

UNHCR
Centre for Documentation and Research



WRITENET Paper No. 8/2000

**GUINEA: CONFRONTING INSECURITY IN THE MIDST
OF UNSTABLE NEIGHBOURS**

By Tom Kamara

**Independent Researcher
The Netherlands**

February 2001

**WriteNet is a Network of Researchers and Writers on
Human Rights, Forced Migration, Ethnic and Political Conflict**

**WriteNet is a Subsidiary of Practical Management (UK)
E-mail: writenet@gn.apc.org**

THIS PAPER WAS PREPARED MAINLY ON THE BASIS OF PUBLICLY AVAILABLE INFORMATION, ANALYSIS AND COMMENT. ALL SOURCES ARE CITED. THE PAPER IS NOT, AND DOES NOT PURPORT TO BE, EITHER EXHAUSTIVE WITH REGARD TO CONDITIONS IN THE COUNTRY SURVEYED, OR CONCLUSIVE AS TO THE MERITS OF ANY PARTICULAR CLAIM TO REFUGEE STATUS OR ASYLUM. THE VIEWS EXPRESSED IN THE PAPER ARE THOSE OF THE AUTHOR AND ARE NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF WRITENET OR UNHCR.

ISSN 1020-8429

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	INTRODUCTION	1
2.	FACTS AND FEARS OF INSTABILITY	3
2.1.	ROLE OF SIERRA LEONE’S RUF AND LIBERIA IN THE INCURSIONS.....	6
2.2.	REGIONAL POLITICS AND SECURITY CONCERNS.....	10
3.	THE HUMANITARIAN AND REFUGEE ENVIRONMENT	12
4.	REFUGEES AS A SOURCE OF INSTABILITY.....	15
4.1.	REFUGEES AND THE HOST POPULATION	16
4.2.	DONORS AND GUINEAN REFUGEES	18
5.	POLITICAL CHALLENGES AHEAD.....	20
6.	CONCLUSION	22
7.	BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	24

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
CP 2500, CH-1211 Geneva 2, Switzerland

E-mail: cdr@unhcr.ch
Web Site: <http://www.unhcr.org>

1. Introduction

From its independence in 1957, one of the challenges confronting successive Guinean leaders has been battling with insecurity in the midst of unstable neighbours. Ahmed Sekou Touré, the country's fiery trade union leader, under the slogan of freedom in poverty rather than slavery in wealth, galvanized the population for a 95.5% "No" vote against continued French ties. But thereafter, incessant allegations of destabilization plots against regional opponents such as Côte d'Ivoire's Houphouët Boigny, Senegal, and ex-colonial master France became common, culminating in the 1971 abortive invasion led by Portuguese officers based in neighbouring Guinea Bissau and Cape Verde. Not much has changed sixteen years after his death; the country is still confronted with the spectre of insecurity emanating from politically unstable neighbours.

To a significant level, despite slogans of African solidarity, concerns for its own national security contributed to Guinea's regional interventionist policies largely aimed at buttressing friendly regimes within its immediate geographical sphere. Thus prior to the collective West African intervention led by Nigeria, pioneering Guinean troops were dispatched to Sierra Leone in April 1991 to back the beleaguered government of General Joseph Momoh, although he later fled to Conakry in the wake of a military coup d'état in 1992. As the Liberian war escalated in 1990, rumours of possible Guinean intervention led President Lansana Conté to deny that he was assisting another friendly, besieged president, Samuel Kayon Doe. But Guinean troops were nevertheless deployed at the borders to halt the rebel National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) incursions. Eleven years earlier, Guinean soldiers had stormed the Liberian capital Monrovia to save another falling government, that of President William Tolbert, who was nevertheless executed the following year in a bloody military coup d'état. In 1967, Guinea became home for Sierra Leone opposition leader, Siaka Stevens, who fled to Conakry after controversial elections. Although there were mounting allegations that Stevens was recruiting fighters to seize power, he triumphantly returned home to become President following a coup d'état. Nearly 30 years later, Guinea would also host another Sierra Leone President, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, who escaped a coup d'état staged by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and the military in 1997.

Similarly, Guinea's active participation in the West African peace monitoring group ECOMOG (Economic Community Cease-fire Monitoring Group) was largely influenced by internal security fears that it, too, would be engulfed in the spreading avalanche of chaos consuming its English-speaking and poorly governed neighbours, Liberia and Sierra Leone. Thus it became the only Francophone country to actively remain engaged in Liberia until the end of that country's war, just as it would be the only French-speaking neighbour active in Sierra Leone peacekeeping.

These regional alliances, which proved valuable in terms of regional security arrangements until the outbreak of the Liberian war, emanated largely from political and security factors following independence. Touré's command politics and socialist economic policies in a society dominated by mercantilist tribes such as the Mandingos and the Fulani left him many opponents who soon congregated in French-speaking neighbouring countries and in France to oppose his government. Marxist economic

programmes, such as the outlawing of private trading in 1975, meant reliance on state structures like the hated Economic Police to implement his government's unpopular decisions against smuggling to willing neighbouring countries for higher commodity prices.

Dissatisfaction and paranoia spread, as allegations of assassination plots multiplied. Various sectors of society were targeted and suppressed, some stigmatized as "reactionaries and feudalists".¹ In 1976, another alleged assassination plot was uncovered, this time involving members of the rival Fulani tribe. It accentuated the antagonism between the Mandingos (Touré's ethnic group) and the wealthy Fulani class. Diallo Telli, a prominent Fulani politician and former Secretary-General of the Organization for African Unity (OAU), was arrested. He died in prison in 1977 after "confessing".²

On Touré's death in 1984 the then Colonel Lansana Conté, under the aegis of the Comité Militaire de Redressement National (CMRN), seized power in a coup d'état, promising democracy and a departure from monolithic politics. Although Conté's presidency registered some successes, an end to the power struggle or improvement in the security situation were distant, with Conté immediately charging some officials of working to "satisfy their personal interests" and reshuffling the government as charges of assassination plots against him increased.³

Liberalization, which meant ridding the country of Touré's authoritarian political structures, also encountered obstacles. But the country's first multi-party and free elections, albeit marred by violence and alleged irregularities, were held in 1993 with a high turn out of 78 per cent of 3.2 million eligible voters. Conté claimed 50.93 per cent against candidates who were mainly returning exiles. The main contestant, the now imprisoned opposition leader Alpha Condé, from Touré's Mandingo ethnic group, carried 19.55 per cent, while Mamadu Bâ of the mainly Fulani wealthy ethnic group took 13.37 per cent. President Conté's party also won the National Assembly elections in 1995 overwhelmingly, taking 71 out of the 114 seats despite boycotts by leading opposition parties.⁴ Claims of irregularities affected legitimacy as national security remained fluid, with the Opposition denouncing the process as an "electoral masquerade" and "a comedy".⁵ Key international institutions that observed the process, such as the International Commission of Jurists and the African-American Institute, reported serious irregularities.

Scars left by the elections led to a series of political upheavals as incursions from Liberia and Sierra Leone became imminent. In February 1996, an Army mutiny rocked Conakry, in which 50 people were killed and about 300 wounded. The leader of the mutiny, a former Youth and Sports Minister named Gbagbo Zoumanigue, fled to Burkina Faso and Libya, the two states consistently accused of backing regional rebellions.

¹ *New African Yearbook 1991-1992*, London: IC Magazines, 1991, p. 202

² Englebert, P., Guinea: Recent History, Independence and the Touré Era, 1958-1984 in *Africa Year Book 1996*, London: Europa Publications, 1995, pp. 461-2

³ *Ibid.*, p. 462

⁴ *New African Year Book 1997-1998*, London: IC Magazines, 1997, p.218-19

⁵ United States, Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1996: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 30 January 1997

2. Facts and Fears of Instability

Predictions and warnings that Guinea would be the next prey in the domino of regional conflicts have been persistent. The country's role in regional politics, its ethnic composition linking it to Liberia and Sierra Leone, along with its past political alliances, made it a target of rebel movements, particularly the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front (RUF). Added to these, the proliferation of arms into the region, detailed in a United Nations Panel of Experts report released in December 2000,⁶ along with the rush for diamonds and other resources, has brought a frightening dimension to regional instability.

Pointing to this factor, Guinean officials have linked incursions into the southern part of the country to its diamond deposits.⁷ On the other hand, Guineans are heavily involved in Sierra Leone's US\$ 700 million a year diamond trade, accused of supporting all militias with medicine, food, and cash in return for diamonds.⁸ A week after the release of the UN report indicting Liberia as a key transit point for arms, Ugandan officials informed the UN Security Council Sanctions Committee that they had seized a consignment of arms destined for Liberia. Custom papers filed with Uganda officials falsely indicated the arms were meant for Guinea's Defence Ministry.⁹

But to a greater degree, the current security unease in Guinea is linked to the mutual distrust between Liberia's President Charles Taylor and President Conté, going back to when Taylor was the NPFL leader. In 1993, Taylor protested to the United Nations that Guinean troops had attacked NPFL positions and threatened retaliation. The rising antagonism between the two men was partly linked to the presence in Guinea of the rival Liberian rebel group, United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO) led by Alhaji G.V. Kromah, a Mandingo, and the Guinean Government's decision to train units for the Interim Government of National Unity installed by ECOWAS. Kromah later confirmed that large numbers of Liberians were recruited and trained in Guinea for service as the President's security guards.¹⁰

However, Taylor's apprehension of Guinea and Sierra Leone as centres of military opposition against his government heightened after the 1997 election. The Liberian Government, in one of its policy blueprints on regional security, claimed that the country's security was threatened by the presence of large numbers of Liberians training with the newly British-trained Sierra Leone Army.¹¹ Hysteria followed, with Liberian claims in December 2000 that a shipload of weapons had arrived in Conakry, and that 500 Sierra Leonean and Liberian combatants were en route to Guinea for an offensive against President Taylor's government.¹²

⁶ United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000) Paragraph 19 in Relation to Sierra Leone, December 2000, <http://sierra-leone.org/panelreport.htm> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁷ Agence France Presse [Conakry], Guinea Approves Sending Troops to Border Region", 30 December 2000

⁸ Onishu, N. Africa Diamond Hub Defies Smuggling, *The New York Times*, 2 January 2001

⁹ United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts ..., paragraph 252

¹⁰ Alhaji G.V.Kromah: Disappointments and Denials, *The Perspective* [Atlanta GA], Vol. 4, No. 3, August/October 2000

¹¹ President Taylor's Formula for Peace in Mano River Union: A Response to Concerns of the International Community, Monrovia, December 2000? (unpublished document)

¹² *BBC Monitoring*, Weapons Arrive in Guinea, 23 October 2000, quoting *Radio Liberia International*

Moreover, ethnic groups along the borders of the three countries, such as the Mandingos, Sousous, etc., on the Sierra Leone border, and Mandingos, Lormas, Kpelles, Kissis, Manos, etc., along the Liberian flank provide a convenient recruitment base, since they are largely indistinguishable via national identities. Thus when Mandingos fled from NPFL onslaughts in Liberia, they simply regrouped in Guinea and Sierra Leone under the umbrella of ULIMO.¹³ Other ethnic groups fleeing from indiscriminate atrocities, such as the Krahnns, joined their ranks in building a military force against the NPFL and the RUF. Large numbers of Liberian refugees, numbering 235,000 at the close of the Liberian war, provided enough manpower and grounds for suspicions.¹⁴ Mandingos became symbols of opposition to the Liberian Government, with several reports of many being tortured and killed. ULIMO leader Kromah, who now lives in the United States, claims he was forced to flee Guinea after President Taylor dispatched assassins to Conakry to kill him.¹⁵ Perceived or real Mandingo threat brought in the RUF, in alliance with Liberian Government forces, in 1999 to defeat insurgents in Lofa County opposed to President Taylor, who accused Guinea of backing the rebellion.¹⁶

But whatever Liberia's claims of a Guinea-based insurgency determined to overthrow President Taylor, the popular view was of Liberia as the centre of regional instability. The UN Security Council, in late December 2000, urged "all states, particularly Liberia, to refrain from providing ... military support and from any act that may contribute to further destabilization of the situation on the borders between Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone".¹⁷ The Washington-based US Committee for Refugees concluded that Liberia was behind much of the endemic violence spreading from Sierra Leone to Guinea, and argued that President Taylor was using his control over the region's diamond, timber and other natural resources for political destabilization, as well as for personal vengeance and financial gain.¹⁸ But it was becoming clear that Liberia, although at the centre of the allegations, was not the only state in the region culpable of spreading conflicts. Burkina Faso, Ghana, Gambia and Côte d'Ivoire were among states which the UN Panel of Experts held responsible for the ongoing destabilization because of their alleged links to diamond smuggling.¹⁹

Nevertheless, Guinea's stability remained the focus in view of the humanitarian and security crisis it presented. "If Guinea is to avoid a similar downward spiral", said a US-based humanitarian group, "the international community must act decisively. The situation in Guinea could evolve rapidly into a complex political emergency with serious humanitarian repercussions. It could set back progress in the sub-region for another decade."²⁰

¹³ See Ellis, S., *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*, London: Hurst; New York: N.Y. University Press, 1999, p.179

¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, *Annual Report 1999*, New York, 1998

¹⁵ Alhaji G.V. Kromah ...

¹⁶ In Lofa, RUF Fighters on Rampage, *New Democrat* [Monrovia], 6-8 October 1999

¹⁷ *BBC News*, UN Says Liberia Destabilising Region, 22 December 2000

¹⁸ United States Committee for Refugees, Widening West Africa Violence: Decisive Action Needed to Stop Regional Destabilization, 15 December 2000 (press release), <http://reliefweb.int> [accessed 4 February 2001]

¹⁹ Lynch, C. Ban Sought on Diamond Sales by 2 Nations, *Washington Post*, 20 December 2000

²⁰ United States Committee for Refugees, Widening West Africa Violence ...

As in Sierra Leone, the economic benefits of the Liberian war, in terms of a booming business in looted goods, created a vested interest in the continuation of the war. The closer these economic relations were, the greater the danger that feuds between rival Liberian factions would spill over the border into Guinea and that local disputes within Guinea itself would become militarized as guns and war booty were traded freely.²¹ Such petty economic interests were however peripheral, overwhelmed by larger national and regional security fears, among them Guinea's fear of the immense military and political backing given to the NPFL by its historical rival and neighbour, Côte d'Ivoire. Thus regardless of the ethnic links, Guinea's national security interests played a significant role in its backing of ULIMO and other rivals of the NPFL.

These apprehensions would become exacerbated in 1999 as Liberia suffered a series of armed incursions launched by Liberian exiles allegedly from Guinean territory, with President Taylor hinting at confrontation:

I know he that is down fears no fall. I think Guinea has more to lose in a conflict with Liberia than Liberia has to lose. We have had a war already, and Guineans do not need a war, neither do we. We have had to work and use resources to expel these insurgents, backed and trained by Guinea, from Liberia territory.²²

In 1999, in the midst of mistrust and suspicions, Liberia's borders with Guinea were closed and troops deployed, although President Taylor, promising investigations into Guinean attack claims, insisted no orders had been given to invade Guinea.²³ He however repeated charges that the dissident attackers with their sophisticated weapons were based in Guinea, and warned President Conté that he too ought to be concerned if his country harboured well-armed groups capable of carrying out raids against another country.²⁴ Nevertheless, persistent reports that Liberia was the centre of a wider regional rebellion, buttressed with allegations against it for backing Guinean dissidents allegedly led by the late President Touré's son, Ahmed Touré, proliferated.²⁵ Guinea announced that it knew the sources of the attacks - Liberia and Sierra Leone's RUF - and warned it was capable of equal strength armed response. But President Taylor was defiant in denial, flatly dismissing the accusations.²⁶

After a lull during the first half of 2000 the attacks, accusations and denials began again. Liberia's Deputy Information Minister, Milton Teahjay, echoed his President, insisting that Liberia could not be at the same time encouraging peace in the sub-region and harbouring insurgents, as alleged by Guinea.²⁷ The accusations intensified, along with the escalation of the cross border raids, as the Guinean Army extended itself in the difficult task of containing incursions that left 1,500 people dead in less

²¹ Ellis, p.179

²² Agence France Presse [Monrovia], Several Hundreds Killed in Attacks on Liberia, Taylor Says, 14 September 1999

²³ *Liberian Daily News Bulletin*, 9 October 1999 (Libnet)

²⁴ Pan African News Agency [Monrovia], Taylor Claims Hundreds Killed in Cross-border Attacks, 14 September 1999

²⁵ Cross-border Crisis, *Africa Confidential* [London], Vol.41, No.15, 21 July 2000

²⁶ Reuters [Conakry], Guinea Warns Liberia over Alleged Border Attacks, 13 September 1999

²⁷ Pan African News Agency [Monrovia], Liberia Denies Attacking Guinea, 10 September 2000

than five months and tens of thousands internally displaced by December. The commercial town of Forécariah, just 75 kilometres distant from the capital Conakry, was hit in early September, indicating that Liberia's Defence Minister Daniel Chea's pledge to "chase the dissidents out", was not an empty threat.²⁸ Anxious to end the raids, which could have undermined his presidency, President Taylor sought a face-to-face meeting with President Conté, but at the same time warned that Liberia insisted on its ability and right to protect the integrity of its territory.²⁹ Refugee camps in the border areas emptied as refugees sought to move further into Guinea in the attempt to escape the cross border attacks. However, their movement was halted by roadblocks erected to stop infiltration by RUF rebels occupying the border areas.³⁰

2.1. Role of Sierra Leone's RUF and Liberia in the Incursions.

Despite the denials, increasing evidence for the incursions pointed to Liberia, the RUF, in alliance with Guinean dissidents or Army deserters. In mid December, Liberian civic groups and opposition political parties linked the incursions to the Sierra Leone war. They demanded the expulsion of RUF officials and foreign military advisors along with mercenaries and suggested direct negotiations with Guinea.³¹ But the Government rejected the pleas, insisting that the presence of RUF officials in Liberia was endorsed by the OAU and ECOWAS.³² On the other hand, a number of Guinea's opposition figures attributed the crisis to Guinea's involvement in regional peacekeeping and politics, and suggested negotiations with President Taylor to end the crisis.

Developments in the Liberian and Sierra Leone wars highlighted Guinea's vulnerability, and, according to President Conté, created security problems directly arising from the drawn-out fratricidal wars in the neighbouring states.³³ The country's proximity to Sierra Leone made the spectre of RUF infiltration more ominous, and there were a number of reports indicating this as relief officials reported that refugees, "mostly men", were entering Guinea.³⁴ Evidence of RUF complicity in the attacks surfaced when two Catholic priests kidnapped by the rebels were released. "The RUF insisted they were not considered hostages and would be released as soon as their safety could be guaranteed", Catholic officials said.³⁵ In early January 2001, 23 Sierra Leoneans and Guineans, described as "mercenaries", were arrested en route to Guinea via Sierra Leone.³⁶

²⁸ Pan African News Agency [Monrovia], Taylor Gives 72hrs to Expel Dissidents, 15 September 2000

²⁹ Rebels Attack Nimba, Govt. Confirms, *The News* [Monrovia], 22 November 2000

³⁰ United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Refugee Agency Prepares Camps for 60,000 Internally Displaced in Guinea, 28 December 2000 (press release)

³¹ Expel Mosquito, Free Political Prisoners, Inter-faith, Civil Society Recommend, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 15 December 2000

³² NPP Country Officials Want Taylor to Withdraw from Sierra Leone Peace Talks, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 29 December 2000

³³ Reuters [Conakry], Guinean Troops Fight Gunmen near S. Leone Border, 2 October 2000

³⁴ Agence France Presse, More than 260 Sierra Leone Refugees Flee to Guinea, 9 May 2000

³⁵ United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, Sierra Leone: Missionaries Free, 6 December 2000

³⁶ *BBC News*, 23 Mercenaries Arrested in Sierra Leone, 4 January 2001

Further evidence of RUF involvement in Guinea was indicated in the UN Panel of Experts Report on Sierra Leone:

The training was given to non-Liberian nationals for deployment in RUF-territory in Sierra Leone, and for action in recent clashes on the Guinea border Having no access to the sea, the RUF can import weapons and related materiel only by road or by air. The role of aircraft in the RUF's supply chain is vital, especially over the past two years, as their sphere of influence in Sierra Leone has widened. Given the state of the country's roads, it would be impossible to supply RUF operations such as those undertaken at Pamelap in Guinea late in 2000, for example, without aerial support.³⁷

The RUF have accused Guinean troops of co-ordinating joint operations in an attempt to seize the Kambia District, which borders Guinea and serves as a launch pad.³⁸

At an earlier stage, in 1998, there had been reports of cross border raids by Sierra Leonean rebels, some of whom were claimed to have been killed by Guinean forces.³⁹ There were continued hints of a RUF role in the incursions in 1999, when President Taylor indicated he would request the help of allies to combat attacks on Liberia he blamed on Guinea. "Under international law we have the right to defend our territory but our hands are tied. I can assure you that Liberia will seek military assistance from her friends ... I am not talking about ordering arms and ammunition ... but I can assure you that we can ask for troops from friendly countries because we are not armed."⁴⁰ In an attempt to put an end to the RUF role, a UN spokesperson said the organization was trying to persuade the RUF not to allow their fighters to be used as mercenaries by Liberia and Guinea.⁴¹

But the Guineans rejected President Taylor's allegations and instead blamed his government for the security problems by refusing to train his Army in accordance with the Abuja Agreement that ended the Liberian war. Moreover, as previously pointed out, the RUF-Liberia alliance, based on common interests, worked against Guinea. *Africa Confidential* made the comment:

Many of Taylor's former National Patriotic Front of Liberia soldiers have been fighting alongside the RUF for personal profit. This enhances his reputation as the region's guerrilla godfather and generally stops them returning to Liberia to cause trouble. However some of the fighting in Liberia's northwest Lofa County, which Taylor blamed on Guinean-backed rebels, may have been caused by disgruntled ex-NPFL and RUF soldiers fighting over spoils in the refugee camps close to the border.⁴²

³⁷ United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts...

³⁸ *Sierra Leone News*, News Archive, 1 January 2001, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/slnews/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

³⁹ United States, Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1998: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 26 February 1998

⁴⁰ Reuters [Conakry], Liberia Accuses Guinea, Seeks Troops, 16 August 1999

⁴¹ Associated Press, Nicole Winfield, US Wants Liberian Arms Embargo, 3 January 2001

⁴² Sierra Leone: Liberia Godfather to the Rebels, *Africa Confidential* [London], Vol.41, No.13, June 2000

Guinea further contended that the presence of many untrained and unpaid fighters transformed into “security forces”, many of them roaming around border areas, was the root cause of Liberia’s instability. That Liberia was a conduit for sub regional destabilization became a widely held view, as the prospect of Guinea becoming a refugee producing country with horrific regional implications became real. A *New York Times* editorial commented as the raids spread:

In the last two months the rebels and their Liberian allies have engaged in a series of border clashes with the armed forces of neighbouring Guinea, and they have massacred hundreds of Guinean civilians Guinea already shelters 500,000 refugees from Sierra Leone and neighbouring Liberia, and many of these could be uprooted. This would create yet another African humanitarian emergency, and it raises fears of an expanding circle of conflict akin to the intractable wars now consuming Congo. The primary source of instability throughout the region is President Charles Taylor of Liberia. He helped create the Sierra Leone rebel front in 1991 as a means of destabilizing that country and exploiting its diamonds⁴³

Despite Liberia’s repeated denials, the prevailing opinion indicted President Taylor’s government, blaming Sierra Leonean rebels, Liberian soldiers and Guinean dissident forces for the incursions.⁴⁴ Former US President Jimmy Carter, shutting down his Liberian pro-democracy office, reminded the President that, “it is increasingly evident that Liberia’s role in the conflicts of the sub- region has been a destructive one”.⁴⁵

But the raids persisted with several towns hit. Macenta, Gueckedu, near the Liberian border, Pamelap and Forécariah along the border with Sierra Leone, Massadou on the Liberian flank, were all raided with heavy loss of lives.⁴⁶

The mood in Conakry quickly changed. The attacks were no longer isolated but well-coordinated infiltrations. A group, Rassemblement de Forces Démocratique de Guinée (RPG), emerged to claim responsibility. The Guinean authorities however dismissed the group, insisting that it was nothing more than a front for foreign aggressors, meaning Liberia and the RUF.⁴⁷

The impact of these attacks was horrifying with implications for both humanitarian workers, the newly displaced, and particularly refugees. Several international NGOs and humanitarian organizations called for intervention by the US in order save lives.⁴⁸ But there was little let-up in the raids, as relief organizations became targets.

⁴³ West Africa Widening Conflict, *The New York Times*, 6 December 2000

⁴⁴ United States Committee for Refugees, Escalation of Attacks in Guinea Endangers Refugees, Poses Serious Challenge for UNHCR, 8 December 2000 (press release), <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁴⁵ Carter, J., Letter to President Taylor, 6 November 2000, in Carter Center press release, 7 November 2000, <http://www.cartercenter.org/NEWS/RLS2000/pr-liberia.html> [accessed 5 February 2001]

⁴⁶ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, More Trouble on Guinea Liberia Border, 2 December 2000

⁴⁷ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 11 December 2000

⁴⁸ Interaction, International Organisations Express Concern over Critical Situation along Guinean Border, 27 November 2000 (press release) <http://www.interaction.org/disaster/guineaborder.html> [accessed 5 February 2001]

Armed men from the Liberian border attacked a military garrison in Macenta, killing one UNHCR worker and kidnapping another.⁴⁹

Guinean public opinion concerning who was responsible for the raids was divided. When a group of “forest youths”, meaning those from areas bordering Liberia, claimed the incursions were due to the authorities’ alleged links to ULIMO, state media countered their claims, quoting local officials and individuals opposed to the so called forest youth anti-governmental coordination, who insisted that the majority of youths were supporting President Conté and his programme. State media quoted officials in the border areas as saying that the statements made on foreign radio stations were unrepresentative and that their region had never seen any Liberian rebels or rebel training camps.⁵⁰

Backing the Government, a group of opposition political parties urged “all our fellow countrymen and women to remain united for the sacred defence of our soil” and to “form a joint front against our enemies”.⁵¹ Images and scenes of destruction in Liberia and Sierra Leone, featured prominently on state television, were used to rally the population against the insurgents, and the state controlled paper *Horoya* wrote:

These rebels who have already destroyed their country, seem to want to try their luck in Guinea. As the saying goes, one who burns his own house does not care about his neighbour’s home... It would seem that Guinea is now confronted with a double threat. Our people have always assumed their fraternal responsibilities by welcoming, feeding and accommodating thousands of refugees for almost 11 years now. It is clear that the Guinean blood, which these traitors are continuing to shed, will not deter our people from carrying out their fundamental mission, which they have always done with great faith and serenity ... This warning should indeed be taken very seriously ...⁵²

As the propaganda war accelerated between Guinea and Liberia, so did the clampdown on refugees. Six suspected Liberian rebels were shot and killed in Conakry in early December 2000.⁵³ The Liberian state-owned and self-censored press reported arrests of Liberians by Guinean security forces and that many of those arrested had been brutally treated and then removed to unknown destinations.⁵⁴ The Liberian cabinet called for direct retaliatory action, while urging the establishment of joint border patrols with the Guineans.⁵⁵ Jingoism filled the air, as some citizens demanded that force was met with force against those allegedly backing the dissidents while others called for an end to war.⁵⁶

⁴⁹ Associated Press, Guinea: UN Staff Member Killed in Guinea; Another Missing, 17 September 2000

⁵⁰ *BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, Officials Deny Liberian Rebel Presence, 29 November 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*

⁵¹ *BBC Monitoring*, Political Parties Condemn Attacks on Liberia, 8 September 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*

⁵² *BBC Monitoring*, Paper Says Guinea Confronted by Double Threats, 8 September 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*

⁵³ Agence France Presse [Conakry], Guinean Army Shoots Dead Six Suspected Rebels, 1 December 2000

⁵⁴ In Sierra Leone, Guinea: Liberians Abducted, *Daily Times* [Monrovia], 8 September 2000

⁵⁵ Cabinet wants ‘Hot Pursuit’ Against Dissidents, *The News* [Monrovia], 15 September 2000

⁵⁶ We Don’t Want War Again ..., *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 12 July 2000

Guinea's ambassador to Liberia warned the Liberian authorities against whipping up anti-Guinean sentiments, and insisted that his country had no aggressive intentions against others. However, he also made clear that Guinea would not remain inactive if Liberian threats to pursue dissidents on Guinean territory were carried out.⁵⁷

2.2. Regional Politics and Security Concerns

With Guinea on the brink of collapse and Liberia plunged into continued insecurity while the RUF was issuing new preconditions presumably to disarm, the commander of the UN Sierra Leone Forces, the Kenyan Daniel Opande, admitted that resolving the Sierra Leone crisis posed more difficulties in the midst of the Guinea incursions. On suggestions that the UN force should extend operations into Guinea, he ruled out such a possibility:

I don't think that would be called for. I think we already have enough to do in Sierra Leone and we don't want to go across the border ... We don't have the mandate to get ourselves involved in cross-border policing of what is happening there. We would like to contain the problem within our borders which is Sierra Leone and not across the border.⁵⁸

Nevertheless, attempts at finding a sub regional solution, including a meeting of security chiefs of the three countries, had been made amidst optimism in late April 2000. For the first time, declared Guinea's Minister of Security Sekou Goureyssy Condé, security experts of the three states would tour alleged rebel hideouts, a development that would have been unthinkable even a few years previously.⁵⁹ This was a dramatic change in relations, combined with a Conakry Summit of Mano River Union (the political organization to which Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea belong) states in May, which appointed a Security Commission in an attempt to build confidence.⁶⁰ However, underneath the seeming solidarity there was deep mistrust. President Conté warned those at the summit intent on destabilizing his country, that Guinea was prepared to defend its territory.⁶¹ The warning was implicitly meant for Liberia, since Sierra Leone had no such capacity and has fostered long-standing cordial relations with Guinea.

These moves did not however produce the desired results as the security environment in Guinea degenerated, forcing President Conté to order a general mobilization, repeatedly blaming Presidents Taylor and Blaise Compaoré of Burkina Faso, and insisting that the two men were backing jailed opposition leader Alpha Condé to destabilize Guinea.

⁵⁷ Guinea Denies Harboursing Dissidents, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 17 July 2000

⁵⁸ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, Interview with Gen. Opande, 14 December 2000

⁵⁹ *BBC Monitoring*, Guinea Minister on Security Agreement with Liberia and Sierra Leone, 20 April 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*

⁶⁰ *BBC Monitoring*, Mano River Summit Calls for Immediate Release of UN Hostages, 9 May 2000, quoting *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation*

⁶¹ *Ibid.*

Earlier optimism for a solution further faded, for the security environment swiftly changed by September, with Guinea now accusing Liberia, Burkina Faso and Sierra Leone's rebels of "barbaric and bloody" attacks.⁶²

With Sierra Leone host to the largest UN force yet, West African leaders indicated in December they needed the international community to support a Guinea border force.⁶³ The growing concern is whether poor countries, with crumbling economies, are able to sustain expensive peace operations, which have plagued West Africa since 1989. Welcoming the troop deployment, the Guinean Government however warned the troops against being "tourists", citing the role of UN troops in Sierra Leone disarmed by RUF rebels.⁶⁴

In the midst of disagreements, hopes and misgivings were again focused on the prospects of stationing a West African observer force in the forested Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea borders, less than three years after West African troops left Liberia and moved on to Sierra Leone without solutions. The Sierra Leone Minister of Information, Julius Spencer, warned that destabilization of Guinea would lead to large scale population displacement and that the situation must be brought under control, and commended the steps taken by ECOWAS to make this happen.⁶⁵ A different view was expressed by a Guinean opposition leader, Jean Marie Doré, who contended that ECOWAS was incompetent to solve the crisis, and that instead the presence of West African troops would destroy Guinea just as Liberia and Sierra Leone had been destroyed, due to the inevitable political bias of ECOWAS commanders.⁶⁶

Regional leaders, meeting in Mali in mid December also sought to establish an ECOWAS Supreme Court to handle disputes among states, although Liberia objected to the domination of the Court by Francophone states empowered to name five of the Court's seven judges.⁶⁷ President Conté's conspicuous absence from the summit cast further doubts on the implementation of any security proposals. But the Liberian Government intensified its lobbying for deployment, although three years earlier, it had rejected the stationing of West African troops in the country as post-war guarantors of its and regional security. Now both President Taylor and Liberian officials were quoted as saying that deployment of ECOWAS troops was the only way to handle the situation.⁶⁸ Pledges of troops from Mali, Senegal and Nigeria gave hopes for border monitoring, while the Organization for African Unity promised US\$ 300,000 for the peace project.

⁶² Agence France Presse [Conakry], Guinea Says Gangs Backed by Liberia, Burkina Faso, Continue Attacks", 15 September 2000

⁶³ Reuters [Abuja], West African Force of 1600 to Police Guinea Border, 28 December 2000

⁶⁴ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 30 December 2000

⁶⁵ *Sierra Leone News*, News Archives, 18 December 2000, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/slnews/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁶⁶ Reuters [Conakry], Intervention Force Plan Worries Guinea Opposition, 23 December 2000

⁶⁷ ECOWAS Fails on Security Matters; Liberia-Guinea Border Conflict Still Hanging, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 18 December 2000

⁶⁸ Taylor Wants ECOMOG Deployed, *The Patriot* [Monrovia], 16 December 2000; Pan African News Agency, Government Troops Battle with Dissidents, 23 November 2000

Continued allegations that Liberia was spreading regional instability marred the search for regional and international solutions. US Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs Susan Rice, in briefing Congress, contended that, “Liberia has been involved in this conflict almost from the beginning, and now Guinea is victim to cross-border incursions by RUF elements and their allies”.⁶⁹

Another regional dimension of these allegations surfaced when Côte d’Ivoire accused its ousted head of state, General Robert Guei, of recruiting mercenaries from Liberia, a charge that Liberia denied. “It is worrying. We know that he is recruiting men in Liberia. We’re on his trail. We have taken precautions”, said Ivorian President Laurent Gbagbo.⁷⁰

The December incursions into Liberia’s Nimba County, home of President Taylor’s “revolution”, again heightened Liberian calls, backed by UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan, for West African troops deployment. Annan urged all parties “to use whatever means necessary to curb this spiralling violence that is likely to have serious security and humanitarian consequences not only inside Guinea, but also for the subregion as a whole”.⁷¹

But without tackling prevailing fears and distrust amongst regional leaders plagued with debilitating socio-economic and political problems, it is doubtful if mere summits and difficult-to-fulfil pledges can solve the current problems.

3. The Humanitarian and Refugee Environment

Coupled with security problems, dwindling funding posed obstacles for effective humanitarian undertakings. High hopes were placed on the deployment of ECOWAS border troops, which relief officials believed would quickly bring about greater stability in the region.⁷² ECOWAS duly announced a 1,678 strong border force mandated to guarantee free movement of persons as well as the security of humanitarian agencies.⁷³

But the immediate challenge was handling the deteriorating humanitarian environment. France’s ambassador to Guinea, Denis Gauer, noted:

I saw in Kissidougou about 20,000 refugees... They explained to me that they left their camps around Yende and went into the bush, and

⁶⁹ Rice, E.S., “US Policy Towards Sierra Leone: Achieving Peace and Justice in Sierra Leone (paper presented before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on African Affairs) Washington DC, 11 October 2000, http://www.state.gov/www.policy_remarks/2000 [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁷⁰ Agence France Presse [Abidjan], Liberia Denies Claims that Guei Is Recruiting Mercenaries, 19 December 2000

⁷¹ United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, Annan Urges End to Spiraling Violence along Border, 11 December 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.org/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁷² Agence France Presse [Monrovia], UNHCR Welcomes ECOWAS’ Decision on Guinea Deployment, 19 December 2000

⁷³ *BBC News*, Troops to Guinea Border, 28 December 2000

walked through the bush during six days, and then arrived to Kissidougou. And in Kissidougou the authorities have nothing to care for them, so they put them in the *lycée* [school] in the middle of the town. They all told me, all the refugees in the camps around Gueckedou - that means about 400,000 people - went out of the camps, went into the bush, and were presently walking in the bush towards the north... [France has already offered some assistance, but] now we must do more We must all together face this situation now.⁷⁴

The adverse security situation led humanitarian groups operating in some areas to pull out permanently. A missionary worker declared:

The entire area is on the move in one direction or another, and the fear is that you will turn into something like Rwanda where you have people just caught in the cross-fire and in the harassment of war, caught on all sides by the RUF, by the rebels from Liberia, and then caught in the defence forces on the other side, because there's nowhere to avoid that.⁷⁵

By late December, a UNHCR team had toured areas around Gueckedu and found a number of camps destroyed. But security concerns prevented a tour of areas where there were 280,000 refugees, although 48 members of the Agency's team began arriving in Guinea to oversee protection and assistance.⁷⁶ The destruction of facilities meant re-deployment of technical experts to cater for 60,000 fleeing refugees while the UNHCR announced that the fate of tens of thousands was unknown.⁷⁷ Ironically, a Guinean official denied that there was a humanitarian crisis in the country, and insisted that his government was handling the refugee issue in accordance with international conventions.⁷⁸ Views from relief officials told a different story: "The lives of some refugees have become even more precarious these days as they can't get food since supplies cannot now reach areas, especially in the forest region [near the Liberian border], where the rebels' movements have intensified", an agency official said.⁷⁹

The indispensability of guaranteed security for resource intensive humanitarian work can be seen in the huge material and financial losses incurred by agencies in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, and now Guinea. The magnitude of this problem came to the fore when the UNHCR, after a series of security problems, proposed establishing a broadly based, communal police force in its areas of operation along the Liberian-Sierra Leone borders in 1999, thus putting into question the viability of relief work in the absence of requisite security. Fabrice Weisman, writing for Médecins Sans Frontiers (MSF) some years earlier, had reflected:

⁷⁴ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 16 December 2000

⁷⁵ *Sierra Leone News*, News Archives, 2 January 2001, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/slnews/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁷⁶ United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, *Guinea Update*, 2 January 2001, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁷⁷ United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Agency Prepares Camps ...

⁷⁸ Agence France Presse [Conakry], Guinea Approves...

⁷⁹ Reuters, Ten Killed in Guinea Raids - Refugees Set to Move, 5 December 2000

Should relief workers seek to save lives in the short term but risk exacerbating the conflict by providing the warring factions with food, vehicles and supplies as well as other sources of equipment and revenue, thereby condemning more people to deprivation and death in the long term? Or should they stand by and do nothing because more lives (but also not) may be saved eventually? Is this a decision for humanitarian agencies? Or has the onus fallen, once again by default, on aid organizations to find the solutions (when obviously they cannot) because the international community has failed to provide the necessary political and military support for them to operate?⁸⁰

As Guinea has again demonstrated, rural areas, the main agricultural bases where refugees are concentrated, remain vulnerable targets for roaming rebels. In December 2000 relief agencies reported about 20,000 refugees, some in “indescribable condition”, wandering towards Conakry some 300 miles distant, after selling their meagre belongings for exorbitant transport fares.⁸¹ What was evolving was a human catastrophe as noted by a missionary worker:

Many of the children died from exposure. Many old people were not able to make the journey ... They died on the way, they were just left behind. Many of the women either delivered on the way, had premature deliveries, lost the children, and many died themselves. And so the loss of life will not even be possible to estimate at this time. Who knows what will happen to these people. After all, they ran away from the RUF in the first place ... You cannot say that refugees should be left where they are, because where they are is as volatile, if not more volatile than a large portion of Sierra Leone at the minute. There's no way to call the area of the Forest Region safe at this moment. And I think the proof of that is in the way the Guineans have moved. And that in itself, what's it like if you see the situation where the refugees are surrounded by completely empty villages, empty towns. Do you stay trapped inside there and say it's not safe to move these somewhere else? I don't think so. I ran for my life. I find it impossible to think of saying to someone, 'You stay here and wait while I find myself a safe haven'⁸²

Thousands descended on Conakry scrambling to return home via UNHCR arrangements, with relief officials complaining that, “these people seem to think they are better off and safer in Sierra Leone”.⁸³ Despite the stampede out of Guinea, the UNHCR said it was not encouraging repatriation into Sierra Leone due to the uncertain security conditions there.

⁸⁰ Weisman, F., Liberia: Can Relief Organizations Cope with the Warlords? in J. Groenwold and E. Porter (eds.), *World in Crisis: The Politics of Survival at the End of the 20th Century*, New York, Médecins Sans Frontières; London: Routledge, 1997, p. 113

⁸¹ Agence France Presse [Conakry], Confusion over Whereabouts of Guinea Refugees, 18 December 2000

⁸² *Sierra Leone News*, News Archives, 2 January 2001

⁸³ United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, *Guinea Update*, 2 January 2001

A spokesman emphasized that UNHCR was not a peace keeping force, mandated to ensure security, but said that the organization would commence radio broadcasts to warn refugees against returning to Sierra Leone.⁸⁴

But the rush out of Guinea, mainly by Sierra Leonean refugees, was unabated, with figures ranging between 15,000 and 25,000 in September.⁸⁵ As concerns over refugee safety mounted, the World Food Programme (WFP) reported that it had only limited information about the movements of previously assisted groups, and that only limited monitoring of the situation was possible.⁸⁶ The agency reported 2,000 Sierra Leonean refugees returning home weekly but that it was not clear where the Liberian refugees were ultimately aiming to go.⁸⁷ The unknown destination of Liberian refugees was due to several factors, including the fears of many Mandingos and Krahns of returning to a hostile Liberian political environment. Moreover, border cross points, under the control of insurgents, were simply too hazardous for many. The vulnerability of rural refugee border camps necessitated relocations. But whether relocation, however sensible, is the lasting solution in spreading insecurity is questionable.

4. Refugees as a Source of Instability

The exodus, although linked to insecurity, was also tied to fading hospitality. Already a year earlier relief officials had pointed out that with the continuing mass flight from Sierra Leone, Guinea, with 470,000 refugees, now had the second highest refugee population of any African country, a burden that could not be expected to be indefinitely sustained, and that indeed Guinea was already beginning to make this explicit.⁸⁸

There is a significant parallel between Guinea and Sierra Leone in terms of political instability linked to mass movement of people. The exodus from Liberia into Sierra Leone in the early 1990s contributed to the Sierra Leone war, because amongst the fleeing masses were many former soldiers and combatants who reorganized for counter offensives against combined NPFL-RUF rebels. “Things are changing so rapidly that even people more knowledgeable than us are unable to give figures”, said the head of an Organization for African Unity (OAU) committee fact finding team, Chief Segun Olushola, touring refugee areas in 1990.⁸⁹ Despite prevailing insecurity over 10,000 new Liberian refugees were reported fleeing into Guinea as fighting flared.⁹⁰

⁸⁴ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 3 January 2001

⁸⁵ United States Committee for Refugees, *Escalation of Attacks...*

⁸⁶ World Food Programme, *Emergency Report No. 50*, Rome, 15 December 2000, <http://www.wfp.org/ereport/2000/001215.htm> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸⁸ Stromberg, P., *The World's Most Brutal War, Refugees* [Geneva], Vol. 2, No.115, 1999, p.18

⁸⁹ Rosenior A. de G., *Fire Next Door, West Africa* [London], 24-30 September 1990, p.2513

⁹⁰ Carter, T., *African Pestilence Reflects Yearning to Be Democratic*, *The Washington Times*, 14 December 2000

4.1. Refugees and the Host Population

This rush into economically depressed societies carries the potential of instability, and this seems to be the case in Guinea now, with reports of growing resentment among the local population against refugees, who were seen as having better access to medical, water and food assistance than they themselves.⁹¹

The attack on a Guinean border village in September 2000, which left over 70 people dead and caused horrific destruction, ignited existing xenophobia, with President Conté fanning the flames: “I am giving orders that we bring together all foreigners in [Guinean] neighbourhoods, so that we know what they are doing, and that we search and arrest suspects. Civilians and soldiers, let’s defend our country together to crush the invaders.” The response to the President’s orders was swift as mobs descended on frightened refugees, attacking them with a variety of home made weapons such as sticks and iron bars, knives, stones and electric cords.⁹² In late December about 5,000 Liberian and Sierra Leone refugees from Guinea reportedly crossed into Liberia following threatening broadcasts from a local radio station.⁹³

However, these developments were not entirely new. Reports had been circulating already for some years that refugees in Guinea were subjected to arbitrary arrests and detention, e.g. for having insufficient identification or on suspicion of being rebels, The US State Department noted in 1996:

While the Government has generally been hospitable toward refugees, there have been reports that local police and border patrol soldiers harassed refugees and demanded bribes or sexual favors for entry into Guinea. In reaction to violent Liberian rebel incursions in the Macenta forest region, which resulted in the death of dozens of Guineans and Liberian refugees, the Government increased its armed forces along the Liberian border in July and fought Liberian rebels. There were no reports of forced repatriation.⁹⁴

But the September 2000 clampdowns led to well publicized international concerns about the fate of refugees, with the US State Department urging Guinea to continue to protect refugee populations.⁹⁵

Amongst Guineans, emotions against the refugees were not however entirely without foundations. According to state media, alleged links between refugees from border areas and the insurgents surfaced to whip up xenophobia:

⁹¹ Stromberg, p.18

⁹² Human Rights Watch, *Refugee Women in Guinea Raped*, New York, 13 September 2000 (press release), <http://www.hrw.org/press/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁹³ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 30 December 2000

⁹⁴ United States, Department of State, *Country Report ... 1996*

⁹⁵ United States, Department of State, *Guinea: Attacks on Guinean Villages, Violence Against Refugees*, 15 September 2000 (press release)

The assailants, who came from Liberian territory, armed with offensive weapons, committed crimes and made away with all that came their way. After the killings, they took some citizens hostage, using them to carry the goods stolen from the people According to other explanations given by some survivors, three former refugees from the area led the rebels to attack the village. The three men, who served as guides for the rebels, had all stayed in the attacked village for eight years and enjoyed the remarkable hospitality of the people of this village like all other refugees who flee war raging in their countries.⁹⁶

Reactions were immediate, as security deteriorated, with relief officials acknowledging that, “insecurity has grown countrywide and checkpoints controlled by military and civil militias of unemployed youth have emerged”.⁹⁷ “For several days, armed groups of civilian militias, police and soldiers broke into refugees’ homes, beat, raped and arrested them and looted their belongings”, reported Human Rights Watch.⁹⁸

This rapid worsening of security forced relief agencies to begin evacuations as the UNHCR announced it had “to work much more closely with the UN Security Council in order to institute improved security measures for its personnel.”⁹⁹ The WFP suspended operations, citing security and warning that, “in the absence of a safer environment, we’ll have to find alternative ways to assist the local residents and refugees”.¹⁰⁰

Frequent border closures ensued, with the Guineans, suspecting infiltrators, accepting only “vulnerable” refugees (including pregnant and lactating women; children below the age of 14 - later raised to 18 - and the elderly). The UNHCR confirmed in September that at least 10,000 civilians were waiting to cross the border from Sierra Leone.¹⁰¹ UNHCR High Commissioner Sadako Ogata warned that Guinea would not be in a position to sustain rising numbers of refugees under the prevailing conditions, adding that the crisis was the UN agency’s most pressing emergency.¹⁰²

By early December, the attacks intensified, as relief and humanitarian agencies suspended activities in some areas and expressed grave concern about the safety of more than 400,000 refugees.¹⁰³ Officials indicated plans to relocate tens of thousands of refugees, including 127,000 from Forécariah border region to Kindia.¹⁰⁴

⁹⁶ *BBC Monitoring*, Paper Says Guinea Confronted ...

⁹⁷ United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals Process Strategy Paper for West Africa*, 20 November 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁹⁸ Human Rights Watch, R. Reilly, *The Refugee Crisis in Guinea: Another Macedonia?* 3 October 2000, <http://www.hrw.org/editorials/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

⁹⁹ Crawley, M., *Africa Struggles to Get By on Just \$35 per Refugee*, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 December 2000

¹⁰⁰ Reuters, *UN’s WFP Suspends Aid in Guinea Due to Rebels*, 14 December 2000

¹⁰¹ Human Rights Watch, *Refugee Women ...*

¹⁰² *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 14 December 2000

¹⁰³ Associated Press, *UNHCR Scales Down Guinea Operations Following New Attacks*, 6 December 2000

¹⁰⁴ Reuters, *Ten Killed ...*

In the midst of hysteria, the Liberian authorities announced evacuation plans, although less than 500 of the estimated 126,000 refugees arrived in Monrovia by a government-hired boat. The Government accused Guinea of “humiliating” Liberians and warned that any such attempt would be strongly resisted. Guinea in return expressed shock at Liberian threats that the safety of Guineans in Liberia might not be guaranteed.¹⁰⁵ A Liberian diplomat stationed in the border town of N’Zerekeli was expelled by Guinea, accused of actions incompatible with diplomatic status.¹⁰⁶

Continued harassment prompted Pope John Paul II to refer to the disturbing reports of “bloody attacks in Guinea against the local population and against refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone”, pleading, “I ask in the name of God that the perpetrators desist from such acts of violence and respect the rights of all, in particular those who are refugees and who are already living in a precarious situation”.¹⁰⁷

Notwithstanding this outpouring of condemnations, Guinea’s security concerns were accepted as genuine even within the relief community. “We want them to look at the security of Guinea in assuring that the government keeps the doors open for new asylum seekers, which is not the case at the moment”, a relief official in Conakry pointed out. The attack on the border commercial town of Pamelap created more fears of infiltrations. “There are general fears of people getting through and slipping into the capital. It’s not an easy period,” a humanitarian worker said, adding: “Things could very quickly deteriorate. That is the reality here in Guinea. There are probably indications that this has been a bit more serious than it has in the past”.¹⁰⁸ A message broadcast by the insurgents, warning of attacks on the heavily refugee-concentrated town of Gueckedu, led to panic and cancellation of food distribution, as UNHCR recalled its staff to the capital. “This instability poses a grave threat to Africa’s second largest refugee population”, warned Abou Moussa, UNHCR’s top official in the West African region.¹⁰⁹

4.2. Donors and Guinean Refugees

Spreading and unending crises have tended to generate donor fatigue, and Guinea is no exception. The security vacuum, which created obstacles for relief and humanitarian agencies, remains a key concern as donor altruism dwindles. The priority given African refugees is indicated by reports that they receive US\$ 35 per head while their European counterparts get US\$ 120. “Even if you account for the difference in climate and the difference in the cost of living, the disparity is still high”, says a UNHCR spokesman.¹¹⁰ Comparing the plight of refugees in Guinea with those in Macedonia, Human Rights Watch observed:

¹⁰⁵ Agence France Presse, Guinea Denies Impeding Liberian Repatriation, 19 September 2000

¹⁰⁶ Liberian Diplomat Expelled from Guinea, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 8 September 2000

¹⁰⁷ Reuters, Pope Calls for an End to Killings in West Africa, 14 September 2000

¹⁰⁸ Reuters, UNHCR Scales Down, 4 October 2000

¹⁰⁹ United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, Guinea: UNHCR Alarmed by Threats to Refugees, 6 December 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

¹¹⁰ Crawley

We asked whether the international community would be willing to intervene to assist host countries elsewhere in the world in the same way as they had assisted Macedonia, especially when the political and military stakes were not so high. The current situation in Guinea provides our answer. The response of western countries has been negligible, the crisis has hardly touched the world media headlines, and there has certainly been no airlifting of refugees to safety. Yet, the situation in Guinea is as grave, if not graver, than the situation in Macedonia during the Kosovo crisis.¹¹¹

But additionally, many of the refugees in Guinea have been condemned to the uncertainty of refugee life for over a decade, and sustaining donor enthusiasm to support programmes infinitely is difficult. “At the same time when no improvement is made in the questions of conflict and insecurity in Sierra Leone for a long time, the heavy load on Guinea as an asylum country becomes domestically unsustainable ... And Guinea is not a wealthy country”, UNHCR Chief Sadako Ogata said.¹¹²

The targeting of relief agencies and refugees, so prevalent in the Liberian and Sierra Leone wars, was echoed in Guinea during the first weeks of the insurgency when a relief worker was killed and other kidnapped. The incident was peculiar, coming only days after a Liberian Ministry of Information newspaper published a story alleging UNHCR workers were “staunch supporters of dissident activities”.¹¹³ By early December, the market town of Gueckedu, one of the UNHCR’s main centres close to the Liberian border, was attacked, and relief facilities destroyed along with logistics. Tens of thousands of vulnerable refugees and residents alike fled as their homes went up in smoke; Sadako Ogata again:

[The] UNHCR and the government of Guinea have been warning for months that the international community must take urgent action to secure this volatile border region. We are now on the verge of a major humanitarian catastrophe in which both refugees and tens of thousands of local residents may be displaced within Guinea.¹¹⁴

Despite such despair, concrete international largesse was unlikely, and as one writer concludes, since the conflicts are “peripheral to powerful countries”, added to the fact that “military involvement of regional states, the creation of pseudo-security zones, fed by international assistance, inside the areas of conflict, the closing of borders, even the forced repatriation of refugees ... constitute the pillars of stabilization initiatives advocated by Great Powers in recent times...”.¹¹⁵ Views of international inaction rapidly gained currency, with another observer noting:

Today we are confronted with a similar situation in West Africa, and once again we are failing to act, although this time it is not out

¹¹¹ Human Rights Watch, R. Reilly

¹¹² Agence France Presse, UN Chief Marks Agency’s 50th Year, Warns of West African Emergency, 14 December 2000

¹¹³ UNHCR Supports Dissidents?, *The New Liberia* [Monrovia], 15 September 2000

¹¹⁴ Associated Press, UNHCR Warns of Catastrophe in Guinea, 7 December 2000

¹¹⁵ Weisman, p. 121

of impotence, but self-interest. To do nothing while helpless civilians are scattered, murdered, and mutilated, their villages and towns over-run, sacked and burned, is to see our own condition demeaned and the foundation of our own society brought into question.¹¹⁶

But prior to the escalation of the raids, the WFP announced the now usual difficulties in raising funds to feed 520,000 internally displaced people in Sierra Leone and 300,000 refugees in Guinea at the cost of US\$ 90 million for 18 months. Although the agency warned of a humanitarian tragedy without the money, only US\$ 57 million was raised, forcing it to totally cancel school feeding and community programmes while reducing rations by half. The agency launched another search for an additional US\$ 65 million needed to feed one million IDPs in their own countries.¹¹⁷

In a letter to US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, a number of non-governmental and relief organizations outlined the problem:

The insecurity along Guinea's borders, the prevailing mood in Guinea against refugees, and the under-funding of key humanitarian organizations including UNHCR have led to a sharp curtailment of humanitarian assistance within Guinea threatening the welfare of the nearly five hundred thousand Sierra Leonean and Liberian refugees in Guinea. The attacks on Guinean soil launched from Sierra Leone and Liberia and the targeting for retribution of refugee populations by the Guinean government threatens to further destabilize the region.... But we fear that the failure to address the violence along Guinea's borders jeopardizes the lives of these refugees and, if left unchecked will result in a widening of the long running conflict in the region.¹¹⁸

Visiting US State Department officials were told that refugees were still being harassed if they ventured outside the camps.¹¹⁹ But the fluidity of the security situation also terribly affected relief staff, who spoke openly about the need to find more indirect ways of assisting local populations and refugees, due to the increasingly unsafe environment experienced by relief workers.¹²⁰

5. Political Challenges Ahead

Like many post-authoritarian African governments, Guinea is confronted with harnessing demands for democratic reforms while maintaining stability, and this seems to be a difficult challenge facing the Government as cross-border raids tested its survival. In mid December, signs of rifts in national unity became apparent when the Fulani opposition politician Mamadu Bâ blamed President Conté for the crisis and

¹¹⁶ Poole, R. An African Peace Force, *The Independent* [London], 13 December 2000

¹¹⁷ Associated Press [Abidjan], UN Food Agency Short of Food for Troubled West Africa, 6 November 2000

¹¹⁸ Interaction

¹¹⁹ United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, US Officials Visit Refugee Camps, *Weekly Roundup*, No. 47, 24 November -1 December 2000

¹²⁰ Reuters, UN's WFP Suspends Aid...

called for a negotiated settlement with the insurgents and President Charles Taylor.¹²¹ If this is any indicator of political cohesion needed in the face of external threats allegedly backed by foreign states, then Guinea could slide along the path of Liberia and Sierra Leone very quickly.

President Conté believes, as one writer noted, that “Guinea will fall ... in the domino theory, after Sierra Leone, Liberia, Guinea-Bissau and Senegal and that a firm hand, not negotiations with rebels, is needed”.¹²²

Satisfying political demands and balancing a fractious ethnic mosaic present dangers for a country labouring with a transition from a Marxist one-party state to multiparty democracy. The US State Department, in its 1999 Human Rights report, indicted the police and paramilitary gendarmes for playing an “oppressive role in the daily lives of citizens”, and that “members of the elite presidential guard are accountable to almost no one except the President”. The report cited “extrajudicial killings; disappearances; use of torture by police and military personnel; police abuse of prisoners and detainees; inhuman prison conditions and frequent deaths due to these conditions”.¹²³ Distrust of state structures, such as the security forces, constitutes fears for uncertainty. “Many citizens view the security forces as corrupt, ineffective, and even dangerous”, noted the US State Department already in its 1996 report.¹²⁴

As the crisis worsened, Amnesty International further criticized the judicial system and called for the release of opposition politician Alpha Condé and 48 other political prisoners, who were held without proof that they had advocated or used violence in order to overthrow the Government.¹²⁵

Nevertheless, the prospect of political collapse and disintegration became larger factors, with worries of an attending regional anarchy. An American official traveling with US Secretary Madeleine Albright to Conakry in October 1999 observed that the Government had “made progress in a number of areas”, but added, “clearly this is not a democracy”.¹²⁶

Ethnicity remains a key feature of Guinea’s political spectrum as indicated by the execution of youths from the Forest Region accused of being rebels. Such moves run the risk of driving *forestiers* into the arms of insurgents. The US State Department notes: “While the Constitution and Penal Code prohibit racial and ethnic discrimination, ethnic identification is strong. Mutual suspicion affects relations across ethnic lines, in and out of government. Promotions to senior government levels and the highest military ranks below the President include representatives of all three major ethnic groups.”¹²⁷

¹²¹ *BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 16 December 2000

¹²² Farah, D., Leader Keeps Tight Grip on Guinea, *The Washington Post*, 6 November 2000

¹²³ United States, Department of State, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 25 February 2000

¹²⁴ United States, Department of State, *Country Reports ... 1996*.

¹²⁵ Amnesty International, *Guinea: The Alpha Condé Affair: A Mockery of a Trial*, London, 12 December 2000

¹²⁶ Farah, D.

¹²⁷ United States, Department of State, *Country Reports ... 1996*

Responding to the insurgency, the government launched a recruitment drive attracting unemployed youths into the Army as vigilante groups erected checkpoints around the country with reports of civilian harassment. A traditional hunter militia, with alleged supernatural powers against bullets, emerged with the declared objective of defeating the insurgents. One of the dangers in this scheme is meeting the economic demands of these recruits and the Army in general before and after the end of the insurgency. Reintegration of combatants has been a crucial problem in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, and as the raids continue with more men needed, Guinea could find itself with a similar problem.

With a restless opposition demanding reforms and a population experiencing economic hardship, it remains to be seen how the Government faces the challenge of continued political cohesion and ethnic unity, particularly so when a prominent Mandingo, Alpha Condé, remains a symbol of opposition, while another politician from the powerful Fulani ethnic group is accusing the government of creating the crisis by allegedly allowing ULIMO into Guinea. The traditional rivalry amongst the dominant ethnic groups, primarily the Mandingos and the Fulas remain, while Conté, from the less dominant Sousou ethnic group, rules. With cross-border ethnic alliances, maintaining this delicate ethnic balance to ensure stability presents many challenges.

But the impact of political developments within the sub region, where demands for more liberalization have led to the fall of a number of governments, poses serious threats to Guinea's stability. As has been the case in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone the end of an era built on authoritarianism brings with it demands which do not necessarily lead to democratization, but anarchy.

6. Conclusion

At the heart of Guinea's security and therefore political problems is the entrenched mistrust and suspicion amongst regional leaders with varying objectives. Political alliances and ethnic line-ups emanating from the Liberian conflict, now spreading in Guinea, pose serious obstacles for the attainment of regional stability. These suspicions and fears made Guinea a target of mistrust within regional rebel movements, mainly the NPFL and the RUF.

The country's high-profile participation in the West African peacekeeping force ECOMOG, and its proximity to Liberia and Sierra Leone, enhanced its vulnerability. Furthermore, countries targeted for destabilization within the sub region have been those active within ECOMOG during the Liberian war, a point emphasized by Guinean opposition politician Mamadu Bâ when he accused President Conté of creating the crisis by sending Guinean troops to Liberia and Sierra Leone.

As Mandingos remain Liberia's feared and threatened ethnic group, Guinea becomes a target of more suspicion. President Taylor remains deeply suspicious of Guinea and has unsuccessfully sought more face-to-face meetings with President Conté (although both men have met on several occasions) to erase the suspicions.¹²⁸

¹²⁸ We Are Talking with America, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 11 December 2000

Taylor fears what he considers the threatening presence of his opponents in Guinea and Sierra Leone. This fear has kept him involved in the Sierra Leone war, sustaining the RUF, and frequently deploying troops (and mercenaries) at border points.¹²⁹

Guinea's dilemma is in part the result of regional politics that ended the Liberian crisis without solving fundamental problems of regional security and basic human rights. The links between Liberia and Sierra Leone's RUF were either ignored or glossed over in regional politics and alliances as the stampede out of Liberia led to makeshift solutions with long-term implications. Common interests of regional actors clouded concerns for regional security, and as Graça Machel once said, there is the "tendency of working as if our governments are clubs where they meet, they discuss but they can't punish perpetrators of violence...".¹³⁰

The prospects of Guinea, taking 161st place at the bottom of world human development index, surviving co-ordinated attacks in the midst of internal political squabbling, are slim. If so, West Africa is headed for an apocalypse.

¹²⁹ Military Build-up at Borders, *The News* [Monrovia], 20 June 2000

¹³⁰ Abdi, Y.H., A Serious Breakdown of Human Values, *Refugees*, Vol.2, No.115, 1999, p.19

7. Bibliography

- Abdi, Y.H., A Serious Breakdown of Human Values, *Refugees*, Vol.2, No.115, 1999
- Agence France Presse [Conakry], Guinea Approves Sending Troops to Border Region, 30 December 2000
- _____ [Monrovia], UNHCR Welcomes ECOWAS' Decision on Guinea Deployment, 19 December 2000
- _____ [Abidjan], Liberia Denies Claims that Guei Is Recruiting Mercenaries, 19 December 2000
- _____ [Conakry], Confusion over Whereabouts of Guinea Refugees, 18 December 2000
- _____ , UN Chief Marks Agency's 50th Year, Warns of West African Emergency, 14 December 2000
- _____ [Conakry]. Guinean Army Shoots Dead Six Suspected Rebels. 1 December 2000
- _____ , Guinea Denies Impeding Liberian Repatriation, 19 September 2000
- _____ [Conakry], Guinea Says Gangs Backed by Liberia, Burkina Faso, Continue Attacks, 15 September 2000
- _____ [Monrovia], More than 260 Sierra Leone Refugees Flee to Guinea, 9 May 2000
- _____ , Several Hundreds Killed in Attacks on Liberia Taylor Says, 14 September 1999
- Alhaji G.V. Kromah: Disappointments and Denials, *The Perspective* [Atlanta GA], Vol. 4, No.3, August/October 2000
- Amnesty International, *Guinea: The Alpha Condé Affair: A Mockery of a Trial*, London, 12 December 2000
- Associated Press, Nicole Winfield, US Wants Liberian Arms Embargo, 3 January 2001
- _____ , UNHCR Warns of Catastrophe in Guinea, 7 December 2000
- _____ , UNHCR Scales Down Guinea Operations Following New Attacks, 6 December 2000
- _____ [Abidjan], UN Food Agency Short of Food for Troubled West Africa, 6 November 2000
- _____ , Guinea: UN Staff Member Killed in Guinea; Another Missing, 17 September 2000
- BBC Focus on Africa Broadcast*, 3 January 2001; 30 December 2000; 16 December 2000; 14 December 2000; 11 December 2000; 2 December 2000
- BBC Monitoring*, Weapons Arrive in Guinea, 23 October 2000, quoting *Radio Liberia International*
- _____ , Political Parties Condemn Attacks on Liberia, 8 September 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*
- _____ , Paper Says Guinea Confronted by Double Threats, 8 September 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*
- _____ , Mano River Summit Calls for Immediate Release of UN Hostages, 9 May 2000, quoting *Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation*
- _____ , Guinea Minister on Security Agreement with Liberia and Sierra Leone, 20 April 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*

- BBC News*, 23 Mercenaries Arrested in Sierra Leone, 4 January 2001
- _____, Troops to Guinea Border, 28 December 2000
- _____, UN Says Liberia Destabilising Region, 22 December 2000
- BBC Summary of World Broadcasts*, Officials Deny Liberian Rebel Presence, 29 November 2000, quoting *Radio Guinée*
- Cabinet Wants 'Hot Pursuit' Against Dissidents, *The News* [Monrovia], 15 September 2000
- Carter, J., Letter to President Taylor, 6 November 2000, in Carter Center press release, 7 November 2000, <http://www.cartercenter.org/NEWS/RLS2000/pr-liberia.html> [accessed 5 February 2001]
- Carter, T., African Pestilence Reflects Yearning to Be Democratic, *The Washington Times*, 14 December 2000
- Crawley, M., Africa Struggles to Get By on Just \$35 per Refugee, *The Christian Science Monitor*, 14 December 2000
- Cross-border Crisis, *Africa Confidential* [London], Vol. 41, No. 15. 21 July 2000
- ECOWAS Fails on Security Matters: Liberia Guinea Border Conflict Still Hanging, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 18 December 2000
- Ellis, S., *The Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimension of an African Civil War*, London: Hurst; New York: N.Y. University Press, 1999
- Engelbert, P., Guinea: Recent History, Independence and the Touré Era, 1958-1984 in *Africa Yearbook 1996*, London: Europa Publications, 1995
- Expel Mosquito, Free Political Prisoners, Inter-faith, Civil Society Recommend, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 15 December 2000
- Farah, D. Leader Keeps Tight Grip on Guinea, *The Washington Post*, 6 November 2000
- Guinea Denies Harboring Dissidents, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 17 July 2000
- Human Rights Watch. R. Reilly. The Refugee Crisis in Guinea: Another Macedonia?, 3 October 2000, <http://www.hrw.org/hrw/editorials/> [accessed 4 February 2001]
- _____, *Annual Report 1999*, New York, 1998
- _____, Refugee Women in Guinea Raped, New York, 13 September 2000 (press release), <http://www.hrw.org/press/> [accessed 4 February 2001]
- In Lofa RUF Fighters on Rampage, *New Democrat* [Monrovia], 6-8 October 1999
- In Sierra Leone, Guinea: Liberians Abducted, *Daily Times* [Monrovia], 8 September 2000
- Interaction, International Organisations Express Concern over Critical Situation along Guinean Border, 27 November 2000 (press release), <http://interaction.org/disaster/guineaborder.html> [accessed 5 February 2001]
- Liberian Daily News Bulletin*, 9 October 1999 (Libnet)
- Liberian Diplomat Expelled from Guinea, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 8 September 2000
- Lynch, C., Ban Sought on Diamond Sales by 2 Nations, *Washington Post*, 20 December 2000
- Military Build-up at Borders, *The News* [Monrovia], 20 June 2000
- New African Yearbook 1991-1992 & 1997-1998*, London: IC Magazines, 1991 & 1997
- NPP Country Officials Want Taylor to Withdraw from Sierra Leone Peace Talks, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 29 December 2000
- Onishu, N., Africa Diamond Hub Defies Smuggling, *The New York Times*, 2 January 2001

- Pan African News Agency [Monrovia], Government Troops Battle with Dissidents, 23 November 2000
- _____ [Monrovia], Taylor Gives 72hrs to Expel Dissidents, 15 September 2000
- _____ [Monrovia], Liberia Denies Attacking Guinea, 10 September 2000
- _____ [Monrovia], Taylor Claims Hundreds Killed in Cross-border Attacks, 14 September 1999
- Poole, R., An African Peace Force, *The Independent* [London], 13 December 2000
- President Taylor's Formula for Peace in Mano River Union: A Response to Concerns of the International Community, Monrovia, December? 2000 (unpublished document)
- Rebels Attack Nimba, Govt. Confirms, *The News* [Monrovia], 22 November 2000
- Reuters [Abuja], West African Force of 1600 to Police Guinea Border, 28 December 2000
- _____ [Conakry], Intervention Force Plan Worries Guinea Opposition, 23 December 2000
- _____ , UN's WFP Suspends Aid in Guinea Due to Rebels, 14 December 2000
- _____ , Ten Killed in Guinea Raids - Refugees Set to Move, 5 December 2000
- _____ , UNHCR Scales Down, 4 October 2000
- _____ [Conakry], Guinean Troops Fight Gunmen near S. Leone Border, 2 October 2000
- _____ , Pope Calls for an End to Killings in West Africa, 14 September 2000
- _____ [Conakry], Guinea Warns Liberia over Alleged Border Attacks, 13 September 1999
- _____ [Conakry], Liberia Accuses Guinea, Seeks Troops, 16 August 1999
- Rice, E. S., US Policy Towards Sierra Leone: Achieving Peace and Justice in Sierra Leone (paper presented before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee Subcommittee on African Affairs), Washington DC, 11 October 2000), http://www.state.gov/www.policy_remarks/2000/ [accessed 4 February 2001]
- Rosenior, A. de G., Fire Next Door, *West Africa* [London], 24-30 September 1990
- Sierra Leone: Liberia Godfather to the Rebels, *Africa Confidential*, Vol. 41, No. 13, June 2000
- Sierra Leone News*, News Archives, 2 January 2001, 1 January 2001, 18 December 2000, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/slnews/> [accessed 4 February 2001]
- Stromberg, P., The World's Most Brutal War, *Refugees* [Geneva], Vol. 2, No.115, 1999
- Taylor Wants ECOMOG Deployed, *The Patriot* [Monrovia], 16 December 2000
- UNHCR Supports Dissidents?, *The New Liberia* [Monrovia], 15 September 2000
- United Nations, Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000) Paragraph 19 in Relation to Sierra Leone, December 2000, <http://www.sierra-leone.org/panelreport.htm> [accessed 4 February 2001]
- United Nations, High Commissioner for Refugees, UN Refugees Agency Prepares Camps for 60,000 Internally Displaced in Guinea, 28 December 2000 (press release)
- _____ , *Guinea Update*, 2 January, <http://www.unhcr.org/news/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

United Nations, Integrated Regional Information Network for West Africa, Annan Urges End to Spiralling Violence along Border, 11 December 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

_____, Sierra Leone: Missionaries Free, 6 December 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

_____, Guinea: UNHCR Alarmed by Threats to Refugees, 6 December 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

_____, US Officials Visit Refugee Camps, *Weekly Roundup*, No. 47, 24 November -1 December 2000

United Nations, Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, *Consolidated Inter-Agency Appeals Process Strategy Paper for West Africa*, 20 November 2000, <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

United States, Department of State, Guinea: Attacks on Guinean Villages, Violence Against Refugees, 15 September 2000 (press release)

_____, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1999: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 25 February 2000

_____, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1998: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 26 February 1999

_____, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1996: Guinea*, Washington: Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor, 30 January 1997

United States Committee for Refugees, Widening West Africa Violence: Decisive Action Needed to Stop Regional Destabilization, 15 December 2000 (press release), <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

_____, Escalation of Attacks in Guinea Endangers Refugees, Poses Serious Challenge for UNHCR, 8 September 2000 (press release), <http://www.reliefweb.int/> [accessed 4 February 2001]

We Are Talking with America, *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 11 December 2000

We Don't Want War Again ..., *The Inquirer* [Monrovia], 12 July 2000

Weisman, F., Can Relief Organizations Cope with the Warlords? in J. Groenwold and E. Porter (eds.), *World in Crisis: The Politics of Survival at the End of the 20th Century*, New York: Médecins Sans Frontières; London: Routledge, 1997

West Africa Widening Conflict, *The New York Times*, 6 December 2000

World Food Programme, *Emergency Report No. 50*, Rome, 15 December 2000, <http://www.wfp.org/ereport/2000/001215.htm> [accessed 4 February 2001]