

UNIVERSITY OF NAIROBI
INSTITUTE OF DIPLOMACY AND INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN PEACE BUILDING: A CASE STUDY OF LIBERIA

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R51/75662/2009

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**A research proposal submitted to the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies,
University of Nairobi in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the award of Master of
Arts degree in Diplomacy.**

NOVEMBER 2014

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DECLARATION.

I, Sila Clementine Mukui, declare that this dissertation is my original work and has not been submitted for the award of a degree in any other university.

Signed 
Sila Clementine Mukui.

Date 20TH NOV, 2014.

This Project has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University Supervisor.

Signed 
Prof. Maria Nzomo
Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies,
University of Nairobi.

Date 20/11/2014

DEDICATION

To my father Silas Mbatha, Mum Joyce Kanini, my siblings, nephews and nieces, I am proud to be one of you.

To my dear daughter Eden, may God bless you so much and may you live long to always inspire your brothers and sisters. I love you.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This research could not have been done were it not for the un-ending guidance and criticism of Prof. Maria Nzomo, who took time to read through and guide me at every stage. My gratitude to the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies of the University of Nairobi for being quite resourceful in guidance and materials through out this research.

I thank my informants from the Government of Liberia, and the officers from the Liberian consulate in Nairobi, they were very informative and participatory in this research. I thank my employer the Teachers' Service Commission and my colleagues, who allowed me time to study even at work.

Finally, I thank my mentors, classmates, colleagues, and friends especially Mark Muga, Ps. Ken Yapha, Mrs Emily Odhiambo, and Judy Wamuya who through prayers, inspiration and dedication spent long hours in helping me accomplish this work. Without them, I probably could never have done it.

But all glory, praise and honor is to the Lord God Almighty, the creator of all.

ABSTRACT

This study is based on the role played by women in sensitizing, making and building peace in post conflict times. The case study is Liberia which after prolonged periods of civil war is gradually experiencing a different wave of peace under the leadership of H.E. Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. The study will focus on peace- building at all levels starting from the grass root.

The study starts with examining the effects of war in Liberia, focusing on women both as combatants and victims. The role of women in the re-integration process and the influence of other actors will be evaluated. The framework used in the study is based on the theories of feminism and liberalism which help explain the need for human reason and women empowerment in decision making. The methodology used in data collection is reviewing of secondary data and analyzing interviewees to come up with qualitative data. The study uses the case study of Liberia.

The fourth chapter which is analytical seeks to verify the findings and the hypotheses, brings the study to a conclusion that indeed, women have a role to play not only in peace- building but also in decision making and development both at national level and international level. The fifth chapter gives recommendations to policy makers and points out further areas of research.

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Appendix 1 Interview Questions and List of Interviewees

Appendix 2 Speeches by President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on development in Liberia, peace-building and the role of women.

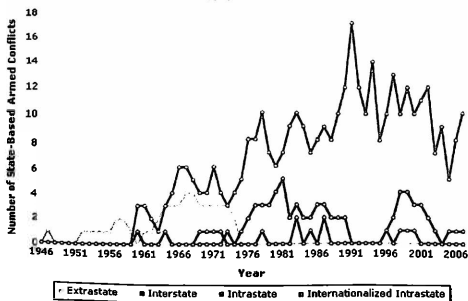
CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1: Background to the Study

Estimates by different organizations such as United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the commission for refugees (UNHCR) reveal that since the 1900, far more people have been killed by their own governments than by foreign armies¹. The worst affected regions are America, Central and South Asia, East and Southeast Asia and Oceania, Europe, Middle East and North Africa, and Sub-Saharan Africa. The types of conflict are extra-state, inter-state, intrastate, and internationalized intrastate.

Figure 1.1: the number of State-Based Armed Conflicts in SSA by type, 1946-2007



Source: Human Security Report Project

¹ B. Verhey, 'Child Soldiers: Lessons Learned on Prevention, Demobilization and Reintegration' Africa Region Working Paper Series No 23 Nov 2001

The impacts are dreadful. The UN estimates that at any one time more than 300,000 children (child being defined as any person 17 and under) fighting in armed government or opposition forces around the world in more than 30 countries. These countries are El Salvador, Columbia, Cambodia, Mozambique, and Kosovo. Some of the worst use and abuse of children has occurred during the brutal civil war from 1989-2003 in Liberia that has left the country's infrastructure in shambles. Not only were Liberia's children subjected to terrors of indiscriminate death, starvation, loss of schools, displacement, and uncertainty, but as many as 20,000 were beaten, mutilated and raped. They were also forced or coerced into committing atrocities such as rape, mutilation, and murder. Many times the victims of these atrocities were civilian men, women, and children.

In Africa the most affected countries are in West Africa: Cote d'Ivoire, Guinea, Liberia, Nigeria, Sierra Leone and Togo; and in East Africa: Eritrea, Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia with Liberia having recorded devastating killings in the shortest time.

Short history of the conflict in Liberia

Liberia was founded in 1847 by freed American slaves. The Liberian civil war broke out in 1989 when the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), led by Charles Taylor, invaded the country to oust the Liberian dictator Samuel Doe. Police began firing into the crowd, killing more than one hundred protestors². Within a few weeks, the NPFL had assassinated Doe and assumed control over 90 percent of the country. In 1991, the Taylor-backed Revolutionary United Front (RUF) joined the war from Sierra Leone, the NPFL split into smaller factions, and former soldiers from President Doe's army formed the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO).

² L. Taylor, "We'll Kill You If You Cry" Human Rights Watch Vol. 15, No. 1 (A) Jan 2003.

In 1996, the warring factions signed the Abuja peace agreement and concurred to hold elections, which Charles Taylor won. Unfortunately, the Taylor government was rife with corruption and abuse, further widening the divisions and deepening popular resentments caused by civil war. From 2000 to 2003, full-scale conflict erupted again when the anti-Taylor groups, invaded Liberia from Guinea to reduce Taylor's control of the country to a minority. Thousands of Liberian men, women, and children were killed and subjected to torture, beatings, rape, and sexual assault³.and in that case

Under mounting national and international pressure, Taylor agreed to participate in peace talks to be held in Accra, Ghana, under the auspices of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). However, amid 17 charges of war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law stemming from the Sierra Leonean conflict, Taylor left the talks and resigned from the presidency of Liberia on August 11, 2003⁴. On August 18, 2003, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in Accra, Ghana, and the Liberian National Transition Government (LNTG) was entrusted with running the country until January 2006, when democratic elections took place. This is when Africa's first female president, Ellen John Sir-Leaf won.

Arms and Daggers in the Heart of Africa: Studies on Internal Conflicts (Nyong'o 1993) offers the best overall perspective on internal conflicts in Africa, with particular attention paid to the social forces that cause and perpetuate conflicts. Chapter-length case studies deal with conflicts in Ethiopia, Sudan, Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, Zimbabwe, Zambia, South Africa, and Liberia.

³ Reuters. "Liberia's Child Soldiers Struggle to Rebuild Lives." CNN.com 31 Aug 2003
online at: <http://edition.cnn.com/2003/WORLD/africa/08/31/liberia.child.soldiers.reut>

⁴ W. D. Deng, "A Survey of Programs on the Reintegration of Former Child Soldiers: Country Profile: Liberia," 30 March 2001. online at: <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/human/child/survey/profile3.html>

1.2 Research problem

The fourteen-year civil conflict in Liberia has led to the increase of human rights abuse, particularly the rights of children. During the war, most of the communities around the capital Monrovia that sheltered the Internally Displaced People experienced the worst situation of rape, sexual abuse, economic exploitation, torture, etc. Women and children rights were abused on a daily basis without concrete actions taken as a deterrent to this inhumane act.

Even after the Liberian civil conflict ended, abuse of vulnerable women and children's rights kept rising. This is because of the weakness of the Liberian laws and the corruption that had engulfed the judicial system. This is a scenario that is shared by other conflict states. But the government of the female president, Ellen John Sir-Leaf seems to resolve rebuilding peace issues rather faster than in male headed states.

The problem not only demonstrates a failure "to create inclusive, transparent, accountable governance, political mobilization along ethnic lines, and the absence of trust of leadership,"⁵ but has an important corollary effect on other causes of conflict like land ownership, mismanagement of natural resources, and perceived divisions due to the relationship between the leadership and its citizens in geographic areas hardest hit by the recent conflict, like southeast of the country. Although the causes are quite numerous, the extremely high levels of domestic violence and physical assault correlate to the lack of conflict resolution and prevention skills among individuals (including women) who make up their community.

Granted that the social economic impacts of poverty diseases, malnutrition access to social services are of concern to women, it is important to see what role women can play to mitigate

⁵ Priority Plan for Peacebuilding Fund. February 2008, P.2.

against full-fledged conflict linked to the use and misuse of power, and the leadership decisions taken and followed by communities.

The goal of this paper is to give the reader a good understanding of the roots of the civil war in Liberia, the role of women in peace building and conflict resolution, and the challenges women face in rehabilitating and reconstructing the lives of these children now that the long war is over.

1.3: Objectives

The general objective is to investigate the nexus between involvement of women in positions of influence and peace building for groups with conflicting interests. More specifically the study aims at doing the following.

1. To establish gender factors that may influence conflict and peace outcomes
2. Investigate the conflict resolution mechanisms under the leadership of Ellen John Sir-Leaf
3. To suggest practical roles that women can play in peace building in warring society
4. To assess the measures taken by women to restore peace in Liberia
5. To investigate how involvement of women in peace building has acted as a catalyst to the experience of peaceful political running in Liberia.

1.4 Literature Review

Conflict

The word conflict is not synonymous with armed or violent conflict but indicates rather a situation of disagreement, often over access to and the right of distribution of power or resources. A synthesis of various definitions could be summarized as: a conflict is a social situation in which at

least two actors try to, at the same time, gain access to the same set of resources. Conflict can be understood as a situation in which competing actors have different interests that they are prepared to aggress for or defend, violent or not.⁶

Zeiton⁷ further describes conflict as any situation in which two or more social entities or parties perceive that they possess mutually incompatible goals or interests, express hostile attitudes, or take actions which damage the other parties' ability to pursue those hostile interests. Schellenberg defines conflict as the opposition between individuals and groups on the basis of competing interests, different identities, and or differing attitudes.⁸ Thus conflict is generally an interaction between interdependent people who perceive incompatible goals and who expect interference from the other party if they attempt to achieve their goal.

According to Galtung⁹ the conflict triangle has a structure with attitudes, and behavior as its vertices. Galtung champions the structural theory.

1.5 Hypothesis

To establish the role of women in conflict resolution, we must analyze all the gender factors as they relate to conflicts and their intervention.

This study shall investigate the following hypotheses;

1. The presence of women in conflicting groups reduces the intensity of conflict

⁶ Zeiton, M. (2004) "The Conflict vs. Cooperation Paradox: Fighting Over or Sharing of Palestinian-Israeli Groundwater?" submitted for publication.

⁷ Zeiton, M. (2004)

⁸ Lind, J., 'Ecological Sources of Conflicts in Sub-Saharan Africa.' A Policy Research, Information Dissemination and Capacity Building Project. Background Documents. Unpublished document for ACTs, Nairobi. 2001, p26

⁹ J. Galtung, *Violence, Peace and Peace Research*, Journal of peace research, 3, 1969

2. The presence of women in conflicting parties leads to quicker resolution due to easy softening of stances.
3. The priorities of women in positions of power and leadership leads to consultative decision making, a process which brings about a long lasting peaceful period after conflicts.

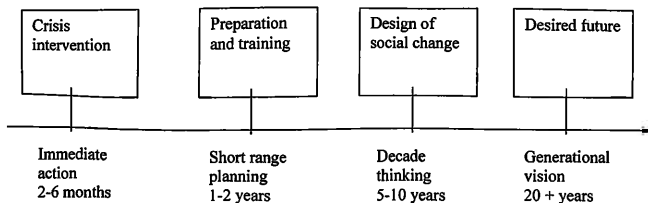
Peace building: the role of women

Peace Building

A model for understanding peace building as a dynamic process built on two central concepts which are that conflict can be understood analytically as a progression that moves through different stages. Also peace building can be presented as a process made up of a multiplicity of independent roles, junctions and activities. The goal of peace building is to create and sustain transformation and the movement towards restricted relationships¹⁰.

Conflict reinforces the ideas that peace building involves much more than the achievements of a cease fire or the conduct of negotiation. The role of peace building is to sustain a dynamic and constructive process. Peace building process can be summarized in the chart below.

Time dimension in peace building



¹⁰ J.P. Lederach, 'Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies,' United States Institute of peace. Washington D.C, 1997. P. 71

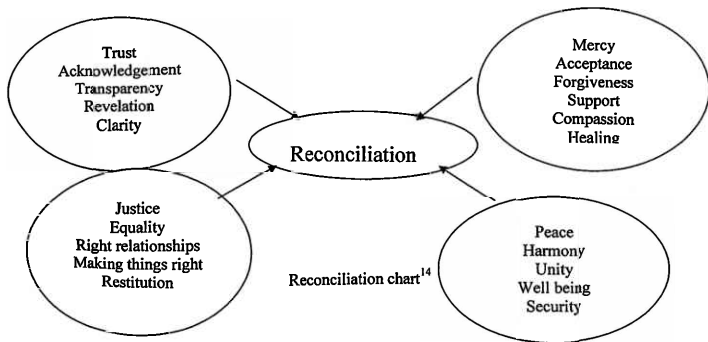
Peace cannot be achieved without patience over time as illustrated above, just as it need all parties to actively participating in achieving it. It is a long process and concerned parties need to be committed to the end. If one party fails out of the process there could be insecurity for the other party and year of re-eruption of war. Peace building is an actual form of preventive diplomacy.

“Preventive diplomacy can be located at knowledge of the factors that steer the conflicts and conformation. The challenge is to find a way to move the confirmation from violence to non-violence using negotiated modalities¹¹.

People’s participation implies participation in decision making process, planning, formulation, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation and sharing the benefits of development¹².

To do this people should focus on what is common to all , rather than on differences and to see same capabilities and functions as more central, more at the core of human life than others¹³.

Below is a chart that demonstrates aspects that contributes to peace building and reconciliation.



¹¹ J.P. Lederach, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, op cit P.70

¹² A. Bhandari & R. Mehta, *Women, Justice and the Rule of Law*, Serials Publications. New delhi, 2009. P. 156

¹³ M.C. Nossbaum, & J. Glover, *Women, Culture, and Development, A Study of Human Capabilities*, Clarendon Press, oxford. 1995, p. 63

¹⁴ J.P. Lederach, *Building Peace, Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, op cit P.30

The details of the exact procedures of building peace up of complex, multifaceted endeavor and can vary significantly from setting to setting. Conflict is a progression and peace building is a process made up of various functions and roles¹⁵.

Actors and approaches of building peace

Peace makers center on the personality of the peace maker rather than what is needed to sustain the process. This is according to the public interest in media coverage. This is especially in high level mediation efforts¹⁶. Below is an analysis of actors and approaches in peace building.¹⁷

Type of actors	Approaches
Level 1- top leadership Military/ political/ religious leaders with high visibility.	Focus on high level negotiators Emphasizes cease fire led by highly visible, mediator.
Level 2- middle range leadership Leaders respected in sectors, ethnic/ religion leaders, academic/ intellectuals Humanitarian leaders (NGO's)	Problem solving workshop Training in conflict resolution, peace commissions. Insider – partial terms
Level 3- grass root leadership Local leaders Leaders of indigenous NGO's Community developers Local health officials and Refugee camp leader	Local peace commission Grass root training Prejudice reductions Psychological work in post war trauma

¹⁵ IBID P. 63 (9)

¹⁶ IBID P.66

¹⁷ IBID P. 39.

From the chart it is apparent that as you approach the grass roots level, the actors increase and the work /approaches increase too. This is because in peace building the individual especially at the community level is most involved.

The Role of Women

Empowering women is a prerequisite for creating a comfortable, peaceful and orderly state. This is to say that when women are empowered, a society with stability is assured. Empowerment of women is essential as their thoughts and their value system lead the development of a good family, good society and ultimately a good nation¹⁸. Empowerment of women involves many things, economic opportunities property rights, political representation, social equality, personal rights and so on.

The political empowerment of women is crucial not only for the development of women themselves but the availability of their creative potential which is socially important and without it the country cannot hope for any sustainable development.¹⁹

Women's direct involvement in peace building was very minimal in the past. In places like Somali women were used as tools of peace building by exchanging of brides to show trust between warring parties.²⁰ Women's were also at times sending as peace envoys or fast massagers to go break the ice. It was deemed safer during initial stages of resolving a conflict when peace agreement was not reached²¹

Other roles of women in peace building were to mobilize people for demonstrations against war, deal psychological and emotional needs of people, charged songs and poems in support of peace, voluntary envoys with touching speeches, awareness on peace using their organizations, persuaded

¹⁸ A. Bhandari & R. Mehta, '*Women, Justice and the Rule of Law*,' op cit , p 155

¹⁹ IBID P.156

²⁰ A. M. Warsame, '*Queens Without Crowns; Somaliland Women's Changing Roles and Peace Building*,' Life and Peace Institute. Sweden. 2004.P. 42

²¹ IBID P. 43

husbands and sons to stop the fight, giving logistical support to peace conferences-like contribution among themselves and preparing food for delegates and submitting peace declaration to warring parties²²

Today women are more involved in decision making roles. Reasons are because they have income from their efforts, women organization are being heard in the public arena and women are having more say in their families.²³ Women are ready to learn and train in many fields including conflict resolution, management and prevention.²⁴ They are better placed for peace building than in ancient days.

This study seeks to find the role that women should play in peace building and through it will be looking at most actor levels from grass root to top leadership, there will be more emphasis on the leadership of president Ellen Johnson sir leaf of Liberia. It will be supported by the theories of Feminism and liberalism.

²² IBID PP 43-44

²³ IBID P. 79

²⁴ IBID P. 81

1.6 Theoretical frame work

This study will be guided by feminism and liberalism theories of international relations. This is because peace building is based on co-operation by actors from government and non- government levels. In addition, the project is not just about peace building, but also the role that women play in it. For the first reason, the theory that best pursues cooperation and the role of non-states actors is liberalism. For the second reason, the theory that best pursues the role of women in the society at large is feminism.

Liberalism

It is a theory in international relations that is optimistic in approach explaining the relation between states in a condition international anarchy. According to liberals the potential for conflicts between states is diminished but not ruled out all together by a process of cooperation that results from states engaging in international organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union. Such organizations act as forum for communication, open diplomacy and peaceful resolutions of disputes and they help engender adherence to peaceful norms of behavior. This portrays the idea that, cooperation remains a better option and peace is normal, also that states are not always rational so individuals can also be heard.²⁵

For peace building to take place parties have to come together and to cooperate. The parties can either be brought together at state level or at grass level. Other players can be involved in peace building include: non-governmental organizations (NGO's) international organizations (IO's) individual activities and think tanks. This is necessary to give consideration to all best possible options so that the resolution can be all inclusive of all parties involved.

This project will seek out the role of such groups and individuals in peace building.

²⁵O. Daddow, '*International Relations Theory*,' Sage publications. London. 2009. Pp 68-70

Feminism

As a theory in international relations, which states that women have been excluded or marginalized empirically (by not seeing them as valid subjects of study) and theoretically (by constructing the conceptual building blocks of the discipline on concepts associated with masculinity). Feminism as a theory will contribute highly to this project especially in the part that women are equally best placed to make decisions and bring solutions of peace building to the table just like men do. Further, it will help in explaining why women could actually be better placed, individually or in organizing to enhance peace building than any other party. As a theory that seeks to give a woman a chance to be heard it will be vital in the development of the argument on this project as to why women should not be left out in peace building decision making.²⁶

Further, for women to be effective in those decision making process, they could be given parties in allocation of resources, leadership positions, and support in other duties like family duties. Women organization should be given chances to be heard and be supported. Trained and skilled women should also be given a chance in employment market so that they can compete with the rest.

In summary, liberalism and feminism are the best suited theories for my study. This is basically because in the ancient times states were more of the rational actors but times have changed because activities are also coming up with solutions for states. In the ancient times women also were just to be seen but not be heard, their major role being family duties, but currently are evident that they are taking up other professions even ones considered to be preserved for men and doing better than them.

The case study of this project which is Liberia as the best example of why women are better placed in peace building. Since President Ellen Johnson sir leaf assumed power in Liberia, the country has experienced more peace and calm than the previous years which were marked by men's rule. She

²⁶O. Daddow, '*International Relations Theory*,' Op cit, PP 146-148

being and only woman president in Africa is the beginning of a new era where women's are tremendously making breakthroughs where men have failed.

1.7 Literature Gap

Having there been two wars in Liberia, the state have resorted to looking for many ways to bring back peace and the much needed development in the country starting from the grass root level. This study will examine these ways and especially the women input in peace building.

As discussed earlier women have had a role to play in the achievement of peace in Liberia and the world at large. This however is not clear cut especially where both women and men worked together and where governments and organizations were also involved. It is not defined well where women solely spearheaded the peace building from the beginning to the end, at one stage or another other parties contributed too.

1.8 Justification of the Study

This study can be justified in both the academic and policy levels. At the academic level, there has been assessment of gender issues in the society and more so the West African region on political matters. Most of the literature reviewed represents some imbalances on the involvement of women but at the same time, women are seen taking keen interest in being peace restoration activists.

The involvement of women in an area that had been dominated by men and receiving positive results altogether remains as an area of interest to most African political and diplomatic scholars. This is based on the still prevailing notion that women are a weaker gender physically, but what about the intellectual and managerial stability? The study will also offer critical insights into basis in peace building, as well as the proposition of new strategies to deal with gender inequalities in peace restoration and the capacity of conflict resolution processes.

Similarly, most international organizations are slowly recognizing the indispensable role that women play in preventing war and sustaining peace. This draws strength from the United Nations Security Council's Resolution 1325 issued on 31st of October 2000, urging the Secretary General to expand the role of women in UN field-based operations, especially among military observers, civilian police, human rights workers and humanitarian personnel²⁷ and this yielded to a statement by the then Secretary General Kofi Annan remarking, "For generations, women have served as peace educators, both in their families and in their societies. They have proved instrumental in building bridges rather than walls"²⁸. In this case, women have been able to bridge the divides in conflicting situations. Striking examples can be drawn from Sudan, India and Pakistan among others.

Individuals and communities reading the report of this work will constructively prevent potential violent conflict on all levels of society by addressing negative behavior and power structures which lead to discrimination and exclusion.

Individuals and communities will be prepared to constructively engage with opportunities coming from other actors.

1.9 Research methods

The researches will mainly qualitative analysis of information from a number of secondary sources and interviews. It will also be emphasized by the chosen case study of Liberian and the rule of President Ellen Johnson sir leaf.

²⁷ E. Rehn and E.J. Sirleaf, 'Women War Peace.:The Independent Experts 'Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace – Building,' UNIFEM. New York.2002 p39

²⁸ ECOSOC

This research will focus on one case study that is Liberia and the women's attempts to use reintegration for peace building. It will target the contemporary situation of Liberia in both the war time and the development time. This will mostly rely on written and reported works on Liberia and other secondary sources relating to the study. There will also be interviews with personalities, institutions and foreign missions relating to the case study. This section will involve data collection and data analysis.

The research design is going to use content analysis of the case study. This is because there will be an in-depth evaluation of secondary data and materials and investigation of an individual, group or institution. I will aim at determining factors and results from the actions and the behavior that is being studied. It is appropriate for this study because there will be an in-depth investigation of the consequences of the actions that women in Liberia and elsewhere have used to forge for peace building.

The data collection will be from secondary sources and interviews. Qualitative analysis will be done. This will help give research validity and evidence to prove that the facts are valid. The interviews will be administered to the available personalities with resourceful information on the case studies and their views will be noted.

The study will be conducted within the administrative boundaries of Kenya and will specifically be in Nairobi, Kenya. The interviewees will mostly be Liberian nationals and diplomats from the Liberian Embassy in Kenya, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Kenya. There will also be a visit to five homes of Liberians citizens currently living in Kenya where I will engage them in discussions.

The target where the sample will be drawn will be people who have worked on or studied or visited Liberia and those who have resided there. The views will be used to analyze the findings.

The population to be used will be that which is accessible because it will be a population narrowly defined. Therefore the informants will be the ones readily available to provide the necessary information.

The sample will be diplomats and nationals/organizations of the case study country. Any individual or organization who is involved in advancing the foreign relations of the case study country will be useful in the study. The sampling technique to be used will be convenience sampling which is a non-probability sampling; it involves the sample being drawn from that part of the population which is close at hand. That is, a sample population selected because it is readily available and convenient. It may be through meeting the person or including a person in the sample when one meets them or chosen by finding them through technological means such as the internet or through phone. Instruments for collecting data will be; interviews, photographs and telephone.

The data will be both primary and secondary. Primary data will be collected from those individuals with whom I shall have organized to meet or visit. Secondary data will be collected from written works in books and journals. The data will be analyzed qualitatively. Then I will summarize the qualified data in a table or diagram form. From there the pattern of occurrence in regards to distribution or dispersion or relationship will be observed.

The data collected will give in-depth holistic information, skills and attitudes, values and knowledge which cannot be obtained using survey and experimental methods. In this case it will be from interviews held with subjects through rapid assessment procedure.

1.10 Outline of the project

The first chapter which is the proposal of the project has given the background of conflict in the world, Africa and narrowing to Liberia. It shows the problem of the research and the objectives

The second chapter discusses peace building as the key variable of the study, it further looks in to the participation of women in peace process

The third chapter narrows down to my case study and evaluates the unfolding of conflicts in Liberia. A part from discussing the roles of other players in peace building in Liberia like the O.A.U and UN, it discusses how women have played an important role in resolving the conflict.

Chapter four is an analytical chapter. It analyses women role in peace building, the aim and means of peace building and strategies that women use. It concludes with discussing challenges encountered in peace building by women.

The final chapter is the conclusion where I give recommendations to policy makers on peace building and state further areas of research. The hypothesis is analyzed in this conclusion.

CHAPTER TWO

PEACE BUILDING: THE ROLE OF WOMEN

Introduction

Building a culture of peace implies trying to put in place the universal values of respect for life, liberty, justice, solidarity, human rights and equality between men and women. It entails changing values systems, attitudes and behaviors of people, especially in potentially explosive environments and relationships.

Peace is an attitude a way of life that should be cultivated.²⁹ It is a shared desire sincere committed to by the parties in conflict if any effort at reconciliation is to stand any reasonable chance of success. There is no particular agreed definition of peace. Peace building entails peace making that is, developing peace through human development, liberation and fulfillment.³⁰

Peace building in particular is a fairly new concept and an even newer field of study. It was with the dismantling of the Berlin wall in 1989- a symbol of dangerously divided world that gave the international community the opportunity to view peace not simply as the preservation of the preclusions balance of power among competing blocs, but as ongoing concern for human security in a rapidly changing global system.³¹

Peace building is to reduce related hostility through repair and transformation of damaged relationships. It focuses on reconciliation forgiveness, trust building and future imagining³², and seeks to minimize poorly functioning communication and maximize mutual understanding.³³

²⁹ M. N. Mohamed, 'The concept of peace culture and education for peace building,' Paper presented at the sub-regional seminar on the perspectives of education as a basis for achieving a culture of peace in Africa, Nigerian national commission for UNESCO, August 15-17, Abuja.2000. P.2

³⁰ M. Sara, 'Concept of Peace Remains Elusive for Many Children,' APA monitor, VOL. 29, No. 10, October.

³¹ R. Miller and T. C. Necla, 'Canada and Missions of Peace,' Ottawa, IDRC, 2003

³² M. Maiese, 'What it Means to Build a Lasting Peace,' University of Colorado, Conflict Research Consortium, Colorado.2003.

³³ J. P. Lederach, 'Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies,' United Nation Institute of Peace, Washington, D.C, 1997, p. 75.

2.1 Conflict

Peace and conflict are not antonyms. There are also conflicts in peace times and conflicts are neither good nor bad in themselves. Conflicts are part of the social interaction between people and they arise for example when two individuals, groups or states strive towards incompatible goals and to some extent define their relations with the other on the basis of this incompatibility.³⁴

The key word in any conflict is parties and the fact that a conflict is a social situation means that the conflict is something that one party always has in common with the other parties³⁵ for instance power. Sometimes, the words primary and secondary parties are used in conflicts whereby the primary parties are those that are directly involved in the conflict or the fighting while secondary parties are those that back- up and support those who are fighting.³⁶ Therefore, considering conflict as a relationship, the question of power is inevitable and asymmetrical conflict arises when the difference in the parties conflicting is so great that one party can dominate totally.³⁷

Whether conflicts are of internal origins or have significant international dimensions, they bring about the total collapse of communities, nations and lose of human lives. It would be appropriate at this juncture to provide a brief explanation on the dynamics of internal, international and internationalized conflict. Internal conflict is a conflict that occurs within a state. International conflict takes place between two or more states, while internationalized conflict occurs when the internal or domestic conflict becomes linked to the international sphere through the process of internationalization.³⁸

³⁴ A. Anner, *Transforming Conflicts and Building Peace, Experience and Ideas of Swedish Civil Society Organizations*, Sida Studies, Sweden, 2001, p 13

³⁵ IBID p 48

³⁶ IBID

³⁷ IBID p 49

³⁸ M. Mwangi, *Conflict, Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management*, Watermark Printers, Nairobi, 2000, p 61

Mwagiru³⁹ is of the opinion that, "the effect of conflict, wherever it is located, is to dislocate valued relationships, and to cause stress on the structure on which relationships are based. This is a significant case in the Liberian both civil wars.

Slater⁴⁰ defines conflict as a condition in which one identifiable group of human being (whether tribal, ethnic, linguistic, cultural, religious, socio-economic, and political) or other identifiable human groups are pursuing what are or appear to be incompatible goals.

According to Coser,⁴¹ conflict is a contest over values and demands to limited status, power, and resources in which the aims of the rival are to offset, ruin or get rid of their rivals.

Burton⁴² describes conflict as a social phenomenon that can either end to a peaceful ending or degenerate into a destructive end. It is an inescapable condition so far as human relations are concerned and any attempt to suppress a conflict, the society will be rendered static. This is the reason why Webb⁴³ was of the opinion that human beings must learn to live and cope with conflict since conflict is endemic in society.

Galtung⁴⁴ analyses the types of conflict where on one hand, an example of structural violence is given whereby, any constraint on human potential is caused by the structures in society. This exists in those conditions which human beings are unable to realize their full potential.

On the other hand, there is direct violence found in situations where, unequal access to resources, to political power, to education, to health care or to legal standing are forms of structural violence embedded in social structures which cause direct conflict.

³⁹ *IBID* 4

⁴⁰ O. R. Slater, 'Conflict and Change in the International System,' in Slater O.R. (et al), 'Global Transformation and Third World,' Lynne Rienne Publishers, 1993. pp 311-324

⁴¹ L. Coser, 'The Functions of Social Conflict,' The Free Press, New York, 1956, p 3

⁴² J.W. Burton, 'World Society,' Cambridge University Press, 1972, pp 132-138

⁴³ K. Webb, 'Structural Violence and the Definition of Conflict,' World Encyclopedia of Peace, Pergmon Press, Oxford, 1986, Vol 2. Pp 431-434

⁴⁴ J. Galtung, 'Violence, Peace and Peace Research,' Journal of Peace Research, 1969, Vol 6., pp 167-197

Mwagiru⁴⁵ argues that violent conflict is nested on behavioral violence while structural conflict is nested on structural violence and states that if there were no relationships in the society, then there would never be structural violence or conflict.⁴⁶

In support of the above mentioned, Berridge⁴⁷ claims that structural conflict is caused by the anarchial structure of the state system itself.

Women in conflict

The impact of conflict on the state and on civilian population is high on the regularly conflicting zones. Such conflicts have impeded the socio-economic development of states and the effects are often worst for women and children.⁴⁸

Men are more involved in war than women therefore more men die. Similarly the decision to go to war is often made by men. In such an instance, women become victims of wartime rape, refugees, and they also get internally displaced.

The impact of conflict on women according to Mwagiru and Karuru is felt differently and conflicts affect women in various ways. The whole process of fleeing and finding shelter in other countries or areas is dehumanizing and this has a debilitating impact on women and by implication, children. This impact can be categorized as general, health, social and psychological.⁴⁹

Functions of conflict

Bushra⁵⁰ states that conflict should be understood in relation to its historical antecedents and as moving towards a variety of potential outcomes.

⁴⁵ M. Mwagiru, 'Conflict, Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management,' op cit. p 23

⁴⁶ IBID pp 24-25

⁴⁷ G.R.Berridge, 'International Politics: States Power and Conflict Since 1945,' Prentice Hall, 1997, p 72

⁴⁸ S. Matthews, 'Women in Conflict,' in Trends, ACCORD, 2000, No. 4

⁴⁹ M. Mwagiru, and N. Karuru, 'Women's Land and Property Rights in Conflict Situations,' Center for Conflict Research and Women and Law in East Africa-Kenya, Nairobi, 1998, p 36

⁵⁰ J.E. Bushra, 'Transforming Conflict,' 'Some Thoughts on a Gendered Understanding of Conflict Processes' in S. Jacobs, R. Jacobson and J. Marchbank (eds), 'States of Conflict, Gender, Violence and Resistance,' Zed Books Ltd. London, 2000. P 67

Far from being only a negative factor which tears apart, social conflict may fulfill determinate functions in groups and other interpersonal relations; it may for example contribute to the maintenance of group boundaries and prevent the withdrawal of members from a group as well as to help avoid contacts that may result to conflict.

Conflict resolution

In analyzing the issues of peace in Africa, Hansen⁵¹ argues that conflict resolution is “only a minimal condition” for the achievement of peace. He adds that causes of conflicts, nature and dynamics of conflict, patterns and effects are all linked to other “deeper issues” such as the quest for material needs and resources⁵² which should be dealt with while resolving the conflicts for a sustainable outcome.

2.2 Peace

Peace is an extremely nebulous concept, whose lowest denominator is the absence of war and armed conflict.⁵³

Peace is neither a process nor a structure, it is both.⁵⁴

A distinction has often been made negative peace to mean the absence of war and positive peace which also includes the realization of values such as economic and social justice and respect of human rights.⁵⁵

⁵¹ E. Hansen, *'Africa Perspectives on Peace and Development,'* the United Nations University, Zed Books Ltd, New Jersey, 1987

⁵² IBID

⁵³ A. Anner, *'Transforming Conflicts and Building Peace, Experience and Ideas of Swedish Civil Society Organizations,'* op cit p 45

⁵⁴ P. V. Tongeren, (et al), *'People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society,'* Lynne Rienner Publishers Inc. London. 2005, p 34

⁵⁵ J. Galtung, *'Peace by Peaceful Means: Peace and Conflict, Development and Civilization,'* International Peace Research institute, PRIO, Oslo.1996

For lasting and reliable peace to be attained, it is important to fashion economic systems which can generate sustainable economic growth and guarantee the mass of the population a certain minimum of material existence and basic needs.⁵⁶

Peace-building has to deal with the activities needed that structurally support and intensify peace. The focus is taken away from the warring parties, their behaviors their attitudes and the dispute and is placed instead on the community. An action is therefore taken to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict⁵⁷ is peace-building.

Peace-building requires us to work at constructing an infrastructure to support a process of desired change and change is permanent.⁵⁸

Butros Butros Ghali⁵⁹ defined peace- building as the post-conflict action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict.

In matters concerning the parties involved in peace-building, Mazuruana and Mckay⁶⁰ cited that peace-building includes gender awareness and women's political, social, economic and human rights. empowerment. At the same time they stated that peace-building fosters the ability of women, men, girls and boys in their own cultures to promote conditions of non violence, equality, justice and human rights of people to build democratic institutions to sustain development.

Mwagiru⁶¹ looked at the warning signs of conflict and stated that, because conflict develops over time, manifested in early symptoms of restiveness and tension, preventive measures should be put

⁵⁶ E. Hansen, 'Africa Perspectives on Peace and Development,' op cit, p 12

⁵⁷ B. B. Ghali, 'An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace Making and Peace Keeping,' 17th June 1992, (A/47/277-S/24111)1992, www.un.org/docs/SG/aspeace.html, p 21

⁵⁸ P. V. Tongeren, (et al), 'People Building Peace II: Successful Stories of Civil Society,' op cit, p 34

⁵⁹ B. B. Ghali, 'An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace Making and Peace Keeping,' op cit

⁶⁰ D.E Mazurana and S.S. Mckay, 'Women and Peace Building,' International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development, Montreal, 1999, p12

⁶¹ M. Mwagiru, 'Conflict, Theory, Processes and Institutions of Management,' op cit, p 11

in place. These measures include activities which deal with the building of trust and confidence between the conflicting parties.

Advocating for preventive diplomacy, Mwangiri considers this as part of the process of consolidating the peace that has been negotiated, as well as considering an immediate action after the process of conflict management and during the post conflict phase where peace-building should take centre stage.

Bush⁶² approaches peace-building as a two-fold process which requires both the deconstruction of the structures of violence and the construction of the structures of peace.

Lederach⁶³ gives the credibility of peace-building as a long term commitment to a process that embraces investment, gathering and coordination of resources and materials. He gives more support to this idea by stating that the transformation of relationships is peace-building's main focus and that sustainable reconciliation has to do with structural and relational transformations.⁶⁴

At the international organizations arena, the United Nations refers to peace-building as one dimension of peaceful settlement of disputes. Speaking on peace-building Role of United Nation's operations, Michael Harbottle said that peace-building is the paramount practical interactive approach to address the apparent structural causes of conflicts and violence on the ground. This is conducted in stages whereby the first comes in when conflicts end, actors like military step in to keep peace, helping reduce the level of violence.

After the peacekeeping stage, peacemaking approaches resume using Track One diplomacy where diplomats come in, international organizations and leaders negotiate peace. The final stage is for the peace-builders needed immediately to consolidate the negotiated peace.

⁶² K. Bush, 'A Measure of Peace: Peace and Conflict Assessment of Development Project in Conflict Zones,' Working Paper No. 1, IDRC, 1998

⁶³ J. P. Lederach, 'Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies,' op cit

⁶⁴ IBID

Conflict settlement

Involvement of third parties may work for a solution or settlement of conflict without actually being part of the conflict.⁶⁵

In conflict settlement, both the nature of the issue and the power situation between parties involved must be given consideration in a conflict analysis.

In conflict, the most common form of conflict resolution and settlement is negotiation compared to other processes using neutral "third parties" negotiation has the advantage of allowing the parties themselves to control the process and the solution,⁶⁶ failure to which third parties are involved.

Peace-building processes

Peace-building is a process that flows through the pre-conflict or conflict prevention, the actual conflict stage as well as post conflict phase. Many peace-builders, particularly women operate at all of these stages.⁶⁷

Peace-building entails strategies, research, conflict settlement and negotiation, all of which act as the key aspects and key players included to help accomplish the goal of peace-building.

Peace-building processes are the procedures that are followed to reach a stable post conflict ground in the society. There are three primary procedures that lead to peaceful agreements namely; negotiation, mediation and arbitration.⁶⁸ The distinguishing factor is in the way they are practiced the variety in their application.

⁶⁵ A. Anner, 'Transforming Conflicts and Building Peace, Experience and Ideas of Swedish Civil Society Organizations,' op cit p 48

⁶⁶ S. B. Goldberg, (et al), 'Dispute Resolution, Negotiation, Mediation and other Processes,' Aspen Publishers, 2007, p 3

⁶⁷ R. Manchanda, 'Women's Agency in Peace Building: Gender Relations in Post Conflict Reconstruction,' Economic and Political Weekly, Vol 40, No. 44/45, (Oct 29-Nov 4, 2005), pp4737-4745

⁶⁸ S. B. Goldberg, (et al), 'Dispute Resolution, Negotiation, Mediation and other Processes,' op cit, p 3

Negotiation

Negotiation is communication for the purpose of persuasion. This is preeminent mode of dispute resolution.⁶⁹

The promotion of a dialogue can lead to, but is not the same thing as peace negotiations. A dialogue has the aim of creating understanding and more trust. Peace negotiations have the aim of reaching an agreement between the parties on ways in which they should handle or solve conflict.⁷⁰ Negotiations take the place of necessity at decision making level.

There are three phases of negotiations; the pre-negotiation phase, the actual negotiation and the post negotiation phase.⁷¹

At the pre-negotiation phase, relationships are built and empathy is a key component for breaking down mistrust and polarization. Use of negotiation skills improves understanding across the conflict line and prepares ground for the actual negotiations.⁷² This takes into consideration the issue of contention, the people to carry out the exercise, the time required to conduct negotiations, the venue as well as planning for the possible or desired outcome.

At the negotiation phase, the repertoire of negotiation skills comes in handy so as to keep the parties engaged and provide a foundation for successfully managing the inevitable crises and breakdowns of negotiations⁷³ encouraging empathy and reciprocity in formulating options for settlement. The skills applied at this level more likely allow joint or reciprocal action rather than a unilateral one.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ IBID p 17

⁷⁰ A. Anner, A., '*Transforming Conflicts and Building Peace, Experience and Ideas of Swedish Civil Society Organizations*,' op cit p 68

⁷¹ S. B. Goldberg, (et al), '*Dispute Resolution, Negotiation, Mediation and other Processes*,' op cit, p 18

⁷² T. Pearsons d'Estree and E. F. Babbitt, '*Women and the art of Peacemaking*,' Data From Israeli-Palestinian Interactive Problem-Solving Workshops, Political Psychology, Vol. 19, No. 1, March 1998, P 205

⁷³ IBID p 206

⁷⁴ IBID p 207

The post-negotiation phase takes the review of the strategies laid down during the pre-negotiation stage and evaluates whether the objectives of the negotiation have been met. The implementation of ideas and agreements presented at the negotiation stage occurs at this level.

Mediation is negotiation carried out with the assistance of a third party. The mediator, in contrast to the arbitrator or judge has no power to improve an outcome on disputing parties (d-ibid p108). Some mediators attempt to focus the negotiations on satisfying the vital interests of each party, while others focus on legal rights, sometimes providing a neutral assessment of the outcome in court or arbitration.

Arbitration is a legal way to of brokering peace.

2.3 Categories of peace building

Peace building seeks to prevent, reduce, transform, and help people recover from violence in all forms even structural violence that has not yield civil unrest.⁷⁵

Wage conflict non- violently

In waging conflict non-violently there is pursuing of democracy and human rights through strategies that raise awareness of conflict issues and pursuing others to bring about change.

Women have been involved in waging conflict non-violently through activism and advocacy, to achieve true and justice women's mass action for peace demonstrates that the sustained presence of women in non-violent activism help create needed pressure to keep key players at the negotiation tables and yields peace. This can be done through women organizations. An example

⁷⁵ Tongeren, paul van(et al): People Building Peace II; Successful Stories of Civil Society,' op cit, p.98

of such women organizations is the women in peace building network (WPNET)⁷⁶ launched in 2001 with a goal of using women's peace activism to promote social justice in West Africa. This was both for antiwar activism and deconstruction of structural forms of violence existing in everyday society.

Reduce direct violence

This category of peace building majorly involves peace keepers and aid workers. Groups around the world garner efforts to provide relief and charity work to communities in war torn areas largely known in the international federation of Red Cross, UN agencies and international organizations. People generally through their churches, mosques or temples provide aid to communities in need. Women have been known to be very involved in the ground work of providing relief, one such organization is women in security, conflict management, and peace (WSCOMP)⁷⁷ is an Indian initiative called Athwaas implying a warm hand shake. They strive to get self spaces for self expansion and reconciliation through sustained dialogue.

Transform relationships

Mediator's trauma healing counselors and policy makers help to transform relationship and address the roots of violence in times of intense conflict dialogue initiatives are often the only channel of communication between hostile communities/nations.

In the context of the conflict between Pakistan and India groups such as women in security, conflict management and peace (WIACOMP) and women's initiative for peace in south Asia (WIPSA) facilitate sustained dialogue between women's groups in the two countries even when

⁷⁶ IBID P. 134

⁷⁷ IBID P. 111

official diplomatic communication has been caught in war rhetoric and political jingoism and civil society. Engagement has been irregular and limited.⁷⁸

Women have worked with civil societies, NGO's media, business communities, educators and community leaders to foster a multi track approach to peace building in the two countries.

Build capacity

Finally, the grass root initiative in peace education and social economic empowerment facilitate an inclusive gender sensitive and sustained dialogue among diverse stake holders in the conflict. Examples are Athwaas and WIPNET initiatives.⁷⁹

These initiatives create forums which transcend the fault lines of fat, ethnicity, class, gender, and political persuasion. Athwaas is one group that has managed to achieve peace through capacity building and bringing together people of different backgrounds and opinions.

The west African network for women in peace building (WIPNET) trains women in the skills of peace building to increase their capacity for enjoying peace work in their organizations, communities and nations.

2.4 Women involvement in peace building

The protocol to the African chapter on human and people's rights on the right of women in Africa (PRWA)⁸⁰ which came into force in 2005 is a significant tool for peace builders the (PRWA) recalls Security Council resolution 1325 in its preamble. It provides for right to peace and declares that women have the right to participate in the promotion and maintenance of peace.⁸¹

As earlier discussed in the categories of peace building women have played key roles in

⁷⁸ IBID P. 99

⁷⁹ IBID P. 99

⁸⁰ Opened for signature 13 September 2000, organization for African unity DOC CAB/LEG/66.6 centred into force 25 November 2005

⁸¹ Article 10

peace building. The Athwaas and the WIPNET groups are good example of how women initiatives have managed to keep peace and bring healing to warring community and victims of war

It is vital to involve women in peace building for many reasons.

- (i) Women make up more or less half of every community and their skills and resources are necessary for the complex tasks of peace building.
- (ii) As central caretakers of their families everyone suffers when women are oppressed , victimized and excluded from conflict prevention and peace building
- (iii) Women have the capacity for both violence and peace and in many areas of the world are actively supporting violent solutions to conflicts. They need to be encouraged to use their special qualities in building peace rather than violence. Women are great empathizers with the oppressed in violent contexts.
- (iv) Women and men have different experiences of violence and peace so women must be allowed and encouraged to bring their unique insights and qualities to the process of peace building.
- (v) Women's empowerment should be seen as an inherit to the process f peace building because sexism , racism , classism, ethnic and religious discrimination originate from the same set of believes that some people are inherently better than others , the sexist belief that women's lives are less valuable than men's lives leads to violence against women.
When women engage in peace building they challenge those sexist beliefs along with other structures that discriminate against people.
- (vi) Women are successful peace builders. through there groups initiatives basing their strategies on the principles of inclusivity and collaboration and the methodology of

multitasking they produce peace building outcomes that are broad based and sustainable.⁸²

2.5 Theories in peace building

The liberalism and feminism theories have been used to advance this study as discussed below they show the importance of peace and equal rights.

Feminism

Scholars J. Ann Ticker and Laura Sjoberg⁸³ define it has a set of society constructed characteristics describing what men and women ought to be.

It has its roots in social contract theories of the 16th and 17th centuries. This was based on the call of equal opportunity and equal rights upon the claim that women too are rational. The international organization like the United Nations plays a central role in feminism where they addressed the issue of gender equality for both women and men and women's human rights around the world.⁸⁴

Feminism is about challenging the division of labor in the world that puts men in charge of public sphere which is work, sports, wars and government while women slave away unpaid in the homes carrying the whole burden of the family life before the dawn of feminism history provided examples of women who possessed extraordinary power , courage and talent like the famous Queens ,empresses, brave women worrier ,saints, witches, scientists and poets and artists. Queen Elizabeth I (1533-1603) was the Britain's great sovereign who inspired the English renaissance, contemporary examples include the first African women president, Ellen Johnson sir leaf, president of Liberia.⁸⁵

⁸² P. V. Tongeren, (et al), '*People Building Peace II; Successful Stories of Civil Society*,' op cit, p. 100

⁸³ O. Daddow, O., '*International Relations Theory*,' Sage publications. London. 2009. P. 147

⁸⁴ M. Karl, '*Women and Empowerment Participation of Decision Making*,' Zed Books.1995, P. 34

⁸⁵ S. Patricia, '*Technology, gender and power in Africa*,' International development center, Ottawa. 1989, P. 77

Liberalism

The key scholars are Hugo Grotius, Immanuel Kant and Abraham Lincoln⁸⁶

Liberalism is the founded theory of international relations which bases its argument on co-operation and good relations in liberalism war is not the natural condition of international relations peace is natural and national interests are safeguarded by more than military means. Further, states are not the main actors of the international stage and they are not unitary actors democracy is necessary for the perfectibility of human beings to be allowed to develop. Independence between the states is a key feature of international relations on human nature, liberalism argues that human beings are perfectible, faith in the power of human reason, faith in the power of human to release their inner potential and believe in progress (scientific, technological, moral and social)⁸⁷

With this argument, peace being normal then states and warring parties should struggle to maintain peace and since states are not the only factors of peace building they should give room for human reason and especially letting them realize their potential. That is why women and men alike should be given a hearing in peace building process.

Conclusion

This second chapter aimed at intensively looking at peace building as the major valuable of the study and the role women have played on it.

It also evaluated theories in international relations that are use to develop this research

Peace building is therefore a key component of maintaining normalcy in every community and can be achieved through many ways. These ways are all anti-wars and non-violent means which have discussed women have featured prominently.

⁸⁶ O. Daddow, *International Relations Theory*, Op cit p. 69

⁸⁷ IBID p. 70

Feminism a theory advocating for women to be given equal hearing and liberalism a territory advocating for human reasoning and non-stock involvement in national issues have both shown that there is need for peace and women can equally play part in achieving it.

The following chapter narrows down this study to Liberia as a country and the role women have played in peace building there.

CHAPTER THREE

PEACE BUILDING IN LIBERIA

Introduction

This chapter will look the background of Liberia, the Liberian conflict, parties involved in the intervention and the role of women in the conflict resolution.

3.1 Background of Liberia

Liberia is located in the west coast of Africa bordering the north Atlantic ocean and lying between cote d' ivory and sierra Leone. It has population of about 2.8 million people and a land mass covering 97.754km² (i.e. 37,743 sq miles) it was established as an independent republic in 1847. For more than a century the country was dominated politically and economically by descendants of freed slaves otherwise referred to as 'Americo Liberians'

The Liberian Conflict

In 1980, army master sergeant, Samuel Doe, led a bloody coup d' Etat in which president William Tolbert was killed. Because of wide spread dislike for the military Amerco – Liberian elite, this coup was warmly welcomed by large segment of the Liberian population. But it was not long before Doe increasingly become oppressive and unpopular. He surrounded himself with members of his Krahn ethnic group at the expense of others. His ruthlessness and incompetence made him be feared and reviled⁸⁸

Since the coup, rivalries between indigenous groups in search of state power become a major source of conflict and competition in Liberia. Following a calp attempt in 1985, the armed forces

⁸⁸ B. G. Erick and E. S. Katie, '*Peace Keeping in Africa: Capabilities and Culpabilities*,' Geneva, UNIDIR 2000.p.83.

of Liberia (AFL) killed as many as 3000 Mano and Gio civilians.⁸⁹ The persecution of rival ethnic groups by the duo regime eventually led to the efforts by the national patriotic force of Liberia (NPFL) under Charles Taylor former government minister to overthrow the Gio regime. They launched a Guerilla war against the doe regime backed by the Gio and Mano ethnic groups.⁹⁰

Doe, who had previously scuttled about 36 attempted coups during, is rule responded to the campaign by Taylor with brutality.⁹¹ Eventually Taylor and Prince Johnson who led a sprinter group of the NPFL known as the independent patriotic front of Liberia (INPFL) overran the whole of Liberia and entered Monrovia.⁹² There was immense suffering and waste of Liberian lives in the war and it threatened the security of neighboring states.

Milton Varma,⁹³ a senior training analyst, with the General Auditing Commission of the republic of Liberia notes that the previous regimes of Liberia before the President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf had bad governance characterized by marginalization. This led to a struggle that culminated into the civil unrest which plagued the country for 14 years. National development was at snail pace while agglomeration became the focus of government officials

Bomo Whiegar,⁹⁴ manager labour qualification audit of the General Auditing Commission of the . Republic of Liberia echoes Varma's views adding that during the early days, women did not have voting rights or rights to hold elected posts. This however has changed gradually since 1957 to the great achievement in 2005, when the first African elected female president took office.

⁸⁹ H. Herbert, 'Lessons of Liberia: ECOMOG and Regional Peace Keeping,' in E. Michael et. Al. (eds), 'Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict,' Cambridge, the MIT press, 1997

⁹⁰ Online Source, 'Freedom in the World,' 1998-1999. <http://www.freedomhouse.org/survey/country/Liberia>. Visited march 2012

⁹¹ S. O. Ogwí, 'Nigeria and the Liberian, Imbroglío: An Epítome of Nigeria Led Crisis Resolution in the Sub Region,' Nigerian forum, vol. 13. No's 9-10, September- October, 1994.

⁹² L. Schuster, 'The Final Days of Dr. Doe,' Granta, no. 48, summer 1994. P. 66.

⁹³ M. Varma, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012.

⁹⁴ B. Whiegar, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012.

Sub – Regional Intervention

This touched the hearts of Liberian friends and neighbors to intervene. Nigeria initiated and gave leadership to the formation of the ECOWAS cease-fire monitoring groups (ECOMOG) countries involved in ECOMOG peace mission up to 1994 and beyond include Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea and Gambia. By 1980 5000 Liberian lives had been lost and almost half the country's population turned into refugee and others were internally displaced.⁹⁵ By 1991, fighting had ravaged Monrovia and president Doe was captured at very strange circumstances by the INPFL under Johnson, and subsequently tortured to death.

The political economy of the war is the most important factor responsible for the prolongation of civil wars in Africa and especially the Liberian war. The control and exploitation of diamond, timber and other raw materials became one of the principal's objectives of the warring factions.

Effective control over these resources helped to finance the various factions involved in the war and gave them the means to sustain the conflict.

Niashekar Gluasey,⁹⁶ an official with the ministry of finance of the government of Liberia says that most West African countries were involved in the war and peace-building in Liberia. He mentioned that the president Charles Taylor with his government had invaded Ivory Coast and made enemies with the neighbors. This made the countries to retaliate and fight Liberia which fueled the already ongoing war. However, he notes that there were governments that helped to calm the situation which include; Nigeria, Ghana and others under the umbrella of ECOWAS.

The sub-regional organization parties were also interested in the control of the resources and so the prolonging of the war was of financial benefit to many of the protagonists.

⁹⁵ C. Bassey, 'Nigeria and Regional Security in the West African Sub-Region: Lessons from Monrovia,' Nigerian forum, January – February. Vol 14. No's 1-2, 1994.p.35.

⁹⁶ N. Gluasey, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012.

Multi -Lateral Response

The UN attempted to resolve the conflict through the establishment of the UN observer mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) In September 1993 through the UN resolution 866 to assist ECOMOG implement the control peace agreement.⁹⁷ It had mandate that concentrated of the review of the disarmament and demobilization process of the factions following the peace agreements. Prior to this and even after, the following attempts were made towards resolving the conflict

ECOWAS peace plan – Banjul communiqué (7 august 1990)

Bamako cease fire (28 November 1990)

Banjul joint declaration (21 December 1990)

Lome agreement (13 February 1991)

Yamoussoukro I Accord (30 June 1991)

Yamoussoukro II Accord (29 July 1991)

Yamoussoukro III Accord (17 September 1991)

Yamoussoukro IV Accord (30 October 1991) – UN Security Council

The USA intervened on 30th September, 1993 and allocated 19.83 million dollars to the Liberia peace process through the UN. In 1995 UNOMIL's mandate was modified by Security Council resolution 1020 to include investigation and reporting on violations of human rights and training human rights group.⁹⁸ In 1997 elections were made and Charles Taylor became president, though the civil war had stopped issues of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration still was not solved. Issues on reconstruction and reconciliation are still on the agenda.

⁹⁷ R. Hay, *Peace Building During Peace Support Operations; A Survey and Analysis of Recent Missions*, Canada. Department of foreign affairs of international trade. March 14, 1999. P. 7

⁹⁸ O. Agbu, *West Africa's Trouble Spots and the Imperative for Peace Building*, Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa, 2006. Dakar. 2006, pp 24-25

Rebels of Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) advanced a few kilometers to Monrovia in 2002. ECOWAS placed a travel ban on LURD

The ban was justified because the activities of the rebels ran counter to the protocol on good governance stipulated by ECOWAS and the OAU (now AU)⁹⁹

Since 7th may 2001 UN have placed sanctions on Liberia because Taylors government supported RUF rebels in sierra Leone. The sanction was on diamond exports an arms embargo and travel restriction on Liberian government officials. As the war raged between 1990 and 1996, it involved signing of over 14 agreements with the last one brokering for demobilization. The demand for peace building which included restructurings of the Liberian armed forces, the bureaucracy, infrastructure and utilities. Further, disarmament, democratization and reintegration (DDR)¹⁰⁰ through demining and dealing with child soldiers was very sensitive a Liberian civil organization, the children's assistance program (CAP)¹⁰¹ assisted in their rehabilitation. There were community based transit homes ran by UNICEF. The media was also restrained to control social and political spaces left for civil society. Many women also continue to suffer from physical abuse and traditional societal discrimination despite continued guaranteed equality. Several women organization assisted the estimated 25,000 women had been raped and abused during the war.

Taylor's government was accused of high handedness intransigence and of not implementing aspects of the peace process. The county was burdened by its 3 million dollars debt. Corruption

Was still a major obstacle to economic growth? There were renewed rebel activities in 2002. In August 2003 Taylor was persuaded to abdicate his presidency and he went to Nigeria on exile. In October 2005 there were successful elections that saw Ellen Johnson sir leaf as Liberia's and Africans first elected female president. This in a way justified efforts of peace building by

⁹⁹ IBID p. 25

¹⁰⁰ IBID P. 25

¹⁰¹ IBID P. 27

Nigeria, ECOWAS and UN mission in Liberia (UNMILL) the civil society and the international community who all pulled resources together to promote peace education and peace building in Liberia.¹⁰²

In a nutshell, as Jarwo Cooper,¹⁰³ an official with the government of Liberia says, Liberia got immense support from international organizations especially, ECOWAS, UN, European Union (EU), World Vision International and Medecins Sans Frontiers.

3.2 Women's Involvement in Liberia's Conflict

As discussed earlier, the Liberian war raged between 1989-1997 and from 1999- 2003. In the first phase women were more of victims than participants, but in the second war women participated in the war. For many reasons among them to protect themselves from sexual abuse, to avenge relatives death, porters, spies, sex slaves, cooks and mothers.¹⁰⁴

Considering the calamity suffered by these vulnerable groups during the conflict. Several efforts have been made by relevant actors in the peace process since 2003 to cater their needs.

In late 2005, Liberia democratically elected the first female president in Africa. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf came in to power in January 2006 and since then the government has made significant efforts to promote gender equality at all levels of society, and placed female reintegration initiatives high on its agenda. Since then, the government of Liberia has made tremendous strides in promoting gender issues. It is highly committed to the convention on elimination of all forms of discrimination against women (CEDAW) and the UNSC resolution

¹⁰² IBID PP.29-30

¹⁰³ J. Cooper, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012

¹⁰⁴ Amnesty International, 'Introduction in Liberia: A Flawed Post War Process Discriminates Against Women and Girls,' Amnesty International, London, 2008, p.5

1325, thus increasing women's participation in the national recovery process and making them economically self-reliant and independent through reintegration opportunities.

Samwar Fallah,¹⁰⁵ a Senior Audit Coordinator with the government of Liberia credits women for the peace in Liberia. He mentions WIPNET with their peaceful protests which put pressure on fighting forces to sign a truce for the restoration of peace in Liberia. WIPNET ensured the presence of some women at the peace talks in the Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord. He adds that the head of WIPNET, Leymah Gbowee jointly won the Norwegian Peace prize award along with two other women.

Niasehkar Gluaseay¹⁰⁶ agrees that women in Liberia through WIPNET greatly contributed to peace-building. He remembers that in 2005, women from different ethnic and religious groups assembled at the Samuel Kayon Doe sports stadium for six months prostrating themselves in prayer calling for peace. This attracted the international actors. Women also camped outside the U.S embassy in Liberia asking for intervention.

3.3 Reintegration of War Affected Females

Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and is a national responsibility. This usually necessitates long term external assistance.¹⁰⁷

There are high unemployment rates but microcredit opportunities are allowing Liberia's low-income households to set up small business or engage in other productive ventures. Many war-affected women, caring for their children and with little or no vocational and educational skills, are involved in the local enterprises assistance program (LEAP) a microfinance program supported by

¹⁰⁵ S. Fallah, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012

¹⁰⁶ N. Gluaseay, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012.

¹⁰⁷ J. Pugal, 'Identifying the Dimensions of Reintegration in Post Conflict Liberia,' 2007. P.7

the ministry of finance. It is supported by LEAP and the American refugee council /liberty finance around 11,000 clients mostly women are benefiting from the credit scheme.¹⁰⁸ Many NGO's are providing business skills for Liberian women through schemes like the women's economic empowerment project, funded by the Danish government. They also provide counseling for beneficiaries affected by the war trauma.¹⁰⁹ This development is a milestone in poverty reduction strategy (PRS) that is being implemented by the government.¹¹⁰

The government of Liberia launched an educational program in January 2007 to give Liberian women between the ages of 18 and 35 years interested in joining Liberian national police (LNP) but did not meet requisite qualifications the opportunity now to do so.

The program of training the women was supported by UNMIL and is in line with CEDAW's principles and the mandate of the UNSC resolution 1325.¹¹¹ In 2004 the rapid assessment of learning space (RALS) conducted by UNICEF, NGO's and the ministry of education, showed that the total student population in Liberia was found to be 1,007,784 student of which 47% were females.¹¹²

An informer¹¹³ from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi, discloses that although there is development in maintaining calm in Liberia, most of the affected parties especially the women and the children at the time of war are still traumatized. However, she notes that the government efforts have been tremendous.

It is apparent that under the governance of President Ellen Johnson sir leaf, the government with support from the UN and NGO's has set up projects and avenues of great importance to enhance

¹⁰⁸ J. W. Washington, 'Unsung Heroes of Micro Credit,' in UNMIL Focus, vol. 4.no. 2, Liberia: UNDP, 2008. P.26

¹⁰⁹ UNDP Liberia, 'Lofa Women Receive More Loan Complete Business Management Training,' in Development Up date, Vol.2 no. 2, Liberia UNDP, 2008. P.10

¹¹⁰ Republic of Liberia, 'Confronting the Data and Information Crisis,' in Breaking With the Past: From Conflict to Development, 2006.p. 93

¹¹¹ S. Momodu, 'All female Class Graduates' in UNMIL focus. Vol.4. no. 2, Liberia; UNMIL, 2008. P. 12

¹¹² S. Maeda, 'Mending Broken Wings,' in UNMIL focus, vol. 1, no.4, Liberia:UNMIL,2005,p.33

¹¹³ Political Officer, Interview with Clementine Sila, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi, May 2012.

healing after the war. This project has majorly helped women who had been victimized to get over the trauma and develop themselves and their community.

Reintegration of Females Associated With the Fighting Forces

As Bomo Whiegar¹¹⁴ summarizes, women were forced into the war and exposed to harmful substances which necessitates for their rehabilitation before they merge with the community. This is for various reasons but majorly they faced rejection from their communities when they came back.

Women associated with fighting forces (WAFF) in their reintegration were helped by the national commission on disarmament, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration (NCDDRR) which works collaboratively with the United Nations development program (UNDP) UMIL and other related actors through the Liberian DDDR program.

Their mandate is to support social economic reintegration of ex-combatants in to their communities and to equip them with marketable skills and formal education training

The options include: Formal education, Agricultural and vocational skills training, Apprenticeship (on the job training) and Parallel programs supported by the European commission (EC) and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)¹¹⁵

In 2007, 24% of the 30,106 DDDR beneficiaries that opted for vocational training, skills training, apprenticeships and formal education were female ex-combatant¹¹⁶. The same year Norway donated 7 million U.S dollars for the reintegration of a remaining estimated 8,789 ex-combatants. Reintegration in general takes a long time and meets several challenges. Some cases are successful while others are not.

¹¹⁴ B. Whiegar, Interview With Clementine Sila, Nairobi, April 2012.

¹¹⁵ Information and sensitization unit/ joint implementation unit, 'Reintegration Package, in Liberia: DDDR program,' RR hand book, no.2, vol.1, Liberia: UNDP,2006. PP 2,6.

¹¹⁶ UNDP Liberia "DDRR achievements" in manual report, Liberia: UNDP, 2007 P.14

3.4 Challenges

The countries infrastructure economy and social fabric can devastate the reintegration process. It has been hard to absorb the flood of new workers in the labor market or to identify which markets will be successful.¹¹⁷

Many WAFF feared stigmatization and chose not to participate others were out of the country too ill to participate and others did not know it was happening

The society was rejecting female combatants and WAFF considered them aggressive and looking down on them particularly if they came back from war with children. They thereby rendered themselves vulnerable to sexual exploitation, abuse and gender based violence, which remain major problem in Liberia

Rural – urban migration has slowed down regional or rural reintegration initiatives.

Conclusion

The government of Liberia has tremendously helped in re integrating women in policy making at all levels particularly in the development of the PRS and country development agendas. Over 10% of active police officers are female, with 23 top positions being held by females. 14 of the 94 members of parliament are females, as well as 5 of the 15 county superintendents and two of the five members of the Supreme Court. There are five female senators and over four government ministers her female including the president herself.¹¹⁸ Reintegration is a long term process and its goals of gender mainstreaming can only be realized over time with robust implementation and elimination of gender biases.

¹¹⁷J. Pugal, 'Identifying the Dimensions of Reintegration in Post Conflict Liberia,' op cit, p. 7

¹¹⁸S. Momodu, 'Women's Conference Held in Monrovia' in UNMIL focus, vol.4,no.3,Liberia: UNMIL,2008,P.32.

Decentralization, rehabilitation of public and private institutions restoration of basic social services and creating a peaceful and guaranteed atmosphere for investments should also be priorities' by the government to achieve the long term goal of reintegration for all.

A diplomat¹¹⁹ from the Liberian Consulate in Nairobi concludes the role of women in Liberia peace-building by saying that Liberia's internal and foreign relations have greatly improved due to the unending government effort to seek peace. He says that with the presidency of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, there have been visible and tangible peace efforts commending her for the great improvement in good relations. He however says that she could not have done it alone noting that the Liberians themselves have been greatly dedicated to enhancing their public and international image. This of course is based on the fact that during the previous regimes, Liberians suffered at the hands of their neighbors whom President Taylor had invaded.

From this research, it has been noted that prior to the elections that saw President Ellen into power; the Liberians were tired of the male leadership which was dictatorial and marginalized many people. It could be agreed that they could not have made a better resolution than to elect President Ellen having seen her leadership and experienced the peace that her government has cultivated. This is further supported by the fact that she won the elections once again and continued serving as a president in November 2011, a clear indication that the citizens were satisfied by her leadership.

¹¹⁹ Political Officer, Interview with Clementine Sila, Liberian Consulate in Nairobi, May 2012.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS

Introduction

This project takes into consideration the reasons for addressing women's needs, roles as well as responsibilities, before, during and after conflict in connection to peace building processes.

The roles of women's as analyzed in this section, in relation to conflict, change variedly and take different forms depending on the level or phase of the conflict, namely pre conflict or time before the conflict.

4.1 Role of women as actors

The various roles played by the women are characterized by the nature of the conflict-phase.

The women's multifaceted roles in conflict situations is characterized by them as victims, of sexual violence, whereby in the actual conflict, there are increased numbers of civilian casualties, due to the women having being escaped to violence as well as being subjected to sexual abuse and assault as a systemic method of warfare as was the case in Liberia.

During conflict, probably the most important sexual threats to women are systematic rape and other forms of sexual abuse against women that have become means of contemporary warfare in themselves. Sexual violence against women appears to be a result both a general breakdown in law and order and a policy to demoralize the enemy.

Other forms of violence that women face are exploitation, for example, cooking for the soldiers, being insulted verbally as well as physical torture. Similarly, the women were denied access to social amenities like schools, hospitals, which led to inability to access some basic needs. At times, they could be forced to watch their children and husbands being murdered.

Children born of rape and sexual exploitation are in most cases stigmatized and regarded to as social misfits, making both their lives and those of their mothers difficult to adopt and fit in the society in a free and a comfortable way. Women are also put into long term displacement, and they are at the same time made subjects of infection diseases among them HIV/AIDs, malnutrition, not to mention environmental damage, which makes it unsafe for them to use natural resources like water vegetable as well as fresh air for breathing. At the post conflict phase women still get victimized in form of domestic violence and this way they would feel exposed continually to insecurity.

The male ex-combatants too intermit the rate of violence against women when on their return home, they project their traumas and frustrations out their wives and families. This features in sexual violence that affects the women.

In both Liberians civil wars some women acquired permanent or irreversible physical injuries, dents, scars, amputations, they went in to psychological torture as well as trauma; a situation with which some of them are trying to get into terms. Another issue is that women typically rear the greatest burden of managing post conflict relations with war traumatized children, family members and former fighters. Therefore these effects range from psychological problem and traumas to social exclusion and even ostracism of the respective women and the children born out of their sexual violence.

During conflict, probably the most important sexual threats to women are systematic rape and other forms of sexual abuse against women that have become means of contemporary warfare in themselves. Sexual violence against women appears to be a result of both a general breakdown in law and order and a policy to demoralize the enemy.

One would go wrong by considering women as victims only in conflicting situations and fail to put into consideration the fact that they are also involved in the conflicting processes. This happens when they carry out duties as combatants a situation that directly involves them like in fighting as well as situations where the women themselves support the conflict.

Women's active participation during conflict is thus often their own free decision. For instance women actively took part not only in the hostilities during the second world war and the gulf war in Liberia wars but also in intrastate conflicts, in ethnic cleansing for instance in Rwanda, among others.

A good example is witnessed in the Liberian women case where after declaring that enough is enough, they took the front line in supporting and participating actively in the second civil war.

Women are also involved in conflict in an indirect way, by supporting their men folk in military operations and by providing them with the moral and physical support needed to wage war.

The post conflict phase puts the female ex-combatants through the reintegration process in form of rehabilitating them with an aim of making them useful people in the society.

The non-governmental organizations bring about the incorporation of women for peace in the three phases of conflicts. For instance, in the pre-conflict phase, the threat of conflict catalyses peace activism among small and dispersed women's groups. This too takes place during the conflicts since their sons and husbands leave to fight and even some lost in the fighting the reason for this is for protection of their loved ones. Most of these activities are both formal and informal and they take care of the around well being of women themselves as well as their children and spouses, for instance, seeking for alternative health care facilities, education and food sources.

It is at this level when anti-conflict campaigns are formed taking over public roles so as to help maintain normal situations. At some instance, these women provide relief and humanitarian assistance.

At the post conflict phase, the existing newly established non-governmental organizations tend to get involved in a broad range of activities among them, charity work, and protection of human rights, political activism, development projects and distribution of natural, as well as financial resources.

Often times, women have been left out in formal peace processors. These has been so due to their limited access to political life at the pre conflict phase, where they are marginalized and their contributions ignored or taken for granted.

However, this situation changes as from the actual conflicting time to the post conflict stage. During the conflict, there is increased political participation of women viewed from the ankle of gender equality. It is at this stage where the society has the urge for a different touch, a female touch, hence the high demand of female politicians who make a difference at various levels of the society. This comes as a result of a decrease in stereotypical gender in the political and conflict, management and resolution approach.

At the end of conflicts, women use different tactics in peace negotiation and peace building although it has a hard to maintain their political positions that they had occupied during the conflicts. Despite these frustrations they actively take part in disarmament processes, fighting for gender equality and they also feature a lot in the peace negotiation table.

Even though with limited opportunities, the women participate tirelessly in amendment of laws and constitution, they take part in post –conflict elections and in rehabilitation efforts. This is

witnessed from the interview researches made about Burundi, Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia where such women found the Mano river women's peace network to engender the peace process.

It is difficult at first for women to believe that they can actually cope and still shine towards a conflict. This is due to the in imaginable experiences that they dread to go through which brings them extensive fear while approaching a conflict. At the pre-conflict level, women have minimum survival mechanisms.

However, this situation changes immediately a conflict starts due to the natural role placed on the "woman" as a person. While watching their young ones suffer, their loved ones goes through harsh conditions and they themselves being taken through inhuman experiences, women tend to increase their speed of adaptation to their existing roles for instance protecting, nurturing and caring for their loved ones as well as undertaking the task in their immediate environment.

Women have a tendency of finding their out of problems and in their efforts to stay out of trouble the mechanism of migration is adopted, reasons why the percentage of internally displaced and refugees who happen to be women is so percent in most warring states. Migration is conducted for lack of a better option since with it some disadvantages like separation from family, adaptation of new lifestyle, building up of new skills to generate income and change to more sustainable ways of living due to departure from community network which offer protection and support others.

In some instances, when left with no option, women end up doing socially unacceptable things such as prostitution, petty crime, illegal trade, so as to source for income. This way may be done during conflicts, where their clients happen to be the male combatants and peace keepers. After the conflict, this takes place when the women are left in desperate conditions, and may do that as a way of coping with distress. This in most cases may happen as the last option, when the women have considered the others mentioned earlier.

During conflict time, when men have gone to war, women remain in charge of their homesteads.

This is worse if they lose their spouses in the conflict. This changes their role completely cutting across their family, community and in the public domains, making them the households heads hence the breadwinners and carrying out duties formally carried out by their men, reason why, special attention is paid to the widows in any society due to the task force placed on their hands.

After conflict, husbands and male relatives return home and restore their tasks and roles, and let the women take up their role in the household.

When the women have formal employment or skills useful for supporting the family, the situation is not as bad as in those instances where the women are under equipped and untrained. This calls for involvement of the community leaders or even state to help allocate property which can sustain the family and this may lead to continuing struggle for access of land and the property. It also gets difficult for the women to maintain activities outside the home after the conflict especially when they have lost their men during the conflicts.

In relation to education, girls and adults female students may drop out of schools and colleges during the conflict times and others are forced to change the course of their education depending on the available options. This later on affects their future in terms of career and occupation.

Employment changes variedly depending on the conflict situation in this regard, before conflicts arise women continually work towards their live of career or professions, depending on whether they are in formal or informal employment majority make progress as they stabilize in their marriages depending on their ability to do so. However, this change immediately conflicts begin since they become destabilized, and their response towards the conflict which may be migration, puts them under increased informal activities. Some may lose their jobs completely or even fear working in the same places again from what they go through unless rehabilitated

During the conflict, it is also difficult for the women to access formal sector employment and may be forced to accept badly remunerated work in the informal sector.

After the conflicts some women may lose their jobs completely especially if they had been working with private firms which apparently may close down due to the conflicts, leading to joblessness, while others are forced to do house work. Those in formal employment and under the parastatal resume work when things get back to normal. In most cases after every training one is expected to work

In summary, the ways in which women catalyzed peace building from the case study and elsewhere are:

- i) **Grass roots organizing** to end conflict and build skills necessary for peace building and reconstruction takes place effectively at the post conflict phase, networks of solidarity and anti militarism were build to create alternatives women's policy on the local regional and global level entering women resistance to war and militarism into alternatively history¹²⁰. Ways to take care of the victims ranging from psychological emotional and physical healing processes are considered. Those whose status change especially after losing their husbands and children find themselves put in a special category for instance, widows, and they form movements to demand their rights to be considered in social programs. They also form self help group, businesses, which are made to both help them as well as develop the society at large.
- ii) **Organizing across borders** covers next after the grass root levels. A good example is the Mano river united women's network for peace, which has members from guinea, Liberia and sierra leone bringing together high level women from established political

¹²⁰ E. Rehn and E. J. Sirleaf, 'women war peace. The Independent Experts Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace -Building.' UNIFEM. New York.2002. p.79

networks as well as grass roots women whose duties are to ensure that there is no more fighting in any of the three countries, among other organizations.

- iii) Eventually women **got to the peace table** where peace agreements are signed. This was witnessed in the cases of Somali, Burundi, Djibouti not to mention Liberia itself
- The presence of women in peace negotiations even though the final agreements rarely make reference to the need to eradicate violence against women

This is witnessed in the Liberian peace agreement which states that “the national transitional government of Liberia shall accord particular attention to the issue of the rehabilitation of vulnerable groups of war victims. (Children, women the elderly and the disabled) within Liberia¹²¹; which as a short coming by not indicating the existing international legal framework dealing with violence against women

Before getting to the negotiating stage women start working from the grass root level, to mean that they have tangible and first hand information and experience, given where they come from and this makes it quite easy for them to get better deals.

- iv). Training and facilitating-** The pre conflicting stage women are trained in the police force and security officers to help equip with skills to counter the attacks and possibly protect those who need their protection.

After the conflicts the women ability, skills and techniques applied during negotiations may be based on their experiences as well as having been taken through training to be able to facilitate the peace deals.

¹²¹ C. Chinkin and C. Hilany, Op cit p 945

At these level women are employed as immigration officers as well as officials to oversee democratic values and respect for human rights which is a nonpartisan approach to duty and the evidence of the corrupt practices. This is provided for in the Liberian agreement.¹²²

v). **Quotas** –so as to avoid the difficulties posed by the traditions and cultural barriers that make it impossible for women to be fully involved in peace process and post war governance the introduction of quota system in governments like Somalia and Mozambique¹²³ has made women's contributions be considered.

The quota system well stressed and affected by the Beijing plat form for action, and the United Nations Security Council resolution 1325, urge the appointment of women in decision making bodies and peace processes giving an allowance of at least 30% minimum representation. This also has to do with constitutional reforms electoral issues as well as judicial reforms and the quotas are a temporary solution to enable increase gender balance but they do not at the long run, bring about permanent changes in the socioeconomic sectors as well as political processes.

Much activity has been noted from the actual conflict phase and at the post conflict stage. This is to say that before the conflicts start, women are actually at the perspective and play other roles based on the community development, at this stage factors are considered constant and the environment conducive for them to conduct their duties at normal set up.

After the conflict stage when the situations are not the same any more their reactions is seen to take different shapes and they are catalyzed to act in a manner as the situations demand.

The post conflict stage has then relaxed and thinks on the way towards which they can manage, eradicate or live with the conditions that come as the result of conflict this also as a result of the

¹²² C. Chinkin and C. Hilany, *op cit.* p. 947-948

¹²³ E. Rehn and E. J. Sirleaf, 'women war peace. *The Independent Experts Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building,*' *op cit* p.82

conflict varies differently according to the situation that was in existence before the conflict, conflict resolution or post conflict reconstruction. The three are significant to a peaceful existence in the human society.

4.2 Role of other actors

The role of actors in peace building can be analyzed in the three levels of analysis, namely the individual level, the nation/state level and the systemic level of analysis.

Individual

At the individual level of analysis among other figures Ellen Johnson Sirleaf who is the current president of Liberia. Much effort and inspired by interest to have a peaceful environment Sirleaf travelled to many of the worlds conflict zones and talked to women and girls who have experienced the devastating impact first hand, analyzing and giving recommendations to the concerned bodies as it will be looked up at in the paragraphs following.

Mobilization on public opinion in her research as well as strategy on how to bring about a long term political order is a remarkable task that she undertook.

Nation state

This level begins with government of Liberia itself, under the leadership of Sirleaf which agreed on the formation, signing as well as implantation of the Liberian peace agreement.

Other government, majorly the United States of America have participated in managing conflicts, regardless their interests in Liberia. Some of the projects carried out were financial and material assistance; through the regional body ECOWAS, to help in peace keeping operation¹²⁴

¹²⁴ K. Wermester and C .L. Sriram, *'From Promise to Practice: Strengthening UN Capacities for the Prevention of Violent Conflict,'* Lynne Reinner Publishers, Inc. Colorado. 2003, p. 314

It also facilitated in mediation efforts as well as offering humanitarian assistance like food, medicine and other items of necessity to the war victims, refugees and the internally displaced persons.¹²⁵

The Role of the Dutch Government

The Dutch government offered financial aid in the post war reconstruction. Nigeria supported in harnessing regional organizations like ECOWAS, ECOMOG as well as the Abuja declaration which played an important role in peace restoration in Liberia.

The systemic level of analysis puts into consideration the roles played by regional, nongovernmental and the international organizational. (See paragraph I below)

The regional Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) helped in peacekeeping, disarmament and reconstruction of military and security organization¹²⁶ as well as establishing the economic community of west African states cease- fire monitoring group whose main objective among others was to monitor and prevent war in conflicting zones.¹²⁷

Regionally, the Mano River countries with their empowerment to women in peace building, WINPET, the federation of African Women's peace networks, women in black are all organizations based on the women's active role in peace-building especially in the west African region.

The Non Government organizations, among them, the carter center, helped in supporting ECOWAS, OAU and the United Nations in mediation and reconstruction processes.

¹²⁵ *IBID*

¹²⁶ K. Wermester and C.L. Sriram, 'From Promise to Practice: Strengthening UN Capacities for the Prevention of Violent Conflict,' *Op cit*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

International groups have also become peace facilitators, helping bring together women. For instance, the women's international league for peace and freedom (WILPF) women waging peace¹²⁸ among others.

The United Nations crowns the entire level of systemic analysis given its nature of being a global organization, and its potential to mobilize resources than either ECOWAS or the OAU¹²⁹.

Conflict prevention is the first promise of the United Nations charter and this has been practiced in many parts of the world including Liberia.

On the political and security side, former secretaries' general Butos Butos Ghali and kofi Annan played an important role in the normative level by placing conflict prevention at the fore front of their respective agendas.¹³⁰

Under the spices of the department of political affairs and through the Security Council mandate, peace building support offices (PBSOs) were established in Liberia, guinea Bissau and Central African Republic between years 1997 and 2000.¹³¹

Other bodies affiliated to the united nations based on the case study are the united nations development fund (UNDP), united nations observer mission in Liberia (UNIMOL)and UNIFEM which worked tirelessly in ensuring peaceful structures were put in place.

¹²⁸E. J. Rehn and E. J. Sirleaf, 'Women War Peace. The Independent Experts' Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women's Role in Peace-Building,' op cit, Pp. 80-124

¹²⁹ K. Wermester and C. L. Sriram, 'From Promise to Practice: Strengthening UN Capacities for the Prevention of Violent Conflict,' Op cit

¹³⁰ Online source, 'Report of the Secretary General on the Preventing of Armed Conflict' see www.un.org/peace/ppbm.pdf:pp 20-21 retrived on 28th feb. 2012."

¹³¹ IBID

4.3 Actors and approaches to peace building

Level 1 Actors

These are the people at top positions; they are leaders and government official's military officials, political officials, religious leaders in general leader with high visibility. It consists of very few people who are looked upon by the society and can affect change in policy making. In my case study the people that fit these are the UN and ECOMOG peace keepers and all other officials national and international who are involved in peace keeping in Liberia.

Among individuals, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has predominantly stood out as one who featured most in peace building. She affected policies and projects that in the long run helped in the reintegration process.

Approaches at level 1

Here the focus is on high level negotiation. They emphasis on cease fire led by highly visible single mediators. Apart from decision making involvement as policy makers with position in the government women have used other channels too like international and nongovernmental organizations

President Ellen has been to affect peace building process in Liberia using her position as president and the various ministers under her like using the ministry of gender and ministry of education there has been reintegration felt up to grass root level

Through the UN federation of the African women peace networks (FERFAP) UNIFEM and WINPET. These have given women forums to contribute in decision making and peace building through enacting and making of policies. However gender equality mechanism created during peace negotiations often remain weak women representation in such organization is often limited.

Peace agreements, electoral and judicial reforms and government restructuring are only as good as their implementation. Most chatter remains unacted upon. Even the Beijing plan for action has a long way to be needed by government structures.

Level 2 Actors

This is the middle range leadership. It entails leaders respected in sectors ethnic/ religion leaders, academic intellectuals and humanitarian leaders through NGO's. At this level individuals cannot enact decisions on their own they use organizations or groups to do so, or forums. Through women's organization in Liberia and churches they were able to recommend ways and projects of peace building. Leaders in NGOs intellectuals and other individuals also make recommendations to decision makers on ways of enhancing development and reintegration.

This group of people is also very useful in implementation process as they act middle men between the top leaders and the community. Here the affected population is fairly larger than the one of level one. The actors are more.

Approaches at level 2

Here they use problem solving workshops. They do training in conflict resolution peace commissioners and they also use teams. These workshops help the members to get enlightened in means of bringing about healing after conflict. In Liberia these forums are very common through government supported and NGOs plus other foreign government projects financing. Civil education is important for the community leaders and the community itself since it helps equip people with formal education, literacy and global sense of the importance of peace.

The trained people will in turn go to train others so that they can get over trivial differences and hurdles that pull them apart and see the bigger picture.

The trained, already become peace builders just by passing the information to others through word of mouth. This makes the reintegration process easier to implement as new people are aware of the importance of order, peace policies and development at large.

Level 3 Actors

This is the grass root level. It entails actors such as leaders at grass root level, local leader leaders of indigenous NGO, community developments local health officials refugee camp leaders and the like.

These are the people who have direct contact with the community they stay with them and most likely can relate with their experiences

They are the people who have hands on experience in dealing with the local and can talk on their behalf. They interact with the community and the middle level leaders to pass information or receive information from either side.

At this level the actors are many and the affected population is the largest because this is at the community level. The approaches are numerous too.

Approaches to level 3

Here there is local peace commission's grassroots training prejudice reduction psychological work in post war trauma. Here there is a lot of work and person to person contact. The victims are handled at individual level and there is a lot of counseling to help them overcome the trauma. Projects like tailoring are used to equip the victims and combatants to assimilate again in the society from here they are free from trauma stigma guilt, anger, and war years, then they have a

still to start a living. They are also linked together with others in the community and other communities so they can work in groups where they can associate easily.

They are able to forgive and to work together groups they went to war against. This in Liberia was supported by the government and foreign agencies through the disarmament demobilization rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) programs. This helped the victims and combatants like to assimilate in the society.

4.4 Challenges women face in peace building

1. Peace agreements, electoral and judicial reforms and government restructuring take time to be implemented and when they do it's mostly gender biases. This makes women agendas to be delayed and even forgotten even after documents enacting the same have been signed and approved. For example the national charter of Somali¹³² is regarded one to the best of the Muslim world in terms of women's rights yet Somalia is still today one of the most dangerous places on earth.
2. Paying attention to women's needs and tapping women as recourse in peace building and reconstruction will not happen without mainstreaming gender and every stage of the peace process and reconstruction. However, internationally supported national plans largely add on gender as an afterthought and rarely give the gendered causes and consequences of conflict due attention. This especially in the implications of the increase of women in poverty.
3. Diversity and ethnicity is also a major challenge. A universal interpretation of agency across cultures cannot be assumed. The differences in geographies, religions, ethnicities,

¹³² E. Rehn and E. J. Sirleaf, *Women War Peace* op cit p. 85

classes and cast impact on how local identities of women and men are society constructed and affect women experiences and agency it is difficult to have universality equal grounds for gender equality even though there is universality of the structural in equality between men and women worldwide.

4. Under representation is a major challenge. According to the UN secretary general's 2004 report on resolution 1325¹³³, women remain seriously under represented especially at senior levels with women contributing 1% of military personnel 5% civilian police personnel and 12% of senior civilian staff serving in peace keeping operation.
5. Trauma after war is a challenge too. One of the practical problems imposed on women by the prevalence of value systems grounded on honor and shame is the impossibility of women activism and combatants to return to normality. In Liberia this was majority so, especially if they came back from war with children due to rape. They were unmarriageable. No one in the society wanted to associate with them even their families.
6. Victimization- women were not only victimized by involving forces but also fellow male combatants and peace and peacekeepers themselves. They are vulnerable to sexual violence both at war and after war.
7. Illiteracy is a challenge during reintegration. This is because during the war, normal life is disrupted. The education system is unable to operate normally. Women combatants leave their homes to go to war age and families' duties take toll on them. They find it hard to join adult classes or school with juniors. In Liberia, women combatants' majority dropped from the adult classes and joined vocational training like tailoring instead. They found it easier to do vocational training than formal education. Although this training helped, it rendered

¹³³ Economic and political weekly vol.40,no. 44/45 (Oct 29- Nov 4,2005)p. 4743

them less professional and chances in top leadership positions where they could effect policies and decisions in peace building became minimal.

8. Family duties pose a challenging to women as peace builders in traditional setting the woman takes solely the role of giving birth, being a mother and a wife among giving care, cooking and other household chores. They hardly have time for being in meeting, classes, organizations, or activities of peace building. Most of them are even restricted from doing such by their husbands since they are regarded as heads of homesteads.
9. Rural- urban migration – this is a major challenge especially in Liberia with a big percentage residing in Monrovia. This has derailed the reintegration projects set up in the rural areas most of the people that would be involved or benefit or implemented them have moved to urban areas to seek for employment. There is need for decentralization for programs to evenly reach out to the masses.
10. Limited resources – being from third world economies, not all projects are allocated for funds or resources by the government. Further, not all are considered by donors or financiers. This makes it hard for women programs to thrive since they rely on their own budgets. The peace building program most times finds them being conducted on voluntary basis where there is not much income for the actors. Women in peace building find it hard to do their outreach programs and mostly rely on what the projects fetch as revenue.

Analysis of the hypothesis

1. The presence of women in conflicting groups reduces the intensity of conflict; further it leads to quicker resolution due to easy softening of stances.

This is true according to the project because Liberia was at war for more than a decade during the leadership of men, but with the entrance of a female president the country took less than five years to get back to a peaceful state.

2. The priorities of women in positions of power and leadership lead to more inclusion and consultative decision making.

This is also true because as a leader, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has constantly worked with government ministries, non-governmental organizations, regional organizations as well as international organizations not forgetting community leaders. Women are by nature not likely to prioritize dictatorship since they are more sensible to other people cries. The previous president conflicted with the people so much because they did not care about others opinions.

4.5 Way Forward

The project has discussed the role of women in peace building through which there are challenges and achievements as mentioned in the previous sections. This section is seeking to look at the way forward

Women organization should be supported to achieve their participation in peace processes and new government and their efforts to rebuild judicial and civil infrastructure. Below are fair suggestions to contribute to peace process and decision making about security safety, resources political space and access to decision makers.

- a) Safety

Women are vulnerable since they are subjects to sexual attacks in additions to the other dangers and often seen as stepping outside traditional role. An enabling environment that

allows organizations and individuals to express their opinions in safety and security would sustain current activities and encourage more women to become active.

b) Resources

A larger pool of funds is needed to maximize the potential of women organizing efforts. There is often fierce competition for humanitarian and development resources. This does not enhance collaboration between groups. Women peace work reinforces the border effort to extend and protect human rights and expands the political space that allows women to address gender issues. This deserves a dedicated pool of funds to leverage the political, financial and technical supports that women civil society organizations and women leaders need so they can have a significant impact on peace efforts nationally, regionally and internationally.

c) Political space

Women should be given space and time for 'women only' gatherings to ensure that they play an important role in peace building. Thanks to the political space provided by UNIFEM a similar consensus was achieved by women observers of the Burundi peace process many of whose recommendations were included in the final document.

d) Access to decision makers

NGO's activities are often viewed as a source of innovative ideas and information, but governments and international organizations often view them as a nuisance or a threat to their interest.

Former secretary general of the UN Kofi Annan has called NGO's the conscience of humanity and so for this conscience to be realized, the voices of women organization must

be heard and headed by the governance structures in which they are fully and consistently represented.

Further in 2000 he said concerning the evaluation of the Beijing with a simple statement; "we are not guests on this planet we belong here: five years on I would venture that we all know this is an understatement, not only do women belong on this planet The future of this planet depends on women."¹³⁴

In a nutshell suggestions for strengthening the role of women in peace building include; creating greater awareness about peace to women, allowing space for women delegates in peace negotiations, encountering women into decision making creating women peace associations and networks, allocating quotas for women in parliament and community, women allowed to start peace education in their families (fathers and sons included) promoting women's education self confidence, and teaching them their rights in all fields including religion.

¹³⁴ E. Rehn, and E. J. Sirleaf, 'Women War Peace,' Op cit, pp 77-90

ROLE	RELATED OPTIONS FOR INTERVENTION		
	PRE-CONFLICT	ACTUAL CONFLICT	POST-CONFLICT
Women As Victims Of (Sexual) Violence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Women's active participation in, for example early-warning systems 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Practical safety measures, for instance in refugee camps • Trauma counseling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reducing domestic violence • Involve women in security sector reform, demining, small arms, and DDR programmes • Trauma counseling • Truth and reconciliation • Persecution of perpetrators, for example for crimes of rape and sexual abuse
Women As Combatants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support non-war activities • Awareness-raising among female combatants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support non-war activities • Start addressing specific needs of female combatants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support non-war activities • Gender-sensitize demobilization and reintegration programmes
Women For Peace In The Non-Governmental Sector	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support establishment of women's organizations • Train women activists and women's organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support women's organizations • Train women activists and women's organizations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make women's organizations sustainable • Train women activists and women's organizations • Redirect goals, priorities and sources of income towards women's organizations • Long-term financial commitment
Women In 'Formal Peace Politics'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage women's participation in preventive diplomacy; through, for example, training and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage women's participation in peacekeeping and peace negotiation processes, through, for example, training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage women's participation in post conflict elections, drafting constitutions, rehabilitating efforts, etc.

	quota systems	example, training and quota systems	through for example, training and quota systems
Women As Coping And Surviving Actors		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involve women in humanitarian assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Actively involve women in humanitarian assistance
Women As Household Heads		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of assets, skills and information Micro-credit schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of assets, skills and information Micro-credit schemes Legal assistance and legal reforms
Women and Employment		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Micro-credit schemes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-traditional training and employment programmes Micro-credit schemes Structurally improve women's employment possibilities

Figure 4: The Interrelationship between Women's Roles in Conflict and Options for Intervention Before and After Conflict

CHAPTER FIVE:

CONCLUSION

Introduction

This last chapter begins with an overview of the findings, analysis of the hypothesis recommendations and further areas of research. Finally it concluded with a word of hope.

5.1 Overview

As discussed in the previous chapter it is evident that women have majorly been involved in pre-conflict, conflict and post conflict stages. Women have been involved both as victims and combatants and at awakening of gender equality debate, women are now involved in peace building.

The project has discussed the various levels of actors at which women have been involved in peace building. Women have been involved at grass root levels especially in their families and communities at middle level through their organizations like WINPET and Athwaas and at top level as ministers or presidents like the major subject of this study president Ellen Johnson sir leaf. We have come from days when women were just to be seen and not to be heard days when women were given away as brides by conflicting parties to show good will. We are at an age where women through training and workshops are able to be more useful in professional tasks and compete in the job market. President Ellen of Liberia has demonstrated how skillful women can be even at top positions considered previously for men and actually do better than them. President Ellen has all done her predecessors; president doe and President Taylor, in many ways but most important in bringing peace to Liberia. Through her government, she has able to bring peace, development and a niche for women and girls especially those victimized the war as well as those

involved as combatants. Of course one cannot ignore the role that international organization, governments, NGO's and activists played.

However, there is still a lot to be done in order to involve women fully in decision making and peace building. It would be pre-emptive to say that women are safe now. They still face challenges in the presence in peace keeping and this is majorly because the percentage of women in such positions is still too low. Consider President Ellen, the first female president in Africa being the only one well until president Banda of Malawi who came into power just recently in 2012 from vice president after the sudden death of the president. This means that the world has not fully accepted women in huge responsibilities that men are known to naturally hold. There is need for more women presentation in all aspects of leadership, policy making, peacekeeping, job market and so on.

According to the independent experts' assessment of women and peace operations¹³⁵, women continuously face hosting in war-torn areas even in the presence of peace keeping forces. In the past majority of peace making environments, there is relation between the arrivals of peace keeping personnel and increased prostitution, sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS infection. It is not only the UN peace keepers alone who contribute to these conditions. This situation is so because there are no enough women or women representation in the peace keeping forces.

"Many of the women who are raped like I was can identify their attackers, but find it difficult to report them to the police. If only we had female police in MONUC to whom we can report these horrible things that happened to us."¹³⁶

Additionally, forces involved in harassing women especially from the UN cannot be disciplined because the UN head of mission does not have that authority. UNAMSIL established a

¹³⁵ E. Rehn & E. J. Sirleaf, 'Women War Peace,' op cit, p.64

¹³⁶ IBID P.73

coordination committee for the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse made up of representatives of UN agencies, NGO's and the government but this is not enough. As president Ellen and Rehn¹³⁷ recommend that the call by the secretary general to establish an ombudsman person in every peace operation who could handle reports of abuse by peace keeping personnel, this is a viable option. During peace keeping mission stay in a country the locals are only offered non-professional employment like secretaries, language assistants, young women are likely to be moved in "peace keeping economies" which are industries and services such as bars and hotels that spring up near military bases. Here they are vulnerable to exploitation.

The "light foot print" strategy of the United Nations assistance mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) has given increased recognition to the role of national professional staff in a UN peace operation. Such arrangements offer the opportunity not only to build on, national capacities, but also allow women to play a more active role in re building the nation.

"Three fleeting references were made to women and peace keeping in the 1995 Beijing platform for action, and it was not until 2000 that the UN thoroughly mapped the issues and elements needed to include gender in all aspects of multidimensional peace operations, in the Windhoek declaration and Namibia plan of action¹³⁸. Soon after in resolution 1325, and again in an open session devoted to the subject in July 2002, the security council confirmed the relevance of routinely including gender perspectives when executing peacekeeping mission.¹³⁹"

The UN has deployed more gender specialists in peace keeping mission like in the UN mission in Kosovo (UNMIL), in UN transitional administration in east Timor (UNTAEF) and in Sierra Leone (UNASMIL) in 1999. And then in the democratic republic of Congo (MONUC) in 2000 However

¹³⁷ *IBID*

¹³⁸ Online source, ' <http://www.reliefweb.int/library/accessed> on 28th april 2012

¹³⁹ E. Rehn and E. J. Sirleaf, ' *Women War Peace* ' op cit p.65

as Jean-Marie Guehenno,¹⁴⁰ Under Secretary General for the UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) said in an assessment of gender mainstreaming in peace operations, “for more remains to be done, both in the field and at head quarters”

5.2 Recommendations to Policy Makers

1. The UN and governments should improve opportunities for collaboration with women's groups in peace operations to address gender issues.
2. Gender experts should be included at all levels and in all aspects of peace operations.
3. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and member states should increase women's representation in peace operations including the recruitment of police, military and civilian personnel with a view to train, give experience as well as refining the women on the skills required for peace building processes.
4. Women should be given 50% representation in leadership at all levels nationally.
5. Women's groups and organizations should be allocated finances in the national annual budget to support their reintegration and grass root projects.

Further areas of research

1. Women leadership and policy making
2. The seniority of women's family roles
3. Catalysts of conflict

¹⁴⁰ Statement to the Security Council Open Meeting on, 'Conflict, Peace Keeping and Gender,' New York. 25 July 2002

Conclusion

Finally, the study has dwelt on women as peace builders but it has not gone in depth to state the role men have played in the same. This is a field that would be exhausted by considering women as victims, combatants and peace builders at all levels. It is worth nothing that the road is still long and there is a lot to be done, to only ensure that women are included in peace building but also in other aspects of life including leadership.

Women are affected at all levels by violence in personal, house hold and public¹⁴¹; ranging from wife battering to rape and denied hearing and chances in the public.

This violence has acted as a catalyst for women to yearn for liberty from being looked down upon, from being victims to solution holders and decision makers. Women have walked a long way in the fight for equality and they indeed need corn mending.

Gayle foreman¹⁴² talked of how women from three war torn areas; Afghanistan, Kosovo and east Timor honored the first anniversary of resolution 1325 even though the UN does not normally allow birthdays and anniversaries. This is one of the instances that women through activism and consistent pressure managed to get a policy amended to include their opinion. There are many hurdles before women's credibility and right as peace builders and decision makers is an accepted law but the future looks bright.

¹⁴¹ O'connell, H., 'women and conflict' OXFAM focus on gender, oxford. 1993, p.1

¹⁴² Ammu, J.and Sharma,K. 'Terror, Counter-Terror, Women Speak Out,' Zed Books, London. 2003, p.155

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INTERVIEWS

INTRODUCTION

This research is being carried out under the authority and direction of the Institute of Diplomacy and International Studies of the University of Nairobi. The research titled **'The Role of Women in Peace-Building: A Case Study of Liberia,'** involves both primary and secondary sources. The interviewees will be treated as the primary sources of this research, with an assurance that the information given will strictly be used for the purpose of completing this research and that the researcher may edit the information to fit the scope of this study.

The interviewee will be briefed on the scope of the study and further explanation and definition of the variables may be given if necessary. The researcher will grant anonymity of informer in case the interviewee requests so.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe Liberia before President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's regime?
2. How would you describe Liberia during President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf?
3. How did women in Liberia participate in the 1st and 2nd war, both as victims and combatants?
4. Describe ways in which women have participated in reconstructing the peace and development of Liberia?
5. What external organizations and/or governments took part in the war and/or peace building?

Thank you.

LIST OF INTERVIEWEES

1. Jarwo Cooper, General Auditing Commission, Republic of Liberia.
2. Niaschkar Gluaseay, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Liberia.
3. Bomo Whiegar, General Auditing Commission, Republic of Liberia.
4. Milton Varma, General Auditing Commission, Republic of Liberia.
5. Lavina Gould, Ministry of Finance, Republic of Liberia.
6. Samwar Fallah, General Auditing Commission, Republic of Liberia.
7. William Bryant, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Liberia.
8. Political Officer, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Nairobi.
9. Political Officer, Liberian Consulate, Nairobi.

ADDRESS

By

Her Excellency Ellen Johnson Sirleaf

President of the Republic of Liberia

To

The Security Council of the United Nations

On

Friday, March 17, 2006

(New York)

*Your Excellency, the President of the Security Council of the United Nations;
Your Excellency Secretary General of the United Nations;
Distinguished Excellencies, Members of the Security Council;
Ambassadors Accredited to the United Nations;
Ladies and Gentlemen.*

It is this morning a distinct honor and privilege to address distinguished members of the Security Council of the United Nations, in the name of the 3.5 million people of Liberia. I thank you for this special opportunity. As many of you will know, the people of Liberia last October/November took the heroic step of voting, not once but twice, to elect a new Government to direct their affairs for the next six years. In that process they entrusted me with the stewardship of a nation that had until only two years earlier still been the object of unprecedented internal civil strife, resulting in massive physical destruction and immeasurable moral and spiritual degradation. Today, thanks to the will and resilience of our, and buoyed by the unstinting support and commitment from you in the international community, a new Liberia has been ushered in since last January 16, 2006. Liberia is back, the long walk to our renewed freedom and aspirations as a nation has now begun in earnest. And after all, in the popular saying of a distinguished member of this very Security Council, "the longest journey starts with the first step". Liberians have now taken that first step towards a more just and democratic society, once again respecting of the rule of law and committed to a new and secure economic dispensation for all our citizens.

As I stand before you today, I am also mindful of what my very presence represents for the women of Liberia, who campaigned tirelessly at all levels of society not only last year, but through many years, for my election as President of Liberia, and as Africa's first elected female Head of State .On that basis I also today represent the hopes and aspirations of all women of Africa and indeed of the world. I know that this body has consistently fought for the rights of those women. As a former Assistant Secretary General of this very United Nations, I more than many know what this Security Council has done over the years, to ensure that women live better, with greater dignity and take their rightful place in areas of national and global leadership in our world of today. I salute your Council for this and I say to our women all over-I will not let you down.
Keep hope alive!

What we have inherited

Mr. President, while as recently as four decades ago, Liberia's state of economic development and quality of life paralleled that of today's "Asian Tigers" at that time, today Liberia is sadly among the poorest societies on our planet. Liberia has for the past 25 years or so, witnessed one of the most catastrophic and stunning reversal of development progress, driven mainly by internal civil strife. As a result, the legacy for the new Government which I now headed is one that of a country that is sadly the world's second or third poorest. In the devastating wars of the past 15 years in particular, some 250,000 were estimated dead; 500,000 were internally displaced from their communities of origin, with 300,00 as refugees in neighboring countries. Liberia's national production of goods and services has declined almost seven fold in the past 25 years.

As I traveled the length and breadth of Liberia in recent years, and especially during my electoral campaign last year, I saw ample and heartbreaking evidence of how three in every four of our citizens now try to live the less than one dollar a day that they earn. Almost one in 5 Liberian children will never live to see five years of age-one of the worst ratios in the world. Well less than half of our young people are currently enrolled in a primary school, partly as a result of us having had one of the highest enrolment of child soldiers in the world. One does not have to go far to see that almost 80% of the schools and health facilities of our country have been destroyed by the war. Our environment has been seriously damaged on all fronts. The average Liberian will probably die by the age of 47. At about 10-12% prevalence rates, Liberia has almost the highest rate of HIV/AIDS infection in West Africa at the moment. There is chilling evidence in Monrovia and across our country that four out of five eligible persons in Liberia are unemployed currently, the vast majority of these being young people.

What is worse is that the costs of war, mismanagement, misgovernance and sheer corrupt looting of our state have left us with a debt of some \$3.5 billion, well over a \$1000 per Liberian, earning less than \$1 a day. This debt has to be serviced from a national budget currently of a mere \$80 million dollars, probably smaller than the budget of most small corporations and many schools in a New York City. With this level of debt averaging

almost 40 times what we earn from our exports of once lucrative rubber, iron, diamonds and registrations of international ships, Liberia had not been able to service its indebtedness for more than two decades now.

Moreover, our new Government has inherited some of the worst and systemically pernicious forms of corruption for any developing country. Most of our state systems have collapsed; human capacities have migrated in abundance; institutions have disintegrated and remaining ones are at best fragile. In a word, had it not been for the tremendous support that we have received from you the international community over the years, Liberia would have been even more calamitous than presently, having already been declared a failed state only a few years ago by the UN. The people of Liberia know that this Security Council has steadfastly stood by them in the past. **I thank you for rescuing us through the years.**

International Support

Mr. President, in this connection we gratefully recall your tangible support through Resolution 1343 in 2001 justifiably embargoing the trading of Liberian diamonds. We recall that of Resolution 1478 of 2003 that imposed sanctions on our forestry industry, restricting the sale of our timber. Both of these resources were indiscriminately being used in the past to fuel the civil conflict, in which thousands of our citizens internally and externally displaced and lost their lives and property. I would in particular also like to acknowledge the facilitation of the Accra Peace Agreement signed August 18, 2003, by the International Contact Group for Liberia (ICGL), consisting of international and African regional Governments and institutions; the deployment of some 15000 UNMIL peacekeeping forces by Security Council Resolution 1509; and your support for the first International Reconstruction Conference in early 2004 co-hosted by the US, the UN and the World Bank. That conference enabled us to launch critical funds for humanitarian and early reconstruction needs, including the very important demilitarization, demobilization, rehabilitation and reintegration (DDRR) program for some thousands of ex-combatants, since end 2003 and prepared the ground for democratic elections, which successfully

paved the way for the new democratic process now underway in Liberia. For this we are deeply indebted to the international community. We simply cannot betray the faith and hope that you have all invested over the years in us as a nation in our darkest hours. **Again I say, thank you so much.**

Where are we going?

So how are Liberians responding to the new challenges with which we are now faced, thanks to your generous support over the years, work has already begun on inclusive national economic reform and reconstruction. restoration of national peace and reconciliation as a top priority .Sustained national security, buoyed by the continuing support of UNMIL's forces, is imperative. But we recognize that to make a success of these we must move quickly and decisively to reassure our long suffering people that their new Government means business .This we are already doing .Working in close collaboration with our development partners, we are concentrating on enhancing security; pursuing programs of economic revitalization; strengthening good governance and the rule of law; and quickly rehabilitating our badly broken infrastructure , while seeking to provide basic services for our deprived people. Importantly, we have already begun to put our financial house in order.

More specifically, in the short term i.e. within the first 150 days of my Administration, we have already seriously embarked on, and are firmly committed to, modest restoration of electricity in a few sections of our capital Monrovia, which has been totally without power for more than 15 years now. We have already put in place and are rapidly expanding a number of community-based projects providing basic social amenities such as health clinics, primary schools, water and sanitation, throughout the length and breadth of Liberia .Our people demobilized from conflict and returning from refugee camps in neighboring countries to their communities of origin, are already embarking on the rebuilding of their own sustainable livelihoods. Work is advanced on the rehabilitation of some 600 kms of primary and feeder roads and several interconnecting bridges, as we quickly repair severely damaged commercial and agricultural access across our nation.

Importantly, we have already defining a national anti-corruption program .This will be over and above ongoing implementation of a framework already agreed with our partners for a focused governance and economic management program ,especially for a number of our State -Owned Enterprises (SOEs) , among many of whose operations there several instances of corrupt practices in the past. This underscores my Administration's unflinching commitment to stamp out corruption in all facets of national Life in our new Liberia. **We have absolutely no tolerance for corruption in this new Liberia.**

Beyond these specific things that we are well on our way to completing within the first 150 days of office , we are leady actively collaborating with our Bretton Woods partners, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, to quickly put into place the building blocks for our planned medium and longer term programs of economic reform and revitalization. Work is advanced towards a Staff Monitored Program with the IMF. By late this year the elements would be in place for ultimately clearing our external debt arrears of some \$1.5 billion to the multilateral, eventually facilitating significant debt relief within the HIPC process. With the World Bank and other partners we have also begun work towards a Poverty Reduction Poverty Strategy process, to more systematically confront the persistent poverty that has plagued our nation for so long.

Liberia needs to grow again. It needs to expand its national pie, for the greater good of all our long suffering people. They deserve no less; but more. I would have failed them if they got less. **I do not intend to fail the people of Liberia.**

The Road Ahead

But Mr. President, Members of the Security Council, even as we in the new Liberia embark on this long journey of reform and reconstruction, we are keenly aware of what lies before us. I am personally certain that sustained national security, consolidation of peace and the reaping of the post-conflict peace dividend for our people will not be possible without large and continuing flows of international capital and investment. Specialist World Bank research tells us that countries coming out of conflict run the risk

of relapse within four to five years, in the absence of such early and sustained support. We estimated our reconstruction needs for only this year and next year alone to be in excess of \$1 billion. Much of this will have to come from private capital sources. We have no illusions about this.

We are already doing what we could to prepare a more propitious environment for private investment and to deepen public-private partnership in Liberia, **To our private sector friends, I say, come to the new Liberia –you are very welcome.**

But I spoke earlier about our young people and how most of them have no jobs; how much they feel a sense of helplessness and hopelessness at the moment. As I mentioned in my Inaugural Address, I am particularly troubled by the unemployment situation now confronting them. Our youth are the future of our nation. But they are equally potentially the fuse, if not properly engaged and productively employed in the necessary process of national development. We must as a matter of priority, therefore, seek workable and concrete opportunities to create quick, meaningful employment activities for these young people, in areas of micro-finance development for instance, and to technically equip them as quickly as possible in the acquisition of basics skills to serve as necessary inputs for the significant amount of emergency and public works rehabilitation that we would need to undertake in coming months and years. I would personally very much welcome any suggestions or reference to translatable good practices in this area from any other parts of the world, both nationally and at a regional level **.Please share these with me.**

The conflict of the past two decades has also deprived us of the best and finest of Liberia's brains and skills .Thousands have left our shores and are now living abroad. Many would like to come back, but cannot do so over night. We are trying to do whatever we could to attract them back, to encourage them to make the national sacrifice. But as we all know this is not always as easy; there are often domestic and professional factors to be considered. It is our hope nevertheless that we could continue to count on our development partners and regional institutions to support any programs such as the UN's TOKTEN, to make special dispensations to fund the return from the diaspora of as many of our citizens as are willing to return for the process of national reconstruction.

For our part, we have initiated efforts to strengthen national educational and technical institutions. Practical schemes to facilitate cross-fertilization of other post-conflict experiences from other continental countries and elsewhere are also being explored. In addition, we are embarking soon on a systematic program of civil service reform, not only to right size the currently over-bloated public sector, but also to assure that those who are retained in service can command a much better package of remuneration than presently obtains.

Importantly also, Liberia is a part of a dynamic and entrepreneurially charged region of West Africa, whose citizens have invested an enormous amount to assure that we in Liberia are where we have come today.

We owe it to them to build on this spirit of regionalism, to positively expand cross – border contact, and to capitalize on the many regional and wider continental opportunities that exist for mutually growing our respective economies. To our brothers and sisters of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union (AU), I say a special thank you for all you too have done for us in the past. We look forward to jointly walking with you along our aspiring paths of peace, stability and revitalization in the long journey ahead.

Continued Support

Mr. President I have tried to outline above the present realities and the way ahead for the new Liberia. I count in your continued and unstinting support. I ask your continued support for speedily removing the remaining sanctions on trading our forestry products and diamonds. We have now met just about every agreed precondition. I am confident that any minor remaining few will be fully achieved in a matter of a few weeks. This will greatly assist our national budget, and grow our national pie.

I also seek your further support in the repatriation of any legitimate resources of our state that may have in the past been illegally stashed away by citizens of Liberia for personal gain. Where these are identified and can be properly documented and traced, we trust that we could count on your future support for their repatriation .Such reverse flows could go a far way towards alleviation of the wide spread poverty and suffering that have afflicted our people for so long, given our current annual budget of a meager US \$80 million dollars.

I equally ask as many of you as possible to forgive as much of our \$3.5 billion of the unsustainable debt burden we have inherited. Servicing an inherited debt of that magnitude, deprives us from buying basic medicines for our people, from sending more of our young girls to school, from expanding badly needed employment opportunities for our young men and eventually from staying secure as a nation.

I also call on our development partners among you to continue to go the extra mile wherever possible for small, poor post- conflict countries like Liberia, by showing even greater willingness and flexibility in the application of your bilateral and multilateral rules of engagement. In showing greater tolerance and flexibility in their implementation. In harmonizing your procedures wherever possible, and using more our own country systems, which are on the mend. In looking for concrete opportunities for modifying procedures to facilitate speedier return and support for Liberians abroad, and for funding of local costs for aspects of our operations, or for flexibly deploying assets to our government service following closure of projects they supported. **These will all help greatly.**

Closing

Mr. President, Secretary General, Distinguished Members of the Security Council, Ladies and Gentlemen:

I have tried this morning to signal the new journey upon which the nation of Liberia has now embarked, with the coming into office of my new Government just over two months ago. The journey to recovery and renewal has begun. It is a journey at the centre of which lies the need for continued stability, peace and maximum national security. At one level, as a people, we have patiently and peaceably done our part to ensure the initiation of this process of change and renewal now fully underway. Through enormous personal and collective sacrifice, we have already vindicated the hopes and aspirations that the entire community of nations have invested in us. And we are prepared to do more. But it is a task that will require sustained material and moral support-national, regional and international.

I therefore appeal to this august body to do all within your power to further assist us in building on an already emerging democratic legacy. As I walked through thick and thin, rain and shine, mud and solid ground, over the past several years- and especially the past one- the eyes, the tears and the smiles of our people told me all. "We want a better life, we need a brighter future, we are tired of the past, of the wars, of the pain, of the suffering, of the corruption", they consistently cried. They have called upon me now to deliver a better way for them. I intend with all my strength to walk the talk with them. To try to make a real difference for each and everyone of them – our long suffering people. **I owe them no less.**

I ask you to stay with me.

I thank you.

Remarks by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
At World Development Report 2011 High-Level
Panel Discussion on "Achieving the MDGs: Addressing
Conflict, Fragility and Armed Violence"
United Nations, Monday, September 20, 2010

Excellencies;
Fellow Panelists;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

It has been a pleasure to listen to the insightful contributions from my fellow panel members on this most important of topics.

I see my role today as contributing the perspective of one of those countries that has been affected by the turmoil of prolonged conflict.

I want to add a human face to the discussion, to remind ourselves that behind the statistics and indicators we are discussing, there are millions of people who are living daily with the consequences of slow progress towards the MDGs.

I also want to emphasize that just as the problems we are discussing are real, and that the need of today's event is pressing, with the right resolve and support, we can make progress and make a difference.

While most developing countries were moving towards meeting the MDGs between 1990 and 2003, Liberia was not only heading dramatically backwards, we were also losing the capacity desperately needed to achieve the Goals.

A direct result of that lost decade is that today almost two-thirds of our people live below the poverty line. Indicators on health,

education, access to clean water, food security and infrastructure are all poor. Women, in particular, are vulnerable because of the precarious nature of their employment and because of more limited access to such basic services as health and education.

To tackle this dire situation and have any hope of achieving the MDGs, the first priority of my Government was to establish peace and stability, because a return to violence would inevitably have wiped out any tentative gains we made.

We, in Liberia, are thus eternally grateful for the invaluable help of the UN and the international community – not only for their assistance, but for the way they have worked with us to support the peace-building priorities we identified.

Together, as laid out in our national Poverty Reduction Strategy, we have placed great emphasis on security sector reform, particularly the Armed Forces of Liberia and the Liberia National Police. We also focused on community reconciliation, on the crucial pillars of justice and the rule of law.

These elements are crucial to stability, without which there would be no investment and no jobs; no scope to rebuild our hospitals and schools, fix our roads and reconnect our power supply; no platform for what must be the ultimate guarantor of our development, namely long-term, inclusive economic growth.

The journey will be long. The scars of civil conflict, and the complex, deep-rooted tensions that gave rise to it, will not be easily erased.

Thanks to international cooperation, assistance and investment, we have started that journey and are making progress. We are hopeful of halving the proportion of people that suffer from hunger; eliminating gender disparities in primary and secondary

education; reducing by two-thirds the under-five mortality rate; halting the spread of HIV/AIDS, which we have kept under 5 percent; and halving the number of people without access to safe drinking water.

Countries that have experienced, or are still struggling with conflict and instability, are not lost causes.

However, we must recognize that their needs are specific and particularly challenging; that they need more specialized help and consistent, long-term support than more stable nations.

As an international community, we must do all we can to deliver the support that is needed.

If we do not, millions of people, who have already been caught up in the horrors of war, will have to face the misfortune and the injustice of being denied the improvements the world signed up for 10 years ago when it adopted the Millennium Development Goals.

I thank you.

Remarks by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
At Panel Discussion on "Inclusive Growth in Africa"
New York, Wednesday, September 22, 2010

Prime Minister Rasmussen;
UNDP Administrator Clark;
Fellow Panelists;
Excellencies;
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen:

As our country emerges from the state of economic collapse and institutional decay, the notion of "inclusive growth" is not just an abstract concept; it must become a reality in order for a secure future to take hold.

In Liberia, this is no easy feat. Our comparative advantage and our hope for economic growth over the next decade rest in our rich natural resources. But as we well know, the rents from resource extraction are the hardest to share equitably, especially before mature state institutions are built. Moreover, nearly two decades as a failed State has taken a serious toll on our people. As a result, we face capacity constraints in both the private and public sectors. High transportation costs, minimal electricity generation, shortcomings in educational provision, and fledgling state institutions present major challenges in furthering a diversified economy.

The combination of our inherited the socio-demographics and external shocks of the global market -- which limits the scope of our domestic economic policy -- means that without careful interventions, Liberia runs the risk of returning to the difficulties of its

past. We must thus create the social and economic opportunities that will restore our people's dignity and self-worth."

Our reform agenda aims at accessible and inclusive growth, as demanded by the people in a robust consultative process of town-hall meetings at the district, county and regional levels.

We know that our education and health sectors require massive overhauls, and we have worked to deliver improvements in those areas. We seek to provide access to learning for all segments of the population and improve the quality of teaching and learning at all levels. We have instituted free and compulsory primary education. We have built new schools in under-served areas, provided learning materials relevant to contemporary Liberia emphasizing gender parity, and de-wormed sick students.

We aim to improve health and equity by focusing on maternal and childhood mortality as well as malaria prevalence. We have implemented a basic package of health services, improved health infrastructure, and coordinated partnerships to strengthen investment in human resources at the frontline of care.

In our growth agenda, we have attracted private capital and invested in our natural resources at terms and conditions more favorable to the Liberian people. We have become the first country in Africa to become compliant under the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative, and the second in the world. This means that the revenues from our natural resources are closely monitored to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in allocating that use.

Our people, particularly the youth, require jobs. Our focus on the agricultural sector – which represents three-fifths of GDP and provides income and employment for 70 percent of our population – is motivated in part to create an engine for jobs and inclusive growth.

We are also in the process of land reform to stimulate agriculture and ensure that Liberia's land is used for the benefit of Liberians. A new labor law will ensure that the kinds of labor violations that afflicted the workers in our rubber plantations cannot occur in the future.

A significant part of our inclusive growth will come from small and medium-sized enterprises. Their success is dependent on government policies and processes. To date, our reforms, such as reducing corporate and other taxes, and getting rid of red tape, have focused on increasing investments by small businesses. We have also undertaken reforms in the financial sector, and are proud to say that micro-finance banks are now operating successfully in our country, which is both evidence and auguring of small business formation.

Inherent to the success of all of these policies is sound infrastructure, and nowhere were the people in the town-hall meetings more in agreement than when they said they wanted roads! We are working to improve those roads, allowing farmers' produce to get to market even during our rainy season. We are working to improve energy-generation capacity and access, which now reaches less than one percent of the population. We are gradually improving access to clean water and sanitation, a sector that had virtually shut down over the last 20 years. To expand spending on infrastructure and

reach our targets, we look to investors and partners to complete the \$250 million per annum gap.

Each time we develop policies, each time we build bridges, each time we change our legislation, not only are we transparent, not only do we only hold public hearings and meetings with civil society, we also keep asking Liberians in the villages whether this or that measure will make their lives better. In so doing, we guarantee that our development strategy is thoroughly and iteratively written by our people.

Importantly, we have undertaken these reforms while working towards a competitive economic environment where investors – both Liberian and foreign – will choose to come to our shores to do business. Of course, we will learn from others who, in time, have built the kinds of social and economic systems we aspire to attain. My friend and colleague Mr. Rasmussen presides over what may be the most developed economy in the world. Denmark is very much a competitive nation. Its companies generate wealth and ideas far in excess of what one might predict from the country's small population of 5.4 million. Yet, it is a just society, with one of the most equal income distributions in the world.

Liberia cannot become a Denmark overnight, or even over the next generation. Reforms in education – even when we have begun our work with diligence – take more than a generation as today's pupils need to become tomorrow's teachers. Other reforms, like social security and targeted cash transfers, cannot even be considered in earnest until our nation has escaped its underdevelopment.

Dear Friends, if you leave here thinking that Liberia has solved the many challenges it faces, I will not have been honest with you. When

a country is rich, to be inclusive is a question of values and desire, the kinds of values demonstrated by the citizens of Denmark. When a country is poor, it is also a question of resources. Our people want to be the engineers and the planters and the business owners that will

rebuild Liberia. But they lack the training to build the mines, good roads that lead to their farms, or capital to start a business.

On our own, we cannot provide all that. Moreover, our imperative to grow the economy will mean that we have to build broadband connections while some of our people are still without clean water. Our partners can, and are, helping us to push hard on all fronts so that our trained farmers have roads, our graduating students have jobs, and our entrepreneurs have a good business environment as well as capital. Only when we have made extensive progress on multiple fronts can inclusive growth become self-reinforcing.

I thank you.

Remarks by H.E. President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf
At Community of Democracies/Council of Women
World Leaders Panel Discussion
On "Women as a Critical Force in Democratic Governance"
New York, Thursday, September 23, 2010

Let me thank you, Tarja [President Halonen of Finland] and Dalia [President Grybauskaitė of Lithuania] for arranging this meeting. I join others in congratulating Michelle [Bachelet, the new Head of U.N. Women and former President of Chile] for taking on this responsibility in this institution, and joining Margot [Wallstrom, UN Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict], and Helen Clark, the first woman Administrator of UNDP, thereby expanding the critical force of women in the United Nations system.

As we know, governance epitomizes all facets of representation and decision-making, from the community to national levels. Women in democratic governance is when women's access in participatory institutions at the local, national, regional levels, are able to voice their preferences on issues of national concern.

And the word "critical" is important in these discussions because critical means that you have a critical mass of those voices and actions that are necessary for progress and for democracy.

The lone female voices in governance are just insufficient to make the meaningful changes that are necessary. As a small minority in governance, women are isolated, can be subjected to pressures, their capacities as representatives, policy makers

and decision takers are sometimes constrained by these small numbers. So critical force will need to bring together women's voices and perspectives, to be able to make a meaningful impact on democracy and to sustain the effort for the empowerment of women and the representation of women.

As of 2007, only 19 countries had achieved 30 percent of women's representation in national parliaments. By 2008, women occupied only 18 percent of parliamentary seats, with only 13 women in the highest positions of State out of 192 governments. Women ministers, and to a large extent, although this is changing, tend to be concentrated in social areas rather than legal, economic, political and executive sectors of the government.

We always applaud Rwanda as having the highest number of women parliamentarians in the world, at 55 percent. And in Pakistan and India, for example, constitutional amendments passed in the past decade increased the representation of women in their legislative assemblies and local governments.

In my own country, Liberia, our women organizations have a big pressure on for 30 percent women's representation in throughout our political life, in our Legislature, political parties and other organizations. The bill is facing serious challenges from a male-dominated Legislature, but we will continue that battle; we'll continue to push on it until that objective is achieved. Liberia is guided by the 1995 Beijing Platform for Action, which calls on nations to review the differential impact of electoral systems on the political representation women in electoral bodies and consider the reforms that are necessary toward enhancing their role.

The number of women in our Cabinet, our National Legislature and the Judiciary continues to increase. Not as fast as we would want it to, but in significant enough numbers, so that progress is indeed measurable and noticeable.

In my administration, I have six female Cabinet Ministers out of 21, but I make sure they hold strategic positions – Justice, Foreign Affairs, Agriculture, Commerce, Youth and Sports. That compensates for not being able to achieve the numbers. I've always played with the idea that I would get into the *Guinness Book of World Records* by having an all-female Cabinet, but I haven't been able to achieve that as yet. At the local governmental level, our women are visible, with 40 percent representation.

We are pleased that in our effort to enhance the empowerment of women, Liberia has made great progress and was recognized during this session as having made the most progress in that regard.

For us, democracy is becoming a global entitlement with women as a critical force – one that will increasingly be promoted and protected by collective national and international processes. Our success lies in gaining the support of civil society institutions, including the media, religious and women's and all the human rights groups that promote activism and equality in the society.

We, in Liberia, will continue to examine our laws and social institutions to eliminate any form of discrimination against women, to bring our laws in conformity with UN Conventions,

and to ensure that measures are taken to enable women to have equal to all opportunities and rights and freedoms that exist in the society under our laws.

In March 2009, I was privileged to co-host with Tarja [President Halonen] a Colloquium on Women that brought together thousands of women from all over the world to talk about the progress women have made since Beijing; to examine what kind of laws and measures, approaches and strategies have been adopted; and to exchange information on best practices and good examples that will enhance it.

Our National Plan of Action was one of the first to be concluded in Africa, and we've established the Angie Brooks International Center that will carry on the work of that Colloquium, providing the opportunities for women to come in and to be able to do research, to look at the examples of other women; to do the networking and promote the kinds of cross-border examples of exchange around the world, so that each nation can look at its own strategy, its own progress, and be able to adopt and change and revise and renew its own effort based upon the experiences and the successes of others.

I want to thank you all for being here, and thank all the panelists for supporting Liberia in its effort to advance women, and supporting women all over the world.

I thank you.

**ADDRESS BY HER EXCELLENCY ELLEN JOHNSON SIRLEAF
PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
TO THE 65TH REGULAR SESSION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY
NEW YORK, SEPTEMBER 24, 2010**

Mr. President;
Mr. Secretary-General;
Your Excellencies, Heads of State and Government and Heads of Delegations;
Distinguished Delegates;
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am honored to address this 65th Session of the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the people of Liberia. I congratulate you on your election, Mr. President, as President of this august Assembly. We are assured that you will bring to the office your wealth of experience as a former President and Foreign Minister of the Swiss Confederation.

Let me express appreciation to your predecessor, H.E. Dr. Ali Abdussalam Treki, for the capable manner in which he conducted the affairs of the 64th Assembly.

Allow me also to extend highest commendation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his unwavering commitment to the Organization and his efficient management of its affairs.

I wish to congratulate President Jacob Zuma, the Government and people of South Africa for successfully hosting the 2010 World Cup for the first time on our African continent. You made Africa proud, and we, in turn, are proud of you.

Mr. President:

Some four years ago, I stood at this podium and told the story of a country exhibiting the symptoms of two decades of self-destruction: a criminalized

and collapsed economy; a suffocating external debt overhang; dysfunctional institutions; destroyed infrastructure; a pariah nation in a state of decay; a people in a state of despair. All of this translated into hundreds of thousands in refugee camps, equal numbers of the talented in the Diaspora, thousands of women, youth and children struggling for survival.

Today, I stand at the podium to report on the progress that can be made from the collective effort of a resilient people, a responsive partnership, and effective leadership.

We have come to report to you, with confidence, that Liberia is well on the way to recovery. In less than five years, our economy has experienced average annual growth rate of 6.5 percent, despite the drag on the two-digit potential occasioned by the 2009 global economic crisis. I can say to you, with pride, that having successfully carried out the reforms required under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative, on September 17, at the Paris Club, the final segment of Liberia's \$4.9 billion external debt was written off the books.

I can report to you that we have opened the economy to put the private sector at the center of our development effort and thereby have attracted some US\$16 billion in private investment in the reactivation of our mining, agriculture and forestry sectors. A new potential lies recently in oil exploration.

Mr. President:

The results of reform in our security sector, enhanced by the continued deployment of the United Nations peacekeeping force, has stabilized the security situation in the country, with people moving freely around. The experience in this regard shows that peacekeeping and peace building can and should take place concurrently, and we are pleased that Liberia is now formally placed on the agenda of the Peace Building Commission to enable us to chart the way for a smooth transition for peacekeeping and peace-building to recovery.

Moreover, we have encouraged a vibrant environment in which people have exercised their inalienable rights to free expression, association, religion and access to the press without hindrance. Nobody has been molested on account of views expressed. Liberia has no prisoners of conscience in detention, nor does anyone have cause to flee in fear for their life or safety on account of their political belief or association. Thus, in promoting a liberal environment in which freedom, equity and equality are exercised as the best guarantee for peace, security and stability, we can boast of being counted among the governments that have demonstrated the commitment to good governance and proven respect for human rights.

Regionally, Liberia continues to demonstrate its commitment to good neighborliness, peaceful co-existence and respect for the sovereign integrity of other nations. We actively participate in sub-regional and regional affairs through the African Union, ECOWAS, CEN-SAD, and the Mano River Union. The Mano River Union is currently under Liberia's chairmanship, and this has allowed us to stay engaged with our members, Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire, as they embark upon their political transitions.

Mr. President:

We hail the recent breakthrough by President Barack Obama in bringing the Palestinians and Israelis back to the negotiating table, and holding their leaders to their words to fulfill their promise to remain engaged and conduct direct talks aimed at ending this long-running crisis.

Because we live in a global village, continued crisis in any Member State or region should warrant our concern. Moreover, an unending crisis contradicts the cardinal objective of the United Nations, which is the promotion of international peace and security.

In this regard, we suggest that the situation in Somalia warrants a Chapter VII intervention. Having gone many years without a stable constitutional government, the presence of pirates, extremists and other terrorist elements in that country should sound the alarm. The world needs to act promptly, as we cannot afford to see Somalia remain a haven of anarchists and extremists.

This is why our government supports the role of African Union troops in Somalia. We call for more troop deployment from other countries, and strongly support action in putting an end to the Somali quagmire. We also call on the Somalis themselves to accept dialogue and to go to the negotiating table to thrash out their differences and restore their country to rightful peace and dignity.

While we acknowledge the rights of States to self-defense and the promotion of programs in support of national interests, we call on them to do so responsibly with respect for international public opinion, protocols and conventions surrounding such developments.

Mr. President:

At this week's Millennium Development Goals Summit, we reaffirmed Liberia's commitment to continue to work for the achievement of all eight Goals, although we are implementing those Goals under a more challenging context. Our national development agenda and programs on ensuring national reconciliation, good governance and the rule of law, national security, food security, and implementation of our Poverty Reduction Strategy are consistent with the objectives of the MDGs. Our progress bears the fruits of this commitment.

We are pleased to note the progress the world has made in the advancement of women. Today, there is greater representation of women in government, in political life, business and in civil society. Liberia's own effort was recognized on Sunday when we received an award for our progress on MDG 3, the empowerment of women. We also commend the Secretary-General for establishing U.N. Women, and we applaud the appointment of Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, to take on this assignment as Executive Director.

We have five years left to do so. For us, it is not the target date that matters; rather, it is the commitment to achieving the Goals that is important to us. We therefore call upon our partner countries to support the realization of the Goals through strong global partnership as recommended by MDG 8.

We believe in the partnership that we have enjoyed from bilateral and multilateral institutions that have made our progress possible. We call upon all in this room to secure the strength of this partnership that benefits all of our countries by supporting the replenishment of the resources of the World Bank and the African Development Bank.

Mr. President, Excellencies:

Liberia's progress is not without challenges. The satisfactory security environment of which I speak is still fragile, and made more so by the political uncertainties in our sub-region. We also continue to face the tensions associated with the thousands of our youths who, lacking skills, are still unemployed. Moreover, we continue to manage the raised expectations in the demand from villages and communities across the country for essential infrastructure such as roads, schools and clinics.

Perhaps the greatest challenge we face is to go beyond the measures we have taken in formulating a public service Code of Conduct, in introducing new procurement and financial management systems in establishing and strengthening the pillars of integrity, all aimed at addressing long-standing corruption. Reform of the judicial system and efforts to change an inherited value system are additional measures that are under way.

Another challenge is Liberia's vulnerability to organized cross-border crimes, including drug trafficking and human trafficking, as a result of porous borders and limited law enforcement capacity with weak national security organizations. Against this background, we recently signed the Freetown Commitment on Combating Illicit Trafficking of Drugs and Transnational Organized Crime in West Africa. This should assist in promoting capacity building in the region to combat transnational crime.

Mr. President:

The root cause of civil crisis in Liberia has been the consistent failure of democratic transitions which would usher in governments elected by the people. With the support of the United Nations, multi-party democratic elections were held in 2005 following the end of the civil crisis. In keeping

with our Constitution, once again the Liberian people will exercise the right of choice as we are to hold elections in 2011.

The 2011 elections will mark a groundbreaking turning point. It will complete Liberia's transition to full constitutional rule and participatory democracy. This will be the true test of Liberia's progress on the road to development and its defining moment, which, if successful, will serve as proof that we can truly stay on an irreversible course towards peace and development. It is absolutely essential that everything is done to ensure a peaceful, legitimate and transparent process.

I wish to state categorically that my government is completely and fully committed to this objective, and we call on the international community to stay with Liberia on this last stretch. Already, the process leading to the holding of elections in 2011 has begun with the release of the elections timetable.

As a Founding Member of this Organization, Liberia remains inspired by the noble objectives of the United Nations in meeting the enormous global challenges. We believe in the ability of the United Nations to formulate and implement programs particularly aimed at raising the standard of living of people, forging global cooperation and solidarity, and encouraging dialogue to reduce tension and conflicts.

Mr. President, Excellencies:

In closing, we say again that Liberia is on the way to recovery. We have thrown off the label of a pariah state. We have restored hope to our people, credibility and honor to our national integrity, and won international creditworthiness and respect.

Our confidence in the future of our country is firm. Our new vision of a Rising Liberia seeks to move us to a middle-income country by the year 2030. This is an aggressive goal but we are determined, and through efficiency in the allocation and use of our natural resources, we will succeed.

We thank you, Mr. President and all the Members of this noble institution, for the support which has brought Liberia to this point of progress.