

Ethnic National and Regional Challenge to Peace Keeping and Development in West Africa ECOMOG in Focus

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ABSTRACT

The Liberian crisis which is the subject of this study was one of such cases in which the measures was applied to maintain peace by the Economic Community of West Africa State (ECOWAS). The Liberians crisis escalated in 1980 when Samuel Doe staged a coup that brought the ethnic majority of the Liberian to power. The conflict assumed a wider dimension following the involvement of other extraneous forces around Liberians, a situation which the ECOWAS leaders thought would lead to the war spreading to other countries in the sub region. This study examined the operations of the peacekeeping body the ECOMOG which ECOWAS established for the purpose of securing peace in Liberia. For its explanatory tool, the study adopted the theory of collective Security. The major findings of the study include the fact that the domination of political power by the Afro-America Liberians is at the root of the conflict in the country. The study also discovered that poor funding and the colonial orientations of the various forces contributing states in ECOWAS adversely affected the operation of ECOMOG in Liberia. The study recommends that the Leaders of ECOWAS should establish more integrated peacekeeping forces with training in language and cultures of the Nations in the sub-region.

INTRODUCTION

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), whose main objective is to promote economic development in West Africa, created a military branch called ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). ECOMOG was created to perform peacekeeping operations in the ECOWAS countries in crises. Since its establishment, ECOMOG was deployed in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau. During its different deployments, it faced several financial and logistical problems. However, its presence in West Africa helped bring about peace in the countries where there are conflicts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The political crisis in Liberia reached its apogee following the invasion of the Nimba country by Charles Talyor in December 1989 under the banner of National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). By early 1990, the situation degenerated with rebel forces having reached Monrovia. International call for a cease-fire went unheeded and mediation efforts ultimately proved. That parties should subscribe to free and fair election as the only way to restore peace and harmony in that country.

Despite problems of command and control, among others, ECOMOG has achieved more success than expected by its founders and the international community. It has provided clear proof of what is possible if African states pool their resources to address a problem. Though the force has been successful, it would be foolhardy to ignore the considerable problems that have been identified in the course of its operations. The most salient of these may be summarised as follows:

1. Excessive control by home governments
2. Language differences
3. Lack of standardisation of equipment, arms and ammunition
4. Different training standards, doctrine and staff procedures
5. Poor sea and air lift capabilities
6. Absence of vital air to ground support assets, particularly ground attack helicopters
7. Lack of logistic support for some contingents
8. Inadequate resources to deal with humanitarian problems
9. Poor coordination and liaison with international relief agencies
10. The misrepresentation of force activities by mercenary organisations and the international mass media

Ray Ofoegbu (1980) is of the conception that conflict relationships in the international system receive more attention, comment and analysis than either cooperative or competitive relationship. He avers that conflict occurs when a serious disagreement, threat, use of violence or threats of the use of violence. In spite of the nature of conflict, Ofoegbu considers it as a normal and almost inevitable phenomenon at all levels of human society because as he puts it, occasions and issue of conflict always exist which could be activated when an actor seeks a major redistribution of values while others stay aloof. Hence there will always be those seeking to change the status quo and hoping to maintain it. Koffi Annan (1995) is of the contention that classical peace would be a neat

solution to conflict but if one should restrict himself to that, then one would be excluding the main new sources of threats. Koffi Annan is simply emphasizing peacekeeping but sees classical peace keeping as a way out, once the crisis has taken place.

METHODOLOGY

Method of Data Collection

This study engages “documentary method” in the form of secondary sources of information as the method of data collection used in this research study.

Method of Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study, qualitative analysis is applied. By utilizing quantitative approach, deduction argument was applied to articulate the quantum of data reviewed and the study was concluded based on the documents available.

RESULT AND DISSCUSSION

Historical Background to the Liberian Crisis

Liberian is a country in the West African sub-region. It was established in 1821 by Freed slaves from America. Since its foundation, Liberian had experienced varying levels of conflicts as a result of the injustices meted out by one group on another. The settlers commonly known as American Liberians imposed a colonial rule on the natives whom they met on the land. They used powerful institutions like the true Whig Party and the Masonic lodge as the repressive instruments against indigenous Liberians.

The true Whig Party won all the election in Liberia between 1877 and 1880. This state of affair did not augur well for indigenous Liberians as a result, their plight drew the attention of the league of Nations in 1929, Which had to investigate into the allegation of slave labour that was practiced by the American-Liberians on the natives whom they met on the land. At a certain stage, in the marginalization of the natives by the American-Liberian, a man known as Samuel Doe a sergeant took a bold step to redress some of these injustice and so began process which put an end to these predecessors like (Williams Tubman) through a bloody coup by him (Samuel Doe) in 1980 to which the majority of the people, particularly the natives Liberian saw as a fulfillment of justice. The euphoria that greeted Doe’s take over was ephemeral as it soon turned into despair.

Doe, like his predecessor began to implement repressive policies which led to ethnic tensions in various quarters and he used khan dominated Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) as the instrument to subjugate the people. Samuel Doe’s repressive measure came under resistance when in December 1989, some rebels under the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor invaded Liberia from its boarder with Cote d’Ivoire and created the pandemonium for the regime of Samuel Doe. It did not end there as full blown guerilla warfare erupted in Liberia characterized by large scale massacre of civilians.

The (AFL) of Doe on its part was immersed in the slaughter of civilians from Gio and Mano tribes in Nimba country whom Doe accused of supporting the rebellion. Reprisal by the NPFL of Charles Taylor resulted in even greater human suffering as traditional accepted rules of war were totally ignored by the conflicting parties. It is sad that foreign nationals were taken hostage and that the United Nations facilities as well as various embassies came under attack. By October 1990, Liberian refugees outside the country numbered over 600,000 thereby placing serious strain on the already fragile economies of the neighbour states.

The Liberian crisis was first officially discussed by ECOWAS in May, 1990 with the establishment of a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC), consisting of the Gambia, Ghana, Mali, Nigeria and Togo. An emergency meeting of the foreign Ministers of members of the SMC was held on July 5, 1990. To work out modalities for a cease fire after which a decision was made to deploy a peace keeping force known as the ECOWAS Cease fire monitoring group (ECOMOG) to Liberia. The force consisted of troops from Gambia, Ghana, Sierra Leone and Nigeria, which contributed about 70% of the force. There is abundant evidence that since the entrance of the minority Americo-Liberians into Liberia there had been difference between them and African settlers or ethnic Liberian majority. Hence the forces of imperialism and nationalism. In short the activities of the Americo-Liberians prepared the grounds for the conflict between them and the indigenous Liberians.

The domination, subjugation and intimidation of the indigenous people by the Americo-Liberian was too glaring. Out of 19 Presidents before the April 12, 1980 putsh, none was an indigenous Liberian, besides, 11 out of the number were actually born in America. These and other retrogressive activities on the part of the Americo-Liberian necessitated the "rescue operation" carried out by 17 non commissioned and hardly literate officers of the Liberian Army by seizing power in April 12, 1980 in the spirit of nationalism against the imperialist American-Liberians.

This singular act, though celebrated by the majority of Liberians in the spirit of nationalism was the pivot upon which the Liberian conflict revolves. Sergeant Samuel Doe, the first ethnic President of Liberia became too ruthless first to the Americo-Liberians, later to his fellow indigenes, though not from his tribe. In sum, his style of leadership and political ambitions engineered a lot of opposition against him. Finally civil war broke through the activities of Charles Taylor's (an Americo-Liberian) NPFL on the 24th of December 1989. At the end of it all, Charles Taylor an Americo-Liberian became the President of Liberia's 3rd Republic. From the foregoing, it is abundantly clear that both collective security theory as our framework of analysis, and theories of imperialism and nationalism all have combined to explain, evaluate and organize the data on the evolution and escalation of the Liberian crisis and also the intervention through peace keeping operation by ECOWAS monitoring group (ECOMOG).

In sum, through collective security theory we were able to see the justification of intervention by the Economic Community of West African States and through the theories of Imperialism and Nationalization, we were also able

to trace the root cause and development of Liberians crisis. ECOMOG intervention in Liberia crisis puts the organization and Nigeria at the center of the struggle against tyranny and agnate in that country. The bottom line is that the procedure resolution of conflicts was used as attested by the series of discussion, conversation, arguments as well as the compromise which results from bargaining and too pave the way for mediation and conciliation and eventually peace or relative return to that country (Liberia) through the last stage of procedure resolution known as award.

The Liberian Civil War, which was one of Africa's bloodiest, claimed the lives of more than 200,000 Liberians and further displaced a million others into refugee camps in neighboring countries. Elections are scheduled for 1991. But late in 1989, severe communal violence broke out after a failed coup attempt against Doe. Several hundred members of the Gio and Mano tribes, that had been ill-treated by Doe, revolted in the northeast.

On December 24, 1989, a small band of Libyan trained rebels led by Charles G. Taylor, invaded Liberia from the Ivory Coast. Taylor, Doe's former procurement chief, is an Americo-Liberian of both indigenous and Americo-Liberian ancestry. He graduated from Bentley College in Massachusetts and is said to have tastes that run to fine suits and silk ties. With explicit support from neighbouring African nations and a large section of Liberia's opposition, Taylor's National Patriotic Front rebels rapidly gained the support of Liberians because of the repressive nature of Samuel Doe and his government. Various unpredictable events, like the Gulf war and the consequent US disengagement from Liberia, coincided to turn this into a protracted civil war, with ultimately west African ECOMOG intervention. A final cease fire and peace accord in 1996 was followed by the installation of a transitional government of all factional leaders.

Liberian troops and provincial security forces were dispatched to Nimba County to counter the insurgency and indiscriminately killed Liberian civilians without regard to the distinction between combatants and noncombatants. In response to this insurgency, President Doe launched an unrelenting wave of violence against the inhabitants of Nimba County. Media reports and international human rights organizations estimated that at least 200 persons, primarily members of the Mano and Gio ethnic groups, were killed by troops of the Government of Liberia during the counterinsurgency campaign.

Libya may have used the Liberian civil war to undermine US influence in Liberia, since the CIA had reportedly used Liberia as a base to attempt the overthrow of Gaddafi's regime. Burkina Faso's president Blaise Compaore, another Libyan protégé, provided foreign mercenaries and training bases for Taylor. Military supplies and manpower from Libya and Burkina Faso were transported by road through the Ivory Coast to Liberia.

One of the factors that drove the warlords to reject a transition to normalcy was their exploitation of Liberia's natural resources. Once the war started, Taylor found wealth, and the war was increasingly about maintaining that fortune. The warlords were wantonly exploiting their country's resources to keep themselves and their ragtag forces in weapons with virtual impunity,

and in some cases complicity. The primary sources of revenue for these warlords were Liberia's diamonds, timber, rubber, gold, and iron ore. Timber and rubber are among Liberia's main export items. Liberia earns more than \$85 million and more than \$57 million annually from timber and rubber exports, respectively. Alluvial diamond and gold mining activities also account for some economic activity.

Barely 6 months after the rebels first attacked, they had reached the outskirts of Monrovia. Liberia has been marked by intermittent civil war ever since. Although many Liberians were glad to see Doe's repressive regime removed, no group that emerged from the civil war was powerful enough to replace the Doe government. As a result, the Republic of Liberia was plunged into a state of chaos from which it has yet to emerge.

Despite a cease fire agreement signed in Bamako, Mali, in 1990, the civil war never really ended. Prince Johnson, who had been a member of Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) but broke away because of policy differences, formed the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL). Johnson's forces captured and killed Doe on September 9, 1990. The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) intervened and succeeded in preventing Charles Taylor from capturing Monrovia. An Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) was formed in Gambia under the auspices of ECOWAS in October 1990 and Dr. Amos C. Sawyer became President. Sawyer was backed by a Nigerian led peace keeping force, known as ECOMOG (ECOWAS Monitoring Group). Taylor refused to work with the interim government and continued the war.

The war spilled over into Sierra Leone in 1991, when Foday Sankoh led a mixed group of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans into Kailahun in eastern Sierra Leone. President Momoh's troops attempted to train a fighting force from among the 250,000 Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone. The ex-Liberian Broadcasting Corporation head, Alhaji Kromah, organised Mandingo Muslims and Krahns refugees in Freetown to form the United Liberation Movement of Liberia (ULIMO). The Krahns and Mandingoes became the direct targets of Taylor's NPFL group. In neighboring Sierra Leone, refugees of these two tribes led other tribes in organizing the ULIMO faction and returned to Liberia. It was this group in 1992 that helped the West African ECOMOG peace keeping force stop the takeover of Monrovia by Taylor's NPFL rebels.

With the escalation of violence that began in August 1992 it seemed as if even the limited peace Liberia possessed had been completely shattered. The re-emergence of overt civil war threatened to return Liberia to the state of terror and brutality that prompted Africa Watch monitors to call Liberia a "Human rights disaster". By 1992, several warring factions had emerged in the Liberian civil war (All of which were eventually absorbed in the new government). Roads leading out from Monrovia were not open for travel except for very limited pre-approved trips into Cape Mount and Bomi counties. Travelers, including US citizens, had been detained, harassed and delayed by forces of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL). Five US citizen nuns were killed in Gardnersville by NPFL Troops in October 1992. Roberts International Airport

outside of Monrovia was closed. Limited air service existed only between Spriggs Payne Field in Monrovia and Abidjan, Cote D'Ivoire, and Freetown, Sierra Leone. No major international air carrier served Spriggs Payne Field. Overland routes to other West African countries were not open

From AAFC to ECOMOG

Since ECOMOG operations started with Liberia, it is necessary to discuss some of the events in the country that led to the creation of the regional force. On 12 April 1980, Master Sergeant Samuel Kanyon Doe took advantage of the absence of the senior officers who had planned the coup to terminate the oligarchic government of President William Tolbert. When these officers saw that the marines had actually assassinated President Tolbert at the executive mansion in Monrovia, they took to their heels. Master Sergeant Doe, realising that he was now the most senior among the soldiers at the executive mansion, declared himself head of state. Among his subordinates was Charles McArthur Ghankay Taylor, a member of the General Services Agency (GSA) at the time.

In an attempt to legitimise his rule, Doe organised an election in 1985 and declared that he had won. Meanwhile, Charles Taylor had embezzled government funds and escaped to the United States. On 24 December 1989, Taylor spearheaded an insurgent movement, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) to overthrow the government of President Samuel Doe. Taylor was supported by the late President of Côte d'Ivoire, Felix Houphet-Boigny, who was an in-law and had been a close friend of President William Tolbert.

The NPFL made rapid military gains and, by the middle of June 1990, were fighting in the vicinity of the Liberian capital, Monrovia. The fighting was of a most savage nature. The combatants respected neither life nor property and killed Liberian nationals and foreigners indiscriminately. Civilians were particularly targeted in the conflict. They were murdered in their thousands and in the most brutal manner. The result was a massive refugee problem as thousands of civilians fled to neighbouring countries.

The internal security situation further deteriorated when the commander of the advance unit of the NPFL that was operating in the vicinity of Monrovia, Prince Yormie Johnson, revolted against Charles Taylor and formed his own armed movement. Liberia gradually started sliding into anarchy as the government of President Doe was clearly losing the capacity to protect life and property, enforce law and order, or even to carry out the normal routine of administration. Thousands of foreign nationals were trapped in the fighting. Many of them fled for safety to their embassies, churches or with international relief agencies, but they were chased from these supposed places of refuge and massacred by Liberian combatants. Many countries that attempted to evacuate their nationals could not do so because of the state of anarchy.

Peace Enforcement

All ECOMOG intervention operations have so far been successful. They have forced armed groups to accept negotiations that, in most cases, led to a cease fire. ECOMOG is normally asked to monitor and enforce the provisions of the cease fire. Because the factions that signed these cease fire agreements do not do so in good faith, violations are rampant. This compels ECOMOG to use

force to get the recalcitrant parties to adhere to what was agreed. Sometimes, this will involve outright and large scale military operations against the most belligerent insurgent group or groups. ECOMOG missions, at this stage, change from intervention to peace enforcement. At all stages, the ECOWAS Secretariat is kept informed.

Peace enforcement operations of ECOMOG have always led to a widening of the initial safe havens established for non combatants. This compels armed groups to realise that they cannot achieve their political objectives by military action. It takes appreciable time for armed groups to reach this conclusion. In the period that ECOMOG is engaged in military action to force them to such a position, extensive logistic support and troop reinforcement are required. This is because the groups which it is fighting against are not conventional armies, and their strategy is to bring intolerable hardship on the civilian population in order to make ECOMOG and the legal authority it supports unpopular. They usually do this by carrying out extensive ambush operations on commercial vehicles in order to render the roads unsafe. They also carry out extermination operations against undefended communities in order to terrorize others into submission and collaboration.

In order to checkmate this strategy of terror, ECOMOG has had to deploy over wide areas, but in most cases, it has not had adequate troops and logistics to do so. It is usually at this critical stage that ECOMOG suffers operational reverses that Western powers exploit in order to step in and force all the parties to negotiate. These negotiations are normally under the auspices of ECOWAS, and in all cases a general settlement is reached. A consistent aspect of these general settlements includes disarmament, the formation of an interim or transitional government, the return of refugees, military reform, and the staging of general elections. ECOMOG is usually tasked to carry out the disarmament, ensure the security of UN personnel and the interim or transitional government, as well as to assist in the process of military reform and the conduct of general elections. At this stage, ECOMOG missions change from peace enforcement to peacekeeping.

Peacekeeping

ECOMOG peacekeeping missions normally start off on a very difficult footing. It takes considerable effort, time and diplomacy to persuade the parties that fought ECOMOG that the force is now neutral. However, ECOMOG has successfully overcome these difficulties and can rapidly transform itself from a fighting force to a peacekeeping force that enjoys the confidence and respect of the very insurgents it was fighting. The key to this success is because ECOMOG has always enjoyed the trust and confidence of the civil population. In many instances, it has intervened when general anarchy has set in, and has saved the civilian population from the savagery of gunmen. ECOMOG is thus perceived as a liberator by the larger society.

ECOMOG soldiers have also shown remarkable humanity in their treatment of captured or surrendered combatants. The initial fears which insurgents have had about ECOMOG disappear when, in contact with ECOMOG troops, they are given food, cigarettes, medicine and made to feel at

home as fellow soldiers. In most cases, the combatants find that they receive better treatment from ECOMOG troops than from their own commanders. ECOMOG High Command also makes a deliberate effort to reach the leadership of the insurgent movements and to establish sound interpersonal relations. The success of this strategy has been manifested in the ready acceptance, or sometimes even request by the insurgent leaders for ECOMOG to assume responsibility for their personal security.

Command and Control

Like most multinational peace support forces, ECOMOG has experienced difficulties in trying to operate a unified command. Because of the high level of distrust among member states and the influence of non-regional powers, troop contingents usually arrive in the mission area with different and sometimes conflicting instructions. From the perspective of a former force commander, it appears that the kind of key instructions on rules of engagement, given to various national contingents in a typical ECOMOG operation by their home governments, could vary from contingent to contingent as follows:

1. To take active part in all military operations, including combat in all parts of the mission area
2. To take active part in combat, but only in a particular part of the mission area
3. To take active part in combat only on the approval of the home government, after assessing the situation
4. To avoid taking part in any form of offensive operations, but to defend if the contingent is attacked
5. Not to participate in any fighting whatsoever and to refuse deployment in areas where contingent personnel might be exposed to the dangers of combat action

The command structure of ECOMOG is very simple. At the top is the force commander with below him the deputy force commanders who are also the contingent commanders of their countries' troops. The force commander operates a small planning staff headed by a chief of staff, who deals with common problems and coordinates the activities of the various contingents in close co-operation with his deputies. The central planning staff, under the directive of the force commander, usually designates various sectors of the mission area to the respective contingent commanders taking into consideration their strength, instructions from their home governments, their affinity to the host country and the level of their equipment, arms and ammunition.

ECOMOG does not operate a common or central logistic administration system. Each country provides its own contingent with arms, ammunition, food, transport and communication equipment. Nigeria has provided the entire force with petrol, oil and lubricants. The US, through a private company called Pacific Architect Engineers (PAE), has assisted ECOMOG operations with transport helicopter services, communication facilities, vehicles and general repairs and maintenance. The services provided by PAE are used commonly by all the contingents. In operations, the force commander's mission is given to the contingent commanders, who then task the various units of their contingents.

Because of the high level of control by home governments, the contingent commanders enjoy considerable autonomy from the control of the force commander. There have been instances where contingent units were pulled out of their areas of deployment without the approval or even the knowledge of the force commander, thus endangering the deployment of flanking contingents. Some contingents have also at times refused to come to the aid of other contingents without clearance from their home governments.

The Creation of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) 1:

The creation of the United Nations Emergency Force was the result of the General Assembly. The first imparted attempt at applying the uniting for peace resolution to resolve international conflict, and therefore, it was the first attempt by the UN to institutionalize the concept of peacekeeping operation. The conflict which resulted in the establishment of the UNF I was that between Egyptian government under President Nasser, had in 1959 nationalized the Suez Canal Maritime Company which was jointly owned by Britain and France, subsequently, United Kingdom. France and Israel launched a combined attack on Egypt, as an attempt to forestall the nationalization (since the Suez Canal was very important oil life line to the) and to stop Palestinian raids into Israeli territory (Wiseman 1987: 1).

The action of the United Kingdom and France was purported to be in the interest of international peace and security but as observed by some diplomats, "that action was clearly directed towards strengthening their position in the Suez Canal negotiation and in the case of France, towards eliminating one source of support for the Algerian Independence Movement" (Goodrich & Rosner 1957: 413 – 414). The United States and Soviet Union were not happy with the invasion and the case was subsequently reported by US to the Security Council for action and following disagreements among the permanent members of the Security Council, the "Uniting for Peace Resolution" which was intended to make action by the General Assembly possible without delay was evoked.

Problems of ECOMOG.

ECOMOG though had an impressive performance, it was not without challenges. Some of these problems were as a result of the peculiar formation of States in the sub-region, hence the difference in ideology. These led the initial effort to crush the rebellion in Liberia consequently, with establishment of a Standing Mediation Committee (SMC), this group was able to bring each of the warring groups to a roundtable discussion, conversations, arguments as well as compromise, which resulted from bargaining eventually brought peace or relative peace to Liberia.

The attitude of the various factions left much to be desired, as no one of them was ready to abide by the agreements reached. The climax of this attitude led to the abduction and execution of President Samuel Doe by one of these factions, this introduced a new phase to the situation in Liberia. Leaders of the Sub-region had a rethink, consequently armed ECOMOG to be able to keep peace as well enforce it. It may also be interesting to say when the warring factions could not match the more superior fire power of the ECOMOG force; they had little or no alternative but to stop fighting.

Another problem was that of finance, in fact it is inarguable that huge capital is required in peace keeping missions no matter the magnitude. Going by the nature of the economics of most countries in the sub-region, the financing of such a body was seen incomprehensible so they decided to allow the country (Liberia) handle its own problem until Nigeria came to the rescue of the body as a hegemonic leader.

In fact, the Nigeria government informed recently that Nigeria had spent about \$13billion in 12 years on the operations of the ECOWAS monitoring group (ECOMOG). Nigeria bore that heavy financial burden because of its belief in good neighbourliness, peace, security and ability within the sub-region. But even with the contribution from Nigeria, the body still suffered lean finances when compared to the magnitude of the problem it was meant to solve in the country.

The next problem was that of co-ordination and consistency. As a peace monitoring group involving different countries, it is expected that ECOMOG be given a reasonable period of time to get the personnel to work together effectively as team. But because ECOMOG was a child of necessity, the purpose of bringing personnel together to enhance performance was short and not effective enough. This accounted for the so many deaths recorded in the early part of its mission. ECOMOG also suffered the problem of almost losing its credibility as a peacekeeping force because, it was initially seen by the Charles Taylor group as a body that is skewed in favour of Samuel Doe. It was not easy for ECOMOG to convince the factions to understand its principle of impartiality, transparency, and credibility and above all to bring all warring parties to a round table discussion.

The ECOMOG also suffered the problem of spontaneous attack from the rebel groups. A good example is the NPFL attack on ECOMOG and Liberia via an operation code-named "OCTOPUS". This was an intricate problem as ECOMOG strive to defend itself and Monrovia. A major factor worth mentioning is the misunderstanding between the various groups, the difference in culture and ethnic groups. Having been under the Americo-Liberians for such a long period, the indigenous Liberian sees no reason to trust the Americo-Liberia, on the other hand, the Americo-Liberian sees Liberians as a second class citizens, hence their aim to keep leadership within their circle.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has attempted to review the various encounter by ECOWAS in its efforts to bring peace to the crisis laden Liberians through ECOMOG. The study admits that the crisis originated from the inability of the indigenous Liberia population and the Americo-Liberia minority population to live in harmony together. The study observes that this domestic environment related to external factors to fuel the conflict in that country. The involvement of ECOWAS was informed by both altruistic and sub-regional security interests. The altruistic interest of ECOWAS was aimed at stopping the lost in human material resources in Liberia. The study also conclude that the Nigeria desire to write off the bills of the ECOMOG operation in Liberia was informed by the altruistic tendency and the show of big brother posture in the sub-region as well as in Africa as a whole.

The analysis provided in this study has shown that the problems encounter by ECOMOG in Liberia stemmed mainly from the internal configuration fthe forces in the group, as well as other extraneous factors. In view of these, the following recommendations are made:

The ECOMOG community of West Africa State (ECOWAS) should in view of the importance of having a sub-regional organization to help in maintaining peace and security create a more harmonious and integrated peacekeeping body in its efforts in the process of peacekeeping in the sub-region. In this regard, the forces so envisage should be established well ahead of any crisis in the sub-region, perhaps in peace time. The forces so establish should have common training orientation in peacekeeping especially within the West Africa sub-region. Members of the force should be trained in two major languages (English and French) spoken in the sub-region. Common funds shall be established for peace keeping operation in the sub-region. This fund shall be entrusted with the secretariat of the organization and contributions to the fund made mandatory for all members' state of ECOWAS. It is the conviction of this researcher that a well organized, well funded and well articulated peacekeeping operation body is a welcome idea for the maintenance of internal peace and security especially within the West Africa sub-region.

FURTHER RESEARCH

This research still has limitations so further research needs to be done on this topic "Ethnic National and Regional Challenge to Peace Keeping and Development in West Africa ECOMOG in Focus".

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