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SUMMARY ON TWO DOCUMENTRIES IN THE SIERRS LEAONEAN CIVIL WAR

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TITLE: Africas Civil Wars Sierra Leone

YEAR: 2018

AURTHOR: Daily Motion by Beth Portello and Brahim Mahmoud

This documentary starts with graphic videos of Economic Commission of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) soldiers committing execution. From certain interview it was believed that there were mass atrocities carried out by all parties Sierra Leone army, ECOMOG including some civilians.

ECOMOG was given a mandate by the OAU reinforced by the UN through chapter 8 of the UN charter, it operated under the UN in response to the situation and maintaining peace and security. The ECOMOG consisted of Nigerian, Ghanaian, Guinea troops, the UNSC praised the contribution of the ECOMOG forces in establishing peace and security during a UNSC meeting.

The USA, UK contributed in terms of finance, logistics troops and weapons. In an interview granted an Revolutionary United Front (RUF) commander Mike Lamin expressed his dissatisfaction of the ECOMOG operations condemning their the mass atrocities committed and condemned the international community on keeping mute with references made in the case of Rwanda.

An eye witness spoke on the atrocious killings of the ECOMOG

The RUF spokesman acknowledge the fact that the RUF committed atrocities and to an extent and seen as the protagonist to the conflict which he opposes.

Interviews with sierra Leone soldiers made emphasises on the fact that civilians had an equal share in atrocious acts; the killing and burning alive of soldiers. In an interview with Sylvie Brunel (Action Against Hunger) she shares the same view.

However, the government succeeded in making the rebels look like the sole cause of the conflict in order to gain international support. This made the amputees in the camp see the international support as their last and only hope.

There were so many factors which contributed to the war; In an interview with Zainab Hawa Bangura a representative of the civil society she made emphasises on the collapse of the state for three decades, mismanagement and poverty

The RUF commander Mike Lamin in an interview said that RUF was established to ousted a corrupt government of the All Peoples Congress party (APC)which was a dictatorship. They took up arms to fight for equality, education, employment, equal rights, participatory democracy, fight against marginalization social problems and to put an end to the exploitation of sierra Leone with their motto “no more slaves, no more masters, power and wealth to the people”. The RUF accused Kofi Ananna and the UN of having hidden agendas including the false accusation made by amputees against the RUF

In an interview Joe Melrose (UN Ambassador) stated that RUF was established as a movement for change, wealth equitably shared and natural resources to people and the country. Apart from diamonds sierra Leone was an exporter of rice and rich in iron ore and gold.

In an interview with AYB Rogers the RUF spokesman he accused the UN of not wanting the RUF to share in the power indirectly prolonging the war and escalating the war

He went further (The RUF commander Mike Lamin) recollected the horrific events on the indiscriminate bombing of villages by the ECOMOG

In Feb 1999 ECOMOG reinforced troops from Mali, rebels were expelled and 6,000 killed during the operation

In an interview with Jean- Luc Bodin (Action Against Hunger) and Julius Spencer (Minister of Information) they condemned the acts and spoke about the pressure on the politicians and government.

 In 1999 president Kabah goes to Lomé to sign the peace treaty with Foday Sankoh who was recently released. The treaty called for the sharing of power with the RUF, four ministers from the RUF, cancellation of mining license of foreigners and deployment of peace keeping force mainly by Nigerians. The peace treaty was going to be hard to implement as the RUF wasn’t ready to disarm and the UK began training a new army which violated the peace treaty.

In Steve Crossman (UK acting ambassador) during an interview in opposition to this the training would have continued if the Lomé peace treaty wasn’t signed and there was no pressure from the international community.

Eventually Foday Sankoh and other RUF leaders are arrested on the bases of violation of treaty and prevented from registering therefore not being eligible to participate in the elections.

In 2002 the special court for Sierra Leone was set up jointly by the government of sierra Leone and the UN with it’s official mandate “ to try those who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of humanitarian law”.

In 2003 Johnny- Paul Koroma is tortured and assassinated in Liberia as is Sam Bockarie, RUF commander.

In July 2003 Fody Sankoh dies in UN custody of “unknown causes”

This documentary captures the basic information of the Sierra Leonean war it gave room for interview/ experience sharing of people and touches every possible factor known for the civil war. It goes far as displaying videos from archives. However, this documentary fails to talk about the child solders the role an the impact of this horrific act on them most especially mentally.

It is important and commendable that interviews were carried out to listen to different experiences and perspectives to the conflict.

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This had shown the capacity of regional security, the ECOMOG is under the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) which was originally established for economic purposes but seeing this was a major crises in west Africa and it having a potential of affecting other countries the ECOMOG was established for such purpose. This made it evident that the regional body will can handle matters of such nature following all its successful operations. This illustrated the huge milestone for regional peacekeeping.

TITLE: Sierra Leone Civil War Documentary

YEAR: 2016

AUTHOR: Carson Salsgiver

The Sierra Leone war was against the government and the RUF in which the RUF brutalized civilians and had control of 2/3 of the country, the government however seemed weak and had weak strategy in finding them and facing them. After a year of fighting they controlled the south and east sierra Leone.

In 1992 President Joseph Momah was ousted by a coup lead by Captain Valentine stresser establishing the National Provision Ruling Council (NPRC) which promise peace to the country.

In 1993 with the aid on the Economic Commission od West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and Nigerian troops the RUF was pushed out to the Sierra Leone – Liberian boarder, which was thought by everyone to have brought the war to an end. It died down as a low intensity conflict.

In 1995 RUF seized the mines in some districts and the advancement of the RUF to the capital, the government hired Executive Outcomes (EO) with 1.8 million dollars to; return the diamond mineral mines to the government, locate the RUF headquarters and destroy, successfully initiate a program to encourage local sierra Leoneans to support the government. This consisted of 500 military vices and 300,000 trained soldiers. In 10 days they drove RUF out and was successful in its operation therefore achieving its objectives. President Ahmed Kabbah with the RUF signed the Abidjan peace treaty

In 1996 the EO left in five weeks and following the arrest of Sankoh the RUF began regrouping for new attacks

In 1997 the peace accord had failed totally, a group of sierra Leone soldiers freed 600 prisoners among which were Maj. Paul Koroma who staged a coup under the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Without resistance the 5,000 rebel fighters 100 miles into the capital proclaimed the war had been won but looting and crimes against civilians continued

In 1998 the ECOMOG condemned this and later returned power to kabbah’s government. However, this operation was faced with lack of support of aircraft, poor command and control, low morale amongst other challenges

The AFRC/RUF later resurfaced with its “operation no living thing” there was mass rape, indiscriminate killing, looting. At the end of this about 7,000 people were killed mostly civilians. Kabbah’s government was however forced to make an agreement to put an end to the killings which brought about the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999. The agreement gave Foday Sankoh the commander of RUF, the vice presidency a d control of the diamond mines in return for cease fire and deployment of a UN peace keeping force to monitor the disarmament process

The security situation however was still unstable with rebels refusing to commit to the accord

Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) camps were established for rebels in exchange the weapons for food, clothing and shelter

In Oct 1999 the UN established the UN mission to Sierra Leone with the objectives” to assist with the disarmament process, enforce the term established in the Lomé peace accord”. This mission was under the command of Gen. Vaj Jet Lee of India who resigned and later replaced by Lt. Gen. Daniel Obande of Kenya in Nov 2000

In 1999 the UNSC called for support from Russia for participation; Russia supported with for MRL, helicopters with technical crew as well as combatant with experience in Afghanistan

The UN force arrived Sierra Leone in Dec 1999 initially with 6,000 soldiers were to be deployed but in Feb 2000 a new UN resolution authorized the deployment of 11,000 solders. In march 2001 the number increased to 17,000 troops

In May 2000 500 peace keepers were captured by the RUF using their arms to fight, rebels advanced to Freetown. For a year the UN forces avoided RUF district. A call for military intervention was made to rescue the hostage and the government of Sierra Leone

A multinational operation a UN mission involving India, Ghana, Britain and Nigeria. It lasted for 75 days and was successful

In May 2000 British troops evacuated

UN resolution urged that the Liberian government expel all RUF members, the financial support and stop the illicit diamond trade

On Jan 18th 2002 president Kabbah declared the civil war over

This documentary gives an overview of the war but failed to talk about factors that contributed to the war however, it is commended for it detailed explanation of operations and military information regarding the war.