of Sierra Leone

In the 19th century, the region known today as Freetown was a British colony and the remainder of the country was a protectorate. In 1898, following the Hut Tax War, the British, as colonial overlords, and local Chiefs reached a tacit agreement with regard to trade and commerce. An immediate outcome was the building of a railway from Freetown to the Kono district where, in 1927, diamonds and gold were discovered.

The country gained independence in 1963 under the Presidency of Issae Sessay (Sierra Leone People's Party, SLPP).

Corruption and nepotism followed with a string of inept leaders. In 1967, President Saika Stevens organized all the Kono Chiefs, diamond merchants and the international banking system. By 1986, when General Joseph Momoh succeeded Stevens, a system of informal diamond markets had been clandestinely established, circumventing the government. In the post-Cold War era, overseas aid from the West and Russia declined; patrimonialism grew to be more problematic (Nyerges, 2001), and the state government became dysfunctional through corruption; what order existed was maintained through violence.

The Rebel War started in 1991 under the leadership of a dishonorable army Corporal named Foday Sankoh. By the following year, the government of President Momoh was overthrown and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) had taken control of the diamond fields in the Tongo and Kono regions. The RUF had been trained in Libya and backed by Charles Taylor in Liberia. Under protection and control of the RUF, diamonds were smuggled out and weapons smuggled in through Liberia and Guinea. The finances were controlled overtly by predominately Lebanese and corrupt government officials.

The RUF conducted a systematic and successful terror campaign throughout the country. Brutality started almost immediately, targeting civilians. This was followed by two distinct reigns of terror, the first in early 1998 and the second in 1999. The signature atrocity was amputation with reports ranging from 2,000 to 4,000 victims and twice that many deaths resulting from other wound infections. The government, police and military, tainted by corruption and a growing display of incompetence and self-interest, lost the ability to protect the territory and the people (Willow, 2003).

Tejan Kabbah, elected President in February 1996, signed an agreement with the RUF in November of that year but vacillated between negotiations for peace and overt fighting with the RUF. Kabbah employed local 'Kamajoor' irregulars as pro-government auxiliary military; they later formed the Civil Defence Force (CDF), which became the most effective paramilitary force in the country. The regular army resented the 'Kamajoor' and in May 1997, overthrew Kabbah. Major Johnny Paul Koroma of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and later leader of the Peoples Revolutionary Party (PLP) replaced Kabbah as President. But he was overthrown himself by Kabbah in March 1998 who returned with backing from the British military and troops from Nigeria. Kabbah, in retaliation, executed twenty-four key RUF leaders after a brief trial. In January 1999, Kabbah was again forced into exile by the RUF, covertly backed by Liberia.

In response to international pressure, the Government accepted an African peacemaking force recruited from the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the primary forces being Nigerian. In the ensuing eleven months, it was difficult to distinguish between the violence of the RUF and the violence of the ECOWAS force. With less than expected results from ECOWAS, the Government hired mercenaries from the South African-based Executive Outcomes Inc. (EO). "This band of 250 ex-soldiers swept through the country like a plague and advanced without regard to the diamond regions and successfully captured them" (Willow, 2003, p.4). They left shortly thereafter when the Government reneged on their payment. Guinea immediately responded to RUF transgressions into that country with an invasion force into RUF held territory in North West and East Sierra Leone, securing and retaining two major border crossing sites that were used for the illegal trafficking of Sierra Leone diamonds. This occurred despite the fact that Guinea was concurrently contributing a military contingent to the UN Observer Mission (UNOMSIL) force.

The government and the RUF signed the Lome Peace Accord on 7 July 1999, in an attempt to bring stability to the region. This document provided greater power to the RUF than did the 1996 agreement, including the appointment of Foday Sankoh as Vice President and Commissioner of Diamond Resources; three additional RUF members were appointed as Cabinet Ministers. In one of his first official speeches, Sankoh stated openly that he was unwilling to allow UN peacekeepers access to RUF held territory, including the mining region.

The UN responded in 1998 with the deployment of UNOMSIL under Chapter VI of the Charter. Unfortunately, this was a small and impotent force that did not have the resources to protect its own members or influence the combatants. In January 2000, the RUF seized a large quantity of automatic weapons from Guinean UN peacekeepers; Kenyan UN Units were ambushed and, ultimately, surrendered their weapons; and, on 1 May 2000, RUF soldiers took approximately 500 UN peacekeepers hostage and seized

their weapons. This final defiant act terminated the Lome Peace Accord and, on 10 May 2000, Sankoh was captured by anti-RUF government troops. His arrest challenged the provisions of the Accord that granted amnesty for RUF members from prosecution for human rights violations (in return for acceptance of the Accord). UNOMSIL, as a UN peacekeeping mission, collapsed (Willow, 2003).

The trade of diamonds for money to fuel the RUF, and the continuing flow of blood and the images of amputees spurred the UN to once again respond in a growing fear that Sierra Leone could be a mirror image of genocide that had occurred in Rwanda and the Congo. The British unilaterally deployed troops to the region, without UN sanction, securing the Freetown peninsula and the airport at Lungi. This intervention created some stability and allowed the UN to deploy peacekeepers, mainly from African states, under UN Chapter VII with robust rules of engagement.

Peace was declared on 25 January 2002. The RUF was reportedly disbanded and the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF) was created as the political replacement of the RUF (Willow, 2003). In May 2002, elections were held under the scrutiny of the UN with President Kabbah and the SLPP receiving 71 percent of the popular vote and the RUF receiving only 1.7 percent. Foday Sankoh remained in detention while the Peace and Reconciliation Commission was created.

A UN Special Court was established to bring to trial war criminals such as Johnny Paul Koroma, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie. The UN Special Court also allowed the trials to be held under international jurisdiction and thus absolved the Sierra Leone Supreme Court from deciding the fate of these people, and possibly exacerbating the tenuous hold on peace. Sankoh died in prison on 29 July 2003, and his death effectively eliminated the focal point needed for a resurgence of the former RUF as a military entity under his banner.

Sierra Leone is currently facing decisions to deal with a complex and violent history that has been masked by tribal warfare, inter- and intra-state wars, conquest, subjugation, black magic cults, slavery and civil war. By the time the UN deployed peacekeepers in sufficient numbers to establish a semblance of control, the rebels had ruined the entire infrastructure in the country. Roads had been reduced to barely useable tracks; bridges, rail lines, electrical, water, telecommunications, medical and transportation systems had all been destroyed. "The population descended into a state of subsistence living that was regularly and rudely devastated by the RUF forays into their areas" (Willow, 2003, p.3). Approximately 25,000 children, some as young as age 6, were recruited into the RUF and provided with a regular diet of sex, drugs and alcohol to buy loyalty. Other children were employed in the open pit diamond mines. An equal number of Sierra Leoneans had been killed (less than 3,000 by gunfire) and over 1 million displaced, many of whom became refugees in neighbouring countries.

Culture of Peace Program for Action

A culture of peace as a specific concept was described in 1989 at the United Nations conference in Yamoussoukro, Cote d'Ivoire, and subsequently developed by the UNESCO (Adams, 2000b). As an alternative to a culture of war and violence, a culture of peace developed momentum as the means of engaging in war became more lethal and control of weapons of mass destruction slipped from the control of a few into the hands

of many. As lethality increased, there was a transformation in the type of casualties from adult male soldiers (being primarily at risk) to civilians – women, children and the elderly outnumbering military casualties.

The Cold War fuelled the arms race but it also was the motivator for the study of peace. Post World War II, the Council on Peace Research in History was formed in the United States followed by the creation of the International Peace Research Association and the European Working Group on Peace Research in History. Concurrently, UNESCO promoted bilateral communication between European nations that traditionally had held animosities toward each other. UNESCO itself was founded on the premise that education dedicated to learning about peace was a prerequisite to eliminating fear and mistrust that formed the foundation for cultures of war and violence. Education, Avruch (1998) suggests, will increase “awareness of structural inequities and power imbalances” (p. 49).

A culture of peace became more formalized with United Nations General Assembly Resolutions (A/53/243) and the subsequent Program of Action, although not without resistance. Adams (2000b) notes “the states of the European Union took the position that there is no culture of war and violence in the world” (p. 260). Adams submits that resistance was high because, since recorded history, power for these states depended upon a culture of war.

The Seville Statement on a culture of peace was created in 1986 by a team of international scientists who gathered to address the myth that violence is inherent in humans. The Statement was adopted by UNESCO in 1989 and laid the foundation for the culture of peace program (Adams, 1989). Flowing from the Seville Statement, UNESCO identified eight areas that form the framework within a Program of Action (Mayor & Adams, 2000) (Table 1).

Table 1
UNESCO’s Eight Areas within a Program of Action

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Education for a culture of peace ➤ Sustainable economic and social development ➤ Respect for all human rights ➤ Equality between men and women ➤ Democratic Participation ➤ Understanding, tolerance and solidarity ➤ Participatory communications and the free flow of information and knowledge ➤ Internal Peace and security, including disarmament and economic conversion

1. *Culture of Peace through education* – The very concept of power needs to be transformed – from the logic of force and fear to the force of reason and love.
2. *Sustainable economic and social development* – This represents a major change in the concept of economic growth which, in the past, could be

- considered as benefiting from military supremacy and structural violence, and advanced at the expense of the vanquished and the weak.
3. *Respect for all human rights* – The elaboration and international acceptance of universal human rights ... calls for the transformation of values, attitudes and behaviors from those who would benefit exclusively - the clan, the tribe or the nation, toward those that benefit the entire human family.
 4. *Equality between women and men* – Only [the] linkage of equality, development and peace can replace the historical inequity between men and women that has always characterized the Culture of War and Violence.
 5. *Democratic participation* – This is the only way to replace the authoritarian structures of power which were created by and which have, in the past, sustained the Culture of War and Violence.
 6. *Understanding, tolerance and solidarity* – There has never been a war without an ‘enemy’, and to abolish war, we must transcend and supercede enemy images with understanding, tolerance and solidarity among all peoples and cultures.
 7. *Participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge* – [These are] needed to replace the secrecy and manipulation of information which characterize the Culture of War.
 8. *Internal peace and security* – [This incorporates] peace diplomacy, peacekeeping, disarmament and military conversion (Adams, 2000a, p.261).

Perhaps most important to the Program of Action is the assertion that a culture of peace, and a culture of war and violence are mutually exclusive when these eight areas are applied as criteria. Hence, the transformation from a culture of war and violence to a culture of peace encompasses all eight.

Application of the Culture of Peace Program for Action to Sierra Leone

The purpose of this article is to examine the violence in Sierra Leone within the context of UNESCO’s Program for Action to ascertain if a sustainable culture of peace could be established with the implementation of the eight areas within the Program for Action (Adams, 2000b). Although it is clear what a culture of peace would entail, achievement of this end states is less facile. Like the process of creation, implementation may be as arduous a journey. Within a culture of war and violence, “power trumps everything, (including culture)” (Avruch, 1998, p.48); it is the *force majeure*.

Education for a Culture Of Peace

Education for a culture of peace is dependent upon teachers and learners who are able to communicate and assimilate information, knowledge and truth (Paris, 2001). There must be freedom of speech and freedom of hearing, the latter applying to unfettered access to all information. In Sierra Leone, the intelligentsia fled to Europe, North America and other African states when violence erupted out of control. This exodus contributed to the decline of the Government and social fabric of the country, and left the remaining population without an education system. Equally devastating was

Foday Sankoh's decree that education was a privilege for a few and not a right for all. With children forced into the RUF and the diamond mines, or their schools destroyed and their teachers killed, there was no opportunity to attend school had schools been operating. Today, the Sierra Leoneans are marginally capable of contributing to the rebuilding of their country's pedagogical infrastructure, after a decade of virtually no formal education.

Barriers to the education of the youth are many. Religious, social and economic factors and a minimal pedagogical base are all affecting the standard of education in the country. After ten years of no education system, the demands for catch-up has created the immediate need to teach children who have never been in a classroom but who are needed to maintain the family subsistence level of existence. Educators and teaching assistants are few. Most of the intelligentsia of the country fled during the war or were killed or maimed. The resultant caliber and number of educators has fallen to unacceptable levels and aid agencies have been unable to fill the gaps. To address the national lack of education, the government created an abbreviated school curriculum that teaches young adults in four years what they had missed in ten. The result is young adults with only the rudimentary skills necessary to survive. This exacerbates the potential for the growth of dissatisfaction through ethnic, cultural or religious marginalization.

To achieve minimal educational initiatives requires extensive aid to provide the pedagogical tools and resources to create the conditions for success. Currently, school children receive education without books or other materials essential to learning. As well, the school system is plagued by language and tribal biases that further impede success. Education, as currently provided in Sierra Leone, does not meet the needs for development of the youth who only know of violence.

The culture of violence is so ingrained that even the youngest revert to aggression as a means to resolve minor issues. Hence, education in the three Rs must be augmented with social and behavioral modification training in human rights and respect for self and others to establish basic social and interpersonal skills needed to break the extant cycle of violence. This transition of the logic of force to the force of reason and love is not susceptible to a short-term fix but must be considered a long-term initiative to progressively develop respect for individual and collective human rights and dignity.

Sustained Economic and Social Development

Sustained economic and social development requires sound and balanced economic and social strategies. The RUF was not interested in establishing economic or social institutions, or political infrastructures to support them because such organizations would encourage the intelligentsia to return and the populous to gain power and control. The primary objective of the RUF was to maintain control of the diamond mines and control the power for their own personal gain. A culture of war and violence assured their control and profit at the expense of economic and social development.

Current employment initiatives that are aimed at training cobblers, bakers and tailors have not been successful. A nation of people who do not wear shoes, own few clothes and cannot afford bread need to be trained in skills that will allow survivability and some degree of economic wealth. All aid initiatives must take into account the state of development in the entire country not just the situation in the capital city. Basic skills

such as farming, house construction, infrastructure repair and water treatment are fundamental but essential skills needed to create and support the conditions for social and economic development. These skills when enhanced with education improvements empower the populace while limiting the impact of regimes that employ violence to mold the illiterate, poor and disenfranchised into paramilitary and criminal factions.

Social development is critical for the members of the defence force, law enforcement services, and myriad of government departments and offices. Government institutions that allow and encourage corruption and graft as a means of payment, and reduce the requirement for official compensation undermine the democratic process. These institutions are the mirror of the government to the people and, as such, must reflect the compassion and respect for human dignity that will allow the overcoming of the biases that, in turn, prevent integration of the human resources to the benefit of national development. International aid and development agencies and the UN must ensure that government officials are sufficiently trained and motivated to foster and encourage fairness and genuine concern for the betterment of the nation and its institutions.

Respect for Human Rights

Respect for human rights calls for the transformation of values, attitudes and behaviors from those few who benefit exclusively to all humans regardless of status – clan, tribe, or nation. The signature atrocity of the rebels was amputation. The Lome Peace Accord provided amnesty for members of the RUF who committed these human rights violations. Furthermore, some of the combatants and occupying forces of ECOWAS employed as much violence as the RUF and other factions.

The inevitable economic opportunities created by an impotent police service, deprivations caused by the conflict and the potential market of aid workers and foreign troops in the country have created employment opportunities of a less productive nature. Prostitution, crime and trafficking in all natures of contraband and illegal substances have increased dramatically. Anything is for sale and anything can be procured for a price. Crime is rampant and extortion is a common occurrence. The cost of this degradation of societal mores and values is inevitability the loss of respect for human rights and dignity.

Transformation of the values, attitudes and behaviors of the people must be approached concurrently at all levels. Awareness of the problem is as crucial an issue for the contributing nations as it is for the population at large. Willful blindness, ignorance or denial of the issues by humanitarian, and UN forces and agencies fuels the fires and effectively eliminates any possibility of improvement to human rights. Unfortunately, the potential to create individual wealth or attain personal gain remains the catalyst to deny the development of human rights.

Inequity between Men and Women

Inequality between men and women has characterized the culture of war and violence. In Sierra Leonean society, women have been marginalized and employed in traditional sectors; few have gained equal intellectual status in arts, education, literature, philosophy or politics. This has been due, in part, to the British colonial influence of the

late 19th and early 20th centuries that viewed women as secondary to men. During the war, any gains in gender equality that might have been made were abandoned.

Development of a sound and sustainable education system, and improvement of social well being of communities through employment and security are just the first steps needed to change the social and moral values that will facilitate gender equality. One aspect alone will not be effective unless it is applied in concert with the other initiatives that aim to develop respect and self-worth, buffered by sufficient economic and personal security to reduce the need to prosper through the violation of human rights and values that contribute to inequity. Equality between men and women will begin to achieve balance once a values model has been developed and effective and economic security attained.

Democratic Participation

Democratic participation replaces authoritarian structures of power that sustain a culture of war and violence. In general, African states with a culture of violence are not known for their democracies or economic prosperity. In contrast, democratic and capitalist states rarely engage each other in war; however, some would argue that they cause wars through their predatory mercantile behaviors. One of the motivations for the exodus of the intelligentsia was the loss of democratic rights and freedom of speech. Only recently and under the scrutiny of the UN has the semblance of a democratic election returned to Sierra Leone, and only because UN peacekeepers remain has democracy been able to exist in its tenuous state.

The preparations leading up to the first elections held in post-conflict Sierra Leone in May 2002 were fraught with risks despite scrutiny by UN peacekeepers. The population was reluctant to accept the process based on historical abuses. The election of party leaders and the preponderance of political parties (23 parties whittled down to 9, and 1334 candidates) created further confusion for the approximate 2.7 million eligible voters. Surprisingly, the political end state was clear; only three parties gained sufficient percentages of votes to affirm seats, and the ruling party (the Sierra Leone People's Party: SLPP) won 83 of the 112 eligible seats. The development of the democratic system has been able to forge ahead with assistance from the UN that helped in creating conditions that resulted in a clear mandate for the SLPP to govern. One essential aspect of the creation of a stable and *bona fide* government has been the steady inflow of financial and humanitarian aid that has allowed progressive development of political and social initiatives for the benefit of the population.

Understanding, Tolerance and Solidarity

Understanding, tolerance and solidarity transcend and supersede enemy images. After a decade of heinous violations of human rights, an end to the war may be perceived to be unattainable for some. Thousands of amputees and displaced people are a stark reminder of intolerance. Hence, reconciliation that involves understanding, tolerance and solidarity must include change agents and organizations external to Sierra Leone that were not parties to the perfidious violations of human rights and the environment.

A key player in this transition must be the international community. The development of an awareness program coupled with social values training focused on developing the 'hearts and minds' campaign to distance the atrocities from the general population. This social development process must be reinforced and monitored to embed the concepts within the populace. The clear and unambiguous condemnation of the perpetrated atrocities and crimes linked to those who committed them creates a strong sense of repugnance and a reluctance to accept the condition or foster reversion to those methods as an acceptable facet of insurrection. The creation of the Sierra Leone War Crimes Tribunal and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission are two bodies that are proving to be effective in developing a sense of understanding, tolerance and solidarity. In the third year after the end of the conflict, there were significant gains made with the deaths of rebel principles, notably Johnny Paul Koroma, Foday Sankoh and Sam Bockarie, three political and military leaders responsible for leading and committing some of the worst atrocities of the war.

Participatory Communication

Participatory communication replaces secrecy and manipulation of information in a culture of peace. Misinformation, strict control over information and excessive use of propaganda inflamed the situation, and created a deep mistrust in the government and the military, and an inflated (but justified) fear of the pro-government militias and rebel forces. This manipulation of information induced such fear that the population was paralyzed and the military stripped of efficacy to the point where there was little effective resistance to the RUF and some of the more extreme juntas. The military would sway to which ever side promised the most direct (and personal) benefits to the commanders at any level; the government became a corrupt and self-serving institution with no regard for the people it was there to serve.

The UN developed an assertive media campaign supported by effective direct action by deployed troops to improve the lot of the citizens and rekindle a sense of faith in the government. The UNAMSIL radio public affairs branch worked tirelessly with local media outlets, encouraged international aid to rebuild newspaper and radio coverage, and deployed the UNAMSIL radio network to ensure that accurate and timely information was distributed to the population. Exposing the truth as it was happening, providing information on reconstruction and election procedures, and developing a responsive voice to the people effectively began to replace the secrecy and manipulation of information that had been so destructive to the will of the Sierra Leone people.

Internal Peace and Security

Internal peace and security incorporates peace diplomacy, peacekeeping, disarmament and military conversion. However, when surrounded by warring nation-states and inculcated internally by a culture of war and violence, a military defensive presence is needed to assure peace and security. It can be said that every nation has an army, either it's own or someone else's. In the absence of a strong and loyal army, Sierra Leone has been subjected to internal and external invasions and to the whim of less than professional UN forces from less democratic and progressive contributing nations.

Sierra Leone cannot rely on foreign and UN intervention to maintain stability, peace and security. The necessity for a sovereign nation to be responsible to its people for their domestic and international security is essential for its survival. The training of an effective and unbiased national military and police service must be developed in conjunction with social and economic infrastructure remedies. The populace must feel secure and defended from foreign threats, and feel secure within their homes for stabilization to take root and grow. The gradual retraining of the defence and security forces by the United Kingdom and the UN has started to lessen the fear the old regimes instilled; it has also laid the foundation for a more reliable and dedicated national body of defence and security.

The instability of West Africa, in general, and the recent developments in the Ivory Coast and Liberia have negatively affected the peace-building efforts in Sierra Leone. The population has seen and experienced similar events, and has observed cross-national conflicts that indiscriminately shifted without regard for sovereign borders. The Liberian conflict has continued to spill over into southern Sierra Leone since February 2002 and the aggressive response to border incursions by the UN and United Kingdom. Canadian and other military advisors under UN mandates have supported Government forces, thus demonstrating the first inkling of national defence and protection in over twenty years. This is the first stalwart indication that the Sierra Leone culture is transitioning from one of the logic of force and fear to one of reason, love and respect for their country.

Conclusion

Culture is an aggregation of experience, of the Socratic interface between concepts and social habits. Hence, it cannot easily be defined because it has a quality of fuzzy-logic (Avruch, 1998). Culture derives its meaning from art, religion, values, attitudes, beliefs, customs, amongst other social entities and, as such, provides a means of discussion with regard to relationships among individuals within social groups (Goodman, 2002). We interpret culture as socially learned dynamics of physical, emotional, cognitive and spiritual experiences interacting within a systems environment.

Within the context of a culture of war and violence, Hedges (2002) suggests:

war forms its own culture. The rush of battle is a potent and often lethal addiction, for war is a drug ... War exposes the capacity for evil that lurks not far below the surface within all of us. And this is why for many, war is so hard to discuss once it is over. The enduring attraction of war is this: Even with its destruction and carnage it can give us what we long for in life. It can give us purpose, meaning, a reason for living. Only when we are in the midst of conflict does the shallowness and rapidness of much of our lives become apparent. War is an enticing elixir. It gives us resolve, a cause. It allows us to be noble (p.3).

Peace, on the other hand, also has its own culture and the prerequisites for a culture of peace, based upon the eight areas within UNESCO's Program for Action. To bring a culture of peace to fruition requires a level of sophistication in application, acceptance and a level of trust.

Can Sierra Leone achieve a culture of peace as defined by the eight areas within the Program for Action? Such a culture of peace requires concurrent action in all eight areas by the international community and the Sierra Leoneans. Sierra Leone does not appear to have endorsed or adopted UNESCO's eight areas. Perhaps more importantly, there is no indication that they are actively working toward a culture of peace as defined by Adams (2000a). What they may be experiencing is a cessation of war and violence *vice* hot peace (Sandy & Perkins, 2002).

Education for a culture of peace has been superceded with a culture of war and violence for the current generation of children and young adults. Although initiatives have been taken with the abridged four-year program, it will take the return of the intelligentsia and a full generation of a comprehensive pedagogical program coupled with behavior modification programs and trauma counseling for both victims and perpetrators before education for a culture of peace can be achieved. The intelligentsia is needed to champion the culture of peace; time will tell whether they return to lead this cause. Specifically, there is a dire need for education and support for the disabled amputees. The potential for success is tenuous given regional conflicts in West Africa.

Sierra Leone has resources to fund sustainable economic and social development. However, the mercantile trade behavior of foreign nations that continue to operate with conceptual colonial constructs in consort with diamond dealers and resource robbers hampers development. Economic and social development cannot succeed if it is predicated upon the trade of diamonds for weapons or prostitution and other vices, as currently exist. Azar and Burton (1986) suggest "one of the most devastating predicaments in the world today is the simultaneous occurrence of conflict and underdevelopment. These two processes feed on each other and make it difficult for societies to overcome either condition alone" (p.39). Economic and social development can provide freedom from want and dependence on others; the *sine qua non* is the freedom from fear that exists when sustainable economic and social development is present. Unfortunately, this freedom has not yet been realized.

Res Ipsa Loquitur – the facts speak for themselves; respect for human rights is violated by the very nature of a culture of war and violence, and Sierra Leone is no exception. Respect for all human rights "calls for a transformation of values, attitudes and behaviors" (United Nations Declaration A/53/370 as cited in (Adams, 2000b, p. 261). In a country that has witnessed heinous violations of human rights, transformation will only be forthcoming with reconciliation. However, such a favorable outcome may be tenuous at best. Hatreds have been held and wars have been fought over violations of human rights in previous generations, the Balkans being a prime example. A generation of Sierra Leoneans can learn the mechanics of human rights but only history will tell if they can follow through with praxis.

Women comprise approximately fifty percent of Sierra Leone's population, yet they do not share equality with males and have been denied many fundamental human rights. de la Rey (2000) submits that "gender as a locus of power differences is often not given sufficient attention in our analyses of major social issues" (p.219). Women's

participation in economic, social, political and commerce professions in Sierra Leone has been constricted by biases and learned colonial behaviors; they have also been parties to some acts of aggression and violence. Addressing the latter, de la Rey postulates that “although there is evidence that women are less likely than men to initiate and perpetrate violence, there is also evidence that women are just as likely as men to uphold, perpetrate, and collude in systems of oppression” (p.219). This may suggest that the women to whom de la Rey refers may also need to gain an enlightened appreciation for equality in relation to human rights.

Adams (2000a) postulates that an effective democratic process "enables a state and its citizens to resolve contradictions without recourse to violence. In fact, it can be argued that if democracy succeeds, internal military interventions become unnecessary and anachronistic" (p.3). In the region of West Africa, torn apart by war and violence, true democracy as espoused by Adams may not be within immediate grasp. Currently, there is not a critical mass of people with the power and authority to achieve a culture of peace. Few African countries are true democratic states – most are dictatorships under the guise of democratically elected governments. Full democracy and prosperity for Sierra Leone are not likely because of its own history of violence intractably tied to the violence of the region; a more viable solution, in the short-term, will be a protectorate status under the U.N.

Understanding tolerance and solidarity is the basis of respect, and “the construct of ‘solidarity’ is less problematic when tightly linked to the promotion of tolerance, which implies ‘intergroup solidarity’” (Christie & Dawes, 2001, p.132). In a region like Sierra Leone where historical and mythical tribal hatreds are woven into the fabric of the culture, understanding and tolerance is one of the greatest challenges for sustainable peace. Tolerance and solidarity are threatened when individuals associate with members of in-group and exclude members of out-group (Druckman, 2001; Searle-White, 2001). The tribal system is built on this concept of in-groups and out-groups. Hence, solidarity has not been a part of the culture. Significant change in attitude, values and behaviors must occur before a culture of peace can exist.

One of the first casualties of war is the truth. In Sierra Leone, the control of information permitted secrecy and propaganda, and the labeling of the perceived enemy. This was effectively countered with the UN communications strategy. Of the eight areas within the Program for Action, participatory communication and the free flow of information and knowledge may be the easiest to implement and may be the flagship for the transition toward a culture of peace.

Peace and security are not just the absence of war but involve “the search for positive conditions which can resolve the underlying causes of conflict that produce violence” (Woolman, 1985, p.8). Peace and security are states of well-being that individuals and, hence, nations create and experience. These states can only occur when there is freedom from fear that exists when sustainable economic and social development are repressed. Through reconciliation, the seeds of peace and security can be sown.

Peace by forceful means may have to be employed by the UN before peace by peaceful means can achieve long-term prosperity. This should not include negotiated peace settlements that tend to only prolong civil war. History demonstrates that approximately 75% of civil wars end when one side wins over the other. Of the 25% settled through negotiation, 50% return to war.

Diplomatic peacekeeping through negotiations is a form of negative peace because it does not focus on peace-building. Hence, the Lome Peace Accord between the Government and the RUF was a negative peace initiative that failed. Likewise, Chapter VI UN missions were negative peace initiatives that failed because they were based upon negotiations and lacked the peace-building (positive peace) focus and enforceable mandate.

Sustainable peace in Sierra Leone will be a test case for the UN and the international community. Failure on the part of the UN could result in Sierra Leone imploding with short-term battlefield negotiated solutions. An end to war will require a global will on the part of the UN as espoused in the Program for Action culture of peace.

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