Liberia: How Diplomacy Helped End a 13-Year Civil War

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The end of Liberia's long running civil war in 2003 reveals that smart diplomacy is at least as important as military intervention if the international community seeks to save lives under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine. This article, drawing on field interviews in Liberia and Washington, finds that enlightened diplomacy succeeded in Liberia for two main reasons. First, unlike in several other recent conflicts, the international community refused to reward Liberia's rebels for provoking a humanitarian emergency. Instead, diplomats threatened the rebels with prosecution unless they halted their offensive, and peacekeepers were deployed to prevent their advance. This mitigated the "moral hazard of humanitarian intervention" that has emboldened rebels and escalated violence in other conflicts. Second, the international community refrained from demands that Liberia's leaders surrender all power or face quick elections or prosecution. Instead, negotiators promised asylum to Liberia's president and a share of power to his political circle, thereby averting a potentially violent backlash from the regime. Proponents of R2P should incorporate these lessons in future international efforts to protect civilians.

The end of Liberia's long running civil war in 2003 demonstrates that smart diplomacy is at least as important as military intervention if the international community seeks to save lives under the Responsibility to Protect (R2P) doctrine. Indeed, the nuanced international action in Liberia stands in stark contrast to typical calls for military intervention to help rebels overthrow vilified regimes, which has backfired miserably in other

cases.[1] Although Liberia has some distinctive features that facilitated the success of international diplomacy, it also offers more general lessons for future implementation of R2P.

This article starts with a brief overview of Liberia's civil wars from 1990 to 2003. Then, based on field research, it details the origins and strategy of the two rebel groups that escalated fighting in 2003, triggering a humanitarian crisis and international action. Next, it describes how a combination of diplomatic and military intervention over the course of three months successfully ended Liberia's civil war in a durable manner, and explains how this effort differed from failed attempts to protect civilians in other civil wars. Finally, the article presents lessons for future international efforts to implement R2P.

The Rise of LURD & MODEL

Liberia's first civil war raged from 1989 until 1997, at which time the militarily strongest rebel, Charles Taylor, was elected president. Stability was achieved, at least temporarily, but only after years of war that had cost tens of thousands of lives in both Liberia and neighboring Sierra Leone. Newly elected President Taylor generated cooperation with opponents by including them in government, but during 1997 and 1998 he ordered the arrest or execution of other former adversaries. Some of these ex-rebels fled the country – ethnic Mandingos typically went to Guinea, and ethnic Krahn went to Nigeria and the Ivory Coast – where they eventually formed new armed movements that returned several years later with a vengeance.

In 1999, an exiled Liberian rebels meeting in Guinea formed the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD).[2] Unwilling to be perpetual refugees and seeing no prospect for peaceful return, they decided to fight their way back into Liberia. From 2001 to 2003, LURD expanded rapidly to as many as 5,000 trained fighters, including former Liberian army soldiers, supplemented by another 25,000 ragtag forces.[3] By late 2002, LURD controlled about one third of Liberia in the country's northwest, bordering Guinea and Sierra Leone.[4] In March 2003, a second militant movement, calling itself the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), emerged on the other side of the country. These Liberian refugee rebels invaded from the Ivory Coast and made rapid progress. In just three months, from March to June

2003, MODEL expanded from 15 fighters to a force that controlled virtually the entire eastern half of Liberia (figure 1).[5]

Figure 1. LURD and MODEL Rebels Converge on Monrovia
Source: Reliefweb

2003 Crisis and Soft Landing

A humanitarian crisis emerged by June 2003, as the LURD and MODEL rebels advanced toward the capital, compelling tens of thousands of terrified civilians to flee ahead of them into Monrovia, which overwhelmed the government's capacity to provide aid (figure 2). The regime could not fend off the rebels for several reasons: a UN arms embargo hampered its resupply efforts; economic sanctions had reduced government revenue and, in turn, the ability to pay troops and maintain equipment;[6] and Taylor's fear of a coup had led him to hollow out the army in favor of personal security forces and various militias.[7] Ostensibly, Taylor had up to 40,000 troops at his disposal, but less than one quarter were paid and equipped well enough to rely upon.[8] Moreover, by early 2003, his tiny air force had been grounded due to lack of spare parts and maintenance. In the capital, the specter loomed of an imminent three-way battle for control between government forces and
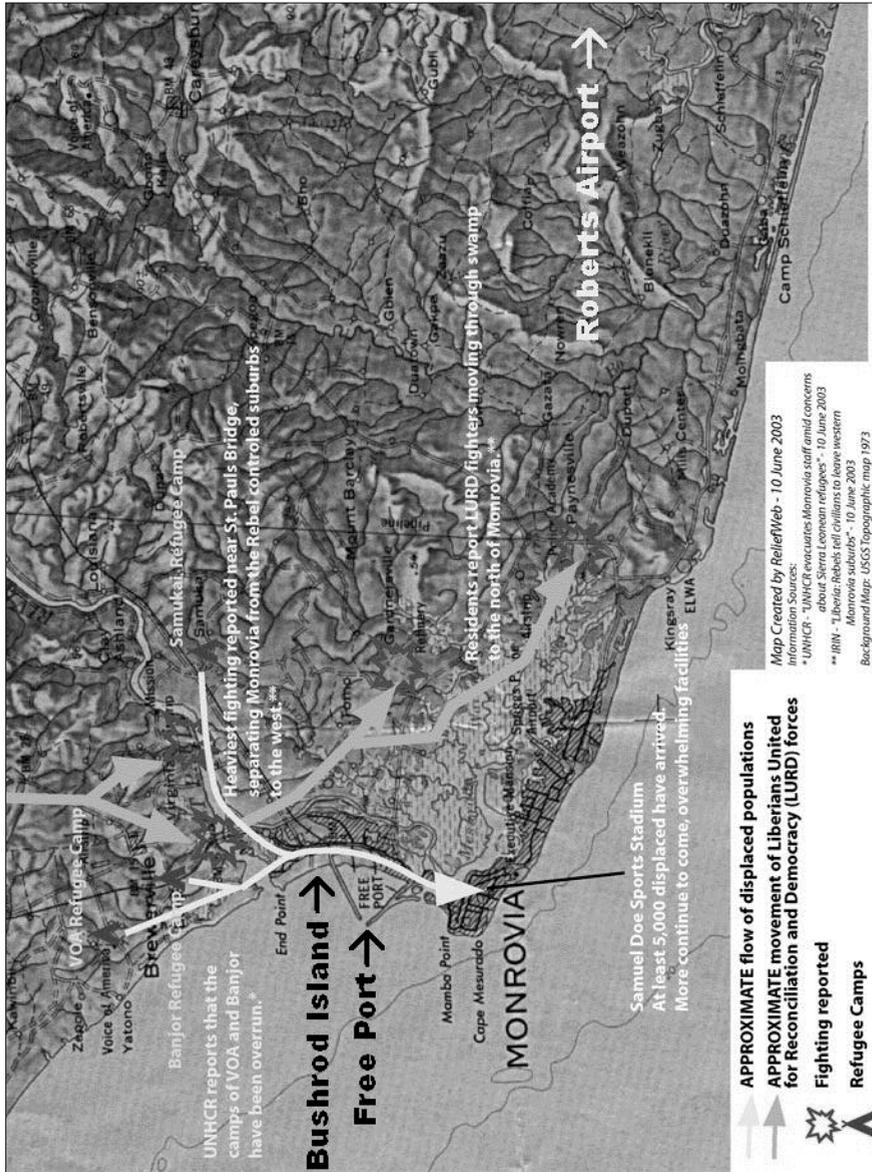
Figure 2. June 2003: Humanitarian Crisis as Rebels Displace Civilians. Source: Reliefweb, June 10, 2003

the two rebel groups.[9] The last time a scenario of that sort had occurred, in 1990, a disaster ensued – devastating the city, killing thousands, injuring and displacing tens of thousands, failing to yield a winner, and perpetuating the civil war for years to come.

Confronting this impending disaster, the international community launched a multi-track effort that in just three months successfully ended Liberia's civil war in a durable manner. First, peace negotiations commenced between Taylor and rebel leaders on June 4, 2003 in Accra, Ghana, organized by the regional Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). On that same day, a special international court released its indictment of Charles Taylor for sponsoring war crimes in neighboring Sierra Leone. As Taylor returned to Liberia the next day, LURD launched a new offensive ("World War I," in the rebels' vernacular) toward the capital. On June 17, in Accra, the two rebel groups and Liberia's government signed a ceasefire that effectively called for Taylor's departure from office, by pledging to reach a peace agreement within one month that would establish a transitional government without him.[10]

Barely a week later, on June 25, as negotiations continued in Accra, LURD broke the ceasefire and launched another offensive ("World War II") that reached the edge of the capital. The international community complained, so the rebels retreated temporarily, and Taylor's forces then reoccupied the area and punished suspected collaborators. On July 17, LURD launched its final offensive ("World War III"), successfully occupying Bushrod Island and its Free Port, the capital's lifeline, but failing to cross either of the two bridges into downtown Monrovia (figure 2). LURD had large supplies of ammunition, including mortars that they fired indiscriminately while trying to capture the bridges, endangering civilians in the densely populated urban area.[11] From the east, meanwhile, MODEL launched its own offensive, capturing the country's second biggest sea port of Buchanan, about 75 miles from the capital. MODEL then proceeded northwest toward its next two objectives: the Firestone plant in Harbel – which provided an opportunity for looting but also was the refuge for thousands of displaced civilians – and the international airport just east of the capital.[12]

At that moment, international action succeeded in halting the fighting. On August 4, Taylor announced that he would accept asylum in Nigeria

the following week, and a Nigerian-led peacekeeping force of 5,000 troops – the ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) – began to arrive at the airport. Soon after, a U.S. task force of 2,000 Marines, stationed offshore, commenced overflights of the capital area and briefly deployed 320 troops ashore. The African peacekeepers marched west and took control of the Free Port from the LURD rebels, who had agreed to retreat, enabling resumption of humanitarian deliveries. On August 11, Taylor went into exile as promised. One week later in Accra, on August 18, the rebels and Liberian officials signed a comprehensive peace agreement, providing for an interim power sharing government to be followed by democratic elections within two years. All U.S. forces departed the area by the end of September 2003, and on October 1, the UN took control of the peacekeeping force from ECOWAS, gradually expanding its UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) to 15,000 troops and police. Except for a few minor skirmishes over the next few months, between and within the three Liberian armed factions, everything went according to plan: the peace agreement was implemented, the civil war ended, the factions disarmed, the interim government served its term, elections were held, and Liberia remains a peaceful democracy at the time of this writing in April 2015. After 13 years of brutal and nearly incessant violence, the remarkable success of this international peacemaking effort without resort to large scale military force offers important lessons regarding intervention.

Interveners Avoided Past Mistakes

The key to success in Liberia was that the international community avoided many mistakes it has made in other attempts to implement R2P.[13] First, the intervention did not reward the rebels for provoking a humanitarian emergency, and thus did not embolden them to seek military victory. To the contrary, the international community warned the rebels that they would never be recognized – but instead prosecuted – if they attempted to seize power militarily. Rather than helping the rebels militarily, the peacekeeping intervention interposed between the armed factions, thereby compelling the rebels to retreat and discouraging them from further attacks. The U.S. military also minimized its ground presence, reducing the danger of mission creep.

Second, humanitarian assistance was delivered in ways that avoided bolstering the rebels – for example, it arrived via government-controlled

areas. Third, the interveners rewarded Liberia's nonviolent opposition by including them in the peace negotiations and ensuring them a share of power in the interim government, thereby bolstering their prospects in subsequent elections. This also reduced the incentive for future rebellion, in Liberia or elsewhere, by demonstrating that nonviolent opposition groups can obtain political power without the costs and risks of resorting to violence. Fourth, humanitarianism was not mere window dressing for self-interested Western meddling. The intervention was sincerely motivated by concern for Liberia's civilians – who were displaced, and targeted indiscriminately, and facing a humanitarian emergency in Monrovia.

Fifth, and perhaps most important, the interveners did not demand that Liberia's government surrender all power, or that Taylor face immediate prosecution, or that the country hold quick elections – any of which could have threatened the security and welfare of loyalist factions and thereby provoked a violent or even genocidal backlash. Instead, international diplomats forged a power sharing deal that guaranteed a portion of authority and wealth during the interim government to each of the four main societal factions – the Taylor regime, the two rebel groups, and the nonviolent opposition – while also permitting Taylor to receive asylum (table 1). In the transitional legislature, the 76 seats were divided as follows: 12 each for Taylor's regime, LURD, and MODEL; one each for 18 political parties; one each for the 15 counties; and seven for civil society. Of the political parties, one was Taylor's own and 9 others were affiliated with him, so the old regime effectively controlled at least 22 seats (almost 30 percent) in the new legislature, making it the largest faction.[14] This illustrates how the peace deal incorporated potential spoilers, rather than alienating them by demanding wholesale regime change, which has backfired in other cases.

Government ministries likewise were divvied up. The regime was permitted to maintain control of the National Defense and Internal Affairs ministries, among others, to address its security concerns. To share wealth (via corruption), LURD was granted the Finance Ministry, while MODEL was awarded the Ministry of Agriculture, as well as that of Lands, Mines, and Energy. The nonviolent opposition predictably obtained less lucrative ministries, such as Education, Gender and Development, and Youth and Sports. To further distribute wealth among the factions, the state's key

public corporations were divided as follows: electricity, broadcasting, and petroleum refining to the regime; ports and telecommunications to LURD; agriculture and forestry to MODEL; and mining, rubber, and the national oil company to the nonviolent opposition.[15]

Table 1. Power Sharing in 2003 Comprehensive Peace Agreement

	Seats	Key Ministries	Key Parastatals
Regime	12	National Defense	Electricity
		Internal Affairs	Broadcasting
			Petroleum Refining
LURD	12	Finance	Ports
			Telecommunications
MODEL	12	Agriculture	Agriculture
		Lands, Mines, and Energy	Forestry
Civ Society	7	Education	Mining
		Gender and Development	Rubber
			National Oil Company
Pol Parties	18		
Counties	15		
TOTAL	76		

The other international action to ensure stability was provision of peacekeepers, which stanched incipient violence within and between the armed factions following the peace accord.[16] Despite Taylor's departure, renewed war remained a considerable risk, especially initially. In the weeks after the peace deal, the MODEL rebels kept advancing toward the capital's international airport, and both rebel groups continued to obtain weapons. On October 1, 2003, LURD clashed briefly with the ex-regime in the Monrovia suburb of Paynesville. Later that month, when the LURD's chief of staff was denied the top position in the new army, he threatened renewed war.[17] When the ex-rebels were not incorporated into the country's new army as they had been promised, many of them also considered a return to war.[18] Illustrating this threat to peace, in December 2003, former rebels in one camp launched a riot.[19] Many ex-rebel commanders were also disgruntled

at facing travel bans and not receiving high government posts, which were reserved for a select few.[20] In early spring 2004, LURD factions even fought each other over who would control the group's lucrative positions in the interim government.[21]

The peacekeepers successfully prevented these minor disputes from escalating into renewed war. According to LURD's senior surviving military officer, Ophoree Diah, the power sharing deal "would not have worked" without the international troops. Although the two rebel groups could have cooperated because they both descended from Liberia's former army, he says, they would have continued fighting against the ex-regime, resulting in a bloodbath.[22] Likewise, MODEL's commanding general at the end of the war, Kai Farley, says "it would be a different story" if the peacekeepers had not mediated disputes during implementation.[23] MODEL's senior military planner, Boi Bleaju Boi, agrees that the peacekeepers were "essential to monitor the peace" and to prevent the armed factions from fighting over "who was in charge."[24] The peacekeepers mainly achieved their goals in two ways that did not require the actual use of force: deterring aggression, and reducing the need for any faction to lash out in fear of surprise attack. However, the peacekeepers also engaged forcefully at times, including quashing the skirmish between the LURD and regime forces in early October 2003.[25]

The peacekeepers may also have been crucial in the weeks after the 2005 elections, which ended the transitional government. Only a few former members of the armed factions were able to remain in government by being elected. For example, LURD's original Secretary General, Isaac Nyenabo, became the senior senator from Grand Gedeh County.[26] Both senators elected from Nimba County were former military commanders associated with Taylor: Adolphus Dolo, a retired army general; and Prince Johnson, who had assassinated Liberia's president in 1990.[27] Taylor's ex-wife, Jewel Howard-Taylor, was elected to the Senate from Bong County.[28] But the large majority of former fighters lost access to wealth and power. The fact that they did not then return to violence is best explained by the peacekeeping presence. However, other factors also contributed, including the extensive demobilization and two years of peaceful power sharing prior to elections. As a leading member of Liberia's civil society recalls, "Initially, we all

thought war would resume, but the peacekeepers deterred it, and then the expectation faded over time."[29]

Was Liberia Easy?

Before generalizing lessons for future intervention, it is necessary to consider whether particular characteristics of Liberia or its conflict enabled the successful outcome, making it difficult to replicate elsewhere. One helpful factor was that the region's armed factions were relatively weak, which also facilitated interventions in neighboring Sierra Leone and the Ivory Coast. Despite that, most peacemaking efforts in West Africa's civil wars have failed, so there are lessons to learn from Liberia's relatively rare success.[30] A second consideration is that for historical reasons the United States has a special aura in Liberia that enhanced its coercive abilities.[31] More generally, however, coercive leverage is available whenever interveners are more powerful than the parties to the conflict, which is the typical balance.[32]

A third factor is that Liberia's rebels may have been unusually willing to compromise, because their stated goal was to remove Taylor, not seize power.[33] However, when LURD approached the capital, its civilian authorities lost control to military commanders, who then attempted to cross the final bridge into downtown Monrovia to take control. Accordingly, the rebels' ultimate acceptance of a negotiated compromise cannot be explained by any lack of desire for victory.

A fourth claim is that neither LURD nor MODEL were confident that they could prevail against each other and Taylor's forces, so that both rebel groups had incentive instead to accept power sharing. However, uncertainty about relative power is common in civil wars and generally believed to prolong the fighting,[34] as it did in Liberia for most of 1990 to 2003. Indeed, the only previous pause in Liberia's war occurred in 1997, when the dominance of Taylor's forces reduced uncertainty about relative power. It is thus unlikely that an increase in such uncertainty explains the peace of 2003. A fifth assertion is that Liberia's residents were exhausted by the long running civil war and thus ready to embrace peace. While that may be true, the two rebel groups were relatively fresh and making rapid progress, so exhaustion cannot explain their willingness to accept a peaceful outcome.[35]

A sixth factor was that neighboring Nigeria was willing and able to quickly provide a few thousand relatively well-trained troops to interpose between the armed factions prior to deployment of the larger UN mission.[36] Although such a rapid deployment may indeed have been crucial, other forces including the U.S. Marines poised offshore could have performed this function if necessary. More generally, the United States is physically capable of inserting a vanguard peacekeeping force of a few thousand troops anywhere in the world within a matter of days,[37] and can often airlift forces from neighboring countries as it did in Liberia. Nigeria's ability and willingness to provide suitable forces, however, was undoubtedly helpful.

A seventh factor was that Liberia had only 3 million people, which reduced the peacekeeping requirements that correlate with population and level of instability. However, this was not atypical, because many violent civil conflicts occur in countries with relatively small populations.[38] A final claim is that Liberia's civil war was not really an ethnic conflict because the opposing groups did not harbor the "ancient hatred" or existential fear that has precluded power sharing in other conflicts. However, scholars have demonstrated that ethnic conflict is not an insurmountable barrier to power sharing and that non-ethnic civil wars are also difficult to end in a lasting manner via negotiated agreement.[39] Thus, the allegedly low level of ethnic animosity and fear in Liberia is neither necessary nor sufficient to explain the success of peacemaking efforts in 2003.

In summary, no unique characteristic of Liberia appears to have determined the peaceful outcome. However, at least four characteristics discussed above may have been helpful, which suggests that replicating such success elsewhere might be facilitated by the presence of these factors: relatively weak local forces; diplomatic interveners with significant coercive leverage; a small population; and suitable peacekeepers able to deploy quickly. By contrast, there is no evidence that peace was enabled by the other ostensible causes: rebels with limited goals; the absence of an armed faction that was stronger than the others combined; a populace exhausted by war; and relatively low levels of inter-ethnic animosity.

Lessons and Conclusions

Given that Liberia's peaceful outcome cannot be attributed to unique characteristics of the conflict, this case offers lessons for future implementation of R2P. Four international policies were the key to success in Liberia: (1) enabling the rise of the rebels to pressure the brutal Taylor regime; (2) incorporating all armed factions, including the government, in the temporary power sharing deal; (3) announcing the indictment of Taylor and then offering him amnesty; and (4) deploying a small scale military intervention to deter and prevent renewed fighting. Washington also made tactical decisions that facilitated the peaceful outcome, most importantly, by reining in the rebels to compel them to accept a compromise. The most questionable, and perhaps shortsighted, U.S. tactic was to double-cross Taylor by subsequently persuading Nigeria to revoke his asylum. In theory, that step reduced impunity and thereby deterred future crimes. More likely, however, it will backfire by discouraging tyrants from accepting future offers of asylum, thereby perpetuating civil wars and leading to even more violence against civilians.

These lessons from the successful international action to end Liberia's civil war in 2003 reinforce the five recommendations for humanitarian intervention that I identified in previous work.[40] First, the international community did not reward the rebels for provoking a humanitarian emergency, but rather threatened them (including with prosecution) unless they halted, thus minimizing the moral hazard that inadvertently has escalated other conflicts. Second, humanitarian assistance was delivered in ways that avoided bolstering or emboldening the rebels, which further reduced the moral hazard and deescalated the conflict. Third, the diplomacy rewarded Liberia's nonviolent opposition by ensuring it a share of power in the interim government and the opportunity to win subsequent elections, thereby further reducing the moral hazard that can encourage rebellion and perpetuate civil war. Fourth, humanitarianism was not merely a cover story but the actual motivation for the intervention, which thus did not artificially raise hopes of future humanitarian-inspired intervention. Fifth, the interveners did not demand that Liberia's leaders surrender all power, or risk quick elections, or face immediate prosecution – but rather promised asylum to the President and a share of power to his political circle – thereby averting a potential violent backlash from regime elements.

When civil wars endanger civilians, proponents of R2P often promote forceful international action: military intervention, regime change, and prosecution of senior state officials. However, such actions have backfired repeatedly, escalating civil war and humanitarian suffering in cases such as Bosnia, Kosovo, Darfur, and Libya. By contrast, Liberia reveals that more diplomatic international action – relying on power sharing, golden parachutes for departing leaders, and peacekeepers rather than offensive military action – can end civil war and save thousands of lives. The goal of R2P is admirable, but its proponents should embrace these lessons to enhance future international efforts to protect civilians.

Notes

1   Examples are Bosnia, Rwanda, Kosovo, Darfur, and Libya. See Alan J. Kuperman, "Provoking Genocide: A Revised History of the Rwandan Patriotic Front," *Journal of Genocide Research* 6, no. 1 (2004): 61-84; Alan J. Kuperman, "The Moral Hazard of Humanitarian Intervention: Lessons from the Balkans," *International Studies Quarterly* 52, no. 1 (2008): 49-80; Alan J. Kuperman, "Darfur: Strategic Victimhood Strikes Again?" *Genocide Studies and Prevention* 4, no. 3 (2009): 281–303; and Alan J. Kuperman, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign," *International Security* 38, no. 1 (2013): 105-36.

2   Joe Wylie, interview with author, Monrovia, August 2, 2012. Wylie says that he and Nigerian Gen. Maxwell Colby helped form LURD by uniting four existing groups: Organization of Displaced Liberians, Islamic Justice Coalition for Liberia, Islamic New Horizon, and Freetown Coalition of Liberians. Wylie advocated that the new organization, unlike its predecessors, should put "Liberia" first in its name.

3   Ophoree Diah, interview with author, Monrovia, August 2, 2012. He appears to be the most senior LURD military officer still alive (as of early 2014), having served in 2003 as the rebel group's deputy chief of staff. His military career started in 1990 and took him from Liberia's army, to ULIMO, back to the army, and then to LURD. James Brabazon, "Liberia: Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)," Armed Non-State Actors Project, Briefing Paper No. 1,

Royal Institute of International Affairs, February 2003, pp. 7, 9-10, estimates that in late 2002, LURD had up to 3,000 troops; 90 percent of the command and 60 percent of the ranks were ex-ULIMO; about 10 percent of the force were fighters from Sierra Leone, whom he viewed as mercenaries.

4   Brabazon, "Liberia: Liberians United," p. 6.

5   Boi Bleaju Boi, interview with author, Monrovia, August 3, 2012, claims that MODEL controlled 7½ of Liberia's 15 counties. International Crisis Group, "Liberia: Security Challenges," *Africa Report* No. 71, November 3, 2003, p. 8, says that when foreign-owned businesses retreated from Buchanan, they stopped paying government troops, who thereby became easy for MODEL to defeat or coopt.

6   The sanctions may have been decisive in the war. Nicole Itano, "Liberating Liberia," Institute for Security Studies, Paper 82, November 2003, p. 4, quotes Sam Jackson, Liberia's minister of state for financial and economic affairs, in mid-2003: "If we had the ability to buy arms openly, LURD would not be at the Freeport today." Taylor provoked these sanctions by angering both the UK (by meddling in Sierra Leone) and France (by meddling in the Ivory Coast), according to Amos Sawyer, interview with author, Washington, DC, November 12, 2009. Sawyer was President of Liberia's Interim Government of National Unity from late 1990 to March 1994. William S. Reno, "Liberia: The LURDs of the New Church," in *African Guerrillas*, eds. Morten Boas and Kevin C. Dunn (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 2007), p. 75, and Colin M. Waugh, *Charles Taylor and Liberia*, (London: Zed Books, 2011), p. 263, report that the sanctions originally were triggered by a UN report, in December 2000, accusing Taylor of aiding the RUF rebels in Sierra Leone, and were expanded to encompass diamond exports in March 2001. But Waugh, *Charles Taylor and Liberia*, p. 268, notes that even after Taylor cut off aid to those rebels, in April 2002, the UN did not lift the sanctions. Monie Captan, interview with author, Monrovia, August 3, 2012, and Waugh, *Charles Taylor and Liberia*, pp. 263, 266-67, report that France helped protect Taylor at the UN until he aided anti-government rebels in the Ivory Coast in 2002, after which Paris supported further expanding the sanctions to include timber exports. Ironically, according to these sources, Taylor believed that France and the United States supported the rebels in the Ivory Coast, so he expected to be rewarded – not punished – for doing likewise. Taylor may have been tricked into aiding the rebels by Burkina Faso's president Blaise Compaoré, who was backing them.

7   Itano, "Liberating Liberia," pp. 3-5, notes that the army still was viewed as dominated by Krahn, the same ethnic group as many of the rebels, especially in MODEL. After LURD seized the Free Port in July 2003, the government could not obtain fuel to operate its vehicles or the power generator of its radio station.

8   International Crisis Group, "Liberia: Security Challenges," pp. 7-8, lists the regime's most reliable forces: 6,000 in the Anti-Terrorism Unit (led by Taylor's son, "Chuckie," until he was removed in 2002 for human rights abuses), 1,500 in the Jungle Lions (led by Roland Duo), 300-800 in the Special Security Service (the elite unit, led by Benjamin Yeaten), 300 Marines (led by Gen. Gonda), and an unspecified number in the Special Strike Force. Much less reliable were the 7-11,000 army troops and the 20-30,000 pro-government militia. Brabazon, "Liberia: Liberians United," pp. 7-8, estimates that Taylor could deploy only 500 troops outside the capital.

9   Former interim President Sawyer, interview, says that without a power sharing deal the outcome would have been protracted fighting, since neither rebel group was strong enough to defeat the other, and each likely would have splintered, as such groups in Liberia had in the past.

10   "Agreement on Ceasefire and Cessation of Hostilities Between the Government of the Republic of Liberia and Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia," June 17, 2003, signed by Defense Minister Daniel Chea for the government, Kabineh Janneh for LURD, and J. D. Slanger for MODEL, http://kms1.isn.ethz.ch/serviceengine/Files/ISN/21541/ipriadoc_doc/b0be53f1-8452-4b77-a58b-a3230c6656a5/en/040.pdf.

11   A former U.S. official, who requests anonymity, says the rebels would falsely tell Guinea that they had expended their ammunition, in order to get more, when in fact they were stockpiling it in Liberia for their offensives.

12   International Crisis Group, "Liberia: Security Challenges," p. 4; Itano, "Liberating Liberia," pp. 1, 3, 5-7; Priscilla Hayner, "Negotiating Peace in Liberia," International Center for Transitional Justice, November 2007, p. 11; Wylie, interview.

13   Alan J. Kuperman, "Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect," *Whitehead Journal of Diplomacy and International Relations* 10, no. 1 (2009): 33-43. See also footnote 1.

14   "The Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA): Status of Implementation," Prepared by the Office of the Advisor to the Chairman on the Scrupulous Implementation of the Accord, December 18, 2005, in author's possession. Hayner, "Negotiating Peace in Liberia," p. 12.

15   "Allocation of Cabinet Positions, Public Corporations and Autonomus [sic] Agencies/ Commission Under the NTGL," Annex 4 of the Comprehensive Peace Accord, August 18, 2003, http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/liberia_08182003.pdf. International Crisis Group, "Liberia: Security Challenges," pp. 3-4, notes that "each warring faction was given key public corporations and autonomous agencies, which promises to allow them to continue old habits of siphoning off state resources." Hayner, "Negotiating Peace,"

p. 14, reports that, in order to obtain the posts that it sought in the peace agreement, LURD escalated its military pressure in Monrovia until it was appeased in Accra.

16 John Blaney, phone interview with author, November 3, 2009, says that after the initial intervention, his staff had to go put out "two dozen firefights all over."

17 International Crisis Group, "Liberia: Security Challenges," pp. 4-7, 10.

18 Joe Gbalah, interview with author, Monrovia, August 1, 2012. Boi, interview. Hayner, "Negotiating peace in Liberia," p. 19.

19 Blaney, interview, says that one of his tactics to keep ex-rebels from returning to war was to employ them in Liberian public works teams, which he called "Blaney Brigades."

20 Diah, interview. Kai Farley, interview with author, Monrovia, August 3, 2012.

21 Sekou Conneh, interview with author, Monrovia, July 31, 2012, says that after the interim government replaced his appointees, "ex-rebels came to me and said 'let's fight.'" See also Reno, "Liberia: The LURDs," p. 80; Kendra Dupuy and Julian Detzel, *Power Sharing and Peace-building in Liberia* (Oslo: Center for the Study of Civil War, PRIO, 2007), p. 19.

22 Diah, interview. He says that LURD and MODEL were compatible despite tribal differences, but that they had no military coordination during the civil war.

23 Farley, interview.

24 Boi, interview.

25 Col. Sue Ann Sandusky, interview with author, Washington, DC, November 30, 2009.

26 Diah, interview.

27 This point was noted by Sawyer, interview.

28 Waugh, *Charles Taylor and Liberia*, p. 280.

29 Kabah Trawally, interview with author, Monrovia, July 31, 2012. He leads the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia.

30 More than a dozen peace efforts had failed in Liberia alone. See Lansana Gberie, "Liberia's War and Peace Process: A Historical Overview," in *A Tortuous Road to Peace: The Dynamics of Regional, UN and International Humanitarian Interventions in Liberia*, eds. Festus Aboagye and Alhaji M S Bah (Pretoria, South Africa: Institute for Security Studies, 2005), pp. 58-61. For a comparison of failed and successful intervention in a neighboring country, see Leslie Hough, "A Study of Peacekeeping, Peace Enforcement and Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone," *African Security Review* 16, no. 4 (2007): 8-21.

31 For example, at the time of the US intervention, one young Liberian was quoted as follows: "We wish they'd stay until peace would come. Their presence here puts fear in our fighters. It makes them think if they carry on hostilities, they'll be handled by the Americans." Major James G. Antal and Major R. John Vanden

Berghe, *On Mamba Station: U.S. Marines in West Africa 1990-2003* (Washington, DC: U.S. Marine Corps, 2004), p. 116.

32 The United States sometimes may be unwilling to use that leverage, such as if it would require withholding support from an ally. For example, in Afghanistan in 2001, the United States did not want its ally the Northern Alliance to seize the capital Kabul, but Washington refrained from using its leverage to deter that outcome. (My thanks to Jill Hazelton for this observation.)

33 Four months prior to the peace talks, and six months prior to the peace agreement, LURD declared objectives similar to those of the international community. As reported by Brabazon, "Liberia: Liberians United," p. 4, in February 2003: "If Taylor is removed, Conneh and LURD claim they will cease fighting. . . . [A] non-elected interim government (comprised of LURD, current opposition parties and certain members of Charles Taylor's government) would oversee a transitional phase of political authority in conjunction with an international stabilization force, preferably provided by the United Nations . . . . [Then, LURD would] help the international community to oversee free and fair elections." Gbalah, interview, says that in June 2003 he expressed similar objectives to a U.S. delegation that was visiting Guinea, led by Gen. Thomas Turner and including approximately six U.S. defense intelligence officials.

34 Geoffrey Blainey, *The Causes of War,* 3rd ed. (New York: Free Press, 1988), pp. 108-24.

35 For a summary and critique of "ripeness" theory, see Alan J. Kuperman, "Ripeness Revisited: The Perils of Muscular Mediation," in *Conflict Management and Africa: Negotiation, Mediation, and Politics*, eds. Terrence Lyons and Gilbert Khadiagala (Abingdon: Routledge, 2008), pp. 9-21.

36 Nigeria also provided asylum. But some country could be found to provide asylum for virtually any head of state, especially if encouraged by the United States.

37 Alan J. Kuperman, *The Limits of Humanitarian Intervention: Genocide in Rwanda* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2001). The time requirements can be substantially greater if the force is larger or must be equipped for extended combat.

38 For example, Bosnia (1995), Kosovo (1999), and East Timor (1999) had populations even smaller than that of Liberia (2003) when international forces were deployed. A larger populace would increase peacekeeping requirements, potentially prohibitively so, as explained by James T. Quinlivan, "Force Requirements in Stability Operations," *Parameters* (winter 1995-96): 59-69.

39 Alan J. Kuperman, "Is Partition Really the Only Hope? Reconciling Contradictory Findings About Ethnic Civil Wars," *Security Studies* 13, no. 4 (2004): 314-49.

40 Kuperman, "Rethinking the Responsibility to Protect."