

Université de Montréal

Civil War Resolution:
The Private Military Industry, Asymmetric Warfare, and Ripeness

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Faculté des études supérieures

Ce mémoire intitulé:

Civil War Resolution: The Private Military Industry, Asymmetric Warfare, and Ripeness

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RÉSUMÉ

La théorie de *Ripeness* développée par William Zartman s'avère hautement pertinente dans l'analyse de l'intervention des multinationales militaires dans les guerres civiles sévissant en Angola et en Sierra Leone, puisqu'elle met en lumière la manière dont ces multinationales militaires favorisent et facilitent l'obtention d'un dénouement diplomatique aux guerres civiles qui s'éternisent. Notre essai démontre qu'Executive Outcomes (EO), une multinationale militaire sud-africaine, a contribué à créer des conditions de *ripeness* dans les deux pays ci-haut mentionnés, ce qui conduisit les adversaires à la table de négociations suite à des années d'impasse. EO a fomenté ce que William Zartman dénomme un *Mutually Hurting Stalemate* (MHS) en nourrissant la symétrie structurelle des guerres à la fois en Angola et en Sierra Leone. Ceci eut pour résultat la formation de douloureuses impasses propices à l'inauguration de négociations. Dans les deux cas, cette conjoncture fut saisie et transformée en négociations, tout en échouant à établir une paix durable. L'absence de pacification sur le long terme n'infirme en rien le fait qu'EO ait contribué à la création de MHSs qui ont jeté les bases de *ripeness*. S'il appert que l'implication des multinationales militaires est favorable à une paix durable, il faut que cela s'intègre dans un cadre politique et diplomatique plus vaste et plus compréhensible. Les conclusions auxquelles nous a mené ce mémoire sont significatives, étant donné qu'elles démontrent qu'un acteur privé, externe à la situation, a eu la capacité de générer une situation de *ripeness*. A une époque où la volonté politique internationale est faible et où les états défaillants échouent fréquemment à mobiliser de fortes capacités militaires, l'usage de services des multinationales militaires se présente comme une option prometteuse.

Mots clés: Angola ; Dénoement diplomatique ; Executive Outcomes ; Guerre civile ; *Mutually Hurting Stalemate* ; Multinationale de guerre ; Paix durable ; *Ripeness* ; Sierra Leone ; Symétrie structurelle des guerres.

ABSTRACT

This research analyzes the intervention of Private Military Firms (PMFs) in the intra-state wars of Angola and Sierra Leone. I apply William Zartman's notion of *ripeness* to probe the utility and effectiveness of private defense contractors in facilitating the negotiated resolution of protracted civil wars. This paper argues that Executive Outcomes (EO) a South African PMF, helped generate ripeness in both countries at hand by restoring military symmetry and by contributing to the creation of Mutually Hurting Stalemates (MHSs) which led the warring parties to the negotiation table after years of impasse. In both cases, the ripe moments were seized and turned into negotiations but failed to generate long-term peace. This lack of sustainable peace does not negate the fact that EO contributed to the creation of a MHS which laid the foundations for ripeness. If the involvement of PMFs is to be

conducive to long-term peace, it must probably fall within a wider diplomatic package. The findings of this thesis are significant since they demonstrate that an external private actor can generate ripeness. In a time when international political will is low and failing states possess weak military capabilities, the use of private military services may be an option worth considering.

Keywords: Angola; Asymmetric Warfare; Civil War; Executive Outcomes; Mutually Hurting Stalemate; Negotiated Outcome; Private Military Industry; Ripeness; Sierra Leone; Sustainable Peace.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APC	All Peoples Congress
EO	Executive Outcomes
CCB	South African Civil Cooperation Bureau
CDG	Chicken Dilemma Game
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
FAA	Forças Armados Angolanos
FALA	Forças Armados de Libertação de Angola
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GSC	Gurkha Security Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IMF	International Monetary Fund
JPMAC	Joint Political Military Angola Commission
MHS	Mutually Hurting Stalemate
MPLA	Movimento Popular da Libertacao
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
NEC	National Electoral Commission
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PDG	Prisoner's Dilemma Game
PMC	Private Military Company
PMF	Private Military Firm
RSLMF	Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADF	South African Defense Force
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SONOGAL	Sociedade Nacional de Combustiveis de Angola
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNAVEM	United Nations Angola Verification Mission
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
US	United Sates of America
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

DEDICATION

Through out the ages, acquiring knowledge has been a continuous process for personal growth as well as a vital tool to be employed by humanity at large. None of my learning experiences could have fully been developed without having my beliefs and thoughts listened to, analyzed, considered, and debated. Engaging in forums of discussions pertaining to worldly issues, especially in this era of an ever expanding, demanding, and interconnected world, is in my opinion of paramount importance without which the human vision hinders. In my particular case, I have been privileged to partake in a spectrum of productive discussions with an array of politically minded individuals.

My thesis would not have become a reality without the involvement, contribution, constant support and commendable wisdom of my research director Professor Zahar, whose invaluable guidance assisted me through out my Masters' journey in the world of academia. My deep appreciation is also extended to Professor Fortmann who provided me with essential guidance and constructive comments pertaining to security and defense issues. I also extend my profound thanks to Professor Ethier who with her excellent explanations greatly engaged me into the fascinating world of international relations, a domain which has vastly captured my interest. I especially thank Professor Faucher. His insistence on adamantly seeking the truth via hard evidence rather than normative assumptions made him an exceptional inspiration to me. He widened my scope of vision on a number of political issues. With gratitude, I also thank Professor Ducatenzeiler and the Faculty of International Studies at the Université de Montréal not only for providing me with the arena to learn but also for having offered me a scholarship which assisted me in completing the last stages of my thesis. But above all, I reserve my thanks for my mother who through out my scholastic stages, not only constructively critiqued my work but also afforded me the environment to reach for the highest. To my mother, I dedicate this thesis. Last but not least, with my thesis in my hand, I salute my late father.

INTRODUCTION

The increasingly manifest presence of private military firms (PMFs) during the last two decades has not gone unnoticed. The contemporary era marked by heightened and unconventional security threats has incited and spurred the dramatic proliferation of these new transnational corporate actors¹. Offering a wide assortment of military and security services, PMFs, by their sheer existence, directly confront standard traditional beliefs concerning security issues, namely the exclusive control of nation states in the sphere of defense².

The unique nature and the relatively new occurrence of the private military industry shaped with a business-like framework have somewhat caught policymakers and scholars alike off guard. Theories of international relations have traditionally attributed overwhelming attention to the sovereign nation state. The realist school of thought establishes the sovereign state as the central and key player in international relations, despite apparent systemic transformations resulting from the contemporary phenomenon of globalization. Although it is not incorrect to pronounce states as the ultimate players in international affairs, their supremacy within the international system has declined relative to other actors such as non governmental organizations, international organizations, multinational organizations and transnational organizations³.

More specifically in the realm of security studies though, not only are there new non-governmental *threats* to international stability, but there are also new potential non-governmental *providers* of international stability. PMFs, by means of military and strategic capabilities, are one such actor. Following a rationalist school of thought and a dominant state-centric paradigm, PMFs can merely be construed as

¹ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions* (Adelphi Paper 319, Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), 23.

² Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes", *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 36 (no. 2) (1998), 308.

³ Diane Ethier, with the collaboration of Marie-Joëlle Zahar, *Introduction aux relations Internationales* (2 ed., Montréal: Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 2004), 31-54.

instruments employed by states to maximize their national interests⁴. Scholars such as Deborah Avant have stated that contrary to the misconception of PMFs undermining state power, “military contractors can actually enhance the power of individual states, as when failed states like Sierra Leone essentially buy an army”⁵.

This thesis shall attempt to partially fill a theoretical void within the literature pertaining to the private military industry by seeking to understand in a more comprehensive manner the nature of PMF activity. More specifically, this study shall seek to uncover whether or not PMFs contribute to the resolution of civil wars within weak and failing states, especially in the case of two particular civil wars having taken place in Angola and Sierra Leone. In order to examine the relationship between PMFs and conflict resolution, we shall test one hypothesis: PMFs do indeed contribute to conflict resolution by creating *ripeness*⁶ for political negotiations to take place. In order to test this hypothesis which will serve to assess the impact of PMFs on conflict resolution, the *war weariness* theory particularly expounded by William Zartman will serve as the main theoretical framework⁷. Therefore, this study’s aim is to expose the effects that PMFs have on the process of civil war resolution in the case of two particular intra-state wars.

Research Topic

The complex, ambiguous and often heterogeneous character of PMFs has been a source of confusion and contention amongst scholars. Putting semantics aside however⁸, most would agree that PMFs are corporate actors supplying military related services to recognized national governments, corporate firms and non-governmental organizations (etc.). From a purely pragmatic realist perspective, the private military industry, when employed in the context of civil wars, could be

⁴ Herbert M. Howe, “Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes”, 308.

⁵ Deborah D. Avant, 2004. “Think Again: Mercenaries”, *Foreign Policy* (July/August).

⁶ This concept will be further elaborated on in Chapter Two *Ripeness Theory*.

⁷ I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985/1989).

⁸ These private entities can be referred to as Private Military Firms, Private Military Companies, Private Security Companies (etc.). Refer notably to: Daniel Bergner, “The Other Army”, *The New York Times Magazine* (New York), August 14, 2005 Section 6, 29-35.

considered as a convenient instrument used by states to maximize their national interests in the face of an internal threat. Due in part to their proficient, resourceful and supple manner of conducting business, transnational corporate actors specialized in the supply of military services are capable of offering weak and failing states, whom seldom have any other feasible alternative, a viable solution to an immediate and rapidly escalating threat. Although outsourcing PMFs is a possible way out for these particular clients, what is less clear is how promising this alternative will prove to be in the long run.

Clients of combat oriented PMFs⁹ tend to be weak national governments with comparatively low military capabilities facing immediate, high threat situations¹⁰. Failing to exert effective control over the territory they govern and unable of even providing security to their own citizens, governments within failing and weak states are often incapable of maintaining or restoring internal stability. Whilst these governments face internal menaces which threaten their very governance, they often must turn to external third parties for assistance. While superpowers filled this need during the Cold War, this is no longer a realistic prospect since the end of the Cold War, especially in Africa where certain nations have lost much of their strategic importance¹¹. No longer governed by the logic and rules enshrined in a bipolar system, many weak and failing states within Africa can no longer confidently depend on external involvement for assistance. A number of these states have turned to PMFs for assistance. Essentially, the private military industry's "purpose is to enhance the capability of a client's military forces to function better in a war"¹².

PMFs: Defining the Object of Research

⁹ This is especially true of military *provider* firms introduced in the next two pages.

¹⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), 93.

¹¹ It must however be mentioned that although the US, Russia and the UN have been less willing to intervene in certain African states following the end of the Cold War (subsequent to the power and security vacuum that emerged), they have remained central players in other areas such as the Middle East, the Balkans and Chechnya.

¹² David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*, 23.

In order to properly conduct further analytical research on the private military industry, an adequate understanding of the nature, function, scope, and form of PMFs is both essential and imperative. Peter Singer undoubtedly puts forward one of the clearest, most concise, parsimonious and functional account of PMFs¹³. Although he recognizes the heterogeneous and multifaceted character and the dual nature, that is military and economic (profit driven)¹⁴, of the private military industry, he points to one single overarching factor which unifies the industry as a whole: “all the firms within it offer services that fall within the military domain”¹⁵. In spite of this unifying element, it should nevertheless be mentioned that “there are, as yet, no common definitions, standards and methodologies that can be used to delineate the boundaries of the phenomenon being discussed”¹⁶. Peter Singer points to the fact that:

there are no universally accepted definitions of even the most widely used terms; no framework of analysis of the industry exists, no elucidation of the variation in the private military firm’s activities and impact, no attempts at examining the industry as a whole, and no comparative analyses¹⁷.

The conceptual ambiguity surrounding the issue of the private military industry is of course a potential problem for analysis. The apparent lack of consensus amongst scholars, even when referring to basic terminology, represents a serious setback for research. This inhibits a fully comprehensive development of explanatory and predictive concepts.

Nonetheless, we shall borrow from Peter Singer’s work and use his *Tip-of-the-Spear* typology, which emerges as the most comprehensive classification due in

¹³ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*.

¹⁴ The profit driven nature of PMFs will be addressed further on in this chapter when referring to Singer’s *Tip-of-the-Spear* typology and in the following chapters.

¹⁵ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 88.

¹⁶ Jakkie Cilliers and Richard Cornwell, “Chapter 11: From the Privatization of Security to the Privatization of War?” in *Peace, Profit or Plunder? The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, eds. Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies, 1999, 241 as cited in Robert Mandel, *Armies without States The Privatization of Security* (Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner, 2002), 127-128.

¹⁷ Doug Brooks and Hussein Solomon, “From the Editor’s Desk”, *Conflict Trends* 6 (July 2000) as cited in Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), viii.

part to its recognition of the private military industry's dual nature: military and economic. Among the three broad categories enumerated in Peter Singer's tip-of-the-spear typology, this research paper shall exclusively focus on type 1 military *provider* firms (versus military *consultant* and military *support* firms), which are distinctively positioned in one specific physical location on a theatre of combat. What is particularly interesting to us about type 1 firms is that within this theatre of war, these military *providers* firms directly work and maneuver in the Theater of Operation (explicitly the tactical battlefield), considered to be the very tip of the spear¹⁸.

According to Peter Singer, type 1 firms focus on the tactical environment. In a "military sense, such firms provide services at the forefront of the battle-space, by engaging in actual fighting, either as line units or specialists and/or direct command and control of field units"¹⁹. In many cases, they are utilized as *force multipliers*, with their employees "distributed across the forces of the client, in order to provide general leadership and experience to a greater number of individual units"²⁰. As often is the case with weak and failing states facing immediate internal threats, the outsourcing of PMFs is often done under the form of force multipliers. Although PMFs are capable of putting forward overall unit packages (stand-alone tactical military units), they are most regularly contracted out as specialized Force Multipliers, which need not be numerous. Several cases such as those of Angola and Sierra Leone witnessed the presence of as little as 50 civilian contractors on the terrain. Force multipliers:

play active roles alongside those of the client, but in a way designed to make the overall combination more effective [...] typically, their employees provide either specialized capabilities too-cost prohibitive for the local force to develop on its own (such as flying advanced fighter jets or operating artillery control systems), or they may be distributed across the forces of the client, in order to provide general leadership and experience to a greater number of individual units²¹.

¹⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 92.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, 94.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 94.

Therefore, the effectiveness of force multipliers is not found in their numbers, but rather in their specialized tactical role and presence on the terrain.

Although type 1 firms will be the focal point of this analysis, a more attentive look at the case studies of Angola and Sierra Leone will demonstrate quite clearly that the type 1 firms²² employed in both cases often also provided services and functions proper to type 2²³ and 3 firms²⁴. Therefore, one should bear in mind that there is a significant amount of overlap within the three broad categories of Peter Singer's typology. Despite this overlap, this research shall nonetheless emphasize the characteristics proper to type 1 firms which were employed in Angola and Sierra Leone, since they reveal and expose the actual direct physical presence of civilian contractors on the battle field, alongside local forces. Hence, this research paper shall attempt to demonstrate that these firms have the capacity to directly change the tide of military operations via their local strategic and tactical presence.

Research Question

²² Type 1 firms “focus on the tactical environment. They offer services at the forefront of the battlespace, engaging in actual fighting or direct command and control of field units, or both. In many cases, they are utilized as ‘force multipliers’, with their employees distributed across a client’s force to provide leadership and experience. Clients of type 1 firms tend to be those with comparatively low military capabilities facing immediate, high threat situations. PMFs such as Executive Outcomes and Sandline that offer special forces-type services are classic examples of military *provider* firms”. Refer notably to: Peter Warren Singer, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its Ramifications for International Security”, *International Security* 26 (no. 3) (2001/2002), 201.

²³ Type 2 firms “provide advisory and training services. They offer strategic, operational, and/or organizational analysis that is often integral to the function or restructuring of armed forces. The critical difference between type 1 and type 2 firms is the ‘trigger finger’ factor; the task of consultants is to supplement the management and training of their client’s military forces, not to engage in combat. Examples of type 2 firms include Levdan, Vinnell, and MPRI. Type 2 customers are usually in the midst of force restructuring or aiming for a transformative gain in capabilities”. Refer notably to: Peter Warren Singer, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its Ramifications for International Security”, 201.

²⁴ Type 3 firms “rear-echelon and provide supplementary military services. Although they do not participate in the planning or execution of direct hostilities, they do fill functional need that fall within the military sphere—including logistics, technical support, and transportation—that are critical to combat operations. The most common clients are those engaged in immediate, but long-duration, interventions (i.e., standing forces and organizations requiring a surge capacity”. Refer notably to: Peter Warren Singer, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its Ramifications for International Security”, 202.

This research seeks to analyze the influence and impact of PMFs in the context of civil war resolution. Can combat driven PMFs help resolve conflicts and restore peace in civil war torn countries? This research shall solely analyze the effect of combat driven PMFs (type 1 firms) introduced earlier in Peter Singer's typology, and shall specifically focus on the cases of Angola and Sierra Leone, where type 1 firms were employed. We shall test the hypothesis which affirms that PMFs do in fact affect the process of conflict resolution by creating conditions of ripeness (for political negotiation to take place).

William Zartman's work identifies three main elements of ripeness: a mutually hurting stalemate; an impending or recently avoided catastrophe; and an alternative way out²⁵. We shall try to demonstrate that, by altering the military balance, PMFs do help in attaining one condition necessary for the realization of ripeness: a Mutual Hurting Stalemate (MHS)²⁶. Since the mandate of PMFs is often narrow and precise and since their involvement is habitually limited to military intervention, we shall attempt to prove that PMFs do in fact help tilt the military balance in favor of their clients, and hence create a MHS.

This paper shall seek to confirm whether the involvement of PMFs brings about the elements deemed necessary for a ripe moment according to William Zartman. In other words, this section shall seek to uncover whether or not there is a relationship between the military oriented mandates/methods of PMFs and ripeness.

Unfortunately, the theories of *war weariness* and *ripeness* mostly shed light on the initiation of negotiations rather than on the success of the negotiations in question. Therefore, ripeness generates the conditions necessary for negotiations but there is no guarantee that these negotiations will assure a permanent resolution of the civil war. This study shall prove important since it will help in determining whether PMFs are capable of creating conditions ripe for negotiations and conflict resolution.

²⁵ I. William Zartman, "The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments", *The Global Review of Ethnopolitics* 1 (no. 1) (2001), 8-18.

²⁶ This concept will be further elaborated on in Chapter Two *Ripeness Theory*.

Methodology

We will rely on the analysis of secondary sources. Within the limited framework of this thesis and in the face of financial restrictions, fieldwork will not be retained as a chosen method of collecting data. The bulk of information will be gathered through academic periodicals, manuscripts, official publications, data sets, international treaties, national legal papers, United Nations (UN) resolutions, peace treaties, press releases, journal articles, and conferences relating to the subject matter. There is obviously a large amount of readily available information pertaining to the private military industry. However, the literature at hand possesses various weaknesses, limitations and gaps. A significant portion of the literature is mainly descriptive, biased, normative, and usually fails to measure up to standard academic criteria which put emphasis on theoretical analysis. Furthermore, the lack of existing and appropriate theoretical frameworks from which to work with has left scholars largely ill equipped to tackle the complex issues surrounding the private military industry. Hence, this research shall consciously take into account and acknowledge these limitations.

The rationale behind the choice of Angola and Sierra Leone is that both case studies are in many ways very similar and provide for comparative evaluation. Both countries experienced seemingly intractable civil wars and both states were failing nations. With little other opportunities, both states turned to PMFs for assistance. What's more is that they both turned to the same PMF: Executive Outcomes (EO). A closer study of the two case studies shall help us shed light on the various ways a PMF can alter a given civil war. However, we realize that it might be difficult to generalize from these two cases. Empirical findings are mostly tentative. In addition, there are no established criteria for judging and rating the effectiveness of PMFs in conflict resolution settings. Therefore, the reader should bear in mind that the results may not be applicable to all cases where PMFs intervene.

Contribution of this study

This research is pertinent because it sheds light on a new type of actor who can play the role of a third party in civil wars. It is also likely to shed light on the potential for PMFs to contribute to civil conflict resolutions. There are presently several approaches for resolving civil wars. However, relatively few have been efficient and successful insofar. If research can lead to a better understanding of these private actors and if it can shed light on the conditions favoring their proper functioning, PMFs could potentially contribute to the resolution of protracted civil wars by working in conjunction with political actors. Nonetheless, academic analysis hitherto has led to very polarized conclusions. Hence, this paper shall seek to determine whether or not PMFs can contribute to the resolution of civil wars within weak and failing states.

THE PRIVATE MILITARY INDUSTRY

Private Military Activity in an Era of Globalization

During the last two decades, the increasingly visible presence of PMFs has manifested itself on the international scene. The contemporary era marked by heightened and unconventional security threats has incited the dramatic proliferation of these new transnational corporate actors. The three major reasons which explain the most recent rise in Private Military Companies (PMCs) use are: “(1) the end of the Cold War and the vacuum of security it produced in the global market²⁷, (2) the transformation in the nature of warfare, and (3) the normative rise of privatization”²⁸. The rationale behind this sector’s dramatic growth has clearly been echoed by Tim Spicer of Sandline International, a UK-based PMF, who states: humiliating experiences

The business was established in the early 1990s to fill a vacuum in the post cold war era. Our purpose is to offer governments and other legitimate organizations specialized military expertise at a time when western national desire to provide active support to friendly governments, and to support them in conflict resolution, has materially decreased, as has their capability to do so²⁹.

²⁷ Although the US and Russia have been active players in key areas such as the Middle East, the Balkans and Chechnya since the end of the Cold War, other areas or countries, namely certain African states such as Angola and Sierra Leone, have failed to draw the attention of these great powers following the *détente* period (as will be demonstrated and elaborated on in the following chapters on Angola and Sierra Leone), hence creating considerable security vacuums that allow PMFs to exploit. The US and Russia (and hence their contribution to UN peace operations) have been less inclined to contribute troops and explain casualties to their domestic constituencies following embarrassing experiences in the past such as the Somali Affair where the US lost 18 of its men.

²⁸ Peter Warren Singer, “Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its Ramifications for International Security”, 193 as cited in Jared F. Lawyer, 2003. *The Role of Private Military Corporations in Failing Nation States* (presented at the conference on Multinational Corporations, Development, & Conflict, Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford, 06 December 2003). Oxford: Queen Elizabeth House, 3.

²⁹ Sandline International, “Overview of the Company”, available at. <<http://www.sandline.com/site/index.html>> (last updated April 16, 2004, page consulted April 2006).

Hence, with a large demand (scores of protracted civil wars, etc.) and a limited supply of military services and assistance, these corporate bodies have found a particular niche to exploit. This industry has literally come to have a global reach, ranging from supplying the logistics to NATO's campaign against the Serbs, to training and supporting Congo's military³⁰.

Using their flexible and efficient structure, PMFs have successfully exploited the security gap which developed following the end of the Cold War. Supplying a wide array of military-related services to clients, PMFs have been involved in numerous intra and inter-state conflicts surfacing across the globe. Their mandates are diverse, ranging from protecting weak states against armed insurrection to addressing the threat of terrorism. The involvement of PMFs in global security matters has been so significant that they represented the "third largest contributor to the war effort [in the War in Iraq] after the United States and Britain"³¹. Since it appears unlikely that the private military industry is a transitory phenomenon, numerous scholars have demonstrated a growing interest in researching this industry.

Defining the private military industry

Although several scholars such as Deborah Avant³², Robert Mandel³³, and David Shearer³⁴ have presented suitable definitions concerning the private military industry, we shall borrow from Peter Singer who puts forward a clear, parsimonious and functional account of PMFs. He defines them as "profit-driven organizations that trade in professional services intricately linked to warfare"³⁵.

³⁰ Peter Warren Singer, "Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its Ramifications for International Security", 188.

³¹ Economist, March 25, 2004, "Mercenaries: The Baghdad boom", available at <http://www.sandline.com/hotlinks/Economist-Baghdad.html> (page consulted April 2006).

³² Deborah D. Avant, *The Market for Force: The Consequences of Privatizing Security* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).

³³ Robert Mandel, *Armies without States. The Privatization of Security* (Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner, 2002).

³⁴ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*.

³⁵ Peter Warren Singer, "Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and its

This definition clearly highlights the dual military and economic (profit-driven) nature of PMFs, which underscores the increasingly prevalence of neo-liberalism in the post-Cold War era (numerous previously government –dominated sectors of the economy are increasingly being outsourced and privatized). Peter Singer also points to internal variations within the overall private military industry. He states that PMFs “vary in their market capitalization, number of personnel, firm history, corporate inter-relationships, employee experience and characteristics, and even the geo-graphic location of their home base and operational zones”³⁶. However, as highlighted in the previous chapter, one single overarching factor unifies the industry as a whole: “all the firms within it offer services that fall within the military domain”³⁷ (which still highlights the dual military and economic nature of PMFs). This unifying element is vital since it incorporates each and every firm within the private military industry contributing very diverse and often dissimilar services. This manner of conceptualizing the industry is convenient since it is sufficiently general to allow for sub-categorization, yet concise enough to allow us to define PMFs as corporate bodies supplying diverse services falling under the general umbrella of military assistance.

In addition, scholars have for the most part also stressed the importance of the *corporate* nature of PMFs in order to differentiate the contemporary private military industry from the traditional and politically charged notion of *mercenary*³⁸. *Corporatization* is a key element in distinguishing PMFs from mercenaries³⁹. PMFs are structured, which entails a certain degree of hierarchy and chain of command. They are:

organized in business form [...] this in contrast to either the ad-hoc structure of individual mercenaries forming loose units or the social makeup of many of the historic contract units (such as the Swiss regiments that were local militias marketed abroad) [...] PMFs are ordered along pre-existing corporate lines, usually with a clear

Ramifications for International Security”, 186.

³⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 88.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 88.

³⁸ Deborah D. Avant, *The Market for Force: The Consequences of Privatizing Security*.

³⁹ There are still important similarities between mercenaries and PMFs but these similarities vary according and depending on the type of PMF being analyzed (Type 1, 2 or 3). The issue of differences and similarities between PMFs and mercenaries is debatable and contentious.

executive hierarchy that includes boards of directors and shareholders⁴⁰.

Although there remains some confusion over the differentiation between PMFs and mercenaries, most authors concur that PMFs are institutionalized and corporate endeavors which perform a wide array of functions, ranging from logistic support to intelligence gathering. Unlike the classical notion of a mercenary extolled in the 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions and the 1989 UN International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries⁴¹, many scholars such as Deborah Avant, David Shearer and Peter Singer insist that “a military company advertises its services and is legally registered [...] personnel are employed within a defined structure, with established terms and conditions, and work with a degree of organization and accountability⁴² to the company”⁴³. The company in turn “is answerable to its clients, often under a legally binding contract”⁴⁴. Therefore, although PMFs may share certain characteristics in common with mercenaries, they should, although debatable, be considered first and foremost as corporate actors specialized in the supply of military related services.

Differentiating PMFs from mercenaries is not merely a semantics exercise. The two terms of inquiry also carry legal ramifications. Under “international law, individuals who sell military services on their own – better known as mercenaries – are generally thought to be prohibited”⁴⁵. There are several international laws that render illegal mercenary activity, most notably the 1989 UN international

⁴⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 45.

⁴¹ Peter Warren Singer, “War, Profit, and the Vacuum of Law: Privatized Military Firms and International Law”, *Colombia Journal of International Law* 42 (no. 2) (2004), 527-530.

⁴² Although the personnel of the PMF Executive Outcomes (EO), as will be demonstrated in Chapter Three *Case Study Angola*, worked for both opposing parties in Angola, it did so at different times (EO worked for UNITA during the Cold War and for the government after the Cold War) and never broke out of a contract for the next highest bidder. Although PMFs are profit-driven and might not adhere to values such as ideological, ethnic, or religious (etc.) loyalties, they are still legally bound by contracts and desire to upkeep a sound corporate image in order to attract new clients and contracts.

⁴³ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*, 21.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 21.

⁴⁵ Peter Warren Singer, “War, Profit, and the Vacuum of Law: Privatized Military Firms and International Law”, 524.

convention against the use of mercenaries, the 1977 Additional Protocols to the Geneva Conventions, and the 1977 regional treaty in Africa for the elimination of mercenarism in Africa by the Organization of African Unity⁴⁶. Although these international treaties and legal endeavors are vital for banning mercenaries, and although they reflect the international political concerns raised over mercenaries and their impact on African military affairs (they also reflect the existing and actual problems inherent in mercenarism and their possible connections to the private military industry, hence their possible parallel impacts), they have nonetheless failed to concretely be instrumental in regulating private military activity since they do not adequately address PMFs and their distinctive and complex nature (dual military and corporate nature), distinct from mercenaries. Many, even including Enrique Ballesteros the UN-appointed expert on the subject, have admitted that international legal definitions concerning mercenaries are of little assistance in dealing with the privatized military industry. For the reasons stated above, it has been difficult to regulate the activities of PMFs since they are considered to be corporate bodies (in the realm of security), not random individuals, thus falling in key loopholes of international law.

Although many scholars and policymakers now distinguish PMFs from mercenaries, most, namely the *UN Special Rapporteur on the use of mercenaries* Ballesteros and former Secretary General Kofi Annan, also remain guarded in relation to use of PMFs and caution for a vigilant and prudent manner of employing these firms. In Rwanda, Kofi Annan reflected upon employing PMFs in order to stabilize the situation and protect refugees from combatants. However, he stated that the world was probably not ready to come to terms with this trend of privatization in the realm of security and peace⁴⁷. Although certain similarities may be established between PMFs and mercenaries, PMFs are in point of fact not analogous to legendary mercenary figures such as Frenchman Bob Denard or American born Bob MacKenzie who were individuals accountable and bound by

⁴⁶ Jesse Selber and Kebba Jobarteh, "From Enemy to Peacemaker: the role of private military companies in sub-Saharan Africa", *Medicine and Global Survival* 7 (no. 2) (2002), 93-94.

⁴⁷ Stephen Fidler and Thomas Catan "Private Military Companies Pursue the Peace Dividend", *Financial Times*, July 2003.

no rules or corporate guideline and directives⁴⁸. In order for a PMF to act legally, it must be supporting the official ruling government in order to assist in preserving national sovereignty⁴⁹. They can only (theoretically) serve the interests of a ruling government, not of rebel insurgencies. One particular PMF, EO, has proven itself reliable, has remained loyal to its employers, “has not switched sides, has not threatened the government, and has not shirked from combat – [four] traits of many past mercenary operations”⁵⁰. PMFs are also required to adhere to national laws concerning licensing and registration regulations.

Nevertheless, domestic laws are fairly easy to circumvent since there exists little domestic regulation regarding the privatized military industry in countries other than the US, UK and South Africa⁵¹. Analysts usually concur that the two groups of actors are very different, but that “there are, as yet, no common definitions, standards and methodologies that can be used to delineate the boundaries of the phenomenon being discussed”⁵².

Peter Singer points to the fact that there is yet no universal convergence pertaining to a suitable definition of even the most widely used terms. No “framework of analysis of the industry exists, no elucidation of the variation in the private military firm’s activities and impact, no attempts at examining the industry as a whole, and no comparative analyses”⁵³. This apparent lack of consensus represents a serious setback for research. It inhibits the development of explanatory and predictive theories of PMF behavior and has already had various concrete repercussions. For example, the failure to clearly define and characterize PMFs has rendered nearly all international legal initiatives concerned with the regulation of

⁴⁸ Ken Silverstein, *Private Warriors* (London: Verso, 2000), 147.

⁴⁹ Peter Warren Singer, “War, Profit, and the Vacuum of Law: Privatized Military Firms and International Law”.

⁵⁰ Herbert M. Howe, “Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes”, 317.

⁵¹ The “South African government has made the most direct domestic attempt to regulate the private military industry; under the provisions [of the 1997 Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Bill], any military firm based in South Africa is compelled to seek government authorization for each contract it signs, whether the operation is local or extraterritorial”. Refer notably to: Peter Warren Singer, “War, Profit, and the Vacuum of Law: Privatized Military Firms and International Law”, 539.

⁵² Robert Mandel, *Armies without States. The Privatization of Security*, 127-128.

⁵³ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, viii.

these corporate actors dysfunctional. Article 47 of the 1977 Additional Protocol I of the Geneva Conventions and the 1989 International Convention against the Recruitment, Use, Financing and Training of Mercenaries are both ineffectual due to conceptual and semantic ambiguities⁵⁴.

Classifying PMFs

Numerous authors have attempted to classify the private military industry by providing a taxonomy regrouping PMFs into sub-categories. Once again, there does not appear to be a clear consensus among scholars as to which criteria to be adopted for this type of classification. For pragmatic reasons, we shall use Peter Singer's 'Tip-of-the-Spear' typology, which despite certain weaknesses remains one of the most functional theoretical classifications. Peter Singer's approach recognizes the dual nature of the private military industry. At "its base level, the industry is driven by both military and economic fundamentals [...] a successful typology of its constituent parts must take into account both elements"⁵⁵. Peter Singer's typology clearly takes into account the corporate nature of PMFs since the tip-of-the-spear distinction-by military unit location-is analogous to how outsourcing's linkage with business chains also break down⁵⁶. According to the tip-of-the-spear typology, PMFs are broken down into three broad categories: type 1 military *provider* firms (such as Executive Outcomes and Sandline), type 2 military *consultant* firms (such as MPRI and Vinnell), and type 3 military *support* firms (such as Boeing Services and Holmes)⁵⁷. Each category is linked to a specific physical location in the battle space.

This research paper will exclusively focus on type 1 military *provider* firms (versus military *consultant* and military *support* firms), which are distinctively positioned in one specific physical location on a theatre of combat. As explicated in the previous chapter, type 1 firms focus on the tactical environment. In a "military

⁵⁴ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*, 16.

⁵⁵ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 91.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 91.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 93.

sense, they provide services at the forefront of the battle-space, by engaging in actual fighting, either as line units or specialists and/or direct command and control of field units”⁵⁸. And as was mentioned earlier, in many cases, they are utilized as *force multipliers*, with their employees distributed across a client’s force to provide leadership and experience⁵⁹. What is particularly interesting to us concerning type 1 firms is that they directly work and maneuver in the Theater of Operation (explicitly the tactical battlefield), considered to be the very tip of the spear⁶⁰. Due to their direct presence on the battlefield, they hold the potential of altering the local military balance. What is also particularly interesting about type 1 firms in the context of this study is that their clients are different than those of type 2 and 3 firms in various respects.

Clients and the Demand for Private Military Services

Clients of military *provider* firms tend to be weak national governments with comparatively low military capabilities facing immediate, high threat situations. Failing to exert effective control over the territory they govern and unable of providing security to their own citizens, governments within failing and weak states are often incapable of maintaining or restoring internal stability. A number of these states, such as Angola and Sierra Leone, have turned to PMFs for assistance in resolving their conflicts. Due in part to their proficient, resourceful and supple manner of conducting business, transnational corporate actors specialized in the supply of military services are capable of offering weak and failing states a viable solution to an immediate and rapidly escalating threat.

As is often the case with weak and failing states facing immediate internal threats, the outsourcing of PMFs is often done under the guise of ‘Force Multipliers’. Although PMFs are capable of putting forward overall unit packages (stand-alone tactical military units), they are most regularly contracted out as specialized Force Multipliers. They provide assistance wherever there is a vacuum

⁵⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 92.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 92.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 92.

of security and expertise. The addition of “a few highly skilled personnel to ‘stiffen the backs’ can have dramatic impact, akin to past colonial armies that mixed tribal levees with trained officers”⁶¹. Therefore, the effectiveness of force multipliers is not found in their numbers, but rather in their specialized tactical role and physical presence on the terrain.

Although type 1 firms will be the focal point of this analysis, a more attentive look at the Angola and Sierra Leone case studies will clearly demonstrate that the type 1 firms employed in both cases frequently provide services and functions falling under the rubric of type 2 and 3 firms⁶². Therefore, one should bear in mind that there is a significant degree of overlap between the three broad categories enumerated in Peter Singer’s typology. Despite this overlap, this research shall nonetheless highlight and emphasize the characteristics proper to type 1 firms since they expose the direct physical presence of civilian contractors on the battle field alongside local forces, and the strategic and tactical effect this might have on the military dimension of the conflict.

PMFs and Intra-State Conflict Resolution

Although the services of private military *provider* firms have been outsourced by numerous weak and failing states experiencing civil conflict, there is little research on the concrete effects engendered by these actors in relation to conflict resolution. This thesis shall seek to analyze the influence and impact of PMFs in the context of civil war resolution. Can combat driven PMFs help resolve conflicts and restore peace in civil war torn countries? In order to answer this question, we shall test a first hypothesis which affirms that PMFs do in fact affect the process of conflict resolution by creating a condition of *ripeness*: a MHS⁶³. We shall examine whether PMFs are capable of redressing symmetry in civil conflicts by directly changing the tide of military operations via their local strategic and

⁶¹ Doug Brooks, “Write a Cheque, End a War Using Private Military Companies to End African Conflict” *Conflict Trends*, (July 2000) no.6 as cited in Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 95.

⁶² Refer to Chapter *Introduction* for further information on type 2 and 3 firms.

⁶³ This concept will be further elaborated on in Chapter Two *Ripeness Theory*.

tactical presence and hence provoke a MHS, thus making negotiations more likely. The following chapter will elaborate on the relation between Ripeness Theory and PMFs. It will focus on the potential role PMFs can play in the resolution of a civil war.

RIPENESS THEORY

Intra-State Wars and Negotiations

Many scholars such as Roy Licklider⁶⁴ assumed that the demise of the Soviet Union would lead to a New World Order characterized by international order, stability and peace. However, the rise in civil wars, transnational threats, and terrorism shattered this belief. In 1999, Former US Secretary of State Henry Kissinger was asked if the world seemed like a safer place. He replied that “from the point of view of nuclear danger, infinitely safer, from the point of view of structure, far more chaotic”⁶⁵. No global order has yet emerged to replace the bipolar system which once stabilized international relations for over a half decade.

Of particular interest to this paper is the increase in the number of civil wars witnessed in the past two decades. Intra-state wars have typically been more challenging to resolve than inter-state wars. They are described as the most difficult conflicts to resolve by the means of negotiations. Only “a quarter to a third of modern civil wars (including anti colonial wars) have found their way to negotiation, whereas more than half of modern interstate wars have done so”⁶⁶.

Furthermore:

About two-thirds of the internal conflicts have ended in the surrender or elimination of one of the parties involved; fewer than a quarter of the international conflicts have so ended [...] yet in internal conflicts more than in interstate wars, defeat of the rebellion often merely drives the cause underground, to emerge at a later time; on the other hand, in principle, negotiation is the best policy for both parties in an internal conflict⁶⁷.

⁶⁴ Roy Licklider, “The Consequences of Negotiated Settlements in Civil Wars, 1945-1993”, *The American Political Science Review* 89 (no. 3) (1995), 681-690.

⁶⁵ Tim Spicer, *An Unorthodox Soldier. Peace and War and the Sandline Affair* (Edinburgh/London: Mainstream Publishing Company, 1999), 16.

⁶⁶ Paul R. Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1983) and Stephen John Stedman, *Peacemaking in Civil War: International Mediation in Zimbabwe, 1974-1980* (Boulder, Colo.: Lynne Rienner, 1990), as cited in I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 3.

⁶⁷ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington D.C.: The

Taking into consideration these figures, scholarly emphasis has increasingly been axed on the different strategies possibly leading to the initiation of negotiations in civil wars.

Intra-State Wars and Asymmetry

One of the reasons explaining the complexity in resolving civil wars is very often their asymmetrical structure whereby one party is disproportionately stronger than the other. Asymmetry signifies that “the most propitious conditions for resolving conflicts are difficult to obtain”⁶⁸. This particular feature of civil wars is considered in-conducive to negotiations since it further complicates negotiation dynamics, hence often rendering intra-state wars intractable. But what exactly is it about asymmetry that renders civil wars protracted?

The link between asymmetry and intractability is found in power dynamics. A symmetrical structure implies that both players are in a situation of parity, often military parity, therefore causing a stalemate or a deadlock. A stalemate often suggests that a conflict has reached a plateau since players find themselves in an impasse where neither is predominant. If neither is predominant, neither has the hope of reaching unilateral victory, hence viewing a negotiated resolution of the conflict as favorable (the consequence of war weariness)⁶⁹. On the other hand, asymmetry “of an internal conflict rarely produces the stalemate needed for negotiations”⁷⁰.

The link between asymmetry and intractability can be made clear via two lines of reasoning. The first has been termed the *commitment problem* argument. It can be illustrated through a scenario in which the government is strong and the rebels are weak. Several authors such as James Fearon⁷¹ explain that negotiations in

Brookings Institution, 1995), 3.

⁶⁸ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 8.

⁶⁹ I. William Zartman, *Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985/1989).

⁷⁰ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 8.

⁷¹ James D. Fearon 2004. “Why do some Civil Wars Last so much longer than Others?”, *Journal of Peace Research* 41 (no. 3): 275-301.

such circumstances are complicated by what they call a commitment problem⁷². They argue that “the central obstacle to ending a civil war by negotiation is that mutual disarmament by government and rebel forces is a Prisoners’ Dilemma in which neither can tolerate any risk of being ‘suckered’”⁷³. Already in a situation of inferiority and of mutual distrust, rebels have little guarantee that once they abandon their arms, the government will not re-launch another offensive line of attack. By disarming for the sake of risky and prospective negotiations, rebels are increasing their level of vulnerability vis-à-vis their opponent. Rebels who are in a weaker position have no real guarantee or incentive to disarm in order to initiate a negotiation process. The lack of trust, confidence, and often communication seriously hinders chances of opening a window of opportunity for negotiations⁷⁴. This scenario thus demonstrates how asymmetry can be in-conducive to negotiations.

The second line of reasoning has been termed the *unilateral victory* argument. It supposes that both the government and rebels are strong but very disproportionably. Embedded in the logic of attrition theory, the reasoning follows: if one party (suppose the government) is overwhelmingly strong, it has no real incentive to negotiate with its counterpart since it still hopes to escalate the conflict until it reaches unilateral victory. The goal is to conquer and annihilate the adversary in order to reap all the benefits of a unilateral victory. In other words, both strong parties hope to win since the benefits of prolonging a war appear to outweigh the costs. Thus, circumstances behind asymmetrical structures render conflicts intractable since they are not conducive to negotiations. Conditions of asymmetry therefore favor intractability⁷⁵.

Given that an asymmetrical civil war has very limited chances of being resolved through negotiation, we may conclude that the very creation of symmetrical circumstances can open a window of opportunity for a negotiated

⁷² James D. Fearon 2004. “Why do some Civil Wars Last so much longer than Others?”, *Journal of Peace Research* 41 (no. 3): 275-301.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 291.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 275-301.

⁷⁵ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars.*

resolution. Stated otherwise, symmetry, whereby both opponents⁷⁶ are in a situation of balanced military capabilities (contributing to war weariness), can create ripe moments for negotiations. Let us elaborate further on this matter.

According to public choice notions of rationality and public choice studies of war termination and negotiation⁷⁷, individuals are rational beings who make choices based on cost-benefit analysis. In the context of civil wars, each of the affected parties will seek to evaluate the costs and benefits associated with the prolongation of war. A party will opt for the alternative which best serves its personal interests. A decision to alter its original course of action will be induced by increasing pain associated with a costly war. People “seek to avoid a loss of a certain amount more than they seek a gain of the same amount”⁷⁸. They are *loss-averse*. If both parties are in a situation of parity (symmetrical structure), there is little hope for either of them to reach unilateral victory. Each party will hence begin to feel uncomfortable in the costly dead-end state of affairs. The more both parties bear and suffer the costs associated with the prolongation of war, the more they will likely reconsider halting their course of action in favor of negotiations (if neither is able to achieve its aims of victory-war weariness)⁷⁹. In other words, the stalemate will be painful to the both of them. Hence, a MHS is the reflection of symmetry. Both are conducive to negotiations.

Ripeness Theory

Many scholars have devoted their work to the study of conflict resolution in the context of civil wars. Authors such as Christopher Mitchell, Jeffrey Rubin,

⁷⁶ The intervention of PMFs in civil wars involving more than two belligerents will not be examined within the framework of this thesis. The topic of PMF intervention in intra-state wars involving more than two main parties might however be an interesting research avenue to be examined in future studies.

⁷⁷ Steven J. Brams and Marek P. Hessel, “Threat Power in Sequential Games”, *International Studies Quarterly* 28 (no.1) (1984), 23-44.

⁷⁸ I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Stephen Stedman, and William Zartman just to name a few, have based their research on the concept of *ripeness*, which revolves around the notion of *timing* for negotiations. The concept of a ripe moment “centers on the parties’ perception of a [...] MHS, optimally associated with an impending, past, or recently avoided catastrophe”⁸⁰. Ripeness is based on the notion that when both parties find themselves “locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy or Way Out”⁸¹.

Although there are many variants and different interpretations within this body of literature, Ripeness Theory speculates that there are specific moments during the course of a civil war where conditions facilitate a negotiated resolution⁸². Because the conditions and nature of a civil war change over time, certain stages during the life span of a civil war are more susceptible to develop into opportunities for negotiation and settlement over others (if the occasion is seized). As the conditions of a civil war fluctuate, occasions for resolution come and go. William Zartman refers to these specific moments as ripe⁸³. He states that a ripe moment is one at which “the parties’ motivation to settle the conflict is as its highest”⁸⁴. Therefore, it is implicit that even if there might be a drive and willingness to resolve a conflict, the conditions present at that very moment might not be conducive for a negotiated resolution since the conflict may not yet be ripe. An important point to note is that:

ripeness is only a condition, necessary but not sufficient, for the initiation of negotiations. It is not self-fulfilling or self implementing. It must be seized, either directly by the parties or, if not, through the persuasion of a mediator. Thus, it is not identical to its results, which are not part of its definition, and therefore not tautological. Not all ripe moments are so seized and turned into

⁸⁰ I. William Zartman and M. Berman, *The Practical Negotiator* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1982), 66-78.

⁸¹ I. William Zartman, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, 8.

⁸² I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*.

⁸³ I. William Zartman, (2001). “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, 8-18.

⁸⁴ I. William Zartman, (2000), “Ripeness: The Hurting Stalemate and Beyond”, in *International Conflict Resolution After the Cold War*, eds. Paul C. Stern and Daniel Druckman, Washington, DC: National Academy Press, 228.

negotiations, hence the importance of specifying the meaning and evidence of ripeness so as to indicate when conflicting or third parties can fruitfully initiate negotiations. Although ripeness theory is not predictive in the sense that it can tell when a given situation will become ripe, it is predictive in the sense of identifying the elements necessary (even if not sufficient) for the productive inauguration of negotiations⁸⁵.

Numerous studies have shown that “a mutually hurting stalemate defines the moment as ripe for resolution: both sides are locked in a situation from which they cannot escalate the conflict with their available means and at an acceptable cost”⁸⁶. Such a “stalemate provides a window of opportunity that is narrow and highly conditional; it depends on perceived rather than objective reality, on a stalemate that affects both sides, and on a discomfort (preferably increasing) felt by both parties”⁸⁷. Although “the pain does not have to be equal or the stalemate exactly balanced, the asymmetry of internal conflict rarely produces the stalemate needed for negotiations”⁸⁸. MHSs, which provide incentives for parties to resolve their conflict through negotiations, are lengthy and intensive periods of violence from which neither of the fighting parties are likely to achieve a one-sided unilateral victory.

Put differently, a MHS is a costly situation whereby opponents are in a state of military rough power parity (symmetry) whereby no one side in a conflict predominates and hence, become locked in a painful deadlock. According to Eric Brahm⁸⁹, parity refers to a situation where a conflict reaches a point at which a sort of equilibrium sets in which neither side is getting any closer to achieving its goals and which no one is happy with the situation. Once conflicts escalate for a while, they often reach a stalemate.

Stalemates can exist under different forms. Christopher Mitchell has elaborated on three such forms:

⁸⁵ I. William Zartman, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, 9.

⁸⁶ I. William Zartman, “Ripe for Resolution: Conflict and Intervention in Africa”, 2d. ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989) as cited in I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 8.

⁸⁷ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 8.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁸⁹ Eric Brahm, “Lustration” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium, University of Colorado, Boulder, (June 2004).

(1) a stalemate of desperation, where both sides are exhausted and no victory is in sight; (2) a stalemate of attrition, where neither side is being significantly hurt but neither can destroy or neutralize the other; (3) a stalemate of frustration, where adversaries have come to recognize that they cannot achieve a clear-cut victory that achieves all their goals, whatever their expenditure of effort and resources⁹⁰.

Despite these variations, a stalemate can usually be understood as a painful plateau following an intense and rapid escalation of a conflict. Therefore, there is a clear link between ripeness and symmetry. If one can alter the local conditions in order to create symmetry and hence a MHS (since a MHS is a reflection of symmetry and military parity), the timing might then become ripe for a negotiated resolution.

Recognizing a MHS

Inherent in ripeness theory and a MHS are both objective and subjective elements⁹¹. The objective existence of a military stalemate or military symmetry is not sufficient for the determination of a ripe moment⁹². Rather, the conditions of a hurting stalemate must be subjectively perceived by the affected parties, hence making them recognize the costs associated with the continuation of violence and conflict. Locating and identifying a ripe moment requires research and intelligence studies to identify the objective and subjective elements⁹³. Subjective expressions of “pain, impasse, and inability to bear the cost of further escalation, related to the objective evidence of a stalemate, [...] and/or other such indicators of MHS [...],

⁹⁰ Christopher R. Mitchell, “Cutting Losses: Reflections On Appropriate Timing”, January 1, 1996, *ICAR Working Paper 9*, 3.

⁹¹ I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

⁹² Michael E. Salla, “Creating the Ripe Moment in the East Timor Conflict”, *Journal of Peace Research* 34 (no. 4) (1997), 451.

⁹³ I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

can be researched on a regular basis in a conflict to establish where a ripeness exists”⁹⁴.

Since finding the occurrence of a MHS necessitates research on both the objective and subjective elements, we shall further shed light on what exactly these elements consist of. We shall seek to uncover which conditions contribute to how elites perceive their party’s strategic position in a conflict and thus their desirability to negotiate. We shall start by introducing a list of conditions that make up a MHS (if of course they are subjectively perceived by the military and political authorities as costly for them). Four indicators will be used to elaborate on the elements which assist in creating a MHS⁹⁵: 1) Territory; 2) Military; 3) Economic; 4) Political.

Let us begin with our first indicator being *territory*. Exercising authority over national territory in the context of a civil war, as opposed to inter-state wars, is a particularly important and strategic advantage to have since both adversaries live and subsist on the very same land. More specifically though, it is to a party’s advantage to seek control over: 1) strategic sites in regions rich in natural resources like oil and mine fields (a potential source of income for funds allocated to military operations); 2) borders which can be crucial for trading, restocking, rearmament and smuggling (human and material); 3) key infrastructures (such as central highways, ports, airports, communication and radio centers); 4) military bases which are essential for logistical, organizational and command purposes. A party’s failure to exercise effective control over national territory will inevitably inflict many costs. However, if both parties manage to obtain territorial advantages on a relatively balanced scale, they might become trapped in a MHS as they reach a sort of equilibrium in terms of territorial acquisitions. This impasse and military deadlock will most likely force both camps to reconsider their options since both have less chances of escalating the war to unilateral victory. All that said, territory is thus a key variable in the context of elements leading to a MHS.

⁹⁴ I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

⁹⁵ These will be applied in the two case studies in order to discern a link between private military intervention and a MHS.

Our second indicator used for the purpose of uncovering a MHS is *military*. The military capability indicator will be subcategorized in three sections: 1) troops; 2) equipment; 3) strategy and tactics. We will make use of data on the number of troops dispatched, on troop quality, on the use of technology, and on support systems (etc.). These subgroups have been deemed important for determining a MHS since logically speaking, the more military parity (balance in military capabilities) there is between two opponents, the less both parties can hope to achieve a unilateral victory. Military parity combined with the costs associated with a military deadlock will undeniably contribute to a MHS.

Our third indicator used for the purpose of uncovering a MHS is *economy*. We shall seek to examine the economic costs associated with a war. We will use data on Gross Domestic Product (GDP), debt, social spending, sanctions, and blockades (etc.). Economic factors are important to study since the more a war hurts a party in economic terms, the less it can viably achieve victory. Less hope of attaining a unilateral victory combined with additional costs associated with the prolongation of war makes negotiations appear more profitable and cost-effective (war weariness).

Finally, we shall make use of a fourth indicator: *political* factors. A party's reputation can alter its legitimacy and credibility vis-à-vis both the state's internal populace and the international community, thus affecting its chances of prevailing in an intra-state war. A lack of credibility and/or legitimacy might hinder the affected party's chances of success by: 1) limiting the party's access to global markets (engendering a loss of trade); 2) denying the party local support from the country's population (local assistance and alliance making can often be crucial in civil wars); 3) submitting the party to foreign pressure via international condemnation; 3) engendering a loss in foreign investment and foreign aid; 4) an imposition of a blockade mandated by an external party such as the UN or another organization or state. Hence, political factors are indeed important when considering a MHS.

All four indicators thus inflict costs on the affected parties of a civil war. Each of the main parties directly involved must bear and suffer the costs, but not

necessarily for the same reasons or at equal degrees. Hence, it is the perception of the objective condition rather than the condition itself that generates a MHS⁹⁶.

Ripeness Theory thus draws on cost benefit analysis for reviewing intra-state conflicts and the implicated parties' respective positions⁹⁷. In game theoretic terms, it marks:

the transformation of the situation in the parties' perception from a prisoners' dilemma (PDG) into a chicken dilemma game (CDG) (Bramns 1985, Goldstein 1998), or, in other terms, the realization that the status quo or no negotiation [...] is a negative-sum situation, and that to avoid the zero-sum outcomes now considered impossible [...] the positive-sum outcome [...] must be explored⁹⁸.

Ripeness Theory and Critics

Although Ripeness Theory has often been employed to determine the right moment when conditions are conducive to successful negotiations, a number of scholars such as Jeffrey Rubin have denounced the theoretical body of literature⁹⁹. According to Jeffrey Rubin, Ripeness Theory can promote a certain degree of passivity on the part of third parties (such as the UN or external Powers). The absence of a ripe moment may serve as a pretext for non-intervention. As a result, external parties to a conflict might take advantage of this valid excuse for not getting involved, even if genocide or other forms of human rights abuses occur¹⁰⁰.

⁹⁶ I. William Zartman, "*Ripeness*" *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

⁹⁷ The "careful case study by Stephen J. Stedman (1991) of the Rhodesian negotiations for independence as Zimbabwe takes the concept beyond a single perception into the complexities of internal dynamics; Stedman specifies that some but not all parties must perceive the hurting stalemate, that patrons rather than parties may be the agents of perception, that the military element in each party is the crucial element in perceiving the stalemate, and that the way out is as important an ingredient as the stalemate in that all parties may well see victory in the alternative outcome prepared by negotiation". Refer notably to I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 10.

⁹⁸ I. William Zartman, "The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments", 9.

⁹⁹ Jeffrey Z. Rubin, "The Timing of Ripeness and the Ripeness of Timing", in *Timing the De-Escalation of International Conflicts*, eds. Thorson Stuart J., Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991.

¹⁰⁰ Jeffrey Z. Rubin, "The Timing of Ripeness and the Ripeness of Timing", in *Timing the De-Escalation of International Conflicts*, eds. Thorson Stuart J., Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991.

Although this criticism is warranted, evidence and past instances fail to consistently corroborate the concern raised above. The active engagement of Third Parties, which can be in the form of mediation or partisan support, can actually alter and manipulate a local situation in order to provoke a stalemate and hence contribute to the creation of a ripe moment. Therefore, Jeffrey Rubin's concerns might be appeased since external parties do not always remain indifferent to conflicts not readily ripe for a negotiated resolution. Although their efforts might not directly be geared towards the final stages of a resolution, external parties may for example intervene by emphasizing the benefits of a negotiated resolution or by actually producing incentives and benefits associated with a negotiation (etc.).

If some:

objective elements are present, persuasion is the obvious diplomatic challenge. Such was the message of Kissinger in the Sinai withdrawal negotiations [...] and Crocker in the Angolan negotiations [...], among many others, emphasizing the absence of real alternatives (stalemate) and the high costs of the current conflict course (pain). If there is no objective indicator to which to refer, ripening may involve a much more active engagement of the mediator, moving that role from communication and formulation to manipulation. As a manipulator [...], the mediator either increases the size of the stakes, attracting the parties to share in the pot that otherwise would have been too small, or limits the actions of the parties in conflict, providing objective elements for the stalemate. Such actions are delicate and dangerous, but on occasion necessary. US massive aid incentives to Israel and Egypt to negotiate a second Sinai withdrawal in 1975, NATO bombing of Serb positions in Bosnia in 1995 to create a hurting stalemate, or the American arming of Israel during the October war in 1973, or of Morocco (after two years of moratorium) in 1981 to keep those parties in the conflict, respectively, among many others, are typical examples of the mediator acting as a manipulator to bring about a stalemate¹⁰¹.

These examples have established that the notion of a Ripe Moment does not necessarily have to be one with a passive undertone, since a situation can actively be ripened by external parties in order to promote conditions favorable for negotiations. Therefore, third party players can help induce a military stalemate in

¹⁰¹ I. William Zartman, "The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments", 15.

order to form a ripe moment. The motives for intervention on the part of Third Parties are not relevant here. Their motives may be moral, financial, or political. Third Party players might intervene because they are called upon by one local actor who might not be impartial in the conflict and who might not necessarily wish to achieve peace via the involvement of the invited Third Party player. Therefore, the motive for intervention does not necessarily have to be the ripening of the situation. Whether the ripening of the situation is intended or not is not of importance here. Rather, the concrete outcome of third party intervention is what matters.

Ripeness Theory and PMFs

For the sake of this paper, we shall seek to uncover whether or not biased third party intervention, in the form of private military assistance (acting as external manipulators), can help create or expedite the achievement of negotiated settlements by creating a MHS, a necessary condition for ripeness. Parallel to the 1995 NATO bombings in Bosnia, we shall seek to uncover whether or not the active military engagement of PMFs, in particular of EO, on the terrain in Angola and Sierra Leone, have helped to create a mutually hurting stalemate by the means of manipulating local military balances and redressing local symmetry, hence creating military parity and a painful deadlock. Can PMFs create MHSs? Put differently, we will ask ourselves whether private military involvement, by redressing the military symmetry to create a military stalemate, can be a solution to the problem raised by Jeffrey Rubin of passivity within the ripeness theory.

In order to determine the effect of PMFs in both case studies, we shall by the use of our indicators pay particular attention to the objective conditions created by PMFs and study how private military involvement subjectively altered the affected parties' considerations in their cost-benefit calculations. Hence, we shall determine whether PMF intervention changed the game from a prisoner's dilemma to a chicken dilemma game by making the parties realize that they cannot unilaterally escalate the conflict in order to achieve a one-sided victory. In the cases of Angola and Sierra Leone, the mandate and activities of EO will be studied in

order to determine the local concrete effects provoked by these private actors. Objective and subjective factors resulting in costs for all parties will be dissected in order to put forth and clarify the causal relationship between PMF intervention (dependent variable) and the attainment of negotiations-ripeness (independent variable).

The next two chapters shall test the hypothesis that combat driven PMFs, via their military and strategic capabilities, can contribute to the resolution of intra-state wars by creating a MHS (by redressing the symmetry), a necessary condition for ripeness/political negotiations (which are themselves indispensable but not sufficient for a permanent resolution of a conflict). If the hypothesis is validated, PMFs could be perceived as representing the private equivalent of military peace enforcers (military function) which help create windows of opportunity for negotiations, where political actors take on the charge to complete the process of resolving the conflict by taking on the role of peace makers (political function).

It is very clear that PMFs alone are not sufficient for restoring long term peace and it is not the objective of this paper to suggest that PMFs can unilaterally and permanently resolve a civil war. As the ripeness theory explicitly states, the notion of ripeness is not tautological. Private military involvement can create a window of opportunity for negotiations to take place (by creating a MHS, a necessary condition for ripeness), but this opportunity must be seized by political actors (Way Out). Ripeness has been “key to many successful cases of negotiation, opening the way for discussions that led to an agreement in the Sinai (1974), Southwest Africa (1988), El Salvador (1988), Mozambique (1992), and many others”¹⁰². The lack of ripeness also led to “the failure of attempts to open negotiations between Eritrea and Ethiopia in the late 1980s, within Sudan for decades, and elsewhere”¹⁰³. Therefore, one can assume that ripeness is necessary but not sufficient for the successful initiation and conclusion of negotiations.

¹⁰² I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi Burgess. Conflict Research Consortium (University of Colorado, Boulder. Posted: August 2003), available at. <<http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/ripeness/>> (page consulted April 2006).

¹⁰³ I. William Zartman, “*Ripeness*” *Beyond Intractability*. eds. Guy Burgess and Heidi

Despite several drawbacks and hurdles related to the involvement of PMFs, which will evidently be discussed later, the plausible potential for ripening conflicts in weak states held by these actors is compelling enough to reward further examination. However, since this research focuses on just two case studies, it should just be noted that the conclusions established in this study should not bear any general predictive nature on PMFs and their influence on conflict resolution. The results gathered in this study might not be applicable to every case where PMFs have been employed.

CASE STUDY: ANGOLA

Introduction

Analyzing private military intervention in the Angolan civil war by way of applying William Zartman's notion of ripeness proves vital for pointing out the manipulative¹⁰⁴ effect a biased Third Party player might have on the resolution of a given civil war. In addition, applying the theory of ripeness to private military involvement can also partly respond to Jeffrey Rubin's concern for the need to continue looking for ways of *creating* ripeness in pro-active manners, rather than simply passively waiting for the ripe moment to present itself¹⁰⁵. In the following chapter, we shall seek to uncover whether EO's intervention in the Angolan conflict managed to brake out the impasse in negotiations and bring about a MHS, resulting in the 1994 Lusaka Accords (approximately two years following the 1992 elections). We shall first and foremost briefly go over Angola's historical background, then shed light on the nature of Angola's civil war, and finally make use of our four indicators (territory, military, economic, political) discussed in chapter two to test the following hypothesis: in its two year contract between 1992 and 1994, EO contributed to the creation of ripeness by way of generating a MHS.

A brief historical background of Angola

¹⁰⁴ The term *manipulative* in this context is not used in a pejorative manner. Quite the opposite, this term helps in seeking to uncover whether biased third party intervention, in the form of private military assistance (acting as external *manipulators*), can help create or expedite the achievement of negotiated settlements by actively creating a MHS (Mutually Hurting Settlement), a necessary condition for ripeness. Viewing private military involvement under this light (redressing the military symmetry to create a military stalemate) can potentially be a solution to the problem raised by Jeffrey Z. Rubin of passivity embedded in the ripeness theory. Refer to Chapter Two *Ripeness Theory* for additional information.

¹⁰⁵ Jeffrey Z. Rubin, "The Timing of Ripeness and the Ripeness of Timing", in *Timing the De-Escalation of International Conflicts*, eds. Thorson Stuart J., Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1991.

Angola is by all means a country abundantly blessed with natural resources. Being Africa's second largest oil producer and possessing an array of exploitable minerals, Angola has the potential for developing a prosperous economy¹⁰⁶. However, three decades of civil war has among other things prevented its economy from thriving. Extreme poverty is still a daily reality for 68% of Angolans¹⁰⁷. The roots of the Angolan crisis can be found in the country's brisk period of transition to independence from Portugal in 1975. The Portuguese settlers, virtually representing the whole of Angola's educated population, abruptly deserted the country, rendering it de-facto desolate and void of a populace trained in statecraft, industry or agriculture. The new Angolan nation was thus left with little more than a "ready supply of warring guerilla armies [...] then, for the better part of the next quarter-century, the superpowers, their proxies, and white minority governments in the region stoked the conflict by injecting cash, arms and military personnel"¹⁰⁸. With adolescent government institutions and with inexperienced and unsuitable personnel running them, the Angolan government was ill-equipped for dealing with upcoming challenges.

Angola's state of affairs following independence was complicated by coexisting internal and external factors. Angola was suffering from the consequences of both inter-state and intra-state conflicts, rendering the attainment of stability very difficult¹⁰⁹. On the one hand, its inter-state conflict for the most part involved regional players such as Namibia and South Africa. But as a result of United States (US) Assistant Secretary of State Chester A. Crocker's mediation efforts and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics' (USSR) compliance, Angola's inter-state war "was eventually settled in December 1988 by a tripartite agreement, which provided among other things, for Namibia to move stages to independence and for the redeployment and disengagement of Cuban troops from Angola"¹¹⁰. The détente period, which at the time governed international relations, guaranteed

¹⁰⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 107.

¹⁰⁷ Department for International Development, "Country Profiles: Africa", available at <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/africa/angola.asp> (last updated March 01, 2006, page consulted April 2006).

¹⁰⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* 107.

¹⁰⁹ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 175.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 175.

an end to Soviet, Cuban and South African involvement in both Angola and Namibia¹¹¹. As early as 1989, a small UN team of military monitors (UNAVEM I) was stationed across the country in order to observe the progressive withdrawal of Cuban troops from Angolan territory. The details of this disengagement are elaborated in the 1988 Brazzaville Accords¹¹².

Although Angola's intra-state conflict was strongly interrelated to its inter-state war, it proved more difficult to resolve. On top of featuring international interference, the civil war "had personal, ideological, interethnic, and interregional dimensions"¹¹³. When Angola obtained national independence, two main parties shaped its unripe and underdeveloped political life: the *Movimento Popular da Libertacao de Angola* (MPLA) and the *National Union for the Total Independence of Angola* (UNITA). On the one hand, the Soviet Union and Cuba supported the communist MPLA, a party founded by an educated left wing urban elite concentrated in Luanda (its rural base essentially limited to Kimbundu), and who had managed to seize the government following independence. They were perceived by their opponents as *asimilado* (urban, educated, and Portuguese-oriented), *mestizo* (mixed race), and northern dominated¹¹⁴. The MPLA's military wing, the *Forças Armados Angolanos* (FAA) consequently constituted Angola's state army, directed by then General Joao de Matos as Chief of staff. And since the MPLA held national control over state resources, it thus created *Sonogal* the Angolan state oil company in order to generate state revenue¹¹⁵.

On the other hand, UNITA, which de-facto constituted more of an insurgency movement, was propped up by the United States and South Africa during the Cold War. It was founded in Chokwe territory in 1966, nine years before Angola declared independence from Portugal, by Jonas Malheiro Savimbi (1934-

¹¹¹ Some organizations such Human Rights Watch however claimed that there was still backing under the form of covert assistance and arms trade after 1988.

¹¹² Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes", 311.

¹¹³ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 175.

¹¹⁴ Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, "Angola Unravels: The Rise and of the Lusaka Peace Process", available at. http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Angl998-03.htm#P439_33860 (page consulted April 2006).

¹¹⁵ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 107.

2002), a cult figure for the faction. Unlike the MPLA, UNITA was rural in character and had regional roots, primarily among the Ovimbundu people of southern and central Angola. The structure of its leadership was regionally diverse and included Cabindans, Bakongo, Lunda-Chokwes, and Nganguelas (etc.)¹¹⁶. UNITA's respective military wing, which held overpoweringly power over UNITA's political wing, was the *Forças Armados de Libertação de Angola* (FALA).

The nature of Angola's civil war

Angola's civil war thus started as soon as it gained independence from Portugal in 1975 and pit the MPLA against UNITA. This intra-state war was complex seeing that it comprised of both conventional and guerilla war aspects. Further complicating matters was the intervention of multiple third party players who fueled the conflict with cash, ammunition, and arms. Not only was Angola experiencing a proxy war on its own soil (the intervention of the US, South Africa versus the USSR and Cuba), but was also witnessing the presence of other external third party players such as private military firms like EO. EO employees, while also serving in the South African Defense Force (SADF), had for example already intervened in Angola in the 1980s in order to support UNITA and punish Angolan support for the rebels fighting against apartheid rule in Namibia and South Africa¹¹⁷.

Angola's first intra-state conflict opposing the MPLA and UNITA "continued until the year of 1991, when a Portuguese-mediated effort, actively supported by the United States and the Soviet Union, resulted in the Bicesse Accords of May 1991"¹¹⁸. The accords were the result of trilateral talks between Angola, Cuba and South Africa, and were facilitated by then US Secretary of State

¹¹⁶ Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, "Angola Unravels: The Rise and The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process", available at. http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Ang1998-03.htm#P439_33860 (page consulted April 2006).

¹¹⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 107-108.

¹¹⁸ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 175.

Chester Crocker, with the discreet assistance of the USSR. These six rounds of peace talks were “made possible partly by the ending of the Cold War, which facilitated US-Soviet cooperation and partly by the desire of the Soviet Union and Cuba to reduce their financial commitment to Angola”¹¹⁹. The Bicesse Accords ratified a ceasefire and called for the integration of government and UNITA forces into the FAA, a 50,000 strong military force¹²⁰. The Accords also contained a *Triple Zero* clause that stipulated that arms delivery to any Angolan party was prohibited¹²¹. Under the Accords:

the MPLA remained the legitimate and internationally-recognized government, retaining responsibility for running the state during the interim period and for setting the date for elections. A U.N. Angola Verification Mission (UNAVEM) team of 576 people was responsible for monitoring during this interim period¹²².

In addition, a Joint Political Military Commission (JPMAC consisted of the MPLA, UNITA and the three observer nations) would also oversee the transition to elections after the cease fire had taken effect.

The Bicesse Accords, finally signed by President dos Santos and Savimbi (following Namibia’s independence and the withdrawal of Cuban combat troops), did much to relieve Angolans of the shocks of war between June 1991 and early October 1992. Ultimately, they led to the country’s first national elections, held September 29-30, 1992¹²³.

First National Elections

¹¹⁹ Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, “Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process”, available at. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Angl998-03.htm#P439_33860> (page consulted April 2006).

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Sean Cleary (1999) “Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement”, in *Peace, Profit or Plunder? The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, eds. Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies, 150.

¹²² Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, “Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process”, available at. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Angl998-03.htm#P439_33860> (page consulted April 2006).

¹²³ Sean Cleary (1999) “Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement”, 145.

As a result of the Bicesse Accords, Angola was awaiting and preparing for its first electoral experience. Although both the MPLA and UNITA were confident about the electoral support they could depend on from their respective constituent ethno-linguistic groups, UNITA decisively lost the elections which counted a turnout of more than 91 percent (4.4 million) of registered voters¹²⁴. In the “presidential election, the MPLA’s dos Santos received 49.6 percent of the vote compared to 40.1 percent cast for UNITA’s Savimbi [...], in the parliamentary election, the MPLA gathered 53.7 percent of the popular vote versus UNITA’s 34.0 percent”¹²⁵. Due to the volatile and unpredictable situation, UN Representative Margaret Anstee intervened and declared the elections fair and free. In addition, the National Electoral Commission (NEC), UNAVEM and Troika insisted there were no electoral irregularities¹²⁶. The MPLA had indisputably won. Nonetheless, external assurances did little to quell UNITA. Order proved difficult to attain because “Jonas Savimbi refused to accept the outcome of elections held in 1992 under the agreement”¹²⁷. Soon after the results were officially made public, Savimbi declared on the VORGAN radio station that he would no longer tolerate electoral fraud.

Failing to acknowledge the MPLA’s national authority, Savimbi withdrew from Luanda claiming his life in the Angolan capital was in danger, fled to his personal house in Huambo following his public declaration on the radio, and remobilized his faction’s forces countrywide, hence re-inaugurating another round of war. The following months witnessed local clashes multiply between UNITA and members of the paramilitary riot police, into which most members of Angola’s Special Forces had been transferred into prior to the elections¹²⁸.

¹²⁴ Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, “Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process”, available at. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Angl998-03.htm#P439_33860> (page consulted April 2006).

¹²⁵ J. Andrew Grant, 2001. *The End of ‘SavimbiLand’? The Rise and Decline of UNITA’s ‘State-Within-a-State’ in Angola* (Prepared for the ‘States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era’ Workshop at the University of Toronto, 19-20 October 2001). Toronto: University of Toronto, 11.

¹²⁶ Sean Cleary (1999) “Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement”, 153.

¹²⁷ I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars*, 175.

¹²⁸ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*, 46.

In an effort to de-escalate the precariously volatile situation dominating Angola following the elections, and in order to avoid a national crisis, negotiations were set up in Luanda the last week of October 1992 between the newly re-instated government and the UNITA insurgency¹²⁹. During the Luanda negotiations, several parties exchanged proposals on how to end the clashes and restore peace until the second round of presidential elections could take place. Unfortunately, these attempts proved insufficient to quell the mounting tension surging between the MPLA and UNITA. Due to discord over the electoral results, Angola's civil war resumed approximately one month following the elections and would last until November 1994¹³⁰.

Lack of a MHS?

This moment of opportunity in Luanda following the month of October 1992 was obviously not *ripe* for a negotiated resolution. The lack of a MHS in 1992 could be one factor in explaining the lack of ripeness. It appears as though Savimbi had no interest in negotiating since he knew the balance of military capabilities was in his faction's favor. UNITA was indeed strong relative to the MPLA in terms of territorial acquisitions and military capabilities. It "claimed approximately 80% of the country-its highest ever-including the diamond-rich north-eastern region"¹³¹. Even UN Secretary General Boutros-Ghali reported in December of 1992 that UNITA held 2/3 of Angola's municipalities, rendering the MPLA's country wide authority near obsolete¹³². There was no symmetry in terms of military power and there was no painful deadlock.

Since UNITA was militarily predominant, Savimbi had his eye set on intensifying the conflict until the point of reaching unilateral victory. In a cost benefit calculation, prolonging the conflict until unilateral victory would be more

¹²⁹ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement", 153.

¹³⁰ Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes", 311.

¹³¹ Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola*, 11.

¹³² Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement", 154.

beneficial to his faction than negotiating. But Savimbi was not alone in refusing to negotiate. If the MPLA had negotiated at that moment of heightened crisis (the second period of Angola's war had already been inaugurated), it would have done it from a position of extreme weakness. Due to territorial factors, the MPLA had no leverage over UNITA. The political lines drawn on the Angolan map attributing approximately 80% of the territory to the rebel faction would ultimately have remained frozen, attributing less than 20% to the government¹³³. If the international community had intervened, both parties knew that "the political lines in Angola would likely remain drawn where they stood when the ceasefire was announced"¹³⁴. The Luanda Talks and Savimbi's subsequent unilateral ceasefire thus failed. In game theoretic terms, Angola's main players were still trapped in a Prisoners Dilemma Game and hence had no incentive to negotiate. A MHS was what was missing at that juncture. The local power dynamics thus led to the outbreak of Angola's second civil war which commenced the month of October 1992¹³⁵.

As early as October (following the September elections), Savimbi launched a major offensive. Already in a better situation relative to the MPLA, UNITA only guaranteed an even more secure position for itself with its latest line of attack. The offensive proved to be very successful since UNITA, beyond what it already controlled, captured most of Angola's key oil facilities and much of the diamond-mining regions¹³⁶.

The MPLA had its back against the wall and had little alternatives left to choose from. Since UNITA chose war over negotiation, the MPLA although in a weak and vulnerable position, counterattacked between October 31 and November 02, 1992¹³⁷. Riot police and other FAA units managed to destroy all of UNITA residences and party offices in Luanda, leading to many deaths and the capture of most of its military and civilian cadres in the capital. By December of 1992, the

¹³³ This was in line with what happened later in the year of 1993 when Jonas Savimbi declared a unilateral ceasefire.

¹³⁴ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order* (Vancouver-Toronto: Douglas and McIntyre, 2002), 125.

¹³⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 125.

¹³⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 108.

¹³⁷ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement", 153.

MPLA had also managed to cleanse a number of Angola's main cities from UNITA supporters. Despite these conquests, which remain modest, the MPLA's stronghold remained limited to Angola's capital. UNITA on the other hand controlled most municipalities outside the capital and more importantly, the rich in natural resources towns of Uige and Negage¹³⁸. Thus, despite its efforts, the MPLA alone could not change the tide of war in order to create a MHS since UNITA was too strong of an opponent.

Provoking a MHS via the outsourcing of EO?

The situation following Angola's first free elections was such that both parties chose war over negotiations. They failed to be trapped in a painful military deadlock and as a result, UNITA still hoped to lead an attrition war. However, an important factor came into play in 1993 which would significantly alter Angola's civil war: the intervention of an external third party. The MPLA being in a precarious position vis-à-vis its counterpart decided to outsource EO's military services in January of 1993¹³⁹. In order to assess the company's efficiency, the Angolan government initially signed a 2 month contract for work in north-western Angola with EO a South African firm specialized in the supply of military services "representing the expanded model of the military contractor"¹⁴⁰.

The MPLA was first introduced to EO by Tony Buckingham, owner of Branch-Heritage Oil. EO was a PMF "founded in 1989 by Eben Barlow, a former assistant commander of the 32nd Battalion of the SADF and then the agent with the South African Civil Cooperation Bureau (CCB)"¹⁴¹. Between 1989 and 1992, EO was a faithful agent and a loyal ally of the former apartheid state. EO had shown itself to be an "adaptive military entity that mutates and reincarnates itself when the political environment changes and when it encounters challenging or hostile

¹³⁸ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- A Case Study of Private Military Involvement", 153.

¹³⁹ Khareen Pech (1999) "Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest", in *Peace, Profit or Plunder? The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, eds. Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies, 85.

¹⁴⁰ Thomas K. Adams, "The New Mercenaries and the Privatization of Conflict", *Parameters US Army College Quarterly*, (summer 1999), 106.

¹⁴¹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 102.

influences”¹⁴². EO was thus the perfect candidate for managing the MPLA’s needs since it had the experience and the ability to swiftly organize and deploy an elite fighting force on short notice. EO “was not only the most notorious example of a military provider firm in its purest form, but, as even its most fierce critics admit, one of the most effective”¹⁴³. Especially in Angola, a country with a comparatively low military capability, “using ex-SADF personnel had several advantages [...] it ensured a common training, a pre-existing hierarchy, and extensive combat experience in low intensity conflict and counter-insurgency operations”¹⁴⁴.

This however was not Angola’s first experience with a PMF. As mentioned earlier, EO itself was previously involved in Angola’s civil conflict, but ironically, was outsourced by UNITA then still supported by the US and South Africa. As a result of EO’s extensive involvement in Angola’s past affairs, this PMF had gained an insider’s view of UNITA’s military strengths and weaknesses. This knowledge later proved very useful for the MPLA who subsequently outsourced EO in its struggle against UNITA.

Since EO was substantially involved in Angola, we shall try to seek to what extent EO’s intervention actually had an impact on the country’s civil war? Did EO help generate ripeness through the crafting of a MHS, resulting in the 1994 Lusaka Accords? In order to uncover whether EO did indeed contribute to the creation of a MHS in its two year contract, we shall draw on our four indicators (territory, military, economic, and political) discussed earlier in Chapter Two.

EO’s impact on territory

In the military sphere, it appears as though the dominant perception among the political elite of both camps at the time of the 1994 Lusaka Accords was that a military stalemate did exist, hence the rationale behind their willingness in negotiating rather than prolonging the war in order to achieve their self-interested aims. However, this perception seemed absent just two years earlier in 1992 prior

¹⁴² Khareen Pech (1999) “Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest”, 84.

¹⁴³ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 101.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 103.

to EO's intervention, hence explaining their reluctance in negotiating. Was there indeed a link between EO's involvement and the MHS that generated the 1994 Lusaka negotiations?

When EO was initially introduced to the MPLA in 1993, UNITA was unquestionably in a predominant position in terms of territorial control and influence. There was indisputably no territorial parity between both rivals. Savimbi extorted many advantages from his expansion in territorial acquisitions, but his greatest strategic advantage was the control over the diamond trade, which enabled him to rebuild his army into a significant force, as it had been when UNITA worked in tandem with the South Africans. Given that natural resources were also an important source of finance for the MPLA, Sonogal the state oil company, and private oil companies such as Branch-Heritage Oil¹⁴⁵, recapturing territory rich in natural resources from UNITA was one of the MPLA's first priorities in its bid to reclaim authority over Angola¹⁴⁶. Accomplishing this would not only allow the MPLA to reinvest much needed revenue into the war effort, but would also sever UNITA's source of income used for rearmament purposes (etc.). Regaining territory from UNITA would ultimately help redress a symmetrical structure for Angola's civil war.

EO's initial contract with the MPLA was fairly limited and straightforward. Following UNITA's capture of Soyo in March 1993, an area rich in petroleum, EO's operation consisted of recapturing and defending "valuable oil tanks at Kefekwena and then do the same for the oil town of Soyo, which had been overrun by the troops of Jonas Savimbi"¹⁴⁷. These "specific fields were critical in two ways: the oil resources were an essential government source of finance and the facilities in question were owned by Sonogal [...] and Branch-Heritage Oil [...]"¹⁴⁸. EO intervened in the *Soyo Operation* primarily as a *force multiplier*. Although EO was up against thousands of UNITA troops already deployed in the oil region, EO departed for the Soyo mission with only half the numbers of personnel that had

¹⁴⁵ Branch-Heritage Oil was part of the overall business umbrella owned by Tony Buckingham, the man who personally introduced EO to the MPLA in 1993.

¹⁴⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 108.

¹⁴⁷ Khareen Pech (1999) "Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest", 85.

¹⁴⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 108.

been requested¹⁴⁹. EO with a unit of merely 80 men¹⁵⁰ nonetheless demonstrated its capabilities during its very first exercise seeing that it reclaimed in only two months the oil fields while deployed. As early as May of 1993, the siege was eventually lifted seeing that UNITA was unable to dislodge the MPLA then backed by EO. This joint MPLA/EO effort led to the alliance's first victory¹⁵¹.

The Soyo operation undertaken by EO provided the Angolan government a concrete display of the firm's true combat capabilities. The "importance of the Soyo battle was that it demonstrated that a private firm could play an integral role in a conflict, by providing military services for hire to the highest bidder"¹⁵². The direct impact EO had on this battle was confirmed by the fact that "as soon as EO's men withdrew from Soyo, UNITA retook the facility from the Angolan army [...] without the PMF, the Angolan government was back to square one"¹⁵³. The MPLA single-handedly did not possess the sufficient capabilities to protect the region from UNITA troops. It still required the assistance and support of an external party.

The capture of the Soyo region was an important territorial seize for the MPLA seeing that it was an important source of finance. This victory partially and very temporarily contributed to the creation of a stalemate since it helped generate military parity by leveling out UNITA's and MPLA's territorial acquisitions. The Soyo victory without a doubt signaled the beginning of what would soon become a territorial equilibrium between the government and its opponent. But since EO's involvement in the Soyo mission was very brief, this first triumph alone was insufficient to make the parties feel trapped in a painful deadlock. It was not yet a zero sum game since UNITA still had an upper hand concerning territorial dynamics.

Later in 1993, UNITA once more demonstrated its might by having its troops march on the Angolan capital Luanda. The "primary political objective of UNITA has always been to gain control over the state capital and rule the country,

¹⁴⁹ Khareen Pech (1999) "Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest", 85.

¹⁵⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 108.

¹⁵¹ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 156.

¹⁵² Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 108-109.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 109.

as Savimbi has always fancied”¹⁵⁴. This was a huge blow for the government since Luanda was one of the MPLA’s last strongholds and, as Angola’s capital city, was the country’s mark for universal diplomatic recognition. It was all the more crucial since it generated revenue from some 500,000 barrels of oil per day output¹⁵⁵. Yet again, UNITA confirmed its territorial advantage over its counterpart. Since UNITA was in a disproportionately strong position vis-à-vis the MPLA and since it still had faith in the idea of victory, it was in its best interest to continue fueling the conflict rather than to negotiate. The situation was not yet ripe.

Savimbi thus pursued with an aggressive country wide line of attack to claim more territory. The MPLA had to respond swiftly. With “its oil resources under threat and its back against the wall, the [MPLA] government was [again] ready to accept outside assistance – especially from forces with firsthand knowledge on UNITA”¹⁵⁶. In light of the “continuing losses suffered by the FAA, EO was offered a \$40 million, one year contract in September 1993 to help train the state army and direct front-line operations”¹⁵⁷. An important deal was struck whereby SONANGOL, the state-owned oil entity, would partially finance EO’s “support operations and, in turn, the project leaders of EO would work closely with their former enemy, the *Forças Armadas Angolanas* (FAA) and its military chief, General Joao de Matos”¹⁵⁸. EO organized and geared up for a more systematic and comprehensive mission than its previous operations in Soyo. They “recruited more carefully and established a highly successful support operation in Angola that enabled the FAA government forces to claim a decisive military victory in late 1994”¹⁵⁹.

With “tactical assistance from Executive Outcomes air assets, that struck UNITA troop concentrations and launched raids all over the countryside, the joint EO/FAA force became the spearhead of a government counter-offensive”¹⁶⁰. Using

¹⁵⁴ Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of ‘SavimbiLand’? The Rise and Decline of UNITA’s ‘State-Within-a-State’ in Angola*, 5.

¹⁵⁵ Sean Cleary (1999) “Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement”, 159.

¹⁵⁶ Khareen Pech (1999) “Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest”, 86.

¹⁵⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

¹⁵⁸ Khareen Pech (1999) “Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest”, 86.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁶⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

“special forces reconnaissance teams and electronic intelligence, EO would locate UNITA units and headquarters in and around Angola”¹⁶¹. Due to EO’s intervention and its heavy reliance on diverse sources of intelligence, UNITA became increasingly exposed since it could no longer retreat to its traditional rural refuge for resting ground. This proved to be a successful mission since the EO/FAA coalition regained control over most of Angola’s major cities. EO’s actions drove UNITA out of its military bases in the northwest and cut its access to arms and food supplies. The joint EO/FAA operations successfully secured Angola’s entire oil region and much of its diamond producing areas. What’s more is that “these victories solidified the government’s ability to make arms purchases and payments abroad, key to rebuilding the rest of its army”¹⁶². At this juncture, UNITA had become vulnerable and virtually defenseless as it was cut off from most of its sources of supply and had no quarters left to retreat to.

EO’s truly decisive triumph occurred only in “June 1994 when the EO-trained Angolan 16th Brigade triumphed over a strong UNITA force at N’taladonda, a strategic town outside Luanda”¹⁶³. N’taladonda was the “newly constituted brigade’s first battle; with joint EO-FAA planning it suffered only four casualties”¹⁶⁴. EO personnel helped “recapture the diamond areas of Cafunfo in mid-July 1994 and the oil installations at Soyo [once again] by November, as well as Uige”¹⁶⁵. EO’s successes were unprecedented. At no other time in history had the FAA been so successful in combating the rebel insurgency. EO’s assistance helped the MPLA exploit UNITA’s weaknesses on the battlefield and gain an advantageous edge over the insurgency.

Since EO’s work was irrefutably efficient and central in changing the tides of war, the MPLA signed a second contract with EO in September of 1994. In an unrelenting and consistent show of competency, EO subsequently helped the

¹⁶¹ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 129.

¹⁶² Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

¹⁶³ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States* (Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 199.

¹⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 199.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 199.

MPLA gain control over the strategic town of Huambo¹⁶⁶. Huambo fell to government forces when Savimbi eventually abandoned the city in November of 1994¹⁶⁷. UNITA was forced to give up its traditional stronghold without a fight.

This series of stunning and rapid victories was a huge blow to UNITA's war effort since it caught Savimbi off guard. The regions reclaimed by the MPLA were Savimbi's key financial assets and having to lose them was very costly. It was all the more painful since Savimbi was already suffering the ramifications of a UN imposed arms blockade (applied to UNITA and lifted on the MPLA)¹⁶⁸. The effect was thus amplified since these regions were one of UNITA's last sources of revenue. Other sources of revenue such as Zaire's contributions and other channels of illicit and covert assistance were becoming insufficient¹⁶⁹. The MPLA, with EO support, had finally become a worthy opponent.

A comparison between the map of September 1993¹⁷⁰ and the one of February 1995¹⁷¹ clearly reveals the territorial expansion the MPLA accomplished during EO's involvement. Although the areas under UNITA's control in 1993 were limited to the south eastern region bordering Zambia and Namibia, the areas of UNITA's operations extended country wide (with the exception of regions surrounding Luanda and Lubango) and included the strategic regions of Cabinda, Soyo, N'dalatando and Huambo¹⁷². In contrast, the map of 1995 demonstrates that the MPLA gained predominant control over much of the territory where UNITA had previously held important operations. The MPLA, assisted by EO, had come to hold control over the entire coastal region, ranging from Cabinda to the Namibian border¹⁷³. By November 1994, UNITA's territorial control was reduced to merely 40 percent of the country, in stark contrast to the 70-80 percent it controlled prior to EO's involvement.

¹⁶⁶ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 161.

¹⁶⁷ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 130.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁷⁰ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 160.

¹⁷¹ *Ibid.*, 162.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 160.

¹⁷³ *Ibid.*, 162.

But the joint MPLA/EO partnership did more than solely recapture territory in a random manner. EO had systematically sketched out a comprehensive plan for recapturing specific targeted areas. The wide-ranging formula of targeting strategic sites would contribute to the success of the MPLA's overall war effort. Planned with much precision, EO's plan focused on recapturing strategic sites such as oil and mining regions, key infrastructures (towns with key ports around Soyo, Cabinda and Luanda etc.), and military bases (chase UNITA from their military bases via electronic intelligence and special forces reconnaissance teams).

Although EO largely contributed to the MPLA's success in many ways, it however failed to flawlessly guard Angola's porous borders, a key component in the Angolan civil war. Although EO had located UNITA units in and around Angola, and although there are allegations while vehemently denied by EO that the PMF had personnel deployed in Zaire¹⁷⁴, there is still enough information to suggest that UNITA continued to purchase arms and sell diamonds through illicit trade corridors running into the capital of Kinshasa (etc.)¹⁷⁵. Borders should thus have been an important priority to consider, especially since the UN arms embargo prevented any neighboring country from selling arms to UNITA. Despite not having secured Angola's borders, EO still altered Angola's map by assisting the MPLA in taking control over much of the country's strategic sites.

The map of 1995 partly points to the symmetrical structure the Angolan civil war had taken on for the Lusaka Accords. Although the joint EO/FAA effort did not manage to annihilate UNITA from all Angolan territory, it definitely did manage to thwart UNITA's plans for a unilateral victory by inhibiting its territorial predominance and by preventing UNITA from using Angolan territory as a base for operations against the government. A rough symmetry between the MPLA and UNITA in terms of territorial acquisitions had undeniably emerged as a result of EO's presence.

¹⁷⁴ Executive Outcomes, EO Press Release, "EO's Alleged Involvement in Zaire", available at. <<http://web.archive.org/web/www.eo.com>> (page consulted January 2006).

¹⁷⁵ Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola*, 12.

EO and military capabilities

We shall proceed by drawing on our military indicator in order to further examine the effect private military intervention had on the development of a MHS in Angola. In terms of troop morale, UNITA and the MPLA were certainly not in a situation of military parity in the year of 1992. The fact that UNITA continued to operate for over two decades of resistance confirmed their strength, power, resilience and morale. Not only did UNITA's military wing enjoy up to several thousand soldiers by 1993 but it also managed to maintain a steady growth¹⁷⁶. Savimbi's military faction continued to rapidly expand because he persistently enlisted additional recruits into UNITA's military ranks from the territorial expansion he had recently acquired. At no other time in Angolan history had the rebel group acquired so much territory in so little time. Being part of UNITA's armed faction represented glory and pride. It also ensured future possibilities and benefits that the MPLA's military division could not offer. UNITA's military morale was at its highest. Its resolve persevered even when the US, a particularly influential ally, stopped providing UNITA with military assistance due to the 1991 Bicesse Accords. This latest development, although significant, did not prove detrimental to UNITA's war aims because Savimbi still managed to rely on weapons stockpiled prior to the 1991 peace agreement. His faction was still equipped with heavy artillery and missile systems, as well as armored vehicles. Therefore, UNITA was in a fairly superior position vis-à-vis its counterpart in 1992 in terms of military indicators.

The MPLA was in a very different situation. Government forces were literally on the verge of defeat in September of 1993¹⁷⁷. Military morale was soaring among the ranks of FAA units. After 20 years of rebel resilience, not only did Angola's military personnel perceive the elimination of UNITA guerillas as highly unlikely, they also believed that UNITA had the means to lead an attrition war. Serving time in the Angolan armed forces had lost its glamour and glitter. It

¹⁷⁶ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 127.

¹⁷⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

became abundantly clear that UNITA, confident and optimistic, would escalate the war until attaining unilateral victory if the MPLA and the FAA did nothing to alter the asymmetrical structure of the war.

However unanticipated and unforeseen, the government managed to alter the balance in military power as of mid-1993. Information and data suggests that EO had an impact as its arrival clearly coincided with the exact turning point of the war. The MPLA, although not predominant, had finally become in 1994 a challenging opponent to UNITA who controlled over 70% to 80% of the country's territory just two years earlier. EO enhanced the FAA's raw military capability by providing sound military and tactical advice, training and logistical supports¹⁷⁸. All things being interrelated, these technical attributes would later contribute to an increase in FAA morale.

EO was initially charged to train the FAA's newly reestablished 16th Brigade, a brigade which ironically was virtually destroyed by the SADF¹⁷⁹ in the 1980s¹⁸⁰. Additional local units trained by EO employed new tactics to strike at UNITA troop concentrations. At one of EO's special operations training bases, "EO personnel instructed the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) in such fields as motorized infantry, artillery, engineering, signals, and medical support, as well as sabotage and reconnaissance"¹⁸¹. As for advising, EO had a strong influence on FAA troops as well. The PMF "took up an advisory role with the high command of the Angolan army to help steer its operations"¹⁸². EO advised the Angolan government on everything from strategies to tactics, thus helping the MPLA sketch out a comprehensive plan of attack and lay out a clear contingency plan. EO's plan "for the campaign was based on well-practiced counter-insurgency strategies that had been perfected in Rhodesia, Mozambique, and Namibia"¹⁸³. EO, with years of

¹⁷⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

¹⁷⁹ EO's personnel had initially worked to destroy the government's forces during the Cold War. EO's personnel worked for both camps (UNITA and the government) but at very different time periods. No contract was ever broken nor has EO quit a case or renounce a client/contract for the next highest bidder.

¹⁸⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

¹⁸¹ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 199.

¹⁸² James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 128.

¹⁸³ *Ibid.*, 129.

experience and knowledge in warfare, assisted the MPLA in drawing a clear picture of UNITA's strengths and weaknesses.

Although training and advising were two core components of EO's role, its tasks were not restricted to these two features. This PMF also served as a force multiplier, "a small group whose specialized skills enhance the overall effectiveness of a much larger force"¹⁸⁴. As such, these South African defense contractors fought alongside the FAA in numerous battles. Although they deployed "units that are much smaller in terms of manpower relative to both their adversaries and major UN military forces, their ability to project force rests in their high level of training, experience, and overall battlefield skill"¹⁸⁵. The 16th Brigade, being the MPLA's ground force, had EO personnel "inserted into all levels of the formation's command structure"¹⁸⁶. EO-trained "soldiers proved instrumental in seizing N'taladonda, and EO personnel helped recapture the diamond areas of Cafunfo in mid-July 1994 and the oil installations at Soyo by November, as well as Uige"¹⁸⁷. EO's contribution was so successful due to the fact that they exploited UNITA's weaknesses by employing previously unseen tactics in the Angolan theatre of war. These included "night fighting, joint air-land assaults, and long-range strike missions"¹⁸⁸. With little experience in these new styles of warfare and with little or no set protocol for these missions, UNITA was extremely powerless.

The EO/MPLA partnership prevailed thanks to several factors but two military capabilities in particular contributed to their success: discipline and mobility. These two features would be their greatest assets. EO had better quality personnel and the fact that EO personnel directly intervened alongside the FAA on the field did indeed alter the FAA's military capabilities. EO defense contractors were "handpicked from a pool of highly trained combat veterans, an especially large pool since post-Cold War demobilizations"¹⁸⁹. A significant number of them

¹⁸⁴ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 199.

¹⁸⁵ Scott Fitzsimmons, "Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation", *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8 (no. 1) (2006), 3.

¹⁸⁶ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 128.

¹⁸⁷ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 199.

¹⁸⁸ Scott Fitzsimmons, "Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation", 6.

¹⁸⁹ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 192.

came from “very professional Western units [and proven South African combat specialists] in which political responsibility and military capabilities are cardinal principles”¹⁹⁰. EO employed soldiers from three of the most elite units of the “Apartheid-era South African Defense Forces (SADF) [...] most were drawn from the disbanded 32nd Battalion”¹⁹¹. EO personnel¹⁹² exploited the military capabilities they had gained during their military careers to prop up the existing authority in Angola. PMF researcher A.J. Venter notes that any defense contractor who “stepped out of line was put on the next plane back home, policy that reflected the reality of there was little room for mistakes when attempting to compel 38,000 active duty UNITA personnel to stop fighting”¹⁹³. UNITA was thus pitted against a professional fighting force and had to compete against the military capabilities of elite fighting units.

EO also had better quality combat equipment. In terms of mobility, EO had prepared for the MPLA to have at their disposal all the material needed to effectively battle UNITA. EO combat units focused on a classic campaign of find, fix and destroy¹⁹⁴. They benefited from a pan-African communication network which enabled them to circumvent logistical hurdles inherent in conducting military operations in Africa¹⁹⁵. Aircraft for transferring personnel and supplies and an established procurement infrastructure for dispensing equipment and

¹⁹⁰ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 192.

¹⁹¹ Scott Fitzsimmons, “Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation”, 3.

¹⁹² The argument put forward in this context may very well be debatable. The thorough and rigorous use of force employed by personnel of this nature (namely as the personnel from SADF’s 32nd Battalion have been known to be) can in certain circumstances be construed and appreciated as a necessary exercise in the face of violent opponents (as the *Brahimi Report* condones the use of force when required). The use of force, which undeniably causes human casualties such as the NATO bombing of Serb positions in Bosnia in 1995 (as mentioned in Chapter *Ripeness Theory*), may in certain cases (when necessary) prevent future bloodshed and further human casualties. Nevertheless, the main point remains that PMFs enjoy the ‘membership’ of numerous high ranking officials (officials who can implement the use of force in a more effective manner) which provide field operations with quality experience and expertise.

¹⁹³ Venter, Al J. (2000) *Privatizing War* (London, UK: Sandline International, 2000) as cited in Scott Fitzsimmons, “Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation”, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8 (no.1) (2006), 6.

¹⁹⁴ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 129.

¹⁹⁵ Khareen Pech (1999) “Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest”, 89.

consumables were readily available¹⁹⁶. EO focused on buying aircraft for the upcoming operations. Its acquisitions included “Mi-24 Hind-D helicopters gunships purchased from the Ukraine, M1-17 Hip medium transport helicopters, MIG-23 fighter jets, L-39 propeller-driven ground-attack aircraft, and even two Boeing 727s for logistics shipments”¹⁹⁷. Everyone of their men:

was mounted, allowing them to move very quickly and appear anywhere on the battlefield while the enemies were forced to march on foot. For EO, its aircraft would accomplish the same aim. While UNITA was forced to march for days in the bush, EO could cover the same distance in minutes. EO-led squads would [also] appear at the points with superior weapons and discipline. Together, these features would make EO unbeatable¹⁹⁸.

Much of EO’s success has indeed been attributed to the “PMC’s surprise long-range helicopter assaults deep within UNITA controlled territory supported by ground attack aircraft and armored ground vehicles”¹⁹⁹. These equipment purchases allowed EO to conduct extremely mobile attacks and to deploy rapidly in any region of Angola. EO’s involvement, in terms of training, advising and combating, thus positively helped boost the FAA’s military morale while acquiring more territory and control in Angola.

The information above definitely sheds light on the extent that EO helped in altering the balance in military capabilities. Defense “strategists generally credit EO with greatly assisting the MPLA to turn back the resurgent UNITA”²⁰⁰. There are even UNITA combatants who addressed the issue of EO’s interference. During the conflict with EO, one UNITA soldier even stated:

We used to know we could sleep well at night. In this recent war, new tactics meant that fighting continued at night and that light infantry units led by these Executive Outcomes guys would come deep behind our lines. We could no longer rest. It weakened us very

¹⁹⁶ Khareen Pech (1999) “Chapter 5: Executive Outcomes-A Corporate Conquest”, 89.

¹⁹⁷ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 128.

¹⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 129.

¹⁹⁹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, as cited in Scott Fitzsimmons, “Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation”, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8 (no.1) (2006), 11.

²⁰⁰ Elizabeth Rubin, “An Army of Their Own”, *Harper’s*, February 1997, 45 as cited in Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States* (Boulder/London: Lynne Rienner, 2001), 199.

much. It is the new tactics in which they trained the FAA [...] that made the difference. They introduced a new style of warfare in Angola. We are not used to this²⁰¹.

Some even claim that EO performed a peace-enforcing function in Angola by enhancing the military capability of one camp in order to alter the military tide of the conflict²⁰². Indeed, a realist perspective of conflict management theory would point to “empirical evidence that suggests that the majority of intra-state conflicts have been resolved by force [...]”²⁰³.

EO once again helped in partially redressing the symmetrical structure of the war by creating military parity between the warring sides. Savimbi’s drive to win a final victory was fading²⁰⁴. The boost in FAA morale and the increase in UNITA casualties led each of the parties to sign the Lusaka Protocols, which at that point in time ended Angola’s protracted civil war. A formerly ignored peace accord had finally been approved and signed as a result of EO’s intervention. The “subsequent elections in Angola could also be considered a direct result of the successful military campaign EO had led”²⁰⁵. Hence, propping up the MPLA’s military capabilities partially contributed to altering the balance in military power in Angola.

EO and economic costs

We shall now consider the effect EO had on the war’s economic dynamics. As stated previously, UNITA was by and large in a predominant position vis-à-vis its counterpart in 1992. However, two consistent years of war escalation between 1992 and 1994 gravely affected UNITA’s economic resources, hence rendering its

²⁰¹ Human Rights Watch, “Between War and Peace: Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses since the Lusaka Protocol” (New York, NY: Human Rights Watch, 1996), 10, available at: <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1996/Angola.htm>> (accessed on January 13, 2004) as cited in Scott Fitzsimmons, “Dogs of Peace: A Potential Role for Private Military Companies in Peace Implementation”, *Journal of Military and Strategic Studies* 8 (no.1) (2006), 7.

²⁰² Damian Lilly, “The Privatization of Security and Peacebuilding: a framework for action”, *International Alert* (International Alert, London: September 2000), 21.

²⁰³ *Ibid.*, 21.

²⁰⁴ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 129.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, 131.

war effort increasingly difficult to sustain. Although the financial repercussions were very costly for the MPLA, it cannot be said that the escalation of war which took place during EO's involvement was inconsequential for UNITA. It is true that the mere survival of a rebel insurgency, in this case for over 20 years, is often viewed as a victory in itself²⁰⁶. The faction's resilience is confirmed by UNITA's ability in undermining state authority for such a long period of time and by UNITA's success in acquiring 80% of Angola's territory by 1992. However, the pace and intensity of EO's successes and concrete accomplishments in just two years put the mere future and survival of UNITA into question.

UNITA came to suffer hard blows following EO's involvement. Logically, UNITA's survival was closely linked to its economic lifeline, and its economic lifeline was closely linked to the territory it possessed. During the two years of EO involvement, Savimbi's faction lost most of its newly acquired territory and as a result the revenue that could be extracted from it. EO had blocked UNITA's access to most of these areas. The loss of the regions of N'dalatondo, Cabinda, Soyo and Huambo were particularly huge blows to UNITA's revenue not only because they represented a colossal source of income but more importantly, because they represented one of UNITA's last sources of revenue, hence rendering them vital for the survival of UNITA²⁰⁷. Savimbi's faction was exceptionally dependent on Angola's natural resources for revenue since the UN had lifted sanctions on the MPLA and not on UNITA (the UN Security Council banned the sale of weapons and petroleum to UNITA under Resolution 864 on 15 September 1993)²⁰⁸. UNITA had very little alternatives left. It was thus forced to almost exclusively rely on Zaire's illicit trade routes for restocking and rearmament purposes, which after a while became inadequate for UNITA's war effort, even for maintaining a basic

²⁰⁶ Henry A. Kissinger, "The Viet Nam Negotiations", *Foreign Affairs* 47 (no. 2) (January 1969), 214 as cited in I. William Zartman, *Elusive Peace. Negotiating an End to Civil Wars* (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 1995), 9.

²⁰⁷ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 129-130.

²⁰⁸ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 128 and Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola* (Prepared for the 'States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era' Workshop at the University of Toronto, 19-20 October 2001). Toronto: University of Toronto, 11.

level of administration and infrastructure. Zaire's contributions alone had become insufficient for sustaining UNITA's war effort²⁰⁹. Although figures on UNITA's economic standing are not provided due to methodological problems associated with the study of rebel movements²¹⁰, it is still evident that EO had indeed severed UNITA's economic base. This de facto propped up the MPLA.

The gap in power and supremacy between UNITA and the MPLA was incrementally diminishing as UNITA came to suffer from economic breakdown. However, the two years of war escalation which allowed the MPLA to reach rough parity with its counterpart came at a high price for the government as well. The intensification of the conflict between 1992 and 1994 proved very costly for the MPLA who witnessed among other things Angola's economy plunder.

If one takes figures of Angola's GDP (\$ million), one notices a fall from 1992 to 1994, the most intense years of Angola's civil war, which coincide with EO's involvement. While in 1991 the country's GDP was at 12 127, it fell to 8 702 in 1992, then to 6 645 in 1993 to finally 4 706 in 1994²¹¹. Moreover, Angola's external debt (% of GDP and which includes some oil company debt) more than doubled in just two years. In 1991, the external debt was at 67,3, then jumped to 106,1 in 1992, then to 149,7 in 1993, to finally 233,8 in 1994²¹². Furthermore, the composition of government spending (% of GDP) had also been modified. While government defense spending was at 8% in 1991, it fell to 6% in 1992, only to climb back to 15% in 1993 to then skyrocket to 20% in 1994²¹³. The government's new spending priorities clearly had an impact on Angola's gross domestic savings since they fell from 18% of Angola's GDP in 1991, to 13% in 1992 to finally an

²⁰⁹ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 130.

²¹⁰ The "nature of the activities raises special methodological problems that account, in part, for the relative dearth of empirical studies. Connections to the criminal 'underworld' shroud war economies in a secrecy that hinders efforts to obtain tangible evidence of theoretical claims. The context of civil wars, with the attending disruption of normal life, makes data collection arduous and research in the field hazardous". Refer notably to Marie-Joëlle Zahar, "Is All the News Bad News for Peace? Economic agendas in the Lebanese civil war" *International Journal*, Winter 2000-2001, 116.

²¹¹ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 164.

²¹² *Ibid.*, 164.

²¹³ *Ibid.*, 165.

all-time low of 10% in 1994²¹⁴. And on top of it all, EO's contract itself was worth US \$40M a year, costing the MPLA a total sum of US \$60M for its services²¹⁵. Therefore, the period between 1992 and 1994 was very costly for the government as well in terms of economic figures.

However, putting these figures in context nonetheless helps to highlight the efficient nature of EO's engagement. While EO's price tag may seem an "extravagant expense at first glance, it must be noted that the United Nations was spending roughly \$1 million a day to maintain its UNAVEM II observer force in Angola at the same time"²¹⁶. Besides, half of EO's fees were intended for arms purchases which later proved very useful for the MPLA while the other half was intended for EO expenses²¹⁷. The MPLA purchased tanks, armed personnel carriers, and other heavy weaponry to enable the FAA to attack UNITA installations. For the MPLA, "it was money well spent because EO helped to halt UNITA's military drive"²¹⁸. Although EO's intervention did come at a high price (the effect the intensification of the war had on the Angolan economy), it did indeed allow the government to re-appropriate territories rich in natural resources, and hence contributed to changing the tide of war. EO's fee was small relative to the revenue the MPLA could extract from areas such as the Soyo region. As some say, the war effort cost the government the next three to seven years of earnings from oil to its industry. This however is minute considering the fact that the government was on the verge of total defeat prior to EO's arrival, and risked losing all of its oil assets prior to EO intervention.

All we have said sheds light on the fact that although not quite in equal manners, the war was costly for both the MPLA and UNITA. However, EO and the resulting escalation of the war particularly severed UNITA's economic base, thus propping up the MPLA. A stalemate, painful to both the MPLA and UNITA, had indeed developed and was in part due to economic factors.

²¹⁴ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 165.

²¹⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 128.

²¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 128.

²¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 128.

²¹⁸ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 199.

EO and political costs

We shall now examine the effect EO had in Angola by considering the political factors that contributed to the creation of a stalemate. In terms of political power, the MPLA and UNITA were obviously not in similar situations in 1992 due to their political status. While the MPLA had legitimate authority over Angola due to international recognition subsequent to the 1992 elections, UNITA had no official standing since it was considered a resistance movement. However, as is often the case with rebel movements, the sheer existence of UNITA clearly illustrated the government's political inability on the ground. This rendered it difficult for the MPLA to consolidate its power across all regions of Angola. UNITA enjoyed significant support from numerous regions and ethnic ties, including that of Angola's largest ethnic group, the Ovimbundu²¹⁹.

While the MPLA regime, being Angola's sovereign government, enjoyed judicial recognition, UNITA successfully:

carved out and administered an ever-changing portion of the country referred to by some as 'Savimbiland'. Savimbiland, of course, is not a juridical state, but it is consistent with Spears' definition of a state-within-a-state in which UNITA has demonstrated, to varying degrees, the extension of force, territory, national identity, and internal legitimacy, capacity to generate revenue and.... administration and infrastructure²²⁰.

Savimbiland began as a "small section of territory in the far south-eastern corner of the country surrounding the UNITA's base camp in Jamba and grew to approximately 70 to 80 percent of the country's land mass in the early 1990s"²²¹. Unlike the aims of certain insurgencies in other civil wars, UNITA never envisioned or aspired to create Savimbiland as an independent state. It was never established in the hopes of being converted into a separate or autonomous state²²².

²¹⁹ Sean Cleary (1999) "Chapter 8: Angola- a case study of private military involvement", 143.

²²⁰ Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola*, 2-3 as cited in Ian Spears, "States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era", Introductory Paper prepared for the States Within States Workshop at the University of Toronto, (19-20 October 2001), 5.

²²¹ *Ibid.*, 5.

²²² *Ibid.*, 5.

Savimbi's aim was not secession, for the creation of a separate state on southern Angola "would have left him with little more than a great, barren tract of bush [...] rather, his intention was to ensure that his adversaries could never forget his demand to enter the kraal in Luanda in triumph"²²³. With such a defiant temperament and with such extensive regional influence, Savimbi was definitely a considerable challenge to the MPLA's national authority. Although UNITA did not benefit from international recognition, it still did possess local authority and support within *Savimbiland*, civilian support often being a key component in waging and winning a war.

As has been demonstrated, Savimbi, and de facto Savimbiland, generated "revenues in order to sustain UNITA's war efforts, ranging from patron states to internal sources in the form of taxation to lucrative proceeds from diamond exports"²²⁴. These sources of revenue have enabled "UNITA to establish a basic level of administration and infrastructure within Savimbiland, such as hospitals, schools, airstrips, a radio station, a newspaper, and farms"²²⁵. UNITA's investment in Savimbiland's infrastructures secured Savimbi local civilian support. The fact that the head of UNITA reinvested assets into local communities ensured mass support for the cult leader and his war against the Angolan government who failed to provide basic services to pockets of Angola's populace. However, as established earlier, UNITA had come to lose much of its sources of revenue at the time of EO's intervention. The combination of UN sanctions and the loss of territory rich in natural resources gravely hindered UNITA's war efforts. No longer having the means to reinvest assets in Savimbiland, UNITA grew increasingly desperate and turned to other methods for survival. These latter means, often brutal, inevitably came to the detriment of local support.

Even though Savimbi's track record for human rights was never very good, a shift from old guerilla warfare to terror tactics was noticeable in the years of war

²²³ Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola*, 2-3 as cited in Ian Spears, "States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-Cold War Era", Introductory Paper prepared for the States Within States Workshop at the University of Toronto, (19-20 October 2001), 5.

²²⁴ *Ibid.*, 3.

²²⁵ *Ibid.*, 3.

escalation from 1992 to 1993²²⁶. Due to EO's intervention which hampered UNITA's source of income, the rebel faction was forced to start looting, among other things, for survival (seizing arms, food, etc.). Due to military and logistics reasons, UNITA's military units started to act in a more purely terrorist manner. Having lost much of its territorial assets to the MPLA, UNITA had to steal to survive.

Many of UNITA's brutal attacks on unarmed peasants and humanitarian relief workers have been carefully documented by human rights organizations and reporters such as New York Times' Kenneth Noble²²⁷. Even Fred Bridgland²²⁸, a conservative British journalist who wrote a rather sympathetic biography of Savimbi and who had until 1989 been a staunch supporter of UNITA, stated that Savimbi had committed several human rights abuses²²⁹. For example, while battling to capture the second city, Huambo, UNITA shelled the area and a medical delegation sponsored by the United Church of Christ's for racial justice, despite a majority of its residents having granted support for UNITA during the elections²³⁰. The town finally fell to rebels, at a cost of many civilian casualties. This act of terror, especially having been conducted in a town where traditional support was relatively strong, gravely damaged UNITA's image amongst civilians.

There were also frequent reports of violations of the laws of war, including executions of captured soldiers and cases of children forced to fight on the war front²³¹. UNITA is responsible for gross human rights abuses, including executions

²²⁶ Human Rights Watch, Background, September 1, 1999 Report, "Angola Unravels: The Rise and Fall of the Lusaka Peace Process", available at. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1999/angola/Ang1998-03.htm#P439_33860> (page consulted April 2006).

²²⁷ Kenneth B. Noble (1992) "Cacucaco Journal; 'This is our Land' Has Angola Astir", *The New York Times* (August 29, 1992).

²²⁸ Fred Bridgland, *Jonas Savimbi: A Key to Africa* (New York: Paragon House, 1987).

²²⁹ Human Rights Watch, Publications, "Angola", available at. <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1989/WR89/Angola.htm>> copyright 2006 (page consulted April 2006).

²³⁰ Human Rights Watch, Publications, "Angola", available at. <<http://www.hrw.org/reports/1989/WR89/Angola.htm>> copyright 2006 (page consulted April 2006).

²³¹ Human Rights Watch, April 29, 2003 Press Release, "Child Soldiers Forgotten in Angola", available at. <<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2003/04/29/angola5822.htm>> copyright 2006 (page consulted

of civilians and other deliberate and arbitrary killings. A major event which received much public attention occurred near Quipungo (Huila), when UNITA attacked a train on May 27, 1993 in which hundreds of people were killed and several hundred injured. Many landmines have also been deliberately planted on Angolan terrain, destroying agriculture and crops and forcing Angolan civilians to flee their homes²³².

But civilians were not UNITA's only targets. Humanitarian efforts were also hampered by the war. Several relief flights were hit by UNITA fire. In April 1993, a World Food Program aircraft was shot down by UNITA in eastern Angola. UNITA attempted to deny the delivery of food aid to isolated government towns in order to capture the food supplies for its own men. Frequent suspensions of relief flights were the norm because of UNITA attacks. Moreover, frequent kidnappings and unlawful arrests were common, just like Alfredo Afonso, a UN World Food Program official based in Huambo, was arrested by UNITA in July 1994²³³. These tactics of intimidation cost UNITA significant local civilian support. A popular Angolan slogan which was posted country wide was self explanatory: "The MPLA steals, UNITA kills". UNITA could no longer depend on civilian support as it previously could. These means would come to cost them dearly in terms of political support.

But UNITA was not the only one suffering from the political costs of war between 1992 and 1994. The government experienced painful political ramifications as the war inflicted major political costs on the MPLA during EO's involvement. The story for the government was however very different since the MPLA was officially in charge of the country ever since Angola declared independence from Portugal in 1975. With UNITA on a major line of attack and

April 2006) and Human Rights Watch, January 01, 1996, "Children in Combat", available at.

<<http://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/c/crd/general961.pdf>> (page consulted February 2006).

²³² Human Rights Watch, August 2006, "Landmines Update", and August 2000, "Angola: Landmine Monitor Report 2000", available at.

<http://hrw.org/doc/?t=africa_pub&c=angola> (page consulted April 2006).

²³³ Amnesty International, "Angola: Assault on the right to life", available at.

<<http://www.amnestyusa.org/countries/angola/document.do?id=F983F2876F061674802569A60060384B>> (page consulted November 2005).

with the involvement of a private military firm, the conflict rapidly intensified to previously unseen levels. Between October of 1992 and November of 1994, there were more dead Angolans than in the 16 years of conflict prior to 1991. It is estimated that:

300,000 Angolans-3 percent of the population, died in the fighting-probably more than in the preceding sixteen years of war. The UN reported that as many as 1,000 people were dying daily from May to October 1993 from the conflict, starvation, and disease-more than in any other conflict in the world at the time²³⁴.

Fighting was particularly fierce in the last two months of the war, when tens of thousands of civilians were said to have been killed. Thousands of Angolans, many of them women and children, died in the besieged cities of Kuito and Huambo and in rural areas. Some died of hunger, some were killed in cross-fire, some were blown up by land-mines. Both the government and UNITA shelled and bombed predominantly civilian areas, killing thousands. In Kuito alone, a city almost totally destroyed by bombing, tens of thousands of people are said to have died during an 18-month siege by UNITA. Both parties blatantly disregarded international humanitarian law and explicitly used food aid as a weapon. Humanitarian aid agencies were attacked by both sides and both the government and UNITA prevented delivery of food to areas controlled by the other side²³⁵.

Although it was UNITA who reinstated the war because of its failure to accept the 1992 electoral results, and although the MPLA only outsourced EO's services when it found itself in a position of extreme weakness, the government was still criticized for having employed a PMF making use of more sophisticated and lethal arms. Many blamed much of the war's detrimental effects, such as the amount of civilian loss, on the use of these new lethal weapons, imported by the FAA under the advisement of EO. The war had dire consequences on civilian life. The number of displaced individuals had speedily increased by June 1993. Commercial food imports into Luanda nearly came to a standstill due to the lack of

²³⁴ Human Rights Watch, "Angola: Between War and Peace-arms trade and human rights abuses since the Lusaka Protocol", *Refugee Survey Quarterly* 15 (no. 2), (February 1996), 37.

²³⁵ Human Rights Watch, "Angola: Between War and Peace-arms trade and human rights abuses since the Lusaka Protocol".

foreign exchange, forcing the government to spend money on armaments. A UN World Food Program report suggested that an important proportion of Angola's harvest would rot due to disruption caused by the fighting, and estimated that 1.9 million conflict-and drought-affected individuals would need 337,000 tons of food assistance²³⁶. The MPLA was thus perceived as weak since it was unable to ensure security to Angola's population. The MPLA, although stronger than prior to EO's intervention, was still bearing the consequences of the war escalation. The successes of the MPLA could be directly attributed to EO's involvement²³⁷. Although both the MPLA and UNITA were in a situation of rough parity, they were both bearing the political costs associated with the war. They had reached a painful deadlock, a situation no longer viable for either of them.

Conclusion

After having studied the case of Angola, it is now abundantly clear that there was indeed a MHS in 1994 which subsequently led to the Lusaka Accords. In Angola 1994, there was rough parity between both opponents, both were moving toward equality, and both found themselves in a painful deadlock. These statements have been demonstrated via the use of our four indicators. The four indicators used for the purpose of the Angolan case study are clearly interrelated and are all involved in a dynamic interaction. For example, it is clear that a loss in territory obviously has repercussions on economic indicators, and vice versa. The modifications witnessed in all four indicators have jointly contributed to a stalemate whereby Angola's civil war took on a symmetrical structure in 1994. The MHS was obviously the combined impact on all four levels: territory, military, economy, and politics.

It is also abundantly clear that EO had a significant role, albeit not exclusive, in the creation of the MHS. Many experts of the Angolan civil war

²³⁶ Ibid.

²³⁷ Ibid., 53.

directly attribute the MPLA's success to EO's involvement²³⁸. Therefore, the hypothesis asserting that EO contributed to the creation of ripeness by way of generating a MHS in its two year contract between 1992 and 1994 has been confirmed.

While UNITA was in a predominantly superior position in 1992 in terms of territorial acquisitions, military capabilities, economic sources of finance, and political leverage, the situation quickly changed subsequent to EO's intervention. EO, outsourced by the MPLA, succeeded in altering the balance of power. By exploiting UNITA's weaknesses, EO managed to recapture most of UNITA's territorial acquisitions, managed to surpass UNITA's military capabilities by using innovative strategies and tactics, managed to sever UNITA's source of income, and finally, managed to inflict political costs making civilians turn against UNITA. Savimbi's faction was no longer disproportionately strong vis-à-vis the MPLA. Thanks to the government's partnership with EO, the MPLA, much stronger, was able to defend itself and retaliate against its opponent. However, even with EO's assistance, the MPLA still did not foresee a rapid defeat of UNITA as likely. The government knew that it could not rapidly or fully defeat the opposition, hence making negotiations more attractive (given the costs which induced war weariness). There no longer appeared to be any predominant player in the Angolan civil war.

After two years of rapid and intense escalation, the conflict appeared to reach a plateau whereby both players were trapped in a painful deadlock. Both parties had thus reached a painful impasse by 1994 whereby neither side could win. By redressing the conflict's symmetrical structure, EO helped create a MHS. This MHS hence led to a ripe moment when the Lusaka Accords took place. The fact that neither side predominated on the battlefield created a stalemate that stimulated Angola's warring sides to seek a negotiated settlement.

By late 1994, military advances by the government forced UNITA to lose leverage and make significant concessions in the Lusaka peace talks (accept

²³⁸ Human Rights Watch, "Angola: Between War and Peace-arms trade and human rights abuses since the Lusaka Protocol", 53.

proposals for national reconciliation). UNITA hence pledged to sign the protocol in order to halt the government's newly witnessed military gains. The Lusaka Protocol was initialed by the Angolan government and UNITA on October 31, 1994. The joint MPLA/EO operation was indeed successful and decisive in the course of the civil war since UNITA rebels, "beaten back and stunned by the new tactics, which included deep penetrations air-ground assaults and night attacks never used before in the conflict, agreed to a peace accord in Lusaka in November 1994"²³⁹. And in a "seeming recognition of EO's effectiveness, UNITA made a condition to its signature: that the company leave the country"²⁴⁰.

Nevertheless, the Lusaka Accords failed to provide long term peace as fighting was renewed months later. Indeed, the Lusaka Accords did not permanently halt the war. However, one must bear in mind that the point of obtaining a MHS is to create ripeness for political players to attempt to resolve a conflict in a comprehensive manner. Since the Ripeness Theory is not tautological, a MHS can guarantee the initiation of negotiations, not the success of negotiations. And this is exactly what EO accomplished. EO's mandate (military, strategic, and tactical) did not consist of permanently resolving the conflict. EO altered the military balance, created a MHS and made possible the initiation of negotiations. Achieving a MHS is important because it is a necessary and fundamental component (but not sufficient) for the permanent resolution of a conflict.

Therefore, the lack of permanent peace hence does not negate the fact that EO contributed to the creation of a MHS and that this MHS created ripeness, resulting in the 1994 Lusaka Accords. These conclusions do however provoke follow up questions. Since EO did in fact create a MHS which led to the 1994 Accords, what was then missing for these accords to be successful and ensure long term stability? Was the lack of peace a variable of EO's stay? In other words, if EO had remained in the country for a longer period of time after both sides had joined the negotiation table, would a permanent resolution of the conflict have

²³⁹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warriors. The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 109.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

transpired²⁴¹? Having successfully fulfilled its military mandate, how could EO have further assisted post-MHS political efforts in creating lasting peace? Did EO's intervention create unintended consequences in Angolan politics, such as the intervention of new players? Can a PMF alter the symmetry and generate a MHS in intra-state wars involving more than two main belligerents? It is evident that more research has to be done on this issue. However, this case study has proven that an external and biased third party can have an important impact for creating a MHS, hence contributing to a ripe moment.

²⁴¹ There may be a need for *stay behind* companies.

CASE STUDY: SIERRA LEONE

Introduction

In this chapter, we shall seek to uncover whether EO's intervention in the Sierra Leone conflict managed to break out the impasse in negotiations and bring about a MHS, resulting in the 1996 Abidjan Accords (only ten months after Sierra Leone's first multiparty elections). We shall first and foremost briefly go over Sierra Leone's historical background, consisting of years of war between the internationally recognized government and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels. We shall then shed light on the nature of the country's civil war and the ensuing Abidjan Accords (the internationally negotiated and enforced political settlement). Finally, we will make use of our four indicators discussed earlier in Chapter Two to test the following hypothesis: in its two year contract between 1995 and 1997, EO contributed to the creation of *ripeness* by way of generating a MHS.

A brief historical background of Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is a country blessed with a diversity of natural resources. Especially abundant in diamonds, bauxite, and gold, Sierra Leone has had opportunities for developing its national economy via the exploitation of its natural resources. Certain scholars such as Peter Singer have even stated that Sierra Leone should be one of Africa's richest states since it is "endowed with vast amounts of the highest-grade diamonds in the world, in-ground kimberlites"²⁴². Sierra Leone is blessed with huge potential wealth in the form of vast "mineral deposits, yet is struggling to use these riches for the benefit of the majority of the population - the country is rated 176 of 177 countries in the 2005 UN Human Development

²⁴² Marina Jimenez, "Canadians Seek Fortune in Land of Anarchy, Violence", *The National Post* (Canada), August 23, 1999 as cited in Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), 110.

Index”²⁴³. By the 1990s economic activity was waning and “economic infrastructure had become seriously degraded [...] over the next decade much of Sierra Leone’s formal economy was destroyed in the country’s civil war”²⁴⁴. Hence, over a decade of brutal civil strife has prevented Sierra Leone from prospering.

The origins of Sierra Leone’s conflict are manifold and include historical, military, economic, geographical, and political facets. Sierra Leone gained independence in 1961 from the British who handed the country’s administration to the Sierra Leone People’s Party (SLPP), headed at the time by Milton Margai²⁴⁵. Sierra Leone’s troubled contemporary past started with “Siaka Stevens breaking from the SLPP and forming the All Peoples Congress (APC), winning a contested and controversial election victory in 1967”²⁴⁶. Following a brief spell of military government, the army restored civilian power in 1968, with Siaka Stevens and the APC assuming control under the form of a one-party kleptocracy²⁴⁷. Stevens’s power was further strengthened in 1978 when a referendum rendered the APC Sierra Leone’s only legal party. Benefiting from the advantages derived from rampant corrupt governance and recognizing how vulnerable his political authority was, Stevens intentionally weakened the military in order to prevent eventual coups. The populace was thus left with nothing more than a corrupt government and an underdeveloped economy. Neither “Stevens nor his handpicked successor, General Joseph Saidu Momoh [who took power in 1986], managed to stem the continued downward spiral of the economy”²⁴⁸. Mismanagement and corruption, especially in the diamond industry, were significant factors behind Sierra Leone’s underdevelopment. However, a 1991 referendum gave the country’s populace a

²⁴³ Department for International Development (DFID), “Country Profiles: Africa”, available at <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/africa/sierraleone.asp>> (last updated March 24, 2006, page consulted April 2006).

²⁴⁴ Ibid.

²⁴⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, in *Peace, Profit or Plunder? The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, eds. Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies, 175.

²⁴⁶ Ibid., 175.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 175.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 175.

glimmer of hope seeing that it provided for a new constitution sanctioning a multiparty democracy.

Despite mounting optimism, Sierra Leone's problems only worsened in the 1990s. The country's troubles originated from both internal and external factors: internal popular dissatisfaction with Sierra Leone's post-independence governance, and external regional conflicts spreading across borders. Bordering Guinea and Liberia, Sierra Leone was unfortunately often drawn into the political affairs of its neighboring states, and vice-versa. Liberia, under the control of Charles Taylor, proved to be especially problematic for the stability of Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone's civil conflict only really began though in March of 1991 when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Corporal Foday Sankoh, crossed over the Liberian border and launched a rebellion against President Momoh²⁴⁹.

This attack was both planned and executed from Liberia with considerable assistance from Charles Taylor, former warlord who subsequently became President of Liberia. Taylor, who had met Sankoh in guerilla training grounds in Benghazi Libya in the 1980s, indirectly and personally waged and organized attacks against the Sierra Leone government who had allowed the Nigerian-led ECOMOG intervention force to use Freetown as a base during its exercise in Liberia²⁵⁰. Taylor, whose bid for power was affected by the ECOMOG force (the government provided logistical backing to ECOMOG in its effort to defeat Taylor)²⁵¹, wished to "impair Freetown's ability to assist the military effort of ECOMOG in Liberia"²⁵². In retribution for Sierra Leone's assistance to the Nigerian-led ECOMOG, Taylor aided his old contact Sankoh in destabilizing Sierra Leone by supplying the RUF with arms and ammunition.

Prior to Sankoh's arrival at its head, the RUF was a group of exiled, alienated, and estranged students contesting Steven's corrupt and incompetent

²⁴⁹ David Shearer, *Private Armies and Military Interventions*, 49.

²⁵⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

²⁵¹ Human Rights Watch, Backgrounders, "Charles Taylor and the wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone", available at

<<http://hrw.org/english/docs/2006/03/29/liberi13103.htm>> copyright 2006 (page consulted April 2006).

²⁵² Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 177.

rule²⁵³. But when Sankoh joined its ranks, he took over the military wing and cast out the politically minded individuals. The rebel movement would soon start waging particularly violent and brutal attacks on the Sierra Leone populace, exploiting the country's political cleavages "between town and country, and between the repatriated-slave elite and indigenous people"²⁵⁴. The RUF, which primarily appealed to the country's dispossessed, was relatively successful in its war against Sierra Leone's government, and used drastic measures to achieve its goals, regularly exercising brutal methods such as the amputation of limbs, the decapitation of leaders, and the abduction of child soldiers and sex slaves²⁵⁵.

Not only was the RUF's mission sustained by Taylor's support, it was also fuelled by the government's feeble and incompetent military, which ironically had purposefully been weakened by the Sierra Leone government for fear of an eventual coup. The "army had been largely ceremonial, completely unprofessional, and recruited from among the same alienated youths as the RUF"²⁵⁶. As a result, Sierra Leone's government failed to defend itself against the advances of the RUF and was unable to halt its territorial expansion. In essence, the "government's ability to resist the RUF was undermined by its very corrupt nature"²⁵⁷.

The RUF was unquestionably in a superior position vis-à-vis the government at this point in time. By the end of 1991, Sierra Leone's "token army was becoming demoralized"²⁵⁸. On top of being incapable of defeating the threat posed by the rebels, "President Momoh didn't appear to trust them [...] as morale sank, some army units began going over to the RUF [...] by early 1992, the Sierra Leonean army was broken and the rebels were approaching the capital"²⁵⁹. Due to the RUF's triumphs and rapid territorial expansion, a change in public policy regarding the new rebel threat was crucial. Defense policies embracing the status-quo were no longer a viable option.

²⁵³ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

²⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 111.

²⁵⁸ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 134.

²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 134.

Adjustments would have to be executed in an unconventional manner and it would be up to a man by the name of Valentine Strasser to finally give way to this change. Momoh the amiable but ineffectual leader²⁶⁰ was finally ousted in April 1992 when army officials headed by Corporal Strasser entered his office and demanded assistance for the armed forces²⁶¹. Anticipating a coup and fearing for his life, Momoh fled and was consequently replaced by none other than Strasser who subsequently became President. A military council would come to run the country²⁶². Inheriting his predecessor's problems, Strasser quickly needed to put in order a comprehensive plan offsetting the RUF and its encroachment on Sierra Leonean territory. His initial move consisted of re-opening the channels of communication with the RUF's leader Sankoh.

However, local conditions in terms of balance in military capabilities between the government and the RUF were unfavorable and not conducive to negotiations. The RUF perceived that it could attain unilateral victory which would have been more beneficial than the potential benefits inherent in any future conciliation. The "RUF could taste victory and were not interested in negotiation"²⁶³. Despite Strasser's attempts, no dialogue or negotiation would result from these efforts.

At this critical point in time, Sierra Leone's political administration decided it was time to alter its military approach. As the RUF sustained its unrelenting line of attack on Freetown, the increasingly desperate government turned outwards for assistance requesting bilateral support from Nigeria. Since Liberia had increasingly become a destabilizing force for not only Sierra Leone but also the entire region, the request was tended to and "two thousand troops were sent to Freetown, and a few fighter aircraft were stationed at the airport"²⁶⁴.

Strasser's next move was to strengthen his armed forces in order to back up the Nigerian exercise in Freetown. By "late January 1994, the national army

²⁶⁰ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 133.

²⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁶² *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁶³ *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 134.

swelled in size from five thousand regulars to more than twelve thousand”²⁶⁵. This new course of action was however done without much reflection or planning. The state’s political elite’s impetuous decision to expand its military was done hastily by the arbitrary drafting of new recruits. In an incomprehensive and random manner, the government indiscriminately enlisted released prisoners, drug addicts and kids from the streets in order to fill abstract quotas²⁶⁶. This unsystematic approach meant that when government forces were deployed, the newly enlisted soldiers were deficient and lacked essential military training. The conscripts’ daily “ration of marijuana and rum did not help matters much either, and the government’s military soon dissolved into a looting force that tended to target the civilian populace instead of the rebels”²⁶⁷. The new military approach ironically only made matters worse. There “were no coherent front lines, no political causes, and for the terrorized public, no place was safe”²⁶⁸. Sierra Leone’s civil war was progressively deteriorating into a state of total civil chaos²⁶⁹. By early 1994-95, Sierra Leone’s military situation had only worsened since the first serious signs of trouble emerged in 1991²⁷⁰. A negotiated resolution was not likely at this juncture.

Lack of a MHS?

From 1991 to 1995, Sierra Leone’s civil war lacked *ripe* moments for a negotiated resolution to take place. The RUF ostensibly had no interest in negotiating with its counterpart since its leader Sankoh recognized that the balance of military power was in his faction’s favor. The RUF was indeed strong relative to the government’s armed forces in terms of territorial acquisitions and military capabilities (etc.). The rebel force had steadily conquered vital territory in Sierra

²⁶⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 134.

²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 134.

²⁶⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 112.

²⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 111-112.

²⁶⁹ Rubin, Elizabeth “Army of One’s Own”, 47 as cited in Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (New York: Cornell University Press, 2003), 112.

²⁷⁰ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 134.

Leone, its progress was accelerating as time passed. The RUF was also very conscious of the government military's limited capabilities.

The rebel RUF forces had managed to take control over the major diamond mines, a significant source of revenue for the government, and had successfully surrounded Sierra Leone's government in the capital city²⁷¹. Although the RUF counted approximately several thousand at the most and 350 hard core fighters according to a high ranking U.S. official, it militarily dominated the national army on the field²⁷². The RUF "aided by a general breakdown in order and disloyal government soldiers, had advanced by May 1995 to within 20 miles of the capital of Freetown"²⁷³.

The Republic of Sierra Leone Military Force (RSLMF) on the other hand, lacked most qualities normally attributed to state armies. The RSLMF "hardly qualified as an army, despite its size of perhaps 14,000 soldiers (two thirds of whom at been hastily recruited)"²⁷⁴. Stevens and Momoh had *ethnicized* the military and had severely cut its budget²⁷⁵. The "World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) increasingly pressed the government to lower military funding, following the army's hasty buildup from about 3,000 to 11,000"²⁷⁶. What's more, Sierra Leone's state army was highly corrupt. RSLMF members were commonly referred to as *sobel*s ("soldiers by day, rebels by night"), a term denoting soldiers who engaged in banditry and rebel activities²⁷⁷.

The Sierra Leonean "army was defeated, and the situation looked grim [...] in fact, it was a repeat of the MPLA's situation in late 1993"²⁷⁸. A sense of doom was quickly developing as RUF brutal atrocities against Sierra Leone's populace persisted, whilst the government's troops were too inept to defend their nation. Over the four-year war, "1.5 million people in that country had become refugees

²⁷¹ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 135.

²⁷² Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 200.

²⁷³ *Ibid.*, 200.

²⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, 200.

²⁷⁵ Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes", 313.

²⁷⁶ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 201.

²⁷⁸ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 135-136. Please refer to Chapter Three *Angola*.

and over 15,000 had been killed”²⁷⁹. The government was indeed “facing a desperate situation in which the insurgents had cut off the government’s last major source of domestic revenue earlier that year”²⁸⁰. There was indeed no symmetry in terms of military power and there was no painful deadlock. In game theoretic terms, Sierra Leone’s main players were still trapped in a Prisoners Dilemma Game and hence had no incentive to negotiate. The local power dynamics thus led to the prolongation of Sierra Leone’s intra-state war.

Sierra Leone’s political administration had its back against the wall and had little alternatives from which to choose. Unlike the FAA in Angola which managed to regain at least some of its lost territory single-handedly, Sierra Leone’s armed forces were completely ineffectual and were no match for the RUF. Thus, despite its efforts, Sierra Leone’s government alone could not change the tide of war in order to create a MHS. The RUF was too strong of an opponent for the Sierra Leonean government to combat.

Provoking a MHS via the outsourcing of EO?

The situation in Sierra Leone in 1994 was such that war carried on to the detriment of negotiations. Both camps failed to be trapped in a painful military deadlock and as a result, the RUF still hoped to lead an attrition war. However, an important factor came into play in 1995 which would significantly alter Sierra Leone’s civil war: the intervention of an external third party. Sierra Leone’s government being in a precarious position vis-à-vis its counterpart decided to outsource private military services in April-May of 1995 for assistance in suppressing the increasingly prevalent rebel movement²⁸¹. In an unprecedented move, the government turned outward to a firm called J&S Franklin Limited, which then subcontracted Channel Islands-based Gurkha Security Group (GSC) in order to train and guide its armed forces. The intervention of this external player

²⁷⁹ Robert Mandel, *Armies without States, the Privatization of Security*, 110.

²⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 110.

²⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 110.

was nevertheless cut short when a rebel ambush in February of 1995 cost the firm heavy casualties, including the loss of its local commander Bob Mckenzie²⁸².

As a result, the defense firm broke its contract and Sierra Leone's government was left once again vulnerable and defenseless vis-à-vis its rebel counterpart. Desperately requiring external aid, Strasser then turned to EO, a company which by many accounts had just withdrawn from a successful mission in Angola. At this point in time, EO's involvement would be critical because the RUF was on the verge of victory. By April 1995, the RUF had already dangerously advanced toward the capital and held significant control over the country's main mining regions²⁸³.

As Sierra Leone's context demonstrated at the time, privatized security was perhaps "the only option with any hope of restoring order, filling a void where existing government authorities are fearful of treading due to political, military, or financial costs"²⁸⁴. As was the case in Angola, EO was once again a perfect candidate for managing Sierra Leone's particular needs. Seeing that Sierra Leone was a country with a dreadfully low military capability, using ex-SADF personnel had a number of advantages, such as experience in low warfare combat, counterinsurgency, weapon selection (etc.). As Deborah Avant spelled out, "military contractors can enhance the power of individual states, as when failed states like Sierra Leone essentially buy an army"²⁸⁵. Since government troops lacked even basic military qualifications, EO could compensate for these deficiencies by providing comprehensive packages. EO's "training packages covered the entire realm of military operations, including everything from basic infantry training and armored warfare specialties to parachute operations"²⁸⁶. Essentially, EO had assumed responsibility for Sierra Leone's state functions since security and order could no longer be guaranteed by the government.

²⁸² Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 112.

²⁸³ *Ibid.*, 112.

²⁸⁴ Robert Mandel, *Armies without States, the Privatization of Security*, 84 as cited in Herbert M. Howe, "Global Order and the Privatization of Security", *Fletcher Forum of World Affairs* 22 (summer/fall 1998), 5.

²⁸⁵ Deborah Avant, "Think Again: Mercenaries".

²⁸⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 104.

Furthermore, as a result of its extensive involvement in Angola just one year prior to its involvement in Sierra Leone, EO had gained an insider's view of the special needs weak and fragile governments had in the region. This knowledge proved very valuable for Sierra Leone's military since EO was familiar with the RUF's strengths and weaknesses and could use that knowledge to its advantage. Since EO's contribution was extensive between 1995 and 1997, we shall examine the effects that EO's involvement generated on Sierra Leone's civil war. Did EO help generate ripeness through the crafting of a MHS, resulting in the November 1996 Abidjan Accords? In order to uncover whether EO did indeed contribute to the creation of a MHS in its two year contract (approximately from April-May 1995 to January 1997), we shall draw on our four indicators discussed earlier in Chapter Two.

EO's impact on territory

In the military sphere, it appears as though the dominant perception among the political elite of both camps in 1996 was that a military stalemate did in fact exist, and thus led to the November 1996 Abidjan Accords (ten months following Sierra Leone's first multiparty elections). However, this perception of a MHS was not present in 1995 prior to EO's intervention. Was there indeed a link between EO and a MHS leading to the Abidjan Accords?

When EO was initially introduced to the case of Sierra Leone in May 1995, the RUF had already attained a predominant position in terms of territorial acquisitions. The RUF was rapidly gaining head way by progressively exerting control over areas traditionally run by government authorities. By 1995, the RUF held much of the countryside and was in close proximity of Freetown²⁸⁷. The diamond mines were overrun and the government was surrounded in the capital city. The Sierra Leonean army was overwhelmed and near total defeat.

²⁸⁷ Department for International Development (DFID), "Country Profiles: Africa", available at <<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/countries/africa/sierraleone.asp>> (last updated March 24, 2006, page consulted April 2006).

Being fully aware of the potential benefits derived from territorial control and expansion, Sankoh made a concerted effort to expropriate as much territory as possible. The “RUF was allowed to reconsolidate its position and, by the end of 1994, began a series of raids from its forest camps into virtually all parts of the country, reaching areas close to Freetown by the beginning of 1995”²⁸⁸. Having dangerously approached the capital by 1995, the RUF intended to prolong the conflict in an attempt to escalate the intensity of the war. The situation pertaining to the defense of the country’s capital city became so alarming that even embassies starting evacuating their staff²⁸⁹. The rebel insurgency was so successful that, not only were the alluvial diamond fields of the south east and north east overrun, but “the areas of bauxite and rutile mining were also captured, production had stopped, and thus most of the foreign exchange revenue essential to government operations was not available”²⁹⁰. Sankoh indeed gained many advantages from his encroachment on Sierra Leonean territory. His greatest strategic advantage was a result of his control over the diamond mining areas, which enabled him to expand and improve his army into a significant force by exploiting the diamond trade, all the while handicapping the government’s armed forces. In other words, it was not in the RUF’s interests to negotiate with the government since the RUF was reaping many benefits from the war. There was no MHS and the war still held an asymmetrical structure which was not conducive to negotiations.

Recapturing territory rich in natural resources from the RUF was one of the government’s first priorities in its bid to reclaim authority over the country. Accomplishing this would not only allow the government to reinvest much needed revenue into its war effort, but would also sever the RUF’s earnings required for its war aims (rearmament purposes etc.). Regaining valuable territory from the RUF would ultimately help redress a symmetrical structure in Sierra Leone’s intra-state war.

²⁸⁸ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 178.

²⁸⁹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 112.

²⁹⁰ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 178.

Since regaining territorial assets was one of the government's main concerns in its battle against the RUF, EO's contract primarily focused on the conflict's territorial dynamics. EO's military plan was especially comprehensive and relatively more wide-ranging when compared to EO's initial *Soyo* contract in Angola. In accordance to the government's most urgent needs, EO devised a three-phased operational strategy: resolve the siege on Freetown; protect the alluvial diamond area around Koindu; and destroy the RUF headquarters²⁹¹. Each of these three stages would allow the government to gain headway in its war against the RUF rebels by reclaiming control over the sovereign state of Sierra Leone. EO systematically sketched out a comprehensive plan for recapturing specific targeted areas. It focused on strategic sites such as oil and mining regions, key infrastructure, and military bases (chase the RUF from its military bases via electronic intelligence and Special Forces reconnaissance teams).

Resolving the siege on Freetown was the first step in EO's plan. Regaining control of a capital city is always an important military objective and proves to be a vital symbolic exercise because it validates a government's authority over its sovereign state and "gives the government some breathing room"²⁹². A country's capital city is the emblem of state and government and is thus almost always a "primary target in war, as capturing it usually guarantees capture of much of the enemy government, victory for the attacking forces, or at the very least demoralization for the defeated forces"²⁹³. What's more is that in the case of Sierra Leone, Freetown was especially vital in the war effort for strategic and logistics considerations. The major roads running through Freetown were the main channels for food and fuel transport, and thus, urgently needed to be reopened to assist in the joint EO/government operations²⁹⁴. Lifting the siege on the capital city was hence a prerequisite for the success of the alliance's line of attack.

²⁹¹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

²⁹² James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 136.

²⁹³ Wikipedia, "Strategic Importance of capitals", available at. <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Capital> (last updated January 2007, page consulted September 2006).

²⁹⁴ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

The RUF center of operations in the siege on Freetown was “out of a base to the east of the city in a location known as Ma-Sherwe”²⁹⁵. The EO/government alliance, aware of the RUF’s positioning and setting, sketched a tactical contingency battle plan to drive the rebels further back into the bushes. The government battalion level combined operation set up by EO was well matched for this challenge. It was efficiently prearranged and equipped with military armored vehicles and Russian built helicopters to overcome geographical and mobility obstacles. As expected, the joint EO/government operation was successful. The siege on Freetown was lifted in only ten days. Within:

nine days, the EO force had not only stopped the rebel advance, but sent them back 126 kilometers into the jungle interior, mainly through the skilful employment of helicopter gunships that had not been used in the conflict previously²⁹⁶.

This was “the first battle of the war in which the government troops had achieved positive results, with fifty rebels killed within two days and the siege lifted in ten days”²⁹⁷. This impaired the RUF since by this time:

about 200 rebels had been killed and there were more than 1 000 deserters, most of the latter having been enlisted as unwilling conscripts and employed, among others, as porters and general laborers²⁹⁸.

Amid its numerous battles against the RUF, this represented one of the very first times the government accomplished success against its opponent, strongly suggesting that EO had a direct impact on the local power dynamics. EO effectively demonstrated its capabilities during its very first exercise seeing that it reclaimed in only ten days Sierra Leone’s capital city while deployed. This battle was a huge blow to rebel morale because it demonstrated that an external third party player had the capacity to affect the war effort of an established local faction. Indisputably defeated in the country’s capital during EO’s very first exercise, the

²⁹⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

²⁹⁶ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 112-113.

²⁹⁷ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

²⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 182.

RUF had no other choice but to retreat 100 kilometers into the interior²⁹⁹. The joint EO/government effort led to the alliance's first victory, allowing the government to reclaim control over the country's capital. Despite the scale and symbolic significance of this initial success, there was still no symmetry in terms of territorial control since only one of the three phases of the operational strategy had been completed and the RUF still exerted control over much of Sierra Leone's main mining regions. The RUF still had confidence in successfully escalating the war and it was still ready to bear the costs associated with the escalation since it deemed them tolerable (in the view of obtaining a unilateral victory).

After having lifted the siege on the capital city, EO carried on with its mission by instigating in June 1995 the second phase of the operational strategy around the diamond areas of Kono³⁰⁰. The "second phase of the joint government/EO operational strategy was to stabilize the alluvial diamond area around Koindu by removing rebel forces from the area"³⁰¹. The rebel's control over the productive areas of the country was a major obstacle to the government's war aims since the funds made available through the extraction of natural resources were fundamental for fueling the war. This operation "met with little opposition and, by July, the mines were back in government hands"³⁰². The alliance's operations were so successful that the Koindu region was recaptured in only a matter of days and area clearing operations were subsequently carried out in the Kono area³⁰³. Later, by "late January 1996, EO-backed forces had retaken the southern coastal rutile and bauxite mines, notably those belonging to Sierra Rutile and Sieromco"³⁰⁴. This series of victories was a significant element in the government's overall struggle against the RUF since the Kono region generated large sums of revenue which were used by the rebel insurgency to fuel the war and

²⁹⁹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

³⁰⁰ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³⁰¹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

³⁰² James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³⁰³ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

³⁰⁴ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

gain a disproportionate advantage vis-à-vis the government. Although “EO’s military efforts did not destroy the RUF, they forced them out of the vital diamond and rutile-producing areas, compelling them to seek sanctuary in the deep forest”³⁰⁵. The new developments triggered by the involvement of EO had altered the nature of Sierra Leone’s intra-state war and its balance in military capabilities. While this was a major blow to the rebels’ war aims, the RUF was not entirely defeated. The situation was not yet completely ripe but the structure of the war had definitely changed into a more symmetrical one.

The EO/government’s third objective was more tactical in nature and consisted of locating and destroying RUF headquarters³⁰⁶. EO’s “strategy mandated the constant pursuit and punishment of the rebel force, whenever it came into contact”³⁰⁷. After having successfully seized the RUF’s stronghold in the Kangari Hills in a ground assault³⁰⁸, the EO/government alliance went on to pursue the RUF’s main center of operations. Employing up to date military technology such electronic intelligence and air-ground reconnaissance, EO successfully located the “RUF main headquarters fifty miles east of the capital and brought it under attack, killing many of the RUF leadership and destroying their ability to wage a concerted guerilla warfare”³⁰⁹. This was a significant blow to the rebel force since “follow-up intelligence indicated that this was formerly the main springboard for operations against Freetown”³¹⁰. By knocking down this major command center, the EO/government alliance had in effect destroyed the RUF’s ability to plan, organize and execute major operations. The rebel force’s military capabilities were thus seriously hindered as a result of EO’s active engagement.

At this juncture, the RUF had lost vital territory which they had previously drawn on for symbolic recognition (the country’s capital city), financial use (the mining areas) and strategic positioning (the RUF headquarters). The joint

³⁰⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 184.

³⁰⁶ Ibid., 182.

³⁰⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 113.

³⁰⁹ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³¹⁰ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

EO/government force, which had grown to be the spearhead of Sierra Leone's counteroffensive, proved to be a successful alliance since the RUF had increasingly become vulnerable and exposed, and could no longer retreat to its headquarters for resting ground. There "were still many small roving bands around the country, but it would take a lot of time and money to rebuild the movement"³¹¹. By now, the RUF had become vulnerable and virtually defenseless seeing that it was cut off from most of its sources of supply and had no quarters left to retreat to. The RUF fighters had been "driven back to enclaves along Sierra Leone's border"³¹². Sierra Leone's territorial dynamics were thus altered as a consequence of EO intervention and the government had managed to re-expropriate much lost territory.

A comparison between the maps of 1994 and 1996 clearly highlights the territorial expansion the government had accomplished during EO's involvement. Although the areas of RUF control in 1994 were limited, the areas of RUF operations extended country wide and included the strategic regions of the Kono mining areas. In contrast, the map of 1996 demonstrates that the government gained predominant control over much of the territory where the RUF had previously held important operations. The government, assisted by EO, had come to hold control over economically rich areas. By November 1996, government offensives had reduced the RUF's territorial control, in stark contrast to the situation prior to EO's involvement. Although EO did not annihilate the RUF, it still managed to alter Sierra Leone's map by assisting the government in taking control over much of the country's strategic sites.

The change in territorial dynamics was a huge victory for Strasser. While Strasser scored military points from EO's involvement, he was under pressure to restore civilian rule. He thus announced that elections would be held February 16, 1996. Although Strasser had achieved military progress in the war waged against the RUF thanks to EO, internal political factors provoked his removal from power as his deputy Brigadier Julius Maada Bio overthrew him January 16, 1996 due to

³¹¹ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 140.

³¹² US State Department, "Background Note: Sierra Leone", available at.
<<http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/5475.htm>> (page consulted September 2006).

fears over a return to civilian rule³¹³. The RUF's state of military affairs was not however altered as a result of the coup. The rebel force was still in a costly situation and no longer held a predominant position vis-à-vis its governmental counterpart like it did prior to EO's intervention.

In an unprecedented move (revealing symptoms of war weariness), the "RUF announced a unilateral cease-fire and offered to talk to Bio's government unconditionally"³¹⁴. Despite the coup, elections finally did take place in February 1996 and a ceasefire was eventually reached in April 1996, demonstrating willingness on the part of the rebels to halt the war and negotiate. By:

April 1996, the combined efforts of EO and the Kamajor³¹⁵ caused Sankoh and the RUF to seek a cease-fire; however, it was another seven months before a peace agreement was finally signed in November³¹⁶.

In "November, the RUF leader signed peace accords, which, as in Angola, mandated EO's withdrawal as a condition of signature"³¹⁷. This strongly suggests that the RUF had come to realize that EO was in fact in part responsible for its own downfall. After having signed the peace agreement, "Sankoh conceded that, had EO not intervened, he would have taken Freetown and won the war"³¹⁸. EO "had temporarily defeated the RUF in the field that staved off further loss by entering into negotiations"³¹⁹. Negotiations had thus become to be seen as beneficial to both adversaries. This signaled a major change in the local power dynamics of the conflict.

RUF territorial defeats thus altered the tide of the war. The "combined efforts of EO, the Kamajors [a locally based paramilitary force that EO had built an

³¹³ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 184.

³¹⁴ Ibid., 184.

³¹⁵ The Kamajors are a locally based paramilitary force that EO had built an alliance with.

³¹⁶ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 184.

³¹⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 114.

³¹⁸ Ibid., 114.

³¹⁹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 184.

alliance with]³²⁰, and to a lesser extent the army, broke and scattered the RUF in early 1996³²¹. Although they were “not completely defeated, the rebel leadership under Foday Sankoh knew their force was shattered [...] in April, Sankoh asked for a cease fire and let it be known that he was willing to negotiate”³²². Hence, EO provided temporary stability (after having helped escalate and intensify the conflict until the attainment of MHS) which led to negotiations. Since

the launching of the Kamajor militia and the arrival of EO, the RUF had suffered serious setbacks. The two forces had collaborated closely to seek out RUF bush camps and in less than two months they killed an estimated 1,000 of the RUF's best fighters and destroyed several of their bases. More importantly, they had also pushed the RUF away from the main diamond districts³²³.

The Sierra Leone government's successes were unprecedented. EO's assistance helped them exploit the RUF's weaknesses on the battlefield. This series of stunning and rapid victories was a huge blow to the RUF's war effort since it caught Sankoh off guard. The regions reclaimed by the government were Sankoh's key financial assets and having to lose them was very costly. The government, with EO support, had finally become a worthy opponent. The foundations of a stalemate were beginning to develop. The map of 1996 partly points to the symmetrical structure Sierra Leone's civil war had taken on for the November 1996 Peace Talks. Although the joint EO/government effort did not manage to annihilate the RUF from all Sierra Leonean territory, it definitely did manage to thwart the RUF's plans for a unilateral victory by inhibiting its territorial predominance. A rough symmetry between the government and the RUF in terms of territorial acquisitions was undeniably emerging as a result of EO's presence.

EO and military capabilities

³²⁰ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

³²¹ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 139.

³²² *Ibid.*, 139.

³²³ Conciliation Resources, “First stages on the road to peace: the Abidjan process (1995–96)- Elections and the promise of peace”, available at. <http://www.c-r.org/our-work/accord/sierra-leone/first-stages.php> (page consulted May 2006).

We shall continue our analysis by drawing on our military indicator in order to further examine the effect EO had on the development of a MHS in Sierra Leone. When considering military aptitude and troop morale, the government and the RUF were certainly not in a situation of parity in 1994-1995. Symmetry, an essential component of a MHS, was missing. On the one hand, the government's military wing was in a dire state (prior to EO's intervention in 1995)³²⁴. In an attempt to resolve the immediate challenges facing Sierra Leone, Strasser decided to enlarge the national army. Although he managed to swell Sierra Leone's army by enlisting new recruits, by early 1995 the "army was proving entirely ineffective and the country was in ruins"³²⁵. Due to poor planning and hasty recruitment methods, government troops were both "devoid of professional skills, and corrupt"³²⁶. The government's ability to defy the RUF was undermined by its very fraudulent nature. The army had been largely "ceremonial, completely unprofessional, and recruited from among the same alienated youths as the RUF [...] consequently, there was little resistance and the towns and villages quickly fell to the rebels"³²⁷.

The atmosphere within Sierra Leone's political and military circles was becoming increasingly bleak seeing that it had already been three years since Sankoh first launched Sierra Leone's civil war in March 1991 by crossing the border from Liberia, and government troops were still unable to defeat the RUF. Despite frequent internal attempts, different approaches, numerous strategies, and a number of different leaders, Sierra Leone's military was too ineffective and weak to suppress its increasingly strong counterpart. It soon became apparent that unless the government did something drastic to counter the rebels, the RUF would escalate the conflict until the point of attaining unilateral victory.

On the other hand, the RUF proved astoundingly resilient and was reaping the benefits of its attacks on the government. At no other time in Sierra Leone's history had the RUF acquired so much supremacy in terms of regional power,

³²⁴ Herbert M. Howe, "Private Security Forces and African Stability: the case of Executive Outcomes", 313.

³²⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 134.

³²⁶ Robert Mandel, *Armies without States, the Privatization of Security*, 110.

³²⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

territorial gains, and military clout. The fact that this rebel insurgency had continued to operate for over three brutal and intense years of resistance confirmed their strength, power, resilience and morale. One of the reasons why the RUF was proving hard to defeat was due in part to its ambiguous nature and composition. The RUF was unpredictable and volatile and had no clearly defined political agenda³²⁸. The rebels were a:

mysterious faction with no coherent ideology and a constantly changing composition, and they persistently refused to enter into negotiations with Strasser's regime, denying its legitimacy and demanding the withdrawal of Guinean and Nigerian troops assisting the Sierra Leone government³²⁹.

The continually altering nature of the RUF hence made it more difficult to defeat. Sankoh's "attacks more than succeeded in that respect"³³⁰.

Although the RUF was not ideological in the classical sense, it did however appeal to the country's most dispossessed and alienated by the failures of post independence. The rebel insurgency succeeded in many respects because it exploited "the cleavages that split Sierra Leone (between town and country and between the repatriated-slave elite and indigenous people)"³³¹. Although the RUF exploited internal cleavages, it also depended on the spoiler agenda of neighboring states such as Liberia and Guinea for support. For strategic purposes, the RUF "depended upon outside support from Libya, Guinea and Liberia, while tactically, it depended upon guerilla tactics, foraging, and the capture of arms and equipment from the RSLMF which was weak, poorly led and seemed prone to flee on contact"³³².

The RUF's operations continued to grow and expand unhindered between 1994 and 1995. Not only did Sankoh's military faction already possess a large fighting force but it also enjoyed a steady growth as a result of the territorial

³²⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

³²⁹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 177.

³³⁰ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

³³¹ *Ibid.*, 111.

³³² Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 178.

expansion it recently acquired and the terror it exerted across the countryside, “abducting children and forcing them to kill on its behalf”³³³. Additional recruits were persistently being enlisted into the ranks of the RUF military through coercion and intimidation. This was in a sense the form of conscription that the RUF had imposed on Sierra Leone’s citizens and youth. While research on the RUF is limited, the RUF’s overall strength has been estimated at “three to four thousand with a hard core of five to six hundred soldiers”³³⁴. Operationally, the RUF held a relatively clear chain of command, and was “roughly organized into six battalions, each of which operated from jungle camps, using classic guerilla tactics”³³⁵.

Sankoh also benefited from wireless communication transmission systems, with “an efficient radio network consisting of about twenty radio stations throughout the country”³³⁶. An “office in Abidjan, Côte d’Ivoire, which was part of the radio network, dealt with international relations, and was controlled by Sankoh’s brother”³³⁷. Sankoh’s broadcasting instruments were useful in many respects. Among others, they allowed him to make use of propaganda methods, such as slipping war messages and boosting the responsiveness of local communities and regions. This was yet another strategy used by Sankoh to foster the war against the government. Hence, with an increase in territorial gains, an ample amount of fighters, an adequate level of organization, and a willingness to employ brutal methods, the rebel insurgency was a serious threat to the government’s weak hold on power. The RUF was on the path towards victory.

All this serves to illustrate that the RUF was in a superior position vis-à-vis its counterpart in 1994-95 in terms of military indicators. From the government’s perspective, the RUF troops were more skilled and proficient than its own and the likelihood of defeating them seemed unlikely. The rebel insurgency was

³³³ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 111.

³³⁴ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 178.

³³⁵ *Ibid.*, 178.

³³⁶ *Ibid.*, 178.

³³⁷ A.J. Venter, “Sierra Leone’s Mercenary War, Battle for the Diamond Fields”, *International Defense Review* (11/96) (London 1996), 65-70 as cited in Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, in *Peace, Profit or Plunder? The Privatization of Security in War-Torn African Societies*, eds. Jakkie Cilliers and Peggy Mason, Johannesburg: Institute for Security Studies, 178.

overwhelmingly predominant in terms of military capabilities and had already managed to “overrun the diamond mines, and the government was surrounded in the capital city”³³⁸. Nearing total defeat in 1995, Sierra Leone’s government had very little options left.

However unforeseen, the government managed to alter the balance in military power as of mid-1995. EO likely had a significant impact as its arrival coincided with the exact turning point in the country’s civil war. After a string of faltering attempts in suppressing the RUF, the government finally decided to seek external assistance and turned to a PMF. It initially contracted EO in 1995 to “help its faltering four-year campaign against the RUF”³³⁹. Sierra Leone’s armed forces, although not firmly in a predominant position by 1996, had finally been transformed into a challenging opponent to the RUF who had to this point significantly encroached onto Sierra Leonean territory. EO enhanced the government’s raw military capability by providing sound military strategic and tactical advice. All things being interrelated, these technical attributes would later contribute to an increase in government military morale which would ultimately lead them to defeat the RUF.

When considering the RUF’s rapid encroachment on Sierra Leonean soil in only four years, EO’s military progress in only two was much unanticipated as it caught the rebel insurgency off guard³⁴⁰. As in Angola, this PMF primarily operated as a force multiplier. EO personnel would thus be embedded in and supporting local Sierra Leone army units. With EO operating as a force multiplier, an increase in the quality of local army brigades was inevitable. That being said, the RUF would no longer solely be competing against unprofessional and corrupt armed forces but rather against the military capabilities of an elite fighting force with extensive experience in regional conflicts. The contract required EO to “provide 150 to 200 soldiers fully equipped and with helicopter support, mandated to support the RSLMF with training and other forms of assistance, while aiding in

³³⁸ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 135.

³³⁹ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 200.

³⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 200.

prosecuting the war against the RUF³⁴¹. Although its operations were fairly varied and broad, EO for the most part “provided technical services, combat forces, and training”³⁴². Arriving in 1995, not only did EO employees train as many as 150 government soldiers in just a few weeks, they also helped create an alliance with the Kamajors, who later proved crucial in the battle against the RUF³⁴³.

Due to the incompetent and unprofessional nature of the national army, EO’s role in training the government’s armed forces was both necessary and extensive. The “first item of business was a restructuring exercise, directed by EO, which saw the reorganization of basic and specialist training”³⁴⁴. EO’s course schedule for training in Sierra Leone in 1995-1996 was wide-ranging and included skills such as Basic Training, Rapid Reaction Force, Mortar Training, Section Leaders, Junior Commanders, Infantry, Basic Base Protection, and Battalion Mortars (etc.)³⁴⁵. However, given the dire situation and immediate threat facing the government at the time of EO’s arrival, “a crash course for individual soldiers and rifle companies was conducted at the same time to deter the immediate threat to Freetown”³⁴⁶. Therefore, the training package that EO provided the national army with was extensive and included the juggling of different priorities and concerns concurrently.

While training activities were moving forward, EO also provided the government with skills beyond training activity. The South African PMF also supplied its client “with the essential, though less visible functions of information and intelligence gathering, command, control and communications, helicopter support, and finally a guarantee of both logistic and fire support for operations”³⁴⁷. EO’s experience in Angola had confirmed the importance of intelligence capabilities in counterinsurgency wars. Sources inside EO have revealed that the

³⁴¹ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 180.

³⁴² Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

³⁴³ *Ibid.*, 201.

³⁴⁴ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 180.

³⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 181.

³⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 180.

³⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 180-182.

“organization in Sierra Leone conducted counterintelligence operations, and intelligence operations at times of identifying possible informants, isolating and training them, and then supplying them with communications, equipment”³⁴⁸.

Intelligence capabilities conferred a significant advantage to the government who was as a result in a better position to understand the strengths (map out the location of the RUF’s bases, etc.) and exploit the weaknesses (slow deployable capacity, etc.) of its opponent. These intelligence capabilities proved later to be a vital asset in Sierra Leone’s war seeing that “inadequate intelligence had hamstrung other recent African interventions, most notably that of ECOMOG in Liberia”³⁴⁹.

Beyond training and intelligence capabilities, EO also provided logistics support and rapid deployable means, which later proved imperative in all three elements of the ‘find, fix and destroy’ approach. Most of EO’s operations in Sierra Leone were “characterized by the effective use of helicopters and co-coordinated fire support [...] in classic air-mobile operations, EO sought to find, fix and destroy”³⁵⁰. The better quality combat equipment of EO was an important asset in Sierra Leone’s war. Most local units prior to EO’s arrival did not have sufficient or fully functional equipment. In terms of mobility, most units also failed to have logistic support. They did not have the capacity to transport supplies and troops. But EO had prepared for government troops to have at their disposal all the material needed to effectively battle the rebel insurgency and allow government troops to have operational control over the country. These equipment purchases allowed EO to conduct extremely mobile attacks and to deploy rapidly in any region of the country. EO also had a fairly modern communication network which enabled the government to bypass the logistics problems of operating in Sierra Leone. The government now had at its disposition a rapid deployable and mobile force, and solid logistical base to find, fix and destroy the enemy. The joint EO/government endeavor:

³⁴⁸ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 203, in Interviews in Britain, Sierra Leone, and Washington, D.C., 1996 and 1997.

³⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 203.

³⁵⁰ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

first found the RUF, using electronic warfare and good intelligence; then fixed them in place using direct fire from helicopters and indirect fire from mortars flown into position; and, finally destroyed the enemy by using helicopter-borne assault troops³⁵¹.

The RUF had become so vulnerable that it was no longer even capable of withdrawing to its bases for protection and resting ground since no quarter or area was out of reach of EO's highly mobile teams. The tactics used by the newly formed alliance were incredibly efficient as they inflicted little costs on the government, ensuring very low casualties, and very high collateral damage on the opponent, inflicting high casualties and affecting the military morale of the RUF.

As seen earlier in our section pertaining to territorial indicators, the first priority on the agenda of the joint EO/government effort consisted of lifting the siege on Freetown. And as demonstrated earlier, the mission was a huge success as the siege was lifted in only ten days. More than 200 rebels had been killed, and more than 1,000 had deserted the RUF's base³⁵². Regaining control over the capital city was important for symbolic reasons but also for strategic and logistics reasons as the main roads running across Freetown were finally reopened, allowing for the transportation of fuel and food³⁵³. Much of the mission's success was due to the use of classic air-mobile operations made possible by the synchronized use of air and land equipment supplied by EO³⁵⁴. The RSLMF battalion-level combined operation "was supported by two BMPs (Soviet-built armored personnel carriers), two Land Rovers with mounted machine guns, and two Soviet-built helicopters (one Mi-17 and one Mi-24)"³⁵⁵. The assistance that EO provided the government of Sierra Leone under the shape of training, logistics, advising and weaponry had obviously boosted the government's raw military capabilities seeing that this was the very first battle of Sierra Leone's intra-state war in which government troops were

³⁵¹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

³⁵² *Ibid.*, 182.

³⁵³ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201.

³⁵⁴ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

³⁵⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 182.

successful in defeating its opponent, thus strongly suggesting that EO was responsible for the change in the country's military balance of power.

The second phase of the joint EO/government operation focused on recapturing the diamond area around Koindu from the RUF³⁵⁶. This operation “started in June 1995, with the same support group of armored vehicles, but with two additional rifle companies”³⁵⁷. As seen earlier, the operation was a success. Within just “a few days, and without much resistance, Koindu was recaptured and ‘area’ (clearing) operations were conducted in the Kono district”³⁵⁸. EO had learned lessons from previous experiences though and applied them to its mission in Sierra Leone. It became clear to EO following Angola's *Soyo* incident that suppressing rebels from recaptured areas was not sufficient for protecting the area at hand and for defeating the enemy. Troops needed to *clear* areas, and more importantly, *hold* the areas. And in order to hold areas, moving combat troops out from conquered areas too quickly needed to be avoided. It became clear to EO after their experience in *Soyo* that perpetrators of violence would leave cleared areas only to filter back later. Targeted areas needed to be kept safe from future enemy infiltration either through *stay behind companies* (subcontracted by EO), longer term presence (of EO), or immediate and enduring presence of local troops. Therefore, unlike the episode in *Soyo* where clearing the area was the sole objective, EO decided to first clear, then occupy and finally retain a presence in the Koindu region in order to prevent the RUF from recapturing the mining area upon their premature departure. As “zones were cleared of rebels, the rest of the army began to settle in and reassert itself around the country”³⁵⁹. Military advising, along with technical and training support provided by EO, ensured the success of this first stage in the EO/government operation.

The success of the second phase of EO's contract was critical for the government's war objectives since the reacquired areas were an important source of revenue essential for financing the war. Ian Douglas, a retired Canadian general

³⁵⁶ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

³⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 182.

³⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 182.

³⁵⁹ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 138.

who worked in Sierra Leone from 1995 to 1996 under the command of the UN wrote extensively “about his experiences in Sierra Leone and EO’s successes in the 1995 campaign”³⁶⁰. He wrote:

The retaking of the mining areas demonstrated that a cohesive well-trained organization, with appropriate intelligence and firepower, had the ability to defeat a force that outnumbered it significantly. The success of small-unit operations by the RSLMF (Sierra Leonean army) up to company level increased. This was particularly true when the organization had been trained by, and bonded with, similar EO elements. EO efficiently provided hard, combat-oriented training programs, supplemented by knowledgeable leadership-and leaders who led from the front, not the back....³⁶¹.

Hence, the force multiplier function carried out by EO had a direct impact on changing Sierra Leone’s tide of war due to its influence on the government’s military capabilities. It did much to alter the balance in military power, rendering both parties more equivalent in terms of military capabilities. But it was the third phase of the joint EO/government operation which would ultimately affect Sierra Leone’s tide of war, culminating in a MHS.

The third objective of the joint EO/government strategy “was to locate and destroy the RUF headquarters”³⁶². This step was especially crucial in terms of military capabilities since headquarters are generally the centerpiece of military strategy. They are the quarters for executing military plans and for organizing logistics concerns. If one’s headquarters are destroyed, the entire balance of military arrangements is overthrown. Once again, the joint EO/government strategy included the use of modern equipment and military tactics. For this exercise, “air reconnaissance indicated the presence of a large enemy base approximately eighty kilometers east of Freetown which was attacked on December 5, 1995”³⁶³. Using “electronic intelligence and air-and-ground reconnaissance, EO located the RUF main headquarters [...] and brought under attack, killing many of the RUF

³⁶⁰ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 137-138.

³⁶² Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

³⁶³ *Ibid.*, 182.

leadership and destroying their ability to wage a concerted guerilla war”³⁶⁴. The skillful employment of helicopter gunships which had not previously been used proved particularly useful³⁶⁵. Follow up intelligence “indicated that this was formerly the main springboard for operations against Freetown”³⁶⁶. At this point, the RUF had lost control over the capital, had lost access to the mining regions, no longer had headquarters to plan out their operations from and take refuge, and had lost some of their top ranking officials. Without its headquarters intact, the RUF was exposed and defenseless. The *find, fix, and destroy* strategy had effectively made the RUF a vulnerable and powerless entity. The government had finally gained power and become a worthy opponent, for the most part due to the military training provided by EO.

The main reason why the government’s operations were so successful is that they were sustained by EO who employed new styles of warfare, placing the enemy off guard. Whereas “the previous style of warfare prior to EO’s arrival had been road-side ambushes and quick withdrawals, EO strategy mandated the constant pursuit and punishment of the rebel force, wherever it came into contact”³⁶⁷. In other words, EO was relentless and unyielding, seeking to exhaust and wear the enemy out until breaking point. EO’s “expertise in combat operations and, especially, as a force multiplier garnered widespread respect”³⁶⁸. EO was recognized as a key player in Sierra Leone among others, as it’s “troops proved instrumental in several battles, for instance, at Cafunfo in Angola and Kono in Sierra Leone”³⁶⁹. Its “pilots, often flying MiG fighters and MI helicopters, greatly assisted ground and intelligence operations”³⁷⁰. EO’s strategy also “made use of air and artillery assets and sought to engage the RUF in stand-up battles that the rebels were loathe to face”³⁷¹. The rebel force was effectively pushed back to the border

³⁶⁴ James R. Davis, *Fortune’s Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³⁶⁵ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

³⁶⁶ Ian Douglas (1999) “Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone”, 182.

³⁶⁷ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

³⁶⁸ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 202.

³⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 202.

³⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 202.

³⁷¹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

regions and came to fully recognize the momentous and direct effect EO had on its war aims. Additional proof of this acknowledgment was the RUF's declaration for "a reward of \$75,000 dollars in diamonds offered to anyone who could shoot down one of EO's helicopters"³⁷². This suggests that the rebel insurgency recognized the central role played by this PMF in the change of tides of Sierra Leone's war. Effectively overwhelmed, the "RUF agreed to negotiate with the government for the first time"³⁷³.

The information above sheds light on the extent to which EO helped in altering the balance in military capabilities. The tide of war had undeniably changed due in large part to the intervention of EO. Like in Angola, the rebels asked for the departure of EO as a condition for negotiations to take place, strongly suggesting that EO had a direct impact on changing the tide of war during its intervention. EO once again helped in partially redressing the symmetrical structure of a war in Africa by creating military parity between the warring sides. Sankoh's drive to win a final victory had finally faded. The major losses witnessed by the RUF soon led to the signing of the Abidjan Accords, effectively halting the civil war. EO had empowered government troops and assisted them in altering the asymmetrical structure of the country's civil war. EO's involvement, in terms of training, advising and combating thus positively helped boost the government's military capabilities and morale while acquiring more territory and control in Sierra Leone. Many credit EO for having provided short term stability and peace in the country at hand (as a result as of having escalated the war and created a MHS).

EO and economic costs

We shall now consider the effect EO had on the war's economic dynamics. How did EO's engagement change Sierra Leone's tide of war during its involvement and did it contribute to the creation of a MHS?

³⁷² Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 113.

³⁷³ *Ibid.*, 113.

There is an incredible potential for growth in Sierra Leone. But economic development had mainly been hobbled by the looting of the RUF and the corruption within government circles. As stated previously, the RUF was in a disproportionately strong position vis-à-vis its counterpart in 1994. Particularly in terms of financial resources, the rebels had acquired much power because they held control over much of the main mining regions. They collected large sums of revenue from natural resources and gained considerable advantages from free labor (forced labor necessary for the extraction of these resources). However, a year of consistent war escalation between 1995 and 1996 coinciding with EO's intervention gravely affected the RUF's economic resources, hence rendering its war effort increasingly difficult to sustain. Although the financial repercussions of the war were costly for the government, the intensification of the war which took place during EO's involvement had an especially significant impact on the RUF who had thus far been in a predominant position. And although it is true that the mere survival of a rebel insurgency is often viewed as a victory in itself, the pace of EO's successes and concrete accomplishments in just one year seriously put the mere future and literal survival of the RUF in jeopardy and rendered the costs associated with the prolongation of war unbearable.

As a result of EO's involvement, the RUF came to suffer hard blows which threatened its very survival. As in many civil wars, the survival of a rebel insurgency is often narrowly connected to its economic strength³⁷⁴. All things being interrelated, economic strength is also often closely connected to territory. During EO's very first months of involvement, Sankoh's faction lost most of its newly acquired territory and as a result the revenue that could be extracted from it. EO had in effect eliminated the RUF's presence in most of the economically productive regions of the country. The South African PMF had in effect impaired the RUF's economic standing from the very first phase of its three-step campaign. Firstly, the RUF's loss over the capital city was problematic because it was a strategically important site for transport and logistics purposes. The RUF's loss over Freetown

³⁷⁴ Paul Collier, "Rebellion as a Quasi-Criminal Activity", *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44 (no. 6) (2000), 839-853 and Philippe Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: natural resources and armed conflicts", *Political Geography* 20 (2001), 561-584.

was all the more costly since many of the rebel insurgency's forced laborers, crucial for the extraction of natural resources and consequently the waging of the war, were seized from them. The "RUF lost two hundred dead in two days of fighting, and more than a thousand slave laborers, mostly children, that the RUF were holding were rescued"³⁷⁵.

Secondly, it was manifestly evident that if the government was to win the war against the RUF, "it desperately needed the profits from its mining industry, which [...] could only be guaranteed by EO and its subordinates"³⁷⁶. It was a seemingly hopeless situation for Sierra Leone's government prior to EO's intervention seeing that "the insurgents had cut off the government's last major source of domestic revenue"³⁷⁷. Not only were the alluvial diamond fields of the "south, east and north-east overrun by the RUF, but the areas of bauxite and rutile mining were also captured, production had stopped, and thus most of the foreign exchange revenue essential to the government operations was not available"³⁷⁸. By early 1995, the government was "in a desperate situation, since its primary source of revenue-mining companies such as Branch Energy and Sierra Rutile-had ceased to operate"³⁷⁹. The region of Koindu was particularly a main concern for the government since it had "potential reserves valued at US \$1,2 billion"³⁸⁰. The government needed those funds to fuel its war effort.

Regaining control over the economically productive areas of the country was thus a top priority in EO's three-phase campaign strategy since these funds would sustain the government's war effort while simultaneously putting a strain on the rebel insurgency's war aims. As was demonstrated earlier, this second phase of the war proved to be very successful as EO regained control over the important mining region of Kono in only a couple of days. EO's operations effectively suppressed the dominance and most of the presence of the RUF in the country's

³⁷⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 137.

³⁷⁶ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 184.

³⁷⁷ Robert Mandel, *Armies without States, the Privatization of Security*, 110.

³⁷⁸ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 178.

³⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 179.

³⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 179.

most productive areas. Although the services of EO came at a price, the cost of this investment was reasonable when considering the territory the firm helped the government regain (such as the Koindu region and its potential reserves). EO's price tag was also minute when considering the fact that the government was on the verge of total defeat prior to EO's arrival, and risked losing all of its diamond assets. EO's initial contract was "supplemented by contracts for additional manpower that brought the total costs to \$35 million, about \$1.5 million per month for the 21 months that the firm was in the country"³⁸¹. Putting these figures into context helps to highlight EO's efficient and proficient nature. Given that one of the contract's goal "was to reestablish the government's control over the economically productive parts of the country and that it was a fraction of the overall military budget, it seemed a pretty good deal to the government"³⁸². As anticipated, the loss of the Koindu region and the Kono mines was a huge blow to the RUF's war aims. It was all the more distressing since it was a major source of diverse unlawful activity and earnings for the rebel insurgency due to its proximity to Sierra Leone's borders. The RUF depended heavily on "the richest of Sierra Leone's prizes, the Kono diamond fields, and the commercial activity, licit or illicit, associated with this area"³⁸³. The fact that:

Koindu, the centre of the region, is all of 500 kilometers from the capital Freetown, but only eight kilometers from the border with Liberia, and three from that with Guinea, adds an international complication to the quest for control and security-just as it enhances the opportunities and rewards for a trade in contraband³⁸⁴.

In spite of a UN arms embargo, Liberia still managed to funnel arms, financial and human support to RUF insurgents. Sierra Leone's borders were dreadfully porous and allowed the flow of funding and smuggling. EO ultimately helped secure Sierra Leone's borders and stem the level of illegal activity by re-appropriating the Koindu region. In other words, not only did the RUF lose control

³⁸¹ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 112.

³⁸² *Ibid.*, 112.

³⁸³ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 175.

³⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, 175.

over the Kono mining region but it also lost access to the borders with Liberia and Guinea, major roadways for human and arms smuggling as well as illicit trading. This greatly affected the RUF since the rebel insurgency largely depended upon outside support from Libya, Guinea, and Liberia for strategic and economic reasons³⁸⁵.

Lastly, the final step in the EO three-phase plan was also considerable in economic terms seeing that the RUF's main headquarters were destroyed. By "various means, EO had located the main base in the jungle and a large force of Kamajors, army units, and South Africans attacked it"³⁸⁶. There "were still many small roving bands around the country, but it would take a lot of time and money to rebuild the movement"³⁸⁷. This was the last blow which effectively made the RUF submit to negotiations (first a cease fire) since it could no longer tolerate the costs associated with the war. EO's plan had been overwhelmingly successful that the "formal diamond sector had begun to stage a minor recovery, largely because of the protection afforded by EO to DiamondWorks properties"³⁸⁸.

Even critics of private military activity acknowledge the positive impact EO had on Sierra Leone in terms of economic indicators. William Reno, generally a "critic of EO, notes that the force created the stability that attracted more foreign investors, whose revenue helped lower the foreign debt 20 percent in 1995 and 1996 and that allowed nationwide elections in March 1996"³⁸⁹. The Sierra Leone "experience has demonstrated how a small, private security force can impact positively and strongly upon a chaotic, destabilized state, and potentially establish the conditions for economic rejuvenation at minimal cost"³⁹⁰.

The gap in power and supremacy between the government and the rebel insurgency was incrementally diminishing as the RUF came to suffer from an

³⁸⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 178.

³⁸⁶ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 140.

³⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 140.

³⁸⁸ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 185.

³⁸⁹ Herbert M. Howe, *Ambiguous Order. Military Forces in African States*, 201-202.

³⁹⁰ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 198.

economic breakdown. The year which witnessed a drastic escalation in Sierra Leone's civil war allowed the government to reach rough parity with its counterpart. It did however come at a high price for both the government and the RUF. The intensification of the conflict between 1994 and 1995 proved very costly for the Sierra Leonean government. In other words, the costs associated with the war were proving to be unbearable to all parties involved. Negotiations were increasingly being favored as the costs were mounting. Therefore, although not quite in equal manners, the war was costly for both the Sierra Leonean government and the RUF. Symmetry between both opponents was developing. A stalemate, painful to both government troops and the RUF, had indeed developed and was in part due to economic factors.

EO' impact on political costs

We shall now examine the effect EO had on Sierra Leone by considering the political factors that contributed to the creation of a MHS. In terms of political power, the government and the RUF were obviously not in similar situations in 1994. While the government had legitimate authority over Sierra Leone due to international and local recognition (despite many being alienated by the conditions of post-independence), the RUF had no official standing since it was considered a resistance movement. However, as is often the case with rebel movements, the sheer existence of the RUF clearly illustrated the government's political inability on the ground. The rebel insurgency had a significant fighting force and initially enjoyed support from the disaffected.

The RUF had successfully taken control over parts of the country such as the capital (albeit very briefly) and the main mining regions. Although the RUF exercised a high degree of control and force over these areas, they did not benefit from internal legitimacy within these controlled areas. The RUF's hold on power in certain regions was not consistent with Spears' definition of a state-within-a-state³⁹¹ as was Savimbiland in Angola³⁹². Still, with such a defiant temperament

³⁹¹ Paul Kingston and Ian S. Spears, *States Within States: Incipient Political Entities in the Post-*

and with such extensive regional influence, Sankoh was definitely a considerable threat to the government's national authority. Although the RUF did not benefit from international or even broad local recognition, it still did possess local authority (through coercion) and support from neighboring countries.

As we have seen earlier, Sankoh generated revenues in order to sustain the RUF's war efforts. The sources of this revenue ranged from patron states to internal sources in the form of forced labor to lucrative proceeds from diamond exports. These profits enabled the RUF to establish basic levels of administration and infrastructure, with military camps stationed across the country and extensive communications systems including Sankoh's own radio network³⁹³. However, as established earlier, the RUF had come to lose much of its source of revenue during EO's involvement. No longer having the means to reinvest in the war movement, the RUF grew increasingly desperate and turned to other methods for survival. These latter means, often proving more brutal than were previously witnessed inevitably came to the detriment of their long term war aims.

Although Sankoh's track record for human rights was always very poor, a shift from old guerilla warfare to a worsening in terror tactics was noticeable in the years of war escalation from 1994 to 1995³⁹⁴. Due to EO's intervention which impeded the RUF's source of income, the rebel faction was required to step up its already very brutal methods in order to exploit communities for which support for them was dismal. Having lost much of its territorial assets and lacking arms, food and basic resources, the RUF increasingly had to steal and loot to survive. The RUF's military units thus started to act more in a terrorist manner, amputating and slaughtering dissidents, and attacking villages across their path. They attacked at a

Cold War Era (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004).

³⁹² Grant, J. Andrew, 2001. *The End of 'SavimbiLand'? The Rise and Decline of UNITA's 'State-Within-a-State' in Angola*.

³⁹³ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 178.

³⁹⁴ MIPT Terrorism Knowledge Base, "Group Profile: Revolutionary United Front", available at. <<http://www.tkb.org/Group.jsp?groupID=4247>> (last updated December 10, 2006, page consulted January 2007).

faster rate and in more brutal fashion poorly defended villages to seize weapons and food³⁹⁵.

But the number of human rights abuses was not confined to civilians. The increasingly desperate and hopeless RUF started to wage attacks on humanitarian organizations as well. Many of these brutal attacks on unarmed peasants and on humanitarian relief workers by the RUF were carefully documented by human rights organizations and reporters such as Taylor Baines (Global Policy Forum). In order:

to protect its growing empire children are abducted and forced into military service and adults are terrorized into subservience. Any opponents are killed or brutally mutilated through limb amputation as a macabre warning for future enemies. Women are used as sex slaves, and the RUF has even been bold enough to abduct (but later release) 500 UN peacekeepers³⁹⁶.

There were frequent reports of violations of the laws of war, including executions of captured soldiers and scores of cases where children were forced to fight on the war front and coerced into forced labor in the diamond industry. The RUF has:

consorted with known terrorists, dabbled in illegal arms trading, squandered [its] countries fortune in diamonds, and savagely tortured [its] own countrymen for personal gain³⁹⁷.

The RUF was responsible for gross human rights abuses, including executions of civilians and other deliberate and arbitrary killings. This would take a toll on the faction's support levels. EO not only hurt the RUF by pushing it to the breaking point but also hurt it by preventing the RUF from using Sierra Leone as a base of operations. Local civilians even regarded EO personnel as heroes because they protected them from the arbitrary brutality inflicted by the RUF³⁹⁸. EO even helped free forced free labor and kid soldiers from the coercion and grip of the RUF

³⁹⁵ James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors: Private Armies and the New World Order*, 139.

³⁹⁶ Global Policy Forum, February 2001, "When Crime Pays: West African Leader's Brutality Reaps Rewards" by Taylor Baines, available at. <http://www.globalpolicy.org/intljustice/wanted/2001/taylor3.htm> (page consulted April 2006).

³⁹⁷ Ibid.

³⁹⁸ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 103.

(especially in mining areas). Ian Douglas, serving under the UN in Sierra Leone from 1995 to 1996 agrees with the idea that EO personnel were seen as heroes in the streets³⁹⁹.

But the RUF was not the only one suffering from political costs between 1994 and 1996. The government was also bearing painful political ramifications as the violence increased in scope and lethality. With the RUF on a major line of attack and with the involvement of a proficient private military firm, the conflict rapidly intensified to previously unseen levels. Between 1994 and 1996, there were more dead civilians than in the previous years of war. Some died of hunger, some were killed in cross-fire, and many were separated from their families and villages. The war had many effects on civilian life. Civilian losses represented a serious political cost for the government who was theoretically responsible for the safety of all of Sierra Leone's citizens. As a result, the government was perceived as a weak government since it was unable to ensure basic levels of security. The government, although stronger than its previous position in 1994, was still bearing the consequences of the war's escalation. The violence fed by the rebel insurgency provoked a slide toward higher levels of instability and chaos, which reflected poorly on the government who was unable to assume responsibility for protecting its own citizens. Yet, it is precisely the escalation of the war which created a MHS, which led both camps to the negotiation table. Although both the government and the RUF were in a situation of rough parity, they were both bearing the political costs associated with the war. They had reached a painful deadlock, a situation no longer viable for either of them.

Many have argued that:

regardless of Executive Outcome's own purpose, its involvement in Sierra Leone was in a good cause. EO successfully protected a democratically elected government against a brutal and illegitimate rebel force. And EO was certainly cheered in the streets of Freetown for its efforts. Some would also argue that the provision of weapons to the democratically elected government of Tejan Kabbah - a UN

³⁹⁹ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 198 and Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 103.

arms embargo notwithstanding - made sense and was in support of a good cause⁴⁰⁰.

The problem is “not the individual episodes, but the bigger picture which they help to form - of a world in which beleaguered and legitimate governments find little formal international protection against internal predators”⁴⁰¹. In the absence of a “governmental capacity for self-protection, and in the absence of effective mechanisms for international protection, private security firms and mercenaries may be seen by some as the way of the future”⁴⁰². In a certain sense, the international community is left off the hook⁴⁰³. Therefore, EO helped Sierra Leone’s government when no other party was willing or capable. This PMF managed to redress the symmetrical structure of the war and thus, created a MHS-a painful deadlock, where both parties chose negotiation over war.

Conclusion

The case of Sierra Leone demonstrates that the 1996 November Abidjan Accords were a direct result of the MHS created in 1996. Thus, the hypothesis suggesting that EO helped induce ripeness by creating a MHS between 1995 and 1997 has been validated.

There was definitely no MHS in 1994 when the RUF was disproportionately strong and believed it could lead an attrition war against its counterpart. However, our four indicators demonstrate that Sierra Leone’s civil war dynamics dramatically changed just two years later as Sierra Leone’s civil war took on a symmetrical structure by 1996. The sum total of all four indicators led to the creation of the MHS.

EO’s intervention dramatically affected the status-quo predominating in 1994 by altering the RUF’s footing in terms of territorial control, military

⁴⁰⁰ Insights, Partnership Africa Canada, “The Heart of the Matter-Sierra Leone, Diamonds and Human Security”, by Ian Smillie, Lansana Gberie, Ralph Hazleton, available at. <<http://www.sierra-leone.org/heartmatter.html>> copyright January 2000 (page consulted April 2006).

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid.

⁴⁰³ Ibid.

capabilities, economic standing, and political leverage. By targeting the RUF's weak points, EO altered the local balance of power by rendering Sankoh's faction weak in comparison with the government. Despite the apparent changes witnessed during EO's intervention, a swift and total defeat of the RUF was still unrealistic and improbable. The government, although with enhanced military might, still found the idea of rapidly and permanently defeating the opposition unlikely, thus rendering the potential benefits associated with negotiations a more sensible and pragmatic outcome. The same applies for the RUF's perceptions. No one party in Sierra Leone's intra-state war predominated at this critical moment.

Both the government and the RUF witnessed the war escalate and reach a plateau after only a year of EO interference. Both camps came to the same conclusion that the civil war had taken on a symmetrical structure, and as such, neither was capable of achieving its aims, resolving the problem, and winning the conflict on their own. Both parties began to feel uncomfortable in the costly dead end zero-sum game and found themselves in a deadlock. It was thus in their best interest to negotiate since the local conditions were becoming unendurable. This MHS created ripeness for a negotiated resolution to take place and as a result, the Abidjan Accords were concluded in November 1996.

The dual EO/government undertaking was a critical factor shaping the course of Sierra Leone's civil war since both local parties agreed to a peace accord in 1996, following the February 1996 elections and the April 1996 ceasefire. And in an apparent acknowledgment of EO's effectiveness, the RUF rebels signed the November "peace accords, which, as in Angola, mandated EO's withdrawal as a condition of signature"⁴⁰⁴.

The Abidjan Accords did however only generate short term temporary peace since fighting was instigated shortly afterwards following a coup. However, it is important to keep in mind that EO had warned the newly elected Kabbah government of an imminent coup and advised the government to continue outsourcing its services⁴⁰⁵. EO anticipated a coup to take place nine months later.

⁴⁰⁴ Peter Warren Singer, *Corporate Warrior, The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry*, 114.

⁴⁰⁵ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra

However, due to international pressure, EO was forced to depart despite upcoming instability, a coup plot, and the military importance of clearing and holding areas. EO was finally proven right when the coup (led by Corporal John Gborie) they had warned the Kabbah government from did indeed occur nine months later May 25, 1997⁴⁰⁶. This created much instability and chaos, which further sidetracked the implementation of the 1996 Peace Talks.

Indeed, the Abidjan Accords did not permanently halt the war (partly due the security vacuum left by the EO's rapid but involuntary departure). However, the creation of a MHS is still indeed vital even if negotiations fail to lead to the final resolution of a conflict (since MHSs create windows of opportunity for political actors to take a jab at permanently resolving civil wars). Military operations such as EO's are necessary for preparing the ground work and appropriate local conditions conducive to negotiations. And EO successfully achieved this and as a result, helped generate ripeness. Due to the non-tautological nature of ripeness, MHS can only guarantee the initiation of negotiations. The outcome of the negotiations is a result of other factors. The creation of a MHS, which was the basis of EO's mandate, is vital because it is an essential component, albeit not sufficient, for an enduring resolution of a conflict.

The renewal of fighting following the departure of EO in the case of Sierra Leone does not invalidate the hypothesis that EO contributed to the creation of a MHS, hence to the creation of ripeness, resulting in the 1996 Abidjan Accords. The foundations of an international settlement of the Sierra Leone conflict is indeed embodied in the November 30, 1996 Abidjan accords formed between the Kabbah government and the rebels⁴⁰⁷. Though "never implemented, the accords remain valid and viable [...] Kabbah repeatedly has indicated his readiness to implement the accords, provided the rebels cease hostilities and recognize the legitimacy of his

Leone", 187.

⁴⁰⁶ Ian Douglas (1999) "Chapter 9: Fighting for Diamonds - Private Military Companies in Sierra Leone", 188.

⁴⁰⁷ John Hirsch, "Saving Sierra Leone", *The Washington Post* (March 4, 1999).

elected government”⁴⁰⁸. Thus, EO successfully fulfilled its military, strategic and tactical mandate and brought about a MHS.

However, since the MHS and ripe moment created by EO failed to generate long term peace in Sierra Leone, it would be interesting for future potential research to examine the elements which were lacking for these accords to be successful. Future avenues of research could focus on the variable of EO’s stay and its possible influence. Could a permanent resolution of the conflict have transpired if EO had stayed in Sierra Leone, prevented the coups, and halted the rebels from taking over following the vacuum formed after EO’s departure? Having effectively completed its military mandate, could EO have helped sustain post-MHS efforts by cooperating with external diplomatic actors? Did EO inadvertently create unintentional consequences in Sierra Leone, such as the rise in national politics of new key players like the Kamajors? It is obvious that additional research on this particular case study can add to our understanding of the multi-dimensional and complex nature of PMFs and their impact on civil wars. Although the results of this case study are not applicable to other civil wars and cannot be generalized, they have proven that an external third party can potentially have a significant influence on a civil war via the creation of a MHS, hence through the contribution of ripeness.

⁴⁰⁸ John Hirsch, “Saving Sierra Leone”, *The Washington Post* (March 4, 1999).

CONCLUSION

Intra-state wars are often difficult to resolve peacefully due to their asymmetrical structure. The link between asymmetry and intractability can largely be found in the power dynamics of a conflict. A party which is overwhelmingly strong has no real incentive to negotiate with its counterpart; it would rather escalate the conflict until the attainment of unilateral victory. The goal then becomes the conquest and annihilation of the adversary in order to reap the benefits of such a victory. Given that asymmetrical civil wars have very limited chances of being resolved through negotiation, the very creation of symmetrical circumstances should open a window of opportunity for a negotiated resolution. Stated otherwise, symmetry can create ripe moments for negotiations.

If both parties are in a situation of parity (symmetrical structure), there is little hope for either of them to reach unilateral victory. Since individuals are *loss averse*, the more parties bear and suffer the costs associated with the prolongation of an *un-winnable* war, the more likely they will reconsider halting their course of action in favor of negotiations. Hence, a MHS is conducive to negotiations since it helps create ripeness, a concept which “centers on the parties’ perception of a Mutually Hurting Stalemate (MHS), optimally associated with an impending, past, or recently avoided catastrophe”⁴⁰⁹.

Ripeness entails that:

when the parties find themselves locked in a conflict from which they cannot escalate to victory and this deadlock is painful to both of them (although not necessarily in equal degree or for the same reasons), they seek an alternative policy or Way Out⁴¹⁰.

Therefore, if one can alter local conditions in order to create symmetry and hence a MHS, the timing might then become ripe for a negotiated resolution.

⁴⁰⁹ I.W. Zartman and M. Berman, *The Practical Negotiator*, 66-78.

⁴¹⁰ I.W. Zartman, “The Timing of Peace Initiatives: Hurting Stalemates and Ripe Moments”, 8.

The intervention of EO in Angola and Sierra Leone demonstrates that an external party is capable of *artificially*⁴¹¹ generating ripeness via the creation of one of its key components: Mutually Hurting Stalemates. In both cases used in this thesis, the local governments were weak, militarily and politically, and faced an immediate threat. Having exhausted most options available to them, they outsourced military assistance from a private military firm named EO. In both cases, EO managed to prop up the weaker party and create a costly situation whereby the protagonists to the conflict found themselves in a state of rough military power parity (symmetry; painful deadlock). A sort of equilibrium in which neither side was getting any closer to achieving its goals had developed due to EO who had managed to escalate and elevate the intensity of the conflicts.

After only two years of involvement in Angola, EO managed to alter the tide of war which had until then dominated the country's scene for over three decades. In its two year contract between 1992 and 1994, EO contributed to the creation of ripeness by way of generating a MHS, which resulted in the 1994 Lusaka Accords. Prior to EO's intervention in 1992, the rebel insurgency UNITA was disproportionately strong vis-à-vis Angola's government and hoped to lead an attrition war. However, the dynamics of the civil war dramatically changed just two years later as a MHS developed. The significant changes witnessed in all four indicators contributed to a stalemate whereby Angola's civil war took on a symmetrical structure in 1994. Both parties had thus reached an impasse where negotiations had become their best option. There was thus ripeness.

EO's experience in Sierra Leone was fairly similar. After only two years in Sierra Leone, EO had managed to generate a MHS in 1996 which subsequently led to the 1996 November Abidjan Accords. By redressing the conflict's symmetrical structure, EO created a MHS and significantly contributed to the creation of ripeness. By assisting the weak government of Sierra Leone, the situation had reached a military stalemate by 1996 where neither side could win. The RUF rebel insurgency finally had to face a worthy opponent. The MHS was the sum total of the joint impact of all four indicators: territory, military, economy, and politics. It

⁴¹¹ EO was intervening as a *manipulator*.

had become a zero-sum game as the civil war took on a symmetrical structure. Negotiations became a viable option since the costs associated with the war were becoming unbearable for the two central players. With the creation of a MHS, the moment was hence ripe for a negotiated resolution.

Yet, both Angola and Sierra Leone failed to achieve a permanent resolution to their civil wars following EO's intervention. Both Angola's Lusaka Accords and Sierra Leone's Abidjan Talks failed to provide long term peace. This however does not in any way negate the fact that EO successfully accomplished its military mandates and created MHSs seeing that the Ripeness Theory is not tautological⁴¹².

All this information thus sheds light on the fact that EO did indeed contribute to the creation of MHSs in Angola and Sierra Leone, and that these MHSs created ripeness, resulting in the Peace Talks. Due to the limited scope of this study though, the conclusions drawn from the two case studies do incite follow up questions that deserve future examination and merit future investigation. Furthermore, the conclusions drawn from the two case studies at hand must not be generalized and might not be valid in other cases. They are specific to the particular circumstances and conditions dominating the political and military climate of the two civil wars in question. Nonetheless, since it has been proven that a PMF has the ability to generate ripeness, and in light of donor fatigue and a lack of international will, the employment of PMFs should be explored and considered in similar conflicts where other options have been exhausted.

⁴¹² Ripeness is only a condition for the initiation of negotiations. It is thus not identical to its results.

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