

# “Blood Diamonds are Forever”

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BRIAN W. STORCK AND RICHARD J. NORTON

**C**olonel Rico?”

Lieutenant Colonel Juan Rico, USMC, glanced over his shoulder to the door of his Pentagon office and sprang to attention as he recognized his visitor. It was none other than the deputy assistant secretary of defense (DASD) for international security affairs, recently appointed by the Bush II administration. “Yes sir. How may I help you?”

“I was going through some of the briefing papers on Sierra Leone last night, and I saw you are the point of contact for Operation Focus Relief (OFR), the West Africa training initiative. Is that right?”

Juan nodded. “Yes, sir. OFR is in my portfolio. Would you like to know something in particular about it? It looks like everything is on track to begin training the battalion from Ghana.”

“So I read. What I’d like to know is how we came to be involved in this project in the first place. What were the issues and arguments? How did it come to pass? I barely remember seeing anything about it. I’d like a quick briefing this afternoon.”

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As Juan began to pull out his OFR files, he realized he didn’t have a complete answer for the DASD. Thus far the initiative had attracted little attention in Washington.

On the surface, OFR was simple. Beginning in October 2000, a small number (less than a hundred) of U.S. Army Special Forces personnel had begun rotational training of seven battalions of West African troops for peacekeeping duties. Five battalions would be from Nigeria and one each from Ghana and Senegal. The United States was providing the troops with basic equipment, including weapons and uniforms. Once trained, the seven battalions would not only provide the nucleus of a regional peacekeeping force for Sierra Leone, but also be able to respond to any future West African crisis. The total price tag was going to be less than \$90 million.<sup>1</sup>

Luckily, Juan knew some of the mid-grade players involved in the initial decision. He called Carl Jenkins, who had been on the Clinton NSC staff and had worked the Africa desk.

“Carl, I owe the new boss a brief on how we came to approve OFR. You were there. What happened?”

Carl considered the question. “It’s a bit complicated, Juan. You’re going to have to give your new Republican master a history lesson first. And you’re going to have to make sure he understands the impact of Mogadishu and Rwanda. Remember, after Mogadishu in 1993, everyone in the government—well almost everyone—wanted nothing more to do with Africa. Any problems that flared up on the continent were labeled as civil wars or internal matters, and we stayed out. Those eighteen dead Rangers cast a very long shadow. But then there were the Rwandan massacres in 1994, a clear-cut case of genocide. When all the dust cleared it was evident that there had been a successful effort by Secretary of State Warren Christopher and other senior officials to keep the United States from getting involved in Rwanda. I think Christopher did not want to get involved in Rwanda for a variety of reasons. First, Africa was not his area of expertise. Second, from his point of view, there were more important things happening in the Balkans, with the Russians and with NATO. Third, Secretary Christopher had been badly burned by the Somali intervention. In the wake of the deaths of the eighteen Rangers at Mogadishu it was rumored that both he and Secretary of Defense Les Aspin were in danger of losing their jobs.<sup>2</sup> One of the conclusions many analysts drew from Somalia was that the United States had no business putting ‘boots on the ground’ in the middle of an African conflict. And while there was genocide occurring in Rwanda, it was also a civil war.

“The result of our inaction in Rwanda in 1994 was, for the remainder of the Clinton era, a strange combination of aversion and guilt. On one hand the U.S. government remained averse to getting directly involved in Africa—especially in an open-ended commitment or a shooting war. On the other hand, many still felt guilty over not stepping in and stopping a crime against humanity that the United States government knew was in progress. You may remember, in 1998 President Clinton publicly stressed the failure of Western nations to recognize and respond to the genocide in Central Africa. He vowed that such an event must never happen again.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, in 2000 Madeline Albright admitted she had been in favor of intervention in Rwanda in 1994, but was compelled to follow the administration’s line in her role as U.S. ambassador to the UN.<sup>4</sup>

“As you know, before OFR the Clinton administration had already taken some action in regards to these messy African situations. In 1996 the U.S. initiated a program called the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI). We agreed to provide some basic peacekeeping training and equipment for eight battalions from Senegal, Uganda, Malawi, Mali, Ghana, Benin, Ivory Coast and Kenya. The idea was that these units would then form the nucleus of a force, which could respond to any kind of crisis in Africa. Despite some initial skepticism, ACRI has generally been a success. Special Operations Command ran the program, and they are very good at this sort of thing. All eight battalions have been trained, and two of the eight units were used as peacekeepers in Sierra Leone in 2000.<sup>5</sup>

“The trouble is, ACRI hasn’t been effective in halting the violence in Sierra Leone and the rest of West Africa. This is what I call Kaplan country. In 1994 a reporter named Robert

Kaplan had written an article for the *The Atlantic Monthly* magazine titled ‘The Coming Anarchy.’<sup>6</sup> In it he predicted that all of West Africa was going to sink into chaos, misery and despair as pressures from population, disease, civil unrest and other forces destroyed governments that were essentially corrupt and fragile.

Carl continued, “Kaplan gave a great excuse for some people to avoid any commitment in Africa. They argued that because West Africa was doomed, there wasn’t anything that could be done and any attempts to do so were a waste of resources. Liberia had been gutted by a decade-long civil war. There were border clashes and insurrectionist movements in Guinea, and Nigeria certainly saw some turmoil. The repeated United Nations peacekeeping efforts in the area hadn’t worked.

“Here’s a quick summary. Sierra Leone is a former British possession that was granted full independence in 1961. After a succession of weak governments and military coups, it went into the firm grip of a one-party government. In 1991, the civil war in neighboring Liberia spilled into Sierra Leone. The so-called Revolutionary United Front, or RUF, began an insurrection. The RUF was led by a Sierra Leonean named Foday Sankoh, who was a puppet of the Liberian dictator Charles Taylor.”

Juan interrupted. “I thought Sankoh and the RUF were Marxists?”

Carl laughed. “If that’s true then so were Al Capone and his gang. The RUF were crooks, plain and simple. Nigeria saw itself as the regional hegemon and sheriff, and it is certainly a pivotal state in West Africa. The Nigerians had intervened multiple times in Liberia and Sierra Leone, fighting the various factions and trying to keep the peace. Nigeria claimed they spent more than \$10 billion and lost thousands of soldiers in the process, and they felt that the world owed them a debt.”<sup>7</sup>

Carl continued before Juan could object. “I know. For almost all the period in question Nigeria was run by a dictator, their peacekeeping tactics were more than a little harsh and their motives were very questionable. But Nigeria did convince the UN Security Council to approve a peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone in 1998. The Nigerians also convinced their fellow members of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) to provide troops. The ECOWAS members\* realized that nothing was going to be done to help West Africa unless they did it themselves. To that point, the big ECOWAS success had been forcing Liberian dictator Charles Taylor to hold free and fair elections in 1996. Unfortunately, the Liberian people turned around and elected Taylor! Once he was legitimate he stepped up his attacks in Sierra Leone and added the ECOWAS states to his list of enemies.”

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Lt Col Rico next called over to the State Department to catch Dr. Charlie Zim, a Foreign Service officer who was working on the Africa desk.

\* ECOWAS members include Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Ivory Coast, Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone and Togo.

Zim said, "Sierra Leone is all about diamonds, Juan. They have nothing like the fields of South Africa, but they have enough. If there were no diamonds, there would be little in Sierra Leone worth fighting over. At one time or another the Sierra Leone government, Nigerian 'peacekeepers,' the RUF and international mining companies' security personnel have all been in possession of the diamond fields."

"Security personnel? You mean mercenaries," said Rico.

"Not exactly. Of course almost all the security personnel were former South African military, and their parent companies, *Executive Outcomes* and *Sandline*, have been accused of being mercenary fronts. Once the world press started making a stink about them, the security personnel were withdrawn." Zim mused, "They were, however, very good at restoring order, if a little loose with human rights standards. Not that any combatant was paying attention to such things. This struggle was incredibly brutal. One of the RUF's calling cards was to hack off the limbs, especially the hands, of people they didn't like. Children as young as five years old were forced to fight in the various factions, and numerous young girls were kidnapped to provide sexual entertainment for the rebel fighters.

"There was some meddling from outside as well. Libya was widely suspected of having its fingers in the pot. Qaddafi has long had an interest in extending his influence in West Africa. Both the Liberian Taylor and the Sierra Leonean Sankoh attended terrorist training camps in Libya at the same time in the 1980s.<sup>8</sup> Taylor supposedly traded diamonds to the Libyans for weapons. In fact, some locals believe that Qaddafi was pulling Taylor's and Sankoh's strings the whole time.

"And then, in May 1999 there seemed to be a breakthrough. After taking and sacking much of the Sierra Leonean capital of Freetown, the RUF agreed to a ceasefire. In talks held by the UN it was decided that Sankoh would be vice president, President-in-exile Kabbah would return, and 6,000 UN peace keepers would go in to keep things under control. The RUF would be disarmed and the Sierra Leone army would be reduced in size. There was some international media criticism of the idea of letting Sankoh walk away from his crimes, but that was just the way it was.

"The United States endorsed the idea. Madeline Albright, then secretary of state, even flew to Sierra Leone in October 1999. She reaffirmed our support for the peace plan and visited with children who had been maimed in the fighting. You may have seen the video of her holding a small girl who had lost both arms in a RUF attack.<sup>9</sup>

"The U.N. sent in their peacekeepers as promised, and the peace agreement held for several months. Then things went badly out of control. The RUF and the other factions did not disarm, and the RUF refused to leave the diamond fields. Fighting escalated between the RUF and the forces of the Sierra Leone government. Eventually 'Vice President' Sankoh called for the UN to withdraw. The UN peace keepers were attacked and several hundred were taken hostage by the RUF.

“At this point British Prime Minister Tony Blair had enough. The British historical connection with Sierra Leone made the situation there especially embarrassing. Plus, London may have wanted to protect the interests of several British mineral companies who were actively cultivating the Sierra Leone leadership for diamond mining contracts.

“In early May 2000 the British sent in approximately eight hundred paratroopers and Special Air Service troops. They got back the UN hostages, performed a non-combatant evacuation and served as advisors to the Sierra Leonean army. In the process, they also engaged the RUF and captured Sankoh. While this was going on someone in the DoD got the idea for OFR.”

Zim concluded, “You’ll need to talk to my assistant Yvette Deladrier about the Interagency Working Group aspects of the decision. I’ll transfer you to her number.”

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Deladrier was brisk and to the point. “I’m sure Charlie mentioned that the idea for OFR came from Defense. Here’s what happened: The Africa Interagency Working Group, or IWG, consisted of representatives from State, Defense, the National Security Council, and the U.S. Agency for International Development.\* The IWG was meeting at least once or twice every week, as it had since the Rwanda crisis of 1994. It was clear that the situation in Sierra Leone was awful, but there seemed nothing we could do that did not involve U.S. ‘boots on the ground.’ No one, and I mean no one, thought the president was going to buy that as an option. At the same time there was a lot of interest on the part of Secretary of State Albright. She demanded weekly briefings on the area.<sup>10</sup> That may not seem like much, but given her schedule and demands on her time, that level of interest made the region pretty much of a hot spot. You could sense she wanted us to do more. Sandy Berger, the national security advisor at the White House, also wanted the U.S. to be part of a solution to the problem of Sierra Leone and West Africa.

“Of all the options, direct aid to Nigeria’s ongoing peacekeeping efforts in Sierra Leone seemed to be the most effective strategy. Unfortunately, throughout the 1990s Nigeria was basically an international pariah. We simply couldn’t be seen giving direct aid to a brutal military dictatorship that had an extremely poor human rights record. Both Congress and the American public would be outraged. So we were limited to aiding the Nigerians indirectly through ECOWAS.

“Then in June 1998 the Nigerian dictator General Abacha suddenly died. Nigeria subsequently established a transitional government and held a free election in December. By 1999 Nigeria was rehabilitated in our eyes as a potential recipient of direct U.S. aid. In July, the IWG representative from DoD, who was from your international security affairs shop, suggested the idea of training additional peacekeeping battalions specifically for West

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\*USAID is not technically part of the Department of State, although since 1999 the director of USAID reports to the secretary of state.

Africa.<sup>11</sup> We at State saw several potential benefits to such a program, which eventually became known as OFR.

"We wanted to show tangible support for the new democracy in Nigeria as fast as possible, but didn't want to overplay it. After all, democracy is a delicate thing in that region. We also wanted to send a strong signal of support to ECOWAS, which can become a major stabilizing factor in West Africa. OFR would do both. It would also be cheap. We knew from our experience with ACRI that these infantry battalions didn't need a lot of expensive gear. The program would also let us help the United Kingdom. The British could train the Sierra Leone Army for the rough stuff, and we could train the peacekeepers that would move in behind them. OFR would give Secretary Albright a reasonable option to offer to the president.<sup>12</sup>

"Nonetheless, throughout 1999 OFR seemed to be low priority and moved slowly due to our own bureaucratic inertia and Nigerian internal disputes.<sup>13</sup> Then, in late Spring 2000, Albright sent UN Ambassador-nominee Richard Holbrooke to Nigeria to spin up the U.S. ambassador there and get the Nigerians on board. I'm sure the fact that things were falling apart in Sierra Leone during this period led to her decision to send him. As usual, Holbrooke was very aggressive and made things happen. Some of his detractors at State complained that Holbrooke was obviously in search of a new crisis. Although I agree he's a bit of an adrenaline junkie, Dick has a great track record for producing success in tough situations. Sure enough, he got the ball rolling on OFR.<sup>14</sup>

"The White House was also on board. OFR had been a popular idea at the NSC since DoD first proposed it. Sandy Berger has always been a champion of greater U.S. efforts in Africa. He felt OFR would make us proactive contributors to a lasting solution, and there was next to no chance that an American soldier would get killed."

Juan interrupted, "What about within DoD?"

"Some DoD analysts worried that we might be training a palace guard for a future dictator. But by rotating the training sites not only between Ghana, Senegal, and also different ethnic areas in Nigeria, and carefully screening the troops who got the training, we thought such an outcome could be avoided. European Command (EUCOM) made a bit of a fuss at first. West Africa is their area of responsibility and they made the usual excuse about how their theater Special Operations Forces (SOF) personnel were too busy for yet another mission. The training portion of OFR was later assigned to stateside-based SOF personnel, and EUCOM stopped complaining.<sup>15</sup> Special Operations Command never protested. But then again, the OFR mission is in their job description. They do this sort of thing all the time, and it was very similar to the mission they had been doing for ACRI."

"Was anyone else upset? Our allies?"

Yvette answered, "The French don't like us or the British being involved. They see most of West Africa as being in their sphere of influence. They think the renewed British presence in Sierra Leone is weakening their influence. They've grumbled in particular about us enrolling a Senegalese battalion in OFR. Training in Senegal has always been their job as

the former colonial power. Of course, Paris didn't particularly appreciate our earlier cooperation with the Senegalese on the ACRI either, for much the same reasons."<sup>16</sup>

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Now Juan called Professor Frankel, who taught a political science class for journalists at Georgetown University. Juan explained his task and said, "I know the DASD is already wondering why he didn't hear about OFR when it was being decided. I don't remember seeing much publicity about it either."

Frankel said, "Not surprising. There wasn't a lot of interest here at home. Most Americans couldn't find Sierra Leone on the map if they tried. Foreign media, such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), were more aggressive in covering the Sierra Leone story than their U.S. counterparts. Some of the stories and images that were shown in the U.S. were really gruesome, but that didn't translate into U.S. public support for direct intervention. In a Gallup poll in May 2000, when the news of the hostage taking of UN troops was at its height, only 10 percent of U.S. respondents thought Sierra Leone was vitally important. By contrast, over 60 percent thought it was not important or had no opinion whatsoever."<sup>17</sup>

"Some analysts explain this lack of interest in terms of compassion fatigue. There had been simply too many humanitarian disasters, civil wars and stories of suffering from Africa. Despite all previous efforts, nothing seemed to get better. Other experts felt that the public attitude was due to the simple desire to avoid involvement and U.S. casualties in another nasty civil war. Moreover, the news from West Africa wasn't all bad. Over time, the level of violence rose and fell. When the fighting stopped, the atrocities stopped. When the atrocities stopped, the news stories stopped. For a while the diamond campaign had a chance of keeping the media interested, but it fizzled too."

"Diamond campaign?" asked Rico.

Frankel explained, "Diamonds fueled the fighting. The stones were being sent by the RUF to Liberia, which by 2000 had become a major diamond exporter in less than two years—despite having *no* diamond fields. During the last couple of years, NGOs like the British Oxford Famine Relief (Oxfam) and Amnesty International began exposing just who was buying these so-called 'blood diamonds'.<sup>18</sup> Some of the guilty parties were reputable dealers in Europe, New York, Los Angeles, and so on. The bad publicity impacted the legitimate diamond exporters like De Beers, who were anxious to avoid any kind of negative press. Of course, they pushed the idea that respectable dealers should buy only 'clean' diamonds from De Beers! The diamond industry has tried developing ways to identify clean diamonds using laser tagging and other means, but a workable technology has yet to be found. Nonetheless, for a while there was real international pressure to stop the purchase of blood diamonds. In fact, by early 2001 the diamond industry had pretty much agreed on a worldwide warranty system to certify clean diamonds. Unfortunately, the diamond smugglers are already working on ways to forge these warranties.

"But diamonds or no diamonds, no one in the U.S. media really cared about OFR. The few reporters who looked at the program soon lost interest. Green Berets training foreign armies is not news, especially since no one was getting shot at. The price tag is also pretty small. The result? Not a lot of public scrutiny."

"But what about Congress and the African-American community?" asked Rico. "I can't believe the Congressional Black Caucus wasn't engaged."

"There's some history there," replied Frankel. "Both Congress and private activists have been involved in the Liberia and Sierra Leone issues for some time. The trouble is, they got burned. Reverend Jesse Jackson was appointed a special envoy for the president back in 1997 to help work the issue. He made several trips to the area to try to advance the peace process, but he became associated with the RUF rebels' side of the argument. One time during the negotiations, he even publicly compared the rebel leader Sankoh to Nelson Mandela, an international hero. The legitimate government of Sierra Leone was outraged. By the time the peace agreement finally fell apart in May 2000, Jackson was so despised in Freetown that the government side refused to guarantee his safety if he ever came back. They even called him a 'RUF collaborator' when he tried to explain himself."

"The same sort of thing happened with U.S. Representative Donald Payne (D-NJ), the ranking Democrat on the Africa Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee. He was probably the leading expert on African issues in the Black Caucus. Unfortunately, Payne had a personal connection with the Liberian dictator Taylor that goes back to the 1980's. He denied that he supports Taylor, but there's no question that Taylor manipulated his relationship with Payne to advance his own agenda. In fact, the perception of Payne's bias got so bad that the Freetown government stopped dealing with the Congressional Black Caucus and began to approach Congress via senators like Jud Gregg, a white Republican from New Hampshire."

"Both Jackson and Payne were harshly attacked for their actions involving Sierra Leone in an article that appeared in *The New Republic* in July 2000.<sup>19</sup> The article also accused the Clinton administration of having a policy 'to appear to care' about Africa and of 'coercive dishonesty.' And this was in *The New Republic*, a liberal magazine that had been a major supporter of many Clinton policies. Since then, both Jackson and the Black Caucus have been pretty quiet on West African issues."

Juan thanked Professor Frankel and turned to his computer. There were obviously many factors influencing the OFR decision, and he had more than enough material to build a briefing for his new boss. So far, the training program appeared to be a business-as-usual, low-profile success story. . . .

## “Blood Diamonds are Forever” Epilogue

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*Brrrrreeeeep!*

Colonel (Select) Juan Rico, USMC, reached for the STU III secure telephone without looking away from the *Early Bird* on his computer screen. He was engrossed in a *Washington Post* article on a possible connection between Sierra Leone diamond smugglers and Osama bin Laden’s al Qaeda terrorist organization.<sup>20</sup> But Juan straightened abruptly as he recognized the caller. His boss the DASD had obviously been reading the same article.

“Juan, the secretary wants me to update him on Sierra Leone right away. This al Qaeda diamonds story has got the whole Pentagon E-Ring buzzing. What’s your take on the article, and where does Operation Focus Relief (OFR) currently stand? I’ll initiate secure.”

As the phones synched up, Juan hastily reviewed the article. The reporter cited intelligence sources and claimed that al Qaeda was buying blood diamonds from Sierra Leone via Liberia and selling them for large profits in Europe. The article alleged that a Senegalese front man with ties to several radical Islamic organizations was coordinating the contacts between RUF diamond smugglers and buyers from al Qaeda and Hezbollah, the Shiite terrorist group. Al Qaeda was estimated to have earned millions of dollars from the smuggled gems. The phone clicked.

“Okay, sir, I’ve got you secure. I can’t speak to the intelligence reports, but the article squares with what I’ve seen in open sources. The United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) just reached its full strength of 17,500, and the program to disarm the RUF and other elements is continuing.<sup>21</sup> The countryside is pretty quiet, but the RUF fighters around the diamond mines have so far refused to disarm and are apparently mining diamonds more aggressively than ever. The border between Sierra Leone and Liberia is still a sieve, and the Liberian government is being accused of actively participating in the smuggling.”

“Understood,” the DASD replied, “but what happened the international effort to control illicit diamonds?”

“An agreement to implement a system of diamond certification and tracking will probably be signed in Botswana by the end of November 2001.<sup>22</sup> The diamond industry, human rights organizations, and more than thirty countries will be involved. They expect the scheme to be fully in place by the end of 2002, but there are some big questions over monitoring and compliance measures. The U.S. Congress is also developing legislation called the Clean Diamond Trade Act, which would sanction nations that do not comply with the

new standards. The president is expected to sign it despite some earlier concerns over his discretionary powers."<sup>23</sup>

"I'm sure he's seen this al Qaeda story," said the DASD. "So where do we stand on OFR?"

"No major problems, sir. The third training mission to Nigeria is just getting underway, and the Nigerians seem happy with the program. We haven't had any political difficulties with them after the Nigerian president forced the retirement of the heads of his army, air force, and navy last spring. The Senegalese and Ghanaian battalions have been trained, and the whole program is coming in under budget."<sup>24</sup> The first two Nigerian battalions and the Ghanaian battalion have already been deployed to Sierra Leone, and the UN is pleased with their performance."

"Sounds like a good-news story", allowed the DASD, "but why can't they stop the diamond smuggling?"

"In fact, sir, the OFR-trained battalions aren't stationed around the diamond mines. A Pakistani unit controls the area along with armed RUF elements."<sup>25</sup> It's a bit confused. . . ."

"Yeah, yeah," sighed the DASD, "I can still see us getting blamed somehow. So are our friends over at State pushing for an expansion of the OFR program?"

"They aren't, sir. The Africa IWG is still meeting on a weekly basis, but the current focus is on Burundi and Congo. I'm afraid Sierra Leone is no longer a high priority. There's even talk of using some of the OFR-trained units in other contingencies outside of Sierra Leone."

"We'll see about that," said the DASD. "I'll let you know how it goes with the secretary. Out here."

## ABBREVIATED TIMELINE

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| <p>1961 Sierra Leone granted independence from UK</p> <p>1991 Revolutionary United Front (RUF) begins civil war in Sierra Leone</p> <p>1993 Eighteen U.S. soldiers killed in Mogadishu, Somalia</p> <p>1994 Rwandan civil war and genocide</p> <p>1996 African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) begins<br/>Charles Taylor becomes president of Liberia</p> <p>1997 Jesse Jackson appointed special envoy</p> | <p>1998 Nigerian dictator General Abacha dies, free elections held</p> <p>1999 May - Sierra Leone ceasefire signed<br/>July - West African Training Initiative (WATI) proposed<br/>October - Secretary of State Albright visits West Africa</p> <p>2000 April - Sierra Leone agreement fails, UN troops taken hostage<br/>May - UK intervenes in Sierra Leone<br/>June - Richard Holbrooke visits Nigeria<br/>October - WATI training begins in Nigeria</p> <p>2001 November - Diamond industry agrees on warranty system</p> |
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## MAP OF WEST AFRICA



## Notes

1. Interview with Mr. Charles Ikins, OASD (ISA) Office of African Affairs, conducted in Newport RI, 8 February 2001.
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3. "Transcript: Clinton Meets with Rwandan Genocide Survivors," *USIS Washington File*, 25 March 1998, available from: <<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/af-rica/prestrip/w980325a.htm>>, [accessed 27 December 2001].
4. Transcript of Interview with Madeline K. Albright, ABC's *This Week*, 9 July 2000, available from: <<http://secretary.state.gov/www/state-ments/2000/00709.html>>, [accessed 27 December 2001].
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9. Jim Fisher-Thompson, "Albright Meets with Rebel Leader Sankoh in Freetown," *The Washington File*, Office of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State, 18 October 1999, available from: <<http://usinfo.state.gov/regional/af/sectrp99/99101902.htm>>, [accessed 20 July 2001].
10. Interview with LT COL Michael Bittrick, USA, Africa Bureau/Regional Affairs, U.S. Department of State, conducted in Washington DC, 4 December 2000.
11. Ikins interview, 8 February 2001.
12. Interview with Mr. Tim Ryan, Desk Officer, West Africa, U.S. Department of State, conducted in Washington DC, 4 December 2000.
13. Andrew Maykuth, "Nigerian Army Balks at U.S. Training," *Philadelphia Enquirer*, 15 November 2000, available from: <<http://ebird.dtic.mil/Nov2000/e20001115nigerian.html>>, [accessed 15 November 2000].
14. Interview with Ambassador William H. Twaddell, U.S. Ambassador to Nigeria 1997–2000, conducted in Providence RI, 21 November 2000.
15. *ibid.*
16. Bittrick interview, 4 December 2000.
17. Gallup Poll Surveys May 18–21 2000, Gallup Poll News Service, available from: <<http://www.gallup.com/poll/surveys/2000/Topline000518/q31t35.asp>>, [accessed 25 June 2001].
18. "Sierra Leone: Responding to the Crisis," *C2 Magazine*, December 2000, available from: <<http://www.amnestyusa.org/diamonds/overview.html>>, [accessed 4 December 2001].
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21. Follow-up phone interview with Mr. Charles Ikins, OASD (ISA), 3 December 2001.
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