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Sierra Leone >> Peace Agreement (1996)

### **Peace Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, signed at Abidjan on 30 November 1996**

The Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone (RUF/SL).

Moved by the imperative need for a just and durable peace in Sierra Leone;

Inspired by the equally imperative need for genuine national unity and reconciliation to end the fratricidal war in Sierra Leone;

Committed to promoting popular participation in governance and full respect for human rights and humanitarian laws;

Dedicated to the advancement of democratic development and to the maintenance of a socio-political order free of inequality, nepotism and corruption;

Determined to foster mutual confidence and trust;

Convinced that a sense of common purpose and patriotism is the need of the hour;

Hereby agree as follows:

#### **Article 1**

The armed conflict between the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF/SL is hereby ended with immediate effect. Accordingly, the two sides will ensure that a total cessation of hostilities is observed forthwith.

#### **Article 2**

The Government and the RUF/SL undertake that no effort shall be spared to effect the scrupulous respect and implementation of the provisions contained in this Peace Agreement to ensure that the establishment and consolidation of a just peace becomes a priority in Sierra Leone.

#### **Article 3**

A national body to be known as the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace shall be established within two weeks of the signing of this Agreement. The Commission shall be a verification mechanism responsible for supervising and monitoring the implementation of and compliance with all the provisions contained in this Peace Agreement.

The Commission, in fulfilment of this task during the period of consolidating the peace, shall coordinate and facilitate the work of the following bodies which it will proceed to establish:

- i. Socio-Economic Forum;
- ii. Citizen's Consultative Conferences;
- iii. Multi-partisan Council;
- iv. Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace;
- v. Demobilizations and Resettlement Committee;
- vi. National Budget and Debt Committee.

The Commission shall comprise representatives of the Government and the Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone, drawing on the resources of State and civic institutions as and when necessary.

The Commission shall have the power to recommend the preparation of enabling measures necessary for the implementation and development of the provisions contained in this Peace Agreement. It shall have the power to issue publicly its conclusions. The parties undertake to comply with the conclusions of the Commission.

The Commission shall have the power to prepare preliminary legislative drafts necessary for the implementation and development of the provisions contained in the present Peace Agreement.

The Parties undertake to consult the Commission before taking decisions on measures relating to the present Peace Agreement.

The Commission may similarly consult the Parties at the highest level whenever it is appropriate.

The Commission shall have access to and may inspect any activity or site connected with the implementation of the present Peace Agreement. The Commission shall have full powers to organize its work in the manner in which it deems most appropriate and to appoint any group or subcommittee which it may deem useful in the discharge of its functions.

The Commission shall have its own offices, adequate communication facilities and adequate secretariat support staff.

A Trust Fund for the Consolidation of Peace shall be established to provide funding for the implementation of the present Peace Agreement.

#### **Article 4**

Citizens' Consultative Conferences shall be organized once a year, the first of which shall be organized within one hundred and twenty days of the signing of the present Peace Agreement in order to encourage people's participation and to invite recommendations for the formulation of guidelines and their implementation that will ensure truly fair and representative political processes.

#### **Article 5**

The disarmament of combatants will be effected upon their entry into the designated assembly zones, and demobilization and reintegration as soon as practicable thereafter.

The upkeep and welfare of the encamped combatants shall be the primary responsibility of the Government of Sierra Leone in conjunction with the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace, assisted by the international community.

#### **Article 6**

The Parties commit themselves to a well-planned national effort on encampment, disarmament, demobilization and resettlement linked to national development objectives. To that end, a Demobilization and Resettlement Committee shall be established within a month of the signing of the present Peace Agreement.

The Committee shall coordinate the encampment, disarmament, demobilization and resettlement of RUF/SL combatants. The Committee shall work in coordination with all the relevant institutions and agencies.

Both Parties shall consult on the nomination of the membership of the Committee which shall not exceed seven persons.

The Committee shall be provided with adequate funding.

#### **Article 7**

The Demobilization and Resettlement Committee shall identify assembly zones and camp areas for RUF/SL combatants where they shall be registered, encamped and disarmed. The movement into the Assembly Zones shall commence within one month of the signing of this Agreement and be completed as soon as practicable but no later than three months from this date.

#### **Article 8**

The Parties shall request the international community to help supervise and monitor the encampment, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration processes. The Joint Monitoring Group shall have observers at any of these processes.

#### **Article 9**

The Commission shall, as a priority, make recommendations on the restructuring and reorientation of the military as well as its leadership. In this context, members of the RUF/SL who may wish to be part of the country's military can become part of the new unified armed forces within a framework to be discussed and agreed upon by the Commission.

#### **Article 10**

The Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure the return to barracks of those units of the army not required for normal security duties and the downsizing of the Armed Forces of Sierra Leone (RSLMF), taking into account the security needs of the country.

#### **Article 11**

A Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG) from the international community shall be responsible for monitoring breaches of the ceasefire provided under this Peace Agreement.

Both Parties upon signing this Agreement shall request the international community to provide neutral monitors.

Such monitors when deployed shall be in position for an initial period of three months.

The Neutral Monitoring Group shall report any violations of the ceasefire to its headquarters which shall in turn communicate the same to the headquarters of the Joint Monitoring Group comprising of representatives of the Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF based in Freetown.

#### **Article 12**

The Executive Outcomes shall be withdrawn five weeks after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group (NMG). As from the date of the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group, the Executive Outcomes shall be confined to barracks under the supervision of the Joint Monitoring Group and the Neutral Monitoring Group. Government shall use all its endeavours, consistent with its treaty obligations, to repatriate other foreign troops no later than three months after the deployment of the Neutral Monitoring Group or six months after the signing of the Peace Agreement, whichever is earlier.

#### **Article 13**

The Parties agree that immediately following the signing of the present Peace Agreement, the RUF/SL shall commence to function as a political movement with the rights, privileges and

duties provided by law; and that within thirty days, following that, the necessary conditions shall be created to enable the RUF/SL to register as a political movement according to law.

#### **Article 14**

To consolidate the peace and promote the cause of national reconciliation, the Government of Sierra Leone shall ensure that no official or judicial action is taken against any member of the RUF/SL in respect of anything done by them in pursuit of their objectives as members of that organization up to the time of the signing of this Agreement. In addition, legislative and other measures necessary to guarantee former RUF/SL combatants, exiles and other persons, currently outside the country for reasons related to the armed conflict shall be adopted ensuring the full exercise of their civil and political rights, with a view to their reintegration within a framework of full legality.

#### **Article 15**

The mandate and membership of the existing National Unity and Reconciliation Commission shall be expanded in consultation with the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace to enable it to undertake a sustained and effective campaign of civic education aimed at enhancing national unity and reconciliation, taking into account the imperative need to heal the wounds of the conflict.

#### **Article 16**

The Parties agree that the standards of accountability, integrity and probity in the public services of Sierra Leone shall be raised. To that end, immediate steps shall be taken to establish the office of Ombudsman to promote the implementation of a professional code of ethics, and the integrity and patriotism of all public servants. It shall also seek to eradicate all forms of corruption.

#### **Article 17**

The Parties shall approach the international community with a view to mobilizing resources which will be used to establish a trust fund to enable the RUF/SL to transform itself into a political party.

#### **Article 18**

The Parties agree to the principle of reforming the present electoral process in Sierra Leone. There shall, in that regard, be the full participation of citizens and their organizations in formulating electoral reforms.

The independence and integrity of the National Electoral Commission shall be guaranteed to ensure fair and acceptable electoral exercise.

In reconstituting the National Electoral Commission, the President shall consult all political parties and movements including the RUF/SL to determine the membership and terms of

reference of that Commission, paying particular attention to the need for a level playing field in the nation's electoral politics.

Both the Government and the RUF/SL shall, together with other political parties, nominate men and women of professionalism, integrity and objectivity to the National Electoral Commission, not later than three months after the signing of the present Peace Agreement.

It is hereby agreed that no member of the National Electoral Commission shall be eligible for appointment to a political office by any government formed as a result of an election they were mandated to conduct.

## **Article 19**

The Parties agree that the basic civil and political liberties which are recognized by the Sierra Leone legal system and are contained in the Declarations and Principles on Human Rights adopted by the United Nations and the Organization of African Unity, especially the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and People's Rights, shall be fully guaranteed and promoted within Sierra Leone society.

These include the right to life and liberty, freedom from torture; the right to a fair trial, freedom of conscience, expression and association, and the right to take part in the governance of one's country.

To foster national reconciliation and ensure the full and unrestricted participation of the RUF/SL in the political process, the RUF/SL shall enjoy:

- i. Freedom of the press and access to the media in order that they may be heard and informed.
- ii. Freedom of association, expression, assembly and the right to mobilize and demonstrate freely, and to communicate politically in order that they may organize effectively and set up appropriate infrastructure.

All political prisoners and prisoners of war, if any, shall be released.

## **Article 20**

To monitor compliance with the basic rights guaranteed in the present Peace Agreement, as well as to promote human rights education throughout the various sectors of Sierra Leonean society, including schools, the media, the police and the military, an independent National Commission on Human Rights shall be established.

In pursuance of the above, technical and material assistance may be sought from the United Nations Special Commission on Human Rights, the United Nations Centre for Human Rights, the African Commission on Human and the People's Rights and other relevant international organizations.

The National Commission on Human Rights shall have the power to investigate human rights violations and to institute legal proceedings where appropriate.

Further, a consortium of local human rights groups shall be encouraged to help monitor human rights observance.

#### **Article 21**

The Parties undertake to respect the principles and rules of international humanitarian law.

#### **Article 22**

In the pursuit of the reconstruction, rehabilitation and socio-economic development of Sierra Leone as a matter of the utmost priority, special attention shall be given to rural and urban poor areas, war victims, disabled persons and other vulnerable groups. The Government in conjunction with the Committee for Demobilization and Resettlement shall cooperate with all political parties and movements, including the RUF/SL, to raise resources internationally for these objectives during the initial phase of the consolidation of peace.

#### **Article 23**

The Government shall do all in its power to mobilize resources internally and externally to meet the needs of post-war reconstruction and socio-economic development.

#### **Article 24**

The Parties agree that the independence of the judiciary shall be strengthened in accordance with its role of ensuring the fair and impartial dispensation of justice in a democratic order. The composition of the present Judicial and Legal Service Commission shall be determined so as to ensure the independence of the judiciary from the other organs of State as well as the political parties. Its membership shall include, in addition to judges and representatives of the legal profession and public services, representatives of other sectors of society not directly connected with the administration of justice.

#### **Article 25**

The Police Force shall be strengthened to ensure that the rule of law is upheld throughout Sierra Leone. To that end, the present Police Force shall be vetted. Furthermore, the professional training of the Police Force shall henceforth assure a new orientation, by emphasizing professionalism, the importance of human dignity and democratic values and respect and protection of human rights. It shall, further, emphasize that the conduct of members of the Police Force shall be free from all partisan considerations of politics, ideology and social position and that the Police Force shall avoid and combat corruption.

Nominations for the Police Council will come from wider sectors of society prior to their appointment so as to ensure their truly civilian and non-partisan character.

## Article 26

It is recognized that there is a socio-economic dimension to the conflict which must also be addressed in order to consolidate the foundation of the peace. Accordingly, the socio-economic policy of Sierra Leone shall be guided among other things, by the following principles, taking into account available resources:

- i. Enhancement of the nation's productive capacity through meaningful grassroots participation in the reconstruction and development of the country;
- ii. The provision of equal opportunities to all Sierra Leoneans especially those in the countryside and the urban poor, with the aim of equitable distribution of the nation's resources thereby empowering them to contribute effectively to decision-making and implementation of policies which affect their lives;
- iii. Improving the quality of life of the people through the provision of inter alia,
  - a. Primary health care in all villages and towns;
  - b. Affordable and quality housing, especially in the countryside and poor urban areas;
  - c. Improved educational services to enable all children of primary and junior-secondary school age to receive free and compulsory schooling as well as provide the opportunity for the youth and all other Sierra Leoneans to receive affordable quality education;
  - d. Clean drinking water and a sewerage system in every village and town;
  - e. Provide job opportunities in a systematic and sustainable way for the people, especially the youth;
  - f. Promote and sustain rural development and support agriculture in terms of technical, credit and marketing facilities;
  - g. Provide support for production and provision of basic food and nutritional requirements of the people and food security in general;
  - h. Protect the environment and regulate the exploitation of natural resources in the interest of the people, as well as prohibit monopolies;
  - i. Provide the required infrastructure such as roads, transport and communications, energy and rural electrification, for improved living conditions, especially of the rural people;
  - j. Seek to obtain debt relief in order to transfer funds from debt servicing to meet the urgent requirements of rebuilding a war-torn society.



## **Article 27**

A broad-based socio-economic forum, in which the RUF/SL shall participate, shall be established with a view to enriching policy formulation and execution in the socio-economic sector.

## **Article 28**

The Government of Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations, the Organization of African Unity and the Commonwealth shall stand as moral guarantors that this Peace Agreement is implemented with integrity and in good faith by both parties.

Annex to this Agreement:

A nationwide sensitization programme for the peace process shall be pursued by the Parties, using all available means of communication to impress upon their combatants and the nation at large:

- The fact that hostilities have ended;
- The reasons for demobilization;
- The opportunities for reintegration of combatants;
- The need for reconciliation and lasting peace.

**Done in Abidjan this 30th day of the month of November 1996.**

(Signed) Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan KABBAH  
President of the Republic of  
Sierra Leone

(Signed) Corporal Foday Saybana SANKOH  
Leader of the Revolutionary United  
Front (RUF)

(Signed) Henri Konan BEDIE  
President of the Republic of  
Côte d'Ivoire

(Signed) Berhanu DINKA  
Special Envoy of the United Nations  
Secretary-General for Sierra Leone

(Signed) Adwoa COLEMAN  
Representative of the Organization  
of African Unity (OAU)

(Signed) Moses ANAFU  
Representative of the Commonwealth  
Organization

Posted by USIP Library on: March 26, 2002

Source Name: Text e-mailed from the United Nations Information Centre, Washington, D.C., January 7, 2002.

Source Document Number: U.N. Doc. No. S/1997/1034