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Comparing Third-Party Management of Peace Spoilers in Liberia and Sierra Leone

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INTRODUCTION

Background

Despite a steady growth of negotiated peace agreements to end civil wars and increased international efforts to achieve peace between the early 1990s and 2004, less than 25 per cent of the agreements were successfully implemented. Mass violence and severe atrocities followed several implementation failures when already war-torn countries plunged back into civil war. In Rwanda, the collapse of the Arusha Accord in 1994, less than a year after its signing, resulted in the death of 800,000 people and in Angola, an estimated 350,000 people were killed after the failure of the Bicesse Agreement in 1991 (High-level Panel, 2004; 33-34; Stedman, 2002:1). On the other hand, there are examples of successes such as the implementation of the peace agreement in Mozambique in 1994 (Stedman, 1997:43). These different outcomes do not only highlight the importance of paying more attention to the short-term implementation of peace agreements but also raise the question of why international actors succeed with their implementation efforts in some cases but not in others.

Focus and Objective

This dissertation will argue that the difference in third-party management of spoilers during the implementation process plays an important role in explaining why some peace agreements are successful and why others fail. This argument will be supported through a comparative case study of the failed implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord in Sierra Leone and the successful implementation of the Abuja II Accord in Liberia. The Lomé Peace Accord was signed on 7 July 1999 and ended the eight year-long Sierra Leonean civil war but collapsed less than a year after the signing whilst the Abuja II Accord that ended the first Liberian civil war in August 1996 managed to achieve peace within a year (Omotola, 2007:38; Alao et al., 1999:77).

Stedman (1997:5-6) contends that so-called 'spoilers' – actors who seek to undermine the peace process by non-violent or violent means – constitute the greatest risk to the prospect of peace, and that international actors therefore need to develop and use effective strategies for managing them. His theory on spoiler management will make up the framework for this analysis. It will be demonstrated that the failed spoiler management of the rebel group the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and its leader Foday Sankoh in Sierra Leone and the successful management of the rebel group the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and its leader Charles Taylor in Liberia forms an important factor in explaining the different outcomes of peace agreement implementation.

It is important to address this research topic for several reasons. Firstly, this paper can hopefully offer a contribution to the academic debate on the short-term implementation of peace agreements, an area that has suffered little scholarly attention which favours the topics of peace negotiations and long-term peacebuilding (Bekoe, 2003:256; Osler Hampson, 1996:6). Secondly, the application of Stedman's (1997) theoretical framework to a new context does not only give support to his theory but also offers some new insights based on the case study of Liberia and Sierra Leone. Thirdly, in light of the many failed implementation efforts by international actors, it is important to draw

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on past successes and failures in order to provide some lessons learned for future attempts to achieve peace.

Methodology

The central argument presented above will be demonstrated through a comparative study of the implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord and the Abuja II Accord. These two cases share many characteristics but differ in terms of the outcome of the peace agreement implementation, which makes them suitable for a comparison. One limitation that follows from this choice of cases, however, is that the cases are not completely independent of each other, for instance in terms of the actors involved. This type of comparison is identified by John Stuart Mill (George & Bennett, 2005:153) as the 'method of difference', which attempts to 'identify independent variables associated with different outcomes'. The method has been criticised for only being able to identify conditions that are possibly causally linked with the difference in case outcomes. However, this limitation can be compensated by combining the 'method of difference' with a process-tracing method, which aims to 'identify the intervening causal process – the causal chain and causal mechanism – between an independent variable (or variables) and the outcome of the dependent variable' (George & Bennett, 2005:156-159, 206). A combination of these two methods will therefore be employed in order to identify the factors that contributed to the different outcomes in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

That said however, it is important to note that the aim is not to capture the entire complexities and dynamics that are involved in peace processes (Mutwol, 2009:15) but rather to understand the role of international actors and the effects that their choice of strategies, in dealing with spoilers, had on the implementation process. This dissertation will be based on both secondary materials as well as on primary sources such as reports and news articles that cover central events during the implementation period.

Structure

The dissertation will begin with an overview of the scholarly literature on conflict resolution followed by an introduction of Stedman's (1997) theory on spoiler management. Thereafter, a comparative case study of the implementation of the Abuja II Accord and the Lomé Peace Accord will be conducted, which will start with a brief background of the cases followed by an analytical section. The analytical section will begin with an analysis of the third-party involvement during the implementation period, which will demonstrate that the international commitment to the implementation process in Liberia was much greater than in Sierra Leone. Thereafter, the effect this difference had on the chosen third-party strategies for managing spoilers in the two cases will be examined. Finally, the effect of the chosen third-party strategies on the success and failure of peace agreement implementation will be analysed.

CHAPTER ONE: Literature Review

Many scholars have focused on the negotiation process and the nature of the peace agreements in order to try to explain why peace is achieved in some cases but not in others. Within this literature, a peace agreement, which contains the 'right provisions' is often treated as an end goal and the implementation of the agreement seems to be regarded as something that naturally follows after it has been signed. William Zartman (1995:8-10) focuses on the mediation process and argues that conditions are conducive to negotiation when the warring parties have reached a ripe moment for resolution, also called 'mutual hurting stalemate'. Such moments signify that both sides to the conflict perceive that they are in an uncomfortable and costly predicament where victory cannot be achieved with available means. Christine Bell (2006:386-387) contends that agreements should be legally binding as it raises the reputation cost of non-compliance for non-state actors, which would result in a stronger incentive to follow the provisions in the agreement. She does not, however, support this argument with empirical evidence that the legality of peace agreements leads to greater compliance by non-state actors.

Peace processes are highly complex and by neglecting the nature of the implementation period itself in favour of the

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process leading up to the negotiated agreement, this complexity is not adequately addressed. In light of the many examples of failed peace agreements and the huge risk of a relapse into war and violence that follow after the failure, as seen in Rwanda and Angola (High-level Panel, 2004: 33-34; Stedman, 2002:1), it is important to look more closely at the implementation phase of the peace process. Additionally, the nature of the peace agreement does not alone explain the success or failure of peace agreement implementation. For instance, the Lomé Peace Accord collapsed in May 2000 in Sierra Leone, but was reinstated at a later stage and then successfully implemented (Mustapha & Bangura, 2010:1; Mitton, 2008: 201-203). Thus, factors that could aid or impede the implementation of peace agreements deserve more attention.

Several scholars have made efforts to fill this gap. Fen Osler Hampson (1996:219-234) served as a pioneer with his book *Nurturing Peace* in which he argues that success does not automatically follow after a well-negotiated peace agreement has been signed since there are always unresolved issues and different interpretations that can obstruct the implementation process. According to Osler Hampson (1996), agreements are unlikely to take root if there is a lack of high quality support and commitment from third parties as well as a favourable regional and international environment during the implementation period. Although his account on third-party involvement helped shed light on the implementation period, the failure to differentiate between civil wars is problematic, as pointed out by Stedman (2002:5). This leads Osler Hampson to provide a simplistic prescription for successful third-party involvement: the more outside support and engagement the better, irrespective of differences between cases such as the agendas of the parties to the conflict.

The importance of power-sharing provisions in peace agreements in order to mitigate security concerns often experienced by parties to a conflict has been emphasised by several scholars. Caroline Hartzell and Matthew Hoddie (2003:318-330) argue that peace agreements should include extensive power-sharing provisions along economic, political, territorial and military dimensions in order to decrease the likelihood of a return to war as these provisions would increase the warring parties' sense of security. Barbara Walter (2002:160-161) contends that credible third-party security guarantees, in addition to power-sharing pacts, are crucial in order to make combatants feel secure and commit to the implementation process. Yet, what constitutes a 'credible third-party security guarantee' is not sufficiently clarified by Walter who only identifies three levels to choose from: weak, moderate and strong. She focuses solely on the number of troops deployed but does not mention how this relates to strategic intent, a critical aspect of the concept 'guarantee'. Walter also fails to acknowledge that civil wars and the rebel groups involved differ in terms of the challenges they pose to involved international actors (Stedman, 2002:6-7). A common denominator between these scholars is an assumption that rebels are always motivated by security concerns, which is not always the case. The failure to differentiate between rebel groups and their motivations has led to vague policy recommendations on how third parties should act to mitigate the risk of a relapse into conflict.

These issues must be addressed in order to fully understand which third-party strategies work to achieve a successful peace agreement implementation. Stedman (1997; 2002) has made a valuable contribution in this regard. For example, he asserts that Walter's (2002) theory on the crucial role of third-party security guarantees does not explain the successful implementation of peace agreements that lacked such provisions in Namibia, Zimbabwe and Mozambique (Stedman, 2002:11). Stedman (1997:5-7) opposes a 'one-size-fits-all' approach in terms of third-party efforts for implementing peace agreements since he asserts that all rebel groups are not driven by security concerns but have different agendas. He argues, in fact, that the peace process itself creates spoilers who seek to undermine the peace process. Although a peace agreement has been signed, there will always be parties who disagree over the terms of the peace or who simply have demands that cannot be addressed through negotiation. As stated by Stedman (1997:7): 'the most perfectly crafted power-sharing institutions in the world are useless if one of the parties does not want to share power'. Therefore, coherent and effective third-party strategies are required to manage the spoiler in order to impede it from destroying the peace process. The importance of spoiler management in order to achieve peace will be demonstrated in this paper. Stedman's theory – which forms the framework for the analysis of the implementation of the peace agreements in Liberia and Sierra Leone – will be examined more thoroughly in the next section.

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CHAPTER TWO: Stedman's Theory of Spoiler Management

2.1. Identification of the Spoilers

Stedman (1997:5-7) argues that there are different types of spoilers and that appropriate third-party strategies for managing them therefore are crucial in order for a successful implementation of a peace agreement to take place. In successful cases such as Mozambique and Cambodia, international actors managed to correctly identify and were able to deal with spoilers adequately. Contrast to this was Rwanda and Angola where civil war followed as a result of the unsuccessful spoiler management.

Stedman (1997:9-11) opposes both the claims that spoilers are only motivated by insecurity and that they only seek total power. He contends instead that spoilers differ in their goals and commitment and can be categorised into three different groups: limited, total and greedy. *Limited spoilers* have limited goals – goals that still can be non-negotiable – such as recognition, a share of power or the exercise of power within a democratic system. They can be included in the peace process if other parties to the conflict accept their non-negotiable requirements. *Total spoilers*, on the other hand, seek total power and hold immutable preferences that cannot be changed, which makes them opposed to any compromise peace. They only commit to peace for tactical reasons in order to gain advantages. *Greedy spoilers* hold goals that expand or contract with calculations of cost and risk and 'can be accommodated in peace processes if their limited goals are met and high costs constrain them from making added demands' (Stedman, 1997:11).

In addition to categorising spoilers according to their goals and commitment, Stedman (1997:8) also asserts that there are variations in terms of *numbers* of spoilers, the *position* of the spoiler and the *locus* of the spoiler problem. The presence of more than one spoiler is challenging for the international actor since the strategy chosen can affect the possibility to deal effectively with other spoilers and even strengthen them. A spoiler that is positioned inside the peace process has signed the peace agreement and tends to use strategies of concealment whereas an outside spoiler is excluded from the peace process and often use violence to undermine it. The locus of the spoiler problem refers to whether the spoiler can transform from one type to another. Stedman argues that it is possible for the party's leader to be a spoiler, due in part to the fact that a change in leadership can lead to re-aligned goals and commitment for the party as a whole. Even a total spoiler can transform to a limited spoiler as a result of a leadership change. This possibility rarely exists when the followers are the locus of the spoiler problem.

2.2. Third-Party Strategies for Managing Spoilers

In order for third parties, such as international organisations or individual states, to deal with spoilers successfully, they do not only need to diagnose them correctly but also choose an appropriate strategy for managing them. Stedman (1997:12) identifies three major strategies that are used by third parties: inducement, socialisation and coercion.

The *strategy of inducement* signifies an acceptance of the spoiler's demands by giving it what it wants whether that is justice, greater benefits or a share of the power. When using the *strategy of socialisation*, third parties establish a set of norms for what constitutes as acceptable behaviour and ensures that the spoiler follow these rules, either by using 'carrots and sticks' to reward or punish the spoiler or by persuasion of the value of established norms such as the rules of democratic election. The *strategy of coercion* implies that the international actors use threat or punishment to change the spoiler behaviour, defeat the spoiler or reduce its ability to spoil. There are several variants of the strategy of coercion: the use of threat and demand, the application of force to defeat the spoiler, the so-called 'departing train' strategy, which means that the spoilers are informed that the peace process will proceed whether they are part of it or not, and finally the 'withdrawal' strategy which aims to evoke appropriate spoiler behaviour by threatening to put an end to international involvement (Stedman, 1997:12-14).

Strategies must be matched with the type of spoilers. Total spoilers with their immutable preferences must be defeated or marginalised to such an extent that they no longer have the capability to undermine the peace process.

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The other strategies in Stedman's theoretical framework are simply insufficient or even counterproductive: the spoilers might be strengthened both by inducement and socialisation since it gives them resources and legitimacy. The same counts for the use of threats since these are rarely followed up by concrete action, which undermines the international actor and consequently strengthens the position of the spoilers. The 'withdrawal' strategy only works in favour of the spoilers since they want to get rid of the international presence. Thus, the only strategies that work are the use of force or the 'departing train' strategy since they lead the spoiler to be either defeated or marginalised. Limited spoilers can be included in the peace process through inducement, a strategy that only works if the other parties involved in the process accept the limited spoilers' demands which ultimately depends on whether they are in a strong bargaining position or not. If this alternative does not work, then the peacemakers can turn to socialisation or coercion, although the latter strategy could backfire and provoke the spoiler to use counter-violence. Lastly, socialisation is arguably the appropriate strategy for dealing with greedy spoilers as the method of 'carrots and sticks' can be used to increase the costs of the spoiler behaviour (Stedman, 1997: 14-16).

2.3. *Limitations of Third Parties*

Despite the many strategies that third parties have to choose from when dealing with spoilers, the lack of external support and organisational blinders make this task very difficult (Stedman, 1997:7). The lack of external support can be a result of the reluctance of states to contribute to the peace processes if it is perceived as too costly or risky. Additionally, there are often states that act as external patrons to the spoilers and might ignore the spoiler behaviour or even aid them by providing arms or supporting their claims (Stedman, 1997: 16, 51).

It is also difficult for the international actors to conduct a correct diagnosis of the spoiler due to the array of complexities and uncertainties that characterises peace processes. This task becomes even more difficult as a result of the many organisational blinders, which are rules and beliefs of the third parties, which often serve as an obstacle to successful spoiler management. Firstly, there are often previous relations between individual states and the spoiler, which leads the states to make a flawed interpretation of the spoiler behaviour. Secondly, the international actors can be bound by their doctrine, such as the values of neutrality and impartiality that signify traditional peacekeeping, which may make them reluctant to act vigorously against the spoilers. Thirdly, there is a tendency of third parties to abandon some goals in the peace agreement in order to achieve an overriding goal that is considered to be of great importance, such as an election. The focus on an overriding goal can lead the international actor to ignore other violations of the peace agreement by the spoilers. Fourthly, spoiler behaviour may be ignored if costly action is required to address it. Lastly, the significant investment that is involved in peace processes leads third parties to often perceive spoiler behaviour as negotiable even when it is not since they desire an implemented agreement (Stedman, 1997:17, 48-51).

2.4. *Critique against the Theory on Spoiler Management*

The spoiler concept itself has been criticised for being fluid and used in an arbitrary way. In terms of fluidity, it has been argued that spoiler types are not fixed but can change over time. Zahar (2003:116) highlights the nearly ten year-long transformation of the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) from a total spoiler to one that is willing to negotiate. However, as pointed out by Stedman (2002:13) the spoiler concept only exists in relation to an existing peace agreement, which speaks against this argument. In terms of arbitrariness, the spoiler concept has been accused of a normative bias as international actors involved in the peace processes usually engage in liberal peacebuilding, which affects their perception of the legitimacy of the warring parties' demands. Edward Newman and Oliver Richmond (2006:106) argue that actors who agree with the normative underpinnings of liberal peace are considered to have legitimate goals and actors that do the opposite are considered spoilers. Yet, the risk of a liberal peace bias must be weighed against the risks associated with a failed management of actors that seek to undermine the peace process in terms of a relapse into war and violence. Since spoiler management can serve an important role in mitigating these risks, the spoiler concept should not be disregarded.

Lastly, Stedman is vague on how success and failure should be defined. In his first article from 1997, he states that successful and failed spoiler management is based on 'whether the spoiler has been relatively weakened or strengthened vis-à-vis its opponents' (Stedman, 1997:19). Yet, when looking at his case studies, such as the failed

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spoiler management in Angola and Rwanda and the relapse into violence that followed, there seems to be an implicit assumption that when the spoiler has been strengthened, the attempt to peace has failed. Due to this lack of clarity, another definition of successful implementation of peace agreements proposed by Stedman will be used, which states that 'success is measured in relation to the ending of violence and the conclusion of the war on a self-enforcing basis: when the outsiders leave, the former warring parties refrain from returning to war' (Stedman, 2002:2).

CHAPTER THREE: A Comparative Study of the Implementation of the Abuja II Accord and the Lomé Peace Accord

In this section, a comparative study of the successful case in Liberia and the unsuccessful case in Sierra Leone will be made to support the argument that the difference in third-party management of spoilers plays an important role in determining the success or failure of the peace agreement implementation. After a brief background of the cases, the argument will be put forward in the following way: (1) the nature of the third-party involvement in Liberia was much more conducive to a successful spoiler management than in Sierra Leone, (2) the conducive nature of third-party involvement in Liberia led international actors to conduct the right diagnosis of the spoilers followed by an appropriate strategy to deal with them while the opposite scenario happened in Sierra Leone, (3) the difference in third-party spoiler management played an important role in explaining why the Abuja II Accord was successfully implemented whereas the Lomé Peace Accord collapsed.

3.1. *A Brief Background of the Cases*

3.1.1. The Civil Wars

Liberia's civil war erupted in December 1989 when the warlord Charles Taylor and his rebel group the NPFL invaded Liberia in order to overthrow President Samuel Doe (Adebajo, 2002a: 601-602). The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) sent their regional peacekeeping force the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) to end the war but it proved incapable of achieving this goal (Gershoni, 1997:55). President Doe was murdered in September 1990, the violence continued and several new warring factions were established (McDonough, 2008:360-361; Gershoni, 1997:59-66). Nine peace agreements were brokered and broken between May 1990 and August 1994 (Adebajo, 2002a: 605). Representatives of the warring factions signed the Abuja Agreement on August 19, 1995, which created a transitional government and gave the three most powerful warlords positions in the new Council of State and other factional leaders posts in the cabinet (Abuja Agreement, 1995:2-5). Yet, hostilities continued and major outbreaks of violence occurred until ECOWAS proposed a revised version of the Abuja Agreement, resulting in the Abuja II Accord in August 1996, which postponed the elections until 30 May 1997 (Pham, 2004:128-130).

The civil war in Sierra Leone began in 1991 when the rebel leader Foday Sankoh and his rebel movement the RUF, backed by NPFL units, invaded the country from Liberia (Gershoni, 1997:55) to overthrow the ruling party, the All People's Congress (APC) (Zack-Williams, 2010:19-21). Instead, a group of officers from the Sierra Leone Army overthrew the APC in 1992 and formed the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), a military junta that did not manage to end the war. Elections were held in 1996 and replaced the NPRC with a democratic government led by the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and its leader Ahmed Tejan-Kabbah (Mustapha & Bangura, 2010:2-4). The RUF and the SLPP signed the Abidjan Peace Agreement, which swiftly collapsed when a military junta led by Johnny Paul Koroma overthrew the government and formed a junta-RUF coalition called the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) (Mitton, 2008:199-200; Mustapha & Bangura, 2010:2-4). The coalition met heavy domestic and international resistance, which led them to sign the Conakry Peace Plan with ECOWAS in 1997, which called for the reinstatement of the Kabbah government. However, ECOMOG expelled the junta-RUF regime and reinstated President Kabbah in early 1998. The war continued, fought between the RUF on one side and ECOMOG and the government on the other, and did not end until the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord in July 1999 (Mustapha &

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Bangura, 2010:2-4; Abraham, 2004:234).

3.1.2. Similarities between the Cases

Liberia and Sierra Leone have many common characteristics. These resource-abundant West African neighbours have experienced colonialism, repressive rule with an ethnic dimension and state weakness (Orogun, 2003:295-297; Adebajo, 2002a: 601-602; Adebajo, 2002b: 80). Stedman (2002:5) has listed several aspects that can affect the implementation process such as the number of warring parties, economic capabilities, war aims of the parties and the level of death and destruction. All of these aspects were realities in the civil wars that lasted nearly a decade and resulted in an estimated total of 200,000 deaths in Liberia and 70,000 deaths in Sierra Leone. Charismatic warlords – Charles Taylor and Foday Sankoh – initiated the civil wars in order to gain control over the central state (Sawyer, 2004:439-449; Adebajo, 2004:167-168; McDonough, 2008:364; Pham, 2006:Introduction). Both the NPFL and the RUF enjoyed a steady flow of arms and revenues from natural resources and both countries saw a proliferation of war factions (Gershoni, 1997:58-60).

The peace processes leading up to the negotiated agreements also shared many similarities. Both Liberia and Sierra Leone had seen the rise and fall of peace agreements and the learning experience of trial and error was thus a common denominator, although Liberia had had a more extensive one (Alao & Ero, 2001:119-120). The Lomé Peace Accord and the Abuja II Accord both attempted to appease the warlords by offering political power in exchange for peace (Adebajo, 2004:180-181). Sankoh was given the status of Vice-President and was made chairman of the Strategic Resources Commission whereas the warlords Taylor, Alhaji Kromah and George Boley were given positions as Vice Chairmen of the executive branch of the government. Many common provisions were present in both agreements such as a ceasefire, the disarmament and demobilisation of armed groups, elections and a transitional government (Sawyer, 2004:449; Abuja II Accord, 1995:2-5; Lomé Peace Accord, 1999).

It is important to acknowledge, however, that civil wars and peace processes are highly complex and there will always be differences between them. For instance, the Abuja II Accord included all warring factions while the Lomé Peace Accord only included the RUF and the Sierra Leonean Government (Adebajo, 2004:180-181). Nevertheless, the many similarities between the cases in combination with two very different outcomes suggest that a closer look at the implementation process can offer an understanding of the success of the Abuja II Accord and the failure of the Lomé Peace Accord. The following subsections will therefore be devoted to the implementation phase of the agreements.

3.2. *Third-Party Involvement During the Implementation Period*

3.2.1. Nigeria — A Difference in National Interest

Whilst the United Nations (UN) was the primary international actor in the cases presented by Stedman, the national interest of Nigeria plays a central role in understanding the amount of support the peace processes in Liberia and Sierra Leone received. Adebajo (2003:64-66) portrays Nigeria as an emerging power in West Africa, which seeks to become a regional leader in Africa by using military, political and economic actions. He claims that Nigeria was the leading actor of the missions in Liberia and Sierra Leone. As a powerful member state in ECOWAS, Nigeria could influence ECOMOG's actions for its own purposes (Pham, 2004:135-138). Yet, Nigeria was far more engaged during the implementation process in Liberia than in Sierra Leone.

When the implementation of the Abuja II Accord in Liberia took place, Nigeria was still controlled by a military junta, which had invested a lot of prestige in the success of the mission and therefore considered a potential withdrawal as a humiliating defeat. ECOWAS' policies were highly influenced by Nigeria since the country had contributed with 80 per cent of the troops and 90 per cent of the funding of the ECOMOG mission in Liberia (Adebajo, 2002a: 604; Adebajo, 2003:71-72). Additionally, there had recently been an important leadership change in Nigeria where General Sani Abacha took over power from General Ibrahim Babangida. While Babangida and Charles Taylor had been antagonists, Abacha regarded Taylor as a means to success in Liberia (Harris, 1999:436). By solving the civil war and ensuring that elections were held, Abacha could demonstrate progress and legitimise his own plans for

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democratic elections in Nigeria (Mutwol, 2009:154-158).

In contrast, Nigeria was not willing to provide extensive support during the implementation period of the Lomé Peace Accord in Sierra Leone. A democratic transition had occurred in Nigeria in 1998, only a year before the signing of the Lomé Agreement. Nigeria and ECOWAS had played a key role in trying to end the Sierra Leonean civil war but the Nigerian troops in Sierra Leone were now to be withdrawn by the year 2000 as a result of the domestic pressure on the new democratically elected President Olusegun Obasanjo to end Nigeria's involvement (Hirsch, 2001:98-99; Adebajo, 2003:71-72).

Common for both cases was a perception that the civil wars could not be won by military means. In Liberia, the Nigerian-led attempt by ECOMOG to defeat Charles Taylor's NPFL – the most powerful faction – had not only failed but also weakened ECOMOG's status as a neutral force (Pham, 2004:138; Adebajo, 2002a: 599-600). In Sierra Leone, an attempt by the RUF to take over Freetown in January 1999 led the war-fatigued Nigeria and ECOMOG to conclude that it was not possible to defeat the rebels through military means (Pham, 2004:165).

3.2.2. The International Community: Limited versus Extensive International Involvement

Several other ECOWAS states, in addition to Nigeria, had an interest in ending the civil war in Liberia. Guinea and Sierra Leone had experienced a steady stream of Liberian refugees and nationals from Ghana and Gambia had been involved in fighting with the NPFL (Adebajo, 2003:69). Member states such as Burkina Faso and Côte d'Ivoire sent new peacekeeping troops, which increased ECOMOG's troop strength from 7,500 to over 10,500. There was also a sub-regional consensus on the new peaceful approach to solving the conflict: Nigeria had, for instance, finally accepted Ghana's strategy of accommodation with the warlords in favour of a military strategy (Mutwol, 2009:156-159; Adebajo, 2003:69-70).

In contrast to ECOWAS in Liberia, the UN proved to be an uncommitted international actor in Sierra Leone. The international community lacked the necessary strategic and geopolitical interest in the country, a disengagement, which can be viewed in light of the diminished importance of Africa after the end of the Cold War (Gberie, 2005:156-161). For instance, the United Kingdom (UK) and the United States (US) had put pressure on President Kabbah to sign the Lomé Agreement but were not willing to engage either directly or militarily (Ducasse-Rogier, 2004:36; Olonisakin, 2008:44). In addition to the lack of necessary international support, the role played by President Charles Taylor of Liberia as an external patron to the RUF further obstructed the possibility of successful spoiler management. Taylor had both an economic and political interest in sustaining the conflict since he gained revenues from the flow of arms and diamonds, which were used to develop the NPFL's military capacity. He continued to support the RUF economically and militarily during the implementation period of the Lomé Agreement as he had done through most of the civil war (Sawyer, 2004:447; Ducasse-Rogier, 2004:21).

3.3. *Third-Party Management of Spoilers*

3.3.1. Identification of the Spoilers

The primary spoilers were Charles Taylor and his rebel group the NPFL in Liberia and Foday Sankoh with his rebel group the RUF in Sierra Leone. This dissertation argues that these spoilers differed in their goals and commitment along the spoiler typology provided by Stedman. Charles Taylor was a limited spoiler since his goal was to exercise power over Liberia and he was willing to do so within a democratic system. However, as Stedman asserts, the goals of limited spoilers can be non-negotiable. This corresponds with Taylor's intentions: he sought to exercise political control over Liberia and was not willing to give up this goal (Reuters, 27 August 1996). Sankoh on the other hand was a typical total spoiler as he sought total power, a goal that could not be accommodated within a peace agreement. This claim goes in line with Abraham's (2004:218) argument that the rationale behind Sankoh's decision to participate in the peace process was to buy time in order to seize power through violent means.

Contrary to this view, Adebajo (2004:169) seems to suggest that *both* the RUF and the NPFL were total spoilers as he states that they both sought to win a military victory. However, the NPFL had reason to abide to the Abuja II

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Accord since the rebel group enjoyed support and legitimacy among some ethnic groups and therefore had a credible chance of winning the election. They built support among certain ethnic groups by ensuring protection from attacks by other warring factions (Adebajo, 2004:169). The situation for the RUF was the opposite. Although the RUF portrayed itself as a political movement with an ideological basis, this claim was undermined by its indiscriminate violent attacks against citizens from different ethnic groups. As such the prospects for the RUF to win a democratic election as a political party were practically non-existent due to its extreme unpopularity among the civilian population (Bright, 2000:41; Mitton, 2008:195-197).

3.3.2. Third-Party Strategies for Managing Spoilers — Success versus Failure

The spoilers did not only differ in terms of their goals and commitment but also in terms of the strategies they used during the implementation process. Although both rebel groups used both violent and non-violent strategies, the RUF favoured violent methods while the obstruction of the NPFL was primarily non-violent. The strategies chosen by the third parties to address these spoilers differed. A combination of inducement and socialisation with a dose of threat was used against the NPFL in Liberia and in Sierra Leone, the international actors attempted to socialise the RUF into compliance. Yet, total spoilers like the RUF needed to be marginalised or defeated in order to prevent them from undermining the peace process. As a result, the third-party strategies for managing spoilers in Liberia would prove to be much more successful than in Sierra Leone.

3.3.2.1. Implementation of the Abuja II Accord

In Liberia, the implementation process of the Abuja II Accord proceeded slowly initially and the reluctance of the warring factions to disarm was a major problem. Although Charles Taylor had demonstrated a willingness to disarm when the implementation process started in August 1996 by inviting ECOMOG peacekeepers and UN military observers to inspect the disarmament (Reuters, 27 August 1996), the NPFL soon emerged as the rebel group that had most difficulty with the disarmament process. The NPFL obstructed attempts by United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL) and ECOMOG to visit areas in the southeastern parts to control the status of the ceasefire; it maintained fighters in contested areas and took over a city called Greenville in September 1996. Other rebel factions were also reluctant to disarm and committed ceasefire violations. On 12 January 1997, only 6,826 of the 33,000 fighters had disarmed, with only 19 days left of the disarmament period (Alao et al., 1999:96-99; Secretary-General's Report, 17 October, 1996:3-4; Secretary-General's Report, 19 November, 1996:2).

The international community decided to address the obstruction with a strategy of socialisation. In order to make the rebel groups follow the rules for what was considered acceptable behaviour – compliance with the disarmament agreements in the Abuja II Accord – the ECOWAS Committee of Nine on Liberia, which included members such as Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana, adopted a code of conduct. All rebel groups accepted the code of conduct, which sought to ensure that the warring factions complied with the provisions in the Abuja Agreement and imposed punitive measures against those who violated the terms (Secretary-General's Report, 19 November, 1996:2). Additionally, meetings with ECOWAS foreign ministers were scheduled during which several other 'sticks' could be invoked to ensure compliance among the warring parties such as an exclusion from the election process, sanctions or even a threat of a war crimes tribunal (Adebajo, 2002a: 616-617). ECOMOG threatened to punish those factions that had not disarmed by the deadline of 31 January 1997 with enforced disarmament. As a result, the warring factions began a hurried effort to hand over weapons: 74 per cent of the fighters had disarmed and demobilised by 9 February 1997 (Alao et al., 1999:99-100; Adebajo, 2002a: 616-617; Adebajo, 2004:172).

Despite the progress with the disarmament process, the NPFL displayed spoiler tendencies when the election process advanced during the spring of 1997. The process had started promisingly: Charles Taylor demonstrated that he trusted the peace process and believed that he could win the election. After much protests, he had finally accepted the terms in the Abuja II Accord, which stated that faction leaders who sought to participate in the election had to resign from the Council of State (Alao et al., 1999:96-102), and resigned along with the warlords Kromah and Boley (Pham, 2004:131-132). Problems began to occur when the Electoral Commission and 15 of the 16 political parties began to argue that the election should be postponed for six months since they were too poorly organised to compete with the well-organised Charles Taylor on the originally proposed election date of 30 May 1997 (Pham,

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2004:131-132; Reuters, 14 May 1997; Reuters, 8 May 1997).

The remaining party, Taylor's National Patriotic Party (NPP), strongly opposed this claim and asserted that the election should be held as planned. A delayed election date would have given the other parties time to prepare better for the election and Taylor did not want to lose the advantage he had against his contestants in terms of being better organised and having established structures (Harris, 1999:439-450). As Taylor realised that a long-delayed election could jeopardise his non-negotiable goal of the Presidential post, he began to obstruct the peace process (Harris, 1999:439-450). He suspended his presidential campaign as a result of the discussion to postpone the election date. Additionally, the NPFL stated that a postponed election date would mean trouble and that its followers would resist such development (Reuters, 6 May 1997). During a state radio interview on July 8, Charles Taylor directed one of the most explicit threats against the chairman of the Electoral Commission when talking on state radio: 'If Henry Andrews attempts to postpone these elections, only the angels, not even ECOMOG will protect him...' (Reuters, 22 July 1997). In light of the spoiler behaviour demonstrated by Taylor, the risk of resumption into conflict if an early election date was decided was increasingly likely.

The international community responded to the NPFL's spoiler behaviour with inducement by deciding on an early election date, 19 July 1997, a date that the NPFL had come to accept in light of the fact that the 30 May was unrealistic. Thus, the international community ignored the demands of the vast majority of the political parties who did, however, accept the new date (Alao et al., 1999:105-106; Reuters, May 16 1997). This strategy was primarily a result of the influence of ECOWAS and its leading power Nigeria. In fact, ECOWAS and the UN had very different views on how to address the NPFL. The UN feared that an early election date would mean that no political parties except for Taylor's NPP would be sufficiently prepared and the UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan therefore suggested a two-month postponement (Pham, 2004:131-132; Alao et al., 1999:106). In contrast, the Nigerian-led ECOWAS realised Taylor's potential to destroy the entire peace process if his requirement was ignored and stood behind Taylor's demand of an early election date. Several states that contributed to ECOMOG's troops even threatened to pull back their forces if the elections were postponed (Lyons, 1998:183-184). The will of ECOWAS determined the strategy of the international community: Nigeria's President Abacha chaired a meeting of the ECOWAS Committee of Nine on Liberia during which the new election date of 19 July was decided on (Reuters, May 16 1997; Alao et al., 1999:106).

The election was peaceful and Charles Taylor became Liberia's new President with 75 per cent of the votes (Harris, 1999:431-452). The election marked the end of the implementation of the Abuja II Accord and ended the civil war. Taylor took office and ECOWAS withdrew its troops (Adebajo, 2002b: 67). This development corresponds with the definition of success presented earlier: 'When the outsiders leave, the former warring parties refrain from returning to war' (Stedman, 2002:2). A small UN peacebuilding office was established after the election, but as the main 'outsiders' ECOMOG, left and peace was achieved, this paper argues that the implementation of the Abuja II Accord should be considered a case of success. It would be an exaggeration to claim that the decision of ECOWAS to follow Taylor's demands of an early election date made him win the election. A majority of the Liberian population did vote for him: some voters did it out of fear that the rebel leader would return to war if he lost, some voted for him out of popular support and others chose because they were war-fatigued (Pham, 2004:173-174). He also enjoyed an economic advantage against the other contestants since he received \$250 million in annual revenues (Pham, 2004:173-174).

Nevertheless, the support from ECOWAS certainly contributed to Taylor's win of the election, as he was able to capitalise on his significant organisational advantage against the other contestants. Most importantly, if ECOWAS had decided on a late election date, the NPFL might have decided to return to war, a likely risk considering the explicit threats posed by Taylor. The success of the inducement strategy was also dependent on the acceptance of an early election date by the other political parties despite the disadvantage they suffered in the election that followed.

The claim that ECOWAS intentionally decided to help Charles Taylor win the election seems probable when examining the existing information on the peace process. Although Klay Kieh Jr (2009:217) might go too far when he states that ECOWAS 'awarded' Taylor the presidency as the Liberian population actually voted for him, he still

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provides convincing empirical support to the claim provided above in terms of interviews with officials from warring groups including the NFPL: they stated that ECOWAS regarded the support of Taylor in order for him to win the election as the best solution to end the conflict. This decision can be viewed in the light of the eagerness of Nigeria to successfully end the Liberian civil war and withdraw its troops (Alao, et al., 1999:106).

3.3.2.2 Implementation of the Lomé Peace Accord

In Sierra Leone, the RUF immediately began to obstruct the implementation process of the Lomé Peace Accord. The RUF repeatedly impeded the efforts of the peacekeeping force United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), for example by stopping it from deploying its troops (Bright, 2000:37; Reuters, 28 September 1999). The RUF was not the only rebel group that demonstrated spoiler behaviour. The AFRC also obstructed the implementation process by committing ceasefire violations and demonstrated a reluctance to disarm. The rebel leader Koroma protested against the exclusion of the AFRC from the power-sharing arrangements. President Kabbah addressed this concern by including AFRC representatives in his cabinet and appointing Koroma as chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace. As the implementation process proceeded, it became clear that the AFRC was not responsible for a systematic use of violence but rather sporadic incidents. Further, Koroma demonstrated that he was willing to compromise with Sankoh and took his newly won position as chairman of the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace seriously (Olonisakin, 2008:54-56; Malmin Binningsbø & Dupuy, 2009:96).

Thus, the fact that the Lomé Agreement only allowed for power-sharing between the RUF and the Sierra Leonean government while the Abuja II Accord included all warring factions in the power-sharing agreements does not seem to explain the difference in outcomes of the peace agreement implementation. RUF, who enjoyed the most benefits from the power-sharing provisions in the Lomé Agreement, continued to engage in destructive spoiler behaviour despite this whereas the AFRC, who was excluded from the power-sharing agreement, was accommodated into the peace process during the implementation phase through the inclusion in the cabinet. While an inducement strategy seemed to have worked on a limited spoiler like Koroma who solely sought a share of power, a total spoiler like Sankoh would prove to be much more difficult to deal with.

Sankoh engaged in both violent and non-violent methods to obstruct the peace process. A frequently used strategy was to say one thing and do the complete opposite (Bright, 2000:40). He registered the RUF as a political party, the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF), in November 1999 and asserted that the rebel group was committed to a political strife instead of a military one. Sankoh asserted that 'we took guns for democracy and now that we have a proper system, that is the Lome peace accord, we will prove to the world and our people that RUF believe in democracy' (Reuters, 22 November 1999). These promising words proved to be untrue as the RUF pursued its obstruction of the disarmament process. RUF fighters refused to register on agreed disarmament sites, continued to commit ceasefire violations and even forced UNAMSIL to give up their weapons and equipment (Hirsch, 2001:86-87; Malmin Binningsbø & Dupuy, 2009:98). This inconsistent and unreliable behaviour raised concerns that the RUF lacked a genuine interest in the peace process and rather sought to take over power in Sierra Leone by force (Bright, 2000:40).

Despite this imminent threat, the international community failed to respond aggressively against the RUF. Since the RUF was a total spoiler, it had to be marginalised or defeated in order to prevent it from destroying the peace process. However, the realities for the peacekeepers on the ground did not allow for such strategy. The deployment of a weak and underfunded UN peacekeeping force following the decision of Nigeria to withdraw its 12,000 ECOMOG troops only a month after the signing of the Lomé Agreement adversely impacted the capacity to deal effectively with the RUF (Pham, 2006:148-149). UNAMSIL suffered from many problems including a weak command and control chain, poorly trained soldiers and no clear mandates and goals (Malone & Thakur, 2001:12-13). The incapacity to deal effectively with the RUF remained even though the Security Council decided to increase the number of troops to 11,000 in February 2000 (Secretary-General's Report, 31 July 2000:10). The main impediment to a coercive strategy was the weak mandate given to UNAMSIL: it only authorised peacekeeping and not peace enforcement, which made the UN force less capable than ECOMOG in addressing spoiler attempts to undermine the implementation process (Ducasse-Rogier, 2004:46).

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In contrast to ECOWAS in Liberia, who conducted an early and correct diagnosis of Charles Taylor as a limited spoiler and a threat to the peace process, the international community in Sierra Leone suffered from some of the organisational blinders identified by Stedman, which hindered them from conducting a correct diagnosis of the RUF as a total spoiler. Firstly, the UN was bound by its doctrine of neutrality and impartiality, which contributed to the failure of the Security Council to differentiate between the warring factions and to take the atrocities committed by Sankoh in the past into consideration. Secondly, there was a lack of political will to undertake costly action to address the RUF. As a result, the Security Council chose to regard the RUF as sufficiently pacified and agreed on the deployment of a small peacekeeping force with a weak mandate (Malone & Thakur, 2011:13; Olonisakin, 2008:62; Ducasse-Rogier, 2004:46). Thirdly, the overriding goal for the international community seemed to have been to maintain the Lomé Peace Accord at any cost, even though the ceasefire provisions in the agreement were violated over and over again (Olonisakin, 2008:66).

Instead of treating the RUF as a total spoiler and using a strategy to marginalise or defeat the rebel movement, the third parties deployed a flawed strategy of socialisation in order to make the RUF adhere to the provisions in the agreement. The UN Special Representative Oluyemi Adeniji met regularly with the rebel leaders and urged Sankoh to commit to the implementation process. The international community mainly engaged in persuasion of the value of established norms: strong appeals to comply with the provisions of the agreement and demonstrate a firm commitment to the peace process were frequently directed at the RUF. When Sankoh violated the travel ban imposed on the rebel leaders, the UN Security Council's Sanctions Committee demanded that he should return home, which he did on 28 February 2000. Established committees such as the Joint Implementation Committee urged the RUF and the other warring parties to disclose the number and location of their fighters (Secretary-General's Report, 7 March, 2000:2-4). Despite the constant violations by the RUF, the international community continued to treat the rebel group as a legitimate actor and allowed it to be represented at high-level meetings. For instance, the RUF participated at a special meeting on the 1 and 2 March 2000 with representatives of ECOWAS, the UN and the Sierra Leonean Government (Secretary-General's Report, 7 March, 2000:3).

The strategy of socialisation did not stop the RUF from engaging in spoiler behaviour but rather allowed the RUF to continue to obstruct the peace process since the rebel group could sustain military capacity without severe repercussions. Only less than a third of the combatants had disarmed in February 2000 (Reuters, 22 December, 1999), ceasefire violations and obstruction of UNAMSIL operations continued throughout March and April 2000 (Secretary-General's Report, Sierra Leone, 19 May, 2000:3-5) and the RUF commanders could continue to seek personal profits through continued conflict (Mitton, 2008:200). Additionally, the RUF's patron President Charles Taylor could continue with his support to the rebel group without being punished by the international community (Adebajo, 2004:171).

The already precarious security situation culminated on the 1 May 2000, when ECOMOG withdrew its last troops. The RUF seized the moment to further undermine the weak UNAMSIL and captured over 100 peacekeepers. Despite this hostile action, the international community continued to pursue its socialisation strategy: representatives from regional players including Nigeria and Libya travelled to Freetown to pressure Sankoh to return to the implementation process of the Lomé Agreement. Nigeria's Special Envoy General Aliyu Mohammed met with Sankoh on 3 May and made him sign an agreement, which sought to ensure the release of hostages and stop attacks on UN peacekeepers. Instead of following the agreement, the RUF captured around 200 troops in addition to the 100 already held hostage (Olonisakin, 2008:57-58), a number that soon rose to over 500 (Pham, 2004:149). The Lomé Peace Accord finally fell apart after an attempt by the RUF to seize Freetown (Mustapha & Bangura, 2010:1).

Not until after the collapse of the Lomé Agreement did the international community undertake the necessary forceful measures that ultimately led to the defeat of the RUF leadership and the marginalisation of the RUF as a political actor. The military intervention of the UK to evacuate British citizens and restore security around Freetown in May and August 2000 convinced many RUF rebels that they could not win the war, which made them more prone to disarm. The counter-offensive by Guinea resulted in the arrest of most of the RUF rebel leaders (Mitton, 2008:200-201; Mutwol, 2009:36). The international community began to demonstrate a strong commitment to achieving peace and marginalising the RUF: the Security Council increased the troop strength of UNAMSIL to 13,000, authorised the peacekeeping force to respond more decisively and robustly to attacks by the RUF and forced Charles Taylor to

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commit to a complete disengagement after facing a threat of sanctions (Ducasse-Rogier, 2004:52; Pham, 2006:149-150). Peace was finally achieved in May 2002 when presidential and parliamentary elections were held. The RUF failed to establish itself as a viable political party with most of its leadership captured and combatants that did not have a political agenda and its party the RUF failed to gain a single seat in parliament (Mitton, 2008:201-203).

CONCLUSION

Why do international actors succeed in implementing some peace agreements while they fail in other cases? This dissertation has attempted to answer this question by arguing that the difference in third-party management of spoilers plays an important role in understanding success versus failure of peace agreement implementation.

The implementation process of the Abuja II Accord in Liberia has served as a case of success as ECOWAS conducted the correct diagnosis of Charles Taylor as a limited spoiler who possessed the non-negotiable goal of winning the election. The early identification of Taylor as a threat to the peace process if his demand of an early election date was not met made it possible for the third parties to address the rebel leader with a strategy of inducement and thereby remove the incentive for Taylor to destroy the peace process. This strategy in combination with a strategy of socialisation and a dose of threat to make the warring groups – particularly the NPFL – adhere to the disarmament process contributed greatly to the achievement of peace and the implementation of the Abuja II Accord.

In contrast, the collapse of the Lomé Agreement in Sierra Leone has demonstrated the dangers with failed spoiler management. The lack of political will and the presence of organisational blinders hindered the international community from conducting the correct diagnosis of the RUF as a total spoiler and giving UNAMSIL the necessary mandate and resources to marginalise or defeat the rebel group. Instead, the international community repeatedly deployed a strategy of socialisation to convince the RUF to commit to the peace process, which provided Sankoh with an opportunity to continue his obstruction of the peace process, as his military capacity remained unchallenged. The failure of the international community to stop Liberia, the RUF's patron, from providing support to the rebel group further contributed to the strengthening of the RUF. A return back to full-scale war after the collapse of the Lomé Agreement would have been a likely reality without the military offensive of the UK and Guinea to marginalise the RUF and diminish its military capacity.

In addition to giving support to Stedman's theory on spoiler management, this study also offers some new insights based on the empirical evidence found. Firstly, Stedman presents a number of organisational blinders that hinder third parties from conducting the correct diagnosis of the spoiler in question. This study has identified an additional organisational blinder, which can act as an impediment to a correct spoiler diagnosis: third parties also base their diagnosis of the spoiler on previous experiences in dealing with warring factions. In both Sierra Leone and Liberia, the previous failed attempts to defeat the NPFL and the RUF by military means led them to conclude that the warring factions must be incorporated into the peace process, which was a correct diagnosis in Liberia but not in Sierra Leone. Secondly, Stedman claims that the presence of more than one spoiler is particularly challenging as the strategy chosen can affect the possibility of dealing effectively with other spoilers. In Sierra Leone, however, the strategy of inducement to accommodate the limited spoiler the AFRC into the peace process did not itself affect the possibility to deal effectively with the RUF. The main problem was the perception that the RUF could be socialised into a commitment to the peace process. Thirdly, Stedman argues that primarily spoilers that are excluded from the peace process tend to use violence to undermine it. Yet, the case of the RUF in Sierra Leone demonstrates that violence can be used as a primary spoiler strategy by spoilers that are positioned inside the peace process.

Most importantly, Stedman does not acknowledge that the nature and interest of different international actors can vary and have an effect on the choice of spoiler strategies depending on which third party is responsible for the

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peace agreement implementation. In all of Stedman's (1997) case studies, the UN constituted the primary international actor. Although the UN were involved in both Liberia and Sierra Leone and had the main responsibility for carrying out the implementation process of the Lomé Peace Accord, the interest and commitment of Nigeria is central to understanding the strategies that was chosen for dealing with spoilers as well as the outcomes. The national interest of the military junta in Nigeria to end the Liberian civil war lay behind the decision to support Taylor on his road to becoming Liberia's President. The control and influence of the Nigerian-led ECOWAS over the choice of an inducement strategy was probably a result of its large contribution of troops and resources. The fact that Nigeria was biased contributed to the choice of a necessary inducement strategy. Nigeria lacked, however, a national interest in solving the conflict in Sierra Leone and pulled out, leaving the UN with the main responsibility for the implementation process. In contrast to Nigeria in Liberia, the UN was disengaged and constrained by its doctrine of neutrality in Sierra Leone, which served as an obstacle to the development of a strategy to defeat or marginalise the RUF. Hence, this reasoning demonstrates the importance of looking more closely at the capabilities and interest of the primary international actor in a given case to understand the choice of strategy used in managing spoilers.

In conclusion, this dissertation has demonstrated the importance of paying close attention to the implementation of peace agreements and not only treating the signing of an agreement as an end goal. As peace processes create spoilers, international actors need to conduct an early and correct diagnosis followed by an appropriate strategy in dealing with them in order to mitigate the risk of a collapse of the peace agreement. Additionally, the case study of Liberia and Sierra Leone has offered some new insights in relation to the spoiler debate, which demonstrates that there is more variation between cases than Stedman suggests and points to the need of more research on spoiler management.

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