Occasional Paper #20

HUMANITARIAN ACTION AND SECURITY IN LIBERIA
1989–1994

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in collaboration with
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CONTENTS

"It will be seen that Liberian politics are complicated."

Graham Greene, *Journey Without Maps*, 1936

The Liberian civil war, now entering its sixth year, raises two crucial issues for the international community. First, what can be learned about regional initiatives to address problems in war–related humanitarian crises? Second, how can tensions between political–security and humanitarian objectives best be managed?

This paper explores these issues in a case study by the Humanitarianism and War Project at the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies. The idea for the study was suggested in October 1993 by a UN official involved in humanitarian activities and familiar with the work of the project in other conflicts.

The analysis reflects research by a consultant, Colin Scott, who served as a project officer in Liberia for Save the Children–UK from 1991 to 1992. Some of the data resulted from interviews he conducted as part of earlier work for the Center for the Study of Global Governance and Save the Children (January 1994) and is incorporated here with their permission. On a trip to West Africa in April and May 1994 under the auspices of the Humanitarianism and War Project, he conducted another round of interviews that provided additional data and more current perspectives.

Adopting a procedure that has worked well with some of our other project publications in the past, this document was shared for comment in draft form with politicians and workers, military experts, and academics with expertise in the Liberian crisis. The draft report was also the subject of a consultation held in Brussels on November 17–18, 1994.

The meeting was hosted by the project and the Center for Research on the Epidemiology of Disasters of the University of Louvain in Belgium. It was made possible by special grants from the European Community Humanitarian Office (ECHO), the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the United Kingdom, and the Humanitarian Programmes Office of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). Conference costs were also underwritten by the funders of the Humanitarianism and War Project, identified in Annex IV. We would like to express our gratitude to all who made the

meeting possible.

Views expressed by the eminent group that gathered in Brussels (Annex III provides a list of participants) proved very helpful to us in refining the text. Particularly clarifying for us was former Liberian President Amos Sawyer's observation that our approach as presented seemed designed to "create an autonomous realm [of humanitarian activity] unrelated to the political-military [context] within which the humanitarian problem is to be nested and attended." He urged us to focus more on the dynamic interplay among these various factors, "charting out the labyrinth through which the humanitarian issues have to be considered."

His concern was legitimate. As we hope the study now makes clear, we do not visualize two completely distinct sets of institutions—humanitarian and security—living in entirely separate worlds. Nor do we hold that humanitarian institutions, left to their devices and free of political interference, could have solved the Liberian crisis single–handedly. However, a careful analytical review of humanitarian and security institutions, and of their interplay, is instructive both for future operations in Liberia and for complex crises elsewhere.

The Brussels consultation served a broader purpose as well. We originally had planned to hold the gathering in West Africa in June 1994, postponing the meeting until November, only when the security situation in the region became too volatile. As things turned out, the meeting preceded by a weekend the launching of a session in Accra by President Jerry Rawlings of Ghana designed to press the Liberian factions to agree on arrangements for the demobilization of forces and the transition to elections.

The session in Brussels involved some of the same participants as in the Accra meetings and served as an informal run–up that reviewed events and identified lessons to be learned in charting Liberia's future course. It advanced the basic purpose of our project as a whole: to review humanitarian activities and to frame policy options for decisionmakers and practitioners.

Readers will need to judge for themselves whether we have succeeded in charting the labyrinth that humanitarian interests must navigate in order to assist and protect effectively civilian populations caught in war zones. We have tried

to identify the various strategies pursued by humanitarian organizations—both UN organizations and private relief groups—to gain and maintain access to civilians during four somewhat distinct periods.

However, because of the changing political and military conditioning—and, as they have deteriorated, the numbers of persons in need and of factions to be reckoned with has expanded—we have found difficulty in reaching broad or blanket conclusions regarding what strategies have worked best, and why. Lessons to be learned, it seems, pertain to specific situations and need to be tailored to particular actors confronting particular obstacles in particular phases of conflicts.

We also have reviewed the positive and negative contributions of those institutions with mandates for maintaining security. These include the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the United Nations through the Special Representative of the Secretary–General and the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL).

As our findings demonstrate, there have been serious tensions throughout the civil war between ECOMOG and the United Nations, and between each of them and various humanitarian organizations. In fact, the Liberian situation was somewhat unique—and uniquely problematic—in that unlike many recent UN multifunctional operations, the UN provided only unarmed military observers (and these only late in the day) whereas others provided armed military personnel. Many observers hope that the Liberian experience also will prove unique in the bombing by regional peacekeeping troops of UN and NGO humanitarian activities and in the banning of cross–border aid to needy civilians by the ranking representative of the UN Secretary–General.

Readers are advised to keep in mind the idiosyncrasies of the Liberian experience, many elements of which are unlikely to be repeated in other settings. It would be highly questionable to write largely for wholesale replication around the world the lessons identified from Liberia's civil war.

Nevertheless, readers also will want to be attentive to issues identified in Liberia that recur in other conflict settings. The nature and the mechanisms of accountability of regional

peacekeeping initiatives are salient issues, not just in West Africa but also wherever the UN Security Council blesses such undertakings. Recent initiatives by Russia in Georgia, the United States in Haiti, and France in Rwanda come to mind.

We would like to convey our thanks to Colin Scott for his research and writing, his openness to suggestions, and his attentiveness to detail. We also acknowledge with thanks the contributions of all those involved in the research, formulation, and publication of this document. From start to finish, the process has been one from which our project has benefited greatly. The authors are entirely responsible for any errors of fact or judgment.

As always, we encourage comments and reactions from our readers.

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April 3, 1995

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Liberian civil war has severely tested the ability of the international community to maintain humanitarian operations while promoting peace and security. Against the backdrop of fluctuating international interest, Liberia's multifactional conflict, based as much on material gain as on political objectives, has thwarted peace efforts and frustrated the best efforts of humanitarian agencies.

The political and security context has been marked by a regional military intervention through the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). Internationally supported, this regional initiative has improved the conditions of the affected civilian population, at least in the short term. It also has been viewed as a model that should encourage other regions and countries directly affected by major destabilizing emergencies to mount their own problem–solving initiatives.

Yet the ECOWAS undertaking also has raised serious issues of legitimacy, neutrality, and effectiveness. With political factors eventually embroiling the ECOWAS Monitoring Group in the conflict, the question arises as to whether a United Nations intervention force—had the international community been disposed to create one—might have produced a better long–term outcome. Instead, the United Nations, venturing into the political–security scene late in the day, widened its involvement from a humanitarian–led role to a political–diplomatic initiative without bringing about lasting improvements in either sphere.

The present study focuses on two policy issues. The first concerns relationships between regional and multilateral institutions. The troubled division of labor between the two reflected different points of entry into the crisis: for ECOWAS, a peace and security operation and, for the United Nations, a humanitarian initiative. The second issue concerns the management of tensions between political–security and humanitarian objectives, particularly within the UN system and the NGO community.

With the Liberian civil war continuing into 1995, this study, which reviews the first five years of the crisis, risks being overtaken by late-breaking events. Analyzing develop

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ments at this critical stage, however, may inform operations both in the region and beyond. Indeed, the international community is confronting elsewhere the issues so starkly framed in Liberia between regional and multilateral institutions and between security and humanitarian action.

ECOMOG stepped into a political vacuum. Its intervention has not maintained a neutral stance, shifting instead between peacekeeping and peace enforcement. Order restored and maintained by ECOMOG has come at serious cost to United Nations humanitarian operations, particularly in areas of Liberia not controlled by the government.

United Nations humanitarian operations themselves, begun in March 1990, three months after the onset of hostilities, were a qualified success. But the initial UN response to the crisis was slow. Its humanitarian personnel departed from the country in May 1990 for security reasons, only to return in November 1990. Reestablishing a presence, the UN failed to make adequate arrangements to facilitate work behind rebel lines by its own or associated agencies.

Because it based and concentrated operations in the Liberian capital, the UN's humanitarian presence contributed to the perception of political partiality toward ECOMOG and the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU). The focus on Monrovia also jeopardized a neutral United Nations humanitarian role vis–à–vis the main rebel faction, the National Patriotic Front for Liberia (NPFL). However, UN humanitarian coordination withstood the test of renewed fighting in Monrovia during October 1992. In 1993, the suspension by ECOMOG of cross–border humanitarian aid from Côte d'Ivoire to areas held by the NPFL was backed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to safeguard peace negotiations. This was a direct result of the UN's heightened political profile and involvement in regional politics.

The international donor community, principally the United States and the European Union, chose to respond to the war and attendant human suffering through humanitarian aid rather than diplomacy. While Western states' strategic and economic interests in Liberia have diminished, their presence and funding remain crucial to easing suffering, contributing to reconciliation, and setting the framework for reconstruction

when the Liberians are ready to make peace.

International and local NGOs, including religious groups, have played a vital role in humanitarian operations. The United Nations coordination network improved their efficiency in IGNU areas but created difficulties for them elsewhere. NGOs have struggled to maintain humanitarian access throughout the country to offset the absence of the UN's own programs. This absence was largely due to insecurity. Although the numbers of agencies and scale of operations, there have been disproportionately small compared to those in Monrovia.

In broader terms, the process of disarming the warring parties, establishing a transitional government, and preparing for elections as provided for in the peace agreement, which was signed in July 1993 in Cotonou, Benin, has been painfully slow. Meager disarmament, continued fighting, delay over government representation, and ever–emerging factions all suggest that the power struggle is likely to continue to frustrate the peace process. The deployment of a United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and of a larger and more multinational ECOMOG have been positive developments but with modest impact to date. The recent reduction of Nigerian troops, positive for reasons to be examined, is more a result of frustration than reform.

Reviewing five years of humanitarian efforts against the political–security backdrop, this study groups such activities into four broad periods.

- From December 1989 to August 1990, as the NPFL rebellion spread across Liberia, conditions for civilians rapidly deteriorated. The political and humanitarian response from the international community was limited.
- From August 1990 through October 1992, UN humanitarian operations were independent of ECOMOG and represented virtually the sole form of United Nations involvement in Liberia. During this period of relative autonomy, humanitarian operations were a qualified success.
- Beginning with the appointment of a Special Representative of the UN Secretary–General (SRSG) in November 1992, UN humanitarian operations were subsumed under

a political initiative mounted in partnership with ECOWAS. Aid efforts experienced considerable political entanglement.

- Since July 1993, United Nations humanitarian activities have been lodged firmly within a multifaceted UN and ECOMOG presence. During this period, aid efforts have been eclipsed largely by political considerations and, without clear direction, have been frustrated.

Over time, humanitarian operations have experienced increasing difficulties in remaining independent of political interference. The lack of a clear and concerted strategy has facilitated intrusion into aid activities rather than resisted it. Aid agencies have been torn between a desire to insulate themselves from the political process and a desire to make a direct contribution to peace. As a result, a strategy that could be embraced by all UN humanitarian organizations, to say nothing of the wider humanitarian community, has proved elusive.

The UN Security Council warned in early 1994 that the patience and resources of the international community vis-à-vis Liberia were wearing thin. Neither UNOMIL nor ECOMOG is assured of continued funding. ECOMOG has been able to prevent the kind of slaughter seen in Rwanda, with a few infamous exceptions, and has helped contain the conflict largely within Liberia, although there are renewed signs of its spread to Sierra Leone. On the humanitarian side, international access remains restricted and vulnerable as insecurity has been worsened by factional splintering.

Looking to the future, the study concludes that security structures need reform. For the time being, regional politics are best left to ECOWAS, although the regional body should have a political representative based in Liberia to increase its transparency and international accountability. Reform of the security structure—especially better integration with UNOMIL—will enhance the neutrality and accountability of ECOMOG, and, if funding continues, improve the chances of preventing a wider regional and humanitarian catastrophe.

At the same time, a fundamental rethinking of the United Nations presence is required. Its direct contributions on the

political side are likely to remain modest because the fate of the peace process rests primarily with the Liberian factions and regional actors. Nevertheless, political considerations have eclipsed humanitarian operations that, if given greater support, could not only do more to ease suffering and but also yield some political dividends.

The Liberian experience has not revealed any clear formula for the joint management of security and humanitarian operations, either between regional and global institutions or within the United Nations itself. A review of the past five years, however, suggests that humanitarian mandates, insulated to the maximum extent from political intrusions and carried out by skilled humanitarian professionals, can make a difference.

ADB   African Development Bank

AFL   Armed Forces of Liberia—the remnants of President Doe's army, loosely part of the anti–NPFL alliance but with a reputation for lawlessness. Some AFL elements resurfaced in other groupings such as ULIMO and the LPC.

CRS   Catholic Relief Services—a U.S. NGO and main provider of food aid and other relief throughout the crisis.

EC   European Community, now the European Union (EU)

ECOWAS   Economic Community of West African States

ECOMOG   The ECOWAS cease–fire Monitoring Group—comprised largely of Nigerian forces, with smaller contingents from Ghana and other West African states. Led by a Nigerian commander since October 1990, ECOMOG was widened in 1994 with the addition of forces from Uganda and Tanzania.

IGNU   Interim Government of National Unity—created in 1990 by ECOWAS and headed by Amos Sawyer, IGNU never controlled more than "Greater Monrovia" under the protection of ECOMOG. IGNU was replaced in 1994 by a transitional government, the LNTG.

LNTG   Liberian National Transitional Government—created by the Cotonou peace agreement but not established in practice until March 1994.

LPC   Liberian Peace Council—a Krahn faction emerging after the Cotonou agreement in the east of Liberia and not a signatory to the agreement.

LWS   Lutheran World Service—an international NGO providing emergency and rehabilitation aid in the crisis since October 1990.

MSF   Médecins sans Frontières (Doctors without Borders)—the largest NGO international engaged in relief activities, led by its Belgian contingent, MSF(B), and supplemented by MSF France and Holland.

NPFL   National Patriotic Front for Liberia—the main contestant for power in Liberia, headed by Charles Taylor. Its forces held most of Liberia outside Monrovia until 1992, but since then lost ground to other factions. Its provisional government was the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly (NPRA). The breakaway Independent NPFL (INPFL) was a contender for power only during 1990.

OAU   Organization of African Unity

SCF (UK)   Save the Children Fund (UK) active in Liberia since 1991.

Swederelief A joint Nordic initiative to set up a field hospital in Monrovia.

ULIMO   The United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia—created from remnants of AFL forces and largely Mandingo and Krahn, this anti–NPFL force became a late but influential player in the crisis. Invading from Sierra Leone in 1992, ULIMO captured much territory in the west of Liberia and became a key player in the peace pacts. Intra–ULIMO ethnic disputes led in 1994 to the creation of the LPC.

UNDP   United Nations Development Programme—formed the hub of UN operations on their return

to Monrovia in late 1990, providing the base and resources for UNSCOL.

UNDRO   United Nations Disaster Relief Office—active in Liberia from February to June 1990. Subsequently folded into the new Department of Humanitarian Affairs upon its creation in April 1992.

UNHCR   United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. Active primarily in neighboring countries, although prepared to assist the return of Liberian refugees when circumstances permit.

UNICEF   United Nations Children's Fund—the largest operational UN humanitarian agency in Liberia, working in health, social welfare, and water sectors.

UNOMIL   United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia—established in September 1993 to monitor and verify the implementation of the Cotonou peace accord.

UNSCOL   UN Special Coordinating Office for Liberia—created in July 1990. It facilitated the UN relief program and coordinated operations of WFP, UNICEF, WHO, and UNHCR.

WFP   UN World Food Programme—coordinating all food aid since the return of the UN in November 1990.

WHO   The United Nations World Health Organization.

Cross–border aid	Direct assistance to areas outside of the ECOMOG security zone from neighboring countries.
Cross–line aid	Assistance from within the ECOMOG security zone to areas beyond it.
ECOMOG security zone	The shifting area under ECOMOG control, by late 1994 a triangle formed by Monrovia, Kakata, and Buchanan.
Greater Monrovia	The area administered by IGNU and LNTG under the protection of ECOMOG.
Greater Liberia	Liberia beyond the ECOMOG security zone.

A Chronology of Major Political Landmarks

July 1847	Liberia becomes an independent republic.
May 1975	Liberia is one of the fifteen founding members of ECOWAS.
April 1980	Samuel Doe leads military coup ending 150 years of Americo-Liberian domination.
November 1986	Doe brutally puts down last of three coup attempts.
December 1989	National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) commences rebellion in northern Liberia.
July 1990	Reaching Monrovia, NPFL demands Doe resignation but breakaway INPFL controls the capital.
August 1990	ECOMOG force of 3,500 West African troops arrives in Monrovia.
September 1990	Doe captured and killed by INPFL.
October 1990	ECOMOG pushes NPFL out of Monrovia area.
November 1990	Amos Sawyer installed as president of the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU).
March 1991	NPFL walks out of first all-Liberia peace conference.
June 1991	Yamoussoukro (Côte d'Ivoire) peace talks commence. ULIMO begins operations against NPFL.
October 1992	NPFL launches new attack on Monrovia, repulsed by ECOMOG.

November 1992 UN Secretary-General appoints Special Representative to Liberia.

July 1993 A new peace agreement signed in Cotonou (Benin), but disarmament fails amid increased factional fighting. UNOMIL created and deployed.

March 1994 Sawyer resigns as head of IGNU, which is replaced by the Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG).

September 1994 Fresh peace process started in Akosombo (Ghana) under the auspices of President Rawlings.

December 1994 Peace agreement signed in Accra, but talks break up in January 1995 over the issue of membership of factions in the LNTG.
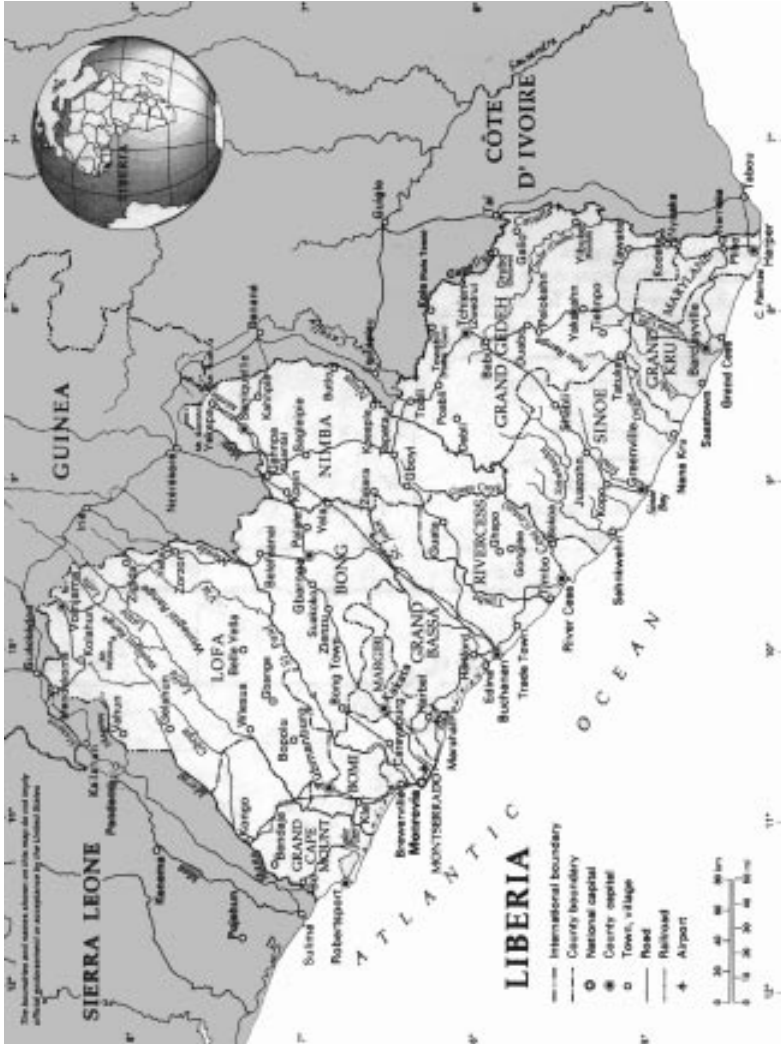
Source: Map No. 3775 Rev. 1 United Nations August 1993

HISTORICAL AND POLITICAL BACKGROUND

The recent conflict in Liberia has posed severe problems both for humanitarian agencies committed to saving lives and safeguarding human rights and for politicians intent on securing regional peace. Tensions have arisen in policy and practice, testing to the limit the ability of the international community to promote peace and security while improving humanitarian conditions.

For the international system the essential challenge of the Liberian crisis has been, as in the case of Somalia, the specter of the failed state set against recently heightened expectations of external action. Liberia stands out in this category of disintegrating states demanding action in that its crisis provoked regional military intervention. This study analyzes the adequacy of humanitarian action in the contexts provided by political and military factors within the region and internationally by the post-Cold War era. It is not intended to be a comprehensive analysis of the Liberian crisis.

Although intervention is a controversial concept in international society, it is nothing new in Liberia. The creation of the nation in the early nineteenth century was a bizarre act of outside interference: the resettling of freed U.S. slaves often in the face of hostility from local inhabitants. The resulting Americo-Liberian elite ruled the country for the next 150 years by dominating and exploiting the indigenous people. In the 1920s the League of Nations, with uncharacteristic tenacity, investigated and condemned Liberia's shipping of forced labor to Fernando Po, causing the Liberian president to resign. Throughout the 1980s, U.S. foreign aid was primarily responsible for the survival of Samuel Doe's violent, minority-based regime in the face of repeated insurrections and other challenges.

When Charles Taylor's NPFL troops opened their revolutionary offensive in Nimba County on Christmas Eve 1989, regional involvement was assured. There were aspects of the conflict that could be traced back to the artificial origins of the state and to tensions between external-coastal and indigenous

groupings. However, various allegiances with West African governments, arms and other support to the NPFL across the Ivorian border, and the flow of Liberian refugees into neighboring countries meant that the conflict would have immediate regional and international dimensions.

Historic internal, tribal, and political divisions have been greatly exacerbated by the continuing struggle for power. Factional violence, based as much on revenge as ambition, simmers and periodically erupts.[1] Wholesale profiteering and looting have been key factors in the continuation of the war. Failed attempts to reach a political solution and to rebuild civil society have restricted or halted humanitarian operations. Maintaining the neutrality of aid has become harder for both the United Nations and NGOs in a theater where many local actors assert and contest sovereignty.

Although accurate figures are unavailable, the human suffering among Liberia's 2.6 million population has been widespread. The UN reports at least 150,000 war-related casualties, the overwhelming majority of them civilians. In addition, at least 700,000 people fled to neighboring countries and 500,000 were displaced within Liberia, most of whom still await resettlement. Social services, especially health and education, "suffered monumental deterioration." As a result, the UN concludes, "Liberia will continue to depend on the relief and humanitarian efforts of private institutions and the international community for the foreseeable future."[2]

In a series of reports to the UN Security Council, the Secretary-General has noted the repeated and widespread disruption of humanitarian assistance, but at the same time has stressed the "paramount importance" of a political settlement.[3] During the five years of the Liberian crisis, there have been both cooperation and tension between security and humanitarian operations. This paper reviews the response of the international, regional, and local communities to these problems, particularly the effects of the regional intervention on humanitarian assistance.

Two major and related policy issues are highlighted in this analysis:

1. The effectiveness of the relationship between regional and universal institutions, with the point of entry for ECOWAS

being a peace and security initiative and for the UN a humanitarian initiative.

2. The management of the tension between political-security and humanitarian objectives, particularly within the UN system.

The Political-Security Framework

Although this study does not provide a comprehensive analysis of the political-security institutions involved, these institutions require attention since they provide the framework for humanitarian operations.[4] During the early phases of the crisis, Liberia was essentially a partitioned state. The ECOWAS cease-fire monitoring force, ECOMOG, provided a security zone that spread out from Monrovia, within which the Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) could operate. Outside the zone, Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and its civilian counterpart, the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly, provided an alternative government for the bulk of "Greater Liberia."

Following the build-up and invasion of forces belonging to the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) in western Liberia during 1991-1992, the security picture became increasingly fragmented, with splintering factional groups disputing ever-changing territorial control. By late 1994, the conflict remained as volatile and unpredictable as ever. Additional details are provided in the chronology in Annex I.

To put humanitarian activities into their security context, we identify the following four security phases:

Phase I: December 1989-August 1990
Covers a period of rapidly deteriorating security as rebel forces closed in on Monrovia, ending with the ECOMOG intervention that prevented Taylor's NPFL from taking the capital city.

Phase II: August 1990-October 1992
Covers the time from ECOMOG's establishment of a limited security zone—which prevented NPFL forces from occu-

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pying the entire country but did not reduce their influence—
to the renewed NPFL assault on Monrovia that ECOMOG
repelled.

Phase III: November 1992-July 1993

Covers a period from the appointment of the Special
Representative of the Secretary-General (SRSG), signaling a
higher UN political profile, to the Cotonou peace agreement.
In this phase of increasing anarchy and factionalization,
ECOMOG showed a readiness to shift from peacekeeping to
peace enforcement.

Phase IV: August 1993-December 1994

Covers a period from the Cotonou agreement to renewed
talks in Ghana. The Cotonou agreement provided a continued
security role for ECOMOG alongside a newly created UN
monitoring force, UNOMIL. It also supported disarmament, a
multifactional transitional government, and a peaceful con-
text for elections. Lack of progress resulted in the reduction by
the end of 1994 of both ECOMOG and UNOMIL. Following
renewed talks in Ghana, a cease-fire was signed in Accra in
December, but negotiations on factional representation in the
LNTG broke down in January 1995 followed by riots in
Monrovia.

As detailed in Chapter 2, both the objectives and the
membership of ECOMOG have varied throughout these dif-
ferent phases. The Nigerian domination of the force has re-
mained constant both in size (by February 1993, it was supply-
ing 8,000 of the 11,500 troops and over 50 percent of the
officers) and in providing every field commander in Liberia
(except the first). All of these commanders have exercised
considerable autonomy.[5] Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra Leone,
and more recently Mali and Senegal have provided much
smaller contingents. In 1994, Tanzania and Uganda contrib-
uted troops to lend a pan-African nature to the operation.
Significantly, Côte d'Ivoire, accused of supporting the
NPFL faction, has never provided troops. Despite Nigerian
leadership, U.S. funding has been critical to the continuation
of ECOMOG since 1991. The annual cost of the current opera-

tion is estimated at $60-80 million, although throughout 1994, Nigeria reduced the size of ECOMOG and threatened to pull out completely. According to some reports, the force was down to 6,000 troops by the year's end.

Humanitarian Operations: An Overview

The composition, operational objectives, and coordination of humanitarian activities also have varied across the four phases of the conflict, as described in Chapter 2. All three families of humanitarian agencies—the UN, the NGOs, and the ICRC—have been involved from the start of hostilities. Although rehabilitation objectives were added to relief programs as early as 1991, activities generally have been circumscribed by the continuing fluctuation of security conditions. The eight progress reports thus far presented to the UN Security Council by the Secretary-General provide a detailed account. [6]

Although small (approximately the size of the state of Virginia), Liberia depends universally and comprehensively on humanitarian aid. The latest figures indicate 1.5 million people requiring food distribution, 400,000 of whom remain inaccessible. Of the 1.1 million receiving aid, 800,000 are registered as displaced, while the remaining 700,000 of the original population survive as refugees in neighboring states awaiting repatriation. The United Nations estimates that in 1994 70 percent of food needs (12,000 metric tons per month) have been met by UN agencies, NGOs, and the ICRC.

Some guide to overall cost is given by the UN consolidated appeal for November 1993 to December 1994, which requested $163 million for food aid and a further $121 million for other relief and rehabilitation measures. Although the UN has received only a fraction of this amount, total donor aid amounts to more than $100 million annually. In providing these services, humanitarian organizations of every sort have collaborated closely. Over fifty external NGOs have been operational in some periods. In some sectors, for example food aid, NGOs have acted as implementing partners of UN agencies. In other sectors such as health, objectives have been sufficiently common to encourage more informal cooperation. In either case,

both external and local NGOs have assertively guarded their independence from the United Nations and other institutions, especially since 1992.

Humanitarian activities have been conducted in the following main sectors, in a coordination structure supported by UNDP:

Food Aid

This has been coordinated by the UN World Food Programme with the operational assistance of both local NGOs like SELF and external NGOs such as Catholic Relief Services and Lutheran World Service, as well as the ICRC. Widespread distribution in Monrovia and NPFL territories has successfully maintained populations through critical periods.

Health Services

These have been provided by a consortium of agencies including UNICEF, WHO, MSF (Belgium, Holland, and France), GOAL (Ireland), and SCF(UK). Urban and, to a lesser extent, rural populations have benefited from the support of external agencies, rebuilding and maintaining a totally shattered infrastructure.

Water, Sanitation, and Power

ICRC, UNICEF, and WHO have been the lead agencies. Again, a destroyed infrastructure has depended on external agencies for repair and maintenance. This was crucial in Monrovia where around one million Liberians have taken refuge.

Education and Children in Difficult Circumstances

UNICEF, MSF(B), SCF(UK), and some smaller NGOs have concentrated on the needs of orphaned or abandoned children, many of whom have been affected by witnessing or carrying out violent acts.

CHAPTER 2:

HUMANITARIAN-SECURITY INTERACTION 1989-1994

Operational Phases

This chapter traces the relations between security operations and humanitarian activities across the four political-security phases. Each phase is reviewed with reference to the main actors: on the political-security side, ECOWAS and the UN system; and on the humanitarian side, UN agencies, major donors, ICRC, and NGOs. From a humanitarian perspective, the four phases are characterized as follows:

Phase I: December 1989-August 1990
Deteriorating Security with Diminishing
Humanitarian Operations

This phase covers the beginning of the NPFL revolt to the ECOMOG intervention. During this period, humanitarian operations were limited by worsening security and the actors finally were forced to leave the country. Their return was tentative and lagged behind the security intervention.

Phase II: August 1990-October 1992
Regional Security Intervention with Independent UN
Humanitarian Operations

During this period, from the gradual resumption of aid operations to the NPFL offensive on Monrovia, humanitarian operations enjoyed relative autonomy but limited geographical reach.

Phase III: November 1992-July 1993
Regional Security Operation in Partnership with UN Political
Initiative but a Secondary Humanitarian Operation

This period includes the appointment of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General to the Cotonou peace agreement. Humanitarian operations were frustrated by political interference from ECOMOG and the UN and by harassment from the factions.

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Phase IV: August 1993-December 1994
Regional Security Operation in Partnership with an Expanded
UN Diplomatic Role and Monitoring Presence, but Directionless
Humanitarian Aid

This phase includes the deployment of UNOMIL and a widened ECOMOG to assist disarmament and the creation of conditions conductive to a transitional government holding elections in September 1994. During this period, humanitarian operations were eclipsed by politics and suffered from continuing insecurity, unclear or multiple leadership, and mixed and incompatible objectives. All aid to the areas controlled by factions was suspended in October 1994, pending improvements in security.

Regional Perspectives: Matching Security and Humanitarian Needs

Phase I: December 1989-August 1990
An Obscure Crisis and a Regional Response

The NPFL advance on Monrovia throughout 1990 received little attention from an international community preoccupied with the fall of the Berlin Wall, radical changes in Eastern Europe, and the looming crisis in the Gulf. Despite Liberian pleas, neither the United Nations nor the United States responded, although the latter had about 2,000 troops offshore.

Sparse and sporadic international media coverage did little to change international disinterest. There was occasional international television coverage of individual incidents: for example, of the slaughter of 600 civilians in a Monrovia church in July 1990. However, major developments (including the battle for Monrovia in the summer of 1990) were upstaged by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August, the ensuing economic sanctions imposed by the Security Council, and, after the turn of the year, the attack on Iraq—the first enforcement action under Chapter VII of the UN Charter in 40 years.

Media coverage, which was limited largely to radio, particularly the BBC World Service and a small group of reporters in Abidjan, generated little additional pressure on the international community to respond. The Liberian conflict was re-

ported as a "lower order, weird African war," said an NGO press officer. With world attention directed elsewhere, ECOWAS was left to take the political initiative to deal with the perceived threat to regional peace.

After a diplomatic approach rejected by Charles Taylor as one-sided, ECOWAS set up ECOMOG in August 1990. Its formal mandate was to keep the peace, restore law and order, and monitor the cease-fire. It was given no formal humanitarian tasks, although ECOWAS statements cited humanitarian concerns.[7] Overall ECOWAS justifications stressed the threat to regional peace and security, including the attacks from Liberia on Sierra Leone and weapons flowing from the outside to insurgent forces.

Although ECOMOG was referred to as a "peacekeeping force," the NPFL threat to resist it as illegal and unwelcome excluded any notion of consent, a key ingredient in conventional peacekeeping.[8] Its requisite neutrality was further jeopardized by the immediate onset of hostilities with NPFL troops. As a senior UN official put it, "Pushing Taylor out of Monrovia by force is hardly peacekeeping." ECOMOG therefore is better understood (at least in its more aggressive phases) as peace enforcing in the spirit of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which helps explain some of its subsequent difficulties in accommodating humanitarian aid.

ECOWAS statements also presented the intervention as a legitimate regional initiative in its own right, not requiring Security Council approval.[9] Indeed, the Security Council did not discuss Liberia until January 22, 1991, when it affirmed ECOWAS efforts. It backed ECOWAS again on May 7, 1992, endorsing the Yamoussoukro IV peace process. Only on November 19, 1992 in Resolution 788 did it invoke Chapter VII to back ECOWAS "peacekeeping forces."[10] Despite such sporadic attention, ECOWAS always had implicit UN support in the sense that, as one senior UN official said, "the United Nations deferred to OAU, which in turn deferred to ECOWAS."

Phase II: August 1990-October 1992
ECOMOG Establishes Security Zone
Following its arrival in Monrovia, ECOMOG was criticized by all sides of the conflict. It was accused of taking sides

with the breakaway INPFL and AFL factions and of failing to protect and feed Liberians. The INPFL criticized it for not attacking the NPFL, and the AFL blamed it for the capture of President Doe. ECOMOG also was accused of widespread looting and systematically stockpiling goods for return to Nigeria. These criticisms persisted long after the November 1990 cease-fire.

Although ECOMOG never had explicit humanitarian objectives, it reduced hostilities and atrocities and, by establishing order in greater Monrovia, set up a safe haven for thousands of Liberians. By securing the port and airport it also assisted relief operations. In this phase, ECOMOG functioned as a police force within its security zone and a defense force against the NPFL on the perimeter.

"The reestablishment of peace in Monrovia was a practical precondition for the delivery of humanitarian aid," noted a senior UN humanitarian official. "However, ECOMOG was in no way responsible for assessing, identifying, and providing humanitarian assistance." In this sense, "ECOMOG was a necessary element in the overall humanitarian strategy."

During this period, there was sufficient separation between ECOMOG's security functions and the UN's humanitarian operations for the latter to accomplish their mission, at least within areas of government and ECOMOG control.

Beyond the security zone, the NPFL-NPRA "government in waiting" attempted to establish a parallel administration, although security was to be a far greater problem once UN or NGO humanitarian agencies left the safe haven of Monrovia.

During this phase, there arguably were missed opportunities for more constructive involvement by the UN on the diplomatic side. Despite criticism, the UN continued its policy of nonintervention established by Secretary-General Pérez de Cuéllar. Following the ECOWAS meeting in Bamako in November 1990 that reaffirmed the standing of IGNU, prolonged peace negotiations failed to secure the agreed-upon participation of the warring factions in government. Some observers felt a UN Special Representative at that stage might have worked to secure arrangements that did not leave the NPFL feeling left out. Others felt there was favoritism toward IGNU in the UN political system (for example, in allowing Sawyer to

address the General Assembly on the Liberian crisis) that implied recognition, further alienating the NPFL camp.

Phase III: October 1992-July 1993
ECOMOG Shifts to Peace Enforcement

Following the NPFL offensive of October 1992 and increased military pressure, ECOMOG resumed a peace enforcement role. The implications for relief activities, already severely restricted by factional conflict, were negative. ECOMOG carried out air attacks on NPFL territory in late 1992 and 1993 in the name of security, hitting civilian, medical, and aid installations and drawing international criticism.[11] In a further effort to isolate the NPFL, ECOMOG imposed and enforced a ban on importing relief supplies from Côte d'Ivoire. Its association with ULIMO and AFL did nothing for its reputation as a guardian of human rights.

Observers offered a variety of explanations for ECOMOG's shifting role. Clearly it was a reaction to the NPFL offensive and, in ECOMOG and IGNU's view, a matter of legitimate self-defense. Beyond the worsening military situation, some attributed to ECOMOG commanders an approach that was less humanitarian and more punitive. General Ishaya Bakut (1991-1992) was seen as more willing to play a diplomatic role whereas General Olurin (1992-1993) adopted a narrower military approach.

Others viewed the erosion of neutrality as inevitable in such a regional undertaking, a West African version of *mission creep.* "Regional initiatives run the risk of being dominated by a single country or two," pointed out a senior UN official in July 1993. He regarded ECOMOG as a sub-regional initiative, underscoring the desirability of a "broader, truly regional" approach that would enlist the political and military involvement of nations from Southern and East Africa.

For other observers, the political agenda of Nigeria, the largest single contributor to ECOMOG, was fundamentally suspect. They suggested that regional domination, not peace, was at the heart of the intervention. Potential commercial interests in Liberia also were widely viewed as a strong incentive for ECOMOG to outlast the NPFL.

Responding to criticisms about restrictions on humanitarian operations during this period, a senior ECOWAS official noted the "need to balance between the interest of ensuring that relief gets to the needy wherever they may be and the imperatives of avoiding any activity which might compromise the security of peace enforcers." He explained that "Our experience in peace enforcement, which is the first of its kind ever undertaken by a regional organization, reveals that unlike peacekeeping, the peace enforcers have a right—indeed a duty—to guide and direct all relief agencies and the displaced population where to go and when to go. In such circumstances, freedom of action or movement is, by definition, restricted."

In any event, UN humanitarian operations in the third phase lost whatever independence they had established, becoming an integral part of a now more-troubled regional political-security initiative.

Phase IV: August 1993-December 1994
An ECOMOG-UNOMIL Hybrid Structure Attempts to
Implement Cotonou Agreement

Setting the framework for Phase IV, the Cotonou peace agreement of July 1993 established a process that attempted to include all parties in the power struggle. The agreement provided for the encampment of warring factions under the supervision of an expanded ECOMOG and a UN observer mission (UNOMIL). This was a significant change in the security architecture because it marked the creation of a hybrid organization, with the separation of armed peacekeeping and unarmed observer roles. The disarmament process was to coincide with the formation of a transitional government, which would include representatives from all factions and cover an interim period prior to the elections in September 1994 and the installation of an elected regime.

By all accounts, however, the trend of events in the period since Cotonou has been negative on both the political and the humanitarian fronts. A major problem was the lengthy delay in setting up UNOMIL and the expanded ECOMOG force needed to backup the agreement. Once established, the hybrid military presence created confusion about who was respon-

sible for disarmament. Above all, the situation was complicated by a proliferation of warring factions, including the emergence of the anti-NPFL Liberian Peace Council (LPC), which did not sign the agreement.

This further splintering along ethnic-linguistic lines has been the major political characteristic of the current phase, entangling the peace process and complicating humanitarian operations at every turn. The controlling agenda of the multiplying factions appears to be local power and material gain rather than longer term and wider political ambition. The presence of 400 UNOMIL staff (which was reduced to 90 by the end of 1994) and the persuasive powers of the international community whom they serve seem outmatched by the obstacles. The best that the future may hold could be constantly shifting alliances in a multifactional balancing of power.

Reviewing the situation in April 1994, the UN Secretary-General's report laid out a mixed balance sheet.[12] Despite some progress in the establishment of a transitional government, delays in the processes of filling cabinet posts, electoral prospects and, above all, disarmament raised doubts about the continuation of the UNOMIL mandate. Distressed at the slow implementation of peace arrangements, Boutros-Ghali warned: "The patience of the international community is clearly running out....The UN Security Council has implicitly warned the Liberian parties that progress must come, and soon, if UNOMIL is to continue playing any role in Liberia."[13]

With no all-out assault on Monrovia from the NPFL, ECOMOG has been able to resume more of a policing role in this phase, although its task has been complicated by the increase in factional fighting. Reports suggest that ECOMOG has tried to avoid involvement in these skirmishes. While the Cotonou agreement also charged ECOMOG with supervising disarmament, it has achieved little in this area, putting prior responsibility for disarmament on other parties instead.

Peace talks in Ghana between October and December 1994 represented a last-ditch effort to salvage the Cotonou framework. Despite signing the latest of multiple cease-fires, the talks broke up in early 1995 over disagreement on factional representation in the LNTG.

Since Cotonou, ECOMOG has assisted cross-line humanitarian operations by protecting convoys, a service not willingly rendered during Phase III. Meanwhile, earlier tensions between ECOMOG and NGOs regarding cross-border operations have eased, although ECOMOG continues to harbor doubts about NGO and UN agency neutrality. In addition, factional suspicion continues that aid agencies are being used as cover for spying and infiltration.

In February 1994, the UN Secretary-General reported a good working relationship between ECOMOG and UNOMIL. However, ECOMOG's various identities as peacekeeper, peace enforcer, and protector of Nigerian interests continue to create confusion. Despite measures in the Cotonou agreement to augment ECOMOG with East African troops, Nigerian forces predominate and are still doing most of the dirty work in the outlying areas of Liberia.

As of late 1994, ECOMOG still cannot be described as a neutral peacekeeping force. It functions more as a regional police force, curbing the worst excesses, going on the offensive when necessary, but acting reactively rather than proactively. Regional sensitivities persist too, especially the fear of the conflict spreading to neighboring Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire. This political cocktail makes for an ever-increasing intoxicant for violence and generates uncertainty and insecurity for aid operations.

The UN Perspective: Managing Political and Humanitarian Coordination

Phase I: December 1989-August 1990
Diminishing Aid

As reported, initial direct United Nations involvement in the crisis took a humanitarian rather than political direction. A UNDRO-led assessment mission in February 1990 and subsequent appeal funded a UNDRO delegate and team of UN Volunteers, which distributed food and medicines from March until May alongside CRS and MSF(Belgium) in rebel- and government-controlled areas. The initiative, however, was short-lived. Following a slaughter of Liberians sheltered in the United Nations compound in Monrovia on May 28, the UNDRO

team was evacuated from Liberia along with the rest of the UN staff.

Responding in July 1990 to the worsening crisis, the UN Secretary-General set up UNSCOL under the UNDRO/UNDP representative to coordinate the work of United Nations humanitarian agencies. Based in Conakry, Guinea and Freetown, Sierra Leone, UNSCOL's mandate also included close liaison, exchange of information among the UN aid agencies in nearby countries, and preparation—once security improved—for their early return to Monrovia.[14] At this stage both the ICRC and MSF(Belgium), feeling less constrained by security issues, were continuing relief work in Monrovia. MSF remained in the country except for ten days in August.

The UN's initial response was criticized for doing too little, too late, too slowly. Some within and outside the United Nations system believed that it should have been more present and active within Liberia, even given the serious insecurity. But as in other emergencies, security rules (since revised) required withdrawal of all United Nations personnel. A senior ECOMOG official, for example, felt the regional intervention force should have been accompanied by a humanitarian task force to deal with the desperate humanitarian needs apparent on landing. However, weeks passed after the ECOMOG intervention before the UN responded to calls for its return.

Phase II: August 1990-October 1992
Independent Aid

In October 1990, Africa Watch, following warnings made since May, called on the United Nations to appoint a special representative to negotiate a peace and coordinate emergency assistance and demanded greater U.S. and West European aid.[15]

Not until late October did a United Nations security and relief assessment mission identify critical humanitarian needs and recommend a prompt return by UN agencies to work alongside ECOMOG. By the time of the UNSCOL assessment report at the end of November, the Secretary-General had approved a UN return, subject to security clearance, and a core team had been set up in Monrovia, headed by the special coordinator. The Secretary-General appealed for $13.8 million

to mount "desperately needed relief operations." A joint UNICEF-Swederelief mission soon followed to detail and determine costs for further plans and coordination.[16] United Nations reports referred only to assistance for "Greater Monrovia," although UN assistance had been approved for the rest of Liberia outside of ECOMOG control as well.

Three issues emerge in assessing UN effectiveness in this phase of the crisis: security, leadership, and geographical reach. Senior UN humanitarian officials felt that the organization, inhibited by "an excessively conservative view of security considerations," nevertheless should have returned to Liberia earlier. Although a massive United Nations presence admittedly would not have been feasible between June and November, a core of seasoned operational staff could have accomplished useful, if limited, work. Even a token presence might have conveyed international concern and perhaps also reduced atrocities, as it did in October 1992.

Leadership and geographical reach also emerged as key issues during this initial phase. By most accounts, UNSCOL, despite a succession of temporary heads, managed to provide reasonable coordination for UN agencies and NGOs. "I thought the UN response was good," observed a NGO official. "The special coordinator seemed to strike an effective balance between humanitarian and political considerations and was prepared to push things along apace."

As for geographical reach, the United Nations established a troublesome pattern by failing to extend its initial involvement beyond ECOMOG lines into NPFL territory. Although UN assistance had been approved for Liberia as a whole, its operations from the outset were limited to the "Greater Monrovia" security zone. Outside this zone there were great security risks, although NGOs such as MSF(B), CRS, and LWS, as well as the ICRC, managed to function.

At no time was an autonomous United Nations operation openly contemplated for rebel-held areas, a shortcoming with serious humanitarian and political consequences. It left many civilians outside the ECOMOG security zone bereft of UN assistance and confirmed the suspicions of the NPFL that UN humanitarian organizations, like their UN political counterparts, had an anti-insurgent bias. This perception was not

sufficiently countered by political and humanitarian decisions made by the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs at UN headquarters in New York. Even fellow UN officials believed that his Sierra Leonean nationality fueled suspicions of UN bias in favor of IGNU and of unwarranted delay of humanitarian operations in NPFL areas, despite the clear evidence of need.

In short, between the outbreak of the fighting in December 1989 and the start-up of major United Nations operations in late 1990, the groundwork was laid for subsequent difficulties. Once established, UN humanitarian activities throughout 1991-1992 were partially successful. However, with changes in the political and military situation beginning in November 1992, the fundamental problems of leadership, security, and geographical reach became increasingly intractable.

Without detailed terms of reference, UNSCOL established a structure and *modus operandi* in this period and within the political-security context. Its main task and accomplishment was to provide a framework for the implementation of humanitarian activities by operational United Nations agencies and associated relief agencies. UNSCOL did so using a consensual model, with weekly coordination meetings and many smaller planning meetings that involved a mix of UN, NGO, and sometimes IGNU staff. "We were trying to get a broad understanding, with NGOs as essential partners," explained a senior United Nations official, "not one person's vision stamped on the community."

An outcome of the UN's coordinating role in the early phase was a consolidated appeal for $135.5 million in July 1991 for a twelve-month relief and rehabilitation program. Building on the findings of a series of joint UN-NGO assessment visits in different sectors such as food-aid and health, the appeal represented a general plan for humanitarian aid throughout Liberia.[17] Another contribution of UNSCOL was to negotiate arrangements within which humanitarian personnel were afforded access to civilian populations in government-controlled and, to a lesser extent, in rebel-held areas. The good offices of the UN coordinator benefited not only the United Nations agencies but also associated NGOs.

There were also wider benefits. "I believe that much of the humanitarian assistance operation during 1991-1992 was carried out in ways that facilitated peace among the warring factions," explained another UN official. "Just bringing together the technocrats in the health sector for meetings allows an exchange of views that considers the country as a whole." That such cooperation across factional lines did not reinforce broader peace efforts was regretable, but hardly the responsibility of UNSCOL.

There were, however, two major UNSCOL shortcomings that persisted. First, its effectiveness varied according to the abilities of its coordinators. Rapid staff turnover (with four UNSCOL heads in the first six months) and variations in degrees of assertiveness undercut sustained results, particularly in addressing difficult issues such as the respective activities of UNICEF and WHO in the health sector. Stable leadership was established only when Ross Mountain took over the UNSCOL operation in June 1991, a position he held for two years.

Second, even after cross-line operations began in March 1991, UNSCOL did not succeed in ensuring that urgent human needs in NPFL territory were addressed. Although security was the main problem, two factors contributed to UNSCOL's difficulties. First, UNSCOL attempted to coordinate activities for the entire country from its base in Monrovia. Second, while UNSCOL managed to set up four UN operational centers in insurgent-controlled territory, it did not move quickly to mount operations or commit senior program managers there.

The damage that flowed from the decision to base humanitarian efforts in Monrovia was both logistical and political. It was difficult to reach Greater Liberia from Monrovia, and NPFL suspicions of political bias in UN aid efforts were hard to refute. A UNSCOL report in July 1992 conceded the imbalance in coverage. "The UN system generally remained too focused on Monrovia," a UN aid official elaborated. "Our world-view was too much shaped by peering out through Monrovia spectacles, without sufficient appreciation for the perceptions and viewpoints in Gbargna," the NPFL headquarters. A vivid illustration was provided by an NGO official who at one stage in Phase II reported 120 United Nations vehicles

in IGNU areas compared with five in Greater Liberia.

The renewal of all-out conflict in October 1992 gave the UN's coordination role its most severe test. First, attacks on Monrovia spurred demands for United Nations personnel to be withdrawn again to more secure locations. Second, having made the key decision to maintain some UN presence, the coordination mechanism was faced with the influx of 200,000 new refugees into Monrovia.

Third, NPFL military gains triggered criticisms of UNSCOL by both IGNU and ECOMOG for working on the NPFL side of the line. Suspicions were not just about "feeding the enemy" but also about the withholding of information about NPFL arms buildup and even siding with the NPFL. Tensions between IGNU and the head of UNSCOL, Ross Mountain, exacerbated by other disagreements, subsequently sparked an IGNU request for his removal. A vitriolic public campaign led by local press hastened his departure.

Phase III: November 1992-July 1993
Aid Overshadowed

Until November 1992, United Nations involvement was primarily humanitarian. Subsequently the nature of the organization's humanitarian coordination was radically changed, first by the addition of an in-country "political supremo," Trevor Gordon-Somers, as Special Representative of the Secretary-General, and second by the departure of the head of UNSCOL, Ross Mountain, in June 1993.

An early test of the new leadership was the dispute during 1993 over aid delivery to NPFL territory across the Côte d'Ivoire border. (This was called "cross-border" aid to distinguish it from "cross-line aid," which reached insurgent-held areas within Liberia from Monrovia.) Since 1990, some NGOs had used this route as the only practical way of accessing the area. But ECOMOG suspected that some NGOs were NPFL sympathizers and that aid deliveries were a cover for arms smuggling. Growing IGNU-ECOMOG pressure confronted the UN system with a stark dilemma.

Despite acknowledging that the cross-border route was the most effective,[18] the UN did not challenge an initial ECOMOG prohibition in May 1993 on its use.[19] Moreover, in

July 1993 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General supported the ban by requesting the Côte d'Ivoire government to enforce it. DHA was not consulted in advance about this decision. NGOs, unhappy about the setback to their humanitarian activities, also criticized the Special Representative for refusing to meet them to discuss his action.

The Special Representative believed, however, that to push ahead with aid convoys without ECOMOG and UNOMIL monitoring units in place would jeopardize the entire Cotonou peace process, the top priority established by the Security Council mandate. He urged instead the use of cross-line routes that the NGOs found both logistically problematic and hindered by ECOMOG control. The resulting NGO protest, which enlisted international media, donor governments, and politicians, caused a breakdown in NGO relations with the UN, ECOMOG, and IGNU. Above all, the unity of the humanitarian effort that had been achieved between the United Nations and the NGOs was lost.

UN humanitarian activities experienced increasing pressure from both ECOMOG and the United Nations' political side. "With the appointment of a special representative and the subsequent increase in the profile of the UN on political issues," commented a UN official in 1993, "the coordination of humanitarian assistance by UNSCOL became more difficult and remains so." The tension was not confined to the field but extended to the secretariat of the United Nations in New York. The imbalance of power between the Special Representative and UNSCOL was reinforced by the relationship between political and humanitarian departments at headquarters. At critical points, the Under-Secretary-General for Political Affairs prevailed over the newly-appointed Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs.

The nature and power of UNSCOL, already seriously eroded before the departure of Ross Mountain in mid-1993, were never restored. His replacement, Christian Lemaire, reverted to traditional UNDP duties. Some UNSCOL arrangements such as coordination meetings have continued, but without the impact of earlier efforts. Aid officials accepted the political reality that the Special Representative had to be in overall control. But DHA and its channel of influence into the

Liberian crisis through UNSCOL simply faded away, and with it UNSCOL's main achievement—the unity and effectiveness of the humanitarian community.

Phase IV: August 1993-December 1994
Aid Eclipsed and without Direction

During this phase, the UN political activities eclipsed its humanitarian operations, with several key issues confronting the UN and the humanitarian community accordingly. How far would failure on the political and security front jeopardize humanitarian operations? How much was humanitarian access compromised by the greater integration of aid activities into UN political goals and ECOMOG security structures? How much could, or should, humanitarian operations be insulated from political-security activities? Does solving such problems depend on renewed UN humanitarian leadership, or should NGOs and the ICRC spearhead international aid independent of the United Nations?

The effort to implement a comprehensive peace agreement set out an expanded UN political operation that incorporated humanitarian activities. The Cotonou agreement included in UNOMIL's mandate "assistance, as appropriate, in the coordination of humanitarian assistance activities in the field in conjunction with the existing UN Humanitarian Relief operation." But it was not made clear what was "appropriate."

The Secretary-General's report in April 1994 noted continuing civilian displacement and distress and difficulties of aid access and logistics.[20] The report also expressed the hope that the new transitional government was "beginning to assume responsibility" for relief, resettlement, and rehabilitation activities throughout Liberia. However, neither UNOMIL nor the LNTG have provided a clear framework for relief activities. In fact, humanitarian access has become even more complicated since Cotonou. Where arrangements once had to be made "only" with IGNU, the NPFL, and ECOMOG, by mid-1994 there were multiple Liberian factions and UNOMIL itself that insisted upon security clearances and other formalities.

The need to deal with an increase in interlocutors has called attention to the absence of UNSCOL and the lack of active leadership from UNDP, whose new country represen-

tative lacked a mandate to coordinate the work of the UN's humanitarian organizations. Consequently individual United Nations agencies have become more involved in their own right in security matters, stepping, some UN staff said, into a "coordination vacuum." Along with efforts by the agencies to negotiate their own access have come serious discussions of the broader need for more clear-cut separation between the humanitarian and political elements of the international system.

Discussions of the need for greater autonomy in humanitarian activities arise ironically at a time when the warring factions are not likely to differentiate between the humanitarian and political operations of the United Nations. Increased harassment by the factions even brought about a reunification of the aid community. In October 1994, the UN and NGO humanitarian agencies joined to issue a statement suspending all aid in areas where factions operate because of continued insecurity and the theft of supplies.

In sum, lethargic movement on the peace front has seriously complicated the activities of UN humanitarian agencies. While they have lost many of the advantages of the independence they once enjoyed, there has been no dividend in a better environment for rehabilitation work. Conversely, United Nations resources that could have helped consolidate and reinforce a serious peace are idle. World Food Programme plans to commit assistance to the rehabilitation of disarmed people, and similar projects by other UN agencies, remain frustrated.

For the international community, the inadequacies of a joint UN political-security and humanitarian mission raise a fundamental strategic issue: whether NGOs and the ICRC following a more independent role might have, or still could, offset these failings.

NGOs: UN Partners or Independent Actors?

Four main policy issues emerge from NGO activities during the Liberian crisis: responsiveness, geographical coverage, coordination, and advocacy.

In response to the onset of the crisis only a few external private organizations such as CRS, MSF(Belgium), and the

ICRC set up operations. Senior external NGO officials acknowledged in retrospect that their agencies could have done more sooner. However, operations became more perilous as the fighting intensified around Buchanan and Monrovia in the summer of 1990. Liberian NGOs, church missions, and a National Disaster Relief Commission (NDRC) were also active in this phase. The church network of in-country operations with external support remained a powerful humanitarian force throughout the crisis. The strength of these local organizations was widely praised by UN and NGO officials.

Many more external NGOs, along with the United Nations humanitarian organizations themselves, used the ECOMOG shield of "law and order" to establish operations in late 1990. But in the early months of 1991, NGOs gravitated toward UNSCOL rather than IGNU. UNSCOL was perceived as the "nucleus of civilian reconstruction" and offered an easy point of entry into the local aid system. In the early months of their return to Monrovia, NGOs paid little attention to the possibilities of partnership with the embryonic government. They kept their distance, partly because of IGNU's lack of resources and credibility and also to avoid prejudicing relationships with the NPFL. Yet their major motivation was more immediate and practical. External NGOs, arriving in large numbers, were intent on staking their respective claims for ready identification by home constituencies.

As for geographical coverage, NGOs were unsuccessful in becoming operational in NPFL territory, either parallel with or as an alternative to Monrovia-based activities. Some believed that the suffering was more pronounced in the capital than in Greater Liberia, although there were reports of widespread problems behind rebel lines. Others felt that scarce resources should be focused in a given area but also conceded that the area chosen could have been Greater Liberia. Above all, NGOs feared security difficulties in dealing with the insurgents and the resulting problems with access, logistics, and accountability. The hopes of most agencies that began in Monrovia on the assumption that an early peace settlement soon would be followed by uninhibited access to Greater Liberia proved ill-founded.

With so many factors to weigh, the one that tipped the balance for many NGOs was the UN's own geographical choice. Its decision to work out of Monrovia lent some legitimacy to NGOs basing themselves there and was seen as simplifying logistic and security matters. An exception to the prevailing NGO thinking was MSF(Belgium), which in November 1990, when conditions were critical in Monrovia, urged "more NGOs to work in Taylor controlled areas." It set up parallel operations, one based in Monrovia and the other working across the border from Côte d'Ivoire. This example was followed by other NGOs as the military stalemate dragged on. Agencies such as LWS and CRS clearly did their best to meet needs on a community-wide basis.

By 1993, it was clear that conditions outside Monrovia were as bad if not worse than in the capital, which was now sheltering one million people. Yet attempts at servicing Greater Liberia were ultimately frustrated by factional harassment, theft of vehicles, and looting of supplies, resulting in periodic suspensions of aid to insecure areas, the latest in October 1994.

Coordination between NGOs and the United Nations worked reasonably well according to both parties, especially in Phase II, where relief objectives were largely complementary. Criticisms of NGO performance from UN sources included the lack of professionalism and experience among some field staff (conceded by some NGOs) and the need for greater flexibility in program operations in response to the changing political-security situation. Coordination became more complicated in the third and fourth phases as tensions heightened between the UN and NGOs. NGOs, no longer prepared to let UNSCOL represent their views, sought their own solutions.

In the area of advocacy, NGOs were actively involved in seeking to create and protect humanitarian space for their own activities, to mobilize international public opinion, and to challenge the policies and practices of the warring parties. Such efforts were widely recognized, although a certain tension emerged among the various advocacy initiatives, especially in Phases III and IV.

NGO negotiations with the UN, IGNU, ECOMOG, and the NPFL to carve out space within which to function were

clearly necessary. However, their advocacy at certain points—for example in the dispute over the cross-border aid through Côte d'Ivoire—tested the limits of this role, creating mistrust and souring relations. IGNU officials expressed concern about the "creeping control" of external NGOs over vital institutions and services of the country. This trend, they said, would only replace the "weak, dependent state with indirect control through foreign-based institutions," which they suggested remedying through greater use of local NGOs. Such reaction against NGO assumption of governmental authority also has characterized other complex emergencies. In Liberia, it created a backlash of resentment that the NGOs would have to deal with later.

NGO efforts to challenge the belligerent parties had mixed results. Some observers believed that the more outspoken agencies such as MSF(B) jeopardized their neutral status and put the continuance of their operations at risk. But the alternate suggestion—that politically charged activities such as denunciation of human rights abuses or efforts at conflict resolution be left to nonoperational NGOs—was not itself universally accepted throughout the NGO community. The most workable approach was some form of joint declaration, either by NGOs alone or jointly with UN agencies, although this was itself dependent on effective humanitarian leadership.

In sum, NGOs in the early phases functioned more readily as implementing partners of United Nations programs or worked comfortably within the UN coordinating framework. As a result, their efforts suffered from some of the problems in the UN's own activities. Following November 1992, greater independence from the UN system brought its own problems of coordination, marginalization, and credibility without any guarantee of greater security or effectiveness. Both integration and independence carried heavy costs.

International Donor Governments—Remiss or Realistic?

The size and nature of funding, the stabilizing effect of the diplomatic and humanitarian presence, and the respective roles of the United States and European Union are three main

policy issues that arise from the role of donor governments in the Liberian crisis.

Funding Background—Competing for Cash

From the outset, the Liberian crisis has faced fierce competition for international attention and funds. Other emergencies including Iraq, Somalia, the former Yugoslavia, and more recently Rwanda have taken priority in the media and on the international agenda. Although the initial ECOMOG intervention saved further demands on a depleted UN peacekeeping budget, the establishment of UNOMIL in 1993-1994 has created fresh budgetary problems for the United Nations presence in Liberia.

For humanitarian operations, U.S. funding was always critical. By October 1990, the United States had already provided $48.7 million of an international total of $62 million in assistance. This supported UN operations whose appeals for funding came through a variety of interim mechanisms until July 1991, when the United Nations launched a consolidated appeal for $135 million for a twelve-month relief and rehabilitation program.

In March 1993, the UN Secretary-General reported a shortfall of $57 million of the $161 million requested. By November 1993, this gap had been reduced to $35 million. A senior UN official reported that "major shortfalls in a number of areas such as education and agriculture inhibited progress over and above security situations." However, he felt fund-raising had gone "better than expected," especially for food aid, two-thirds of which came from the United States. A UNICEF report concluded that "fund-raising efforts were broadly effective but several delays are worth noting."[21] In particular, the consolidated appeal was not issued until a year into the crisis, and "demand soon outstripped appeals leaving three [sub-regional] countries short of funds by early 1992."

An independent report in late 1992 found that "the international agencies do not appear to suffer particular funding constraints. The emergency aid and food-aid efforts have been largely funded by USAID," with some bilateral and European Community (EC) aid. Furthermore, "relatively large-scale funding will be available from the EC for infrastructure projects,

and UNHCR does not anticipate any problems in raising the $27 million for the repatriation program."[22]

The United Nations consolidated appeal in late 1993 set a total of $284 million for humanitarian activities from November 1993 through December 1994. According to one UN official, this was unrealistically high. As of April 20, 1994, only $5.5 million had been received, placing Liberia along with Zaire and Tajikistan as the least well-funded of the various UN emergency efforts. In the current phase of operations in Liberia, preparing the consolidated appeal appears to have become the extent of DHA's involvement.

The United States—Liberia's "Mother and Father"

Historic links between the United States and Liberia have continued to be a major factor throughout the crisis, despite the general assumption that Liberia's strategic value as Washington's foothold in West Africa has passed. U.S. government sources confirmed the lessening of strategic and economic interests, indicating a policy based on a "moral duty, a repaying of old debts." The reluctance to intervene militarily in the crisis shocked and disappointed many Liberians, as has the marked scaling-down of U.S. activity and interests ever since. But Washington's presence and funding has meant that the U.S. still plays a key role as part of the international system at work in Liberia.

The U.S. policy of supporting ECOWAS politically and ECOMOG financially ran into difficulty toward the end of 1992. At that time, widely reported doubts among senior administration officials about the neutrality of ECOMOG caused embarrassment and provoked official rebuttal. But American attitudes to the crisis in Liberia were never completely explicit. A United Nations official summarized U.S. policy as "hands off" to allow the Liberians to sort out their political problems, paired with generous support on the humanitarian side.

Through its continued presence, especially as the only government to keep an embassy open throughout the worst of the crisis, the U.S. has contributed to order and stability. Yet the U.S. never officially recognized IGNU, and all aid from

Washington has been channeled through the United Nations and NGOs rather than on a government-to-government basis.

In October 1993, the United States, reporting $57 million in aid over the year, confirmed a further donation of $19.8 million toward ECOMOG's running costs. This was followed in December by $30 million toward the UN fund for Liberia, again the main source of support for the expanded ECOMOG. The U.S. continues a crucial role in funding ECOMOG and the UN, and providing humanitarian relief, giving it considerable influence in the outcome of the Liberian crisis.

The European Union
A Generous Donor but Political Absentee?

Notably absent from Monrovia in the first two phases of the crisis, the European Union and its member states have since increased their involvement. The EU delegation and member state embassies were closed down as the war engulfed Monrovia in 1990. Their continued absence led to criticism, for example in October 1990, when they were accused by Africa Watch of "leaving Liberia to the Americans."[23]

The United Kingdom response was typical. Although a sizable donor both through the UN and the EU, it did not attempt to reinstate any political-diplomatic presence in Liberia. The High Commission in Sierra Leone kept a watching brief, and from July 1993, the UK embassy in Abidjan took up the task with a view toward eventual accreditation. To date, no other EU embassy has reopened in Liberia.

Despite subsequent and substantial aid (ECU50 million/ $62.5 million in the first year of the crisis), this was managed by the EU in-country through sporadic visits from its Sierra Leone delegation and subsequently through a visiting consultant. The first visit by a senior EU official from Brussels was in mid-1992, but no great interest in the Liberian crisis by EU politicians surfaced.

Although EU humanitarian aid is not normally conditional, some commentators felt that the EU should have complemented its aid operation with a more active role in the peace process. In addition, the EU's influence on Anglo-Nigerian and Francophone relationships in the region arguably could have been used to greater effect. Doubts persisted, however,

about French allegiances in the crisis, centered around allegations that there were considerable French commercial interests tied in with logging and other industries controlled by rebel factions.

There was a general sentiment that the level of EU funding (from 1992 to 1994, a total of ECU84.6 million/$105.75 million) justified an in-country presence, and that this expertise on the ground would have improved the quality of information available to Brussels. By August 1993, the EU had stepped up its in-country involvement, announcing plans to open a technical aid coordination office, but delaying establishment of a formal delegation until after Liberian elections. By May 1994, the office was operational, reflecting a much higher profile and the commitment of experienced staff.

ECU100 million for long-term development in Liberia (via the Lôme agreement) were frozen due to the civil war. A senior EU official remarked that if conditions improved, substantial rehabilitation funds could be made available, possibly for use as "leverage" to discourage human rights violations. However, current EU aid remains predominantly humanitarian in circumstances assessed as too fragile for longer term reconstruction activities.

Commentators expressed some concern that more should have been done to coordinate EU aid with other aid programs in Liberia. Improved coordination between bilateral donors also might have worked to produce a more effective UN approach to the entire political and humanitarian crisis. For the international community, implementation of a concerted diplomatic and aid policy remains the major challenge of the Liberian crisis.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The experience of the international community in responding to the humanitarian imperatives of the Liberian civil war is rich, if still largely undistilled. As a long-serving senior UN official in Liberia commented, "I believe there are many lessons for the international system from Liberia. My biggest fear is that they will not be captured." This case study attempts to identify those lessons while the issues remain current and the key actors accessible.

Some of the richness emerges in the interplay between humanitarian and political-security institutions, some in the myriad and changing relationships among actors—regional and universal, governmental and nongovernmental. However, the response of the international community has been ambivalent, fluctuating from an aid-only role, side-by-side with a sub-regional intervention force, to the rhetorical promise of more comprehensive involvement. But this promise was not kept by the necessary sense of urgency and resources to succeed.

Findings and recommendations therefore are set on the horns of a dilemma. Should they assume the continuation of humanitarian assistance in a chaotic, permanent emergency with continued ambivalence from the international community? Or should conclusions prescribe a comprehensive overhaul of the international response at a time when outside political will and resources are on an ebb tide?

These findings and recommendations focus on security and humanitarian actions in Liberia over the next year, assuming no sea change in international attitudes. They do, however, recognize wider changes that donors and other institutions should make within existing constraints.

The Liberian experience merits particular analysis concerning political-humanitarian tensions. "At least in 1991-1992, Liberia was one of the 'success stories,'" noted a UN official, "coordinated by the United Nations, with close cooperation among its agencies, international NGOs, local NGOs, an interim government, and warring factions. Humanitarian

assistance was delivered in sufficient quantities in Monrovia [though] less adequately upcountry." Increasing insecurity and political entanglement turned this promising start into a frustrating impasse. In the end, the humanitarian operation never achieved its real potential to support the peace process.

Acknowledging both the positive early experience and the more negative results in later phases, this section seeks to group the findings and recommendations according to institutional actors and operational phases.

Political-Security Institutions

The ECOWAS Intervention
Security Gains, Humanitarian Losses?

The ECOWAS intervention focused on the short-term goal of restoring order rather than the longer term objective of promoting a lasting peace. In security terms, ECOMOG largely has contained the conflict within Liberia, although real dangers of regional escalation persist. ECOMOG also has prevented, with a few exceptions, the type of all-out slaughter witnessed between April and July 1994 in Rwanda.

But the form of intervention invites speculation as to whether it has prolonged the conflict. What of the view that nonintervention in 1990 might have allowed a total NPFL victory, political unification, and a better chance of peaceful reconstruction? Liberia's history of factionalism belies such an outcome. An NPFL takeover most likely would have exacerbated humanitarian conditions in Monrovia, and the new regime would have been confronted by an array of warring factions similar to that which exists now.

Nigerian domination of ECOMOG and its collaboration with anti-NPFL factions has compromised the force's claim to neutrality. Prior UN approval of such a regional peacekeeping mechanism might have insisted on a broader membership and greater accountability. But such a force most likely would not have been available at such short notice. Whatever ECOMOG's shortcomings, it is hard to see the current level of international disinterest producing sustained financial, logistical, or political backing for any feasible alternative. Nor is the international community likely to insist at this stage on fundamentally

different terms of engagement for ECOWAS.

The ECOMOG security operation also has had a mixed record in supporting humanitarian operations. Humanitarian gains undoubtedly have been made within the Monrovia security zone. But in rebel areas, ECOMOG has had increasing difficulty reconciling the need for political order with allowing the necessary space for effective humanitarian operations. In earlier phases, these operations suffered from association with—and, in later phases from direct interference by—ECOMOG.

Nothing in the Liberia experience suggests that outside military forces can operate neutrally in a civil war without the consent of the protagonists. Whatever ECOMOG's legitimate security motives in shifting from peacekeeping to peace enforcement, it further undermined any claim to neutrality when it did so.

Such a shift undoubtedly undermined humanitarian operations, which require neutrality where peace enforcement does not. Humanitarian activities that benefited from ECOMOG's earlier, more neutral, phases became tainted by continuing to operate under its protection and from its security zone. Other agencies attempting an independent approach suffered ECOMOG interference and even attack. In such circumstances, special measures were required to maintain the neutrality of humanitarian operations, possibly outside the United Nations system. This was never successfully achieved.

Regional over UN Initiatives—Efficacy Versus Legitimacy?

The comparative advantages and disadvantages of a regional intervention are well-illustrated by the Liberian crisis. Regional forces cost less, were more readily available, and proved more familiar with local conditions and culture than out-of-region forces. Delays in securing resources for the post-Cotonou ECOMOG and UNOMIL demonstrated the difficulties of a more international approach. But ECOMOG's neutrality, actual or perceived, was jeopardized by association with a "family feud." Moreover, unity of command over political, security, and humanitarian operations was sacrificed. As a result, cooperation remained ad hoc among ECOMOG, the

UN, and NGOs in circumstances in which firmer direction would have been preferable.

A UN-mandated and -mobilized intervention under Chapter VII of the Charter might have assured greater accountability and a clearer command structure. However, experiences in Bosnia and Somalia have illustrated that humanitarian operations do not necessarily prosper under such a regime. The framework for Liberia was, and remains, confusing. The Liberia experience also illustrates the difficulties for political and humanitarian interests alike of a shift from a regional to a more global initiative in mid-crisis.

Regional-United Nations Relationships
The Problem of Accountability

The ECOWAS initiative has enjoyed the continuing if modest support of the international community. It is touted as a regional response foreseen in Chapter VIII of the UN Charter and reaffirmed in the Secretary-General's *An Agenda for Peace* published in 1992 and its 1995 supplement.[24] Yet the world organization and its member states held back from a more assertive diplomatic role in the early stages of the conflict when they might have done more to enhance the full potential of ECOWAS military efforts.

Once engaged, the ECOWAS intervention was seen as a substitute for wider international action rather than an expression of it. The initiative would have gained from more regular and rigorous reporting to the international community through the UN Security Council. Had the council acted on the conflict earlier and established better communications with the parties involved, the combined effort might have been more effective.

In the first two phases of the crisis, the UN and ECOWAS relationships—both internationally and in-country—were relatively uncomplicated, reflecting their separate tasks. Once the UN heightened its in-country political profile in Phase III, its political-security objectives were more consonant with those of ECOWAS, cementing relationships between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and ECOMOG's commanders. However, this jeopardized the independence of the UN humanitarian operations and alienated many NGOs.

In the most recent phase, ECOMOG and UNOMIL established what the UN Secretary-General called "a good working relationship." Yet on a security level, this has continued to alienate the NPFL. UN humanitarian agencies ran the risks of association with a fragile peace process, but without the benefits of a clear commitment to their activities from UNOMIL and ECOMOG.

Joint Management of Political and Humanitarian Affairs

Liberia is a variation on a common theme in complex humanitarian crises. Humanitarian activities need reasonable security, which only political and military actors can provide. At the same time, humanitarian activities can be compromised by real or perceived association with political and military institutions and initiatives.

Political and humanitarian operations require skillful management to maintain their respective roles and to deal effectively with each other. Each may benefit from the success or suffer from the failures of the other. The Liberian experience underscores the importance of establishing a careful division of labor and illustrates how these arrangements were undercut by a flawed regional initiative. ECOWAS and the UN have not yet defined an effective division of labor or implemented a unified command structure that would accommodate it.

Provisional Governments and Warring Factions Finding Common Interest in Peace

The main contestants for power in this instance are, in a sense, beyond the reach of recommendations that outsiders may choose to make. However, possibilities for lasting peace remain with a small group of faction leaders, many of whom lack obvious constituencies beyond their own armed forces.

Peace negotiations along traditional lines have not been able to enlist the faction leaders, who are difficult to bring together and then to hold to any agreement, moving quickly on the ground to destroy what they see as unfavorable terms. As the conflict has worn on, many commentators have agreed with a UN official who observed in May 1994 that "the Liberian

factions don't yet want peace. It is just greed which is prolonging the war."

Political-security actors have not yet been able to provide a comprehensive and persuasive peace package with sufficient economic incentives to serve as an alternative to factional violence. In particular, demobilization aid for combatants has been inadequate. Given the important role played by neighboring states in providing incentives and pressure, ECOWAS, with necessary backing from the OAU, remains the key negotiating institution. But humanitarian and reconstruction aid, backed by a guarantee from international donors for speedy implementation, have yet to play their essential role.

Recommendations for Security Institutions

1. Security institutions in the Liberian crisis should take greater account of the positive contribution of humanitarian and longer term economic measures. They should facilitate the access of neutral organizations—whether UN agencies, NGOs, or the ICRC—to civilian populations in distress. Peace agreements should include guarantees for demobilization and long-term reconstruction aid from the major donors to sustain their objectives, and be matched by quick implementation capacity.

2. The current partnership on peace and security issues between the United Nations and ECOWAS needs reassessment. Given the prevailing international disinterest in Liberia and similar conflicts, ECOWAS, with OAU backing, provides the most promising negotiating framework. To ensure greater consistency between political and security measures, ECOWAS should have a non-Nigerian political representative in Liberia, with accountability to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. This would improve in-country coordination, provide direction for the military command of ECOMOG, and increase international accountability.

3. While ECOMOG remains the main vehicle for promoting security, the UN Security Council should clarify ECOMOG's terms of reference. This would confirm ECOMOG's specific mandate, whether it is peacekeeping or peace enforcing, and insist on greater international accountability for regional per-

formance. To safeguard the neutrality of ECOMOG, further steps should be taken to dilute Nigerian domination. Introducing other regional forces such as East African troops should be followed by their wider deployment in conflict zones throughout the country.

4. UN functions—both the Special Representative of the Secretary-General's terms of reference and UNOMIL's relations with ECOMOG—need clarification. A clearer command and management structure is required in which military operations are integrated with political-security and humanitarian objectives. Military activities need to serve agreed political goals.

Humanitarian Institutions

What are the prospects for effective humanitarian operations as an integral part of a wider system charged with promoting international peace and security? Can such operations be insulated from political entanglement while contributing to peace and reconstruction? These issues are most acute within the UN system, which has been involved in managing both political and humanitarian activities. The Liberian experience reveals many problems but no blueprint for overcoming them.

Independence or Integration?

Until November 1992, the humanitarian role of the UN was more prominent than the political. As the active in-country agent of DHA, UNSCOL achieved demonstrable humanitarian gains. It did so because of effective leadership and the relative autonomy enjoyed by UN aid efforts, which were not associated with any UN political, peacekeeping, or peace enforcement activities. UNSCOL's success in ECOMOG-controlled areas was offset, however, by its failure in NPFL territory. NGOs, constrained by lack of security and resources, were only partly able to fill the gap.

Following November 1992, the UN's search for a peace formula and its association with ECOMOG-IGNU political and security concerns tended to eclipse its humanitarian objectives. With increased factional fighting, it was more difficult to maintain corridors of peace for the secure delivery of aid

and to justify them as a humanitarian policy. However, DHA failed to promote the potential contribution of humanitarian operations to peace by effective advocacy either in Liberia or within the UN secretariat.

Conceiving and implementing the relationship between the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and DHA suffered from a lack of clarity. A clear management structure to replace the moribund UNSCOL was never apparent. The dispute over cross-border aid exposed this weakness, emphasized the political-security priorities of the UN system, and split the humanitarian community. While committed to a negotiated settlement, some aid personnel understandably questioned, and continue to question, why urgent humanitarian assistance should be held hostage to an uncertain peace process.

In the present operational phase begun in July 1993, the entanglement of political and humanitarian operations has continued. On the political side, implementation of the Cotonou agreement continually has been frustrated as humanitarian efforts have lost momentum, with the aid agencies divided in their perceptions of, and relations with, the peace process. Only a shadow of the previous humanitarian coordination mechanism remains. DHA retreated to an information-sharing role, precisely at a time when humanitarian leadership has been most critically needed.

Alternatives to the UN?

Humanitarian organizations outside the UN have played a valuable role in all four phases of the crisis, both as partners with, and as alternatives to, UN humanitarian agencies. As a group, however, external and local NGOs have become somewhat schizophrenic. They have welcomed a UN role in establishing an overall operational framework but, at the same time, have asserted their independence when the costs of association become too high.

NGO schizophrenia reflects confusion about whether to seek to function as a rescue squad throughout the country or as a committed partner in a UN-backed peace process. Public campaigns decrying humanitarian abuses have complicated the NGO dilemma. Despite substantial use of NGOs for deliv-

ering humanitarian aid, international donors have done little
to clarify their understandings of NGO status in relation to UN
operations.

Contributing to Peace?

The eclipse of humanitarian objectives and principles by
political factors sounds a cautionary note for agencies close to
the peace process, especially those in the United Nations
system. For the time being, the danger of failure by association
remains very real. Aid workers fear Cotonou may represent
disarmament on paper only, while the factions use the inter-
lude to rearm.

Cotonou and its follow-up in Akosombo and Accra have
not yet produced a new postwar era of trust and commitment
to peace. Aid may be a strong factor in building trust, but this
potential has not been used in Liberia. Experience has not
demonstrated a clear formula for isolating humanitarian ac-
tion from political entanglements. At the same time, however,
the experience has shown that a realistic mandate carried out
by skilled professionals can yield positive humanitarian ben-
efits.

Recommendations for Humanitarian Institutions

1. Humanitarian Access

UN humanitarian agencies, including DHA, should make
access throughout Liberia a priority. The assumption that UN
humanitarian operations would work across borders to reach
those in need should be reinforced. If this is politically unac-
ceptable or unworkable, other humanitarian agencies should
be charged with reaching everyone in need. Humanitarian
agencies have a responsibility to reassure belligerent parties
about the professionalism of aid operations and personnel.

2. Humanitarian Operations

Although Monrovia with its government infrastructure,
facilities, and population seems the natural base for humani-
tarian activities, the situation in Greater Liberia requires cross-
border aid and concerted attempts to coordinate aid from local
centers with sufficient experienced staff. Mindful of a previ-

ous project study on Operation Lifeline Sudan, the UN should not seek to manage humanitarian operations solely from the capital of a country suffering civil war.[25]

3. UN Humanitarian Management

United Nations humanitarian agencies must work within a unified command structure so that they and military operations answer to political leadership that has a clear mandate from the international community through the UN Security Council. In turn, the Special Representative's terms of reference and priorities should be explicit in relation to humanitarian objectives.

Where geopolitical considerations subordinate humanitarian objectives, DHA has a special responsibility to serve as humanitarian advocate, identifying the consequences of various political options for civilian populations. DHA diplomacy and advocacy should take place not only in-country but at United Nations headquarters in New York. This only can be achieved by effective and continuous leadership of the UN humanitarian agencies in both locations.

4. UN Humanitarian Objectives

Given the difficulties of peace-brokering in the Liberian crisis, the United Nations should revise the relative emphasis of its activities. The quagmire of Liberian politics and the destructive results of factionalism should encourage the UN to concentrate its diplomatic efforts internationally rather than seek to mediate differences in Liberia and elsewhere among Liberians. As for UN activities within Liberia itself, greater emphasis on humanitarian objectives might discourage the worst atrocities, achieve greater humanitarian access, and even reap some long-term political dividends.

5. NGOs

NGOs should be aware that cooperation with the United Nations carries benefits and risks. For NGOs based in Monrovia, the tactic of moving in and out of the UN coordination framework as circumstances change is self-defeating and confusing. Where political complications jeopardize humanitarian access for UN or any Monrovia-based agency, NGOs have a special

responsibility to make use of their independence, for example to increase cross-border operations from neighboring countries.

If factional interference makes NGO operations as impossible as they are for UN organizations, temporary suspension of aid should be contemplated, if possible backed by a consortium of agencies. To maximize integrity in relief delivery, operational NGOs should look to nonoperational NGOs and others to spearhead public challenges of human rights and other abuses.

The International System: In Liberia and Beyond

The diagram of the international system addressing the Liberian crisis (see Annex II) illustrates at every level the complexity of coordination and the difficulty of reform. Lines of administrative authority are duplicated, overlaid, and/or bypassed by lines of political influence. The international system reflects a pluralism: states remain the main actors, yet many other players are at work. Absent from the diagram and, apparently also from international control, is the influence of private finance. Foreign commercial exploitation of Liberian resources, which is undoubtedly a major factor in the continuation of war, needs greater international scrutiny.

Viewed from the level of the overall UN system and especially from the Security Council, humanitarian action remains important but, in the final analysis, secondary. Yet improvements are possible, particularly at the secretariat level, where cooperation among mid-level professionals and field officials from the political and humanitarian sides of the United Nations can reduce friction and advance common goals. With that in mind, the recurring recommendation of many of those interviewed deserves consideration: that priority be given to improving the quality of UN personnel, even in the absence any structural reforms in the larger system.

The diagram places member states at the pinnacle, although the major powers have been reluctant to act in Liberia. International donors remain the most influential, and their policies and actions have a major bearing on the texture of relationships between the international community and Liberia.

They fund UN agencies, shape the actions of the Security Council, and help underwrite the work of NGOs and the ICRC. Yet their response is characterized by short-term pragmatism rather than longer term problem-solving. It is driven by opportunism rather than principle.

In the international response to the Liberian civil war, coordination between diplomatic and aid policies of donor countries was frequently lacking. Competition and not coordination often characterized the relationship between the United States and European Union. Emergency aid is normally not subject to conditionality and should not be. However, there is need for more thoughtful parallelism between humanitarianism and security objectives and strategies.

Recommendations for the International Community

1. Regional interventions such as ECOWAS require closer international scrutiny and legitimation through reporting arrangements to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and to the UN Security Council. Regional efforts should not be seen as a substitute for wider international action and require more active diplomatic support. Delays between decisions and implementation, for example in securing resources, will allow peace initiatives to be overtaken. Liberia's problems require a more concerted and better synchronized international approach.

2. Continued international financial support of ECOMOG should be made conditional on the implementation of reforms such as those outlined above, including dilution of Nigerian control and greater international accountability to the Security Council.

3. While supporting regional efforts to negotiate peace, international donors should reexamine the objectives and coordination of aid programs. Aid for reconstruction should be connected more integrally to meaningful progress in the peace process. Coordination between donors, especially the United States and European Union, should be increased. The opening in 1994 of an EU office in Monrovia provides a fresh opportunity for doing so at the country level.

4. Member states should draw on the Liberian experience to impel and focus reforms within the United Nations. In particular, the role of DHA should be clarified and strengthened both in relation to the political and peacekeeping departments in the UN secretariat and to Special Representatives of the Secretary-General in complex emergencies. Notwithstanding structural reforms, the quality of UN personnel should be improved through better recruitment and training policies. Effective leadership of the world organization's political and humanitarian operations in-country is critical. Future emergencies of this kind should pay particular attention to unified command structures.

5. The international community should consider an independent investigation into external commercial exploitation of the Liberian civil war—especially the export of natural resources, arms supply for the various factions, and general profiteering from the conflict. The legitimate use of Liberia's resources in a national reconstruction program would make a worthwhile study by an agency such as the World Bank.

Notes

[1]Economist Intelligence Unit, *Country Profile: Guinea, Sierra Leone, Liberia 1993-1994* (London: Economist Intelligence Unit, March 1993): 59.

[2]Report of the UN Secretary-General on Liberia, S/25402, March 12, 1993.

[3]For example, S/1994/168, February 14, 1994.

[4]For a detailed account of the ECOWAS intervention see Margaret A. Vogt (ed.), *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG: A Bold Attempt at Regional Peace Keeping* (Nigeria: Gabumo Publishing, September 1992); and John Mackinlay and Charles Alao, *Liberia 1994: An Assessment of an African Peace Process* (New York: United Nations University, 1995 forthcoming).

[5]See Jinmi Adisa, "ECOMOG Force Commanders," in Vogt, *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG*, 237-270.

[6]The eighth and latest progress report of the Secretary-General was S/1995/9 January 6, 1995.

[7]ECOWAS communiqué, August 6-7, 1990. A subsequent ECOWAS statement in September was more explicit in stating a humanitarian objective: "stopping the senseless killing of innocent civilians." ECOWAS generally used the humanitarian imperative to strengthen its overall case for intervention.

[8]That is, the consent to a peacekeeping force by all warring factions. See, for example, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* (New York: United Nations, 1992): para. 50; and Alan James, *Peacekeeping in International Politics* (London: Macmillan, 1990): 1-16.

[9]In line with Article 52 of the UN Charter, which legitimizes regional initiatives consistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

[10]See Report of the UN Secretary-General on Liberia, S/25402, March 12, 1993, for details.

[11]Africa Watch, *Waging War to Keep the Peace: The ECOMOG Intervention and Human Rights* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1993): 18.

[12]S/1994/463.

[13]Security Council Resolution 911, April 21, 1994.

[14]UNDRO situation report 90/1170, July 1990.

[15]Africa Watch, *Liberia: A Human Rights Disaster* (New York: Human Rights Watch, 1990).

[16]UNICEF/Swederelief assessment report December 14, 1990.

[17]Consolidated Appeal for emergency humanitarian assistance for Liberia, ST/SPQ/11, July 1991.

[18]See S/25402, March 1993, para 12.

[19]Letter from Commander of ECOMOG to UNSCOL, November 5, 1993.

[20]S/1994/463.

[21]UNICEF, Evaluation and Research Office, "The Liberian Emergency up to September 1992," Internal Evaluation, August 1993.

[22]Philippa Atkinson, *Liberia 1992: Prospects for Returning Refugees* (Oxford: Refugees Studies Programme, Oxford University, 1992).

[23]Africa Watch, *Liberia: A Human Rights Disaster.*

[24]See Boutros-Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace* and *Supplement to an Agenda for Peace: Position Paper of the Secretary-General on the Occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the United Nations* (United Nations A/50/60, S/1995/1). Also, see Vogt, *The Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG.*

[25]A predecessor study on Operation Lifeline Sudan reached a similar conclusion, noting "the desirability of coordinating activities from a location removed from each party in a civil war." Tabyiegen Agnes Aboum et al., *A Critical Review of Operation Lifeline Sudan: A Report to the Aid Agencies* (Providence: Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies, 1990): 44.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS

Date	Political Events	Humanitarian Operations
1989-1990		
Dec. 89-Feb. 90	NPFL incursion from Côte d'Ivoire. War spreads in NE Liberia.	250,000 refugees to Côte d'Ivoire. ICRC and CRS active.
Mar. 90		UNDRO and MSF(B) start relief work up-country.
Spring-Summer 90	War spreads throughout Liberia.	Massive internal displacement, 400,000 refugees to Guinea, 125,000 to Sierra Leone. Africa Watch reports widespread human rights violations.
May 90		UNDRO and other UN agencies depart.
July 90	NPFL reaches and besieges Monrovia.	Massacre at Monrovia church. Atrocities and conditions worsen. UNSCOL set up in Guinea.

Aug. 90	ECOWAS agrees to ECOMOG and IGNU. ECOMOG deploys in Monrovia.	Last aid agencies leave Monrovia.
Sept. 90	Doe deposed and killed. Nigerians assume command of ECOMOG.	Monrovia food distribution to 46,000 homes starts.
Oct. 90	ECOMOG controls Monrovia.	MSF(B) and CRS return to Monrovia. UNSCOL/UNDRO mission proposes UN return.
Nov. 90	IGNU under Sawyer installed in Monrovia. Bamako cease-fire agreement.	UN estimates 150,000 casualties and 1.5 million displaced. UN returns as UNSCOL.
Dec. 90	Banjul agreement continues cease-fire.	UN appeal for $13.8 million. UNICEF/Swederelief assessment.

1991

Jan. 91	UN Security Council backs cease-fire.	NGOs operating only on NPFL side.
Jan.-Mar. 91	Series of failed talks begins political impasse.	UNSCOL proposes relief to greater Liberia.

Mar. 91	NPFL-backed rebel raids into Sierra Leone. ULIMO fights along side Sierra Leonean forces.	120,000 Sierra Leoneans and 125,000 Liberians displaced or take refuge in Guinea.
June-Oct. 91	Yamoussoukro talks, but political stalemate.	Build up of UN/NGO aid. 40+ NGOs at work. Some extend into NPFL areas but are harassed.
July 91		UN consolidated appeal for $135 million follows first UN/NGO mission in NPFL-controlled area.
Sept. 91	ULIMO/NPFL border war in Bomi/Cape Mount.	NGO activities halted there.
Oct. 91	Yamoussoukro IV Accord.	
Nov. 91-May 92	Slow progress on Yamoussoukro IV. ULIMO gains in western Liberia.	NPFL restrictions on aid challenged by UN and NGOs.
	1992	
April 92	Sierra Leone coup. France reported backing NPFL.	
May 92	UN Sec. Council backs ECOWAS/Yamoussoukro IV but ECOMOG deployment falters.	More refugees cross into northwest Liberia.

May-Oct. 92	Intransigence on all sides prolongs stalemate. ULIMO continues gains.	
July 92	ECOWAS strengthens resolve and seeks UN help.	
Aug. 92	ULIMO/NPFL fighting escalates.	30,000 displaced to Monrovia.
Oct. 92	Operation Octopus: NPFL attacks Monrovia. ECOWAS backs peace enforcement. ECOMOG responds, allied with ULIMO/AFL.	New influx of 200,000 displaced. Monrovia water cut off. Some UN, NGO, and diplomatic staff leave.
Nov. 92	U.S. policy reported "in confusion." UN Sec. Council Res. 788 imposes Chapter VII arms embargo on all except ECOMOG. UN SRSG Gordon-Somers appointed.	Killing of five U.S. nuns heightens international attention.

1993

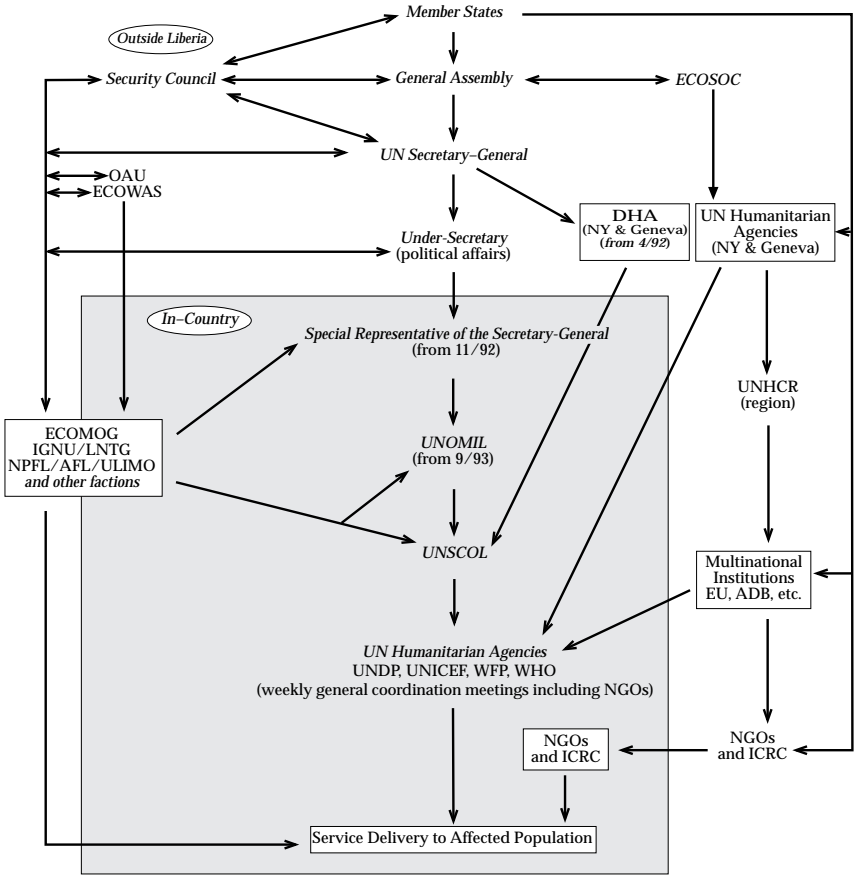|		
Jan.-Feb. 93	ECOMOG troops increased but Senegalese withdraw. UN reaffirms Yamoussoukro IV process.	Relief vehicles on border attacked by ECOMOG aircraft.

Jan.-Mar. 93	ECOMOG and ULIMO military gains.	ECOMOG tries to close all Ivorian border aid.
Mar. 93	UN Secretary-General recommends supportive role only for UN and regional/Yamoussoukro IV process, backed by Security Council Res. 813.	UN Security Council Res. 813 backs aid to all areas, demanding no interference. But in April MSF convoy strafed.
May 93	ECOMOG bans cross-border relief from Côte d'Ivoire.	
June 93	Harbel civilian massacre undermines confidence in ECOMOG. Splits appear in anti-NPFL alliance.	UN hesitates to challenge ECOMOG aid route ban.
July-Aug. 93	Geneva peace talks. Cotonou (Benin) peace accord signed. Process involves transitional government to elections and wider ECOMOG force plus UN monitors.	SRSG Gordon-Somers reinforces aid route ban, NGOs make international protest. Cross-line aid stepped up but still delayed and harassed.

Sept. 93	Sec.-Gen. recommends UNOMIL headed by SRSG to monitor Cotonou, ECOMOG to manage disarmament. Backed by UN Security Council Res. 866.	Resolution 866 includes coordination of humanitarian aid in UNOMIL mandate. NPFL areas reported to be in greatest need.
Oct.-Dec. 93	Disarmament and transitional govt. stalled. A new fighting faction, LPC, emerges in southeast, while fragmentation threatens peace process.	WFP estimates 1 million in need of food. Atrocities in Upper Lofa, but aid looted and halted. Cross-line aid delayed and harassed.

1994

Jan.-Feb. 94	Peace process close to collapse. Final-chance talks set March 7 for transitional government.	Security deterioration greatly restricts humanitarian operations.
Mar.-April 94	LNTG set up but security situation no better and disarmament process minimal. UN Security Council Res. 911 extends UNOMIL mandate but issues warning about limits of international help.	Continued security threats impede all aid operations outside Monrovia-Buchanan security zone. UN reports 300,000 inaccessible in Liberia, with 414,000 refugees still on standby.

June 94	Disputes between factions within LNTG. Conflict within ULIMO.	UN reports 400,000 inaccessible and more human rights violations.
Aug. 94	LNTG still inoperative. ECOWAS reaffirms Cotonou. Factional fighting worsens, disarmament halted.	Inaccessibility and displacement worsen. Harassment of aid continues.
Sept. 94	Akosombo agreement augments Cotonou. Failed coup in Monrovia. Increased fighting upcountry. UN calls situation desperate.	200,000 more displaced. Phebe Hospital ransacked.
Oct. 94	Downsized UNOMIL extended until Jan. 95.	Aid agencies issue ban on insecure areas.
Nov.-Dec. 94	Accra talks and cease-fire.	UN reports 1.8 million in need.

THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM AT WORK IN THE LIBERIAN CRISIS
(1989-1994)

Member States

Outside Liberia

Security Council   General Assembly   *ECOSOC*

UN Secretary–General

OAU
ECOWAS

DHA
(NY & Geneva)
(*from 4/92*)

UN Humanitarian
Agencies
(NY & Geneva)

Under-Secretary
(political affairs)

In–Country

Special Representative of the Secretary-General
(from 11/92)

UNHCR
(region)

ECOMOG
IGNU/LNTG
NPFL/AFL/ULIMO
and other factions

UNOMIL
(from 9/93)

UNSCOL

Multinational
Institutions
EU, ADB, etc.

UN Humanitarian Agencies
UNDP, UNICEF, WFP, WHO
(weekly general coordination meetings including NGOs)

NGOs
and ICRC

NGOs
and ICRC

Service Delivery to Affected Population

Arrows represent lines of management, influence, and/or
funding described by respondents.

Brussels Consultation Participants

The following attended the Brussels consultation on Liberia November 17-18, 1994; each in his or her personal capacity, and shared their comments on the issues addressed by this report.

From Liberia: Dr. Nathaniel Bartee (MERCI), Dr. Walter Gwenigale (Phebe Hospital), Ms. Dorothy Musuleng Cooper (LNTG Minister of Foreign Affairs), Dr. Amos Sawyer (CEDE and former president of Liberia), Dr. Vemba Kanneh (LNTG Minister of Health).

From Nigeria: Mr. Charles Alao.

From Ghana: Lt. Gen. Arnold Quainoo.

From the donors: Mr. Edgar Thielmann and Mr. Patrick Hoon (ECHO), Dr. Johan Heffinck and Mr. Brian O'Neill (European Commission), Mr. Lowell Lynch (USAID).

From the NGOs: The Rev. Canon Burgess Carr (ICVA), Dr. Richard Joseph (Carter Center, USA), Father Ken Vavrina (CRS), Mr. Jean-Daniel Tauxe (ICRC), The Rev. Hans Lindqvist (LWF).

From the UN system: Mr. Hugh Cholmendley (UNOMIL), Mr. David Bassiouni, Mr. Alan Everest and Mr. Carl Tintsman (UNICEF), General Iain Douglas (UNOMIL), Mr. Christian Lemaire (UNDP).

Other participants: Mr. John Mackinlay (Peacekeeping Support Operations), Dr. Debarati Guha-Sapir (CRED), Prof. Silvio Marcus-Helmons (University of Louvain), M. Phillipe Guillot (University of Lyon).

Thanks are also due to Mr. Jan Eliasson (formerly DHA), Mr. Ross Mountain (UNDP), and Mr. Steve Gleason (DHA) who were unable to attend the Brussels consultation.

About the Humanitarianism and War Project and Authors

Humanitarianism and War Project

Day in and day out, from Yugoslavia to Somalia, Tajikistan to Rwanda, Angola to Haiti, civil strife inflicts widespread human suffering. Even where bloodshed has abated, as in Cambodia, El Salvador, and Mozambique, tensions and the awesome task of rebuilding war-torn countries remain.

How can the international community better protect those caught in national and regional conflicts? How can it more effectively assist nations to turn the corner on violence and become productive societies? Can aid become an effective force for the resolution of conflicts? Must humanitarian action await the request of warring parties or, with the ebbing of East-West tensions, can humane values form the new cornerstone of international relations?

These are some of the questions being addressed by the Humanitarianism and War Project. The initiative is an effort by an independent team of researchers based at Brown University and drawing on the expertise of scholars and practitioners from around the world to assist the international community chart its course in the post-Cold War era. The co-directors of the project are Thomas G. Weiss, associate director of the Watson Institute and associate dean of the faculty of Brown University, and Larry Minear, senior fellow at the Watson Institute and the project's principal researcher.

The second phase (1994-1996) of activities has begun with financial support to date from: three governments (Netherlands, United Kingdom, the United States); three intergovernmental organizations (UNICEF, UNDP, International Organization for Migration); ten nongovernmental organizations (Catholic Relief Services, Danish Refugee Council, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, International Orthodox Christian Charities, the International Rescue Committee, Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Mennonite Central Committee, Norwegian Refu-

gee Council, and World Vision); and three foundations (Pew Charitable Trusts, McKnight Foundation, and U.S. Institute of Peace).

During the first phase (1991-1993), support was provided by two dozen practitioner organizations and interested foundations. These included six intergovernmental organizations (UNICEF, WFP, UNHCR, UNDP, DHA/UNDRO, and the UN Special Program for the Horn of Africa); four governments (Netherlands, United Kingdom, United States, and France); ten nongovernmental groups (Catholic Relief Services, Danish Refugee Council, the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development [Canada], International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, Lutheran World Federation, Lutheran World Relief, Mennonite Central Committee, Norwegian Refugee Council, Oxfam-UK, and Save the Children Fund-UK); and three foundations (Pew Charitable Trusts, Rockefeller Foundation, and Arias Foundation).

To date, the project has conducted field research in the Horn of Africa, the Persian Gulf, Central America, Cambodia, and the former Yugoslavia, publishing a series of case studies with policy recommendations to improve international responses to the human devastation resulting from wars. In addition to journal articles and op-eds, the project has published two books: *Humanitarian Action in Times of War: A Handbook for Practitioners* (also available in Spanish and French), and a volume of collected essays by practitioners, *Humanitarianism Across Borders: Sustaining Civilians in Times of War.* The project also has prepared a training module that is currently in use by UN organizations.

During the present three-year phase, the project will carry out additional research, share findings and recommendations in conferences and training events, and continue an extensive array of publications, including a full-length book interpreting the project's conclusions—*Mercy Under Fire: War and the Global Humanitarian Community*—and a shorter monograph for a wider readership—*Humanitarian Politics.*

During the initial phase of activities, the Refugee Policy Group (RPG) of Washington, D.C. co-sponsored the initiative. For the present phase, activities have been consolidated at the

Watson Institute, with RPG continuing to provide substantive support.

The Authors

Colin Scott, a policy researcher based in Washington D.C., serves as a consultant to the project and was principal author of this study. He spent seven years with Save the Children (UK) including a year managing its programs in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Previously he worked in media relations and is currently researching the role of the media in humanitarian crises for the project.

Larry Minear has worked on humanitarian and development issues since 1972 as a NGO official and consultant to UN organizations and governments. In 1990, he headed an international team that carried out a case study of Operation Lifeline Sudan. With Thomas G. Weiss, he co-directs the Humanitarianism and War Project and also serves as its principal researcher.

Thomas G. Weiss is associate director of the Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies and executive director of the Academic Council on the United Nations System. Previously he held a number of posts at the United Nations and the International Peace Academy. He has written extensively on development, peacekeeping, humanitarian relief, and international organizations.

#16: *United Nations Financing Problems and the New Generation of Peacekeeping and Peace Enforcement* by Anthony McDermott
#17: *German Big Business and Europe in the Twentieth Century* by Volker R. Berghahn, Reinhard Neebe, and Jeffrey J. Anderson
#18: *Humanitarian Action in the Former Yugoslavia: The UN's Role, 1991-1993* by Larry Minear (team leader), Jeffrey Clark, Roberta Cohen, Dennis Gallagher, Iain Guest, and Thomas G. Weiss
#19: *Mexico: The Artist is a Woman* by Lucretia Giese, Carmen Boullosa, Marjorie Agosín, Sandra Berler, Elena Gascón-Vera, Laura Riesco, and Margo Glantz; edited by Regina Cortina
#20: *Humanitarian Action and Security in Liberia 1989-1994* by Colin Scott, in collaboration with Larry Minear and Thomas G. Weiss

About the Organization

Brown University's Thomas J. Watson Jr. Institute for International Studies was established in 1986 to promote the work of students, faculty, visiting scholars, and policy practitioners who are committed to analyzing global problems and developing initiatives that address them. The Watson Institute promotes research, teaching, and public education on international affairs, an area of inquiry that encompasses inter-state relations; transnational, regional and global phenomena; and cross-national, comparative studies.

The Watson Institute supports and coordinates the activities of scholars and practitioners with interdisciplinary approaches to contemporary global problems. Most are social scientists working on political, economic, social or cultural issues, along with scholars from the humanities and the natural sciences whose perspectives contribute directly to the understanding of these issues. The Watson Institute's affiliated centers and programs currently engage in a broad range of activities, from improving the teaching of international studies to contributing to research and public education about international security, the comparative study of development, health, hunger, the United Nations, U.S. foreign policy, and issues arising within Africa, the Americas, Asia, Europe, the Middle East, and the former Soviet Union.

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