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DEPARTMENT: Peace and Conflict Studies

COLLEGE: Social and Management Sciences

LEVEL:400

COURSE TITLE:  Contemporary Wars in West Africa

COURSE CODE: PCS 412

**Question**

In respect of our class held over Telegram messenger yesterday, Monday, 06-04-2020, you are required to perform the following task

1. Watch two (2) documentaries on YouTube on the Sierra Leonean Civil War
2. Write a summary of each of the documentary following the following format:
(a) Title of the documentary
(b) Year uploaded / the channel where it is hosted
(c) author of the documentary
(d) Summarize the documentary highlighting the nature of the conflict, its causes, the course it followed through its duration and implication for regional security and peace
(e) Review/critique the documentary

FIRST DOCUMETARY

# TITLE: Sierra Leone Civil War Documentary

YEAR UPLOADED: 2016

CHANNEL: Carson Salsgiver

AUTOR OF THE DOCUMENTARY: Carson Salsgiver

 The documentary talks about how the Sierra Leone Civil War was an armed conflict in the West African country of Sierra Leone from 1991 t0 2002. The war began on March 23, 1991, when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under Foday Sankoh, with support of Liberian rebel leader Charles Taylor and his group, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NFPL), attempted to overthrow the government of Sierra Leonean President Joseph Momah.

 In April 1991 details emerged about the mysterious rebels who were terrorizing Sierra Leone, the rebellion had been started in the name of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) whose leader was Foday Sankoh, an ex-army sergeant and professional photographer in his 50s. The RUF initially waged a war against farmers, villagers and alluvial miners, rather than against the central government in Freetown. The RUF had an ideology of rural resentment against exploitation; they used brutal tactics to terrorize civilians often mutilating and amputating their limbs in their efforts to exploit the inability of the Freetown government to protect its citizens. The rebellion worsened and civilian casualties mounted.

 In May 1991: Momoh, became increasingly worried about the threat the rebel RUF presented to internal security and fearful of the subversion of his own dissatisfied soldiers. Momoh looked towards Britain, the former colonial power, and expected Whitehall to help him out. Ties with Britain had been strong: The Royal Navy had used Freetown's port as a staging post during the Falkands War.

 In October l991: There were clear signs that not only was the SLA losing the war against the RUF rebels, but that many of its brigades had become totally demoralized - and some were cooperating with the rebels. The government army was beginning to split into factions which made the RUF's operations (often backed up by intercepts of government intelligence reports) increasingly effective.

  Various daring operations by the rebels in the diamond-rich south-east of the country indicated their strategy was to escalate from terrorizing civilians to attacking economic targets. There were more successful attacks by rebels on government army convoys.

 The Strasser government launched an army recruitment drive, often signing up poorly-educated youths from the city streets, including orphans and abandoned children from age 12 upwards. The government army grew from 5,000 in l99l to 12,000 men in early l994.

 Brigadier General Julius Maada-Bio overthrew Strasser who, he claims, was clinging to power. Many suspected Maada-Bio's motives: his sister, Agnes Deen Jalloh, was a senior member of the rebel RUF. But Maada Bio insisted he would go ahead with the elections as planned and that he did not aim to prolong military rule. He was close to Nigerian military leader Gen. Sani Abacha who had advised him to postpone the handover to civilian rule. Freetown's market women, suspicious that Maada-Bio was conspiring with local politicians to delay the handover to civilian rule, marched through the city and threatened to expose those politicians who had received bribes from the military to postpone the elections.

 In 15 March 1996: In the second round of voting in presidential elections Ahmad Tejan Kabbahleader of the southern-based Sierra Leonean People's Party was elected President with 59.9 per cent of the votes; but the runner-up, John Karefa-Smart, leader of the northern-based United National People's Party, complained of widespread fraud. Kabbah, a self-effacing former UN diplomat who had been out of the country for many years, agreed to keep on the foreign security companies.

 With the Nigerian troops in l996, Executive Outcome took the war to the RUF: fighting the RUF in its rural redoubt in the southern Kangari Hills in early l996. Sankoh's forces were badly defeated in a series of encounters. They then proposed peace negotiations with Freetown. Sankoh offered serious negotiations and the recognition of Kabbah's government on condition that the EO troops be withdrawn. London-based International Alert positioned itself as a mediator for the RUF, handing out copies of Sankoh's ideological pamphlets to puzzled journalists. International Alert tried to organize talks between the RUF and Kabbah in neighboring Côte d'Ivoire.

 A public row erupted about the cost of the EO contract to the Kabbah government. EO was charging US$ 1.8 million a month for the services of less than a hundred personnel, along with two Russian Mi 17 helicopters and logistics. Freetown politicians complained that EO were exacerbating the civil conflict and that there were covert elements in its fees which meant the government was paying well above the US$1.8 mn monthly fee it had declared. There were growing allegations that individuals linked to EO were engaged in illegal diamond extraction and export. The International Monetary Fund, which was pressuring the government to cut spending, told it to reduce payments to EO and improve accountability in the mining sector. Kabbah renegotiated EO's fee down to US$ 1.2 mn. But independent sources reported that the Kabbah government still owed Executive Outcomes US$30 mn in arrears.

 In November 1996: A peace agreement was signed in Abidjan between the Kabbah government and the RUF. An important provision of the agreement was that EO would leave Sierra Leone by January 1997. But EO's affiliate company, Lifeguard, which was registered in Sierra Leone, renewed its security contracts with several mining companies.

Kabbah then opened discussions with Indian-born Thai banker Rakesh Saxena who offered to provide up to $10 million in finance for a counter-coup in return for Sierra Leonean diamond concessions. Saxena contacted Colonel Tim Spicer of Sandline International and commissioned on 3 July an intelligence assessment of the military and political situation in Sierra Leone. Spicer claims that he has a 'very good' relationship with Kabbah and with the Nigerian-led Ecomog force; he asked Saxena for $70,000 for the first week's work and said that further intelligence work would be charged at a rate of $10,000 a week. A four-nation nation committee of Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Ghana was formed by the sub-regional Economic Community of West African States (Ecowas) to negotiate a return to constitutional rule with the Koroma junta. The four-nation Ecowas committee imposed an embargo on military supplies to the Koroma junta; the Nigerian navy mounted a naval blockade of Freetown and told the junta to clear any cargo ship with Ecowas officials first. The UN Security Council met, condemned the coup and endorsed Ecowas measures to resolve the crisis through diplomatic means and sanctions. In Resolution UNSC1132 it imposed a ban on arms shipments to all parties in Sierra Leone.

 Another round of negotiations between the Koroma junta and the Ecowas Committee on 22-23 October produced a peace treaty of sorts and a promise by Koroma's ministers that the junta would hand over to civilians by 22 April 1998. Nigeria lauded this as a great diplomatic breakthrough and requested an invitation to the Commonwealth Conference in Edinburgh on 24-27 October (Nigeria's membership of the Commonwealth was suspended in November 1995 after its military government executed Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogoni activists). Kabbah attended the Commonwealth meeting, yet his officials admitted they had no knowledge of the Nigerian-brokered deal with Koroma and were skeptical about its viability.

 Atrocities escalated to a peak in January 1999, when AFRC/RUF forces attempted to retake the capital. This is also the period when a policy of amputations was inflicted on the civilian population. The assault on the capitol culminated a campaign of terror in the north, arriving in Freetown in January 1999. Thousands of civilians were killed. The RUF/AFRC targeted civilians during the invasion of Freetown — Operation “No Living Thing” — resulted in the deaths of several thousand non-combatants. In its defense of the government, ECOMOG forces also committed human rights abuses.

Under increasing international pressure on both the government and RUF, the key Sierra Leonean actors committed to an ECOWAS-hosted mediation effort, beginning on May 25, 1999. On July 7, 1999, the Lomé Peace Agreement was signed, providing provisions for a ceasefire, disarmament of combatants and a political settlement through power-sharing. The UN Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMISIL) established on October 22, 1999that is credited with a positive role in helping to stabilize the nation. The level of violence de-escalated in 2000, with the AFRC/RUF forces reduced to ambushes and “less systemic” violence

In early May 2000, the RUF took some 300 UN peacekeepers hostage, provoking a strong military response by a coalition of forces from the government, UK, ECOMOG, and the UN peacekeeping force, with the effect of firmly defeating the RUF. Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader, was arrested in 2000 and eventually handed over to the tribunal for Sierra Leone, where he died while awaiting trial. From 2000 to 2002, the intensity of atrocities decreased to “more sporadic” levels of violence

 On 18 January 2002, civil war was declared over. However, for our purposes the last significant increase in killing as reported by the TRC is 1999.

 One of the major. Causes of this civil was is Diamonds and the resource curse, presence of diamonds in Sierra Leone invited and led to the civil war in several ways. First, the highly unequal benefits resulting from diamond mining made ordinary Sierra Leoneans frustrated. Under the Stevens government, revenues from the National Diamond Mining Corporation (known as DIMINCO) Although diamonds were a significant motivating and sustaining factor, there were other means of profiting from the Sierra Leone Civil War.

The war had regional security implications, in early 2000, the international community increased the military pressure against the rebel forces, with major moves to bolster UNAMSIL supplemented with UK forces on the ground and a diplomatic offensive against Liberia to halt its support of the RUF. Civil society demonstrations forced RUF leader Sankoh to flee; he left behind evidence of Charles Taylor’s direct involvement in the conflict. New RUF leader Issa Sessa folded, and while rebel forces did not immediately submit to the DDR process, a series of negotiated ceasefires in Abuja led to a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process that impacted thousands of combatants.

The Special Court for Sierra Leone, created in 2002 as a joint venture of the Sierra Leonean government and the United Nations, indicted leaders of the AFRC, the RUF, and the CDF, as well as former President of Liberia Charles Taylor. A domestic Truth and Reconciliation Commission, created by the 1999 Lomé Peace Accord, and begun in 2002, operated until 2004. Instability gripped the country during subsequent elections in 2002 and 2007, but the most recent election in 2012 was almost entirely peaceful.

SECOND DOCUMETARY

# TITLE: The Sierra Leone Civil War & Blood Diamonds

YEAR UPLOADED: 2015

CHANNEL: Jessica Xu

AUTOR OF THE DOCUMENTARY: Jessica Xu

 This documentary talks about how the war is popularly called the blood diamond war.

 It talks about The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) was a rebel army that fought in the Sierra Leone Civil War, 1991–2002. The RUF was created by Foday Sankoh along with allies that included Abu Kanu, Rashid Mansaray, and most of the Mende ethnic group in the southern and eastern provinces of the country. Child soldiers were heavily recruited in the Sierra Leone Civil War; a total of 11,000 are thought to have participated in the conflict

 The RUF made extensive use of child soldiers, The rebel Revolutionary United Front (RUF) of Sierra Leone forced children, including demobilized child soldiers, to join its ranks and engage in combat.

 One of the causes is Economic Reasons Rich in minerals, Sierra Leone has relied on the mining sector in general, and diamonds in particular, for its economic base. In the 1970s and early 1980s, the economic growth rate slowed because of a drop-off in the mining sector and increasing corruption among government officials. By the 1990s economic activity was declining and economic infrastructure had become seriously degraded. Much of Sierra Leone’s formal economy was destroyed in the civil war.

The Abidjan Peace Accord was a treaty signed in Abidjan on 30 November 1996 to try to bring an end to the war.

The goals were

The armed conflict between the two main signatories was to end "with immediate effect."

A National Commission for the Consolidation of Peace was to be established within two weeks of the signing.

A Neutral Monitoring Group would consist of monitors drawn from the "international community".

All RUF combatants would disarm, and amnesty would be granted them.

Efforts would be made to reintegrate RUF rebels into society.

The government-hired Executive Outcomes and other foreign troops would leave the country after the establishment of the monitoring group.

 It also talks about the Lome peace accord The July 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement ended Sierra Leone’s civil war on paper, but not on the ground. Ismail Rashid describes how the Lomé negotiations emerged from the 1995-96 Abidjan process and the AFRC-RUF attack on Freetown in January 1999 and the domestic and international responses to this crisis.

 While the military track continued on the ground, diverse personalities and groups worked to rebuild the peace bridges that had been burned in the aftermath of the Abidjan Accord in 1996 and the expulsion of the AFRC–RUF regime from Freetown in 1998. Between January and March 1999, Kabbah met regularly with Sankoh. While these meetings did not stop the fighting, they did result in opportunities for Sankoh to communicate with his commanders, the release of some abducted children and Sankoh's acknowledgement of the legitimacy of the Kabbah government. Kabbah allowed generals, foreign diplomats, ministers, parliamentarians and religious leaders to meet Sankoh and urge him to end the war. The rehabilitation of the RUF leader signaled a cautious return to the two-track approach that had characterized the Abidjan process.

 Kabbah and Sankoh also gave tacit support to UN envoy Okelo to establish connections with the wider RUF movement. Consequently, Okelo and his political officer, Modem Lawson-Butem, flew to Abidjan on 27 January 1999 to meet RUF legal adviser and spokesman Omrie Golley and Ivorian Foreign Minister Amara Essy. Two days of meetings resulted in a communiqué reiterating the legitimacy of the Kabbah government but emphasising the need to resolve the crisis by dialogue.

Despite the absence of a formal ceasefire, Kabbah consented in March 1999 to a consultative and preparatory 'family meeting' between Sankoh and his commanders. The RUF wanted the meeting to be held in Côte d'Ivoire or Burkina Faso. The government, resentful of Burkinabe and Ivorian sympathy and support for the RUF, refused. Togo, whose president Gnassingbé Eyadéma held the chair of ECOWAS, emerged as a compromise. The Kabbah government saw ECOWAS – which was divided by competing interests but still strongly influenced by Nigeria – as their strongest supporter and the main arbiter in the conflict. The RUF, though suspicious of ECOWAS, knew Eyadéma had excellent relations with Côte d'Ivoire, one of their key allies. Though unknown to the public then, Sankoh was related to Eyadéma, by virtue of his daughter's marriage to the Togolese leader's son. Eyadéma saw it as an opportunity to advance his stature as an elder statesman. A successful peace treaty could also provide Togo with much-needed positive international attention, as well as foreign investment, following its tumultuous democratic struggles and economic recession of the 1990s.

 The mediation committee, made up of international stakeholders in the conflict, was chaired by Togo's Foreign Minister Koffigoh and comprised Okelo of the UN; Adwoa Coleman of the OAU; ECOWAS Executive Secretary Lansana Kouyaté; and diplomats from the ECOWAS Committee of Six on Sierra Leone (Guinea, Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Liberia, Ghana and Mali) and Libya. The Inter-Religious Council and other civil groups, their attendance partially funded by the US, complemented the committee. American diplomats, as well as UK and Commonwealth officials, were active throughout the negotiations to 'ensure a continuation of dialogue', in the words of one State Department spokesman. The US also provided three consultants to help with the negotiation process.

In the first three days, the committee worked with the parties to develop a convenient and flexible structure, rather than imposing any particular negotiation model. It was accepted that the parties bore the primary responsibility for reaching an agreement and should therefore negotiate directly as much as possible. The mediators provided the necessary support, advice and communication between the two sides and, when an impasse was reached, they called in Eyadéma and the other West African presidents. This resulted in an array of open and closed meetings. The plenary sessions chaired by Koffigohs were open to all, whereas some meetings involved only the parties and the mediation committee. There were also exclusively Sierra Leonean meetings, involving the RUF and government representatives, and members of civic groups, when appropriate.

The talks were structured around three main topics – military, humanitarian and political – each one being dealt with in a committee with equal representation from the RUF and the government. Coleman, Okelo, Kouyaté and the other mediators helped facilitate and draft the provisions relevant to the different issues, and the IRCSL and other members participated actively in the discussions.

The military and humanitarian committees completed their work by 8 June. The two parties quickly reached agreement on the issues of amnesty, ceasefire, humanitarian operations, socio-economic matters, human rights, disarmament, demobilization, and the new army. The swift agreement on an amnesty reflected the decision by the two parties to use the 1996 Abidjan Accord and 1998 Conakry Agreement as bases for negotiations, in spite of subsequent atrocities. Both documents had granted a blanket amnesty to the RUF.

Instead of the estimated ten days, the talks dragged on for six weeks. Sporadic outbursts of fraternity and optimism could not prevent deadlocks. The three main issues of contention were: Sankoh's freedom and status; the RUF notion of transitional government and power-sharing; and the role of ECOMOG in post-war Sierra Leone.

With help from United Nations forces, British troops, and Guinean air support, the Sierra Leone Army finally defeated the RUF before they could take control of Freetown. On January 18, 2002, newly installed President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah declared the Sierra Leone Civil War had finally ended.