Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007

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Executive Summary

In 2007, for the first time in two decades, Sierra Leone conducted a generally peaceful national election without international peacekeeping assistance. This successful election earned the praise of international election observers as free, fair and credible. Most important, these elections were conducted *by* and *for* the people of Sierra Leone, who exercised their right to vote in a generally orderly environment made possible by their own security forces.

Seen within the context of the levels of violence experienced by the people of Sierra Leone in the previous twenty years, the fact that Sierra Leone conducted this generally violence-free election only seven years after the end of a civil war is a remarkable transformation. In addition, whilst poverty levels in the country are still significant, there can be no doubt that most people are far better off in 2008 than they were in the late 1990s. This increase in the ability of the citizens of Sierra Leone to exercise both their democratic franchise and sustain themselves is due to improved personal security that resulted from substantial UN and United Kingdom (UK) intervention and assistance. But the key to this security transformation has been and continues to be the leadership provided by a core of Sierra Leonean Government officials who have sustained the security reform effort over an extended period of time, often in difficult circumstances.

Since the late 1990s, the post-civil war experience of Sierra Leone has become synonymous with a cluster of policies known in the international community as "security sector reform" (SSR). Indeed, Sierra Leone is frequently seen as *the* example of SSR, as it provides many examples of SSR best practices. However, to date, there has been no comprehensive study of how this process was conducted in Sierra Leone between the late 1990s and the 2007 elections.

This narrative documents some of the key aspects of Sierra Leone's security system transformation during the conflict and post-conflict period of 1997-2007. It chronicles the UK Government's intervention, including the evolution of its role from direct implementer to advisor. In addition, it analyses key security issues that arose during the period, some of which still exist today.

Our description of events in Sierra Leone is heavily contextualised: It deals with the specific set of circumstances and conflicts operating in Sierra Leone at the time. It relies heavily on the input of UK and Sierra Leonean policy makers, technical experts and other practitioners – many of whose experiences and observations are interspersed through this narrative – who were making extremely difficult decisions on short notice, in the field and within dysfunctional, at times non-existent, state institutions. As such, this work is deliberately subjective, rather than objective or technical, in tone.

Any policy recommendations drawn from the Sierra Leone experience need to be viewed with caution when applied to other contexts. For example, Sierra Leone's entire infrastructure, including buildings and records, had been destroyed during the civil war. Whilst the Government of Sierra Leone, with the substantial support of the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and the UK, was struggling to establish basic security across the country, it was simultaneously restructuring basically non-existent intelligence and security systems. This is very rare in post-conflict periods, indeed, in development environments in general, and may explain why, in the case of Sierra Leone's security system, *initial* SSR was a top-to-bottom process. There are many reasons for this, but two of the most important were the urgency of the tasks required in the capital of Freetown and the fact that international advisers had

little technical understanding of regional and local security actors outside the formal government structure located in the capital. Thus, any conclusions drawn as to the implementation of SSR top-to-bottom reform efforts in other contexts should recognise that Sierra Leone's specific needs and the understanding (or lack thereof) of international actors at the time dictated this approach. Other contexts may call for alternative strategies.

We have consciously chosen to characterise Sierra Leone's security reform process as a transformation, rather than simply the reform of one government sector. While development policy makers and practitioners tend to use the words "reform", "SSR" and "security sector" to describe important changes in the provision of security, what happened in Sierra Leone in the past 10 years has gone far beyond the "re-forming" of one sector.

Comprehensive transformation of security structures in Sierra Leone during the past 10 years spread across a breadth of institutions. It reached deep into internal and external security institutions, altered command structures, provided top-to-bottom training and established staffing policies, procedures and behaviour. It created agencies to coordinate security information and facilitated a two-way flow of that security information from the community level up to the President. It also reached out to the people of Sierra Leone, who had experienced horrific violence at the hands of their own security forces during the war, and began the difficult task of reversing public suspicion of security forces and involving citizens in their own security.

Thus, in its title and narrative, this book stresses that what happened in Sierra Leone was not merely sector reform, but a comprehensive transformation of the objectives of security provision, the mission, management and coordination of security. While the term 'SSR' is used here when discussions centre on international debates (conceptual debates in particular), we posit that the history of the security transformation process in Sierra Leone since 1997 deserves the more comprehensive term.

The period under review – 1997-2007 – can be divided into a series of distinct phases, each with its own changing set of policies and responses to changing context. Events in the first period, 1997-2002, were determined by the overriding context of open conflict. The state of emergency in Sierra Leone at the time left no space for sitting back and developing a strategy; the country was in urgent need of support. Thus, programmes started in collaboration between the UK and the Government of Sierra Leone were shaped as responses to consecutive crises until 2002, when the war and accompanying disarmament and demobilization were declared over. During this period, the lack of any capacity to oversee the armed forces (which had staged two coups since 1992) and the inability to properly coordinate responses to security threats and collect intelligence were addressed by the establishment of the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme (SILSEP). Given that police primacy in addressing internal security threats had been the priority of President Kabbah since 1996, the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) were given a new ethos of Local Needs Policing, gender-based violence was addressed through Family Support Units, and vehicles, communication equipment and uniforms were provided. Finally, the judiciary was supported through the Law Development Programme.

At the time, as a result of the context in which operations began and because of the personalities involved, integration of these programmes did not occur. During this period, there was no coherent concept of the security system (or sector), and thus, no organised sense of which institutions needed to be reformed. However, a sense of general direction was emerging; it began to take on a life of its own in subsequent phases of security transformation/SSR. Thus, this initial transformation phase, from 1997 to 2002, was characterised by beginning a security transformation process in a conflict environment, which subsided into a ceasefire situation and then shortly afterwards, reverted back to a conflict. The conflict ended officially in January 2002, although there were significant areas of the countryside that were not under the direct control of the Government. The first post-war presidential and parliamentary elections were held that year, made possible by deployment of what was the biggest UN peacekeeping mission (17,000 foreign troops) to date and assisted by the SLP. The election results

were a triumph for President Kabbah, who by then had come to be seen as the man who brought peace to Sierra Leone after a decade of war.

These elections marked the beginning of the second phase of Sierra Leone's security transformation process. In 2002, the nascent agencies and programmes that had helped win the war were faced with a set of challenges very different from the emergency operational planning they had conducted until then. Emerging issues included substantial rivalries between security agencies and ministries and the thorny issue of whether the UK should continue to perform direct military operational command duties or adopt an advisory role. The Government of Sierra Leone also had to deal with large numbers of armed former combatants without a functioning military and only a partly-developed SLP.

An additional key development in this phase centred on producing (and linking) security strategy and development objectives for Sierra Leone. In practical terms, this was reflected in the completion of the partly-interrelated Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Security Sector Review processes, where the latter was reflected in the former's Pillar One, which promotes good governance, peace and security.

The importance of the Security Sector Review cannot be underestimated. First, it gave much needed conceptual clarity to the institutions involved in or contributing to the security system, institutions that had a stake in defining what security meant for Sierra Leone. Second, the Office of National Security (ONS), established in 1999 as a mechanism for coordination of input from Sierra Leone's security institutions, matured during this phase and became one of the most capable and trusted security institutions in the country. Third, the fact that the Security Sector Review was integrated into the PRSP aligned security and development to a degree that they had not been before in Sierra Leone or elsewhere. Thus, the period of 2002-2005 was characterised by the development of SSR as a governance and policy tool.

The final period of study, 2005 to 2007, was a consolidation and development phase culminating in the successful general elections of 2007. In 2005, the UK

moved its Department for International Development (DfID) offices from London to Sierra Leone's capital of Freetown. One of the most important innovations of UK support for security system transformation at the time was the broadening of its support to the justice sector as a whole, rather than to the police more narrowly. Prior to the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP), little assistance had been given to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and prison services, in particular.

Questions emerging regarding the future direction of security system transformation in Sierra Leone also arose during this period. The sustainability of some of the measures deemed necessary during the war was questioned more strongly. One of the core issues was the affordability, future size and shape of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). Whether the country needed a military capability at all had been questioned for many years; indeed, the Security Sector Review, produced between 2003 and 2005, identified the main threats to the country as being generated internally. Issues raised in the Security Sector Review continue to be of relevance to this day.

What does the experience of transforming the security system in Sierra Leone tell us about SSR? What worked and what did not work? First, perceptions of the people of Sierra Leone, the most important stakeholder for both Sierra Leone and UK Governments, indicate that there has been a significant positive change in levels of security on the ground. This was made clear by a survey of the general population in a number of districts that was carried out as part of this study, the results of which are included in this narrative.

Other conclusions resulting from the 1997-2007 Sierra Leone security system transformation process are:

- Getting the right people on the ground and taking action is more valuable than detailed, extensive and time-consuming planning. When capable people are empowered to make decisions, they devise ways to work together. As a consequence, subsequent reforms are more effective.

- National ownership is critical, even when there is a relatively weak government at the start of a process. One of the most positive elements of the UK intervention was evolution of the role of most UK staff as advisers, not as implementers. As leaders of actual security system reform processes, Sierra Leonean staff was endowed with confidence and provided the necessary space to build institutions in a politically tense environment.

- The development and maintenance of a good, national team is critical, since the turnover of international advisers is chronically high. However, this relatively simple statement belies the difficulties of recruiting and retaining qualified national staff, particularly given historically inadequate conditions of service.

- Sierra Leone lacked a SSR strategy at the beginning of the security system transformation process. There was a good reason this: The Government of Sierra Leone was effectively at war; individuals needed to make rapid decisions without being constrained by strategies. At the time of this writing, there are ongoing efforts to develop an exit strategy for international financial and programme support. At this stage in Sierra Leone's security transformation process, it has become evident that in order to ensure a sustainable future for the security system in Sierra Leone, the country needs a "late stage" strategy in its security system transformation process that addresses, *inter alia,* post-donor assistance issues.

- Reliance on a small pool of nationals is positive in terms of leadership, but negative in terms of sustainability and potential risk. The risk is that a professional security system emerges that can then be misused if the country becomes unstable. If the number of qualified staff does not reach a critical mass, it may not be adequate to sustain progress in unstable periods.

One of the core questions for security system transformation – or SSR – in light of the Sierra Leone experience – is whether or not SSR can be referred to as a coherent cluster of activities. As the experience in Sierra Leone attests, there is an element of SSR as a post-hoc rationalisation of events that happen on the ground. It can be argued that initial SSR efforts, particularly those that

occur in an immediate post-conflict environment, are, by definition, fragmented and incoherent. Only after experience on the ground can enough specific context and information be gathered and analysed in order to begin the construction of a coherent and appropriate set of SSR strategies.

SSR was a relatively new approach for development agencies in the late 1990s; the international community was only beginning to come to terms with what SSR actually entailed. Evolution of international approaches to SSR and transformation of the security system in Sierra Leone were occurring at the same time. Thus, Sierra Leone provided the international community with an on-the-ground example of the need to allow enough *ad hoc* reform to occur in order to construct subsequent institutional linkages and integrated reform strategies and programmes. Early reform activities conducted by international and national actors in Sierra Leone contributed to international learning about the timing of SSR and the fundamental need to structure SSR based upon the foundation of context. Thus, in many ways, while SSR came to shape Sierra Leone, the transformation process in Sierra Leone came to shape international approaches to SSR – as a concept, a set of policies and an integrated set of programmatic approaches.

SSR is a political project for national and international politicians, policy makers and practitioners that requires a long-term commitment by both national actors and international agencies. It is not for the faint of heart; the effort requires endless reserves of patience and perseverance. The experience of Sierra Leone shows how dedicated, capable people who are provided political and professional space to restructure and reform their security institutions and foster informed public discourse can achieve a great deal under challenging circumstances.

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

ACPP	Africa Conflict Prevention Pool
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AFRSL	Armed Forces of Sierra Leone
AIG	Assistant Inspector-General
APC	All People's Congress
B2B	Back to basics
BMATT	British Military Training Advisory Team
CCSSP	Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CDF	Civil Defence Force
CDS	Chief of Defence Staff
CHAD	Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department
CHISECs	Chieftaincy Security Committee
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CISU	Central intelligence and Security Unit
CPDTF	Commonwealth Police Development Task Force
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DfID	Department for International Development
DG	Director-General
DIG	Deputy Inspector-General
DISECs	District Security Committee
DSRSG	Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ESF	ECOWAS Standby Force
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
FISU	Force Intelligence and Security Unit
FSU	Family Support Unit

GAF	Guinean Armed Forces
GCPP	Global Conflict Prevention Pool
GF	Government Forces
GID	Government and Institutions Department
HBTC	Holding and Basic training Centre
IGP	Inspector-General of Police
IRC	International Rescue Committee
ISD	internal security division
ISS	Intelligence and Security Service
JFC	Joint Force Command
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
JSC	Joint Support Command
JSDP	Justice Sector Development Programme
JTF	Joint Task Force
JTFC	Joint Task Force Commander
LCU	Local Command Unit
LDP	Law Development Programme
LNP	Local Needs Policing
LO	Liaison Officer
LPPB	Local Policing Partnership Board
IMATT	International Military Training Advisory Team
MACP	Military Aid to the Civil Power
MDAs	Ministries, Departments and Agencies
MIA	Ministry of Internal Affairs
MATT	Military Training Advisory Team
MODAT	Ministry of Defence Advisory Team
MoD	Ministry of Defence
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding.
MRP	Military Reintegration Plan
NCDDR	National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officers
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NEC	National Electoral Commission
NEO	Non-Combatant Evacuation Operation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
NSA	National Security Adviser
NSC	National security Council
NSCCG	National Security Council Coordinating Group
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
OLRT	Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team
ONS	Office of National Security
ORBAT	Order of Battle
OSD	Operational Support Division
PRA	Participatory Rural Appraisal
POCDI&PA	Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence, Internal and Presidential Affairs

PROSECs	Provincial District Security Committee
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
Psyops	Psychological Operations
RSLMF	Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SILSEP	Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLE	Spearhead Land Element
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SSD	Special Security Division
STTT	Short Term Training Team
TDF	Territorial Defence Force
THC	Temporary Holding Centre
UN	United Nations
UN CIVPOL	United Nations Civilian Police Force
UNAMSIL	United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIOSIL	United Nations Observer Mission

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Introduction

Since independence from Britain in 1961, the ethos of Sierra Leone's political system has been characterised by centralisation of power and resources in Freetown coupled with a deep dualism between Freetown and the rest of the country. After the rule of the Margai family ended in elections in 1967, the then mayor of Freetown, Siaka Stevens, became Prime Minister. Following a series of military interventions, Stevens assumed full presidential powers in 1968 and effectively held sway until his appointed successor, Major General Joseph Momoh, took over following a one-party referendum in 1985. (Stevens was 80 years old at the time.) This one-party state was marked by further centralisation of resources and power in Freetown and a growing alienation, amongst youth in particular, in the countryside.

In the face of increasing political pressure, Momoh eventually established a constitutional review commission, approved by Parliament in July 1991, which recommended re-establishment of a multi-party democracy. However, 1991 also saw the formation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) by Foday Sankoh (who was directly supported by Charles Taylor in neighbouring Liberia) and increased levels of violence, particularly in areas around the Liberian border. The stated aim of the RUF was an end to the corrupt Government of Momoh,

but in reality this mission was quickly overtaken by the desire to control natural resources, notably diamonds.

Meanwhile, in Freetown in 1992, another military coup brought a group of young officers, headed by Captain Valentine Strasser, to power. The rule of the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), headed by Strasser and later his deputy, Julius Bio, although ambitious and generally supported by the population, proved largely ineffective. The consequence was an increase in RUF control in the east of the country until the South African mercenary firm Executive Outcomes was contracted by the Government in 1995 to drive out the rebels. Eventually, growing internal and external pressure to hold democratic elections persuaded the NPRC to hand over power to a civilian government. Following two conferences in the Bintumani Hotel in Freetown, in which civil society representatives played an important role expressing views of the population, elections were held in 1996[1]. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah of the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) was elected President. Two months later, discussions between the SLPP and RUF began and eventually led to the Abidjan Peace Accords of November 1996. The unwillingness of either party to agree to disarmament or monitoring arrangements led to a breakdown of peace by early 1997.

Horrific atrocities against civilians in rural areas were reported throughout 1998. RUF and former AFRC soldiers seeking to impose their will in the countryside perpetrated many of these atrocities, but there were also reports of acts of violence by the Civil Defence Force (CDF) and the Nigerian Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). In effect, rural Sierra Leone was prey to a variety of armed groups, having little coherence and no formal status. The Government of Sierra Leone, although internationally regarded as legitimate by virtue of its electoral mandate, depended on Nigerian troops, the CDF, and Government Forces referred to as the 'Loyal Troops'. This latter faction was composed in large part of loyal soldiers and police trained by ECOMOG in Lunghi, whilst Kabbah was in Freetown. Under the command of ECOMOG, they constituted the front lines in the fight to retake Freetown in February 1998.

In June 1998, the UN established an Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL), composed of 40 military observers to oversee the beginning of disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR). From July 1998 to January 1999, 1,600 combatants went through the process. However, in early January 1999, AFRC and RUF combatants nearly seized control of Freetown, the first time in the civil war that Freetown and its population had come under rebel attack. Appalling atrocities were inflicted on civilians and widespread destruction of property took place. An estimated 3-5000 people are believed to have been killed or abducted during this period; hundreds were mutilated.

The spiralling decline in security implicit in Sierra Leone's descent into virtual anarchy is critical to the context of what has been achieved in Sierra Leone since the end of the war. Such a descent into anarchy as Sierra Leone experienced in the 1990s cannot be reversed by a three- or five-year development programme. This reality is at the heart of the group of reforms that eventually produced SSR – or, in our terms, security system transformation – in Sierra Leone. The pattern of the country's recovery from civil war and transformation of its security structures began with fire-fighting (immediate responses to threats despite the lack of comprehensive policies and strategies), moved to medium-term reorganisation and reform and finally, to long-term commitment to security transformation by Sierra Leone and its international advisors. This narrative explains how this evolution occurred and the consequences of actions taken.

This narrative reflects research conducted by the following members of the project's Working Group - key actors directly involved in the Sierra Leone security system transformation process:

- Desmond Buck, Assistant Inspector-General South, Sierra Leone Police.
- Emmanuel Osho Coker, Secretary to the President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, former Director of the Public Sector Reform Unit, Sierra Leone.
- Kellie Conteh, National Security Coordinator, Office of National Security, Sierra Leone.

- Kadi Fakondo, Assistant Inspector-General Training, Sierra Leone Police.
- Aldo Gaeta, former Civilian Adviser to the Sierra Leone Ministry of Defence.
- Garth Glentworth, Senior Governance Adviser, DfID.
- Brigadier Barry Le Grys, Former Commander International Military Advisory Training Team.
- Rosalind Hanson-Alp, West Africa Programme Coordinator, Conciliation Resources.
- Anthony Howlett-Bolton, Strategic Justice and Security Adviser, Justice Sector Development Programme.
- Al-Hassan Kondeh, former Deputy Secretary of Policy and Procurement in the MoD, Sierra Leone.
- Major General Alfred Nelson-Williams, Chief of Defence Staff, Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces.
- Christopher Rampe, former Adviser to the Office of National Security and the Central Intelligence and Security Unit.
- Mark White, former SILSEP Programme Manager and SSR Adviser, DfID.

The Working Group has met twice, in Freetown and in London. In addition to these meetings and general input from the Working Group, a comprehensive programme of discussions, seminars and interviews involving a variety of experts and practitioners were conducted.

Our study discusses the specific security reform cross-cutting issues that ran through the different phases of Sierra Leone's security transformation. **Chapter 1** looks at the origins of security system transformation in Sierra Leone and provides an overview of the contextual situation during the war itself. It also discusses the initial Sierra Leone Police (SLP) transformation measures and attempts at dealing with the legal backlog that was paralyzing the judiciary. The chapter then describes the development of the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the reestablishment of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF). Finally, it also covers initiatives in the field of intelligence, with the development of the Office of National Security (ONS) and the Central Intelligence and Security Unit (CISU), along with the formation of a locally-based intelligence system.

Chapter 2 discusses three sets of security institutions – police and justice, military and intelligence – and looks at the beginning of the articulation of an SSR concept in Sierra Leone and the increased interaction amongst these institutions. This increased interaction was due, in part, to the changed security context after the 2002 peace arrangements and to the growing realisation on the ground that there were overlaps in activities that should be removed or resolved. Core features of this period were the expansion of the SLP beyond the Government-controlled areas surrounding Freetown, Bo, Kenema, Moyamba, Bonthe, Pujehun and Port Loko, the comprehensive reform and retraining of the RSLAF, establishment of an effective MoD HQ and development of a workable intelligence architecture. These ideas are expanded in **Chapter 3**, which deals with the consolidation of these activities leading up to the 2007 elections and the expansion of the police agenda into justice issues with the introduction of the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP).

Chapter 4 looks at the overarching, cross-cutting issues that underpin the reform activities outlined in the previous three chapters. Essentially, this analytical chapter looks at trends and issues affected by the differing contexts at each point in the security transformation process that continued throughout the period to the present time. These cross-cutting issues include core ideas about sustainability, accountability and finance, as well as the critical issues of oversight and the balance between individuals, processes and institutions. Finally, **Chapter 5** outlines findings from a survey of 250 respondents across Sierra Leone to assess current perceptions of security among the general population – those who are ultimately to benefit from the security system transformation process. The survey was based on the rationale that perceptions are as important to overall security as actual security practices. The survey concludes that improvements in security provision have taken place within the security system transformation that are recognised and acknowledged by the people, but that significant challenges remain to be dealt with by the SLP, RSLAF and the ONS.

Security System Transformation Begins, 1997-2002

In the late 1990s, certainly post-1997, the context within which security reforms had to take place was characterised by continuing conflict, state collapse, military instability and lack of political control in many parts of the country, especially outside Freetown. At the same time, the Government of Sierra Leone was faced with a number of external agencies scrambling to assist a democratically-elected Government in its attempt to stabilise the country and make peace. It was in this context of the Government of Sierra Leone facing a succession of crises that the UK began to develop an extensive response, recognising that without President Kabbah's return from exile in Conakry, any long-term development strategy would be futile; without stability and relative security, economic, political and social development could not happen.

At the outset, the UK acknowledged that security was critical and, as one senior adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone, the current National Security Coordinator, noted: "In our [Sierra Leone's] case the entry point was clearly the police and armed forces. We need to understand that SSR is a political process; the entry point into SSR is based on the circumstances in a country. You don't need an overarching strategy to start"[2]. Thus, while security was recognized as a precondition for development, provision of security was still

significantly distanced from introducing a coherent programme of SSR. At this time, security-related programming was a response to immediate needs rather than a detailed overarching strategy. As one DfID official stated: "The great thing was that we got on with it, supported the Government [of Sierra Leone] and avoided obsessions about planning at the expense of actually doing things"[3].

This chapter documents the initiatives taken and programmes implemented from the late 1990s until 2002, when the war in Sierra Leone and accompanying disarmament and demobilization was declared over. It includes an overview of the context in Sierra Leone in which reforms began as a number of discrete and comprehensive programmes in response to lack of coordination of security institutions and intelligence agencies, absence of executive control of the armed forces through ministerial oversight and a police force that had almost ceased to exist.

The Security Context in the Late 1990s and Early 2000s

Following the 1996 Abidjan Peace Accords, not long after Sierra Leone's democratic elections in 1997, a series of UK-funded programmes were launched to support the rebuilding of Sierra Leone's parliament, judiciary, police and public sector and training the military. The budget for armed forces support was minimal – around £150,000. This initial funding occurred at a time where, according to the High Commissioner at the time, there was no "integrated funding and we could only draw from limited FCO [Foreign and Commonwealth Office] funding. There was no Overseas Development Assistance or full MoD commitment other than providing personnel"[4]. In May 1997, however, another coup, staged by Major Johnny Paul Koroma[5], led to the ouster of President Kabbah, who was exiled to Conakry in Guinea. A military junta was established under the name of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), which invited the RUF to participate in the Government. All reform initiatives ground to a halt.

It was ECOMOG, an ECOWAS-mandated force led by Nigeria, which became decisive in combating rebel forces in Sierra Leone and in "kick[ing] the junta

[AFRC] out of Freetown"[6] in February 1998, allowing Kabbah back into the country. Reform initiatives quickly resumed. In October of that same year, a DfID-funded preliminary diagnostic study of the civil service was conducted[7]. Around the same time Brigadier General Mitikishe Maxwell Khobe, Sierra Leone's Nigerian Chief of Defence Staff (a loan service officer), called for external assistance to build up a "small, highly mobile, properly equipped Armed Forces that is highly motivated, disciplined, loyal and committed to the State"[8].

While President Kabbah was exiled in Conakry, serious talks ensued about disbanding the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) altogether and expanding the police force[9]. The fact that the armed forces had been discredited so comprehensively in the eyes of the public substantiated these considerations. "There was a strong feeling from people around Kabbah to do away with the army. The argument was that if you looked at history, military coups had prevailed. We came back [to Freetown] with those ideas still going around"[10].

Indeed, for a short period of time, the army was in fact disbanded, only to be reinstated in December 1999 at a critical Cabinet meeting. "The Government simply could not afford at the time to let all these ex-combatants out", one participant in these debates noted, "the decision was taken in that meeting to take the army onboard again"[11].

Khobe at the time argued that it would be unwise to disband a body of men who were battle tested and hardened[12]. "His line was clear: Better to keep them in the army, being fed and trained, rather than becoming another band of rebels to fight. Don't forget that Johnny Paul [Koroma] and [Foday] Sankoh were returned to Sierra Leone in 1999 to participate as members of Government. A lot of the people [including past and serving soldiers] were in fact loyal to Johnny Paul"[13].

A military plan was produced, identifying the ideal size of Sierra Leone's army to be 6,000[14]. While ideas on the table could not be implemented due to ongoing conflict, they formed the core of a post-war plan for the stabilization of Sierra

Leone. One informed outsider observed: "The fact that he was overthrown, that he came back and that he still wanted to work with them [the armed forces] helped Kabbah to gain support. They said, 'This man, even though he's back, he still wants to work with them, let's give him a chance'"[15]. All of this took place against a background of continuing conflict leading up to the rebel invasion of Freetown in early January 1999.

During the conflict, Kabbah more or less controlled two separate sets of military actors, the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring group (ECOMOG) and the Civil Defence Force (CDF)[16]. Reports from around 2000 suggest that the CDF played a key role interdicting RUF supply lines in the south. These units received very little material support from the Government; yet the Kamajor[17] units were regarded as amongst the most effective (though never completely trusted) forces available to the Government. In 1999 the RSLMF consisted of the equivalent of two battalions armed with AK-47s, Chinese munitions and traditional hunting weapons; the rest of the armed forces had either been discredited during military coups or the AFRC rule of 1997-98. Uniforms were non-existent; equipment was in poor repair. Since the units relied on ECOMOG for combat support, their role was restricted mainly to guard duty.

In June 1999 the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme (SILSEP) team of three UK personnel were deployed to Freetown tasked to produce a study of the level defence and security management needs of the Government of Sierra Leone. By July 1999, UK political involvement and logistical support to ECOMOG in the form of weapons, ammunition and vehicles had produced at least a partial victory over the RUF. This led to the Lomé Peace Agreement, which turned into a milestone in the development towards peace. In its wake, a number of different SSR and development activities ensued, taking advantage of the relative stability of the country. However, these were all taking place within a very shaky power-sharing arrangement between the RUF/AFRC and SLPP. It soon became clear that "he [Sankoh] couldn't cope with the situation. He would adopt two different poses, either slump on the sofa and pretend he was asleep or he would shout and scream. The only people he showed respect

were the people who stood up to him. He would shout about everybody letting him down. I stopped him in full flow: 'Hang on a minute, Mr. Sankoh, British taxpayers have just paid for refurbishing your house, the bed you're sleeping on.' Sankoh replied: 'And it's not even that comfortable,' and I said: 'Then give it back!' People pandered to the delusions that he had about himself"[18].

While Sankoh and members of the RUF took up key positions in the new administration, including membership on the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR), it became apparent that they did not intend to honour the Lomé Peace Agreement in the long run and "Sankoh became more aggressive"[19]. This volatile post-conflict political environment was also affected by the deployment of a new peacekeeping force, UNAMSIL, which had expanded from the UNOMSIL, took over from ECOMOG and almost immediately inherited a hostile situation.

The turning point and terminal blow to the RUF came in early 2000, when people marched to Sankoh's house to protest RUF activities and approximately 20 demonstrators were shot by RUF supporters. The SLP captured Sankoh on 17 May. He was subsequently handed over to Government Forces and together with several senior RUF commanders taken into custody. The RUF were expelled from the Government. This led to a stalemate with the RUF, which had come to believe that they were invincible and in effective control of most of the country outside of Freetown.

At this time, UNAMSIL was not able to exercise any effective control outside of the city. The context was one of widespread deterioration in security (there were several incidents involving the humiliation of UN military personnel) and a real danger of UNAMSIL collapse. The UK's intervention acted as a catalyst for a new ceasefire, officially brokered on 10 November 2000, this time signed in Abuja.

Another key event occurred when Issa Hassan Sesay took over RUF leadership. Following events of May 2000, Sankoh was incarcerated by the Government at an undisclosed location in Freetown. In the meantime, the Government,

supported by international actors, sought to find an RUF successor to Sankoh, preferably someone amenable to negotiation:

"The Government of Sierra Leone started to send feelers out – if Sankoh was not available, who would be? There was a suggestion that Issa Sesay might be the one. Eventually, it was decided that a letter would be sent to Sesay from Sankoh. We took Sankoh to Lunghi by helicopter, blind-folded, and placed him in the Presidential suite – he thought he was on the way to becoming the President! At Lunghi he was seen by President [Olusegun] Obasanjo of Nigeria and President [Alpha Oumar] Konaré of Mali, then the Chairman of ECOWAS. In the end, Sanoh signed a letter which effectively handed the command of the RUF to Issa; he signed off. Issa Sesay negotiated the RUF into DDR and massive numbers went into the process. A lot of weapons were surrendered by the RUF from August [2001] to January 2002"[20].

Another observer close to the events has noted that "by 2001, most of the steam had been taken out of the RUF, especially when [Sankoh's] followers started to agree with Sesay. The germ of politicizing the RUF came with him"[21]. While Sierra Leone of the late 1990s thus remained highly unstable politically, indeed, the country was still at war, reform initiatives were taking root and moving ahead with Kabbah having returned to power for good in 1998.

SSR and the Security System in Sierra Leone

One of the key characteristics of the security system transformation in Sierra Leone is the idea that Sierra Leone shaped the concept of SSR as it was evolving in the international community at the time just as much as SSR came to shape Sierra Leone.

While the term 'security sector reform' is used in both Sierra Leone and UK Government documentation, there was no clearly concept outlined by DfID of what SSR entailed when SILSEP was initiated in 1999. According to one definition, SSR only dealt with the management of security and defence and

specifically the institutions overseeing and managing their actions, including the National Security Adviser's office. An alternative definition discussed at the time included the intelligence services as well as those institutions coordinating the institutions that provide security, such as the National Security Adviser's Office. One of the key elements in the development of security system transformation in Sierra Leone was the expansion away from these narrow definitions to encompass a broader range of defence and security activities that could be supported by DfID.

It was a modification of the 1980 Overseas Development Act by then Secretary of State for International Development Clare Short that allowed DfID to engage in not only expanding the concept but also the implementation of security-related programming. Any assistance given at the time would have to fall under section 1 of the 1980 Overseas Development Act, i.e., the promotion of the development or maintenance of the economy of a country, or the welfare of its people. The question faced by DfID in the spring of 2000 was whether contributing to the establishment of the infrastructure for military reintegration, the relocation of a new, civilian-led MoD and the establishment of accountable intelligence services were likely to have this effect. As expressed by the Treasury Solicitor in 2000, the rationale was that "the welfare of the people of Sierra Leone will be placed on surer foundation if the armed forces and intelligence services are properly established within the democratic framework of the country rather than being allowed to operate outside it"[22].

Avoiding DfID's direct involvement in working with the armed forces and intelligence agencies, which was seen as inappropriate for development agencies, was to be ensured by seeing its contribution as "ring-fenced to advisory and implementation posts within the Ministry of Defence and subordinate headquarters"[23]. However, as one anonymous DfID officer noted in one of the early drafts of the proposed role of a Military Assistance Training Team (MATT) in Sierra Leone: "In principle, we can support MoD in exercising civilian control of the military but *not* the military itself. Once we have the terms of reference we can consider whether to make the case to senior management. I am *not* optimistic"[24].

Steering clear of operational matters and logistical support was one way for DfID to draw a clear line between what it could and could not get involved in. The reluctance within DfID to fully engage in defence and national security initiatives constituted a tension between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UK. At the same time, there was a clear recognition that transforming Sierra Leone's security system required the application of precisely the same principles and processes that apply to any other public sector reform programme. This tension has been characteristic of the entire security transformation process in Sierra Leone.

In fact, within Sierra Leone, the origins of SSR were not in 'hard security', but public administration and civil service reform, i.e. governance. In 1998, as Kabbah returned to Freetown, the Government of Sierra Leone contacted DfID and requested assistance in conducting a review of the civilian management of the armed forces. This included legal and constitutional requirements and the relationship between the Ministry of Defence (MoD) and the Defence Headquarters. Following two joint DfID, FCO and UK-MoD missions in 1998, a security sector package was designed with input from all three departments. The total expected cost to DfID was £1.6m. The simple reason for this focus on the military and its management was its historical role in staging coups in the country.

While this was the initial point of departure in June 1999, the SILSEP team of two, embedded in the MoD with four Sierra Leonean staff, soon realised that it would be impractical to restructure the MoD alone. Reforms were required across the Defence structure and included the need for a Defence Review to identify roles and to inform a structure for the armed forces down to sub-unit level. They proposed an expansion in terms of reference to UK MoD, FCO and DfID. This recommendation was accepted by MoD and FCO; initially, it was not supported by DfID.

In mid-2001 it was observed that the SILSEP project would benefit from a more holistic approach. This would mean more coordination and interface with other governance and security system transformation activities, as well as more

engagement with Parliament, civil society and the media. (Parliamentary and civil society oversight of the armed forces as well as activities of the intelligence community and ONS have remained weak points.) By the time SILSEP was initiated in 1999, civil society's role in security-related transformation had not been formally defined, and engagement was *ad hoc*. Comprehensive, structured involvement of civil society in the security system transformation process only began in 2006. However, it is a point worth emphasizing that it was recognized early on that checks and balances would be necessary if the democratic process in Sierra Leone was to be enhanced.

At the same time, with the UK Government's 2000 White Paper on International Development, *Eliminating World Poverty*, it was recognised that an essential condition for sustained development and poverty elimination was simply that security is decisive[25]. At the core of this standpoint was an acknowledgement that without effective civil control over accountable and effective armed forces, long-term peace and stability would be difficult to achieve and sustain, in all probability impossible. This was also backed up by significant evidence on the ground that the general population understandably put 'security' at or near the top of their concerns.

Reforming the Police and Legal Sector

Prior to civil service reform in Sierra Leone, which began in late 1998, work was initiated with the police and the legal sector. However, this work consisted of a series of uncoordinated initiatives. A key element of these initial reforms was re-establishing a functional Sierra Leone Police (SLP), not just to reinstate security for the civilian population, but to re-establish state legitimacy in terms of providing internal security. Indeed, those considerations were behind an earlier Government of Sierra Leone request to DfID in 1996 for total reform of the SLP by the newly-elected President Kabbah[26]. Project appraisal activities began in 1997, but were disrupted by the AFRC coup[27].

In August 1998, President Kabbah announced the Sierra Leone Policing Charter, seen below in Box 1, which established the primacy of the police in the provision of security for the people of Sierra Leone and acted as a catalyst for police reform.

Box 1: The Sierra Leone Policing Charter – August 1998

Introduction
My Government wants to create a police service which will be a credit to the Nation.

The Role of the Police
The Sierra Leone Police will assist in returning our communities to peace and prosperity by acting in a manner which will:

- eventually remove the need for the deployment of military and para-military forces in our villages, communities and city streets,
- ensure the safety and security of all people and their property,
- respect the human rights of all individuals,
- prevent and detect crime by using the most effective methods which can be made available to them,
- take account of local concerns through community consultation,
- at all levels be free from corruption.

Equal Opportunities
The personnel policies of the Sierra Leone Police will be the same for all members, regardless of sex or ethnic origin. All recruitment, training, postings, promotions and opportunities for development will be based on a published equal opportunities policy.

The Role of My Government
The Government will do all in its power to ensure that the Sierra Leone Police is:

- directed and managed in accordance with The Constitution,
- locally managed so as to ensure that community views are always taken into consideration,
- adequately resourced and financed,
- well equipped to undertake its duties,
- professionally trained,
- dynamically led, and
- that the terms and conditions of service for members of the Sierra Leone Police reflect the importance of the task they perform.

The Role of the People
In order that our police officers can successfully fulfil our expectations, it is essential that all people of Sierra Leone help and support them at all times.

Conclusion
Our aim is to see a reborn Sierra Leone Police, which will be a **force for good** in our Nation.

His Excellency the President Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabbah

Significantly, in the same year and at this very early stage of the police reform process, the future policing doctrine of Sierra Leone was first defined as Local Needs Policing, which has guided police reform to this day. In its basic form, Local Needs Policing was defined as: "Policing that meets the expectations and need of the local community and reflects national standards and objectives"[28]. Further details on how the concept of Local Needs Policing was developed in Sierra Leone are provided in Box 2, as recalled by Adrian Horn, one of the key advisers to the SLP in the early stages of the transformation process, who initiated the concept.

Box 2: Local Needs Policing[29]

"We needed some simple, key statements on what the Government and the police wanted and valued, and a policing model for the future.

"My previous involvements in developing change were usually constrained by systems and procedures which only allowed tinkering and not 'blue sky' thinking. This new challenge was different. We knew that future policing in Sierra Leone had to be based in the community and work within the community. It had to address a number of fundamental issues.

"There was a need for a complete restructuring of the police service in Sierra Leone. Restructuring necessitates not merely the drawing up of a new organisational structure. To achieve sustainable change, there has to be alteration in the attitudes and behaviour of all police officers, together with a critical shift in the management culture of the organisation.

"Everybody who we met and talked to from outside Sierra Leone all had different experiences of policing and worked with different models. Often these were called 'Community Policing,' but there were as many models and concepts of 'Community Policing' as there were people. What was needed was a model that encapsulated all the good things that were suitable to the needs of Sierra Leone – not a model from outside that may not work.

"We were also conscious that, despite Sierra Leone being a relatively small country, there were great variations in the style of policing required in particular areas and at different times. The policing requirements in Kono were very different to those required in Freetown or Bo. The style of policing would have to respond to changing circumstances and needs as time went on.

"So, stripping it all back to basics, and applying KISS (Keep It Simple) principles, a system of policing was required that met the needs and expectations of the local community. However, there had to be standards and compliance with policy, systems and procedures. The second key element was that such a system of policing

Box 2: *Continued*

had to be delivered within national standards. The third element was to determine the most efficient and effective management structure and working practices that delivered this model of policing.

"What shall we call it? This was important. The name would 0A an important marketing tool, and move everyone away from their own pre-conceived ideas about community policing. It would help ensure that a model was developed that was based on what Sierra Leone required, not what a 'foreign' model dictated.

"Applying KISS, the name was obvious – Local Needs Policing, with the simple acronym LNP. Putting these elements together, we can define LNP as:

'A system of policing that meets the needs and expectations of the local community, delivered within a national framework of standards and guidelines.'

"The basic organisational structure was the Local Command Unit (LCU): 'A body of people, effectively and efficiently managed, accountable and with devolved authority, and designed to deliver the policing needs of the local community'.

"Within these two simple definitions were all the elements required to rebuild the Sierra Leone Police and address the many concerns that had been expressed".

In 1998, a survey conducted by the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF) (summarised in Table 1) confirmed that the SLP were not well regarded by the public.

Although this is a relatively small survey, the lack of public confidence in the SLP at the time, particularly the perception that the SLP were totally corrupt, was pervasive among the people. Attacking institutional corruption, especially prevalent amongst higher ranks of the SLP, became one of the main targets of reform and was one of the central challenges of the new Local Needs Policing doctrine. Clearly, police reform had a lot to accomplish before the people began to see their police force as their protectors.

1998 was also a time where, as one senior DfID advisor noted, "the security sector did not exist. Not only did we not tackle the military in DfID generally, or in the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), we also were not

Table 1: The Image of the SLP[30]									
Total number	Is the SLP corrupt?		How do you view the SLP generally?		Do the SLP victimise people?		Do the SLP ask for money in police stations?		Should the SLP be more polite to civilians?
	YES	NO	GOOD	BAD	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO
30	30	0	5	25	27	3	30	0	30	0
TOTAL	30	0	5	25	27	27	30	0	30	0
%	100	0	16.7	83.3	90	10	100	0	100	0

considering the legal sector or the police as part of the security sector at that time"[31]. Thus, while being vital, developments within the SLP were treated in relative isolation vis-à-vis other security-related programming. This is not to say that regular meetings and informal coordination were not taking place both within and across the programmes involved in security transformation in Sierra Leone. However, programmes were not integrated, and at the time, the need to do so was not clearly articulated or fully realized.

Following the 1999 deployment of the SILSEP team to the MoD and the Office of the National Security Advisor, by 2000, there was a recognition, at least on paper, that SLP reforms should be linked with reforms under SILSEP as well as the Law Development Project (see below). It was also accepted that links needed to be established to the Anti-Corruption Programme, efforts to rebuild professionalism and efficiency in the civil service, and – because of the complementary role of traditional and customary systems of policing and justice – work conducted to restore civil society and support amongst paramount chiefs and local government. However, without formalized linkages between the

different programmes, a joined up approach could not be realized and each programme continued largely in isolation.

When rebels invaded Freetown in January 1999, the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF) was forced to leave the country and all activities effectively ground to a halt. Only in August that year, following the signing of the Lomé Peace Agreement, was the full CPDTF able to redeploy and recommence work. It was clearly and urgently understood that while the process of transforming the security system initially had been initiated out of concern over the involvement of the armed forces in politics, the brunt of security tasks in a stable Sierra Leone would fall on the SLP. This policy has been followed consistently ever since, even if the armed forces are called upon to back up the police in cases of emergency.

At the same time, with respect to the implementation of DDR in 1999 and beyond, it had become clear that the SLP would be instrumental in enabling conflict prevention and providing stability in the resettlement and rehabilitation process of ex-combatants. The task at hand was substantial, not least in logistical terms. For instance, all personnel files had been destroyed and, as recalled by one of the procurement advisors involved at the time, a police force of several thousands existed in name, but with "12 working vehicles and no reasonable uniforms"[32].

In particular, there was very limited SLP presence outside of Freetown, let alone open lines of communication to the leadership in the capital. The establishment of a working police force in rural areas was therefore regarded as urgently needed. This was important, both in terms of establishing security, but also in terms of establishing the legitimacy of the state as a security provider across the country. This process picked up from 1999 and accelerated through 2001-2002, initially spreading to Port Loko, Moyamba, Kenema, Pujehun and Bonthe, areas that were relatively stable at the time, compared to places such as Kono and Makeni. This led to DfID support of the SLP through a procurement programme for vehicles and communications equipment to support for the reestablishment of civilian policing. (When the project came to an end in mid-

2007, a total of £2.3 million had been spent on vehicle and communications equipment through two projects)[33].

The CPDTF was transformed into the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP) in 2000. Although initially referred to as a 'Commonwealth Project', in reality funding for the project was provided entirely by DfID and, after 2001, through additional funding from the UK's Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP). The main focus of the CCSSP – as had been the case with the CPDTF – was to support operational activities of the SLP, including capacity-building. As part of this process, Operation Phoenix was implemented to introduce 'effective visible policing'. As the title of the operation suggests, its focus was on re-establishing the SLP's:

> *"…rightful primacy in the maintenance of public tranquillity and law enforcement […]. There is a need for visible targeted policing to be introduced on a twenty-four hour basis every day of the year. Such policing will be essential to the peace process by increasing public confidence in the rule of law and indirectly encouraging inward investment to the country"[34].*

The general breakdown of state institutions and infrastructure during the war had also had a fundamental impact on the SLP. Almost all police buildings, as point of departure neglected before the war, suffered further damage by the rebel forces; lines of command had been cut and pockets of SLP officers worked without guidance from headquarters in Freetown. Whilst the police force had not been implicated in coups in the direct way that the armed forces had, the SLP had in large measure lost the confidence of the population through a combination of perceptions of corruption, impotence in the face of the rebels, and generally aggressive behaviour prior to the war. Tasks were, as noted by one of the police officers engaged in reform efforts, performed "with blatant disregard for Human Rights […]. The Sierra Leone Police was considered a spent force at the time, with little or no logistical support to enhance its capability […]"[35]. The police had effectively become a self-enclosed organization, lacking in openness, pro-activeness and orientation towards community accountability.

In short, there was no reference to either modern day policing or strategic planning.

This was the state of affairs in the SLP when the then President, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, appointed expatriate and retired UK Police officer Keith Biddle as Inspector-General of Police (IGP) in November 1999. Biddle was appointed to the position for an initial two-year period (which was extended until June 2003). He had come to Sierra Leone as head of the CPDTF and planned to launch the programme in 1997, but was delayed until 1998 due to the AFRC coup. Biddle's appointment as IGP was a far less contentious choice than, for example, appointing a UK national as the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS). Biddle's leadership and direction proved vital in a difficult environment. He played a crucial role developing confidence in the rebuilding of the SLP, since all parties viewed him as not subject to political interference and loyalties, which a Sierra Leonean candidate inevitably would have been. This role as an external catalyst helped develop confidence amongst younger officers and was undoubtedly aided by Biddle's own strong personality and willingness to be both visible and to make decisions on the ground.

Biddle's leadership meant that difficult decisions were made, including restructuring of the rank structure, which had become extremely top-heavy. As one senior SLP officer noted "we needed a neutral person to come in. He cleaned up"[36]. Another SLP officer noted that "If outsiders had not come, there would have been a lot of political pressure on the IGP at the time"[37].

The decision to reduce the number of SLP ranks from 22 to 10 provided much needed space to clarify and redefine the roles and responsibilities of police personnel. The ranks of Sub-Inspector and Corporal were removed completely; those affected were demoted to Sergeants and Constables, respectively, a move that was extremely sensitive given the SLP's military-style rank-conscious organisation. This controversial decision continues to be felt within the organization today.

One of the key effects of reducing the number of ranks was the shortening of internal lines of communication and flattening of the hierarchy. It also affected the extremely centralised command system in which the Office of the Inspector General of Police controlled virtually all police matters. The situation was summed up by one senior SLP officer as "when the phone rings and the IGP calls, one salutes the phone"[38]. This centralisation had narrowed the decision-making structure significantly, centring it around one individual, the IFP. A key element in the transformation process instigated by Biddle therefore became the development of a strong management team that was partly filled by younger officers being speedily promoted up through the SLP hierarchy. "From the outset of the CPDTF we asked DfID to earmark £350,000 for senior management training and development. Well-educated officers with reputations for integrity and hard work were selected for the programme which was centred on a series of special courses delivered at the UK Police Staff College at Bramshill. Some 60 SLP officers went through this training, which produced a mainly young and vibrant senior management cadre. Thus, in order to ensure sustainable, improved SLP management, the traditional seniority system of promotions and appointments was broken"[39].

With the formation of what became known as the Executive Management Board, the highest decision-making body in the SLP was put in place and a culture of open debate around decisions and policies was instituted that proved invaluable in creating a sense of community among SLP's leadership. This further developed confidence amongst the SLP, as expressed by Kadi Fakondo, Assistant Inspector-General of the SLP: "We knew what we wanted, we were advised, mentored, we were very confident at that [senior] level. It could easily have been 'yes sir, yes sir, yes sir' if they had come in uniform. The fact that they consulted before taking anything to the Police Council [the highest decision-making body for the SLP] made all the difference. There was this sense that we knew where we wanted to go"[40]. This clear management structure and more open officer-management communications were crucial in getting SLP officers to buy in to the new service that was being established.

One of the key innovations in the immediate aftermath of the conflict was the establishment of Family Support Units (FSUs) within the SLP. They were a direct response to urgently needed public services and were spearheaded by current SLP Assistant Inspector-General Kadi Fakondo, one of the SLP's key figures in post-conflict Sierra Leone. The aims and outline of the innovative FSU programme are described by Ms Fakondo in Box 3.

Fundamentally, the requirements of a democratic police force are that it is able to identify and deal with threats against the state, including violent disorder and armed criminality. It was recognized that this would require work with sensitive issues such as intelligence gathering within the Special Branch and the re-arming of the Operational Support Group within the Special Security Division. For example, development assistance before the African and Global Conflict Prevention Pools were established in the early 2000s, was deemed appropriate only for non-lethal equipment and associated training and non-covert special branch activities. Support for other elements was passed on for consideration by the FCO.

One of the most controversial decisions taken in the late 1990s was to invest substantially in the Special Security Division (SSD). Up until the 1992 coup, the SSD had been Siaka Stevens' personal security force, and consequently there was a strong inclination in the executive branch to dismantle the SSD altogether following the war. However, when the RUF and remnants of the AFRC attacked Freetown in January 1999, the SSD came to play a vital role in the defence of the city. This loyalty led to a complete shift in perceptions of the force and fuelled debates on disbanding the armed forces, replacing them with an expanded and armed police force[41].

At the same time as the doctrine of police primacy was being consolidated, ECOMOG was withdrawing from military and policing activity and Sierra Leone was left, suddenly, with no army, except a small Nigerian force. Consequently, the then ECOMOG commander, forced by circumstances, stated that given the doctrine of police primacy, the SLP should start policing – and fast. The security vacuum created by ECOMOG's withdrawal was in danger of being

Box 3: The Family Support Unit (FSU) – PART I[42]

"The Family Support Unit started as a Domestic Violence Unit, which I established at the Headquarters of Kissy Police District (Kissy Division) in Freetown. After the January 6th 1999 invasion of Freetown I was posted as Commander of Kissy Division, which was home to thousands of ex-combatants and their 'wives' and other relatives. As their so-called 'wives' struggled to regain their freedom (for jungle justice was no longer applicable in the city) there was stiff resistance on the part of the ex-combatants who wanted to retain them. This was what caused the high rise in domestic violence cases, which overwhelmed my personnel, and I decided to create a special unit to handle them.

Detective Police Constable takes notes while interviewing a woman complainant at Kissy police station's Family Support Unit (FSU).

Box 3: *Continued*

"In 2000, the CCSSP brought in expatriate CID [Criminal Investigation Department] trainers from the UK. Then IGP Keith Biddle, Bill Roberts, a consultant, and I considered it appropriate that the Domestic Violence Unit be developed into a special unit. It was suggested that we develop it into a bigger unit to handle all sexual offences and cruelty against women and children. After several deliberations between Police Headquarters (which I represented) and CCSSP, the unit was transformed into the Family Support Unit and officially launched. It then became a unit under the CID with a Director at Police Headquarters, answerable to Director Crime Management. Much sensitization was done about the Family Support Unit on radio, television, in newspapers, schools, markets and youth groups, etc.

"Massive training exercises were conducted by expatriate CID Trainers to train Police Officers in the investigation of all sexual offences, domestic violence and child abuse to meet the increasing number of cases reported. We also established partnerships with other organizations that were interested in protecting women and children from abuse (inter-agency collaboration). Agencies like the International Rescue Committee (IRC-Rainbo Centre) did and still do medical examinations and treatment for all our victims free of cost. The Ministry of Social Welfare provided social workers who were trained alongside the (FSU) Police Officers in the Joint Investigation of Sexual Abuse. During the Joint Investigation, the Police looked for criminal elements of the case to prepare for prosecution, while the Social Workers looked at issues of protection in the best interest of the child/victim. UNICEF was very instrumental, as they provided motorbikes for FSUs as well as other forms of assistance.

"CCSSP funded all the training and FSUs were established in 26 Police Divisions country-wide. Crime statistics from all the FSUs proved that there were high numbers of cases reported and charged to court, even though the number of convictions was not very satisfactory".

filled by the large numbers of former combatants on the streets of Freetown, most of whom were still armed. In this situation, As Keith Biddle stated later: "Can any of these people [currently criticising the attention given to the SSD] say that this could have been done without armed police?"[43]. Certainly many of the unarmed, uniformed police refused to go on the streets, despite calls from the executive for a police force that was 'part of the people'. What was required at this point was a robust, armed police force capable of dealing with large groups of armed combatants. As noted in hindsight the issue was that "the army was unreliable, therefore from a Government point of view, the SSD was the protection"[44].

Despite the early, and necessary, concentration on Freetown in the initial period of reform, the SLP were aware that their responsibilities extended across the country and that the legitimacy of the state in maintaining security was in question until there was a police presence on the ground. Consequently, in January 2002, the CCSSP started rolling out the SLP, establishing a stronger presence in the regional centres of Bo, Kenema, Makeni and Port Loko, initially accompanied by vehicles and communication equipment. Thus, by 2002, re-establishment of the SLP had begun in earnest across the country.

The Law Development Project

One of the unintended consequences of the CCSSP programme's heavy focus on re-establishing policing as part of the stabilization process in Sierra Leone was that transformation of other institutions forming part of the justice sector moved forward more slowly. In fact, even today "the police themselves regularly comment that weaker capacity across justice institutions is undermining their own effectiveness"[45]. In particular, the SLP regularly complain that they can catch criminals but the judicial system cannot either process them fast enough or obtain a high enough ratio of convictions to arrests.

The Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP), initiated in 2005, has been characterised as the first comprehensive rule of law programme in Sierra Leone, cutting across the SLP, the judiciary, the prison services and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. JSDP does not, however, constitute the first time that support has been given to the judiciary. The Law Development Project began in January 2001 in parallel to the CCSSP. The first 18 months of the project were spent focusing on logistics and infrastructure, i.e., building refurbishment and the supply of equipment, including the main Law Courts Building in Freetown and combined magistrate courts in Bo and Kenema. In 2002, it was noted that this process "had a major psychological effect – symbolising the restoration of normality and the rule of law"[46]. Very little was done in terms of capacity-building, which was addressed during the second half of the project cycle, with training of 20 Court Registrars/Administrators, Under-sheriffs and Bailiffs.

The significant issue regarding capacity in the judiciary was not addressed, however, and its difficulties, identified in 2002, remain significant today:

- The backlog of cases and lack of capacity within the formal legal system of Sierra Leone.
- The vital area of corruption prosecution, which has been patchy.
- Customary Courts and 'traditional justice' and its integration into the Government Legal System. As early as 2002 the empirically unverified, but 'well-accepted' and widely quoted statistic was that "80% of the SL population will only find judicial access and redress from the Customary Courts or from the informal (and presently illegal) alternative dispute resolution mechanisms operated by the Paramount and Lesser Chiefs"[47].
- Use of the justice system as an instrument of reconciliation and peacebuilding.

Many of these issues remain unresolved as JSDP began implementation in 2005. However, this is not necessarily the fault of the Law Development Project, but rather a function of the long-term nature of rebuilding an entire judicial system from scratch. Currently, the Sierra Leonean Bar Association has approximately 200 members (in a country which has a population of approximately five million people)[48]. Most attorneys are believed to reside in Freetown. A specific issue still to be adequately addressed is the relationship between 'traditional' systems of justice and the state-regulated judicial system (a distinction, it should be noted, that makes sense in theory, but less so in practice across the territory of Sierra Leone).

A key element identified by several studies of the dynamics of the war was the role of the chiefdom institution in fuelling the conflict in the countryside in the first place, so reinstating it is a sensitive and difficult process. Nevertheless, they are key actors who were relatively marginalized in Sierra Leone's security system transformation process, including the Law Development Programme, until JSDP began implementation in 2005.

The Senior Principle Magistrate Court in session at the central law courts in Freetown.

The Sierra Leone Armed Forces Before and During the War

Before the conflict, Sierra Leone's armed forces consisted of two infantry battalions with no motorized or mechanized capability and without armour or air support. The armed forces could accurately be described as a "ceremonial and conservative Army" and consisted of approximately 3,500 personnel[49]. It was deeply politicized and its operational capability had declined significantly since independence. The APC Government under President Siaka Stevens appointed the Force Commander – and the IGP – as members of Parliament. A recruitment policy based on a 'card system' gave powers to the executive and other politicians and powerful individuals to enlist loyal and faithful people into the police and the military who bore allegiance to individuals rather than to institutions. Merit mattered, but not nearly as much as personal loyalty and conformity.

The army was ill-equipped, badly led and had no real intelligence capability. As a consequence it was unable to respond effectively to RUF incursions across the border from Liberia. The APC Government had deliberately used appalling conditions of service to undermine the capability of the armed forces in recognition of it being a political threat, something that, paradoxically, increased the likelihood of coups in general and led directly to the one staged by the NPRC specifically.

The NPRC, however, failed to stop the further collapse of the armed forces. Most card bearers deserted the army, the majority of which remained in the Western Area and in Freetown. The rapid haemorrhaging of personnel led to a rapid recruitment campaign that led to a swelling of numbers to around 15,000 minimally trained armed personnel, who were thrown in to battle with the RUF. With frequent political arguments amongst senior officers and no criteria for recruitment or promotion for other ranks, the net result was often the recruitment of criminals, no operational control and deteriorating conditions of service. Inevitably, this led to increased lawlessness, looting and attacks on civilians, a development of the 'Sobel' ('soldiers by day rebels by night') and the total collapse in discipline that finally destroyed any remnants of trust between the army and the civilian population[50]. The infantry battalions had only platoon level support weapons, there was no artillery, no intelligence capability, no mobile capability and a complete lack of engineering or signals capacity.

Transforming the Security System and Fighting a War: The MoD and the Armed Forces

The MoD had suffered from a history of neglect. This had been the case since the first anti-APC Government military coup in 1971 through to the NPRC coup in 1992, which led to the militarisation of the ministry. The outcome was a sharp decline in accountability of the military. Following the collapse of the armed forces during the civil war it became clear that the military were not only ineffectual in the field, but also that its institutional structures were in a state of complete collapse. An accountable and functional MoD would require complete reconstruction.

Then Brigadier, now General, David Richards arrived after the expulsion of the AFRC/RUF from Freetown in January 1999, as the leader of the *Operation Basilica Operational Liaison Team.* Brigadier Richards initially came to Sierra Leone to assess what UK assistance was required and to establish relations with key players in the Government of Sierra Leone, including President Kabbah. It is a common misconception that his main task in 1999 was to prepare for evacuation procedures of UK citizens in the country, unlike in 2000 when he returned to Sierra Leone (very few UK citizens were in Sierra Leone in 1999)[51]. In this capacity, Brigadier Richards was instrumental in resurrecting the original concept of SILSEP, which he saw as a critical complement to the military reforms that he was supporting. Around £10m was secured to reboot military reform activities in Sierra Leone, when it was on the brink of collapse in 1999. Mike Dent, one of the members of the initial UK team sent to establish SILSEP, describes the atmosphere in Freetown at the time in Box 4.

Box 4: First Impressions[52]

"On our arrival we found Freetown in complete disarray and still in a state of virtual war. The functions of state were practically collapsed, with ministries in confusion and officials lacking clear aims and direction. Most businesses and government offices had been looted and vandalized during the January 1999 RUF/AFRC attack and had not been repaired. Much of the city's infrastructure had been destroyed or badly damaged. We were taken by car to the MoD in Freetown to meet the Deputy Minister of Defence. On the journey from our accommodation we passed through seven checkpoints manned by various groups of armed persons. From their dress it was difficult to ascertain if they were military, civilian or police. The rule of law and order appeared to have broken down completely".

During this period, as part of *Operation Basilica*, the UK Government had agreed to provide some military training for new Sierra Leone Army (SLA) recruits and trainee officers and in the late spring of 1999, a six-man UK military training team began working with the SLA. The UK also provided some vehicles, weapons and other materiel that were handed over initially to ECOMOG and the SLA respectively, with the proviso that they would be passed on to the SLA when ECOMOG departed. Training was provided for a wide

spectrum of personnel and positions, from physical training instructors platoon commanders' courses for young officers.

The initial deployment of DfID's SILSEP in June 1999 took place during a ceasefire. It consisted of three people. Two advisers, one military and one civilian, were tasked with designing and implementing the plan to restructure and reorganise the MoD. The third adviser was charged with advising on the restructuring of the office of the National Security Adviser (NSA). The MoD-based elements designated themselves as the MoD Advisory Team (MODAT). After undertaking fact-finding visits to government ministries, civil society organizations and the SLA, MODAT concluded that root-and-branch reform would be required to ensure the introduction of accountability, transparency and civilian control across the defence sector[53]. It argued that the transformation of the MoD could not be undertaken in isolation and recommended to the Government of Sierra Leone and the UK that a complete review of the roles, functions and organization of the armed forces be conducted. The proposal was accepted by the Government of Sierra Leone and MODAT was subsequently given the responsibility to conduct a mini-Strategic Defence Review.

The signing of the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999 formalised the ceasefire and brought the civil war to an end. There was widespread jubilation in Freetown. At this stage, Sierra Leone's MoD staff consisted of four employees; its office was little more than a 'post box'. There were two executive officers whose main function was to sign cheques for the Chief of Defence Staff (CDS), along with around 20 support staff, some of which were employed to support the Civil Defence Force (CDF). CDS Khobe was supported by a small team of senior Nigerian officers and commanded the armed forces. There was no budgeting or financial planning in place. This system largely consisted of the CDS going to the President for money and being directed to the Ministry of Finance, where he was given cash.

The armed forces themselves were in a terrible state, with no personnel records and little or no equipment. The full picture was not initially available to MODAT,

as the CDS and support staff were reluctant to discuss any military issues with them. The Minister of Defence was the President, as constitutionally prescribed; the Deputy Minister of Defence, Captain (Retired) Sam Hinga Norman, who was also the leader of the CDF and therefore 'double-hatted', occupied offices in the MoD.

By October 1999 MODAT had completed the Strategic Defence Review and by December it had finished the project definition stage and initial design. This work produced a set of recommendations, including an outline Defence Policy with Defence Missions and Military Tasks, new defence structures and a detailed organisation for the MoD and armed forces. To implement these new structures, MODAT proposed the establishment of a British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT) to support planning and restructuring of the armed forces and MoD. It was also proposed that BMATT should fill some key staff and command appointments that were required to ensure effective implementation. As MODAT emphasized in October 1999: "[I]n our view, deployment of BMATT is key to the sustainable implementation of SILSEP reforms"[54].

It was observed that to avoid a dependency culture, the period of BMATT support "should not be more than 3 years"[55]. Even if this was true at the time – i.e. that dependency could only be avoided with a relatively short period of deployment – it is difficult to envisage three years as a realistic length of time given the amount of work to be done in reconstructing the entire army. And, indeed, it was a political suggestion by MODAT, advised by UK MoD and FCO supporters, that to propose anything of a longer duration would cause 'flutters' back in London (at least in Sierra Leone, there was a clear realization among relevant parties that a long-term presence was necessary).

It was the integration of hard security, public administration and civil service reform that broke new ground in terms of cooperation between DfID, FCO and the MoD. For instance, funding for a conventional BMATT would come from FCO and MoD. However, given that the BMATT was to not only advise and train, but also to implement the SILSEP-designed reforms, BMATT effectively became engaged in institution-building. In other words, the

governance components of the reform process at the programme design level were 'joined up' on the ground when the UK funding pools came into being, institutionalizing ties between the UK Government departments.

As part of defence reform activities, a proposal initially suggested that the UK should provide the Chief of Defence Staff (double-hatting as Commander BMATT). The idea was eventually discarded, despite its coming from President Kabbah, on the basis of his personal distrust of the armed forces. However, the Commander, a British officer, was to be designated 'Military Adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone'. This was deemed important in terms of presentation, particularly from a UK perspective, and also operationally important from the point of view of building confidence and developing a sustainable defence establishment in-country.

These initiatives were explicitly referred to in MODAT's *Future UK military commitment in support of DfID's security sector reform programme (SILSEP)*, produced in November 1999[56]. BMATT was to be viewed as the "logical extension of the SILSEP MoD Project", as the detailed implementation phase. DfID's SILSEP Mission Statement at the time – agreed to by the Programme Steering Group was:

> *"To work with the Government, national and local institutions of Sierra Leone to design and implement a sustainable policy, institutional and legal framework for the creation of acceptable National Security and Defence Strategies enshrining the principles of civilian control, accountability and transparency"*[57].

MODAT also produced a Military Reintegration Plan (MRP) to reintegrate ex-combatants from all former warring factions into the new armed forces. Due to manpower constraints and a desire to internationalise the solution, the UK decided to solicit support from other nations for what was subsequently to become International MATT (IMATT). In January 2000, the UK MoD arranged a conference in London to brief Commonwealth and Overseas Defence Attachés and Advisers on the IMATT project. Attendees were invited to

participate in the project by providing personnel to fill command and staff appointments[58]. Apart from staffing concerns, the UK also concluded that the involvement of the ex-colonial power on its own was morally contestable. Commonwealth countries, including Canada and Australia, contributed staff, as did the United States. At the core, however, the formalization of the internationalised MATT was, in the words of one of its commanders, "very much a 'we are now stable, let's think longer-term' initiative'"[59].

In December 1999 relations between the armed forces and the police took a downturn, as did relations between CCSSP and MODAT. The two sides were vying for the old Paramount Hotel in Freedom to house the new Sierra Leone MoD; CCSSP wanted to place the Criminal Investigation Division (CID) headquarters in the same building. Adding to this tension was that, since January 1999, following the destruction of the headquarters of both the Criminal Investigation Department (CID) and the Special Security Division (SSD), the two police organizations had been housed at the Paramount Hotel building due to lack of viable alternatives[60]. In the end the MoD won the argument and was allocated the building, which was then just a shell and had to be completely refurbished[61].

There can be no doubting the rapid progress that was made within the MoD at the time. In June 1999 Government Forces were linked to the executive by the post box; two years later, civilian staff had been trained to take up key positions in the military. By 2001, the MoD was regarded as leading the way in public service reform, setting standards and providing a role model for other ministries in terms of running effectively. In addition, whilst this was going on, conflict had restarted and intensified during 2000. Immediate decisions had to be made on the ground which were not always sensitive to concerns about national ownership and long-term sustainability.

The proposals for the restructuring of the MoD HQ and armed forces were submitted to the Government and subsequently endorsed by President Kabbah in March 2000. The endorsement immediately preceded a visit from the UK Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, who had been a

Exterior view of the Ministry of Defence building.

key player in the establishment of the UK's Security Sector Reform Policy and SILSEP. However, funding for restructuring became a potential 'show-stopper'. It was clear from the outset that the expectations of the Sierra Leone Government, civil servants and military were far in excess of the funding available for the SILSEP restructuring process. Additional funds were eventually made available by DfID for the refurbishment of the old Paramount Hotel building, but only after personal appeals by MODAT directly to Ms Short.

Restructuring was planned to take place over a 2- to 3-year period. First was refurbishment of the new MoD, at the Paramount Hotel. This was to be followed by the establishment of the Joint Support Command (JSC) and the Joint Force Command (JFC), replacing the Defence Headquarters. Concurrently, it was planned that all SLA soldiers, together with CDF and RUF ex-combatants, were to have joined the DDR programme and possibly entered into the MRP. Once the MRP process had been completed, personnel selected for the new

RSLAF would have been trained and inducted into the Armed Forces. It was anticipated at the time that this process would be undertaken in a benign environment and that there would be no pressure of time on the selection, training of individuals and implementation of unit establishments. The issue of funding and in particular equipping the new RSLAF was anticipated to be well within the capability of the Government of Sierra Leone to manage[62]. While the SLA did not enter the MRP due to immediate needs for their fighting capacity, and although it has proven difficult, if not outright impossible, for the Government, it is important to understand the context within which certain decisions were made.

Involvement with the armed forces grew quickly from these initial deliberations and was further consolidated with UK military intervention in May 2000. In mid-April 2000, the RUF had progressively started taking UN detachments hostage and seizing their vehicles and weapons. In late April of that year, exploiting ECOMOG's (effectively Nigeria's) departure and UNAMSIL's unwillingness to confront the RUF, rebels took 500 hostages at Makeni and started advancing on two axes, one towards Freetown, one towards Lunghi. By early May, the RUF was reportedly in the area to the east of Waterloo, some 40 miles from Freetown.

UK's intervention became known as *Operation Palliser* and is outlined in Box 5, as recalled by two of the key personalities involved, including David Richards and Mike Dent. The decline in the security situation that led to robust international engagement in security reform was critical in reinforcing the idea that development could not be possible in Sierra Leone without transformation of Sierra Leone's security system. One Senior DfID Adviser noted: "That's how it started, DfID's involvement in security sector reform"[63]. Along similar lines, as recalled by Ms Short: "Some people say that Britain had a war there and was victorious, this is all false. What happened was: There is some sort of deal amongst European countries about who will do evacuations in crises. And it seems to be that the former colonial power often takes the lead for all Europeans in terms of emergency responsibility. Obviously, in Sierra Leone it would be Britain. So when the British troops went in, it was to evacuate Europeans. That's how it was triggered"[64].

Box 5: Operation Palliser

General David Richards later recalled: "On Thursday 4 May 2000, I was looking forward to flying to an exercise in Ghana the next day, when I learnt that the RUF in Sierra Leone was once more on the offensive. ECOMOG, the Nigerian-dominated regional force, had left Sierra Leone a few weeks earlier. UN forces there – UNAMSIL – were under considerable pressure, with hundreds of troops detained by the RUF. The SLA was very weak, having mostly disarmed and begun disbandment under the terms of the Lomé Peace Accord. As the situation deteriorated, I found myself bound for Sierra Leone within 24 hours, on orders to find out what was happening and to prepare to conduct a non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO), should it be necessary"[65].

"What started as a NEO developed into something that had all the characteristics of a small- to medium-scale war-fighting operation. Whilst we came under fire on only a few occasions, over the following six weeks we found ourselves de facto closely involved with the direction of a campaign at the opera-tional level"[66]. These developments were not directed by London – in fact orders had been to do a NEO and 'get out'. Indicative for a highly political and tense context such as Sierra Leone at the time, it was individuals on the ground that transformed the rules of engagement and gained support of political leaders back in London, "cutting out all the layers in between"[67]. Support came from the highest level of Government, including Number 10, the Foreign Office, and the newly-established DfID. The at first ad hoc twin-track operation (support to the UN on the one hand and assistance to the Government of Sierra Leone and its loyal armed groupings on the other) rapidly supplanted the evacuation exercise and soon became official UK strategy[68]. It was also in this context that the decision was made not to make remnants of the SLA go through the MRP, but instead deploy them to support the war-fighting efforts. Simply, they were needed.

Richard continues: "On Saturday 6 May, we requested that a Special Forces detachment and the Lead Company of the Spearhead Land Element (SLE) be deployed immediately. Whilst the lead elements were en route the following day, there was a real danger that, in addition to the RUF advance, an incident in Freetown between the factions could have triggered a spiralling level of violence ending in a coup. Accordingly, I went to great lengths to meet the faction leaders and attempt to bring them together, with a view to main-taining their support for the SL Government and boosting their confidence in the ability of UNAMSIL to defend Freetown. To support this, we dispatched some UK liaison officers (LOs) to advise the UN troops around Hastings and Waterloo to adopt a more defensive posture. Meanwhile, the Lead Company quickly helped secure those areas that we assessed to be vital ground for any NEO: Lunghi airfield and the Aberdeen Peninsula. Simultaneously, the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team (OLRT) became a Joint Task Force Headquarters (JTFHQ) (Fwd), and I was appointed Joint Task Force Commander (JTFC)"[69].

Box 5: *Continued*

In the context of genuine fears that the Government of Sierra Leone as well as UNAMSIL would collapse, UK Forces coordinated and sustained the efforts of disparate groupings of loyal Sierra Leonean fighting factions.

This group of Government Forces included the SLA and what came to be known as the 'Unholy Alliance,' which "began to form after our arrival that first weekend in May 2000 in response to a call to arms by [Johnny Paul] Koroma". Scaled-down and disarmed under the Lomé Accord, the SLA numbered 2-3,000 personnel with a further 3,000 being trained at that time by a UK Short Term Training Team (STTT) as part of *Operation Basilica*. The force was re-organized into three brigades, each including three battalions. The so-called 'Unholy Alliance' consisted of a loose coalition of SLA, ex-SLA, AFRC and CDF combatants, but also elements of the West Side Boys, a group of ex-combatants and criminals operating near Freetown[70]. Together, these different force units were directed by a Government Joint Force Operations and Support Committees with representation from the factions and chaired by British officers[71].

"Unholy they may have been but, guided as they were at every level by British officers and Non-commissioned Officers (NCOs), over the next few weeks they succeeded in securing much of the inland road route between Freetown and Lunghi, relieving the military and, of course, political pressure on Freetown and its beleaguered government. This twin-track operation rapidly supplanted the NEO and soon became official HMG-UK [Her Majesty's Government – UK] strategy"[72].

"By late May, events had taken a turn for the better: The last of the RUF's detainees was in the process of being released; and Government Forces were not only poised to take Lunsar, they were raiding RUF Lines of Communication in the East and pushing towards Mange. Sankoh was isolated in custody, and – in his absence – Liberia's President Taylor was trying to exert increasing political influence over the RUF. Militarily, the RUF was on the back foot, with numerous reports of low morale and desertion and an ever-widening split between the Eastern and Northern Commands"[73].

By mid-June 2000, the security situation had been sufficiently stabilised to allow Operation Palliser to be terminated. Following visits by the UK Chief of Defence Staff and the Foreign Secretary, the UK agreed to provide additional military support in the form of financial and training assistance to the SLA. The UK agreed to commit a total of £21.27 million to re-equip the SLA and deployed a UK infantry battalion to implement a retraining programme that became known as the Short Term Training Team (STTT) package[74].

IMATT deployment had started in June 2000 as part of the UK's response to the re-emergence of the RUF and the need to deliver training and staff support to the SLA, which at that stage was in a state of virtual collapse. By early 2001, 65 personnel staffed IMATT, operating in parallel with Short-Term Training Teams and, as planned, filling key appointments in the MoD and command appointments in the armed forces.

One of the drawbacks of the rapid deployment of IMATT, effectively an emergency response, was that many of the personnel were short-term assignees. Some had completed six-month tours, some even less. This led to a lack of continuity and 'short-termism', where staff wanted to complete a task and see results rapidly, a circumstance which generally speaking has characterized perceptions of some of IMATT's work in Sierra Leone. In addition, at this stage, because not all IMATT posts were filled, there was also a lack of oversight, which resulted in the implementation of only partial solutions for some difficult issues. Kellie Conteh, a leading figure in Sierra Leone's security system transformation process throughout the period, discusses this issue in Box 6.

Box 6: The Balancing Act between Leading and Supporting[75]

"Sometimes when officers are appointed, it's their first time ever out of the UK, and they do not understand the culture. There are things that go slowly, that's how they see it, but they need to understand *why* things are going slowly. The fact that they didn't understand the 'why' led to a lot of things in the MoD that were unacceptable. There was a lot of wasted time and effort in the two first years of SILSEP. UK officers who were supposed to be advisers took up command roles. I don't know how the transfer of knowledge [from advisers to the advised] could have been done in the first years. Consultants were shooting themselves in the foot, giving different names to structures that previous consultants had already set up. Quite a number of consultants wanted to design the wheel from scratch. The police had Sierra Leonean officers encouraged by the IGP and CCSSP to start changing things themselves. In the army and the MoD they categorized all above Lieutenant Colonel as bad, and below as right. I saw clearly that senior officers were pushed aside; that didn't go down well".

In early October 2000 the security situation was deteriorating again. The RUF remained in control of over half the country and were strengthening their grip on key areas, including Makeni and the diamondiferous areas needed to finance their operations. They showed no sign of returning to negotiations, and indeed were expanding their operations into Guinea. President Charles Taylor continued to actively support the RUF and seemed impervious to ill-coordinated attempts by the international community to bring him into line. The UK decided to bolster IMATT once again with the JFHQ from Northwood charged with developing a coherent plan that would ensure the RUF's defeat while protecting and building on the MODAT's vision of a long-term solution that would ensure stability for the future. The JFHQ returned to Freetown in mid-October; shortly thereafter the Commander IMATT departed and his function was subsumed by the recently-arrived JTFC. The primary purpose was to bring the RUF back to the negotiating table, having been convinced of the 'inevitability of their defeat'. Together with UNAMSIL, the mission proved successful and RUF restarted talks in Abuja. A new agreement was signed in November. Box 7 below describes the emerging role of the UN in Sierra Leone and UK involvement with the global organization, based on the observations of Barry Le Grys, who was deployed with the UN in the early 2000s.

Box 7: UNAMSIL and UK Support[76]

UN Security Council Resolution 1270, adopted on 22 October 1999, established United UNAMSIL to oversee implementation of the Lomé Peace Agreement signed in July 1999, and relieve ECOMOG, deployed since 1997. "The troubles experienced by the ECOWAS force were passed onto the UN, whose blue helmet troops came under attack on the official handover day [...]. With the UN Mission in severe jeopardy, UK support became vital".

As RUF hostilities came to an end in 2000-2001, "UNAMSIL was regaining confidence, rebalancing and building strength after earlier, almost catastrophic, setbacks". A large part of the country remained out of the Government's control, which hampered UNAMSIL access. Makeni, Kabala and Koidu were all under the control of RUF. The UN accepted a UK offer of seven military officers to serve with the UN Force HQ in Freetown. Their primary task was to give UNAMSIL planning capability that hitherto had been lacking. Their secondary task was to ensure that coordination with the UK Joint Task Force (JTF) was seamless. The result of this infusion was a far better collaborative effort to roll out security across the country. The ties between UNAMSIL's provision of wider 'area' security and support, the UK-led SLA and the SLP were greatly strengthened.

The most significant stride forward for UNAMSIL was the implementation of a plan to put a coherent, one-nation combined arms brigade into the east of the country, centred on Koidu. After a tremendous diplomatic effort involving Freetown, New York, Washington, London and Islamabad, Pakistan provided the required brigade[77]. Subsequently, the deployment of UK's JTF to provide support to UNAMSIL while they were in the process of stabilising took place. In parallel, the UK provided military and operational planning and logistical support to the SLA[78]. The psychological effect on the RUF of a UK-sponsored SLA advancing from the west and a robust UN brigade in the heart of their revenue source was hugely positive. Violent confrontation was no longer an option for the RUF[79].

Eventually, the presence of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone with its 17,000 peacekeepers helped provide time and space to begin reconstructing the security forces and build up governance structures. The major logistical task and tactical challenge involved deploying what at the time was the biggest ever UN peacekeeping mission. This meant that UNAMSIL had no interest in reforming or building the internal security institutions. In sum, "the UN was looking inwards; it wasn't until 2001 that it started to look out, and when it did, it was very much with a focus on the 2002 elections"[80].

By this time, the process of establishing a functioning MoD, which had begun in late 1999, was well underway. In order to ensure transparency and civilian oversight of the armed forces, a modified basic UK MoD organisational structure, designed by MODAT, was used as a template. New management practices based on UK/Western models, but reflecting the national requirements of Sierra Leone, were introduced. This model was subsequently amended in late 2000 and early 2001 by new members of IMATT from UK who represented "the latest Western thinking"[81].

Throughout 2001, reviews of the roles and deployment of the armed forces were undertaken. It was decided that there was a need to increase the size of the proposed future RSLAF to deal with additional security tasks and to apply lessons learnt from recent and ongoing operations. These decisions were directly linked to the May 2000 events. With the implementation of the military reintegration plan, the RSLAF was anticipated to expand in size to just under 15,000 military personnel. Whilst there were a number of control mechanisms that could be implemented, such as the discharge of unfit and over-age personnel, there was a need to manage these in a sensitive manner. It was planned that by 2005 RSLAF, through the imposition of retirements and other initiatives, would have reduced the armed forces to around 10,600 personnel. At the time this was perceived to be the optimum size for the Sierra Leone armed forces[82].

The construction of the MoD HQ building and implementation of its military and civilian organisation was led by UK military advisers who were members of the IMATT. IMATT, in turn, had been mobilised quickly as a result of the return to hostilities in May 2000. Some of the officers coming in were not very mindful of cultural issues or the need for sustainability and national ownership. As one British Officer on the ground, serving in Sierra Leone during 2003 as Commander IMATT, stated later:

> *"You design an MoD on the basis that you've got fifty British officers running it, and then the next week there is going to be four British officers. And you say: What? They haven't got the capacity for that? And arguably, do they need that? Do they need something as*

complicated as that? So you have to be careful not to take the blueprint that was written in London, change the date and time and reproduce the model. You've actually got to design the model for what they require, and we had an MoD where we made exactly that mistake"[83].

The complexity of the context in which these operations were taking place was daunting. First, there were pressures of operational expediency, as the war was ongoing. Second, at the time, there was a perceived need to put in place appropriate levels of civilian oversight as quickly as possible. Third, corruption, especially in the procurement area, was a major concern. In addition to these immediate concerns, there were also organizational issues between MODAT and IMATT. The UK civil advisers working in the MoD were not part of IMATT; they were reporting directly to DfID and living in separate, private accommodation. While, at an informal level, some mixed socially, some did not. This personal and professional distance resulted in poor coordination and communication.

During transformation of the MoD and RSLAF and their operational and management processes, there were occasional clashes with other branches of Government and within the Sierra Leone public services. Isolating one Ministry and developing it along specific lines with a lead by external advisers meant that MoD reforms, strictly speaking, were not operating within the regulations, rules and constraints of the broader civil service of Sierra Leone. Whilst Sierra Leonean counterparts would frequently accept that IMATT procedures were more efficient, they also felt that many changes were introduced without proper consultation. This was undoubtedly necessary in the emergency of 2000. However, once the security situation had been stabilised and peacebuilding efforts began to overtake fire-fighting by the end of 2001, this became more of a concern to Sierra Leonean civil servants and military staff in the MoD and to overall sustainability and national ownership of the process.

At the same time, recruiting and sustaining the presence of UK civilian advisers to the MoD proved to be extremely difficult, effectively leaving armed forces

reform under an IMATT lead. The formation of the new MoD was therefore being driven by the military through the placement of IMATT officers in key staff appointments. Coupled with the need for IMATT officers in key operational command positions within the armed forces, this created an 'informal' command structure from IMATT officers, through Commander IMATT and directly to the President, as his designated military adviser. There is no question that such a structure helped to speed up decision-making at critical times, but it also had the effect of undermining the overall project purpose through bypassing the formal chain of command and the MoD civilian staff.

This circumstance was fortified by the fact that there was lack of representation of armed forces issues at the ministerial and cabinet level. Over the entire period of this study, but addressed by the APC Government elected in August 2007, the President was also the Minister of Defence and there was no additional defence representation at cabinet level or in the National Security Council Coordinating Group (NSCCG) by his deputy.

Consequently, senior MoD staff lacked direct leadership and representation at the top level. In times of emergency or civil war, the role of the President as Minister of Defence, had major advantages. In peacetime, it was becoming increasingly clear that the lack of separation of these two positions was weakening the democratic process in Sierra Leone. It reflected a, perhaps, over-centralization of government, and broke links between the armed forces and civilian oversight at a strategic level. It was clear, however, that continued fear of a coup at the highest executive level stalled the hand-over of control of the armed forces to a separate minister of defence.

From June 2000 to early 2001, the substantial deployment of international military personnel in Sierra Leone led to an imbalance in power between Defence Headquarters and the MoD, with the IMATT-supported Defence Headquarters carrying out tasks that fell under the MoD's remit. For example, negotiations in early 2000 over a pay rise for soldiers to bring them to police and civil service salary levels took place between the Ministry of Finance and Defence Headquarters, rather than the MoD. Because the appropriate channels were

not used, this caused tension with the police and civil service, who felt that the military had ignored appropriate procedures and any general policy of restraint on pay increases.

By early 2001, there was a perception amongst some civil servants that this imbalance had recreated conditions of the 1980s and early 1990s, when pay and other financial management issues were subject to private deals between the Force Commander and the Ministry of Finance or the President. Equally, the MoD's new Director of Estates was only peripherally involved in the refurbishment of the Paramount Hotel and the Director of Procurement was excluded from purchases of uniforms and equipment. The comparatively entrenched tradition of the military dealing directly with the President and with the Ministry of Finance over their budgetary and off-budgetary financial needs was taking considerable time to overcome[84].

Virtually everywhere across the public service (not just in Sierra Leone) the pay of public servants is a key source of friction, though unique to the MoD was the different salaries of military and civilian personnel. Despite the new pay structures devised in 1998, by 2001, Director-level personnel earned Le160,000 (around $80 per month). This was the same salary as an officer cadet after the recent military pay rises. Understandably, this discrepancy between civilian and military staff salaries caused significant tension between the civilian and military MoD staff and remains a concern. Whilst salary increases in isolation from the rest of the civil service were not seen as helpful, there were attempts made to recompense staff within the MoD in different ways, particularly through refurbishment of Paramount Hotel and improvements in conditions of service. The issue of conditions of service may also be seen as one of the primary reasons why the idea of transforming the Civil Defence Force (CDF) into a Territorial Defence Force (TDC) did not come to fruition (see Box 8 below where the fate of the CDF after the war is discussed as recalled by Mike Dent).

Box 8: The Civil Defence Force

As important as the Government forces at the time were the non-regular forces, the CDF, which were comprised of a mix of civilian hunter groups dedicated to protecting their communities from enemy attacks, played a vital role. Its founder and leader, Sam Hinga Norman, was also the Deputy Minister of Defence from 1998-2002, which undoubtedly underlined the importance of the CDF. Although no official numbers existed, the Government estimated their complement at around 50,000 combatants, though they were only lightly armed and had limited logistical support. Their command structure, based in Freetown, was headed by the CDF Central Coordinating Committee, chaired by the Vice-President and including directors for major functions such as logistics, communications and public relations. In the late 1990s and early 2000s, there were considerable concerns expressed about the CDF and their potentially destabilizing role. Equally strong was a political recognition of the importance of CDF in supporting the Government and also of their crucial role in fighting the RUF[85]. While Sam Hinga Norman was Deputy Minister of Defence at the time, recognition of the CDF's pivotal role cut across the whole political spectrum of Sierra Leone.

In the Government of Sierra Leone's *National Security Policy – Proposals and Recommendations*, there was serious consideration of the establishment of a reserve force that should fall "within the holistic approach of the security sector and […] complement the requirements of the full-time units of both the Armed Forces, the Police and Civil Authority generally"[86]. The document was produced about the same time as MODAT's proposals for restructuring the MoD and the armed forces. The idea was for a Territorial Defence Force (TDF) to constitute a reserve force (not unlike the UK's Territorial Army). Its mission would be in the spirit of the CDF's role during the conflict; it would constitute a civil militia and contribute to local area security for villages and chiefdoms. Different scenarios were envisioned, including TDF provision of first-level response, and, with their local knowledge, intelligence and support, assistance to the armed forces. In times of crisis, the civil militia was viewed as potentially supporting the regular armed forces in territorial defence.

In 1999 and early 2000, an 8,500 person armed force was recommended with the additional TDF option which was seen as relatively cost-free. The issue, however, became politicized with the question of which Ministry – defence or interior – the CDF would be responsible to developing into a major obstacle. As the Military Reintegration Programme (MRP) gathered momentum, with no budget for the existing RSLMF forces and the resumption of hostilities, the idea of the TDF faltered.

During the hostilities of 2000, the CDF were integrated under full military command through an interim command structure. When fighting stopped and the DDR process was initiated, the CDF were officially recognized as combatants, technically alongside RUF fighters. Those who chose to do so could apply to join the emerging armed forces through the MRP. Following this, the idea of a TDF was effectively mothballed due to lack of funding and other, more pressing, considerations such as accommodation and

Box 8: *Continued*

equipment for the regular army. No formal decision was ever made, but the reality in late 2001 was that the resources available simply did not allow for a TDF to be formed and the CDF eventually melted away[87].

Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration

In Abuja in early May 2001, an agreement was finally reached to implement the accord of November 2000. At the time of the signing of 'Abuja 2', as it became known, the RUF were continuing to be resupplied by Liberia and were actively involved in offensive operations in Guinea with the aim of destabilising the Government of President Lansana Conté. The Guinean Armed Forces (GAF) undertook an aggressive defence of Guinea's territory in the areas to the north of Kambia and to the east of Kailahun, using newly acquired Mi-24 helicopter gunships and indirect fire weapons, including artillery. The RUF paid dearly for its actions and, following a GAF offensive into Sierra Leone, the RUF were subsequently forced to retreat back into Kambia where they came under pressure from the SLA. As already noted, this forced the RUF to review their position and to agree to observe the terms of the cease-fire and start instructing their combatants to disarm through the DDR Programme. At the same time members of the CDF joined the DDR process.

In late 2001, the DDR process throughout Sierra Leone was, if not finalized, then assessed to be making good progress, particularly regarding disarmament and demobilization. The National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) was supported by a Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department (CHAD) Operations team that established an effective registration system, oversaw the payment of reinsertion benefits and performed technical aspects of the process. By November 2001, 35,700 ex-combatants had been disarmed; 24,800 of these were discharged and nearly 24,000 paid reinsertion benefits.

Reintegration was the weak link of the DDR process, primarily because of lack of private sector income-generating opportunities for ex-combatants. But reintegration also rankled the civilian population, which had suffered at the hands of these ex-combatants and was now expected to welcome them back into their communities. It also suffered from a lack of suitable implementing partners and, due to institutional issues, the inability of the NCDDR to implement reintegration proposals. A delayed European Community (EC) contribution through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund[88] also led to further delays.

Potential threats that are still raised as universal weaknesses of DDR processes were identified early on in Sierra Leone by NCDDR, including:

- The potential for tension in the future if the large pool of unoccupied youth and ex-combatants in the country reacts violently to disappointments or the lack of reintegration, including education and employment opportunities.
- The unravelling of reconciliation due to divisive political campaigning during election seasons.
- The absence of substantial and sustained foreign investment to kick-start the economy in Sierra Leone and consolidate the benefits of reintegration programmes into progress and ultimately, sustainable economic development.

Whilst these points were all identified in the early 2000s, they continue to be important issues in some parts of the country today, reaching into broader issues of sustainable economic development.

The Military Reintegration Programme

The Lomé Peace Accord of July 1999 required a plan for the integration of all ex-combatant groups, including the SLA, into a single military force for Sierra Leone. The military reintegration programme (MRP) was originally produced by MODAT in April 2000 in response to a formal request from the Government of Sierra Leone and the NCDDR to conform to this agreement. However, the MRP sparked controversy. In 2000, a collaboration between the Sierra Leonean NGO Campaign for Good Governance, the SLP, the Ministry of Defence, and

the Office of the National Security Advisor (ONS was not yet established at the time) provided the opportunity for civil society to engage in discussions on how best to take the MRP forward. An obvious public concern was raised around the implications of reintegrating ex-combatants into the military and the future role of the CDF who, like the army, were accused of committing human rights abuses during the war[89].

The new cease-fire, signed in May 2001, revitalised the DDR programme. Planning for the implementation of the previously endorsed MRP, which had been held in abeyance since April 2000, became a high priority. The MRP was reviewed, amended, endorsed and formally initiated in early June 2001 with the opening of the Temporary Holding Centre (THC) at Kabatha Junction. The formal MRP selection process started at the newly established Personnel Screening Centre (PSC) at Lunghi in mid-June. The first of the successful ex-combatants arrived at the Holding and Basic Training Centre (HBTC), which had been built by SLA Engineers and at Mape a few days later. The reintegration plan itself was carried out in six phases, as listed in Box 9.

The military reintegration plan aimed to implement an RSLAF recruit selection process from ex-combatant groups. It was to provide a credible alternative to the civilian reintegration plan and in the process establish apolitical professional armed forces. It was assumed that a maximum of 3000 ex-combatants from RUF, CDF and AFRC would enter the RSLAF via the programme. A total of 2,091 ex-combatants had graduated from the IMATT-supported Armed Forces Training Centre in May 2002 at the last basic intake. A commissioning parade for platoon commanders in August brought the programme to a close with a total of around 2,400 trained. Headline statistics for the MRP are provided in Table 2.

Box 9: The Six Stages of the Military Reintegration Programme

- **Stage 1** – **disarmament and demobilization**: A country-wide process, recommenced in Kambia and Port Loko in May 2001 and closed in Pujehun, Kenema and Kailahun in January 2002. At this stage all ex-combatants were briefed on the military reintegration programme as part of the pre-discharge orientation process. Despite wide publicity, many ex-combatants missed the deadline to disarm in their own region.

- **Stage 2** – **potential recruit decision**: Temporary holding camps opened in June 2001 and closed in March 2002. Potential recruits were brought into a military environment. They were placed in syndicates of 30 to undergo drills and formal screening based on their medical and marital status and age. Background checks were also conducted by both SLP and RSLAF intelligence agencies.

- **Stage 3** – **individual assessment**: A personnel selection centre opened at Lunghi in early June 2001; the final Selection Tribunal was held in early March 2002. Potential recruits completed a full medical to existing RSLAF entry standards, plus physical, education and military experience tests. At culmination of the personnel selection centre all potential recruits attended a selection tribunal. This was normally chaired by a UNAMSIL Colonel and included RUF and CDF liaison officers employed by NCDDR. IMATT officers provided the secretariat, acted as impartial observers and indeed Chairman on several occasions. Successful applicants were offered entry to RSLAF.

- **Stage 4** – **holding and basic training group**: Opened in mid-June 2001 and closed in March 2002. Recruits were put in platoons. Now formally soldiers and paid as such, they were subjected to military discipline and undertook basic military training.

- **Stage 5** – **integrated bridging training**: The first ex-combatant recruits started training in late July 2001; and the last passed training in mid-May 2002. Recruits were now issued with uniforms, weapons and equipment for the first time. A subsequent 9-week programme delivered basic infantry training within a platoon framework.

- **Stage 6** – **posting to first RSLAF unit**: Trained soldiers joined units as individual reinforcements, posted as manning priorities dictated. Subject to satisfactory performance and recommendation in their first report at the 6-month point, their temporary rank was substantiated.

Table 2: Headline Statistics of the Military Reintegration Programme	
Number entering the military reintegration programme (processed by temporary holding camps and personal selection centres)	2982
Overall pass rate at personal selection centres (varied from 55% to 90%)	80%
Numbers starting formal military training	2385
Overall RUF/CDF ratio joining RSLAF (varied from 51:49 to 79:22)	65:35
Total passing basic training	2349
Overall pass rate in training	98%

Due to the long-term developmental implications of reintegration into civilian life, entering the new armed force of Sierra Leone became one of the most viable reintegration opportunities, not least because it proved to be relatively successful. It provided one meaningful form of vocational training for those disarmed and demobilized who wanted to pursue a military career. Furthermore, while numbers were fairly modest, the programme was significant as it lent credence to the notion of the future RSLAF as an army of reconciliation.

A number of concerns were raised about the rigorousness of the screening of candidates, including the human rights record of ex-combatants, psychological suitability to hold arms and willingness to abide by the concept of civilian management and oversight of the armed forces. Screening processes appeared to focus primarily on physical health and criminal record. It should be noted here that the process was taking place in a framework of generally very few records existing at all, let alone dating from the period of the war. The process was carried out according to a series of principles presented in Box 10.

Given that down-sizing of the armed forces was such a key issue, there were concerns about entrants to the programme only being offered one-year contracts with little prospect of alternative employment. Because there was no detailed long-term strategy in place setting out the overall objectives for the security

Box 10: Principles of the Military Reintegration Programme

The concept of military reintegration is not new; a number of well-tried principles were applied:

1. Fairness.
2. Transparency.
3. Recruitment based on objective, ability-based criteria.
4. Individual choice.
5. No "free passes" for any group.
6. Level playing field for all.
7. Training to be integrated as soon as possible.
8. Firm linkage between civilian and military reintegration programmes.
9. Fixed manpower ceilings for the new Armed Forces.
10. Control of the process to be fully representative.

system transformation process, including in the MRP, there was no plan for the end goal of a down-sizing exercise either. In the early 2000s, no one was willing to make the politically sensitive decision of a complete overhaul of the armed forces, not least IMATT, which held an executive mandate during this period. While making this decision certainly did not become easier later on, it remains an issue which Sierra Leone needs to address, including out of affordability concerns.

It has been said that the number of RUF, AFRC and CDF combatants integrated into RSLAF was small and thus insignificant. Yet, as noted above, the symbolic value of the Military Reintegration Programme was critical. All soldiers were mixed up in their various units and sub-units; thus, no elements of the RSLAF ended up as exclusively 'ex-SLA', 'ex-RUF' or 'ex-CDF'.

The Office of National Security (ONS) and the Central Intelligence and Security Unit (CISU)

The key feature of the cluster of reform measures that eventually became known as SSR, or security system transformation in Sierra Leone, was that reforms were implemented during a conflict. In the case of ONS and CISU, the challenge also included the building of new institutions. A visitor noted,

plainly, in September 1999: "Sierra Leone does not currently have a Security or Intelligence Service. Responsibility for security (counter-espionage, counter-terrorism and counter-subversion) and public order rests with the Special Branch (SB) of the Sierra Leone Police Service"[90]. At this point in time, however, most of the information gathered by these intelligence services focused on monitoring opposition political parties, student organizations and trade unions.

Nonetheless, the demands from Sierra Leone's intelligence services and national security coordination organisation were immediate. There was an urgent need for intelligence to be made available, assessments to be made and policy advice to be submitted. The intelligence community, such as it was, was therefore going to have to transform itself whilst also providing intelligence material to inform policy and actions – which it did. Therefore, despite extremely trying circumstances, progress was made during 1999-2000 in establishing a number of key platforms on which later success was built. SILSEP began to contribute towards a functioning National Security Council, the outline of a National Security Act and the drafting of a National Security Policy. Details of the development of the National Security Policy paper process are presented in Box 11[91].

In operations, CISU and other intelligence agencies supported the defeat of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the establishment of security in post-conflict Sierra Leone. CISU, despite its small size, was able to make a substantial contribution to understanding the intentions and capacities of RUF leadership and to have an impact on the will of that leadership to maintain armed conflict. CISU and its partners were also able to contribute to an understanding and tracking of the other hostile and destabilising forces in Sierra Leone as well as in neighbouring countries. This intelligence was shared with Sierra Leone's allies and considered to be of good value[92].

Also of considerable value was the newly found ability of the transformed, indeed rebuilt, intelligence services to evaluate outside sources of information for the Government, in particular, for the Office of the President. CISU was now able to clearly evaluate external sources as peddling disinformation or

Box 11: Development of the Sierra Leone National Security Policy Paper (2000)

In 2000 a draft Sierra Leone National Security Policy Paper was circulated. The process of producing this document was initiated in 1997 and, at the time, it was seen as a strong statement that the Government was serious about planning for the future in this area. Notably, there was limited, if any, buy-in from the SLA Defence Headquarters.

The aim of the National Security Policy Paper – as with the future Security Sector Review – was to establish a basis for a National Security Policy that would provide an overarching framework within which more detailed policy papers relating to the main security agencies, including military, police and intelligence services, could fit. There was also an expectation, which was never realised, that the National Security Policy would lead to a White Paper on National Security, outlining Government policy and any legislation necessary to support it.

The paper itself defines security and sets the context for national security policy development. It considers key security issues, including geographical, political and economic factors, historical causes of instability, including previous security lapses, and the security forces and agencies available to the Government of Sierra. It then considers internal and external threats to national security, leading to a set of policy recommendations.

The paper takes a holistic approach to security, covering 'traditional' security issues such as the integrity of the state and sovereignty. It also elaborates a number of guarantees of democratic rights and freedom of the civilian population from threats to personal security and property. In addition, it states a commitment to freedom from war, poverty and social injustice. Security was viewed as integral to wider governance issues, and therefore the inclusion of other government agencies was seen as key to this comprehensive security strategy. In practice, this was difficult to realise, partly because of the different pace of reform undertaken by different Ministries and partly because the overarching controlling Committee, the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), did not encompass several Ministries, including the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as permanent members.

rumour, and communicate this clearly to the relevant authorities, rather than pass it on uncritically.

In early 2001, there were officially three intelligence collecting agencies: SLP's Special Branch; the Force Intelligence and Security Unit (FISU) and CISU, formerly known as the National Intelligence Unit. Of these, CISU was the newest creation and existed largely only on paper. (In addition, an intelligence

branch of the CDF existed in 1999-2000, which faded away with the CDF's diminishing importance as the war came to an end).

The first meetings of the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) in 2001 indicated that it would be necessary to carry out radical restructuring of all three collecting agencies in order to achieve a workable level of intelligence production, which in turn would be able to provide the JIC with a minimum of reliable and actionable intelligence. Such a process had already begun in FISU under the guidance of British Army Intelligence Corps advisors, but was not part of a wider strategy for restructuring and integrating Sierra Leone's intelligence machinery. This meant that a new and substantial task had already emerged, but it was equally clear that there was no point in building capacity in the JIC and a Joint Assessment Centre if there was no usable intelligence to action. In hindsight that may be to state the obvious, but refers to the important point of appropriate sequencing of the transformation process.

Limited access to actionable intelligence immediately caused problems for programme management, since the original timetable and resource allocation had not foreseen the need to develop intelligence collection capacity. Moreover, DfID did not believe that developing such 'operational' capacity was part of its charter, indeed could be, given its development-related mandate. In the event, it was agreed that the British intelligence community would support the development of operational capability in parallel with SILSEP by developing analytical 'non-operational' capacities.

Early thinking on state security had been focused around a centralised system with power concentrated in the Office of the President that covered everything from military intelligence to organised crime[93]. The SLP would lose its Special Branch and the military its intelligence unit. However, the President dismissed this idea in favour of the creation of a central co-ordinating mechanism – later to become the Office of National Security (ONS) – that responded to the notion that "there were elementary things that were missing" in terms of intelligence co-ordination[94]. As the first, and still serving, National Security

Coordinator recalled about this period:

> *"We started from a clean slate, I had a view on coordinating the security sector. Basically, I was recommending a structure at the national level, coordinating the security sector. [Previously, the] military were given political power, there was no leadership from the political class. I was finally, with ONS, given a chance to put coordination in place"[95].*

The ONS, a state security agency, was seen as having the benefit of being a 'new start'. It would be a government institution which, due to the new selection process and security vetting of recruits, had a good chance of maintaining standards of incorrupt and apolitical behaviour in its staff. Indeed, it was regarded as having the potential to become a flagship model for other government and public sector departments. Certainly, it represented an improvement on previous intelligence organisations and coordination of responses by institutions of the security system. Prior to the rebel attacks on Freetown in January 1999, information on the incursions had been available to the executive, but without an effective system of tasking, coordination, analysis and assessment. It was arguably not 'intelligence' and it failed to influence the actions of policy-makers. There had been many reports, often rumours, but they were not processed and policy-makers therefore had no means of deciding between useful information and gossip (just as had been the case when rebel attacks on Sierra Leone began in the early 1990s).

The main concern identified, which remains valid to this date, was whether building up an efficient ONS could tempt the executive (or opposition leaders) to put pressure on the organization to use confidential information to discredit political opponents. However, ONS has, since its establishment, been able to guard against political interference into its affairs, largely due to the robustness and persuasiveness of the personalities guiding the organization.

Poor intelligence systems had early on in SILSEP led to the formal creation of a Joint Intelligence Committee that met weekly and included representatives

of the existing intelligence agencies and appropriate Ministries; it was chaired by the National Security Coordinator. The breakdown of the security forces during the war was similar to that of the rest of the public service and, like the military, many intelligence operatives had become politicised and, as noted above, carried out by the SLP's Special Branch. Individual officers were poorly trained and resourced and the quality of gathering, coordinating, collating and managing intelligence suffered as a consequence. In effect, this meant several intelligence agencies were frequently involved in parallel intelligence gathering with virtually no coordination of their activities.

Because there was no SSR blueprint in 2001, a National Security Architecture and the ONS were established before any formal strategy or supporting legislation was produced. In fact, the legislation was first developed in embryonic form to incorporate the key elements of limitations, transparency, accountability, oversight and responsibilities and then developed further in response to events on the ground. An example of this was the late inclusion of paragraphs relating to the control and licensing of private security companies in drafts of the National Intelligence and Security Act.

In particular, the ONS began a programme of engagement with key stakeholders with the aim of identifying answers to critical questions, including definitions or perceptions of the nature of the 'security sector', but also consideration of which components should be incorporated into it. From these initial discussions it became clear that there was the need for a central coordinating function of Sierra Leone's system of security actors. The establishment of the ONS also drove the development of a national security policy and a national security doctrine. However, the process of engaging with a wide range of stakeholders itself was relatively *ad hoc*, at least partly because this was not really about reforming an existing institution, but more about designing a new architecture on a blank sheet of paper[96].

In Box 12 below, Robert Ashington-Pickett, one of the key advisers to the ONS and CISU in the early 2000s, recalls the process of separating intelligence gathering and assessment.

Box 12: Separation of CISU and ONS – Intelligence Operations and Intelligence Assessment[97]

The beginning of 2001 saw the clear division between the MoD and ONS/CISU elements of SILSEP and the arrival of intelligence specialists from the UK (the latter event reflecting a greater sense of acceptance within DfID to draw on UK Secret Intelligence Service (MI6) expertise). The split in SILSEP was echoed in the departure of the former National Security Advisor, Sheka Mansary, and his replacement by Kellie Conteh. Two days after this changeover, the National Security Adviser title was replaced by that of National Security Coordinator. This was significant, as it marked the departure from the traditional personality-based system in which the National Security Advisor had been a personal advisor to the President. Kellie Conteh, on the other hand, as National Security Coordinator, was first and foremost the head of a government agency, not a personal advisor. This move took national security and intelligence out of the realm of intimate, personal chats at 'the Palace' and into the process of professionalising an arm of government. Working relations between ONS and the Office of the President have been characterized as such ever since. It is worth noting that the transition from an intimate personal adviser to the President to a professional government agency is a critical issue for Intelligence and Security Service (ISS) components of SSR. However, elsewhere, in other contexts than that of Sierra Leone, this move has been avoided as being too politically difficult, with subsequent negative consequences for the SSR process as a whole.

"The timeline of establishing the ONS was not neat. The organization inherited a group of senior political figures who were part of the former personality-based arrangements of the Office of the National Security Adviser. This caused some initial confusion over the role of the ONS, since these legacy figures were still in the former mode of rumour peddling and, as such, apparently in competition with CISU. However, this was more apparent than real, since CISU was about to be made into a secret intelligence service, whose methods would be on a different scale and level of sophistication.

"By early 2002, ONS and CISU had clearly separate roles. There was no overlap or conflict of roles during my tenure. One of Kellie Conteh's strengths was that he grasped the significance of clear separation between ONS and CISU immediately and gave it his full support, despite the cultural-political challenges this would bring with it".

As the ONS progressed, it became clear that there were strong political interests opposing the establishment of a body that could coordinate the entire security system. Since such a process is fundamentally about the distribution of power, Sierra Leone's security system transformation process included many perceived threats to power and access to resources and actual threats to people who were threatening that power (both Sierra Leonean staff and international advisers faced death threats at this time). There remained a legacy of politicising intelligence and reliance on an intelligence service that existed to carry out internal political security rather than any technical intelligence function. Senior political players at the executive level at the time relied on their own trusted informants, people who, in turn, relied on questionable and unevaluated sources. Moreover, advisers were often reluctant to give bad news. The political establishment simply pursued traditional highly-personalised security assessment – they felt more comfortable sitting in a room and making decisions in a thoroughly non-transparent and oftentimes dysfunctional way[98].

These entrenched patterns of behaviour had to be overcome to move forward. In particular, it was crucial that the ONS and CISU, and newly recruited staff to these institutions, be able to build trust and support from the highest executive level. As one high-level representative in Sierra Leone noted, "the Government had its own perception in the beginning – gradually, it got rid of a politicized approach to the security sector"[99]. Creating the ever-elusive political space for ONS to perform its task became crucial, and has remained one of the most noteworthy contributions that can be made by external advisers and experts – securing that space.

The fact that intelligence experts were recruited to support the process of building up CISU and the ONS was an important watershed in the use of DfID resources, even though DfID shied away from operational matters. SILSEP's security coordination and intelligence components remain the only really significant intelligence capacity-building programme in any DfID programme, and yet it created a politically neutral space for the further development of security and governance institutions. These sensitivities were all the more significant since the ONS (in its strategy coordination role) and CISU (in its

operational role) came to play an important part in the final phase of the war by supporting counter-insurgency activities, obtaining reliable intelligence from inside the RUF organisation and by assisting in breaking down the RUF from within.

There were perceptions from outside the two organizations that ONS and CISU rivalries were emerging, not least due to perceived overlaps between them. However, it never was the function of the ONS to collect secret or covert intelligence. Later, as it became more sophisticated, ONS did gather "open source intelligence" and "confidential information", including information from those of the Provincial and District Security Committees (PROSECs and DISECs) that functioned effectively. However, this was not an example of overlap but a central part of the emerging design of the National Security Architecture. Secret intelligence collection was the function of CISU; open source intelligence gathering fell to the ONS. In turn, CISU also undertook surveillance, psychological operations (psyops) and disruption operations, and did so successfully. An entirely new intelligence agency concept was emerging beyond anything that ONS or, previously, the Office of the National Security Advisor or the National Intelligence Unit, ever attempted or, indeed, aspired to. While CISU had a low profile and purposefully hid behind the ONS, CISU's operational successes provided 'proof of concept' for the Intelligence and Security Service model as a whole[100].

Thus, the different forms of intelligence and information gathering were meant to complement each other. Their fusion into the Joint Assessments Group would over time lead to a more balanced and rounded intelligence product. At first, as mentioned above, this process was not well understood by outsiders (or indeed by early ONS staff members). It was made more confusing by the overlap that had existed pre-2001 between the Office of the National Security Adviser and the National Intelligence Unit. But by late 2001 the differences were clear to those inside the intelligence agencies. Moreover, they were becoming better understood and appreciated by the Office of the President and wider Government.

At the same time, the idea of CISU was to create a politically neutral civilian intelligence collection organisation to work alongside FISU and the Special Branch of the SLP, all reporting to the JIC. This created tensions, not only with ONS, which was seen to have too many tasks, but also between the Special Branch and CISU. Some clear definitions of responsibility were required to allow proper and effective coordination of intelligence agencies. The draft National Security and Central Intelligence Bill provided these high level definitions.

By 2002, the ONS had gone very far very quickly, which generated a number of challenges in terms of institutional memory, organisational culture and procedures. Meeting such challenges is part of building institutional confidence and it is not possible to cut corners in this process. Substantial achievements, such as establishing a sufficient political space for ONS, a legislative framework and ONS and CISU operating procedures were all vital in establishing a basis for the organizations to operate effectively.

Decentralizing Security Coordination – Provincial and District Security Committees (PROSECs and DISECs)

Within the new national security architecture in-the-making the development of Provincial and District Security Committees (PROSECs and DISECs) became critical in developing an architecture that functioned beyond Freetown. Having been a District Security Officer before the war, President Kabbah's memories of "how security operated in his youth" became a significant factor in achieving buy-in from the highest political level[101]. The President's familiarity with a system that functioned at the local level helped secure his direct support. Thus, PROSECs and DISECs became a means to decentralise the security apparatus.

One UK adviser close to the events noted that, in fact Kabbah in particular had a tendency to "go back to the colonial era when things were perceived to have worked. I suppose we quite unashamedly capitalized on that"[102]. At the same time it was generally noted that:

"Conflicts start out in rural areas where a person has a grievance that can't be addressed. It will start by him hoping that the native police and courts will help; if they don't work, he will go to the magistrate courts. By the time it [the grievance] comes to Freetown, if ever, you've almost lost the opportunity to quell problems arising. Sankoh could come and feed on these problems: 'You're not getting justice, come and join me'. It is way before military coups become an issue"[103].

Clearly one of the lessons learned in the latter stages of the war and in transforming Sierra Leone's security system was that establishing a workable security structure outside Freetown was critical in order to prevent any new rural-based insurgency or border issue with either Guinea or Liberia. In 2000 security committees were set up with basic functions in Bo and Kenema with the expectation of establishing them in every province and district across the country.

The institutional set-up of the PROSECs/DISECs is not drawn from a pre-produced international blueprint outside Sierra Leone, but from previous colonial models in the country as well as experiences from the region, Ghana specifically. "We would literally sit around the table, and one thing that we did realize was that we could not simply import a model from the UK or anywhere else, and say: Here we are, let's slap this one in and see if it works"[104]. In addition, the emphasis on strong links between central and local government institutions provided a critical element to the intelligence structure which had been non-existent up to this point. Indeed, as previously noted, one of the key deficiencies of the security architecture before the war was the lack of structured early warning mechanisms.

Given their origin, the PROSECs/DISECs represent one of the more novel approaches of the Sierra Leone experience to transforming the way in which security is delivered and maintained. The security committees were a pragmatic response to the reality that security and intelligence coordination at provincial and district levels were needed to counter internal threats to security (which predominantly originated from grievances at the local level).

A key element of the development of this system was that these district and provincial security committees represented a shift away from the idea of 'security' as a purely national concern towards security as a fundamental community issue. There was a very early recognition within the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone that security and intelligence coordination at the provincial and local levels, along with local data collection, could be decisive. Clearly the idea of 'holistic national security' had taken root. What this meant by 2001, as the conflict was coming to an end, was that if national security was to work in Sierra Leone, it had to have buy-in by the people at the grassroots level. In retrospect, district and provincial involvement in security not only satisfied accountability and transparency standards, but also helped to consolidate democratic national security institutions[105].

At the time of this writing, a pilot project is being implemented to further decentralize security committees and expand the PROSECs/DISECs philosophy to the chiefdom level with the implementation of Chieftaincy Security Committees (CHISECs)[106]. The CHISECs will initially be implemented in the chiefdoms on the border of Sierra Leone and report to the DISECs.

SILSEP, Security and the Rivalry of Security Agencies

The original idea of SILSEP had been to build "something that could oversee the armed forces. The Office of the President, including the NSC, was not being given reports. The original idea behind SILSEP was improvement in those two areas. Very soon, the programme mutated slightly into reforming the intelligence services as well"[107].

The SILSEP delineation between 'security' and 'defence' at a conceptual level produced practical implications. The understanding of 'security' called for a holistic, multi-agency approach to national security that included the National Security Council, the National Security Adviser, relations between the contributing agencies and incorporation of the military, police and intelligence agencies. 'Defence', on the other hand, was limited to the MoD and armed forces, including military and militia groups. This distinction was made in July

1999, one month after the three-member SILSEP team arrived in Freetown for an initial 12-month period.

The definitional exercise between 'security', linked to the National Security Adviser and 'defence' linked to the MoD led to discussions about splitting the SILSEP programme components rather than managing them as seamlessly as possible (the former approach opposes current good SSR practices as defined by leading agencies, multilateral and bilateral, in the field). Ultimately, this differentiation between the defence and intelligence components also papered over a fall-out amongst the international military advisers involved. "Rank might not matter in DfID", an observer noted at the time, "but it does in the military"[108]. Indeed, it proved of great significance that the first SILSEP team included both serving and retired UK officers. Similarly, it was a reflection of the circumstances that there was very little in the way of a clear reform strategy that substantiated the importance of linking all UK security-related programmes together in anything that could recognisably be called SSR. Establishing those links among all the components of Sierra Leone's transformation process has proven to be a sustained and continuous challenge.

Eventually this conceptual differentiation led to a paper that constructed two separate scoping statements for the 'security project' and the 'defence project', respectively. Within the former, a National Security Policy Paper, the National Security Adviser, the National Intelligence Unit, human resource and training requirements and other developmental management requirements were outlined. The latter 'defence' paper concentrated on the creation of a National Defence Policy for Sierra Leone. This paper also addressed the establishment of a system for higher management of Defence, including training requirements, legislative reform requirements and operational frameworks.

In addition, SILSEP also "left out key institutions such as the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The international community did not want to touch the military. They paid a lot of attention to the police. Ancillary ministries should have been covered as well but were not"[109]. This comment should be seen in the context of contemporary debates regarding holistic concepts of and approaches to SSR,

which were neither clearly understood nor employed internationally in the late 1990s. Nonetheless, the point does speak to the important issue of integrating programming. Furthermore, as noted by a key player involved in the security transformation process in Sierra Leone at the early stages, "you can only do what the climate allows you to do. The Ministry of Internal Affairs was not seen as SSR. The development of the MIA [Ministry of Internal Affairs] was included in the CCSSP with the Permanent Secretary as Project Director. However, due to the political dynamics at the time, work with the Ministry of Internal Affairs wasn't taken forward, it just didn't happen"[110].

Consequently, from late 2000 until 2002, the political interface between the SLP and the Executive was through the Vice President (who is the Chairman of the Police Council), as well as the President directly, rather than being mediated by the MIA. While this may not reflect democratic ideals, it was a methodology that reflected current Constitutional arrangements on police management. At the time, it was hoped, and expected, that this Constitutional anomaly would be dealt with, as it effectively gave the Minister of Internal Affairs no power over the direction of police policy. However, at the time of this writing the role of the MIA remains limited.

Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of the breadth of initiatives taken and programmes implemented in support of Sierra Leone's security system from the late 1990s until 2002. The context in which these initiatives took place was open conflict and the all but complete collapse of Sierra Leone's state institutions.

What started out as a routine non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) by the UK in 2000 developed into a small-to-medium scale war-fighting operation in support of and in collaboration with the Government of Sierra Leone. Subsequently, support to training, indeed, support to re-establishing the armed forces was given under the slogan 'serving the nation'. As Clare Short recalled: "We are trying to build the state and it doesn't have any armed forces, so that was the obvious role for the British then, to help train the new Sierra Leonean army"[111]. At the same time, "there was a whole issue of conflict in Africa. We were in that phase after the Cold War where there was a massive growth in

conflict within and between countries, causing enormous suffering and preventing development. I mean, you couldn't be intelligently interested in development in Africa and not be focused on how you bring all these conflicts to an end"[112]. Development and security were coming together as a means of making, keeping and consolidating peace – an entirely different context in which to operate that existed before the 9/11 attacks, and the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. "The possibility of absolutely merging commitments to development with all your other instruments of foreign policy, including the military, which was conceivable in those days, is now sort of lost"[113].

The general state of emergency in Sierra Leone at the time left no space for sitting back and developing a strategy; the country was in urgent need of support. Thus, prior to 2002, when the war and accompanying disarmament and demobilisation were declared over, collaborative UK-Government of Sierra Leone programmes were very much shaped as responses to consecutive crises. The lack of any capacity to oversee the armed forces, which had staged two coups since 1992, was addressed by SILSEP. So was the inability to properly coordinate responses to the security situation in the country and to collect coherent intelligence. Police primacy had been the priority of President Kabbah early on; in fact, from 1996 establishing a police force had been given priority. The SLP was given a new ethos, Local Needs Policing, gender-based violence was responded to through Family Support Units, and vehicles, communication equipment and uniforms were procured. Finally, the judiciary was supported through the Law Development Programme.

At the time, predominantly as a result of the context in which operations began, but also partly because of the personalities involved, integration of these various security-related programmes did not take place. However, it was also a time with no coherent concept of the security system – or SSR – and thus no real sense of which security-related institutions to include in the transformation process. This was emerging, however, during the period from 2002 until 2005. It was in this way that SSR to a large extent came to shape Sierra Leone just as Sierra Leone came to shape SSR – as a concept, a set of policies and an integrated set of programmatic approaches.

The Development of an SSR Concept, 2002-2005

The year 2002 was pivotal for Sierra Leone. Officially the conflict ended in January, although there were significant areas of the countryside that were not under the direct control of the Government. The first post-war presidential and parliamentary elections were held, won by a significant margin by the Sierra Leone's People's Party (SLPP) taking 70.03% of the vote. This was very much Kabbah's triumph; he was seen by then as the man who brought peace to Sierra Leone after a decade of war. Elections were made possible with the deployment of what was the biggest UN peacekeeping mission (17,000 foreign troops) to date. However, while UNAMSIL provided transport and other logistic support, policing of the relatively peaceful election process was conducted by the SLP.

The partially-developed set of agencies and programmes that had helped the Government of Sierra Leone to win the war were instantly faced with a different set of challenges from the emergency planning they had been engaged in until 2002. The previous chapter outlines a number of those challenges, including rivalry between agencies and ministries, the balance of the UK military between taking operational command and advising, continued political instability and a fragile peace that had to deal with large numbers of armed former combatants.

This was done in the context of an as yet non-functioning military and only a partially-developed SLP. By early 2004, findings of the Security Sector Review being produced at the time noted that the economy – as opposed to more traditional security threats – was a key threat to achieving the future vision for the country[114]. As the outgoing Commander IMATT, Adrian Freer, noted in late 2003: "Within Sierra Leone, although the current situation is calm, the failure of the Government to stimulate the economy and address the resultant levels of unemployment and under-employment are of great concern […]. Without this, and despite security sector reforms, neither long-term stability for the country nor the foreign investment necessary for economic recovery can be assured"[115]. These threats to the stability of Sierra Leone very much remain in place today.

It was becoming obvious that without economic development, neither long-term stability nor foreign investment was a given. Achieving success in the economic sphere to rival the gains in the security system proved difficult, remains difficult and could become a decisively destabilizing factor in the future. It was becoming clear at this time that the Government could not survive without direct budgetary support and other types of aid from donors.

The UK decided to create a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), described in Box 13, which had long-term consequences for UK development policy in Sierra Leone and for the country's post-war reforms in general.

The period from 2002-2005 also constituted a major turning point in terms of producing strategy and development objectives and linkages between the two. The Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP) and Security Sector Review were being prepared. Justice sector programming, which had largely focused on enhancing police capacity under the CCSSP, was broadened into a more holistic approach to encompass the courts and prison services under JSDP, which was being planned during these years. Thus, a recognisable SSR approach began to be developed and linkages that had been formed in the prior period began to be operationalised. Serious issues of the geographical reach of security forces and their lack of capacity began to be addressed, even if challenges remained substantial.

Box 13: The Memorandum of Understanding between the UK and Sierra Leone

In 2002, the UK Government made an unusual, far-reaching decision, spearheaded by then UK Secretary of State for International Development, Clare Short, to agree to a ten-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Sierra Leone. Such a long-term commitment was a novelty in development thinking at the time. It bound both parties to a series of commitments until 2012, and was a consequence of the alignment of UK national and developmental interests. Moreover, it was coupled with a broader geopolitical UK commitment to demonstrate that a joined-up defence, diplomatic and developmental effort, as evidenced by the newly created Global and Africa Conflict Prevention Pools (GCPP and ACPP, respectively), could deliver stability. In other words, working together could produce a situation where the result would be worth more than the sum of its departmental parts[116]. It was "something that helped us enormously", one of the main CCSSP advisers has noted, "at least you knew that you had the support. In '98-'99 real, serious risks were taken. Also some very serious personal decisions – this is the reality. If somebody is going to commit to a change process, my horizon is 15-20 years"[117].

There were key principles adhered to as part of the MoU. The principle of national ownership, often quoted but rarely observed, was at the core of the MoU and the Government of Sierra Leone was presented in writing with the activities planned to be undertaken by the UK Government and the sectoral and financial commitments required to deliver them. Similarly, in signing the document, Sierra Leone demonstrated buy-in at the highest political level to a strategy that included, *inter alia,* objectives on reshaping the army and developing and implementing a national anti-corruption strategy. The MoU amounted to a form of benevolent donor conditionality, with the Government of Sierra Leone being provided with a series of political and financial guarantees deemed necessary to lay the foundations for a comprehensive post-conflict development programme.

The MoU also provided a mechanism for conditionality in the form of performance-related budget support, another usual aspect of a development programme in a country with as a high fiduciary risk as Sierra Leone. Despite the potential carrot-and-stick of the risk of up to £5 million per year being either provided or withheld based on Government performance, this mechanism of conditionality was ultimately not used as effectively as it could have been. Departments responsible for delivering against the benchmarks contained within the MoU often were not aware of their deliverables. In addition, at least with respect to the MoD that was only coming into being, the MoU was signed without its involvement (i.e. pledges were made without knowing whether they could be delivered upon). With the added weakness of not having a Minister of Defence involved in the daily business of the ministry, the political guidance on how to implement the aspects of the MoU relevant to the armed forces, such as producing a long-term plan for down-sizing, simply was not forthcoming.

Box 13: *Continued*

Since decisions made regarding the allocation of the performance tranche were in-year, they were never incorporated into the document. Moreover, deliverables were often not clear. Eventually, this form of strategic engagement gave way to crisis management, and the urgent overcame the important[118].

Establishing the SLP outside Freetown and the Western Area

Before 2002, police reform had taken place predominantly in Freetown and had emphasised strategic issues, in part because of a genuine need to do so and in part because it was not possible to move outside the capital. In particular, emphasis had been placed on building capacity amongst the senior levels of the SLP, including training at the Police College at Bramshill in the UK. The emphasis on Freetown at the time was also precipitated by the security situation, particularly the high number of internally displaced people occupying any large building available, including former railway train sheds and derelict factory buildings in the east end of Freetown. After the war ended, it became possible to move SLP operations outside Freetown and move from a theoretical, strategic approach to a more practical one.

At the time, one key actor pointed out:

"The context changed dramatically right about 2002. From then on we were able to access Makeni, Kabala, Koidu, Kailahun, etc. We were able to go into these places and start re-establishing policing. The context changed from maintaining law and order in Freetown to having to do it throughout the country. That, in itself, presented a whole lot of new challenges in terms of communications, mobility and so forth. Because it was the police that got in first, there was very little in terms of infrastructure – they had completely ruined all our premises. In Kambia there was nothing, Makeni, everything was wrecked. In Kono they dug [for diamonds] under the police stations. We needed money to rebuild the infrastructure, which we

didn't have much of because, at the time, we expected other donors to come in to support. Alan Doss came into his own as the DSRSG [Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General]. He started to mobilize UNDP [United Nations Development Programme]; we went through a period of building makeshift barracks. That was the immediate pressure, establishing some kind of effective policing. We had to take well-armed and professionally-trained OSD personnel with us to enable us to keep these places under control"[119].

Deployment across the country, however, would not have been possible without a massive investment in a vehicle fleet and nationwide communication systems, investments that the Government could not have afforded. By 2004, "the SLP has improved its responsiveness and its visibility. A major factor in achieving this situation has been the communications, vehicles and infrastructure support provided through the CSSP"[120]. However, despite this success, concerns about the long-term sustainability of these massive investments were being raised: "[T]he SLP now have a large vehicle fleet (+700 vehicles) […], but in time these vehicles will need replacing". However, "no government replacement plan or a budget to achieve this" was in place[121]. This issue remains a concern today, greatly hampering SLP mobility, particularly in the countryside.

The push for a police presence outside Freetown not only came from the Government, but from UNAMSIL as well. With limited or no infrastructure in or around Kono, for example, and the continued hostility towards state security forces, it became a massive logistical undertaking to get both human resources and equipment shipped to the area: "The Pakistani army [UNAMSIL peacekeepers] wanted us in Kono. We had to get vehicles in there. Large MI-26 transport helicopters took vehicles and equipment there with 200 police officers. Links were established into HQ and radio communications for local operations"[122].

Despite these efforts, the consolidation of police presence outside the Western Area faced the on-going threat of hostile groups, warring factions, RUF

combatants, CDF fighters and criminal gangs. Consequently, some internal competition about who held the monopoly of providing security at the local level existed. In brief, the situation dictated "policing by consensus", as negotiation and management of these groups were necessary until reintegration as part of the DDR process gathered momentum. At this point, the SLP simply did not have the power to establish a monopoly on delivering security to the population[123].

By early 2003, it became clear that SLP force levels were still inadequate. It had also become clear that given the role of the SLP under the pre-war regime, and more importantly, the complete breakdown of state institutions during the extended period of conflict, basic training, as opposed to retraining, was required.

The SLP needed to increase in size from 6,000 to 9,500 personnel. To achieve this, it would be necessary to train 1,000 new recruits per year until 2005. The obvious need to develop a police training strategy and training itself eventually involved infrastructure investment in the Police Training School, the Operational Support Division (OSD) Training Centre and establishing three regional training centres. By the end of 2004, 900 new recruits per year were undergoing training. Training itself was provided by Sierra Leoneans and by joint initiatives involving the SLP, CCSSP and UNCIVPOL[124].

The rebuilding of the SLP was based on Comprehensive SLP training and the philosophy of 'Back to Basics' (B2B). Some of the skills originally outlined in B2B give a good impression of the SLP training needed: Completing entries in notebooks; interviewing skills and identifying key points; recording statements from complainants, witnesses and suspects; compliance with rules of evidence; and obtaining accurate descriptions of persons and properties. The B2B concept was later noted as not very popular among the police force, which according to some SLP officers regarded this particular initiative as imposed from outside. This may say more about the notion of what is basic than it does about the actual need to reintroduce these skills to the SLP.

In June 2003, Keith Biddle, IGP since 1999, was replaced by the first post-war Sierra Leonean IGP, Brima Acha Kamara. Not surprisingly, with the "handover of leadership came public fears that the police would resort to what it was [before the conflict]"[125], and that British support would disappear. Indeed, access to funding did change significantly in the sense that a Sierra Leonean IGP could not make the same demands as those of an expatriate IGP.

At the same time there was a sense that "Sierra Leonean police officers would fare well, because they knew Sierra Leone better"[126]. In the words of Brima Acha Kamara, Sierra Leone's IGP today:

> *"It became easier because we started to own the thing – everybody became involved in a very active way. The umbrella [of international leadership] was gone, and the message that had very much been conveyed to us was that in any situation there must be one leader, but that we could only make it as a team. There was that awareness among us and we should be seen to sustain what had been done. We started to review some of the policies, whether they suited us, and the Executive Management Board became much livelier. Before, we said that whatever Keith decided was the right thing – without much discussion. Confidence started to come; we became bolder and dismantled a lot of the check points that existed across the country. Our own situation in the SLP had been unique. Keith was British, but the whole team was Sierra Leonean. In our various roles we were able to assist him; he worked through us. If you take Keith out, all the key players were still in place"[127].*

The SLP rebuilding process discussed here has been described by the current IGP as similar to "an aircraft that is about to be airborne. It takes a lot of speed, the structures were put in place and strong leadership was a necessity"[128]. Before Kamara took over there was some leadership fatigue and a degree of uncertainty and power struggles about the succession that involved allegations of tribalism and political affiliation. These struggles influenced relations between the SLP and the political leadership. However, the sense that the political

leadership had listened to Keith Biddle because he was an expatriate and that such privileges would not necessarily be granted to a Sierra Leonean IGP proved unfounded. A President was in place who ensured operational independence for the SLP and consequently limited political interference into the organization's affairs.

Keith Biddle relates his account of the behind-the-scenes IGP succession planning process in Box 14.

The Special Security Division, which changed its name to the Operational Support Division (OSD) in March 2002 to signify a new start for the unit, were regarded by the SLP and external advisors as the front line of policing. By 2004, the unit consisted of seven groups trained in policing public order, firearms, VIP close protection, mobile armed response, convoy protection and escorts. Indeed, the role of the OSD had become so important that the IGP intended to increase its size from the 2004 strength of 2,400 to 2,900, a figure based both on threat assessments at the time and an expanding portfolio to man some 600 protection posts. In September 2004, for example, the OSD took over UNAMSIL responsibilities in the Eastern Region of the country.

Box 14: Handing over Responsibility – The SLP Experience[129]

An IGP succession plan had been in the making since early 2001. The President and the Police Council, together with the Minister of Internal Affairs, approved the final plan: The IGP is appointed by the President on the advice of the Police Council, with approval of Parliament.

- Police officers were placed in three categories:
- Those with the potential to fill the highest positions of IGP, Deputy Inspector-General (DIG) and Assistant Inspector-General (AIG).
- Those with the potential to advance into the first category.
- Those in junior ranks with the potential to succeed to the higher levels.

In the Police Council, full discussions took place on the strengths and weaknesses of potential candidates for various high-level positions. Identified potential candidates were subsequently observed by Police Council members and the President. Those having potential for IG ranks were frequently tasked by the serving IGP to present to the Police Council, for instance. The leading group was also tasked to brief the President and accompany him on official functions throughout the country.

Another means of preparing the transition was the provision of professional training opportunities, awarded to those individuals with the potential to succeed. For example, the current IGP, the DIG and three of the AIGs have all attended the UK Senior Command Course, designed to train future UK chief constables.

The mix of potential candidates was across the ethnic spectrum, but limited in terms of gender equality, as there were only two women officers of sufficient seniority for consideration (both are now AIGs).

Immediately following the 2002 general election, the serving IGP indicated to the President and the Vice-President, the latter being the Chairman of the Police Council, that his contract would have to end no later than November 2003. Procedures to decide on the succession were also drawn up by the Chairman and Secretary of the Police Council (Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Internal Affairs).

Biddle recalls: "In the event the selection procedure was professionally conducted with some nine candidates being thoroughly scrutinized and analyzed. Neither political consideration nor tribal preferences were brought into the selection equation. For my appointment, I had gone through the same process that culminated with an extremely thorough panel interview before a Parliamentary Select Committee, and I have to say that it was the most rigorous interview to which I was ever subjected. My successor's interview was equally thorough and more stressful, as it was televised and broadcasted on the radio – live! The selection process was as professional and as politically independent as those for selecting chief constables in the UK."

Box 14: *Continued*

There were some who tried to take the SLP backwards through lobbying politicians and encouraging press stories by paying journalists to write 'paid up' stories, but I can say that they were not in the highest echelon. In any case, the parties to the process decided to ignore such activities".

A concern raised by some SLP officers, and echoed in CCSSP's successor in 2005, the JSDP, was that the heavy OSD focus was diverting resources away from general duties policing. However, with OSD filling the security gap left by the UN, an increase of the Division appeared justified. Indeed, the OSD was, as noted in 2003, "cited by the outgoing IGP as the critical success factor in developing improved relations with the community"[130]. While this was the case, it was also clear that careful monitoring and management vigilance was needed to ensure that the OSD did not become an alternative 'elite force' or lose sight of its primary role and purpose as an SLP police unit supporting Local Needs Policing. As noted in 2003: "[T]o ensure that the new human rights-based training and operational procedures, including safeguards such as rules of engagement, are institutionalized, support from the CSSP [in the context of this narrative referred to as CCSSP] needs to continue"[131].

In 2004, the perceived difference in treatment between external and internal security providers was creating tension between RSLAF and the SLP. This circumstance was directly linked to the stated aim of creating 'police primacy' in Sierra Leone, and the infrastructural and logistical benefits such as vehicles and uniforms that followed. Because of the SLP emphasis on their primacy in providing internal security, this was misunderstood as meaning exclusivity or supremacy. Primacy on one side and exclusivity or supremacy on the other are two very different types of status; the former denotes areas of responsibility, the other connotes hierarchy of importance.

In this tense context and under the new SLP leadership from early 2003, restructuring of the police continued. However, strategic advice by the CCSSP became more disjointed and the management of the programme was becoming

less visible. In 2003 a delay in appointing a successor to the CCSSP project manager, who had been in place for four years, slowed the programme's impetus. It highlighted the key relationship that had existed between the SLP and the individuals in charge of CCSSP, the importance of timely succession planning and also the view of some SLP officers that the rank and experience of the advisers who were beginning to arrive in Sierra Leone were just too low. As a general rule, rank and experience matters; the issue was the case in CCSSP-SLP relations, but also came to the fore among SILSEP advisors in early stages of the programme, and certainly is the case for any advisor vis-à-vis the armed forces.

The CCSSP management hiatus resulted in too much being done by a fragmented group of individual consultants. The IGP himself was not involved in discussions about their terms of reference; it became clear that some of the activities of the CCSSP at this later stage of the programme added limited value. Effectively, the CCSSP was coming to the end of its useful life and its value to the SLP was diminishing. Whilst some consultants had been in post since the late 1990s, some were new and inexperienced; critically, the IGP was not kept fully in the loop regarding the activities of CCSSP consultants: "At one point I insisted to see copies of the reports that they were doing and that they should be given to me. They would say that 'when the advisers come, they would do this and this' and I started to object and say that 'we don't really want this and this'"[132].

This weakening of direction was clearly felt by advisers coming in to begin implementation of JSDP:

> *Under Keith [Biddle] and Adrian [Horn] there had been more of a balanced approach. Operations [OSD] had been supported, but so had ISD [Internal Security Division], FSUs, etc. By the time I arrived, there was no balance and there were arguments. Clearly there was an absence of a controlled hand and I didn't find any strategic direction. You could argue they were at the end of CCSSP, so there wouldn't be, but I then immediately asked the senior governance adviser, about the closure report for the CCSSP. The*

*answer I got was that 'we don't talk about closure'. The first decision
I made in agreement with the IGP, he gave me a list of people who
he felt were helping, were useful, and in the main kept them on. I
also made it clear to the consultants that I'd ring them. The migration
from CCSSP to JSDP was going to be a break. Some people did get
continuation"*[133].

Many people inside the CCSSP programme would simply assume that CCSSP
would roll into JSDP, a message instinctively taken onboard by the SLP. There
was limited engagement with the idea that the new programme was going to
cover far more ground than the narrow focus of the CCSSP on policing per se.
The aim of JSDP was to address questions relating to the justice sector as a
whole, a very different remit. At the same time, by the end of 2004, full-time
management of CCSSP had give way to temporary management by DfID
staff with a wide-ranging portfolio of diverse programmes. In reality, DfID
came to oversee the closure of CCSSP as occurring over an extended period
of time due to delays in the start-up of JSDP implementation. Strategic and
day-to-day management were consequently not happening; CCSSP consultants
filled the gap themselves. In the management vacuum, differences began to
appear between the old and new guards, i.e., those who had been present from
the beginning and relatively recent arrivals, also between operations and general
policing. The CCSSP ended in June 2005, some four months after the
commencement of JSDP in March. It had run its course.

Parallel to these basic reform activities, the concept of Local Needs Policing
noted above continued to be implemented within the SLP. Following a 2001
pilot programme, the concept was introduced in Freetown divisions from
February 2002 and eventually in the rest of the Western Area. Box 15 provides
a brief discussion to two important, community-based innovations of the SLP –
Local Policing Partnership Boards (LPPBs) and continued implementation of
the aforementioned FSUs. Both institutions, considered success stories of the
SLP transformation process, were key in establishing accountability and trust
between the police and the population.

New police recruits during morning drill at the Police Training School in Hastings.

Box 15: Local Policing Partnership Boards (LPPBs) and FSUs – Building Bridges to Civil Society

In 2002-2003, Local Policing Partnership Boards (LPPBs) were established in each police division, following the rationale of community policing, Local Needs Policing. As recalled by current IGP Brima Acha Kamara: "I went to Northern Ireland twice when I did my MSc at Exeter University. When I went there, they were also going through the same change process [as Sierra Leone]. I picked up the idea of policing boards there, as a form of accountability to the public. The LPPBs were set up as a way of ensuring stakeholder participation in the process, that the needs and expectations of normal people are heard. We were going to change the way we did criminal investigations. How could we involve the locals in policing, a shared vision, shared values, shared resources? When we do that, they own the process"[134]. LPPBs were a fully Sierra Leonean-driven initiative, reflecting SLP's attempts to transform their image into a 'force for good'. It was – and is – also a pragmatic response to the need to engage the population in their own security provision, particularly in isolated towns and villages not easily accessible to the SLP.

As the LPPBs were established, financial constraints became one of the greatest challenges to mainstreaming Local Needs Policing. LPPBs did not, and still do not, have a budget, but have relied on the commitment of police officers and community

Box 15: *Continued*

representatives to attend meetings and contribute to discussions about their own security. In many rural districts, such as Kenema and Kailahun – vast areas with limited road systems – it was and remains difficult for LPPB members to meet. The issue of understaffing combined with lack of vehicles thus hampers the effectiveness of the LPPBs and generally speaking adequate investigations of crimes[135]. In other words, some degree of 'policing by consensus' continues to exist across Sierra Leone, and in particular outside the Western Area.

The significance of the now functioning FSUs in building up stronger relations between the communities and the SLP was also being acknowledged. Their success was reflected in other organizations, with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) not only supporting the concept, but also actively seeking association with the newly established SLP institution. In November 2002, an observer noted that "[w]hen one considers that, two years ago, there was open hostility and distrust of the police by almost all NGOs, particularly those working in the area of sexual abuse, the success of the FSUs becomes even more apparent"[136].

MoD and RSLAF Developments

MoD's organization had its roots in the 10th iteration of the Order of Battle (ORBAT) of the RSLAF produced in February 2000[137]. Since then, in response to the changed security situation, a new structure of the armed forces had been established. In January 2002, President Kabbah opened the new MoD at Tower Hill in the former Paramount Hotel. It was inaugurated as 'a joint Civilian/ Military organization', headed up by a Director General and a Chief of Defence Staff (see figure 1).

The armed forces were officially renamed the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), announced by the President at the opening ceremony, in recognition of a new beginning for a new force[138]. On the same day, restructuring of the Defence Headquarters was begun, essentially splitting it into two new organizations: The Joint Force Command (JFC) and the Joint Support Command (JSC). Both were subordinated to the MoD and both were under the command of IMATT to steer initial development and help build capacity[139]. The design of this twin-force structure was aimed at reducing the chances of a coup by introducing a division of command responsibility, based on the premise that it

Figure 1: MoD Structures after 2002[140]

Legend:
- Military Posts
- Civilian Posts

Office of the President
Deputy Minister of Defence

Chief of Defence Staff
Director-General

Assistant Deputy Secretary of Operations and Plans
- Military Operations
- Intelligence and Security
- Public Relations and Information
- Crisis Management Centre

Assistant Deputy Secretary of Personnel and Training
- Training, Education and Recruitment
- Personel

Assistant Deputy Secretary of Support and Logistics
- Logistics and Equipment Support
- Medical
- Estate

Deputy Secretary of Policy and Procurement
- Procurement
- Policy

Deputy Secretary of Finance and Administration
- Finance and Budget
- Administration
- Legal

would be much more difficult for a single 'force commander' to be able to exert control over operational troops and support elements, particularly in terms of access to combat supplies (food, ammunition, fuel, etc.) and administration.

Into mid-2002, the UK re-equipment and training programmes continued. In mid-May, the last MRP training course was completed at the AFTC Benguema. Following this, UK military presence in the country was reduced in preparation for the transition to the new IMATT structure, which became effective in late July 2002. The final tranche of the UK-funded RSLAF Re-equipment Programme, ordered in April-May 2002 was due for delivery by August 2002. This ended the most visible and tangible part of the UK's programme of military support to the RSLAF.

The new structure of the armed forces was clarified in the 2003 Defence White Paper, which included definitions of roles within RSLAF, between the MoD and JFC and also between civilian and military personnel. A key element of the Paper was a complete overhaul of the staff grading system, which raised a number of issues that are still of concern today. Box 16 describes the significance of the staff grading system issues, as expressed by Emmanuel Osho Coker and Alfred Nelson-Williams, who were key figures in Sierra Leone's civil service and RSLAF at the time, and continues to be so today.

At its inception, there was no anticipation that the MoD would be involved in any operational planning or administration. The project plan assumed its establishment in a benign environment, since the Lomé Peace Agreement had been signed and the RUF/AFRC and elected SLPP were 'sharing' Government. However, as it turned out, implementation of the MoD organization was undertaken in a situation of conflict. It was accepted that external actors, particularly IMATT and SILSEP advisers, followed a rapid implementation timetable, which was driven by operational imperatives. Little room was left for effective consultation, review and validation of new structures and processes.

In 2003, the then Deputy Minister of Defence, J. C. Blell, and other international advisers concluded that that the MoD "was far too complex for Sierra Leoneans

Box 16: Grading System Reforms

"One of the key elements in reorganising a functioning MoD along UK lines, at least initially, was the definition of a workable grading system for officers. For example, the DG [Director-General] is Grade 13, while deputies are Grade 9. The DG is Grade 13, the CDS [Chief of Defence Staff] is Grade 14. However, while the Deputy DG is on Grade 9, the Assistant CDS is still on Grade 13. Senior Assistant Secretaries are Grade 8, while their military counterparts are Grade 10. We have to look at the grading system itself in the MoD, and create a balance to get the system running"[141].

The grading system was a reflection of the urgency with which the MoD had been established and had broader implications for how the filling of civilian posts was handled. "The arrangements for MoD were merely *ad hoc*; in 1999-2000, I was responsible for HR [Human Resources] when the SILSEP advisors came and said I should identify some bright young men. However, at the time, there was no directorate in place. They wanted to transform Paramount Hotel, and here I was talking about job descriptions. What would happen when people were moved away [considering that the civil service is controlled centrally, rather than within line ministries]? It was an *ad hoc* arrangement, and as the army was being trained, civil servants in the MoD suffered. We did an assessment of structures in the MoD in October-November 2003 because of this"[142].

The general issue of establishing a whole new ministerial structure within the MoD also caused some tension with military counterparts:

"[S]ome of the civilians were not properly trained or qualified for their appointments. They were given positions as Deputy Secretaries, the equivalent of Brigadiers (10 years service); Senior Assistant Secretaries were the equivalent of Colonels (7 years service). The Director General was assessed as a Major General. There was no juxtaposition between the Director General and the Chief of Defence Staff, with the Deputy Minister caught in the middle. Inevitably, this created tension at MoD"[143].

In terms of remuneration, differences were also significant, with some military staff being paid over 400% more than their civilian colleagues occupying posts at the same level. Indeed, in 2003, it was noted by the management and functional review team that "in our view, it is difficult to envisage a fully-integrated structure of civilian and military staff working successfully together if the present anomalies [regarding disparity in conditions of service] remain in place[144].

to grasp, both for the military and civilians"[145]. This had been acknowledged already from mid-2002 and took into account the "significant achievements already delivered in a relatively short space of time"[146]. Based on the Defence White Paper, a Command Structure Review Committee was established to

review the structure of the MoD and RSLAF as established and transformed by MODAT and IMATT, respectively[147]. The review process was initiated in late 2003 and led by Sierra Leoneans. It aimed to lay out an organization that they could work with, understand and run, and to move away from the pattern of advisers coming in and doing the actual work. Other results of the January 2004 Command Structure Review were the disbandment of the Joint Support Command and restructuring to two headquarters: A new MoD and a new Joint Force Command headquarters.

The review process did not fundamentally alter internal MoD structures, but it did help to simplify the organization. The UK blueprint that had been its point of departure, however, had not been fully implemented; it was also weak in terms of understanding the historical and cultural context in Sierra Leone, which had as much to do with taking Sierra Leoneans onboard the transformation process and ensuring national ownership as anything else.

During this period, there was a more joined-up approach amongst the different UK programme components, not because of direction from the UK, but because of the cohesion of people on the ground[148]. It became obvious that a strategy was needed that could help fill MoD posts with Sierra Leonean civilians and RSLAF personnel and move IMATT and SILSEP advisors into purely advisory and mentoring posts.

The period from 1999 to 2002 was characterized by efforts to make peace and stabilize the country. The period that followed was one of sustaining and developing further the gains of the three years since the Lomé Peace Agreement had been signed. The development of the Defence White Paper was a significant milestone in these developments. Some of the key elements of its production are outlined below in Box 17, described by Al-Hassan Kondeh, who led its production.

Box 17: Sierra Leone's Defence White Paper

The process of producing the 2003 Defence White Paper is an excellent example of Sierra Leonean-owned policy making and a Ministry of Defence that was no longer a 'clearing house' for the military and civilian staff but was starting to consolidate their position. Given the short time that had passed since 1999, when reforms of the defence sector began, the production of the Defence White Paper was a considerable feat. For the first time in the history of Sierra Leone, a status report of the development of its armed forces was being conveyed to the people.

The process of compiling the paper was participatory in approach, and conducted through a wide range of consultations with actors inside and outside the defence sector. Although the NGO sector was not extensively involved, the Sierra Leonean NGO Campaign for Good Governance, supported by the National Democratic Institute (NDI), held meetings in the towns of Kono and Kabala. From these meetings it became clear that troops stationed in these towns were enduring extremely poor conditions of service. Meeting participants also expressed dismay over the poor state of logistics and communication within RSLAF operational areas. (These were conditions similar to those which led to military coups during the 1990s and equally undermined the armed forces in combating the RUF in 1991.) Apart from engaging CCG, however, consultations predominantly involved those ministries, departments and agencies (MDAs) that had direct dealings with the MoD and RSLAF, including parliamentary committees on defence and finance.

This consultative process enabled an in-depth, informative document to be prepared on the status of reforms, future plans and strategies for the RSLAF. The overarching theme of the Defence White Paper was 'informing the people' on defence missions and military tasks, personnel and their welfare and the new MoD and RSLAF management structure.

To emphasize the central position of the people in the democratization process, President Kabbah launched the Defence White Paper in the presence of all Paramount chiefs and other traditional leaders in the country. Their importance in designing the size and shape of the future armed forces was explicitly emphasized.

Ownership of the Defence White Paper
In keeping with the concept of national ownership of the reform process, MoD advisers, particularly the Civilian Adviser, sought to enhance the capacity of Sierra Leonean civil servants through mentoring. In particular, the Director of Defence Policy was focussed on policy design and analysis, whilst the Deputy Minister and other senior staff at the MoD were encouraged to cooperate, support and participate in the process of collating information for the White Paper. Meanwhile, the UK provided opportunities for overseas study trips to research the production of comparative country case studies in South Africa and the UK. The most fundamental role of advisers in the writing of the White Paper was that of editing the final version for publication. This role allowed an

Box 17: *Continued*

incisive review of the issues raised as against the pre-, post-, and future roles and management of the RSLAF before the document was launched by the President.

From the outset, the Director of Policy was determined to ensure that work on the White Paper was fully managed by Sierra Leoneans, whilst recognizing the vital input of UK advisors. However, the Director of Policy was faced with the challenge of making the UK advisors understand the Sierra Leone context in terms of the content, and more importantly, in terms of the process of development and delivery of the White Paper. For example, one London-based advisor observed at the time: "[T]he Paper appeared to us to contain the kind of detail and direction that we would expect to see in a completed White Paper, written after a Defence Review and full country-wide consultation"[149]. What they did not understand at the time was that the people had not been involved or informed about reforms of Sierra Leone's military structures. Hence, any attempt to undertake a Defence Review would mean, in the first instance, informing them of developments undertaken so far.

Equally, in Sierra Leone, whilst the MoD's Civilian Advisor supported the idea of continuing work on the White Paper, Commander IMATT wanted a Defence Review to precede it, a situation that created a rift between the two personalities. These differences notwithstanding, the civilian adviser supported the development of the White Paper, as it was what the Sierra Leoneans wanted. This support strengthened the determination of the Director of Policy[150].

Following publication of the Defence White Paper, the MoD produced an implementation plan in 2004, known as 'Plan 2010', which was developed by the Commander IMATT. It states a common theme expressed by actors affected by the security system transformation process during this period: "Hitherto, driven by the security situation, IMATT (SL) has been largely reactive. Greater stability has allowed the development of the IMATT (SL) staff effort. Failure to act will have negative implications for the development of the RSLAF and IMATT (SL)'s credibility"[151]. Indeed, external threats to stability were deemed to be low; existing challenges were regarded as largely internal (this fact would also be reflected in the Security Sector Review coordinated by the ONS and published in 2005).

The Plan's aim was to deliver a smaller, better RSLAF with capable Maritime and Air Wings and hand over training responsibility to RSLAF "in all but the most specialist areas", rather than rely on external – and costly – Short-term

Training Teams (STTTs). In 2004, structured training had begun at platoon and company level in some units, "despite the constraints of resource shortages and the distraction of Op PEBU [Operation Pebu]"[152]. Similarly, substantial training, including at the senior level, was provided to RSLAF officers at the IMATT-sponsored Horton Academy.

With Plan 2010, a more structured approach to RSLAF and how it was to become self-sustaining emerged, along with a clearer picture of IMATT's role and eventual drawdown. Simultaneously, the Plan secured a funding profile out to 2010 from the UK ACPP for IMATT. The plan was an important step in the direction of a more joined-up approach by IMATT. In the words of the Commander who took over the year after it had been produced: "[I] t shaped a lot of what I did. I tried to give IMATT plans some shape. Before there was a plan, but it hadn't been written down, and was basically tied to immediate goals"[153]. Indeed, in London, all subsequent deviations from the direction set out in Plan 2010 would have to be qualified. It was the first time that a comprehensive strategy was written down. Previously, the direction of IMATT had been much more personality-driven[154].

The Plan was not so much owned by the Sierra Leone MoD as consented to; it resulted in raised expectations among RSLAF officers. What the UK saw as an objective in the Plan, the RSLAF saw as something to be provided by the UK. Critically, financial assumptions regarding contributions by the Government of Sierra Leone were flawed. If the Plan was to be followed to the letter, it was ultimately undeliverable. Realisation of this resulted in the Sierra Leone MoD instigating a Core Review at the end of 2005. This was effectively a Defence Review by another name, but in the lead up to the 2007 elections a formal Defence Review was not achievable[155]. The fact that not everything included in Plan 2010 was achievable should not, however, detract from its importance as a document providing direction for IMATT activities.

Development of the capacity and skill levels of Sierra Leonean MoD staff was always one of the key objectives of both SILSEP and IMATT. While coherence of strategic delivery of training was at times lacking, one notable exception to

this was a visit of Sierra Leonean MoD officials with South African defence sector experts organised as a South-South initiative in 2002. This visit helped develop understanding and formulate ideas on what a Sierra Leone Defence Review and the production of a Defence White Paper might look like. Training, however, was often supply- rather than demand-driven and delivered in a piecemeal manner. In addition, because there was no overall training strategy (although one was being formulated), competition for training resources occurred amongst the various SILSEP components. Essentially, this boiled down to a lack of openness and transparency over decisions and resource management. More importantly, the ability to send local staff to UK courses was seen as a powerful form of patronage and caused tension between civilian staff (managed by Civil Service Regulations and under Sierra Leone Civil Service pay rates) and military staff.

One key issue was how to invest in improving conditions of service for RSLAF, an issue identified during the White Paper process. This led to the development of Operation Pebu, detailed below in Box 18 by Aldo Gaeta, one of the key advisers to the MoD at the time.

Box 18: Operation Pebu – Part I[156]

The need to restructure RSLAF in preparation for UNAMSIL's withdrawal included the need to concentrate RSLAF locations from 50 HQ/company/platoon sites to nine battalion barracks and three brigade HQs. Following negotiations with paramount chiefs, it was decided to build Battalion barracks at Simbakoro, Moyamba, Yele, Kambia, Kabala, Pujehun and Kailahun. The Brigade HQs would be at Kenema, Makeni and Bo.

Each battalion site would have technical infrastructure (offices and stores) and family quarters. The brigade HQs would have similar technical infrastructure. All sites would have wells and deep trench latrines. The battalion sites were to be self-build projects, while the brigade HQs were to be built by contractors. Operation Pebu ('Pebu' means 'shelter' in the Mende language) was initiated in support of this process in March 2003; it was envisioned to be completed by May/June 2004.

Apart from the immediate need for accommodation, the intent of the project was to facilitate better control, direction and sustainability of RSLAF units and improve the morale and welfare of soldiers and dependants. Its conceptual basis was "to establish and implement a development plan that will deliver new or refurbished barracks, built to an interim standard, in order to put in place the infrastructure necessary to allow the development and implementation of a Formation Training Cycle by May 2004".

Funding: The initial costing of *Operation Pebu* was in excess of US$200 million. Since it was expected that most of the required funding would come from the international community and given the magnitude of the amount required, there was no attempt from within the Government to build these costs into expenditure plans. DfID was approached through IMATT for assistance; in January/February 2003, the amount agreed upon was £3 million, with DfID contributing £1.9 million and the Government of Sierra Leone contributing £1.1 million. Although some of the funding was used to pay contractors building the Brigade HQs, most of it was to be spent on material and rudimentary tools, since construction on the Greenfield sites was to be carried out by RSLAF personnel. DfID funds were spent both locally and through an international procurement contract. Funding provided by the Government was all spent locally on the procurement of materials. Between 2003 and 2004, rapid inflation in Sierra Leone had a major impact on available funding.

Design: The original design for the barrack accommodation was for a one-room mud brick construction on the basis that this was only going to be a temporary measure lasting some 3-5 years. There is little documented evidence to support decisions made at the time or what the catalyst was, but by June 2003 the initial design for a family quarter developed into a three-room structure with veranda, using Hydraform block technology[157]. No written evidence exists to suggest that the time-frame for the project was re-evaluated.

Box 18: *Continued*

Project Management: Although Operation Pebu was jointly funded, the project was owned by the Government of Sierra Leone. The Project Director was the Joint Support Commander; the Project Manager was an RSLAF Lieutenant Colonel. IMATT engineers embedded within the RSLAF Engineer Regiment supervised and advised the construction process, but DfID's limited presence in Freetown at the time meant that they provided no dedicated engineering support. DfID's main link to Operation Pebu was through DfID-funded civil and financial advisers in the Sierra Leone MoD.

An Operation Pebu Steering Committee was formed under the leadership of JSC and met for the first time in early May 2003. From this, an integrated project team emerged which would deal with the practical aspects of the project, taking its direction from the Steering Committee and an 'Operation Pebu Cell' created within the Joint Force HQ. However, there was no senior or significant involvement from the MoD in Operation Pebu committees, which resulted in a lack of commitment and control throughout the project, but most notably in the early stages.

Construction: Whilst the refurbishment of Teko and the construction of the Brigade HQs were carried out by local construction companies, the bulk of the building work was to be performed by soldiers as labourers which, ideologically, appeared to have benefits. The flaw in this plan to self-build, however, was that the Commanding Officer of the Engineer Regiment, responsible for the development of the project, had no responsibility for the manpower, which remained with the Commanding Officers of the individual battalions. Responsibility for the productivity was thus vested in an individual who had no defined role in the project; consequently, it was not possible to know in advance how many labourers would be available at any given time.

This was further complicated by a lowering of soldiers' morale when they realized that through a DfID-funded programme, the SLP was having accommodation built commercially to a much higher standard.

Progress: The initial timeframe was unrealistic. The fact that the seven greenfield sites had to be cleared first, that the country had limited infrastructure and that there was severe lack of mechanical transport all conspired against the project. It was also naïve to think that RSLAF soldiers would be enthusiastic about spending their time on labouring duty. The change in accommodation envisioned with antecedent changes in costs and the change of building technology to Hydraform machines made it close to impossible to keep to time plans. While an assessment suggested that no more than 12% of the married quarters would be completed by the 2004 rainy season, the original Operation Pebu plan envisaged 100% completion by that time. A recalculation suggested that the project would end up taking at least another six years.

Box 18: *Continued*

In May 2004 Commander IMATT and the senior UK Civil Adviser to the MoD approached DfID for additional funding. This time the request was put forward with several options to accelerate project progress. With an estimated cost of some £3.8 million, the request was rejected by DfID, which was becoming concerned with the lack of progress.

A key question for the security system transformation process and for the security of Sierra Leone as a whole is whether the Government of Sierra Leone would have sufficient resources available to sustain a newly-established and equipped RSLAF into the future. The proposed defence review was to provide a formal vehicle for debate within the country about what people required from their armed forces and would include discussions about affordability. However, for political reasons, including the prospect of significantly reducing the armed forces, production of defence review did not happen. While a window of opportunity existed for the Government of Sierra Leone to do so, the will was not there, given the highly political nature of security system transformation and SSR in general. Moreover, the eventuality of a coup was by all measures unlikely, particularly by RSLAF whilst a UK one-star general was shadowing[158].

As part of the process of downsizing, at the end of September 2002, the Defence Council approved the new RSLAF establishment of around 10,500 military posts (the 2003 Medium Term Expenditure Framework (MTEF) submission, which assumed a stable state, reflected a baseline of 14,367). "From the start it was deliberately incremental", one high-level officer who served with the UN and IMATT, Barry Le Grys, has noted:

> *"[A]s there were significant concerns that putting ex-combatants on the streets was too dangerous. Political will to go there, knowing elections were coming, did not exist. Did we miss the trick? No, we didn't, because we wanted to do it from within, not from outside. We could have gone the Liberia way [and disbanded the army], but we didn't. Sustainability was not the priority question of the day"[159].*

Challenges remained with respect to securing adequate funding for the MoD and had a serious impact on the implementation of some of the issues contained in the Defence White Paper. Momentum of the Defence White Paper was also, to a certain extent, overtaken by the process of producing the more comprehensive security sector review, which was coordinated to encompass input from the entire security system, not only the defence sector. In 2004, the MoD placed a bid for Le58.8 billion (approximately US$20.1 million) to run its business, but the Ministry of Finance announced an allocation of Le42.7 billion (approximately US$14.6 million), thus leaving MoD with a shortfall of Le16.1 billion (approximately US$5.5 million). At the same time, the MoD found itself unable to access the funds it had been allocated, leaving the MoD with a significant set of challenges in running its day-to-day business providing equipment and paying staff, but also in dealing with the growing issue of payments related to soldiers killed or wounded in action.

Killed-in-Action (KIA) and Wounded-in-Action (WIA)

Due to the nature of injuries sustained by individuals during the war, it would be difficult and in some cases, impossible for a number of WIAs to find further employment once discharged from the RSLAF. Therefore, during the restructuring process, it was agreed that individuals classified as WIA would be assessed to ascertain the level of disability in order to attract an enhanced benefit payment over and above the normal benefits they were entitled to under their Terms of Service.

A technical committee was formed to devise a formula for fair and equitable payments to qualified WIAs. The proposal was forwarded to the Chief of Defence Staff that a WIA's salary should continue to be his monthly pension. Conscious of the fact that KIAs paid the supreme price, a KIA committee was formed to ensure that only KIA families and relations would receive benefits. A vertification exercise was conducted to curb possible fraudsters and ensure that only eligible beneficiaries would be paid.

Other restructuring activities included payments of KIA, WIA and natural death beneficiaries. In 2004, 3,029 beneficiaries were paid for personnel killed-in-action. In the first phase of WIA, 290 personnel were paid terminal and disability benefits in 2005; during the second phase, 345 personnel were certified as medically disabled, but are still awaiting payment. Given the Government's poor financial situation, IMATT and DfID have been instrumental in handling KIA and WIA payments. In addition, DfID ensured payments for all officers retrenched under the rightsizing programme. The rationale for this DfID support is obvious: Having disaffected former personnel on the streets could have precipitated a serious security situation at a time when UNAMSIL was withdrawing and the SLP and the RSLAF remained fragile.

(l-r) Deputy Secretary in charge of Finance and Administration and acting Director of Budget during their daily meeting at the Ministry of Defence.

ONS, CISU and the Security Architecture

When the conflict in Sierra Leone was declared officially over, the process of consolidating the ONS structure came to the forefront, as did all the challenges that the task entailed. Obstacles started to emerge, including withholding of staff funding by the Ministry of Finance, difficulties recruiting new entrants and delays in passing of primary legislation. Concerns also emerged about the level of politicisation of these institutions, a continuation of past practices, including the fact that some of the staff members were political appointees. As the National Security and Central Intelligence Act was being formulated, political activities of ONS staff fundamentally undermined the neutrality of the national security architecture, which was being consolidated (see Figure 1).

Figure 2: The National Security Architecture[160]

```
                              NSC
                             NSCCG
                    Strategic Situation Group

        JCC  ←·····················→  JIC
                    W/Area
                    COORD              JAT
                    CTEE WACC

                              PROV SY        Intelligence
   Incident Command Centres (ICCs)   CTEES        Agencies

   ICC    ICC    ICC    ICC  ←→  PROSEC West         CISU
   East   West   North  South
                              PROSEC/DISEC East      FISU
   Forward Control Points (FCPs) ←·····
                              PROSEC/DISEC North     SB

                              PROSEC/DISEC South   F/Liaison

   OPERATIONS          INFORMATION        INTELLIGENCE
```
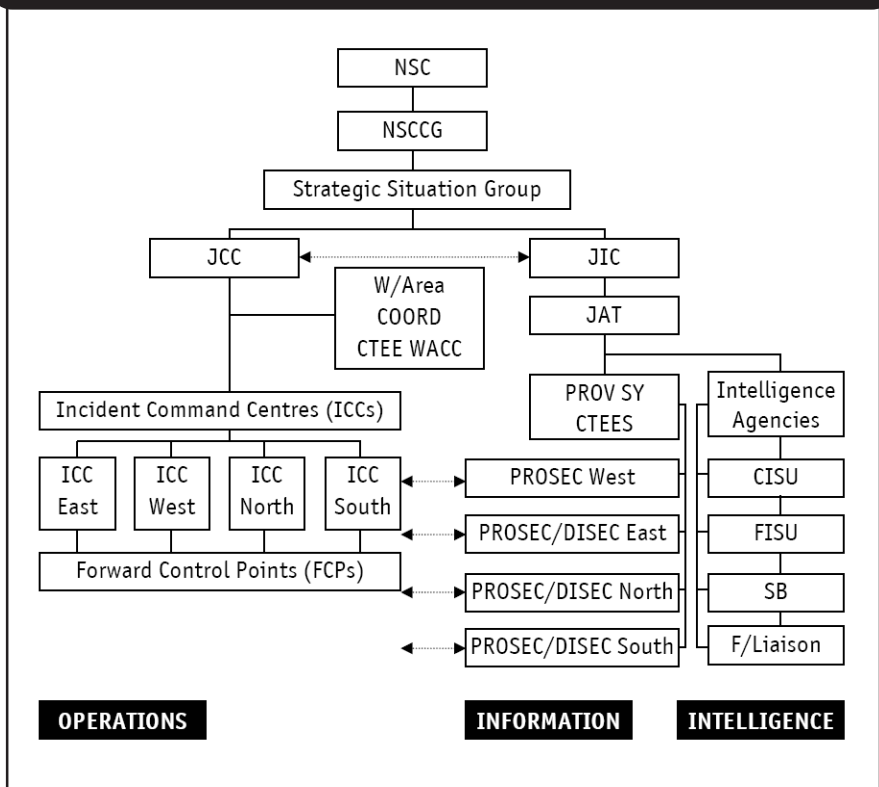
In addition, ONS and CISU personnel in particular did not have direct professional experience with national security coordination and intelligence production, which prompted a number of training courses. Given these challenges and the concomitant need to build the capability of the intelligence architecture, it was particularly impressive that so much progress was made in this period. Much of the credit for what was accomplished is due to the individuals that staffed the organizations.

By 2003, an ONS organization had begun to take shape, including structured management, which prompted reconsideration of the future of SILSEP. As noted by the National Security Coordinator serving at the time:

> *"I was in London in 2002-2003 and was asked a question about how long we would need advisers in the ONS. I said that we would need them for an extensive period of time – far beyond 2007. They were thinking about withdrawing in 2002. Our adviser had been fighting wars in the sense that much of their job was to protect the institution [from political interference] and allow it to grow. Election time [in 2007] showed security was still an issue and the entire system could have been thrown down"[161].*

The critical role of the adviser in opening political space within which the ONS could develop at its own speed is likely to be the single most important role that an external actor can play (which was also reflected in the role of the expatriate IGP). Indeed, in late 2002, elements within the Government continued to try to undermine the newly-established ONS by attempting to establish a parallel security apparatus.

Sierra Leone's National Security Coordinator further explains:

> *"I will talk to one important, but elusive point of the SSR process in Sierra Leone: Creating the political space. As I saw it, if that space is not created, it is not going to work. I was the National Security Adviser for two days and then on the third day I became Coordinator. People came in with their own views, five people who picked up*

stories here and there. I wasn't going to work with all of them, since some of them were clearly political and I had a problem with that. If interventions are going to be made by external actors, then there has to be a structure in place – advisers, and so forth – to provide the space so actors within the country can perform. We didn't know how to do it, but Kabbah knew what he wanted to happen. The structures that are being put in place should be answerable to the President alone, but through committees, not through ministries. It should be apolitical. Maybe we need more than one adviser. There are wars around [of a political nature] to keep the process going. Intelligence has to be brought to a central point first [not the President]. I was a victim myself when I was in the military, where officers would go straight to the President. Some were killed, some were put in prison. I was therefore very, very fuzzy about a central body, an assessment team, which Ghana did not have. We picked up the idea from the UK, which has a central body in the Cabinet Office. However, Kabbah clearly stated that he did not want it in Cabinet. Gradually, people who could do sound assessments emerged. In 2003 it started to make sense"[162].

External actors would often emphasize the benefits of creating a wholly new organization from a blank sheet of paper. While the ONS and its functions were a novelty in Sierra Leone's security architecture, the function of the National Security Adviser had existed. However, the critical shift from 'personal adviser' to 'government agency' was decisive, and a whole range of functions were introduced, including coordination, intelligence assessment and tasking. Similarly, there had been no idea of how CISU should be structured or of how to recruit and train staff for an organization which dealt with matters of importance to national security. The functions of the ONS were thus a distinct break with the previous strategic direction of Sierra Leone's security providing institutions. The focus became the education of security system actors, including discussion of a clear idea of the roles and responsibilities of the ONS.

The 2002 National Security and Central Intelligence Act had the potential to help in this regard. The Act was seen as a way of fully establishing the provincial and district security committees, PROSECs and DISECs, which at the time existed predominantly in name only. Equally, there was a need to clarify their reporting relationship with the national level. On paper, the Act is today seen as an exemplary piece of legislation for intelligence collection and handling and also for reporting to the political leadership and Parliament[163]. With the work of advisers and the passing of the National Security and Central Intelligence Act, a national requirement-setting system was gradually created. The core aims of the Act were designed to lead to a decrease of political pressure on security services, or at least its dissipation, through a series of intermediary structures. It was also designed to delineate the relationship between ONS and CISU and to boost the confidence of staff in terms of the permanence of these organisations as clearly stated in legislation, passed by Parliament.

The proposed Act was available and gazetted in late 2000, but continued to go through various review processes, including input from London-based experts until it was put before Parliament in October 2001. The length of time that it took for the law to be promulgated was not immediately explicable. However, because the Act would clarify the roles of the ONS and CISU, it was seen as having potentially significant political implications. The ONS had not only requested that the issue be treated with greater urgency, but also declared themselves available at any time to support the Act's introduction[164]. The issue was critical at the time, as the delay in promulgation halted further development of the ONS, and from the perspective of the UK Government, progression of the SILSEP project specifically. Delays in recruitment and restrictions on operations were seen as a direct result of the absence of enabling legislation and without the passing of the National Security and Intelligence Act, a number of secondary pieces of legislation, such as those relating to Counter-terrorism and Money Laundering, were delayed.

Promulgation of the Act was important, not least in clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the ONS and CISU. However, its promulgation did not have

a direct impact on the critical issue of capacity in either CISU or ONS, both of which remained short of human and financial resources.

In the early stages of SILSEP (prior to 2002), a lot of emphasis had been placed on putting appropriate vetting procedures in place; work was carried out with the Public Service Commission to create a National Vetting Agency. The aim at the time was to require that ONS and CISU appointments be made on recommendation from the National Security Coordinator and the Director-General of CISU after a transparent recruitment process overseen by the Public Service Commission.

Despite some successes in recruiting, in keeping with the dire financial situation of most of Sierra Leone's government institutions, the issue of unreliable funding was surfacing as a destabilizing and stifling concern. While the staffing budget for the fiscal year may have been agreed to with the Ministry of Finance, in 2002, the Ministry of Finance would inform the ONS that there was no funding available for any further recruitment for at least the remainder of the first quarter (until April 2002). Such announcements would be made at the last minute and had a debilitating effect on other activities such as planned training of new intakes (and thus waste of funding).

Nonetheless, the ONS managed to continue the establishment of PROSECs/DISECs across the country. The National Security Coordinator outlined the process for engaging the civilian population and paramount chiefs in the district and provincial committee system as follows:

> *"Civilians needed to start participating in their own security. We had a lot of problems with bringing in the paramount chiefs. We also met resistance to ONS coming in from the military and the police. Colleagues who had served as District Officers before had certain ideas about what intelligence was, and this (PROSECs/DISECs) was not exactly it. They were designed as a forum to discuss security in the local communities. It was not very easy; the police, for instance, had had their structures before [and thus a point of departure for*

building strength]. Over time, by 2002, when the war was over, we had recruited our second batch, divided between CISU and ONS. At the end of 2002, we had quite a few people in ONS, but we couldn't afford to have them up-country. In each of the DISECs we had the paramount chiefs. As long as the paramount chief agreed to share information with his colleagues, this worked well. From the onset, the chiefs were keen to be involved, but it took quite a lot of time for them to become comfortable sitting with soldiers. Here civil society was important, to convince them [paramount chiefs] that they [the military] are not devils. The more you join in, the better. They started to discuss a wide range of issues, sometimes outside their mandate. In the beginning, it was about getting people to discuss"[165].

The National Security Council (NSC) and the National Security Council Coordinating Group (NSCCG)

After the 2002 elections, the political will to convene the National Security Council (NSC) slowly started to diminish, above all because immediate concerns about conflict were gone. Since it was established in 1998, the NSC had met regularly as a forum for focused debates and decision-making concerning security issues. In addition, the NSC, as prescribed, exercised some oversight of the security system. Up until 2002, the NSC had been meeting regularly, once a week at an appointed time. However, as the war came to an end and elections loomed, the President's priorities changed – his focus was on his re-election campaign as well as the dire state of the economy. Particularly with respect to the former, the NSC was not regarded as useful. Indeed, advisers around the President came to see the NSC as a distraction from the task of campaigning.

As recalled by one of the senior advisers to the Office of the President: "NSC meetings were taking place regularly, there was no NSCCG then. Close to the 2002 elections, however, the President brought along a lot of advisers and saw no need to convene the NSC. Kabbah had brought a number of advisers around him – that group was meeting each morning. These people said that they covered

everything"[166]. Effectively, these circumstances stifled free communication between the higher echelons of Government and the institutions that had been established to serve Sierra Leone's national interests.

Thus, there was no clear command, strategy, control or direction from the top on how decisions were made, which manifested itself in indecision below. Politicised and individualised decision-making increased at lower levels. Lack of strong direction also meant that the Joint Intelligence Committee would not know which areas to actively investigate; lack of capacity at lower levels meant that potentially the information being processed was either inaccurate or did not provide clear guidance on areas requiring further investigation. In addition, the executive chose to take up a range of issues with a number of trusted advisers informally. Despite various Cabinet briefings on the proper use of the ONS as a conduit for all incoming intelligence and the NSC as the proper forum for discussion of its implications, the traditional informal system, a parallel system in essence, began to re-emerge, as it appeared to have more utility for the task of electioneering. Simply put, with the war over, security seemed less important.

In direct response to this situation, the National Security Council Coordinating Group (NSCCG) was established to serve as a coordinating and oversight mechanism, and as a form of executive committee to the NSC (advising on appropriate measures to safeguard the internal and external security of the state). This body managed to get the heads of the implementing, rather than political, security institutions together and incorporated the ONS, the heads of the military, police, and their civilian counterparts. Its chief aim became to share and co-ordinate information and increase the professionalism of intelligence tasking, collection, assessment, and collation across all concerned services and Government. Yet its establishment and the way it was operated reflected limited political will at the top to engage in security-related matters. It was the National Security Coordinator who really kept the NSCCG going as a group.

The Sierra Leone Security Sector Review and Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper

In late 2004 and early 2005, the reform climate in Sierra Leone was ready for the establishment of firm SSR concepts and strategies. It was in this context that the development and security dichotomy was more closely aligned than they had ever been[167]. Two imminent events – UNAMSIL withdrawal and publication of the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission – elevated security again to the status of a central issue. The launch of the PRSP (with security as one of its three central Pillars) and the Security Sector Review provided the element in Sierra Leone's security system transformation process missing to date: An overarching strategy for the security transformation process. Despite the sometimes strained relations between ONS and the Poverty Alleviation Strategy Coordinating Office (PASCO)[168], the organisation developing the PRSP, the two processes managed to become somewhat collaborative: It was agreed that the Security Sector Review would provide input to the PRSP.

The Review strategically supported Pillar One of the PRSP: Promoting good governance, peace and security. It examined the security architecture required to provide a safe and enabling environment within which economic, social and political development of Sierra Leone could occur. There were clear similarities between the two processes, at both a conceptual and a practical level. Relevant actors within the security system, above all the ONS, had recognized the value of an integrated and consultative approach for the development of an effective, evidence-based Security Sector Review. The same had been the case with respect to the Development Assistance Coordination Office leading PRSP preparations. The PRSP attempted to combine implementation at the national and regional level through newly-elected local government institutions, the District Councils, working in parallel with departments of state, while the ONS employed the PROSECs and DISECs[169].

Sierra Leone became the first country in the world in which the central function of security as facilitating economic development was recognized explicitly. Effectively, transforming the security system was seen as inherently linked

with poverty alleviation, governance and how a government operates and is led. The immediate implication of this was that security became embedded in the PRSP, which was able to put forward a vision of "a Sierra Leone safe enough for the Government to undertake whatever policies it wanted through its PRSP"[170]. It was not that many of the concerns raised in the Review were new, but the inclusion of security within the PRSP certainly was.

This perception of securitisation of the PRSP in fact may have impacted negatively on ensuring financial support from the wider international community for PRSP implementation. Of the $260m that the actors within the security system were bidding for, "a sizeable proportion was going towards activities that should actually be dealt with by the Ministry of Health or the Anti-Corruption Commission or the Ministry of Trade and Industry. And you have got the Office of National Security doing it"[171].

It could be argued that the Government of Sierra Leone was actually far more harmonised at the time than the international community. The rationale of the Security Sector Review process being led by the ONS was that the Government needed to act together because it had a long, unsuccessful history of divisive approaches to governance. The ONS viewed itself as providing a coordinated response to the security challenges for Sierra Leone; it was committed to the proposition that a secure and safe environment would provide the greatest opportunity for the achievement of wider development goals.

In 2005, there was a perception within the ONS that because they had coordinated the Security Sector Review, they would also coordinate implementation of security-related aspects of the PRSP in Pillar One. The ONS was well-placed to contribute to the process because of its oversight position and also its experience with the Review.

After a framework document was endorsed by the NSC, the process of producing the Review itself began in late August 2003, led by the ONS. A Security Sector Review Working Group was established, consisting of a Secretariat operated from the ONS and a number of Government ministries

and departments, ranging from the Office of the President and the Immigration Department to the Sierra Leone Airport Authority. Civil society was also engaged, specifically the NGO Campaign for Good Governance and Fourah Bay College.

A critical element in the process was providing a clear definition of 'security' as a precursor to the review process proper. In addition, to carry out a review of this nature was decisive in clarifying the approach to security, inherent to the security system transformation process, and what form engagement with civil society and the public in general could take[172].

Late in 2003, a definition of security institutions was proposed under a heading of 'What is the Security Sector?', which included[173]:

1. Governance and oversight mechanisms, including parliamentary committees.
2. The Office of National Security and the Central Intelligence and Security Unit.
3. Government departments, including Interior, Justice, Defence, Foreign Affairs, and Finance.
4. Uniformed services: The military, police, prison service, customs and immigration.
5. The judicial system, including the Anti-Corruption Commission.
6. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission.
7. Private security companies.
8. Non-state paramilitary forces.
9. Civil society stakeholders and NGOs.

This is a very broad definition of security stakeholders and, as noted about the period when the Security Sector Review was initiated: "2003 sort of harnessed all the other transformations that were taking place [with the onset of the security sector review]. From then on it became clear that all institutions should be involved. It also became clear that there were other security institutions than just the police and armed forces"[174].

The Review's primary aim was to assess potential and actual threats to Sierra Leone's National Vision 2025[175], to identify the institutions which could counter these threats and to make recommendations on how they could do so[176]. It was therefore important to have a clear working definition of the security system in Sierra Leone, not only because of political sensitivities in making an authoritative overview of security threats to Sierra Leone, but also because of the Review's very concrete aims. In brief, those who were engaged were to define what security was – and is – for Sierra Leone.

The Review was also aiming to support the PRSP objective of making difficult choices about the use of scarce resources. Whilst there was certainly no desire to undermine security within the country, funding of the ongoing security system transformation process had to compete for a share of the budget with other priority sectors, such as health and education. Consequently, the Review addressed relevant questions related to allocation of resources, relative budgetary allocations, efficiency and effectiveness.

For much of 2003 and 2004, the Review production process was carried out via workshops involving wide participation across Government and civil society. Consultative workshops in the provinces were very successful in attracting media and public attention and participation. (This was in contrast to the 2000 National Security Policy, which had been produced in a period of open conflict and with a necessarily limited external consultation process, mostly in the Freetown area. It had also been written largely by international advisers rather than relevant national authorities, and thus, while being an important document, it was limited in its inclusiveness.)

The process of producing the Review included a detailed methodology constructed around a series of specific steps. These steps are outlined in Box 19 below and have to a large degree been followed.

Threats to security identified in the Review were almost all developmental in nature: "Perhaps unsurprisingly, many of the threats identified by the population were not of the traditional 'national security' variety. In effect, little reference

was made to Guinean border disputes or Charles Taylor-backed rebel incursions from Liberia. Instead, threats covered topics from youth unemployment and bad governance to corruption and lack of economic opportunities"[177].

Box 19: Steps of the Security Sector Review

STEP 1: *Conduct a Strategic Environment Review* – determine 'drivers' that will shape the future of the country.

STEP 2: *Determine National Threats* – identify and build consensus on specific and generic threats, internal and external, to the future security of Sierra Leone and its citizens.

STEP 3: *Develop Security Policy Framework* – when consensus on national threats has been reached, establish which institution will counter these threats. This will include identifying areas where effective coordination is required between security system agencies and how such coordination can be delivered.

STEP 4: *Develop Individual Institutions/Agencies Policy Framework* – each relevant agency will identify the roles and capabilities it will need to effectively counter identified threats.

STEP 5: *Conduct a Gap Analysis* – in order to establish the nature and level of the transformation required, produce a valid assessment of the current capabilities of the institutions within the security system.

STEP 6: *Develop Transformation Strategies* – Identify where the organization is now and where it should be. Develop a strategy on how to bridge that gap.

STEP 7: *Address Cost and Affordability* – Produce recommendations for the transformation and development of the security system calibrated against affordability.

STEP 8: *Implement Transformation Strategies*.

Using this structured approach, the ONS managed to develop a clear national consensus on a vision for the future of Sierra Leone, the threats to achieving the vision and the required responses and capabilities necessary to mitigate these threats. ONS findings were validated by the National Security Council and through district-level consultations. What followed was a gap analysis to identify discrepancies between current capabilities and those required before developing transformation strategies. The Review process became a thoroughly Sierra Leonean-driven process based on the underlying assumption that findings should be "people-driven, not done by experts in isolation"[178].

Having identified threats to security within the country, the ONS then worked with national security institutions and other government departments to develop an overarching national security framework. Following this, a series of institutional security frameworks were developed to assess the capacity of the institutions concerned to respond to threats identified by the population. This involved identification of each institution's visions and perceived threats, their current capabilities and a gap analysis between the threats and their capabilities to respond. What emerged at the end of 2004 was a series of draft recommendations for each of the institutions on how best they could address the disparities between their current capabilities and those required to deal adequately with the threats they and the population they served faced.

The external push to sign off on the Review was strong; an initial target date was set for the end of March 2004. Regarding the PRSP, in 2002, it was expected that the PRSP would be completed and accepted during 2004. However, both the Review and the PRSP were not published until March 2005. Considerable difficulties remained over recognition and ownership of the PRSP, ultimately because increasingly competitive Government ministries and specialist agencies were chasing donor funding. Other reasons why the Review was delayed included lack of political buy-in and lack of relevant skills. One international adviser, an IMATT Wing Commander, who had the necessary skills and understanding to assist in pushing the Review process forward, left his position, which was a significant set-back. It was not until an appropriate Sierra Leonean national was recruited that the Review process gathered momentum again. Similarly, towards the end of 2003, there was a delay in funding for the programme, in particular for workshops in the provinces. Finally, it was a continuous challenge to ensure active participation from the range of Security Sector Reform Working Group members. For example, certain ministries and agencies did not understand their role in the Review process and sent junior staff to working group meetings, thereby providing limited input and buy-in to the process.

The process of integrating security into a broader development process, namely the PRSP, is one of the lasting legacies of the Sierra Leone experience of security system transformation. Making a direct link between the Security Sector Review and the PRSP became identified by the UK's ACPP, and Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP), and more broadly the international community, as emerging good practice. Merging security and development in this way is not easy and there was significant opposition from both security-related and development-related agencies, particularly from civilians fearing securitisation of more traditional components of the development agenda.

Conclusion

The period of 2002-2005 was, above all, characterized by the end of open conflict and transition from emergency mode to peacebuilding in the medium term, including consolidation of gains thus far in the security system transformation process. The first post-conflict elections were held; the SLPP and Kabbah were the clear winners. A MoU was signed between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UK, which bound both parties to an agreement until 2012. As an expression of long-term commitment, the assurance this MoU gave to the transformation process was crucial, but it also had its weaknesses, including it being very vague on deliverables.

One of the key developments in the transformation process centred on producing and linking a security strategy for Sierra Leone as well as the country's development objectives. In practical terms, this was reflected in the partially-interrelated PRSP and Security Sector Review processes, where the latter was reflected in the former's Pillar One on promoting good governance, peace and security.

In itself, the importance of the Security Sector Review cannot be underestimated. First, it gave much needed conceptual clarity about the institutions comprising the security system, and thus who had a stake in defining what security meant for Sierra Leone. Second, the function of ONS as coordinator of input from the security system and producer of a strategic security

document was illustrated. Third, the fact that the Review was integrated into the PRSP aligned security and development to a degree that had never existed before.

These developments reflected significant strides forward across the security system where the political space for new organizations such as the ONS and MoD was widening. In the SLP, the priority now became to deploy across the country and to move from a relatively theoretical, strategic position to a more practical approach. Leadership of the police was also handed over from an expatriate to a Sierra Leonean in June 2003, and with it, full national ownership of the organization. The MoD was inaugurated as a 'joint Civilian/Military organization' in January 2002. While there were continued struggles between international advisers (IMATT officers in particular) and MoD staff around ownership issues, there were clear signs that the MoD existed as a viable institution. A thoroughly nationally-owned Defence White Paper was being produced, MoD structures were being reconsidered and IMATT produced Plan 2010, a long-term strategy for their engagement with RSLAF and eventual drawdown.

Obviously, considerable challenges remained, including issues such retaining and recruiting qualified staff and general levels of corruption. However, the most substantial challenge was emerging and continues to be a major concern: Affordability. A key question for the security system transformation process and for the security of Sierra Leone as a whole was and is whether the Government of Sierra Leone can sustain the RSLAF, SLP, ONS and CISU, in both human and technical terms into the long-term future.

Consolidation and Development, 2005-2007

The initial security system transformation period of 1997 to 2002 was characterised by starting a reform process in a conflict environment, which subsided into a ceasefire situation and then shortly afterwards, reverted back to conflict. The period 2002-2005 was largely concerned with developing further gains made through the security system transformation process thus far during a period where conflict was officially over. The final period under study – 2005 to 2007 – was marked by consolidation and development of security system concepts, strategies and reform activities that culminated in the peaceful general elections of 2007. At the same time, this period was marked by Government complacency regarding security.

In fact, an alternative chronology could be constructed around a generally declining amount of attention and resources being channelled into the security system transformation process. Effectively, this could have resulted in the Government having significant problems in the elections, had it not been for a generally effective and joined up system of security actors, led by the ONS.

By 2005, Defence Council meetings were postponed so frequently that they hardly happened at all. By 2006, it became clear that the Government had lost interest in security, in the sense that it was regarded as having been 'fixed'. As

one key stakeholder pointed out: "By 2003 [there was] some attention [paid to general issues of security and the security system], in 2004 less. In 2005, they [government officials] were so comfortable that they didn't listen at all. Defence Councils were postponed several times. The NSC had not been held for two years until we pushed for one major meeting where we said that the Government needed to be aware of the issues around [the 2007] elections. By 2007, most ministries cared less about security"[179]. This was due, in part, to other more pressing priorities, such as the faltering economy, but also, it has been argued, to a degree of hubris on the part of the SLPP.

There is no doubt that Sierra Leone's executive was committed to transforming the security system in order to establish control of external and internal security provision. At the same time, however, there was also a sense among some that the executive were "not necessarily [committed] to the structures that came with it"[180].

The executive was also preoccupied with the upcoming general elections, which the country was to organize for the first time without external support. However, while Government-led reforms were stifled, the reality was that security system institutions would need to prepare for the elections to ensure they were held in a secure environment.

In terms of UK support, 2005 was an important year for DfID, as it devolved its office to Sierra Leone, having until then managed its projects from its London headquarters. Richard Hogg, Head of DfID Sierra Leone and vested with decision-making power arrived in Freetown in March 2005; the office was fully devolved in July of that year. This full-fledged country office, rather than a Whitehall Steering Committee-led policy implemented in Sierra Leone, not only made management more effective, but also enhanced DfID's assistance. By virtue of being far closer to operations, DfID's more substantive presence in Sierra Leone enhanced communication and management on the ground, improved clarity and allowed DfID to play a more direct role in the security system transformation process. Devolution also meant that DfID was now in a position to make a greater impact on the Government of Sierra Leone in the

pivotal areas of corruption, governance systems and procurement procedures. The negative element of the DfID re-location was that disputes with the Government of Sierra Leone in Freetown increased as well[181].

DfID's ability to coordinate its activities with IMATT and the High Commission was also enhanced. What has been referred to as the 'Freetown troika' emerged amongst the three organizations, which met bi-weekly to construct coordinated responses to the Government of Sierra Leone. One of the IMATT Commanders serving during this period noted: "During my time, better coordination of response became a reality. I left Sierra Leone with a positive feeling about that"[182]. It was also clear that good personal relations equalled good coordination.

By the time that the final PRSP was published in the spring of 2005, the security system, led by the ONS, had managed to convince their political masters of the Security Sector Review's strategic position within it. The Security Sector Review itself was launched by the President in May 2005; links of the Review to the PRSP were noted in his speech. The security system, led by the ONS, buoyed by this support at the highest level, began the process of developing activities to support Review recommendations in the hope of persuading the international community to provide funding to support their implementation.

These recommendations needed to be adapted slightly in light of the new links with the PRSP. A multi-stakeholder approach to solve the challenges identified at both a national and regional level also needed to be developed. It was clear at the outset that the costs of delivering against the recommendations of the Review would be huge; hence, careful prioritization was required to ensure both the realism of their funding as well as their contribution to poverty reduction. Activities were ranked on a scale of 1 to 5, based on whether they would be able to deliver against security objectives outlined in the PRSP framework. The primary objective was "to build security forces able to prevent and respond to external and internal security threats and provide an enabling environment for poverty reduction"[183]. Only activities scoring 1 or 2 had a realistic possibility of being funded[184].

This period, from 2006 in particular, was also characterized by discussions of a UK exit strategy from SSR-related activities. However, while an exit strategy was being prepared and coordinated between the main UK stakeholders in 2006-2007, the volatility of funding options became an issue. In addition, while a joint DfID/IMATT work plan had been developed in 2006 and was regarded as an exit strategy for DfID, it was not finalised and implemented, which was partly due to the change of staff as well as the personalities involved.

The significance of the 2007 general elections for Sierra Leone's security institutions during this period can not be underestimated. They were seen as a test of SLP and RSLAF capacities to provide appropriate support to the National Electoral Commission (NEC). SILSEP was slated to end in 2008, and DfID was showing clear signs of disengagement from the security system transformation process.

Implementation of the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP)

By 2004, it had become obvious that whilst the Law Development Programme (LDP) had provided infrastructure improvement and training for the judiciary, huge capacity problems remained. Despite the fact that the need to view justice as an integrated system had been recognised as early as 2002[185], other elements of the justice sector (prisons, probation, legal reform, non-state justice, legal advice, and so forth) had not benefited from development assistance, either under the CCSSP or the Law Development Programme. In addition, the increasing influence of the more formal development planning process meant that a sector-wide programme was not approved until 2004 and implementation was delayed for another year until March 2005.

Prior to the JSDP, no assistance had been given to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which may have been caused by the heavy focus on establishing the SLP, first at HQ level in Freetown and subsequently throughout the country[186]. More importantly, however, advisors at the time perceived a lack of political will at the executive level to effect comprehensive change, even though attempts were made in 1998, to engage the Ministry in policy formulation, ministerial

oversight, performance management and financial provision to ensure the sustainability of police developments. In fact, at this time the CPDTF had proposed that a Police Directorate should be set up in the Ministry to provide effective advice to the Minister in his oversight of the SLP[187]. Though still grappling with the fundamental issue of proper political leadership and striking the right military-civilian balance, an MoD had been established, leading the way in civil service reform.

At the same time, the SLP oversight and representative roles of the Ministry of Internal Affairs remained limited, leaving the SLP without direct ministerial support. In Box 20 below, Keith Biddle provides one explanation as to why this might have been the case, which focuses on the types of support provided.

Box 20: MoD and the Ministry of Internal Affairs - Two Models of Support[188]

"In comparing MIA [Ministry of Internal Affairs] and MoD [and reform initiatives within the two departments in Sierra Leone], there are two things to keep in mind. One is that the MoD was externally driven by some very professional and determined people. They did a super job. They capitalized on the fear of the army again overthrowing the Government. They were able to achieve something very quickly. If you take the MIA in 1998, the oversight of the police *should* be with the MIA. However, the supremacy of the ministry was rubbed out by the Constitution of 1991, which removed the minister's accountability that had been within the provision of the almost defunct Police Act 1964. The Constitution is supreme law and its provisions take precedence.

"The Constitution dictated that the Police Council would be the place where police policy, discipline issues and promotions were decided. The police had effectively gone outside of the Civil Service Commission. When it came to police budgeting, decisions were made in the Police Council".

This lack of ministerial support had fundamental implications for the operation of the justice sector, and particularly for the SLP, as reforms had moved from a predominantly operational focus to one of refining the system and policies already in place. In 2007-2008, "the whole ministry has to be rehabilitated with respect to overseeing institutions. The Chairman of the Police Council happens to be the Vice-President. Otherwise we "[the SLP] would be in a very bad state"[189]. Papers prepared to rationalize legislative or institutional changes as well as SLP budget proposals, which, strictly speaking, would have been the task of the Minister of Internal Affairs to take forward, have often stalled or been sidelined[190]. This lack of ministerial oversight capacity is not unique to the police.

Lessons about sustainability were also emerging in 2006. For example, the SLP needed to replace 100 vehicles a year from an 800-strong fleet; they could afford to replace only 10. As DfID's Deputy Programme Manager, coordinating SILSEP and other security-related programming noted about this condition: "[T]he only thing worse than not having any capacity is having temporary capacity and it then being taken away"[191]. In real terms, regarding vehicles and communication, one of the biggest challenges facing the SLP has been financial uncertainty vis-à-vis maintenance and phased replacement of the SLP's vehicle fleet (and in the longer-term, its communication system)[192]. It is also significant, because vehicles and communication were and remain some of the most important means by which the SLP has proved its relevance and made its presence felt to the greatest extent possible throughout the country.

Implementation of the DfID-funded and British Council-managed JSDP began in March 2005, taking over from the CCSSP, which ended in June 2005. It was initiated to support the PRSP process of the Government by helping improve access to affordable justice, provide support for the rule of law, help to prevent further conflict and improve safety and security, particularly for the poor, marginalized and vulnerable. Apart from preventing a more robust approach to non-police agencies integral to the justice sector, the initial delay in implementation had also created significant impatience among key stakeholders. Tensions also arose following the uncertainties around the ending of CCSSP and LDP and

the continuation of some projects and not others. In the end, the JSDP incorporated some elements of both previous interventions; for example, it inherited and continued to support the funding of Commonwealth Judges and Prosecutors as well as a Legal Draftsman post[193].

By 2005, according to international and national stakeholders, the CCSSP had lost much of its strategic direction. However, although the JSDP represented a welcome change in strategic direction, it was also something of a missed opportunity. At the end of the CCSSP, there was a genuine need to look strategically at what should happen in the justice sector as a whole. This would have involved a wide range of actors, including IMATT, local government, Ministries, the legal profession and others. However, this type of broad-based consultation did not happen; the JSDP has had to pick up some of these issues as it developed. Similar opportunities to reflect on strategy were also missed during the PRSP process and when UNIOSIL replaced UNAMSIL in 2005-2006.

In part, this points to a generic development assistance issue: When a number of programmes come to an end at the same time, there is rarely a comprehensive review. Much funding is decided in isolated pockets that reflect the funding boundaries of donors, and individual preferences, rather than the strategic situation on the ground. In the case of DfID at this time, earlier planning of JSDP was clearly hampered by the lack of a senior DfID presence in Sierra Leone and also by 'planning blight', i.e. relative importance being given to a correct logical framework rather than to an informed strategic approach based on experience.

By the time JSDP began implementation in 2005, the ONS, using the Security Sector Review as its vehicle, had managed to establish sound ground rules for cooperation across the security system at national, provincial and district levels. However, within the formal justice sector, let alone the informal sector, there were no similar co-ordination mechanisms. Hence, while collaboration did take place between the various justice sector institutions, coordination between the Ministry of Internal Affairs, prison services, courts and the SLP was limited.

Moreover, before JSDP began implementation, external advisers had treated these institutions in relative isolation from one another. Indeed, by 2007 the SLP had serious concerns about whether it could effectively fulfil its own mandate without external support for developing systems for trying, processing, holding and rehabilitating criminals.

The JSDP represents an important shift in thinking and development within the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone and therefore more generally. In particular, although it suffered from a number of initial teething problems, the JSDP did represent a significant broadening of security system transformation – or SSR – to encompass justice as a whole. Whilst SILSEP and IMATT, in combination, had covered defence, security system coordination and intelligence gathering comprehensively, the JSDP nonetheless became regarded, in 2005, as "the first Sierra Leone experience of a broad sector-wide programme"[194].

The transformation from CCSSP to JSDP also reflected the central role that the judicial component now has within particular conceptualisations of SSR. Under the CCSSP, the focus had predominantly been on tactical and operational support to the SLP, which was critical in the immediate post-conflict period. It gave the police a much needed boost of confidence in their role as internal security providers and ultimately led to the development of an organization owned and driven forward by the SLP itself. It also represented a clear need for a functioning SLP as the basic building block of security and development. The JSDP represented a new stage in the development of justice more broadly; whilst it recognised the SLP's operational effectiveness, it sought to develop a more strategic approach to policing.

From the beginning, JSDP's emphasis was focused primarily on providing assistance to the improvement of police-community relations and on ensuring that the SLP was becoming integrated into the justice delivery system. Emphasis was placed on enhancing Local Needs Policing with associated Local Policing Partnership Boards and enabling community representatives and civil society organizations to work jointly with the police on crime reduction and community

safety projects. A critical component – thoroughly neglected before JSDP – has been the support given to improving prison services[195]. Before and during the conflict, there had been a tendency to marginalize prisons. Indeed, in the past, prison services were effectively treated as a 'dumping ground' for unwanted elements of society[196].

Prisoners at the Moyamba District Prison which was recently renovated and remains supported by JSDP.

An inmate painting in the art centre at Pademba Road prison in central Freetown.

A young man facing charges of theft at the Moyamba District Court.

Support to the prison services has been primarily in areas of infrastructure rehabilitation and development, e.g. prisoner accommodation in Moyamba and officer's quarters in Bo, Makeni and Kenema. (There have also been ad hoc initiatives by UNDP and UNIOSIL to procure medicine for all prisons)[197]. Due to prison overcrowding and the destruction of many prisons during the conflict, there was a critical need to increase prisoner accommodation. Two examples of the prison situation tell the story: The Pademba Road Prison in Freetown is operating at approximately 350% capacity. While adult literacy classes for prisoners have also been part of JSDP, comprehensive training of prison officers only began in a structured manner in March 2008[198].

By 2005, significant organisational reforms were taking place to strengthen the strategic direction and cohesion of the SLP. A comprehensive five-year Medium Term Strategic Plan was produced, which acknowledged linkages to the PRSP and sound financial management procedures. A change management group was established to deal with the development of professional police leadership. A culture of open debate and space to voice opinions without fearing repercussions, was consolidated at the top-level of the SLP, a space which had not existed prior to, during or immediately after the conflict.

It was also clear that the difficulties inherent in ensuring a joined-up approach to security system transformation in 1999 still existed in 2005-2007. The SLP's Medium Term Strategic Plan, for instance, had not been firmly connected to the Security Sector Review process. This was in part due to the timing of its publication, but also to an alleged lack of proper cross-referencing with the ONS. In September 2005, it was noted that "some of the perceived difficulties between differing security sector institutions have been exacerbated by necessary programmatic separations between SILSEP and the rest of the sector"[199].

However, the decision within the SLP to merge the Special Branch and the Criminal Investigation Department into a coherent unit to provide intelligence on security and criminal activity improved internal co-ordination and reduced political rivalry. It was also recognised that if the SLP was to be a truly

intelligence-led force, enhancing information gathering, analysis and collation needed to be genuinely prioritized, in actions as much as words.

The SLP were still deploying outside of Freetown and, in 2005, although the police were now officially up to their authorized strength of 9,500, police deployment was had yet to be completed in districts of the country. In December 2005, it was estimated that 60% of the deployment plan had been implemented. While vehicles, uniforms and equipment remained in short supply, the major logistical problem was the chronic shortage of police accommodation.

In what was referred to as the 'migration' from CCSSP to JSDP, concerns were raised about the changes in approach taking place and whether important security-related programming would continue to be addressed. While CCSSP had been strong on support of operational activities, the move from largely tactical/operational police support to holistic justice sector support would inevitably leave gaps.

This led to a split in support of the SLP, which saw SILSEP assuming responsibilities for gathering and analysis of criminal and security intelligence and strengthening capacity to deal with operational planning, event management and public disorder. (Almost 1,500 police personnel were trained to be formed rapidly into Crowd Control Units[200].) These activities, combined with work on media training, community liaison and asset management, were linked to the SLP's Election Policing Strategy. By extension, impact was felt within the SILSEP programme as well. Given the continued level of commitment to RSLAF through IMATT, the UK could not be viewed as neglecting the continued central importance of the SLP. It was vital that their role in maintaining internal security, and their ability to do so, were sustained. For this reason, security aspects of the SLP's core business were absorbed into the SILSEP programme, whilst JSDP maintained the lead for the broader organisational development of the Police. This split between 'security' (placed within SILSEP) and 'justice' (placed within JSDP) "encouraged security and justice to be seen as interrelated rather than integrated, just as security and development more broadly were struggling with the same conceptual issue"[201]. It could be argued that this split

between 'security' and 'justice' was similar to the split in 1999 between 'security' and 'defence' within SILSEP, hampering an integrated approach to security transformation yet again (and indeed, to some degree the division came as a consequence of the personalities involved).

The split was compounded by difficult decisions that had to be made about the future of the Operational Support Division (OSD) and tension emanating from the conceptual divide between security- and justice-oriented policing. There was no denying the fact that in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, the OSD was seen as a bulwark for the Government. As one senior adviser stated: "[I]f the army kicked up, the OSD was there to support. It has an establishment of seven rifle companies [approximately 3,000 officers]. The army is infantry, and in many ways, so is the OSD. Given that elections to be led solely by the Government of Sierra Leone for the first time were on the horizon, there were several potential areas of conflict that could have led to violence"[202]. A threat register prepared by the SLP identified factors such as closely-contested constituencies, history of disorder, geographic isolation, ex-combatants, strategic economic importance and border security. Indeed, it was the threat register that would dictate the actual deployment of resources during the elections. The 2007 elections generally held much greater challenges for the SLP than previous elections, as it was operating with a reduced logistic capability and with less 'background security' support due to UNAMSIL's withdrawal[203].

At the same time, the ONS, supported the OSD (composed of 3,055 personnel in 2007) explicitly, particularly relative to internal security provision by RSLAF through Military Aid to Civil Power (MACP):

> *"[S]ometimes you just need normal officers to enforce the law. We wholeheartedly support the strengthening of the OSD. Overusing the MACP because people claim that the police are not able to do A, B and C is inappropriate. We hope that messages to the NSC are heard: Refrain from using the RSLAF too much. We want to keep in the police – if guns are needed, strengthen the OSD rather than the RSLAF"[204].*

The critical issue here is that the ONS did not want the army on the streets dealing with domestic policing issues. OSD's capability meant that police capability was wide-ranging and both the political leadership of the country and SLP leadership trusted the OSD more than the country's other security forces, including RSLAF. ONS support of OSD over RSLAF for election security could also be seen as a comment on the lack of clarity that in the past had characterized relations between the police and the armed forces, and had led to misunderstandings and role conflict, and certainly lack of trust from civilians. Indeed, the SLA had deliberately been kept out of the domestic arena since 2000 through a joint policy between the Government of Sierra Leone, UNAMSIL and IMATT which has proven remarkably effective and consistent. However, the initial critical need for armed police officers to maintain law and order was argued by some to be lowered, relatively speaking. Since the OSD force level represented one third of the SLP's force level, discussions were initiated about whether the OSD should begin contributing to basic police support duties.

In relations between SILSEP and JSDP, both of which provided support to the SLP, the issue of programme coordination came to the fore once more, a recurrent theme throughout the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone. It became clear that having two separate programmes with separate funding within a single organization was difficult to coordinate and almost impossible to manage coherently. In addition, it nurtured an impression in the MoD that the SLP had an 'unfair advantage' in access to DfID funding, since, in effect, the SLP had two pools of funding[205]. Equally, within the SLP, it was not very clear how, as it was by far the greatest beneficiary of CCSSP, it should be part of JSDP, precisely because of the latter's much broader focus. This problematic was partly reflected in the lack of clarity about where the SLP sits in terms of 'justice' or 'security', whilst at one level it sits in both. In terms of funding this is significant, due in part to internal DfID funding arrangements. In the words of one DfID staff witnessing the transition from CCSSP to JSDP:

"It was not beyond the realm of foresight to predict that expanding a programme entirely focused on one institution into a broader sector starved of resources would cause a level of animosity within the criminal justice sector. The Sierra Leone Police felt aggrieved at having to share donor resources with the prison service, the judiciary, the Ministry of Internal Affairs and others, at the opportunity cost of further progress being made within the SLP. The other criminal justice institutions, in turn, were reluctant to share their newly-acquired funding access with the Sierra Leone Police, to whom it was felt the lion's share of the development assistance to date had already been provided"[206].

One of the critical effects of the JSDP was that it took some earlier initiatives and expanded them. In particular, this happened in the area of gender and justice reform, largely through the expansion of FSUs, which had begun implementation in 2000. Further details of the continued development of FSUs are provided by Ms Fakondo, the key driver of the programme, in Box 21.

Box 21: The Family Support Unit (FSU) – Part II[207]

"In 2006 I was appointed chairperson of the JSDP Task Force, which was comprised of managers and middle management members of the justice sector institutions. We met once a month to work with the JSDP team on the development of a strategic plan for the justice sector that reflected the needs of sector institutions and civil society. The JSDP constructed FSU offices at Police stations in Lumley, Ross Road, Kissy, Calaba Town, Waterloo, Tombo and Goderich. Previously a pilot office had been built at the Moyamba Police station.

"The programme not only supported construction work, but also supplied all the pieces of furniture, including television and video sets for victims of abuse (especially children). They also supplied toys for our interview rooms.

"Even though there was much delay in dealing with FSU cases in courts, we still had convictions that sent clear messages to the public that sexual offences and other types of violence against women and children are unacceptable.

"With the help of two British Judges in the High Courts, convictions with up to 16 years imprisonment were handed down. Sierra Leoneans now knew that nobody would be spared in the dispensation of justice.

"Convictions were also achieved in the provinces, thereby increasing public confidence in the FSU and the courts. This led to a great increase in the number of cases reported. Today, Sierra Leoneans realise that no one will be spared in the dispensation of justice to vulnerable women and children".

International Recognition of Sierra Leone's FSUs – Regional Learning
"In June 2005, UNICEF Liberia requested the Sierra Leone Police to train the Liberia National Police (LNP) in the investigation of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) in order to counteract increasing occurrences of sexual offences in that country. The SLP was contracted after careful observation of police institutions in West Africa in their handling of women and children protection from various forms of abuse. Liberia wanted to have a taste of the post-war experience Sierra Leone already had, and similar socio-cultural ties paved the way for that.

"The IGP, Brima Acha Kamara, approved the SLP contract to help the LNP establish a FSU prototype. Together with Sergeant (now Inspector) Vandi, we spent two months doing research and preparing a training package of international standards for Liberia. UNICEF Liberia requested the heads of NGOs and sexual abuse specialists from the United Nations Mission in Liberia to read and critique our training manual. In August 2005, we left for Liberia; training began with a colourful launching ceremony in full view of the mass media. A total of 25 male and female police officers were trained for one month; the Headquarters of the Women and Children

Box 21: *Continued*

Protection Section, Liberia's FSU prototype, was established at LNP headquarters.

"After multiple trainings, a total of 75 LNP personnel are now trained in family support issues and practices. We have also established units and deployed personnel in Monrovia and its immediate environs. Each of our training partnerships also included mentoring and recommendations for further programme improvement. In late 2006, we returned to Liberia to carry out a training of trainers and subsequently returned to observe roll-out of trainings led by Liberian nationals".

This positive example of regional learning was made possible in part by earlier CCSSP policies of promoting promising younger officers faster than they would have been promoted in the pre-war system. This generation of officers had a different set of values and were less tainted by earlier practices within the SLP. At the same time, there were significant opportunities for both male and female officers to be promoted on merit, rather than on seniority or political connections. The most eloquent statement of what this meant in practice comes from Ms Fakondo[208]:

"There were people that were benefiting from the system, how it used to work. We were yearning for change, we had an idea about what change should be. We had three groups of people standing, those who were ready to jump onboard, those who were confused and those who didn't want to see change. It was the responsibility of those who wanted change to lead the way. Even if we don't have the funding, we have put in place systems. We need to look at the terms and conditions of the SLP. We have tried to convince the executive board to have a female committee. The executive board is saying that we have a police board. However, this is the policy of gender mainstreaming. Why are we able to bring this up? Because the foundation has been laid. I have always wanted to be a proud police officer; I have been to forums where I've been pushed aside, where someone would be verbally highly abusive of the police. Because I had support, I had the confidence to speak up – and you

can only speak your case when others are listening. I knew what I wanted, I wanted to be a proud police officer. Where else would I go? The war in fact made it possible for people to speak up".

It had become evident during the IGP succession planning period of 2001-2003, that many candidates for the highest positions did not have experience managing all the functions of the SLP. In consequence of this realisation, Assistant Inspector-Generals have been frequently rotated through the various disciplines of the force. This has helped ensure that in the future, the highest ranks are likely to be populated by senior personnel who understand and have experience managing all disciplines at the strategic level of the SLP.

Further Development of the Ministry of Defence

The period following 2005 within the RSLAF was dominated by the lack of an overall strategy, caused in part by the UK withdrawing from developing such a strategy and the inability of the RSLAF to develop its own approaches and a plan. This latter issue had as much to do with the general political buy-in, which was vital with a Deputy Minister who was engaged, but lacked authority. The Cabinet, which had the authority, was not engaged; in fact, it had only been engaged to a limited degree since 2003. Effectively, without political top-cover, the MoD and the RSLAF leadership would not commit[209].

There is an overall vision of the RSLAF, but it remains idealistic rather than grounded. Where policies were in place and functioning, they tended to have been driven by strong individuals, rather than overarching strategies. The converse of this is, of course, that there were also some areas where individuals were not so strong and as a result, neither was the strategy. In 2007, there was still no single programme management document containing details of activities to be conducted, timelines, budgetary allocations, objectives and other management guidelines.

By 2005, the gains of building a MoD essentially from scratch were obvious. For all the difficulties facing a new Department with new responsibilities, MoD's image as a cutting-edge institution remained intact. It was now an organization

under visible and identifiable civil control; civilian and military staff were working side-by-side. RSLAF input into the 2003 Defence White Paper, PRSP and security sector review was indeed perceived to be limited, but had nonetheless been clear. The MoD was now seen as a critical member of the security community and playing a key role in articulating security strategy issues and planning implementation activities. For example, the MoD was central to the drafting of the Security Sector Review Implementation Plan.

Compared to other government departments, the MoD was also seen as being 'ahead of the game' in terms of financial management. Advice from MODAT in the early stages of transforming the security system, and later on the presence of a dedicated DfID-funded financial management adviser and an IMATT counterpart, played a significant role in this. As late as 2005, these two posts, which had executive powers, were seen as vital by an external review. Had they been removed, it would have been highly questionable whether the MoD would enjoy its current reputation for its comparatively competent approach to financial management[210]. At the same time, however, it was deemed necessary that MoD officials take full responsibility for financial management in the near future. It was these considerations that led to the transitioning of a post dedicated to financial management into that of an assistant civilian adviser post with general responsibilities for advising and mentoring across a range of different defence management issues. This push was necessary in order to transfer competencies, as it had become clear that the legitimacy of expatriates making executive decisions had decreased significantly. Indeed, RSLAF and its veterans and demobbed soldiers were likely to react strongly to a Core Review regarded as having been driven by external actors that would inevitably have financial implications for them.

2007 was the ninth year of UK support to Sierra Leone's MoD. During this period, residual executive powers were being handed over; those remaining were *de facto* legacies of long-running projects, such as refurbishing the Paramount Hotel and Operation Pebu. In 2007, it was also becoming clear that there was much less disparity in the approach of SILSEP advisers versus IMATT officers, which hitherto had created tension between civilian and military staff.

However, this period was also characterized by criticisms levelled at expatriate advisers for the lack of an audit of DfID funding, poor communication and failure to learn lessons[211].

One of the lingering cases that engendered a good deal of criticism was the aforementioned Operation Pebu, a MoD-managed project to provide RSLAF accommodation. Box 22 provides an account of the final stages of Operation Pebu, as recalled by the 2005 Commander IMATT, David Santa-Olalla and Aldo Gaeta, Civilian Adviser to the MoD.

Box 22: Operation Pebu - PART II[212]

By the end of 2005, all efforts of Operation Pebu were focussed on achieving completion of accommodation in two sites – Kailahun and Pujehun. As the Commander IMATT at the time noted, "70% of the project was cancelled and focus was on the remaining 30%. It was time to draw a line under Pebu. The original plans were never going to work. A lot of time was spent making sure that IMATT credibility was not lost"[213].

The decision to dramatically scale down the project had come in response to DfID's rejection of additional funding and the fact that a team of independent consultants had suggested that Operation Pebu's accommodation could possibly result in 'the creation of new slums'[214]. There was no proposal on what would happen after completion of these sites because nobody could predict what materials would still be available or what the chances of additional funding would be.

From late 2004 to early 2006 work progressed on both sites in Kailahun and Pujehun, but again, the planned timescale for completion was not achieved. During 2005, two significant events happened. Firstly, the demarcation that existed between Government and DfID funding was removed, allowing all the funds to be pooled for the benefit of the project. Secondly, DfID, which now had a Country Office, released the remainder of DfID funds to the project and also made it clear that no further funding would become available for Operation Pebu. The sites of Kailahun and Pujehun were not completed during the period covered in this narrative.

The sheer scale of Operation Pebu was never appropriately considered. In the original plans of seven construction sites, the estimated population to be housed would be in excess of 2,500 per site. To achieve 100% completion within one year, bearing in mind Sierra Leone's infrastructure and a rainy season of five months, defies logical explanation.

Box 22: *Continued*

There is no single organization involved in the project to blame. It was jointly funded by DfID and the Government of Sierra Leone. In addition, IMATT played a significant part in the management and on-site supervision of the project[215].

Operation Pebu terminated in the spring of 2008. It had delivered two completed sites at Pujehun and Kailahun – the agreed revision to the original programme in 2005.

An RSLAF officer stands in front of his recently renovated accommodation.

Despite the gains over almost a decade of building the MoD, it is clear that it takes a substantial amount of time to consolidate civil management of an institution that for a decade had been a 'clearing house' for the armed forces and before that, had been deliberately neglected by the executive. During 2005-2007, many officials who had been drawn from across the civil service and trained and advised to build the MoD had been transferred to other ministries, departments and agencies or had left the civil service altogether. Their vital institutional memory left with them. Without appropriate recording systems, training opportunities and induction, this has had considerable impact on the

balance between civilian and military staff, which in 2005 was referred to as "fully-integrated" by the UK[216]. Change is fragile and can easily be undone, which is certainly the case in Sierra Leone where civilian oversight of the armed forces was a relative novelty.

In 2005, there was therefore a concern that gaps in key financial management posts would lead to the loss of all institutional memory on some of the systems that had been established. This is one of many examples of the fact that human resource management is the single most critical component of the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone. Ultimately, no institution-building or external financial support can alter this reality. Changing institutions and patterns of behaviour through SSR – and development more broadly – is a long-term and messy endeavour.

Throughout the period covered in the narrative, one considerable challenge has been to ensure that members of the army would accept the principle of civilian oversight. In particular, the existing culture and experience of the army dictated some degree of resentment at civilians taking 'their' jobs. At the same time, there was a lingering perception that the main reason for dismantling the military HQ had been to prevent future military coups. Whilst this is true, in the longer-term, dismantling the military HQ was also an important part of the reform process that engaged the RSLAF into a broader process of democratisation within Sierra Leone, and introduced enhanced checks and balances[217].

To a certain extent, suspicion of the implications of civil oversight still persists within the MoD and impacts integration of the principles of civil-military relations into defence management. Many of the military tend to see civilians as inexperienced in defence and security matters and therefore lacking the necessary competence to oversee the army. On the other hand, many civilians see the military as an obstacle to the reform process, including expenditure management. Mutual distrust along these lines still means that there is a potential to undermine the authority of the MoD – for example, if there is limited commitment by senior RSLAF officers to effectively participate in Procurement Committee meetings[218].

In conclusion, it is clear that within the MoD, the process of working to create an organisational culture that ensures accountability, efficiency and effectiveness in defence management, is a very difficult and slow one. The continuing differences and culture clashes between the military and civilians need careful management in the long-term.

Creating a Role for the RSLAF

There is no denying that results achieved by 2005 in terms of establishing democratically-accountable forces in Sierra Leone were impressive. As noted by one of RSLAF's senior officers: "After UNAMSIL left, everybody cried out that the military was going to make a coup, but because of the reform process, no one would do that"[219]. Furthermore, a perception survey carried out among RSLAF staff and published in early 2007 noted the stark reality that in their past professional identity, it would have been difficult, if not outright impossible, to identify who was a soldier and who was a rebel. This was clearly not the case anymore. In addition, there were further indications that RSLAF officers now regarded themselves as generally heading in the right direction[220].

While RSLAF reforms have been significant, deep-seated suspicion of the armed forces on the part of the executive remained. As a consequence, Government funding of the RSLAF was minimal. As noted by the 2005 Commander IMATT:

"Despite the fact that their [RSLAF] capacity was close to zero, they were just feeding themselves, and they were almost unable to do that; every month they got down to the last Leone. The defence budget was tiny, and the only time they got something was from IMATT – training, accommodation"[221].

These observations resemble the Government's treatment of the armed forces before the war. He continues:

"[T]he Government and civil service take control that way, by keeping the armed forces living at a bare minimum. It was also one of the reasons why conflict started in the first place"[222].

While the reform process was rendering RSLAF more professionally focused, the force continued to be plagued by continued lack of equipment, low levels of operational activity and welfare and perceptions of being comparatively worse off in terms of salary and training than their neighbours in the region. Not surprisingly, the Government was seen as failing to honour them. In 2006, it was noted that "a clear commonality with the wider population [...] is perception of the government [...] as a hindrance rather than an 'enabler'"[223].

A clearly identified role for the RSLAF and its mandate in Sierra Leone was also needed – and sought for. The security system transformation process had been designed to contain the army and enhance policing as the unambiguous providers of internal security. "Professional identity would be further strengthened by a constitution for security akin to 'Police Primacy'"[224]. A great deal of effort had been expended to remove the army from the political sphere and matters of internal security, but it had proven difficult for the RSLAF to emerge with an identity that would give the armed forces a clear purpose.

This issue was exacerbated by comparisons between RSLAF and SLP performance. Over the years the two organizations had received fundamentally different types of external assistance through IMATT and CCSSP, respectively. In 2005, there was a distinct perception within the SLP that RSLAF achievements had been delivered or driven by IMATT, ultimately making reform efforts less sustainable in the long run. Nonetheless, a qualitative perception survey among RSLAF officers conducted in 2006, also showed that since 2004, relations between the police and the army "had become, if not stronger, then more accepting [...]. In 2004, it was suggested that although aware of the message of police primacy, participants perceived RSLAF and police roles to be unclear and overlapping [...]. Furthermore, tension between the RSLAF and the police was a result of a perceived discrepancy in reward levels rather than an RSLAF desire to take back elements of the police's domestic security role"[225]. Such vagueness in roles and responsibilities appeared less pronounced in 2006, with RSLAF members "perceiving their role in relation to the police more clearly with less need to make direct comparisons between themselves and the police"[226].

One reason for this perception shift no doubt related to ONS' formulation of the policy defining Military Aid to the Civil Power (MACP). (MACP outlines how the SLP may call on RSLAF assistance in the extraordinary event that the security situation demands it.) Previously, in the words of one of RSLAF's senior officers "acrimony, misconception and rancour" existed between the two security organizations[227]. During a seminar for key security system actors held in December 2005 in Accra, slight puzzlement over the centrality and weight conferred upon the MACP was expressed. Yet, the MACP gave much needed clarity to relations between the SLP and RSLAF, and as such was crucial in outlining precisely when and how the armed forces may play a role in internal security in Sierra Leone. It also defined an inclusive rather than exclusive role for the armed forces.

MACP itself revolves around when and how the RSLAF may be employed in support of the 'civil power' in conditions of relative peace, stability and normality and in the absence of any substantive threat to the territorial integrity of Sierra Leone. Its functions are defined by 'standing' and 'emergency' categories:

- *A standing MACP* task is one where authority is granted by the NSC for the RSLAF to conduct a defined operation in support of civil power agencies for an indefinite period. The period will end when the relevant government authorities, the NSC specifically, decide that military support is no longer required.
- *An emergency MACP* task is one where specified support is provided to the civil power by the RSLAF after a specific request and NSC authority has been granted. Each task will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Tasks in this category will only be conducted in specific situations of dire emergency and where the civil power is unable to deploy sufficiently appropriate resources to cope with the emergency confronting them (including counter-terrorism and crime in the event that the SLP is unable to provide sufficient resources in a timely manner). This type of MACP also includes point security, providing armed or unarmed RSLAF personnel to secure installations (e.g., the Presidential Lodge or a critical infrastructure site) and specialist assistance to the police in dealing with civil disturbances.

Soldiers from the RSLAF 4th Brigade and Force Reconnaissance Unit taking part in crowd control training exercises at the Armed Forces Training Centre in Freetown.

It was within the MACP framework that RSLAF supported the SLP during the 2007 elections. After a request by the SLP through the NSCCG, RSLAF assistance was granted. RSLAF played an essential role providing pre-positioning troops before, during and after the elections, even though apprehensions about its success were expressed by major stakeholders[228]. Involvement of the RSLAF in such internal security situations was made public knowledge through a press statement.

Another means of investing RSLAF with a stronger identity has been through its potential contributions of troops to the ECOWAS Standby Force (ESF). Indeed, RSLAF aspires to participate in ECOWAS as well UN and AU peacekeeping missions. In 2006, RSLAF contributions to international military operations were seen as "an important mechanism for reinforcing national pride and developing operational capability"[229]. However, while providing international peacekeeping forces was noted as one of RSLAF's priorities[230], the RSLAF lacked several of the important capabilities essential for successful involvement. IMATT noted its willingness to support the development of some of these capabilities, but this assistance was to be preconditioned on what was referred to as a 'comprehensive and sustainable plan' for an appropriately-sized and trained force, effectively a Core Review, which could have paved the way for a defence review after the elections. This remains an unresolved issue at the time of this writing.

Nonetheless, the RSLAF has already contributed a staff officer to the ESF Headquarters in Nigeria, led by a Nigerian Brigadier. Whilst currently not deployable, a force structure has also been prepared, which sees Sierra Leone generating at least an infantry company and possibly a battalion to the ESF. The debate in 2006 revolved around whether to select the company or battalion as a whole, which would be based on the best operational evaluation reports, or whether it should be done by selecting the best individuals to make up the company/battalion[231]. Either way, there was an obvious incentive in the possibility, through ECOWAS Standby Forces contributions, of being employed on UN subsistence rates. Indeed, as noted in 2005, income generation could in the long run emanate from RSLAF contributions to peacekeeping missions[232],

IMATT and RSLAF soldiers during an ESF exercise at the Armed Forces Training Centre.

although the possibilities to do so should not be over-estimated (and the African Union would be unlikely to generate any). Of greater potential have been the perceived gains from patrolling the seas for illegal fishing, an idea that surfaced since 'Plan 2010' was produced in 2004. This would be accomplished by collaborating with the Government of Sierra Leone to establish a Joint Maritime Authority, but despite preliminary planning, this initiative has not been implemented.

From the very outset of the defence reform process, support to build capacity, educate and train was guided by the wish to see young, motivated officers emerge in the same manner as occurred in the SLP. It was obvious that there were good lieutenants and captains in RSLAF. They had undergone training in Ghana and at the Horton Academy at Leicester Peak in the hills above Freetown, but they had limited or no opportunity for promotion[233]. From the perspective of senior RSLAF officers, however, such perceptions, even if not explicitly communicated, were clearly understood: "IMATT personnel were tempted to turn to these officers [i.e., young officers] as the best chance for consolidating reform. IMATT believed that these officers had the flexibility, open-mindedness and idealism of young officers everywhere. They were recruited specifically to wash away the stains left by their predecessors, i.e., most senior officers still serving"[234].

This approach understandably led to tension between a new generation of up-and- coming officers and those officers who had served through the years of conflict, including, in some cases, under NPRC and the AFRC. It was a fine balancing act, but by 2005, a drive for voluntary retirements was initiated with economic and political support from the 'Freetown troika' (DfID, the High Commission and IMATT). Several Brigadiers and Colonels were removed and paid the amount that they would get had they stayed in service until retirement age. From the perspective of IMATT, the focus was on "people who they knew were corrupt. RSLAF had no disciplinary mechanisms, even with all the evidence. We were able to bring through Majors who were more competent"[235].

At the same time, the issue of further downsizing the armed forces to an affordable and sustainable size continued to be hotly debated. RSLAF and the MoD had already experienced a considerable drop in numbers between 2000 and 2006, from around 15,000 to less than 11,000 personnel. However, there is a continuing tension between the need to produce a Core Review of Defence and political resistance to do so, partly because this may imply significant further reductions. It may even imply revisiting the original figures of 6,000 for the armed forces envisaged in the 1990s before security-related programming took off, but the more likely level would be 8,500 (close to the target discussed from the early 2000s), as is currently being discussed. The need to produce a Core Review had been identified by some of the civilian staff in the MoD as a UK-driven constraint on the future size and shape of RSLAF. However, issues of sustainability and affordability could not be addressed without it. In 2007, it became clear that whatever decision was to be made about the size of RSLAF had to come from the incoming Government. The executive powers held by expatriates, civilian and military, had been greatly reduced in 2007; reluctance to enforce difficult decisions on behalf of Sierra Leonean counterparts was increasing.

In conclusion, by 2007 RSLAF had come a long way and was continuing to consolidate its own position, even if affordability issues remain a primary concern. The development of MACP and the turnover of senior officers helped define more clearly a new mandate for a democratically accountable institution and to make changes in the organizational culture to reflect this. These developments are critical in the RSLAF's ability to establish a clear picture of its own identity outside of domestic political involvement and the provision of internal security where the SLP has primacy. At the same time, the MACP sets down a clear framework for RSLAF support to SLP activities. The RSLAF was beginning to see a clear, democratic framework within which to operate and a target (peacekeeping) as something to aim for in the long-term. For all the difficulties and challenges that remain, both are arguably measures of how far RSLAF has come.

RSLAF in training at the base in Wilberforce, Freetown.

A map reading and navigation training exercise at the base in Wilberforce, Freetown

Development of the ONS and CISU, 2005-2007

In the run-up to elections in August 2007 there was a degree of distance between the ONS and the Office of the President. Part of the initial establishment of the ONS was in fact separation between these two institutions, designed as such to avoid political capture. At the same time, the role of the UK adviser remained critical as a guarantor of independence of the ONS. Certainly the ONS viewed advisers as protectors of their political independence against external interference, given the slow implementation of the recommendations in the Security Sector Review. As noted by the National Security Coordinator: "We need to maintain the level of advisers, whether they are visiting or permanent. They are still that protector. Perhaps after the next elections [we can do without advisors], because we are still transforming, we are still reforming, and we need those checks and balances. The things that we identified in the Security Sector Review have not been dealt with even 10%"[236].

Adding to the overall issues within the country, the PRSP process had stalled and a potentially dangerous stalemate was brewing during this period. With no new money appearing, the Government appeared to have little interest in governing and the stable security environment lessened the immediate imperatives to lead. There was a danger that a small political elite would be propped up by a competent security system of institutions, which potentially could lead to disgruntlement among the security forces, and the potential for new coups. Whilst security was dropping down on the list of immediate priorities, it was clear that little or no poverty reduction had been achieved. Indeed, it was certainly undeniable that there were distinctly closer links between politics, business and corruption. For instance, several high profile corruption cases emerged around minerals and marine resources involving Ministers became public. However, no action on these cases was taken by the Government. The symptoms of the conflict may have been dealt with, but the root causes were again becoming evident amongst the elite of Freetown as they resumed business as usual[237].

This was an obvious frustration for all concerned and the lack of financial support for the PRSP hit those institutions ensuring Sierra Leone's security particularly hard. Effectively, they would not receive any funding through the official PRSP trust fund[238]. The ONS and other security institutions had clear ideas about which activities to prioritize, including organized crime, drug and diamond smuggling, fisheries, customs and border control. However, none of these activities could be undertaken in isolation. In turn, the government departments concerned were either unable or unwilling to take the initiative required to develop a comprehensive strategy needed to incorporate the role of the security system. Some of these issues are outlined in Box 23. This was a lesson for both the UK and Sierra Leone: Developing competent security provision and coordination in a vacuum was becoming as much of a threat as a benefit to security, since there effectively was no accompanying plan for the rest of the Government.

Box 23: PRSP Implementation, But By Whom?[239]

The main challenge within the PRSP process was how to build the capacity of weakened and inexperienced institutions to the point where they could bid for funding in a professional manner. Frequently, the organisations themselves did not know their own capacity weaknesses and, whilst this put the security institutions at an advantage, it also handicapped them in the eyes of the Government, who knew that they needed to realign their priorities, but did not know how. Rather than the security system being the leader in enabling the environment necessary for poverty reduction to occur, it now needed to be a follower. But lead institutions such as the Anti-Corruption Commission, the National Revenue Authority, the Ministry of Mineral Resources and the Ministry of Marine Resources did not appear capable or willing to take on this role. This presented all concerned with a quandary – how could a set of institutions contribute to broader Government when there was no broader Government to contribute to?

One of the assets of the 10-year MoU between the UK and Sierra Leone was that rather than being subject to standard donor three-year bidding cycles, UK aid allocation to Sierra Leone was fixed at £40 million a year for the duration of the MoU. This is a sizeable amount of money – the UK's largest aid per capita programme in the world – but once allocated, it allows no additional flexibility for filling development spaces created by success in other sectors. The work undertaken among security institutions, for example, created opportunities for work in trade, the diamond industry, healthcare, education and local government, but the funding was not there to take advantage of the opportunities.

Compared to the inception phase of security system-related transformation in the late 1990s and early 2000s, a process of disengagement by the Government from international advisers was taking place in 2006-2007. The ONS, however, played a central role before and during elections as an objective source of advice to the political establishment in State House. As stated by National Security Coordinator, Kellie Conteh:

"The leadership that was provided by ONS was consistent, it was focused. It also provided a general opportunity for all of us to participate. That bond, camaraderie, was very, very critical at elections. We needed to tell the public that there was no fraction, and that politicians could not use one against the other. Before, politicians would split the security sector, and exploited the vacuum created. ONS largely provided the leadership. Political tolerance – we did several statements on the radio, to get people to work together. At the end of the day, both the military and police realized that a storm had blown over"[240].

At the same time, the perceived disengagement of the executive made it difficult to address fundamental problems, including an exit strategy by donors from the security system transformation process, however long that exit might take. SSR is fundamentally a political process, and in some ways politics is more important that capacity-building. Without high level political support, the security architecture was in a difficult position. However, the ONS remained politically adroit and whilst it is fundamentally dependent on the current National Security Coordinator, in 2007 a number of officers have emerged who are able to take on a variety of different tasks and take over from the National Security Coordinator when necessary. As already mentioned, institution-building is a slow and incremental process, requiring periods of consolidation where staff can learn new skills to enhance overall performance. While the ONS had gone far very quickly, new institutions with a short institutional memory need time to take root. This process cannot be short-cut, a point that is true for the MoD as well as for the ONS.

The success of the ONS is reflected in the wide range of issues that the organization has dealt with as it has come into its own, which have not always, strictly speaking, been within its original mandate. The ONS has been involved in coordinating refuse collection from the streets and responding to the water crisis in the summer of 2006; it has also dealt with organized crime, as well as establishing a workable security framework and a localised system of intelligence gathering. Similarly, the security sector implementation plan that followed the Security Sector Review became the responsibility of the ONS rather than different Departments of Government contributing their specific expertise (which was the case with the PRSP). However, because the Government seemed disinterested, it was very much external actors, DfID specifically, that stepped in to help.

By 2007 the ONS was clearly identified as a success story. It had established itself as one of the "most effective Government agencies in Sierra Leone and […] fully capable of performing the core requirements originally envisaged for it: Preparing joint intelligence assessments; acting as a secretariat for national, provincial and district security committees; and providing strategic security advice to the President"[241].

Indeed, one could argue that the ONS has been a victim of its own success. A review in 2007 concluded that "the ONS is now evolving into a *de facto* Cabinet Office with a much wider remit than intelligence assessment and national security coordination"[242]. Because of the Government's adoption of "human security" as a guiding principle, the ONS has started to aim to provide policy research as well as coordination to much of Government.

The centralization of risk and intelligence analysis as well as broad crisis response coordination carries both benefits and risks with it. ONS may be in danger of crowding out other government institutions by being too effective, even beyond their mandate, partly due to the relative weakness of other ministries, departments and agencies. At the same time, the strength of the ONS, particularly its ability to rise above political infighting, is embodied in its leader, the National Security Coordinator, or, more to the point, the specific individual

in that position. Whilst security is frequently about human resources, the danger of this is that once independence becomes embodied in one person, this can develop into a sustainability problem brought about by the lack of a succession strategy. This can be particularly dangerous when the strength of the ONS could, potentially, be exploited by future political leadership. An organisation is only as unbiased as the individuals who lead it. In the case of Sierra Leone, the absence of current effective Ministerial and Parliamentary oversight compounds the vulnerability of the ONS.

With the change of the security situation in Sierra Leone by 2007, CISU moved its attention from paramilitary organizations to serious crimes, particularly organised crime. Criminal organisations are adept at infiltrating and undermining security organisations, partly due to their command of economic resources, such as diamonds or drugs. However, the relative weakness and corruption of the overall justice system means that arrests made on the basis of leads provided by CISU would not necessarily lead to successful prosecutions. In addition, lack of funding for CISU reflected the lack of executive political will to support the organisation appropriately.

It had also become clear that in 2005-2007, many Government officials and parliamentarians did not understand the difference between ONS and CISU. The relative strength of the ONS had created difficulties for CISU in terms of establishing its own identity and legitimacy, something that remains an issue externally, if not internally, vis-à-vis the two organizations. Discussions taking place during 2007 of moving ONS from State House to a separate, new building was seen as enhancing the ONS' neutrality, but also separating ONS and CISU and thus enhancing CISU's profile.

Despite the continued difficulties establishing CISU's legitimacy between 2005 and 2007, it was able to play a critical role during the election period by exhibiting that several damaging and destabilizing rumours about coup plots and rigging of the elections were fabricated. Given that 'intelligence' of this nature had been a highly politicized tool just eight years before and had led to executive and security sector inaction in general, makes this a considerable achievement.

The charged political environment in the 2007 pre-election period cannot be over-emphasized. Even the ONS, the primary advisor on security matters to the President, came to be regarded with some suspicion during the run-off period between the SLPP and APC. To some extent this was due to arrogance on the part of the SLPP, who became so sure that they would win the elections that any information to the contrary became viewed as a conspiracy. The President's preference for only listening to a small group of trusted advisers, coupled with a general distrust of security institutions and intelligence institutions in particular, would make the roles of the ONS and CISU increasingly difficult as they sought to balance the delivery of objective advice and gain the trust of the political executive.

At the same time, there was widespread consensus among both Government officials and UK advisers that the PROSECs/DISECs had come to play an important role in coordination and conflict resolution at the local level. ONS had established representatives in nearly all of the security committees at provincial and district levels. They had become an undeniably important player by acting as a secretariat and communicating important issues to Freetown. Even in 2005 there was considerable local involvement in preparing the ground for the 2007 elections; PROSECs and DISECs came to play an important role by inhibiting and monitoring paramount chiefs and security officials who sought to discriminate against specific political actors. In addition, their presence on the ground further allowed a far greater outreach to civil society and a greater participation and consolidation of the PROSECs and DISECs as part of local communities. Critically, the two organisations' coordinating role at provincial and district levels has, when effective, performed the same function as ONS at the national level in bringing together individuals in key positions who, if isolated, could be vulnerable to political pressure. One observer close to the events has noted that such figures "found strength and support from being part of a collaborative structure"[243].

The focused engagement of civil society in the security system transformation process as an integrated component of SILSEP begun in 2006, also made an impact, as described in Box 24 by Rosalind Hanson-Alp. With the project

Strengthening Citizens' Security, Conciliation Resources began implementation of a project with the explicit aim of ensuring enhanced civil society engagement in security-related matters, and by extension, the security transformation process.

Box 24: Civil Society Engagement in the DISEC[244]

Conciliation Resources, an international NGO, facilitated open meetings between civil society and security personnel in Kailahun District with the aim of improving local understanding of security structures and dialogue between security personnel and civil society.

During the first meeting, when security personnel presented the structure of national security, it became evident that most civil society participants did not know that there was someone representing them in the DISEC. As one civil society participant stated: "He does not represent us and we are not aware he sits on DISEC on our behalf". At the same time, security personnel stated that this member was currently suspended from the DISEC while investigating allegations that he was a political aspirant, which, if true, would breach the criteria of political impartiality. In turn, the security personnel used this civil society representative to argue that civil society as a whole was neither serious nor committed to participating in security issues.

This issue highlighted some of the challenges of collaboration and at their own admittance civil participants acknowledged that civil society was fragmented. As a result they did not have a strong voice, which made it difficult for security personnel to identify civil society partnerships.

The meetings conducted by Conciliation Resources covered a wide range of issues that gave people the chance to express their views on security and directly interact with security personnel. As one participant expressed: "This initiative is an eye opener for us. I have the feeling that the frank discussions around how we perceive ourselves will go a long way to bridge the gap between them [security] and us [civil society]". It was agreed that there was dire need for civil society to coordinate as a forum from which they could nominate representation on the DISEC. Security personnel acknowledged the importance of improving communication to the public. As the ONS representative said: "I think the issue of DISEC going to the radio to discuss issues on security that is of use to the public will be an issue to be discussed at the next DISEC meeting. I consider this to be crucial".

As a response to recommendations, within a month of the meeting, the Kailahun District Civil Society Organisations (KAIDCSO) was formed and one of its members nominated and accepted by DISEC to represent civil society on the committee with

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Box 24: *Continued*

the directive to report relevant information back to KAIDCSO. In the ensuing year, KAIDCSO members and security personnel have collaborated on a number of events and information gathering activities, both as part of Conciliation Resources' Strengthening Citizens Security project and independently.

The relationships developing between security personnel and civil society in Kailahun has noticeably helped to 'demystify' security and create information resources that are mutually beneficial to civil society and the security system.

Oversight of the Security System

Oversight of the security system remains a big political issue within Sierra Leone. As one international adviser stated: "One wonders where oversight and accountability exist, because I have seen no evidence of oversight or accountability in any of these institutions"[245]. While the MoD represents the main civil oversight mechanism for the RSLAF, a similar process was never initiated with respect to the SLP. The reasons for this relate both to the Constitution and personalities of advisers as well as consecutive Ministers of Internal Affairs (Charles Margai, Prince Harding and Sam Hinga Norman). As noted, a Police Council exists, chaired by the Vice-President, not the Minister of Internal Affairs. As a Constitutional body, the Police Council is responsible for the police service, essentially performing the functions of the non-existent police directorate, including dealing with expenditure and personnel issues. Regardless of the professionalism of the Police Council, this organization of police affairs and centralization of decision-making power does of course, to the outside observer, call into question whether appropriate mechanisms for accountability and checks and balances are in place.

In 2007, the mandate of the MIA remained unchanged, which was to oversee the SLP, prison services, immigration department, national registration department, fire service and coroner's office. This ministry, however, in stark contrast to the MoD, only received limited attention and support during the security system transformation process. While initial cooperation between the CCSSP and the MIA had been strong, for example, when the CCSSP project memorandum was produced, collaboration was not nurtured long-term. This

was partly a consequence of the lack of political will to institute radical changes within the ministry. The net result has been that the SLP continue to operate in the accountability regime set out by the Police Council. Of equal importance has been the converse issue of the SLP not being appropriately represented in Cabinet due to a weak Ministry of Internal Affairs.

At the same time, the separation of the ONS from the Office of the President remains both a core strength and an Achilles' heel. The current professional reputation of the National Security Coordinator means that the ONS remains apolitical, but in terms of sustainability there is a long way to go to create the kind of internal culture that would allow the ONS to develop a comprehensive succession strategy and build on the considerable successes of the ONS to date. This is particularly important, given that the ONS is an island of competence amongst a number of Government institutions that lack capacity to lead. There is a danger that the ONS will step beyond its mandate, and whilst a strong ONS is necessary to a secure future of Sierra Leone, it cannot do everything.

The Parliamentary Oversight Committee on Defence, Internal and Presidential Affairs (POCDI&PA) is specifically mandated to oversee agencies that provide security. However, the Committee faces a number of substantial challenges to performing its role effectively. As point of departure there is a lack of clarity surrounding the Committee's functions, noticeable in the Committee's name. In addition, while the Committee's mandate is restricted to issues of defence, internal and presidential affairs and does not include security as provided by the SLP and intelligence, it has effectively extended its remit to these areas. There has also been an overlap between the POCDI&PA mandate and other parliamentary oversight committees, as the former does not have exclusive power and authority over defence appointments or budgetary issues. Other challenges to the efficient work of POCDI&PA include the lack of human financial and material resources. Finally, the selection of the 16 Committee members, of whom one is a woman, is not based on knowledge of the security system – appointments occur through consultation with party leaders in Parliament[246].

In concluding this section on oversight mechanisms, the critical role of civil society in promoting accountability and contributing to decision-making processes around security should be noted. Important initiatives have been taken through mechanisms such as the Security Sector Review and programmes such as Conciliation Resources' *Strengthening Citizens' Security* programme. As with the rest of the security actors in Sierra Leone, the issue of lack of resources and at times operational capacity has been decisive and remains a substantial challenge to the transformation process in the near to long-term.

Conclusion

Elections in 2002 were held in the immediate aftermath of conflict and in an environment that had not yet fully stabilized. Moreover, they were held when there was significant in-country security and logistics support from the UN. Even so, it was a testament to how far the SLP in particular had come in a short period of time that they were able to ensure that the elections were a success. The 2007 elections, on the other hand, in some ways held much greater challenges, both for the SLP and Sierra Leone's security system as a whole. In simple terms, they operated with less 'background security' support, but in an arguably much more stable environment. The SLP published their Election Strategy in April 2006; its main thrust was to work with the National Security Architecture[247].

At the ONS-level, discussions had begun by mid-2006 on security needs to enable the conduct of the elections. As elections drew closer, the coordination forum provided by the ONS for the National Electoral Commission (NEC), the SLP and other security institutions engendered a structured approach that covered all aspects of the elections – before, during and after[248]. In the rather tense atmosphere surrounding the elections, ONS leadership was vital in showing, domestically and internationally, that the security system was indeed a coherent system of actors that spoke with one voice. In the end, the SLPP lost the elections to the APC and a new Government took over. Considering the state of affairs in Sierra Leone in the early 2000s, this is a significant measure of success for the security system transformation process. It becomes an all the more significant success when one considers that political buy-in to

the security system transformation process had diminished considerably by 2005 (by 2007, NSC meetings had not been held for two years). While general commitment to the transformation process might have been there, the 2007 general elections had become the main preoccupation of the Government.

Any strategic considerations on behalf of the UK into 2008 must involve the development of a strategy for its exit from the security system transformation process. This is an extremely difficult and sensitive process. The role of the UK in Sierra Leone, particularly for the last eight years, has created a strong tie between the two Governments. In some cases, the UK acts both as an important catalyst for change, but also as a guarantor of political independence amongst a set of institutions that became heavily politicised in the pre-war period and were all but destroyed during the conflict. An exit strategy has to be planned carefully and phased in, so as to prevent the lack of oversight and civilian capacity across Government leading to a further politicisation of organisations in a position to abuse power. If this occurs, Sierra Leone will find itself back in the same set of circumstances that led to the war in the first place. Moreover, as ONS and CISU create more distinct identities, what cooperation is going to look like needs to be carefully considered.

This is all the more stark when the lack of resources available to the Government of Sierra Leone is considered. Sierra Leone has none, the state is virtually bankrupt, and is almost entirely dependent on external resources. The only reason why the country is stable is that external resources provide funding. Unrealistic expectations of progress driven by planning imperatives of development agencies remain a key issue. As one participant notes: "We throw it into Sierra Leone and expect it to be sorted in three or four years. I think we need to be realistic with the time frames involved"[249]. One of the key features of the successes in Sierra Leone is the long-term nature of the initial involvement of the UK and the MoU. This has been an unusually long commitment, but the result has been to instil confidence in the future that is all too absent in several other development environments. Once the period of the MoU is over, a return to a three-year project cycle with the accompanying uncertainty could have a significantly negative effect on confidence of and in the system of security institutions that has been established[250].

Key Issues in Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone

So far, this narrative has concentrated on reconstructing a coherent, chronological narrative of a number of the key processes and events that have characterized security system transformation in Sierra Leone. This chapter takes a more thematic approach and analyses cross-cutting themes that have emerged and changed over the period covered, many of which remain issues today. It evaluates the policies and principles adopted and followed during the process and the changes in the relationships between the UK and Sierra Leone over time.

This chapter is divided into four main sections. The first section discusses issues surrounding the UK's involvement in the process that emerge from UK policy itself. The second section discusses technical and process issues, many of which changed as the process progressed. Most of these issues are relevant not only to SSR programmes, but to development programmes overall. The third section discusses the issue of national ownership that has been critical to the success of Sierra Leone's security system transformation. And last, we identify key issues in moving forward.

UK Government Issues

There can be no doubt that one of the key reasons why the intervention in Sierra Leone was so relatively successful was buy-in to the process by key UK institutions. This was influenced by strong emotional and historic ties between the UK and Sierra Leone and by a vocal Sierra Leonean diaspora in the UK which was very effective at lobbying for political support for intervention and raising public awareness of the war. There was also a series of personal commitments to Sierra Leone by influential politicians who had some degree of connections to the country. Even the Prime Minister, Tony Blair, had a link through his father, who had been a school teacher in Sierra Leone in his youth. Indeed, apart from the decision to intervene in the Sierra Leone conflict, generally speaking, UK engagement in African affairs, were limited, bordering on non-existent, in the first term (1997-2001) of the still-serving Labour Government[251].

UK involvement had been growing in Sierra Leone during the war. It increased after the scandal resulting from the involvement of a former senior British Officer, Tim Spicer, and his private military company, Sandline, which was accused of organising an illegal arms shipment to the country. (The arms shipment had been sanctioned, in part, by the then British High Commissioner in Sierra Leone.) There was a clear understanding at the highest political level that a similar situation could not occur again (Robin Cook, Secretary of State, mentioned this to David Richards at a chance meeting between the two immediately before the 2000 UK military deployment)[252]. Given that the then UK Government had proposed an 'ethical foreign policy' this scandal caused a significant amount of UK press attention and thus, a response from the UK Government.

Finally, the personality of the then Development Secretary, Clare Short, cannot be underestimated in terms of developing the political drive to intervene in Sierra Leone. As one UK Government source noted, she was "almost an elemental force; she was very, very committed personally – she met Kabbah and took this upon herself as a kind of personal crusade"[253]. It is hard to overestimate the power of personality at the centre of the UK's commitment to Sierra Leone. Indeed, in Short's own words: "And then, there were people

like me, ringing Tony Blair, and – I think I was somewhere else in Africa, I can't remember exactly where I was – and saying: 'We must not go [leave Sierra Leone]'. Blair, to his credit, decided yes, they wouldn't just evacuate and leave, but stay there, which is what they did"[254].

On a more pragmatic level, apart from the obvious moral imperative to aid Sierra Leone on the verge of conflict, there was also the perception that if the UK could not achieve its conflict prevention and stabilization objectives in a country such as Sierra Leone, where, then, would the development instruments available to the UK Government be effective?

Another key issue with the UK's involvement in Sierra Leone has been the continuing struggle to achieve joined-up Government. Although the High Commission is the principal political authority among UK institutions overseas, this was not reflected in the relationship between the High Commission, DfID and IMATT in Sierra Leone. Each organization reported back to London separately, and "not necessarily in a single package. In my view, we were all reporting to our own"[255].

The lack of any one Department in charge meant that there was no ultimate responsibility or accountability vested with any one UK actor vis-à-vis the transformation process. This led to a lack of leadership, with no one institution able to "get everybody together and say: Right, what are we doing in-country? Is it joined-up? How do we report back to London to ensure that the various strings are being played?"[256]. This was arguably a personality issue, not necessarily one of process and procedure, but the fact remains that there was no one Department able to take the lead in forwarding the process in a co-ordinated manner. This is likely to remain an issue, particularly at the field level, where a body resembling the Cabinet Office does not exist.

Thus, co-ordination became a function of individuals collaborating effectively on the ground in the absence of an overall and agreed framework. Along these lines, the CCSSP Project Memorandum stated that the project would be linked to the Sierra Leone Security Sector Programme (SILSEP), the Law

Development Programme (LDP) and the Anti-Corruption Programme, but there was no indication of how this would be achieved. The failure to address project coordination, referred to in 2004, was also evident in the design of the LDP and SILSEP.

In defence of this approach, at the time, the context inherited by these programmes was one of crisis management. Literally, security system transformation started out during a war. There was little time to spend months planning, collecting baseline data and so forth – action had to be taken immediately. This had the effect of putting responsibility into the hands of individuals on the ground who had to make decisions. There were clearly advantages and disadvantages to this, but put simply, where there were good people, good decisions were made, and when there were people in difficulty, the decisions were not as good. In the absence of an overarching framework – a strategy which was lacking for a reason – such decisions could be important. The experience of Sierra Leone shows quite clearly that getting the right people into the right place at the right time is critical.

The width and depth of DfID, High Commission and IMATT engagement on the ground, apart from what has been referred to informally as the "weekly prayers"[257], is directly proportionate with how well the three organizations are getting along at any given time. This is compounded by a high turn-over of staff (DfID's average field tenure is around 2-3 years, while IMATT's is one year), which has meant that each organisation on the ground has had to cope with constant changes in personnel and the accompanying limitations to institutional memory. Indeed, it may even be suggested that given the amount of turn-over of staff, the institutional memory lies almost exclusively within the Government of Sierra Leone.

Changes in IMATT were particularly difficult, given that each Commander IMATT came in with specific sets of aims and objectives. Many came from radically different backgrounds within the military and brought with them a variety of personal styles. This was particularly the case before Plan 2010 was produced in 2004, but also later on when questions around an exit strategy

were brought up by one Commander IMATT and DfID Manager, but not taken up and further developed or implemented by their successors. In brief, getting up to speed became a real problem, which was also reflected in how output to purpose reviews, that is evaluation of SILSEP in particular, were not necessarily picked up by successive staff coming in. How to retain and pass on institutional memory remains a real issue.

In the early days, it was also certainly clear that the elevation of DfID to a new position and its development as a new Department clearly meant that it wanted a distinct identity along the lines of "we are DfID, we are not the Foreign Commonwealth Office"[258]. This was true in London and it was true in Freetown. Moving into SSR in the late 1990s was in and of itself a reflection of this circumstance, and unheard of for DfID, a development agency, to engage in. However, whilst DfID did maintain an office in Freetown, there was no senior DfID presence until 2005, which meant that to some extent DfID could not play a full part in dialogue in-country. This was important, given the level of in-country decision-making that had to happen within the exceptionally volatile security context and with SILSEP staff effectively taking part in fighting a war. In the late 1990s in Sierra Leone, it was simply an academic exercise to insist on a clear distinction between operations and capacity-building, which DfID on their part did given the substance matter of their activities.

Pre-2005, before DfID devolved programme decision-making authority to Freetown, and as early as 2002, the need for a relatively senior DfID programme co-ordinator (based either in Freetown or visiting more regularly from London) to supplement the DfID Freetown office was emphasized[259]. The purpose would be to build bridges between the various elements of the programmes put in place to transform the security system, as well as with London. Because of remoteness from theatre and bureaucratic hurdles in London, it was difficult to respond to urgent requests for assistance or contribute towards the resolution of problems in a timely and effective manner. This was compounded by long gaps between civilian advisor deployments within SILSEP. Relations between the team working in Freetown and London were always tense: "They [DfID in London] were unaware of the real issue and generally lived in the past. They

did not understand the dynamics of the Sierra Leone Civil Service"[260]. Indeed, there was an acknowledgement of the fact that there was no professional resource in-country for project management and coordination of SILSEP specifically, and all the elements of security system transformation, generally speaking. In the early days, within DfID, there were also separate desks dealing with SILSEP and CCSSP, the Conflict and Humanitarian Assistance Department (CHAD) and the Government and Institutions Department (GID), respectively.

One important reality of the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone – or put differently, the collection of projects that were initiated in Sierra Leone around security-related issues – is that no overarching strategy guided efforts. The development of security system transformation in Sierra Leone was not a joined-up process, certainly in the early stages. Even by 2003 one UK Government official stated: "When I went to Sierra Leone at the end of 2000, what I was presented with was not a strategy, it was a vision. And, basically, I was told: 'Make it up when you get out there'. When I asked about a blueprint for SSR, I was told: 'Well, you are going to write it'. Effectively, we did"[261].

In the absence of a strategic plan, it was clear that security system transformation was an evolving set of programmes, neither carefully planned nor sequenced. However, it is also clear that a vision was developing, however opaque, and that the group of people on the ground implementing its different parts were making decisions broadly in line with what has later come to be referred to as SSR, even if they did not always call it by that name.

The UK's involvement in Sierra Leone at the time was largely based on political motivation rather than technical needs assessments. Ms Short said: "We could not – we, being the British – could not let this fragile, but democratically-elected Government collapse. Now, I don't think there was much theory behind that"[262]. Indeed, to the question of why, then, an intervention took place, Ms Short put it: "I was just doing it because it was disgraceful. No one was planning anything"[263]. This had an impact on the kind of activities that could realistically be undertaken at the time. There was no space to sit back and develop a

strategy, since the country needed support – urgently. UK intervention was very much shaped by consecutive crises prior to peace in 2002, particularly with a military junta in power from 1997-1998, the invasion of Freetown in 1999 and 2000, the RUF attacks on UNAMSIL, and so forth. UK staff had to try to react to that which forced them into action. Given this, it was not surprising that activities on the ground were not particularly joined-up. In fact a report written as early as 2002 concluded that in "the absence of clear guidelines and precedents for SL-type situations, the strategy follows the pattern of needs as they occur and are recognized, rather than vice versa"[264].

In 2002, when the MoU was signed between the Governments of Sierra Leone and the UK, a number of activities were outlined, effectively within a first phase of engagement. However, the MoU framed a 10-year commitment of the UK to spend £40m a year and there was no re-evaluation of MoU commitments to adjust them according to changing priorities. There was a vision, but no real evolving strategy to underpin that vision. The lack of an overarching strategy and a clear end-state also meant that the same concerns kept emerging again and again. For example, within the MoD, each time a new IMATT Commander was deployed he had to ask the same questions:

> *"This lack of overall vision: Where do we want to go with this? The end-state: When do we know when we've succeeded? When do we know that we have something that is good enough? Ultimately this boiled down to the issue of:–Against what are we judging success? Are we judging success on the basis of people being able to make their own decisions? Are we judging people on their effectiveness? There are all sorts of criteria"[265].*

Sierra Leone's Role in the Establishment of the Conflict Prevention Pools

The different interventions in Sierra Leone in the late 1990s conflated with and impacted on the pooling of resources among MoD, FCO and DfID. Regarding the police, there were certain types of support that simply were not feasible with the funding streams available at the time. Rearming the Special Security

Division (SSD), for instance, would not have been possible (and indeed only happened in the late 1990s) if individual CCSSP staff had not gone straight to the UK Chief of Defence Staff for support (albeit with DfID blessings)[266]. "Until then [when the GCPP and ACPP were established], we had steered away from anything to do with weaponry. Not that we [DfID] could do anything with weaponry, but at least the Conflict Pool mechanism got us into that"[267]. The new 2001 Overseas Development Act and the establishment of the joint conflict pools were seen as enabling SILSEP to encompass activities, such as specialist training for intelligence services that were previously considered inappropriate for ODA funding. Likewise the inter-Departmental pool mechanism allowed for thinking about operational issues, including training for the Anti-Corruption Commission, Special Branch and FISU, which had been resisted by DfID. The division simply became that in those areas were there was a clear operational aspect to the training, funding was provided by the ACPP, rather than DfID, development funds.

Prior to the integration provided by the pools, the UK Government was only able to draw on a relatively small pool of FCO funding; no ODA funding was available for many of the relevant activities. After the Abidjan peace agreement and democratic elections in 1997, the country was relatively peaceful and the window of opportunity was used by the UK Government. A number of projects were begun, in the words of former British High Commissioner, "to nurture the infant democracy, including the judiciary, police, the public sector, media and a military training programme, the budget [for which] was something like £150,000"[268]. Following this, the patchwork of activities outlined in the narrative was enacted utilising different pools of support. However, in 2001 UK Government concluded that it could make coordination much more formal. The three relevant ministers, Clare Short (DfID), Jack Straw (FCO) and Jeff Hoon (MoD), jointly decided to establish two funding mechanisms, the GCPP and the ACPP. In fact, the idea of the ACPP had initially come from DfID, immediately followed by the FCO's idea of a GCPP. As recalled by Clare Short:

"Gordon Brown and the treasury came up with this idea, putting lumps of money up to encourage cross-departmental working so somebody in Africa Division said, let's go for an Africa Conflict Prevention Pool, and we were up for it, we'd done some work on conflict in Africa. The idea then was that the Treasury would put in their £20 million – it wasn't much – on the table and then the other Departments would match it, but then that money would be run jointly. The point from the Treasury's point of view was leveraging better inter-departmental working. For us, of course, it meant, really getting into the policy-making, including the security services"[269].

The idea of the pools was to provide a formal indicator that the three departments were willing and able to work together, and, as such, they were at least partially positioned to respond to political pressure within Whitehall. The accounting officers of the departments would remain accountable for the expenditure, whilst the Ministers engaged in joint policy decisions. Apart from the fact that each of the pools dealt primarily with post-conflict, rather than 'conflict prevention', there were additional problems in making the pools genuinely joined-up. In particular, the different cultures amongst the different ministries were exposed within the operational mechanism of the pools, as well as continuing bureaucratic obstacles to meaningful collaboration.

While there might not have been a clearly outlined strategy for security system transformation process in Sierra Leone, meetings in the Cabinet Office about UK engagement in the country took place regularly. However, the evolution of joined-up work in Whitehall is a relatively recent phenomenon. In the days of ODA, the "idea that you would have anything to do with 'nasty' Ministry of Defence was deeply resisted"[270]. At the same time, whilst resistance remains strong among development agencies to engage in security-related programming, it is important to recognise that people have travelled a long distance since 2000 in terms of working jointly: "This period will in the future be looked at, probably not as seismic, but as a quite significant shift in the whole ethos. The idea of being involved in intelligence is strange – I mean, talking to people in Vauxhall Cross, it was dangerous"[271].

Cabinet meetings aside, there was little evidence in 2007 of coherent cross-departmental strategic direction regarding Sierra Leone from the key departments in London[272]. This could have a significant negative effect in terms of changes to current programming or on devising an exit strategy. Without a clear consensual notion of where Sierra Leone lies on the spectrum between a 'post-conflict' and 'developing' country contexts, it is difficult to make a proper assessment of whether executive roles of international staff should be considered or whether a developmental approach would be more appropriate[273]. Similarly, the current lack of a clear definition of what the realistic end-state for Sierra Leone might be has made it difficult to properly assess which programmes to scale down or what actions are needed to allow for a measured handover of responsibilities over time. Political will and momentum in the UK and at country level will dictate future engagement.

Technical and Process Issues

The experience of Sierra Leone's security system transformation process is primarily one of individuals. In the absence of an overarching strategy and an unequivocal decision-making structure, the issue of personalities rises to the surface and becomes instrumental in achieving successes or failures. That was certainly the case in Sierra Leone. What made the transformation process so effective in Sierra Leone was the lucky combination of individuals who shared common views and approaches. It could, of course, have gone disastrously wrong. Whilst it is sometimes, at least conceptually, difficult to distinguish people from institutions and organisations in this way, it is clear from fieldwork involving workshops with most of the people engaged in security system transformation, that there is a great deal of mutual respect on all sides, even when there are strong differences of opinion.

International advisers had unprecedented access to officials occupying key positions, both in Cabinet and the security system. It ultimately boiled down to the personality of any given adviser whether he or she would be able to add value to the ongoing reform process: "Mr. President, might I add a word – and you add a word on the basis that hopefully it will be a good word, and if it is a good word, then next time you do that, everyone stops and listens"[274]. The

danger here is that the international adviser would end up usurping a role that essentially was meant for Sierra Leonean institutions and staff. At times, there was pressure from London to bypass the Sierra Leonean hierarchy, to 'get things done'. It is also clear that there was a perception pressure, i.e. 'if it doesn't look like the UK, it is a failure', which sometimes forced immediate decision-making and disregard of that which was not well understood. The effects of this personality-driven approach could also have the undesirable effect of advisers working on different agendas. This was to a certain extent overcome in Sierra Leone by a significant, critical mass of advisers working in a similar general direction and also by increasingly strong national ownership (see below) by a relatively stable team of Sierra Leonean counterparts.

> *"The role of the personality of the head of state, Kabbah, clearly is a key issue, and anything that has to do with SSR has to take that into account. Any SSR strategy must take the leading personalities into account. Kabbah had to be brought onboard. Part of this process was to identify those key individuals who we found capable and understood what we were driving at. The key was to convince both the President and the broader political environment that this was going to work"[275].*

In fact, in all of this, the role of the President as an individual is frequently forgotten in much of the analysis of Sierra Leone. However, his personal commitment, until at least the latter part of the period covered in this narrative, when his attention turned to the upcoming elections, was constant. Indeed, it is to his credit that the room was made for many of the institutions that were being established in the first place or rebuilt, including the ONS, the MoD and the SLP, for instance. Kabbah himself stated in a speech in May 2005 at the official launching of the Security Sector Review, together with two other SSR-related documents:

> *"As you are aware, my government, since the end of the civil conflict, has been faced with many challenges, including the need to transform the security sector to make it respond adequately to threats to the state and its citizenry, especially in the face of UNAMSIL's final*

withdrawal. I also appreciate the creation of the enabling environment for poverty reduction. The underlying tenet is that security is the umbrella under which peace and development can thrive. It is therefore no accident that the Security Sector Review forms the detail of the first pillar of the PRSP – and this is for the first time ever"[276].

Within all of this, the critical role of the UK Government advisers was to act primarily as both catalysts and as guarantors of independence. The role of the expatriate IGP, serving between 1999 and 2003, was one of instilling confidence in the public but also, critically, in the ranks of the police, particularly the lower ranks, of whom a lot was expected. The main benefit of an international adviser to the ONS was also independence of the organization from political interference. In an organization that in popular perception could have easily succumbed to political interference, the presence of an international adviser acted as an important symbol of independence, and protector of the National Security Coordinator in the conduct of his work.

Apart from the obvious protection role played, there was also a key role of instilling confidence within a system that had completely broken down during the 1990s. Acting as a catalyst is frequently an underrated role, but it is a critical one. In a system that needs to look hard at itself, an outsider can often say and do things that would be unacceptable to national staff. Initiating a process of open criticism can then lead to systems beginning to reconstruct themselves, construct internal cultures and therefore evolve. There is significant evidence of this in some parts of the Sierra Leonean Government now; this is a tangible positive effect of international involvement over the past ten years (again the ONS and the MoD are examples among others of this process).

Financial Management

A critical issue throughout the period covered in the narrative has been the challenge of financial management, which has been, and continues to be, centrally controlled through the Ministry of Finance. Financial management systems in Sierra Leone require departments to make bids for funds in line

with costed strategies and plans. However, financial allocations from the Ministry of Finance tend to be based on last year's allocation rather than bids presented. In addition, indicative ceilings and final allocations would, as a rule, fall well below bids and earlier allocations. This circumstance, impacting across the civil service, may boil down to the general lack of available resources as well as corruption, but it has severe repercussions for strategic planning.

The allocation process is complicated by the fact that funds are released gradually through the financial year. This gradual release of funds is neither consistent nor predictable. This means that funding released in the final quarter, for example, might be significantly above that released in, say, the second quarter. Inconsistency within the financial system makes budgeting particularly difficult and even in a well-functioning department like the MoD, the motivation to plan properly is significantly undermined when existing plans are frequently stalled as a consequence of the inconsistent release of funds[277].

These circumstances are compounded by two additional issues. Firstly, reallocation of funds is not possible without the permission of the Ministry of Finance; even if the MoD wishes to make a decision over funding during the budget year, it cannot do so without permission. Secondly, the unpredictable nature of funding also applies to certain types of donor funding that may not appear in the official defence budget, e.g., certain types of equipment. Apart from the unpredictability of this expenditure, its off-budget nature has also led to its invisibility to the Ministry of Finance, who, since its budgets are based on the previous year, will not include the expenditure in its estimates. Over time, this also leads to a significant resource gap between actual consumption and budgeted figures, weakening the potential sustainability of initiatives.

For the Government, revenue collection lies at the heart of sustainable fiscal policy. This became evident as 'donor fatigue' began to be felt in Sierra Leone, especially given the expenditure requirements of the PRSP. It was clear however, that while revenue collection had improved in terms of US$ collected (from 123 million in 2003 to 145 million in 2005 as a percentage of GDP), revenue collection had remained relatively static, at 12.2% of GDP in 2005 (in

the receding two years, it had been 12.4% and 12.3% for 2003 and 2004, respectively)[278]. While the challenges to the economy remain substantial and entirely unrelated to the security system, in and of themselves they are potentially destabilizing. Weak capacities in tax administration, a relatively narrow revenue base, high levels of inflation and domestic and external debts still threaten to cripple Government. Indeed, during 2006, a growing deficit in security-related funding was detected. As noted above, almost all increases were in the off-budget segment of the expenditure.

These circumstances have directly impacted one of the key concerns raised at the very beginning of this narrative: The conditions of personnel service in the system of security providers itself, and across MDAs more broadly. In 2003, it was assessed that the disparity in conditions of service between pay and emoluments received by uniformed personnel and civilian staff employed at the same grade level was a clear source of discontent[279]. In the second half of 2006, it was assessed that annual wage increases were below inflation – around 10 per cent each year. Whilst modest gains had hitherto been made, improvement of the fiscal situation was vital.

Because of the slow speed with which general tax reform initiatives such as the introduction of value-added tax was undertaken, "efforts through the security sector to foster an enabling environment for the private sector" appeared "all the more justified; to move progressively towards a virtuous cycle"[280]. And, indeed, from 2006, the ONS and CISU have been focusing increasingly on security measures that have the potential to be revenue enhancing, e.g., through the consideration of strengthening integrated border management and maritime policing. In other words, apart from ensuring national security, there may be ways in which security actors can be explicitly engaged in economic recovery and generation.

National Ownership

One of the key reasons why the security system transformation process stayed on track in Sierra Leone was that citizens as well as leaders bought into the overall idea of UK engagement in the country. In short, "there was no appetite

to go back. It worked because the local population wanted us [the UK] to be there"[281]. Indeed, had this fundamental buy-in not existed, "it would not necessarily be the success story that it has become"[282]. For obvious reasons, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, security remained a top priority. At the state opening of Parliament on 22 May 1999, President Kabbah noted that "I take the security of this country as my number one priority and intend to pursue this objective with all necessary vigour". Similarly at the state opening of Parliament on 11 June 1999, Kabbah adopted "peace, security and development" as his theme, pointing out that in "developed countries of the world, peace and security had provided the foundation for their progress" and that in Sierra Leone "human needs and human security must be the basis for our development"[283]. As is evident from this narrative, there were fundamental obstacles, including political interests and corruption, standing in the way of establishing well-functioning security system institutions. However, it is also evident that at the executive level there was the political will to allow security institutions to be established as part of immediate post-conflict reconstruction (the MoD and ONS being cases in point).

At the same time, this buy-in was not only at a public level. There has been, and still is, a core group of Sierra Leonean officials who guide the process of recovery, a point made at length throughout this narrative. Indeed, the core team of Sierra Leoneans has remained consistently engaged. This has allowed strong Sierra Leonean participation in programming and decision-making throughout the whole period covered in this volume.

Key Issues Moving Forward

Certainly in the early stages, the development of security system transformation in Sierra Leone was not a joined up process. There is still a legacy of this lack of coherence. Rivalry between some political institutions may have calmed down following the elections in August 2007 (while always remaining a significant threat), but these rivalries remain between security institutions and between security and non-security political and government organisations. The ONS continues to be a key actor in the security architecture and yet, despite all of the developments over ten years, there remains a need for a UK adviser to

protect the organisation from accusations of political bias (which appear almost on a weekly basis in the media).

At the same time, there are serious implications surrounding sustainability raised by the level of commitment the Government is willing to put into the security system. There is a feeling that security is 'solved' in Sierra Leone, along with a recognition that the focus of Government efforts needs to move on to economic development. Whilst this may be true in the interim, the poor economic situation itself could lead to a worsening security situation. If there is no political commitment from Government or external agencies to maintain a clearly unsustainable security apparatus, a decline in services provided by Sierra Leone's security system may occur.

In this regard, the growth of criminality and associated criminal gangs is of particular interest, since their economic power makes them relatively powerful. Given this, the existence of a functioning Sierra Leonean security system is a regional issue, not just a national one. From the point of view of donors, continuing to evolve the existing functioning security institutions may not only be morally justifiable but far cheaper than letting them fall into disrepair and then having to intervene further down the line. In fact, there is a very strong case to make for enhancing the ability of existing institutions to liaise not only with regional security institutions through ECOWAS, but also with the national security organisations of Liberia and Guinea.

The issue of backing individuals has resulted in a group of Sierra Leonean staff which is committed to security system transformation, individuals who have excellent relationships with their international counterparts. However, the downside to this approach is that a great deal is invested in these specific individuals. This is probably less problematic in the SLP and RSLAF, where there has been a huge effort to deliberately construct a cohort of capable officers. In the intelligence architecture in particular, the success of the ONS relies on a very small group of people; how long these individuals can be expected to continue in these roles and who would succeed them is an on-going issue. In the case of intelligence, so much relies on culture that it is impossible to simply

build a critical mass of intelligence officers to take over. It is inevitable that some form of international support needs to continue to ensure their independence. Similarly, in the case of civilian oversight of defence, institutional memory in the MoD goes back to 1999 at best; with only a few civil servants trained to staff the Ministry, the civil-military balance is inevitably fragile.

At the same time, having said that the SLP and RSLAF are operational – which they are – issues of sustainability have haunted many of the developments over the whole time period. It is clear that the current establishment of the RSLAF is too big and ambitions for greater capability may well be the result of raised expectations rather than planning based on sound principles of revenue or sustainability.

The question of sustainability raises the difficult issue of an exit strategy. At some point, the long-term commitment of the MoU with the UK will need to be replaced, but the danger is that a rapid removal of support for the security system will destroy the confidence built up over the previous ten years. In practice, this would result in a situation where poor economic conditions are compounded by an unsustainable security system where conditions of service decline and there are few prospects for servicemen outside the military or police. Different models for sustained advisory support could be considered, which is not institutionally or programmatically embedded in IMATT or SILSEP, but centred around a team of advisors with experience in different areas of relevance to the institutions that comprise the security system[284]. Indeed, this may be the most realistic way of constructing an exit strategy, while ensuring that 'political space' is maintained to continue Sierra Leone's security system transformation process. For the work that has been done over the past two years regarding an exit strategy, and the work that is being planned, see Box 25.

Box 25: Exit Strategy[285]

In late 2006 a working group was formed to develop a workable model for a future programme which would involve a merged IMATT and SILSEP programme working across the security architecture. The initial authors of this proposed Integrated Security Advisory and Training Team (ISATT) left shortly after setting up the working group and their successors in DfID, the High Commission and IMATT failed to fully agree to the proposed structure. Consequently the ISATT was not taken forward at that point in time. What did come out of the discussions, however, was an agreement that the next phases of SSR in Sierra Leone needed to involve closer working and coordination between IMATT, SILSEP, JSDP and the High Commission. A security sector coordinator was appointed to both fulfil this role, coordinating UK Government activities, and act as an adviser to the ONS.

The UK did not begin exit planning around security-related programming in that point in time as it was widely expected that SILSEP would be extended to give time for greater funding and ownership of the programme post-elections by the Government of Sierra Leone. DfID had recently signed a joint country strategy with the EC committing them to increase support to health, water and education and draw down programmes in minerals and security. The rationale for this change in direction was the human development statistics in Sierra Leone, including the highest infant and maternal mortality rates in the world, and the state of stability and peace in the country. The argument followed that long-term stability could only be guaranteed if citizens were given basic services and opportunities, the lack of which had led to widespread dissatisfaction and the start of the civil war to begin with. So, although drawing down security-related programming, DfID's new direction was focussed on service delivery to reduce poverty and prevent a return to conflict.

In autumn of 2007, the result of the resource allocation round was announced, and DfID Sierra Leone was given a lower than expected budget – budget increases were not to happen in 2008-2009, but in the outer few years of the exercise. This led to a cost cutting exercises, the result of which was a decision to reduce spends in 2008-2009 by accelerating the direction laid out in the Joint Country Strategy for Sierra Leone (JCSP), developed with the EC. The Head of DfID Sierra Leone made the decision to not extend SILSEP post-2007. However, a bid was submitted to ACPP, which was accepted, giving, as a point of departure, one extra year of support to ONS and CISU primarily.

In parallel with these developments, as part of the process of beginning the development of an exit strategy, meetings were held across the UK Government and with ONS, CISU and the Ministry of Finance on how to ensure sustainability of the institutions established under SILSEP since 1999, including Government of Sierra Leone ownership and funding. The APC Government was finding its feet, and the core priority of the ONS was to prove its effectiveness. With this in mind, ONS submitted a budget for the use of ACPP funding to DfID, and instigated discussions with the Ministry of Finance on funding after March 2009. A big focus of ONS, as already noted in this book, was

Box 25: *Continued*

revenue generation, for instance by increasing capacity of the Joint Maritime Authority, and by supporting the combat of trafficking. DfID also made a subsequent bid to the ACPP to build new accommodation for ONS and CISU allowing them to move outside of State House, and create a physical space for the organisations' continuity post-DfID support.

Recognising the urgent need for an exit strategy, in early 2008, the UK Government began work on a strategy for UK Government reduction of support to security-related programming. This time, rather than an ISATT, IMATT would follow its proposed glide path and DfID and the High Commission would complement the glide path through reducing budget support and advisory support gradually over the coming three years. Each subsequent bid to what had now become one collective Conflict Prevention Pool (CPP), rather than a GCPP and an ACPP, would match the SSR transition strategy which would be an annex to the overall UK strategy for Sierra Leone. The bid for 2009-2010 was a single bid from UK agencies in Sierra Leone, which requested funding against this agreed exit strategy. The exit strategy will be shared widely with the Government of Sierra Leone, in particular the Ministry of Finance and ONS, to ensure that it will be able to take over UK support as it is drawn down.

At the time of writing, this strategy and the UK strategy are being finalized.

Popular Perceptions of the Security Environment[286]

A perception survey was conducted in the first half of 2008 as part of the Security System Transformation, 1997-2007, project and coordinated by International Alert in collaboration with Conciliation Resources, an international NGO working in Sierra Leone. It measured popular perceptions of the status of the security environment in the country, including the main security concerns of the people compared to before and during the conflict in 1991-2002. Since it is not a comprehensive survey of all informed opinion across Sierra Leone, some of its findings can be very localised and need to be treated with caution. However, the survey did cover a significant group of people across a wide area; as an indicative survey of basic opinions, it is an extremely valuable tool.

The methodological approach of the survey included use of a semi-structured questionnaire to structure discussions based around Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA). The survey took place in two districts in each of the Eastern and Northern regions of Sierra Leone and one district in each of the Western and Southern regions. While, as mentioned, the survey is not meant to be representative of Sierra Leone as a whole, the spread of the survey was nevertheless designed to contribute to a national sense of the results of the security system transformation process.

Before the actual survey was carried out, pre-consultation preparation included briefing key stakeholders about the reasons why the consultations were taking place. Of particular significance were courtesy calls to paramount chiefs. Visits were also made to the location where survey consultations would take place. Pre-consultation was also crucial, in order to identify a recorder, who would take notes while the survey was being carried out, and a facilitator who could help run the PRA sessions.

The work drew upon both primary and secondary data. Secondary data was drawn from the MoD and the SLP, first, to provide contextual analysis of RSLAF actions to address personnel issues, but also to examine official approaches to ethical issues, including HIV/AIDS and offences against civilians. Use was also made of the Security Sector Review carried out by the ONS in 2005, which contained significant participation of key actors on the ground at the local level.

Primary information was collected from 250 respondents through questionnaires, group discussions and focus group interviews. Different techniques were used to cross-check information obtained during individual interviews. The survey gathered information about the following issues:

1. The visibility of the armed forces and SLP.
2. The degree to which changes relating to the security system transformation process have been accepted by the local population.
3. The degree to which the armed forces are accepted by the population.
4. The perceived impact of security system transformation.
5. Knowledge of processes of the security system transformation process amongst the local population.
6. Impressions of how the security situation may be strengthened.

These questions are necessarily broad and deal with a number of perceptions. This means that the survey is not dealing with absolutes, or has produced hard data per se. What the survey does provide is a snapshot of views on the ground about the security system transformation process and its perceived impact.

Where Were the Surveys Carried Out?

Surveys were conducted in four of Sierra Leone's Eastern, Southern, Northern and Western regions. One district was chosen in the Western and Southern regions; two were chosen in the Eastern and Northern regions, including Bombali, Kambia, Kenema, Kono, Bo and Freetown.

These locations provided a cross-section of different experiences, including flash points during the war where there currently are significant numbers of disaffected youths and ex-combatants; provincial capitals (Bo) where there is a wide base of different communities, ranging from drug sellers and users, student and youth groups and civil society organisations; other urban areas, including main district towns and the capital (Kenema, Makeni and Freetown), where there are concentrations of political activity, but also the legacy of mass migration during the war; diamond rich areas (Kono and Kenema); and border areas (Kambia near Guinea). Care was also taken to ensure that the gender split in the survey was roughly 50:50, and that respondents included representatives from different strata of local society.

What Did the Surveys Tell Us About Security Concerns?

Overall, the Government of Sierra Leone's strategy was for security actors to provide security for the population as a whole, and the survey suggests that the Government has made significant strides towards achieving this goal. However, the survey also suggests that there is still significant room for improvement in terms of security delivery and the perceptions of people on the ground.

Survey results indicate that many of the deep-rooted causes of conflict have changed little since the Government published the Security Sector Review in 2005. Threats identified by the survey include those that have been or are being addressed, whilst others have been identified as priorities. The following is a summary of survey results:

Table 3: Perceived Security Threats		
Social violence (including sexual violence)	**'Classic' SSR security threats**	**Wider environmental threats from outside the community**
• Rape • Gendered violence • Street violence • Drug taking • Youth unemployment • Armed theft • Unlawful allocation of land • Town mining • Chiefs' misallocation of land	• Inadequate coverage of security forces • Too few SLP night patrols • Bribery of security forces • Lack of screening of security personnel • Use of ex-combatants as security personnel • Poor judicial system • Inadequate conditions of service for security personnel • Low levels of education • Political interference	• Predominance of small arms and smuggling • International smuggling • Criminal activity related to drugs • Smuggling of people, especially children

There were, of course, significant localised concerns that differed across the districts. In Bombali (Makeni), for example, there were concerns about political violence and marginalization and increases in HIV/AIDS. Kambia was more concerned with theft and smuggling of food and drugs. Survey results also indicated concerns about human trafficking and drugs as major security threats. Above all, given the level of activity surrounding security system transformation

at top levels of government, there seemed to be little knowledge of these efforts at the local level.

Issues in Bo were different; they appear to be far more concerned with political violence and marginalisation due to political beliefs. This was also a serious issue in Kenema, where political tension was exacerbated by deforestation through commercial logging and in Kailahun, the Yenga border crisis with Guinea was mentioned. Given that it is the main area for diamond activity in the country, Kono was, not surprisingly, dominated by the presence of significant numbers of people from outside the district and from West Africa who believe that they can make quick money in the diamond fields. At the same time, pressure on land and access to land has led to accusations of bias amongst chiefs, forced migration, land degradation, illegal mining and corruption regarding compensation claims. The presence of former combatants as security guards for some of the mining operations also adds to the sense of insecurity in the area.

The Western Area around Freetown was different again. Following the rapid urbanisation during the war, Freetown's main security problems rest with the large number of youths who inhabit the growing slum areas and engage in low-grade crime, including street crime (sometimes violent), theft and use of marijuana. At the same time, as the capital of the country, Freetown exhibits an element of political violence and criminal activity related to organised crime connected into the metropolitan elite.

While it is extremely difficult to rank all of these factors in any meaningful way, it is clear that detailed results from all districts show that there is some consistency amongst the top threats that recur from district to district. These include crime (especially violent and street crime); drug abuse and smuggling; rape and domestic violence; child trafficking; and youth unemployment. Overall, the picture is one in which serious threats of political violence or abduction from rebels has almost entirely disappeared, only to be replaced by domestic threats supplemented by external criminal networks.

Clearly, domestic violence remains a key issue in the countryside in particular. This is also complicated by the number of women who identify a lack of access to traditional systems, in particular, paramount chiefs, that operate outside the formal legal system. This is critical, given that in many areas most people use the formal system for conflict resolution only as a last resort. In fact, the lack of faith in the formal justice system is reflected across all of the districts, but it is not wholly clear whether this is the result of lack of trust, lack of knowledge or lack of resources (in all probability it is a combination of the three). It is certainly related to lack of people, particularly lawyers, who are familiar with the formal system outside Freetown. Traditional justice does serve as a relatively quick, effective and accepted source of justice, but it still clearly excludes specific groups, particularly youth and women.

Survey Results: Security System Transformation Successes

It is clear that the profile of security forces across Sierra Leone is that they are both far better deployed and enjoy a better reputation than before or during the war. While this is to be expected, it cannot simply be taken as a given. Survey respondents across the districts mentioned the increased visibility of security forces as well as their deployment in areas where they had not been present (or had not been perceived to be present) previously.

Communication between the security forces and the civilian population has also improved. In particular, the impact of the ONS has certainly increased the general population's view of who is and who is not a security providing actor. Approximately 40-50% of the population in each district not only said that they had good relations with the security forces, but that they were active participants in their own security provision. Approximately 40% in each district were aware of the existence of the PROSECs and DISECs and their role in collecting security information. This is an impressive statistic given the complete failure of the intelligence structure before and during the war itself. A number of survey respondents indicated that they would use these committees as a form of dispute resolution instead of using the formal magistrates system or the chiefdom courts. This, along with the use of traditional authorities like chiefs, elders or secret societies, was a significant feature of all of the survey results.

The population in general (96% in Bombali) also stated that their security was significantly improved. The RSLAF was mentioned as being present but in barracks – in other words while people know that the RSLAF is there, they do not generally feel threatened by them. Indeed, in many ways, the RSLAF has been removed from the domestic security scene, which has to be seen as extremely positive. Several people in garrison towns like Freetown, Daru, Bo, Makeni and Kenema also feel they can seek redress when soldiers step out of line. Civilians say that they can now talk to Colonels of the RSLAF without been beaten and thrown in the guard room, which is a significant change since before the war.

The situation with the SLP is more complex, partly due to their visibility in local communities and their integral role vis-à-vis internal security. Several participants also seemed to get the SLP confused with 'western' models of justice and the courts in particular. There remains a distrust of some western methods of justice and a continued reliance on traditional justice systems. However, at the same time, the reputation of the SLP is greatly improved. Before the war, the SLP had a reputation for corruption, extortion and random violence. Now, there were instances reported of local communities handing over criminals to the police, as well as widespread use of LPPBs and the Complaints, Discipline and Internal Investigation Department of the police. One of the SLP units mentioned most frequently was the FSU, which, given the prevalence of both child trafficking and also domestic violence, has assumed an important role in many communities. All of these measures, along with a new emphasis on local needs policing have clearly had a positive impact, with, for example, 96% of Bombali respondents and 98% of Kambia respondents people saying that the SLP had improved.

What emerges from the surveys is that the SLP and RSLAF are now clearly embedded into local communities and are no longer seen as being 'above' them. This is a significant improvement for the general population.

Challenges and Opportunities

Significant challenges and opportunities remain. One of the key challenges is, of course, to maintain improvements that have already taken place, which requires the maintenance and further improvement of terms and conditions for service personnel. This may have a significant impact on levels of corruption, which, for all of the improvements mentioned in the survey, was still identified by the general population as being a significant security problem. Specific examples of this that re-occurred in survey results were the extortion of a 'tax' from taxi drivers by the SLP and the continued misuse of some equipment (vehicles) meant for RSLAF operations.

At the same time, there are significant opportunities highlighted from survey results that could lead to further improvements in security. Whereas between 40-50% of people had heard of the ONS and understood its basic functions, there could be opportunities to develop this further and get people further involved at a local level in managing their own security. Local involvement in LPPBs was taken as an example of how people could participate in decision-making that affected their own communities and were mentioned as a possible means for the ONS to engage people in security more broadly (as are the Chieftaincy Security Committees (CHISECs) that the ONS is planning the implementation of with support from UNDP).

Local dispute resolution also represented a significant feature of most of the discussions. Generally speaking, this involves a number of different actors, including chiefs, elders, magistrate courts, the SLP and a wide range of alternative dispute mechanisms. These alternatives range from religious leaders to youth groups and other civil society organisations, with PROSECS and DISECS also playing a role. In Freetown, the press was also mentioned as a means of controlling corrupt politicians.

Other suggestions by survey respondents included civilians playing a prominent role in criminal investigations by helping identify and in some cases prosecute criminals and suspects. The role of the individual in ensuring his or her own security is not insignificant.

Conclusions

There is no doubt that not only have significant improvements taken place within the security system transformation process, but also that they have been noticed and appreciated by the local population across a range of districts. Whilst problems still remain, SLP and RSLAF improvements as well as greater visibility of the ONS at a local level have all contributed to the general population feeling more secure.

Consolidating these gains will, of course, be an ongoing process and whilst there have been improvements, there are still other activities that could further improve the security situation. It could be noted as a point of concern that very few survey respondents were aware that the changes they were seeing on the ground were the result of a major set of programmes around security system transformation with international support. However, the fundamental question is: If people feel more secure, does it matter if they understand the transformation process that led to a greater sense of personal security?

Police Constable at the front desk of Calaba Town police station.

SLP officers on patrol in the community around Lumpa police station.

Conclusions: Lessons and Issues

The aim of this narrative has been to describe the development of security system transformation as a policy, or, more precisely, a cluster of policies and programmes to reconstruct post-war Sierra Leone. It also documents UK involvement in Sierra Leone between 1997 and 2007.

It is important to point out again that this document is heavily contextualised. It deals with the specific set of circumstances of Sierra Leone and the conflicts that existed at that time. The points of view of individuals quoted in our narrative are subjective; the relative if not complete absence of 'objectivity' or 'technicalities' of the process characterizes the narrative. As such, since context is so important, the applicability of any policy recommendations drawn from this experience need to be carefully considered.

Virtually all of Sierra Leone's infrastructure, including buildings and records overrun by the RUF, were destroyed during the civil war. Whilst UNAMSIL and the UK were able to assist the Government of Sierra Leone in establishing basic security across Sierra Leone, those charged with rebuilding the country were faced with the challenge of designing and constructing a security system *within the context of civil war.* This is very rare in post-conflict or, indeed, in development environments in general.

It is a given that the creation of any system of governance is ultimately political. Within the context of Sierra Leone during the period under consideration, the fact that several of the Government's administrative functions had ceased to exist meant that there was less frictional resistance to the reconstruction of security systems within the civil service, even if political space within which to effect the transformation had to be created. Whilst the immediate security threat of the RUF had largely dissipated by late 2000 and was finally quelled in 2001, the country was faced with a number of additional security issues, including unstable borders and neighbours, lack of a security infrastructure, discredited security institutions and a rapidly urbanised population with no immediate prospects for economic betterment.

Fortunately, at the Government level there was a very powerful consensus for reform and reconstruction amongst incorporated political figures, senior operational leaders and the international community. The commitment of a core team of Sierra Leonean leading personalities, at both political and senior civil service levels was absolutely critical in driving the reform process and exercising national ownership.

The role of the international community in Sierra Leone is noteworthy in that the UK provided clear leadership and a remarkable level of commitment to the country. Given the absence of multiple donors, there were fewer external harmonisation issues relative to several other post-conflict contexts. Leadership provided by the UK, backed up by military involvement, proved critical in establishing credibility, not only with the Sierra Leonean population and the Government, but also with the international community.

The Importance of National Ownership and Engagement

National ownership requires confidence on both sides of the development table. External actors need to consider national actors as development partners and cede a portion of the decision-making power to them. National actors, in turn, need to be willing to take a major portion of the responsibility for the transformation. On both international and national sides in Sierra Leone, a

critical mass of people developed a high level of national ownership and kept the transformation process going, despite occasional difficult times.

At a political level, there has been powerful and consistent buy-in from the President and other senior civil servants. This leadership has been important in terms of not only occasional intervention, but also in terms of developing a professional environment for security services and garnering public support and confidence in the system. Critically, there has been a pool of operational actors at senior ranks of the army, intelligence and police, amongst others, who have effectively managed the process (including external advisers) throughout the transformation period.

Overall direction of the process has been driven by the consistency of the core group of actors in Sierra Leone. Whereas the international staff changed frequently, Sierra Leonean staff remained remarkably consistent. The role of international advisers as well as external financial support cannot be underestimated, but it is an over-simplification to conclude that security system transformation was 'externally driven', a criticism that is often raised of the Sierra Leone experience. It is Sierra Leoneans, not external actors, and the country as a whole who have invested a decade or longer in the transformation process.

The Individualised Decision-Making Approach – Advantages and Disadvantages

In large part, initial security system transformation in Sierra Leone was the result of individuals on the ground making far-reaching decisions in the absence of overarching planning and strategies. This individualised decision-making approach has contributed to the sustainability and coherence of the transformation process over time. The consistent presence of these key national actors contributed to the ability of the Government of Sierra Leone to manage external donor relationships in a more coherent manner and greatly increased the level of trust between UK and Sierra Leone. The importance of these individuals in this process can not be overestimated.

Of course, there is an inherent danger in such an individualised decision-making approach, namely the creation of a small group of powerful individuals who make strong decisions and have the political and financial backing to implement them. This is a very positive situation within the framework of the international support that operated immediately after the war. It does, however, have the potential to create a significant group of extremely powerful power brokers in an infant democracy, with few checks and balances, or at least, checks and balances over each other. This is, of course, always a risk, but the obvious rejoinder to this point is to ask 'What other choice was there?'

The disadvantage of an individualised decision-making approach highlights the value of external involvement over longer periods of time to build up norms within governments and allow for further development of democratic institutions capable of safeguarding civil institutions from negative security interference. In particular, this touches on the development of civil society broadly and democratic norms more specifically.

The development of civil society in Sierra Leone has been driven in part by some of the security system institutions involved in the transformation process. The ONS and SLP in particular have been instrumental in engaging civil society through institutions like the PROSECs and DISECs; the RSLAF have also been trying to engage the public in terms of improving public perceptions of the army and the way in which the army interacts with the public. Results from the local survey presented in Chapter 5 show clearly that these efforts have been significantly successful. Today, most people in the districts do not feel threatened by the army or the SLP, whereas before they certainly did. This improvement in public perceptions is a tribute to both the professionalism of institutions that are now willing to engage to some degree with civil society and the ability of civil society itself to foster a security system more open to public discourse. However, only in 2006 was a robust attempt to involve civil society in the process made in a more structured manner. This belated civil society engagement in security issues speaks of the general weakness of oversight of Sierra Leone's security system as a whole, by both civil society and parliament.

By far the least developed element of oversight within the system is at the political, including parliamentary, level. Due to issues with and between Ministries and Ministers and the lack of functioning parliamentary structures, one of the key oversight mechanisms within the Government is the ONS. The question remains, however: Who monitors the ONS? In the longer term this may be a political risk; without proper parliamentary oversight, and at some point, without UK support, the security system may not be able to sustain development in a democratically-led direction.

The Importance of Individuals on the UK Side

If there is one lesson to come out of the Sierra Leonean experience it is that getting key individuals on the ground who know what they are doing, who are sympathetic to the context in which they operate, and who are empowered by Whitehall to make decisions (even when they disagree with London) is paramount. In the case of Sierra Leone, it is difficult to overestimate the importance of UK experts on the ground driving the transformation process, supporting the Government of Sierra Leone and, initially, making the first moves to co-ordinate security system transformation. This is a critical lesson to be learnt for other UK interventions – the choice of who to send should involve more substantial criteria than whether a person is willing or available to go.

Whilst the importance of sending competent and knowledgeable UK experts to Sierra Leone is in part a factor driven by the importance of individuals, UK staffing for Sierra Leone has also been a function of the lack of a coherent Government strategy in Whitehall. Absence of such a strategy has driven a series of continuous disagreements between MoD, FCO and DfID which have been directly related to the issue of individual personalities. The situation was certainly not helped by the lack of senior DfID representation on the ground in Freetown for a number of years and reflects a wider set of issues across Whitehall that are still present, despite the development of the joint pooling mechanisms between ministries. Partly because of this, in some ways the level of coherence reached within Sierra Leone is surprisingly good. Coherence of Sierra Leonean representation and the crucial role played by who were empowered and able to make decisions contributed to this; at a relatively early

stage, a critical mass of individuals recognised that the need for coherence required them to work together.

With regard to security system transformation specifically, there are some very good reasons why there was no overall strategy for developing approaches in Sierra Leone. Since Sierra Leone lacked virtually all of the basic tools and infrastructure necessary to govern and speed was of the essence, it was particularly important to get *something* up and functioning rather than leave a power vacuum. There was no time to go through formal planning procedures that would have delayed intervention, a circumstance acknowledged at the highest level of the executive, both in Sierra Leone and in the UK.

In this situation, DfID fell back on its professional experience and placed experienced staff from within and outside DfID into the field to assess needs and begin implementation. Whilst many of these people were not well-versed in formal project management, they were experienced in running projects on the ground. They were also technical experts within their respective fields, rather than experts in developing logical frameworks. This was a critical skill set in a situation where there was no way that Whitehall could have access to all of the relevant information fast enough to build programmes and adjust them according to immediate needs. As recalled by one of the leading DfID advisers in the late 1990s: "[T]he great thing was that we got on with it and supported the Government, and avoided obsessions with planning at the expense of actually doing things"[287].

Perhaps more problematic for the near-term future is the current lack of a UK exit strategy, although one has been worked on more or less since DfID established a Country Office in 2005. The prevailing concern is that the current functioning of Sierra Leone is only possible at its current level because of significant external support. It should be pointed out that this is not particularly unusual in several parts of Africa or indeed in development aid generally, but there are issues here about the levels of functionality and whether, for example, the RSLAF remains too big. Without addressing these strategic questions more fully, the question of sustainability is always likely to remain an issue.

Britannia Waives the Rules

Another significant element of UK involvement was the long-term commitment to Sierra Leone provided by the MoU between the two countries. This was primarily the result of a high-level coalition of British politicians who had strong personal commitments to a country they felt could not be allowed to fall further into chaos. UK intervention in Sierra Leone was marked by the need to act immediately; in doing so, it circumvented some of its international development policies. Thus, Sierra Leone became an exceptional case that resulted in a strong drive for UK Ministries to work together, even though there have been significant issues in doing so.

In particular, the experience of Sierra Leone influenced the creation of the conflict pool approach to managing aid funding, which was aimed at enforcing shared strategies across the FCO, MoD and DfID. However, there have been internal issues with the management of the pools, not least the rapid and constant change of decision-making personnel located within the pools. This change of personnel has led, at times, to a lack of coherence. It has also resulted in a situation where the future of the security system transformation process in Sierra Leone has been threatened because of the changing priorities of the relevant funding institutions.

At the same time, the early commitment to work together and the development of an overarching framework developed in the MoU was critical in establishing trust between the UK and Sierra Leone. This was certainly the main driver in developing increased confidence in the future of a Government of Sierra Leone backed by the UK and allowed the UK expatriate staff to play a role as external catalysts and guarantors of trust in the Government. In turn, the relationship between the UK and Sierra Leone also contributed to the development and nurturing of a credible group of Sierra Leonean staff as effective counterparts.

Sustainability

One of the issues of sustainability in the context of Sierra Leone is what exactly is meant by the term. A purist definition would take it to mean that a government should be able to sustain its own security institutions without external

interference. However, this would mean that virtually no functioning security apparatus in Sub-Saharan Africa would be 'sustainable'. The key word here is 'functioning', and it is on the relevant functions that are expected of Sierra Leone's security system that we need to concentrate.

Dysfunctional security institutions are prevalent in many parts of the world and are particularly prone to direct involvement in politics. In the long term, external military involvement in states where security institutions have ceased to function (except in a political sense) may be far more expensive and less sustainable than providing steady support and guidance to security institutions over the long-term, with the aim of preventing them from becoming dysfunctional in the first place. Small amounts of investment over a longer period of time may produce a more functional and sustainable international security system than no investment, steady decline and then crisis followed by yet another intervention.

There are, of course, specific operational issues about the relative sizes of armies, police and intelligence systems that need addressing. In particular, the experience in Sierra Leone of linking the production of a national security review where threats are identified to transforming the security system to counter these threats can be developed elsewhere. There are some weaknesses in this approach, particularly the risk of ignoring external regional and international linkages. For example, the RUF did not exist in Sierra Leone alone; it existed also in Guinea and Liberia. The regional dimensions of Sierra Leone's conflict and of any potential future conflict imply that any national security strategy should incorporate significant links with regional partners to prevent any future movement from falling between 'nations' cracks in boundaries and jurisdictions.

The issue of sustainability also leads to a clash between external actors and national owners of the process. It is inevitable that there will be differences between perceptions of what is or is not sustainable in the long run, as well as what operational capability is required or feasible. Like much of SSR – and development activities more broadly – this is partly due to questions of political balance and pragmatism and, at some level, of balancing realistic strategic planning with plans that amount to 'wish lists'. There may be hard decisions to

be made about the form and function of defence and policing infrastructures and procurement of vehicles and equipment that will need strong leadership at the top. However, there must also be commitment from external donors to retrain and reconfigure security institutions that are fit for purpose, as opposed to mirrors of security systems in the donor country.

Where Does Sierra Leone's Security System Transformation Process Leave SSR?

Whilst many activities are now implemented in the name of SSR, it remains conceptually rather weak in Sierra Leone and within the UK Government. Given the length of time that the UK has been involved in security system transformation in Sierra Leone and how often this experience is used as an example of how to implement SSR elsewhere, this is a concern that needs to be addressed.

As we have seen, there were a number of factors that led to development of the security system in Sierra Leone, not least the fact that at the beginning of UK involvement there was no strategy or blueprint of what this process would entail. In effect, what SSR policy that exists within the UK Government is in many ways a *post-hoc* rationalisation of a diverse set of activities that clustered well in Sierra Leone. However, in order to back that conclusion up, we need to examine this further.

The specific experience of people on the ground who were able to react to situation and context is very different to having a coherent plan of security system transformation – or SSR. Clearly 'SSR' has taken place in Sierra Leone, but largely without a framework within which to act. The critical factors appear to have been the existence of a strong group of national owners who have remained relatively constant over time and the existence at important times, of a key group of external advisers who were able to work together to support the Sierra Leonean group. Even though these external advisors themselves have not been constant, the constant presence of external groups who managed to work together (UN, World Bank and DfID, for instance) and specific support mechanisms (IMATT in particular, as well as individuals supporting key security

institutions like the ONS and CISU) has been critical in ensuring a constant upward curve of post-conflict reconstruction. In many ways, the experience of Sierra Leone shows how dedicated people can, over time, achieve an awful lot.

Current debates on SSR emphasize holistic and integrated approaches to the reform of institutions that deliver internal and external security, incorporating security institutions, intelligence, governance and justice. At the same time, there are serious tensions around the further development of SSR as normal planning functions of government departments come in to play. The question that Sierra Leone asks is how far one can actually plan a series of policies that are based in part on an evolutionary series of events and activities devised on the ground?

This, in turn, raises a number of questions about SSR programming and how far it can indeed be programmed. There is a clear set of activities and principles within SSR, but this does not amount to a plan per se; it is more like a series of guidelines or a 'direction of travel'. Whilst this may be an important issue in itself, it does not lend itself to development planning in the sense of neat three-year project cycles. The experience of Sierra Leone, where transformation rather than reform was taking place, shows that SSR is governed by context and entry points. It is, above all, an evolutionary process guided by individuals.

Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, Ten Years On

Sierra Leone is still at the bottom of the league in terms of human development. However, it is clear that there have been significant gains in terms of basic living conditions of the majority of the population. In particular, the pattern of security threats faced by most people has changed markedly from an assumed threat from security forces themselves to more 'conventional' forms of threats, including domestic violence, street crime (frequently violent), smuggling (particularly of drugs), human trafficking (particularly of children) and youth unemployment. The local survey conducted as part of this study may have covered just a small sample of the districts across the country, but the trends in

all areas – urban and rural – are positive. These patterns in themselves, however, also have significant implications. The demand for particular types of security has changed; this change needs to be reflected in the nature of security provided across the country in the years to come.

Concern about youth unemployment is reflected in a number of papers on post-war Sierra Leone that point to the potential threat of alienation of groups that identify themselves with those who originally took to the bush under the auspices of the RUF. In this regard it may be argued that the threat of 'going back' remains strong in the countryside. In the urban areas, youth unemployment reflects a concern about street crime, with young men being the most likely candidates to perpetrate such criminal activity. Unemployed young people also tend to become the foot soldiers of criminal gangs.

This growth of criminal activity and the persistence of unemployment and social exclusion also points to a continuing need for an effective SLP presence in the countryside as well as early warning systems through the PROSECs, DISECs, and, perhaps, CHISECs as well. At the same time, the existence of gangs engaged in the smuggling of drugs and people means that the SLP and other security agencies need to develop stronger cross-border links. (For example, recent drug activity in neighbouring Guinea underscores the need for cross-border links to become a priority.) These changes in security threats now faced by Sierra Leone also point to the critical need to change and enhance the skill sets required by security services across the board.

The importance of ongoing reform of the justice sector also emerges in most of the discussions we have had during our research. In particular, the critical effect on the morale of the SLP of the justice system's processing and sentencing criminals is a serious concern. The idea that one could support the development of an enhanced SLP whilst not supporting the development of a criminal justice system is not borne out by the Sierra Leone experience, where improved performance has led to full prisons and delays in sentencing.

It is also clear that for most people in Sierra Leone justice is local; it involves a range of non-formal and semi-formal conflict resolution mechanisms, including village elders, religious figures and chiefs. However, recent reports from Kono relating to some of these mechanisms making 'wrong' allocations of land are worrying, especially as land allocation is considered one of the initial social causes of the war. One implication of these findings is that justice reforms should pay more attention to non-formal justice mechanisms (addressed in part through the JSDP), whilst at the same time encouraging an accessible SLP and magistrates system.

Overall, perceptions of security have markedly improved; security system transformation has instilled confidence in security services amongst the general population. The fact that more than 40% of respondents to the aforementioned survey understand the functions of local intelligence infrastructures is, in our view, a success; these local institutions should hold the infrastructure in good stead in the future.

Finally, confidence in security and the success of the security system transformation process as a whole can be seen in the fact that free and peaceful elections were held in 2007 without significant violence or the threat of involvement from the security services in politics. An incumbent government left office; an orderly transfer of power to the new government occurred. Considering the state of affairs in Sierra Leone in the early 2000s, that, in itself, is a significant measure of success that suggests that security system transformation is an absolute necessity in order for political transformation to take place.

However, the successes inherent to Sierra Leone's SSR and transformation process do not prove that reforms have come to their natural conclusion. After only about 10 years there is no way in which Sierra Leone's security system transformation process could be said to have been completed. The real test of its durability is yet to come – when donor support dwindles. At that time, the Government of Sierra Leone will have to make a number of difficult choices amidst all the other economic and social challenges the country still faces.

Notes

1   Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008), Civil Society's Role in Sierra Leone's Security
    Sector Reform Process – Experiences from Conciliation Resources' West Africa
    Programme, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone,
    1997-2007, Paper No. 12, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform
    (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
2   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
3   Garth Glentworth, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.
4   Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown.
5   Johnny Paul Koroma was already in prison for treasonable activity, and the coup was
    orchestrated by Non-Commissioned Officers who released him and installed him as
    President of Sierra Leone. It remains, in fact, a moot point whether or not Johnny Paul
    Koroma orchestrated their actions.
6   Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown. ECOMOG was deployed in 1997
    with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) receiving a
    mandate to restore Ahmad Tejan Kabbah.
7   Emmanuel Osho Coker (draft, 2008), Governance and Security Sector Reform,
    Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007,
    Paper No. 2, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and
    International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
8   Mitikishe Maxwell Khobe (2 December 1998), Brief for UK Second Security Sector
    Mission.
9   Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008), Restructuring the Republic of Sierra Leone
    Armed Forces (RSLAF), Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in
    Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 3, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector
    Reform (GFNSSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
10 Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown.
11 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.

12 Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).

13 Keith Biddle, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.

14 Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown.

15 James Vincent, Working Group meeting, 8 May, 2008, London.

16 Usually described as a 'hunter militia', the CDF was effectively a group of local militias comprised of Kamajors, Donsos, Gbethis, Kapras, Tamaboros and from the Freetown peninsula, the Organised Body of Hunting Societies, that used methods similar to the RUF's in fighting fire with fire. Their leader, Sam Hinga Norman, was put on trial at the end of the war, but died during the process.

17 Kamajors refer to one of the groups of traditional hunters in Sierra Leone, many of whom joined the Civil Defence Force (CDF). They were predominantly of the Mende tribe, southern-based, and Sam Hinga Norman's main strength. Other tribal fighters were the Gbethis in the centre of the country, the Donzos in the East, the Kapras in the West and the Tamaboros in the North.

18 Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown.

19 Peter Penfold, interview, March 2008, Freetown.

20 Keith Biddle, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.

21 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.

22 The Treasury Solicitor (communication to DfID), 6 April 2000.

23 Proposed British Military Advisory and Training Team Sierra Leone (BMATT (SL)), 13 October 1999.

24 Emphasized in original note attached to "Proposed British Military Advisory and Training Team Sierra Leone (BMATT (SL)), 13 October 1999.

25 DfID (December 2000), Eliminating World Poverty: Making Globalisation Work for the Poor, White Paper on International Development. See http://www.dfid.gov.uk/ Pubs/files/whitepaper2000.pdf. Accessed 2 October 2008.

26 Jeff Bredemear, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.

27 Prior to 1996, the UK had provided training assistance to the SLP for many years. However, this had been as short-term inputs and unrelated to any form of strategic development. Joint DfID and FCO Synthesis and Review of UK Funded Safety and Security Programmes, Sierra Leone Case Study, November 2004.

28 From Crisis to Confidence – Re-establishing the Sierra Leone Police, The development of a Local Policing Model, Information paper, Police Council Meeting, Thursday 12 November 1998.

29 Adrian Horn, notes, 2008.

30 CPDTF (1998), Operation B to B (back to basics), page 3.

31 Garth Glentworth, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.

32 Arie van Roon, Interview, 2008, UK.

33 Project Completion Report, September 2007, Sierra Leone Police Vehicles and Communications Project, and the Sierra Leone Police Infrastructure Project.

34 Sierra Leone Police – Re-Introduction of Effective Operational Policing, internal paper prepared to inform planning meeting to be held at the Commonwealth Task Force Office in Police HQ on 15 September 1999.

35 Kadi Fakondo (draft, 2008), Reforming and Building Capacity of the Sierra Leone Police, 1999-2007, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 8, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFNSSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.

36   Desmond Buck, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
37   Kadi Fakondo, Working Group meeting, 16 January 2008, Freetown.
38   Kadi Fakondo, Working Group meeting, 16 January 2008, Freetown.
39   Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
40   Kadi Fakondo, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
41   It has been suggested that the joint RUF-AFRC attack on Freetown happened because
      they felt that the SLPP government did not honour the Conakry Peace Accord relating
      to amnesty. After returning from exile, the government oversaw the execution of 24
      Senior Officers of the armed forces who had been involved in the coup. Plans were
      also under way to execute 72 civilians found guilty of treason, including the current
      Minister of Information and Broadcasting in the APC government. See Alfred Nelson-
      Williams (draft, 2008).
42   Kadi Fakondo (draft, 2008).
43   Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
44   Anthony Howlett-Bolton, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
45   Anthony Howlett-Bolton (2008), Aiming for Holistic Approaches to Justice Sector
      Development , Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra
      Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 7, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector
      Reform (GFNSSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
46   Sierra Leone Governance Reconstruction and Reform – Progress Report, October
      2002.
47   Sierra Leone Governance Reconstruction and Reform – Progress Report, October
      2002, page 40.
48   Alison Thompson (July 2008), SSR in Sierra Leone: 1999-2007 – The Marginalisation
      of Prison Services.
49   Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008). No official statistics were available to the
      authors, but numbers as low as 1,500 were mentioned.
50   Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
51   David Richards, interview, 2008, UK.
52   Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
53   Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
54   SILSEP-MODAT, Project Report for Period 11-24 October 1999 (weeks 18-19).
55   SILSEP-MODAT, Sierra Leone – Future UK Military Commitment in Support of
      DfID's Security Sector Reform Programme (SILSEP), 30 November 1999.
56   MODAT, Future UK military commitment in support of DfID's security sector
      reform programme (SILSEP), November 1999.
57   MODAT, Future UK military commitment in support of DfID's security sector
      reform programme (SILSEP), November 1999.
58   Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
59   Barry Le Grys, notes, 2008.
60   Communication between the IGP and DfID, 12 July 2000. In fact, conditions of
      employment were becoming a broader worry. In 2000, the Government of Sierra
      Leone noted in its draft National Security Policy – Proposals and Recommendations
      that the conditions of service of the SLP and army personnel would be crucial to the
      stability of Sierra Leone in terms of perceived fairness, pride in their profession and
      provision for their families. However, within the SLP, there was a feeling that the
      military were benefitting from their rather chequered political history and receiving

more resources. The Government, fearing a third military coup within a decade, authorised more resources for the military.

61 About this particular incident, Keith Biddle (September 2008) recalls: "The MODAT team decided to refurbish the partially derelict Paramount Hotel to become the new civilian-led Ministry of Defence and Finance – the DFID desk handling MODAT and SILSEP issues made the necessary finances available. There had not been any detailed consultation and communication on this issue with either the IGP or CCSSP or the DfID desk that managed the CCSSP's affairs. The premises that previously housed the CID and the SSD had been completely destroyed during the events of January 1999. Indeed, several police personnel were murdered by the rebels whilst on duty in the former CID building. In February 1999, in consequence of a Sierra Leone Cabinet directive, the CID and SSD were housed in the Paramount Hotel and SLP budget funds were utilised to make it reasonably waterproof and habitable. The dispute was not that the SLP wanted to remain in the Paramount Hotel, which until the decision to use it for the new MoD was intended to be returned to its original purpose. The dispute was around the fact that neither MODAT nor DFID had provided for any alternative accommodation for some 300 police personnel and their administrative requirements. The problem was solved by President Kabbah personally, moving the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Local Government and the Ministry of Tourism into smaller and less suitable premises to accommodate the CID. The SSD was housed in temporary barracks, with families, 15 miles outside of Freetown. There were professional tensions between the MODAT team and the IGP, although a sense of humour and personal relations survived! The lesson learned by DfID was that of ensuring cooperation between elements of the SSR process to avoid such embarrassing problems in the future".

62 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.

63 Garth Glentworth, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.

64 Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.

65 David Richards, Operation Palliser (draft article).

66 David Richards, Operation Palliser (draft article).

67 David Richards, interview, 2008, UK.

68 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.

69 David Richards, Expeditionary Operations: Sierra Leone—lessons for the future, World Defence Systems, vol. 3, no. 2, July 2001, pp. 134-136.

70 David Richards, interview, 2008, UK. The West Side Boys were a group of ex-combatants and civilian criminals claiming loyalty to the former AFRC regime and its former leader Major Johnny Paul Koroma, living in the bush outside Freetown. Their main area of operations was in the Okra Hills close to the main Freetown-to-Masiaka highway. They predominately relied upon robbery and looting of local villages and other criminal activities, to fund their lifestyle.

71 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.

72 Notes by David Richards on a draft article, later to be published as: Sierra Leone – 'Pregnant with Lessons?' (2004), in Richard Cobbold and Greg Mills (eds.), Global Challenges and Africa: Bridging Divides, Dealing with Perceptions, Rebuilding Societies, RUSI Whitehall Paper 62, Royal United Service Institute.

73 Notes by David Richards on a draft article, later to be published as: Sierra Leone – 'Pregnant with Lessons?' (2004), in Richard Cobbold and Greg Mills (eds.), Global

Challenges and Africa: Bridging Divides, Dealing with Perceptions, Rebuilding Societies, RUSI Whitehall Paper 62, Royal United Service Institute.

74 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
75 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
76 Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008), United Kingdom (UK) Military Intervention and Progress in Sierra Leone 2001-2006, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 11, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
77 Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008).
78 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
79 Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008).
80 Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008).
81 Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Project II, Output to Purpose Review, June-July 2002.
82 Mike Dent, notes, 2008.
83 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London. In fact, it should be added, the original structure was changed in late 2000 and again in 2001 to reflect the 'latest UK thinking' – this was not in the original concept laid out by MODAT in late 1999.
84 In passing, it should be noted that prior to the conflict, there was an operating paymaster in the military, [but] we didn't have a Ministry of Defence [all matters military were managed from Defence Headquarters]. Before the war, the military would go and discuss their budget with the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Finance would determine what they wanted to give to the army – like all of our departments. The difference is that the military had its whole budget in its account, while the rest would have theirs on a monthly or a quarterly basis" (Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London).
85 Indeed, among some parts of the population there was a very positive public perception of the CDF as having been far more effective than the RSLMF in combating the RUF.
86 Government of Sierra Leone, National Security Policy – Proposals and Recommendations, 2000.
87 Mike Dent, email communication, 2008.
88 The Multi-Donor Trust Fund was the Government of Sierra Leone's principal mechanism for mobilizing donor resources in support of the DDR programme. It was administered by the World Bank, which also provided institutional support to the National Committee for DDR.
89 Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008).
90 Visit report, Sierra Leone Security and Intelligence Service Reform, September 1999.
91 Robert Ashington-Pickett (2008), National Security and Intelligence Reform in Sierra Leone – 2000-2003, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 10, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
92 CISU was created in 1997 following the 1996 elections.
93 Similar ideas would resurface in 2006 with the concept of a Ministry of Security. However, this was effectively seen as unnecessary politicization of the sector, and was rebuffed by the ONS (as well as the UK).

94   Robert Ashington-Pickett (draft, 2008).
95   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
96   Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
97   Robert Ashington-Pickett, interview, 2008, London.
98   Robert Ashington-Pickett, notes, 2008.
99   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
100   Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2007, London. It could be argued
      that an example of CISU's efficiency came with the successful antinarcotics operation
      against Colombian organized crime in 2008, which netted a substantial haul of drugs
      and ended in the arrest of a number of Colombians and Mexicans as well as anti-
      corruption investigations against Sierra Leonean officials implicated in the crime.
101   Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2008, London.
102   Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2008, London.
103   Peter Penfold, interview, 2008, Freetown.
104   Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2008, London.
105   Kellie Conteh, interview, 2007, Freetown.
106   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 7 May, 2008. Garry Horlacher, notes,
      September 2008.
107   Garth Glentworth, interview, 2007, UK.
108   Robert Ashington-Pickett, interview, 2008, UK. Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
      Garth Glentworth, interview, 2007, UK.
109   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
110   Keith Biddle, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
111   Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
112   Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
113   Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
114   DAT Visit to Sierra Leone 23-27 February 2004 (5 March 2004).
115   Adrian Freer, end-of-tour report (2003).
116   Mark White (draft, 2008), The Security and Development Nexus: A Case Study of
      Sierra Leone 2004-2006, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in
      Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 4, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector
      Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
117   Adrian Horn, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.
118   Mark White (draft, 2008).
119   Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
120   Community Safety and Security Project (CSSP), Visit Report, June 2004, page 6.
121   Joint DfID and FCO synthesis and review of UK funded safety and security
      programmes, Sierra Leone Case Study, November 2004.
122   Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
123   Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008,Sierra Leone. Oliver B. M. Somasa, interview,
      2008, Sierra Leone.
124   Since mid-2003, the UK had provided a team of ten police officers to the UN
      contingent of over 150 police officers (UN CIVPOL). The agreement to provide these
      officers coincided with a change of emphasis in UN CIVPOL's mandate from one of
      "mentoring and monitoring" to one focused more on involvement in SLP capacity-
      building. UK officers came under the command of the Commissioner of UN CIVPOL.
125   Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.

126 Oliver B. M. Somasa, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
127 Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
128 Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
129 Keith Biddle, notes, 2008.
130 Output to Purpose Review, 30 May – 6 June, Sierra Leone Community Safety Security Project (CSSP).
131 Output to Purpose Review, 30 May – 6 June, Sierra Leone Community Safety Security Project (CSSP).
132 Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
133 Anthony Howlett-Bolton, interview, 2008, UK.
134 Brima Acha Kamara, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
135 Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008).
136 CCSSP, CID Sierra Leone, 29 November 2002.
137 The February 2000 ORBAT was predicated on the need to provide the military capability required to fulfil the identified and endorsed Defence Missions and Military Tasks, which had been established following the mini-Strategic Defence Review undertaken by MODAT in 1999. This Review was necessary in order to assist with the development of a Defence Policy, which was required to underpin the National Security Policy being developed by the National Security Adviser. It was anticipated that the RSLAF would be established in slow time in a secure and peaceful atmosphere and that the threat level would be minimal.
138 Peter Albrecht and Mark Malan (2006), Post-conflict Peacebuilding and National Ownership: Meeting the Challenge of Sierra Leone. Accra: KAIPTC/ZIF, p. 125.
139 Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
140 Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
141 Emmanuel Osho Coker, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
142 Emmanuel Osho Coker, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
143 Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
144 Management and Functional Review of the Ministry of Defence, November 2003.
145 Aldo Gaeta, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.
146 Management and Functional Review of the Ministry of Defence, November 2003.
147 Al-Hassan Kondeh (draft, 2008), Formulating Sierra Leone's Defence White Paper, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 6, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
148 Aldo Gaeta, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.
149 Al-Hassan Kondeh (draft, 2008).
150 Al-Hassan Kondeh (draft, 2008).
151 IMATT, International Military Advisory Training Team (Sierra Leone) Plan 2010, 17 July 2004.
152 IMATT, International Military Advisory Training Team (Sierra Leone) Plan 2010, 17 July 2004. For more information on Operation Pebu, please see Aldo Gaeta (draft, 2008), Operation Pebu, Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007, Paper No. 5, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
153 David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
154 Robert Musk, interview, 2008, UK.

155 Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008).
156 Aldo Gaeta (draft, 2008); Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
157 Aldo Gaeta (draft, 2008).
158 Barry Le Grys, notes, September 2008.
159 Barry Le Grys, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
160 Peter Albrecht and Mark Malan (2006), p. 117.
161 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
162 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
163 Andrew Cordery, interview, October 2007, Sierra Leone.
164 The Attorney-General's Office and Parliament would insist that the delay in the Act's formal introduction was the result of the failure by the Minister for Presidential Affairs to request a slot on the parliamentary calendar. In turn, the Minister for Presidential Affairs would insist that he had to wait for Parliament to offer him such a slot. In the words of a review at the time: "Result: impasse."
165 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
166 Robert Ashington-Pickett, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
167 Mark White (draft, 2008).
168 PASCO coordinated the preparation of the Sierra Leone PRSP under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning (MODEP) until January 2004. In February 2004, a Technical Working Group chaired by the Director of the Development Assistance Coordination Office (DACO) was established to supervise and fast track the completion of the PRSP.
169 Mark White (draft, 2008).
170 Mark White (draft, 2008).
171 Mark White (draft, 2008).
172 Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008).
173 Defence Advisory Team, Draft Terms of Reference for the Sierra Leone Security Sector Review – Briefing Paper on the Security Sector Review, 2003.
174 Desmond Buck, Working Group meeting, 2008, Freetown.
175 Vision 2025 provides Sierra Leone with a national vision for long-term development and projects future scenarios for political and economic progress. It gives direction to the country's medium-long term strategies such as Sierra Leone's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper.
176 Mark White (draft, 2008).
177 Mark White (draft, 2008).
178 Kellie Conteh, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
179 Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 7 May 2008, London.
180 Robert Ashington-Pickett, Roundtable, 18 December 2008, London.
181 Richard Hogg, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
182 David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
183 Mark White (draft, 2008).
184 Mark White (draft, 2008).
185 Anthony Howlett-Bolton (draft, 2008).
186 Anthony Howlett-Bolton (draft, 2008).
187 Osho Coker (draft, 2008).
188 Keith Biddle, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
189 Desmond Buck, Working Group meeting, 16 January 2008, Freetown.

190   Kadi Fakondo, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
191   Mark White (draft, 2008).
192   Project Completion Report, September 2007, Sierra Leone Police Vehicles and Communications Project, and the Sierra Leone Police Infrastructure Project.
193   Anthony Howlett-Bolton (draft, 2008).
194   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme III (SILSEP III), September 2005.
195   Robert Bradley, interview by Alison Thompson, January 2008, Freetown.
196   Moses A. Showers, interview by Alison Thompson, January 2008, Freetown.
197   Joseph Lamboi, interview by Alison Thompson, January 2008, Freetown.
198   Moses A. Showers, interview by Alison Thompson, January 2008, Freetown.
199   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme III (SILSEP III), September 2005.
200   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
201   Mark White (draft, 2008).
202   Howlett-Bolton, interview, 2008, UK.
203   Sierra Leone Presidential and Parliamentary Elections 2007, Sierra Leone Police Policing Plan (presentation to IMATT).
204   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
205   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
206   Mark White (draft, 2008).
207   Kadi Fakondo (draft, 2008).
208   Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
209   Barry Le Grys, notes, September 2008.
210   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme III (SILSEP III), September 2005.
211   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
212   Aldo Gaeta (draft, 2008).
213   David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
214   Arie van Roon, interview, 2008, UK.
215   There is an additional historic dimension to the complexities that are Operation Pebu. In the 1960s and early 1970s, the barracks that were being built in Makeni were of an extremely high quality. With the advent of Operation Pebu in 2002, starting implementation in 2003, RSLAF expected that the UK would provide electricity and running water for each home. In reality, the UK's primary aim, and what they could afford, was to give the RSLAF basic shelter.
216   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme III (SILSEP III), September 2005.
217   It is worth adding here that perceived levels of corruption among civilian MoD staff also contribute to a sense among military staff that the former are no better at managing defence matters than the latter.
218   Al-Hassan Kondeh (draft, 2008). RSLAF arguments, which are partly true, revolve around the perception that notwithstanding their contributions, the DG has had a tendency to arrive at the procurement meetings with a set position, and that as a consequence, it would have been meaningless for them to make a contribution.

219   Alfred Nelson-Williams, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
220   Defence Intelligence Report, Sierra Leone: Assessment of the Effectiveness of EX GREEN EAGLE in managing perceptions in Sierra Leone.
221   David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
222   David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
223   Defence Intelligence Report, Sierra Leone: Assessment of the Effectiveness of EX GREEN EAGLE in managing perceptions in Sierra Leone.
224   Defence Intelligence Report, Sierra Leone: Assessment of the Effectiveness of EX GREEN EAGLE in managing perceptions in Sierra Leone.
225   Defence Intelligence Report, Sierra Leone: Assessment of the Effectiveness of EX GREEN EAGLE in managing perceptions in Sierra Leone.
226   Defence Intelligence Report, Sierra Leone: Assessment of the Effectiveness of EX GREEN EAGLE in managing perceptions in Sierra Leone.
227   Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
228   Alfred Nelson-Williams, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
229   Barry Le Grys, end-of-tour report (2007).
230   Peter Albrecht and Mark Malan (2006), page 138.
231   Barry Le Grys (draft, 2008).
232   Peter Albrecht and Mark Malan (2006), p. 138. Note that a small number of officers have already been employed as UN military observers.
233   David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
234   Alfred Nelson-Williams (draft, 2008).
235   David Santa-Olalla, interview, 2008, UK.
236   Kellie Conteh, Working Group meeting, 8 May 2008, London.
237   Mark White (draft, 2008).
238   Mark White (draft, 2008).
239   Mark White (draft, 2008).
240   Kellie Conteh, interview, 2008, Sierra Leone.
241   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
242   Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
243   Garry Horlacher, notes, September 2008.
244   Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008).
245   Anthony Howlett-Bolton, Working Group meeting, 15 January 2008, Freetown.
246   Rosalind Hanson-Alp (draft, 2008).
247   Sierra Leone Presidential and Parliamentary Elections 2007, Sierra Leone Police Policing Plan (presentation to IMATT).
248   Kellie Conteh (draft, 2008), Security Sector Reform in Sierra Leone and the Role of the Office of National Security, working paper. *Working Paper Series, Security System Transformation in Sierra Leone, 1997-2007*, Paper No. 9, Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (GFN-SSR) and International Alert, Birmingham: University of Birmingham.
249   Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
250   This is something that is recognised by other donor agencies, including Danida, which commits for periods similar to the UK MoU and even longer, with the express aim of building confidence in institutions.

251 Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
252 David Richards, interview, 2008, UK.
253 Garth Glentworth, roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
254 Clare Short, interview, 2008, London.
255 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
256 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
257 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
258 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, interview, 2007, London.
259 Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Project II, Output to Purpose Review, 25 June – 5 July 2002.
260 Robert Ashington-Pickett, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
261 Robert Ashington-Pickett, interview, 2007, UK.
262 Garth Glentworth, interview, 2007, UK.
263 Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
264 Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Project II, Output to Purpose Review, 25 June – 5 July 2002.
265 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
266 Keith Biddle, interview, 2008, UK.
267 Garth Glentworth, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
268 Peter Penfold, interview, 2007, Sierra Leone.
269 Clare Short, interview, 2008, UK.
270 Garth Glentworth, interview, 2008, UK.
271 Garth Glentworth, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.
272 Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
273 Output to Purpose Review, Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme, April 2007.
274 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
275 Robert Ashington-Pickett, roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
276 Statement by His Excellency, Dr Ahmad Tejan Kabbah at the Official Launching of Three Key Security Sector Reform Documents for Sierra Leone, 26 May, 2005. See http://www.statehouse-sl.org/speeches/3-key-sec-may26-05.html. Accessed 26 February 2008. The two other documents were the Protective Security Manual and the Standards Response Guidelines for the National Security Architecture.
277 Middlebrock and Miller (September 2006), Sierra Leone Security Sector Expenditure Review (SS-ER).
278 Middlebrock and Miller (September 2006), Sierra Leone Security Sector Expenditure Review (SS-ER).
279 Management and Functional Review of the Ministry of Defence, November 2003.
280 Middlebrock and Miller (September 2006), Sierra Leone Security Sector Expenditure Review (SS-ER).
281 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
282 Adrian Freer, Roundtable, 18 December 2007, London.
283 H.E. The President's Address on the Occasion of the State Opening of the 3rd Session of the First Parliament of the Second Republic of Sierra Leone. 11 June 1999. See: http://www.sierra-leone.org/GOSL/kabbah-061199.html. Accessed 2 October 2008.

284   The current position, in September 2008, is that the Government of Sierra Leone is aware of the UK's planned withdrawal from ONS and CISU by 2012, with incremental reduction in donor support commenced in 2008-2009. the National Security Council is discussing with the Ministry of Finance to enable the Government to take over donor elements of the funding from January 2011. Adviser support is planned until 2012.

285   Rebecca Stringer, notes, 2008.

286   This chapter is written on the basis of a local survey among 250 respondents in the following districts: Bombali, Kambia, Kenema, Kono, Bo and Freetown (Western Area). The survey was part of the overall project, 'Security System Transformation, 1997-2007', and carried out by James Vincent, Consultant and Director Integrated Community and Rural Development Services. His work was overseen by Conciliation Resources.

287   Garth Glentworth, Roundtable, 18 December, 2007.