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Book Review

**Tunde Decker: Matrix of Inherited Identity-A Historical Exploration
of the Underdog Phenomenon in Nigeria's Relationship
Strategies, 1960- 2011, Ibadan.**

Reviewer: Joshua O. Bolarinwa

The Collective and Cooperative Security of Preventing Failed States: An Interrogation of Small Arms Control in Liberia

By Bernard B. Fyanka*

Abstract

Intra-state conflict has been identified as a central or prevalent contributory factor to the failed state phenomenon. One of the major arteries that keep these conflicts alive is the volume and nature of arms proliferation within the country and region. Consequently by implication, arms proliferation becomes is a key stakeholder in state failure. During the Liberian conflict, the United Nations and ECOWAS intervened in the war at the levels of collective and cooperative security respectively using several diplomatic instruments including embargoes, legal legislation, voluntary weapons collection programs and DDR. The intent with regards to small arms control was to starve the conflict of weapons and so compel the belligerents to the negotiating table. This study examines the process and impact of these instruments and the extent to which they have enabled the post-war peacebuilding efforts. The paper holds that Liberia's DDR and voluntary weapons collection programs have largely contributed to the reconstruction process as a key aspect of security sector reforms.

Introduction

One of the greatest challenges to global security and international

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order in the post-Cold War era is the phenomenon of weak and failed states.¹ The plethora of security issues that immerse when a state goes into “sovereign remission” are vast indeed. They cover human, economic, political and to a very large extent regional deficits that can put considerable strain on regional cooperation and integration. In light of this collective and cooperative security retains a crucial role in preventing failed states. The case of Liberia is a classic example of a failed state that impacted the regional cooperative security arrangement very negatively. Beyond this, the spill over effect experienced in Sierra Leone and other neighbouring countries is a testimony to the failed state phenomenon.

A state is considered to have failed when it is unable to employ “responsible sovereignty” in providing legitimate political institutions; economic and social structures; and all levels of security within its borders.² At this stage, the “responsibility to protect” regional security is no longer a question, but an obligation that the associating nations must engage with. Theoretically, the concept of collective security should in principle prevent the progressive deterioration of the situation to this point.

Theoretical Considerations on Arms Control and Cooperative Security

A cursory look at early forms of arms control theory reveals that the working principles of arms control were essentially effected through the instrumentality of cooperative security. Scholars and practitioners such as John Steinbruner, Jonathan Dean and Stuart Croft maintained that arms control is meant to break the security dilemma and is aimed at mutual security between partners and overall stability.³ Mutual here presupposes cooperation between

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1. Fukuyama, Francis. *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the 21 Century*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004), 92.
 2. "A Conversation with Condoleezza Rice," *The American Interest* 1, 1; Autumn 2005, 47-50. See also Stewart Patrick. *Weak States and Global Threats: Assessing Evidence of "Spill overs,"* Centre for Global Development, Working Paper Number 73 January 2006, 7.
 3. US International Business Publications, United States Arms Control and International Security Policy Handbook: Strategic Information and Developments USA, March 2009.

two or more states which represents the defining principle of cooperative security. Hence the mutual agreements and understanding regarding arms control at the collective level of the United Nations and the cooperative level of The Economic Community of West Africa (ECOWAS) represented structures aimed at preventing the sovereign failure of the Liberian state.

Intra-state conflict has been identified as a central or prevalent contributory factor to the failed state phenomenon. One of the major arteries that keep these conflicts alive is the volume and nature of arms proliferation within the country and region. Consequently by implication, arms proliferation becomes a key stakeholder in state failure. During the Liberian conflict, the United Nations and ECOWAS intervened in the war at the levels of collective and cooperative security respectively using several diplomatic instruments. The intent with regards to arms control was to starve the conflict of weapons and so compel the belligerents to the negotiating table.

Historical Background to Small Arms Control and the War *Liberian Firearms Traffic Act of 1956*

The proliferation of firearms in Liberia before the Civil War essentially adopted state security patterns involving the army, police and other security services. The need for control only arose in relation to armed robbery, political clashes and civil unrest that occurred from time to time. The national legislation, Liberia's Firearms Traffic Act of 1956 was the dominant small arms control structure available prior to the war. The Act permitted private ownership of firearms in Liberia, requiring such firearms, with the exception of flintlock guns with unrifled barrels, to be registered.⁴ By the late '70s new socio-political realities in the country began to create an increasing demand for small arms and light weapons with an attendant pressing need for control.

The ascendance of Samuel Doe to Liberia's leadership was

4. See Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, (President Republic of Liberia), Executive Order No. 6 Total Ban on Firearms, Monrovia 27th December 2006, http://www.emansion.gov.lr/doc/EXECUTIVE%20ORDER%20_%206%20-%20Total%20Ban%20on%20Firearms.pdf (Accessed 26th October 2012).

predicated on growing instability that had started heating up with riots that broke out in Monrovia in 1979 due to political tensions of the '70s. The military made its entry via a coup that installed Doe a master sergeant as president in 1980.⁵ During Doe's decade of rule, an attempted coup by Thomas Quiwonkpa in 1985 failed, creating more instability. By 1989 the situation escalated when Charles Taylor joined the fray by invading the country through Côte d'Ivoire with his NPFL (National Patriotic Front of Liberia) fighters. The country imploded into a Civil War which ended in 2003.⁶

Arms Embargoes during the War

The increased tension and eventual war had created the ripe atmosphere for the flood gates of proliferation to be opened into the country. The Liberian Civil War was brutal. Both government and rebel groups were indicted of several human rights violations and eventually, in 1992 the first United Nations (UN) Arms embargo was placed on Liberia. In an attempt to support the efforts of ECOWAS at achieving peace in Liberia, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) issued Resolution 788 in 1992 which effectively established a blanket coverage arms embargo on Liberia.⁷

ECOWAS which inspired UN sanctions during this period had worked hard towards negotiating for peace amongst the warring factions. After the entry of Charles Taylor into government, a second phase of the war was initiated. The organisation's threats of economic sanctions had been effectively ignored by Taylor. ECOWAS had insisted that after the expiration of a thirty-day deadline for the warring factions to comply with the cease-fire negotiated on the basis of the Yamaussoukro IV agreement, it would commence sanctions on the warring factions.⁸ Shortly after Taylor refused to disarm, ECOWAS requested for the support of the United

5. "A House with Two Rooms: "Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia Diaspora Project," Advocates for Human Rights, DRI Press Saint Paul, Minnesota, 2009, 5.

6. Ibid, 5.

7. Paul Holton. United Nations Arms Embargoes: Their Impact on Arms Flows and Target Behaviour, Case Study: Liberia, 1992-2006, SIPRI Arms Transfers Project Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI 2007, 2.

8. Ibid, 4.

Nations in imposing arms embargoes and sanctions on all parties that were not working towards implementing the agreement. Consequently, UN Resolution 788 was passed by the Security Council on the 19th of Nov. 1992 effectively creating a blanket arms embargo on Liberia.⁹

The First Liberian War ended in 1997 with Charles Taylors Presidential victory. Subsequently, his subversive activities in Sierra Leone and the sub-region at large led to the second Liberian War which commenced from 1999-2003. As a consequence of Taylor's actions, the United Nations Security Council imposed new embargoes via Resolution 1343 on Liberia in 2001.¹⁰ The implication of this resolution was that Liberia's case became a first instance in which embargoes would be placed on an erring nation for proxy contravention of UN arms embargoes in another country which in this case was the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone. The end of Liberia's war in 2003 did not spell an end to UN embargoes, but rather Resolution 1343 of 2001 was renewed by Resolution 1521 of 2003. Between 2003 and 2012 other resolutions came into force over Liberia as can be seen in the table below.¹¹

9. Ibid, 5.

10. Ibid, 2.

11. Ibid, 2.

The arms control situation in Liberia was unique in the sense that although the conflict had ended in 2003, the post-conflict arms embargoes that were put in place in that year were directed at the government. This set a precedent in conflict management category arms embargoes.¹² The insecure atmosphere compelled the UN to extend the embargoes four consecutive times before eventually lifting them partially for a trial period in 2009. Under this, the Liberia government is obligated to inform the UN Sanctions Committee in advance of any arms shipments by the government while a total embargo still rested on non-state entities. At this point it is important to note that embargoes that are imposed by the United Nations usually follow the due process of passing through the security council after being vetted by the authority of Chapter VII, Article 41, of the United Nations Charter by at least 9 of the 15 members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), including all five permanent members (P5).¹³ By May 2016 the United Nations Security Council voted to end the sanctions on Liberia citing the stabilisation of the government.¹⁴

ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and Small Arms Control During the Liberian War

The United Nations Mission in Liberia and ECOMOG were responsible for monitoring the UN arms embargoes although, that was not their primary objective. The efforts of ECOMOG are however noteworthy, in efforts to control the influx of small arms and light weapons into Liberia during the period of the conflict. After ECOMOG forces were first deployed in August 1990, they laboured towards preventing further consignments of arms and ammunition from getting to Charles Taylor's NPFL.¹⁵ ECOMOG constituted both

12. Damien Fruchart, Paul Holtom and Siemon T. Wezeman, United Nations Arms Embargoes: Their Impact on Arms Flows and Target Behaviour, SIPRI Arms Transfers Project Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, SIPRI 2007, 8.

13. Ibid, 1.

14. SIPRI, "UN Arms Embargo on Liberia" https://www.sipri.org/databases/embargoes/un_arms_embargoes/liberia.

15. Paul Holtom. United Nations Arms Embargoes, their Impact on Arms Flows and Target Behaviour Case Study: Liberia, 1992-2006 (Stockholm International Peace Research Institute 2007), 9.

naval and army forces who were led by Nigerian contingents.

ECOMOG'S Naval Task Force (ENTF) was made up of vessels from Nigeria and Ghana. Before the introduction of the UN's resolution 788, the task force worked towards blocking weapons supplies to the NPFL by patrolling the beaches and scuttling smuggling attempts. On land, they recorded greater successes after capturing Robertsfield and Spriggs Payne airports. ECOMOG also recorded a number of seizures of trucks carrying arms and ammunition at the Liberian-Ivorian border.¹⁶ These efforts by the regional monitoring force went a long way in affecting the smooth running of Taylor's war machine.¹⁷

First Post-war Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Voluntary Weapons Collection Programmes from (VWCP) (1996-1997)

Encouraged by Mali's voluntary weapons collection programme that resulted into the decommissioning of about 3,000 small arms in a 'Flame of Peace' weapons destruction ceremony on 27 March 1996, Liberia carried out its own ceremony tagged 'Flame of Hope' on 26 July 1999. At the event, over 18,000 small arms and over two million pieces of ammunition collected during VWCP in the country were decommissioned.¹⁸ When the first Liberian War ended, disarmament programs were carried out between 22 November 1996 and 29 January 1997 and after the second Liberian War another as carried out from December 2003–March 2005. The first post-war DDR process carried out between, 1996–97 was able to only marginally reduce the number of weapons that came into circulation between 1989 and 1996.¹⁹

The first Liberian Disarmament process was part of the 1995 Abuja accord which the ECOWAS Committee of Nine Member Nations (Nigeria, Ghana, Niger, Burkina Faso, Benin, Togo, The

16. Ibid, 9.

17. Ibid, 9.

18. United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament, The making of a Moratorium on light Weapons, United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa Norwegian Institute of International Affairs Norwegian Initiative on Small Arms Transfers (UNRCPDA 2000), 12.

19. Paul Holton, "United Nations Arms Embargoes," 10.

Gambia, Cote d'Ivoire, and Mali) had agreed to extend for another 9 months after lengthy deliberations in Abuja on August 17. The Accord was extended to June 15, 1997, and in addition, they called for the disarmament of the various militia members.²⁰

Previous Attempts at DDR before the extension of the accord were faulty. In March 1994, a D&D process was initiated but broke down due to inter-factional fighting in August of that year. By February of 1995, a task force on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DD&R) was formed, comprising UNOMIL, ECOMOG, UN agencies, USAID, EU, and the LNTG. A new LNTG (Liberia National Transitional Government) was installed when the Abuja Accord was signed in August 1995 and the National Disarmament and Demobilization Commission (NDDC) joined the other governmental commissions on the task force. Finally, the end of 1995 saw the establishment of (United Nations Humanitarian Assistance Coordinating Office (UN-HACO) with the mandate to coordinate demobilization that would lead to reintegration efforts.²¹

When the DDR process took off an estimated 60,000 ex-combatants were to be disarmed and demobilized. It comprised a 12-week voluntary disarmament period in 18 locations throughout the country. Fighters identified themselves as members of eight factions with the addition of a small number of armed civilians. However, two factions (NPFL and ULIMO-K) accounted for over 83% for all disarmed personnel, almost 85% of the serviceable weapons, 82% of the unserviceable weapons and 93% of the ammunition collected by ECOMOG.²² The most important locations based in the inflow of disarming combatants were Barclays training Centre (BTC) in Monrovia (3,466 fighters, 17% of total), Voinjama (3,035 fighters, 14.9%), Kakata (2,888 fighters, 14.1%), Gbarnga (2,471 fighters, 12.1%) and Camp Naama (2,317 fighters, 11.4%). These five sites concentrated almost 70% of the total disarmed population. The table below shows the percentage of weapons collected from all factions.²³

20. Creative Associates International Inc (CAZI), "Assessment of the Demobilization and Disarmament Process in Liberia," A Report Prepared for United States Agency for International Development (USAID), (Washington June 1997), 7.

21. Ibid, 10.

22. Ibid, 18.

23. Ibid, 18.

Table 2: *Weapons Collected from Warring Factions.*

GROUP	Serviceable Weapons	Unserviceable Weapons	Ammunition
NPFL	5,261	1,226	188,804
ULIMO-K	1,351	276	949,019
AFL	291	35	11,026
ULIMO-J	305	194	32,583
LPC	503	36	31,492
LDF	86	15	5,376
	7797	1,782	1,218,300

Source: Creative Associates International Inc (CAZI), "Assessment of the Demobilization and Disarmament Process in Liberia", A Report Prepared for United States Agency for International Development (USAID), (Washington June 1997), 7.

Apart from the DDR process, other efforts like cordon and search operations also enabled the retrieval of a good number of weapons from the combatants and the general populace. This was accomplished through the efforts of several agencies including ECOMOG, HACO and UNOMIL. This is indicated in the table below.

Table 3: *DDR and Weapons Collection Programmes during the first Post War Period*

Event and timeframe	Implementing agency	Number of combatants disarmed	Number of weapons and ammunition collected	Number of weapons and ammunition destroyed
Disarmament and demobilization programme (D&D) 22/11/96-9/02/97	ECOMOG/ UNOMIL/ HACO	20,332	7,797 weapons (serviceable) 1,782 weapons (unserviceable) 1,218,300 rounds of ammunition	none
Cordon and search operations 9/02/97-13/08/97	ECOMOG	132	3,750 assorted weapons 152,500 rounds of ammunition	none
Ceremonial weapons 26/07/99	ECOMOG and UNOL	.	.	1,000
Weapons destruction completed 19/10/99	ECOMOG and UNOL	.	.	18,420 small arms 626 heavy machine guns 150 anti-tank launchers 63 mortars 26 recoilless rifles 9 guns and howitzers 3 rocket launchers 3,000,000 rounds of SAA

Source: Ryan Nichols, "Disarming Liberia: Progress and Pitfalls" in Nicolas Florquin and Eric G. Berman, *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns, and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*. Small Arms Survey, (Geneva 2005), 115.

It should be noted that this first DDR process was not very successful in mopping up most of the weapons in circulation. The entire process was structurally flawed due to certain inherent problems associated with the process.

Second Post-war DDR and Weapons Collection Programmes (2003–2005)

At the close of hostilities in the second phase of the Liberian Civil War, a peace accord was signed in Accra on 18 August 2003 which like the Abuja Accord, had certain stipulations geared towards controlling weapons and post-conflict peacebuilding.²⁴ The Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord (CPA) called for the setting up a Multinational Intervention Force by ECOWAS which would be responsible for creating the proper atmosphere for post-conflict DDR and peacebuilding. The accord also provided for an international stabilisation force that would provide security and also assist in the DDR process.²⁵

In September 2003, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the UNDP set out to structure a DDRR programme. The programme was largely anchored by UNDP who began by creating awareness through local musicians.²⁶ They proceeded to set up a working group that included, USAID, UNICEF and World Vision. The group designed a DDR process that would disarm about 53,000 ex-combatants over a five-month period. This led to the establishment of a National Commission for DDRR (NCDDRR) charged with coordinating all the different activities.²⁷ The National Commission for DDR, (NCDDRR) which was dependant on the DDR unit of UNMIL and UNDP, constituted a staff of over 400 people with broad representation from the International Contact Group for Liberia, the African Union, the United Nations, ECOWAS, armed groups and the Liberian Government. Coordination and planning for the programme were handled by the Joint Implementation Unit (JIU) of the NCDDRR. The JIU worked in coordination with a

24. Liberia, <http://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/desarme/mapa/liberiai.pdf>. (Accessed 10th Nov 2012).

25. Ibid.

26. Ibid.

27. Ibid.

Technical Coordination Committee in which various bodies of the UN participated.²⁸

By mid-2004, the UNDP projected that an estimated seventy-five million dollars would be needed for a comprehensive DDR programme covering 48,000 former combatants, at an average of \$1,550 per person. The funding of DDR is very crucial to the entire process and success rates of DDR are often tied to funding. In the case of the Liberian process the initial estimates of militants to be demobilized doubled by 100% by the time the process started thereby affecting the initial budget estimates.²⁹ Because of the swell in the ranks of combatants to be demobilized, about 160 million dollars was eventually required to cover participants of the DDR programme. Expenses for the DD stages were covered by the UNMIL purse while the RR part of the programme was subject to voluntary contributions.³⁰ These contributions were obtained via a Trust Fund for Liberia created by UNDP and administered by UNMIL, USAID and the European Commission.

The trust fund that was created received varied amounts of donations from several countries including the government of Japan which contributed 6.7 million dollars in March 2006 to UNICEF for providing aid to child soldiers that numbered over five thousand. The money was used to fund skill acquisition training or went to paying for basic school education for the children. The European Union also contributed over 10 (ten) million dollars to the fund for the purpose of DDR. In total, the European Union (EU) had contributed a total of 21.9 (twenty-one point nine) million dollars to an initial budget figure that stood at 71 (seventy-one) million dollars.³¹ The greater part of the DDR was largely funded by the trust fund via implementation strategies carried out by the UNDP.

The table below indicates the various contributions to the funds and the percentage they represent.³²

28. Ibid.

29. Liberia, 2008, 4.

30. Ibid, 4.

31. Ibid, 4.

32. Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (2003-08).

Table 4: *Contributors to DDR Trust Fund.*

DDRR Trust Fund 2004-07 Contributions (millions \$)		
European Commission	22.2	33%
United States	19.9	29%
Sweden	IDS 6.8	10%
UNMIL (devolution)	6.4	9%
UK DFID	5.4 8%	8%
Denmark	3.5	5%
Ireland	1.2	2%
Norway	1.2	2%
Switzerland	0.8	1%
CPR Small Arms Reduction	0.6	1%
Iceland	0.01	>1%
TOTAL	68	

Source: Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration, 2003-08. <http://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/desarme/mapa/liberia08i.pdf> (Accessed on 10th Nov 2012).

The contribution of the European Commission (EC) to the entire peacebuilding process is very noteworthy. The Commission had voted in 2003 to support the peacebuilding process in Liberia via a €50 million contribution. The running of the ECOWAS office in Monrovia and the operations of ECOMIL were financed by an initial €10 million that was made available.³³ Subsequently, the remaining €40 million was utilized for peace support operations, which together with the €10 million noted above, represented the EC's Post-conflict Rehabilitation and Capacity Building Programme (PCRCBP).³⁴

The DDR was structured to be massive, targeting various groups of combatants with a special focus on child soldiers. An estimated 100,000 ex-militia members were eventually penned down to be demobilised between December 2003 and November

33. Ryan Nicholas. The European Commission and Liberia: Supporting DDRR, United Nations Institute for Disarmament Research (UNIDIR 2006), 3-4.

34. Ibid, 4.

2004. An integration process would run immediately for the next four years.³⁵ The fighters were drawn from several armed groups, including 35,000 members of LURD, 14,000 members of MODEL, 16,000 pro-government paramilitaries or militia members, and 12,000 soldiers of the armed forces.³⁶ Apart from local combatants, 612 foreign combatants from other West African countries were reportedly demobilized by the UNMIL.³⁷

35. Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (2003-2008).

36. Ibid.

37. Nelson Alusula. "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia," *DDR and Human Security: Post-conflict Security-Building in the Interest of the Poor*; Center for International Corporation and Security (CICS), (Bradford, 2008), 12.

Table 5: *Structure of DDR*

Type of DDR	Multiple and massive DDDR targeting groups of combatants with special attention paid to child soldiers and the redistribution of political power
Groups to demobilize	More than 100,000 members of different armed groups and militias
Executive bodies	National Commission for DDR (NCDDRR)
Budget	A minimum of \$110 million
Timeline	Disarmament and demobilization from December 2003 to November 2004. Reinsertion and Reintegration from November 2004 to June 2008.
Status Synopsis	The process has been long and full of difficulties involving financing, corruption,

Source: Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, 2003-08. <http://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/desarme/mapa/liberia08i.pdf>, (Accessed on 10th Nov 2012).

The United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) started by drawing up the qualifying parameters for the disarmament and demobilisation process for both weapons and munitions.

Table 6: *Parameters for Weapons Disarmament.*

Approved Weapons	Qualified No. of personnel per weapon	Remarks
Rifle /Pistol	1	Serviceable weapon only or no entry (no major parts missing)
RPG Launcher	1	
Light MG/Medium MG/Heavy MG	2	Belt fed weapons only
60 mm Mortar	2	Tube, base plate and stand
81 mm Mortar	3	Tube, base plate and stand
106/120/155 Mortar/Howitzer	6	
AA Guns	4	

Source: Nelson Alusula, "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia" *DDR and Human Security: Post-conflict Security-Building in the Interest of the Poor*; Center for International Corporation and Security (CICS), (Bradford, 2008), 12.

Table 7: *Parameters for Munitions Disarmament.*

Approved Munitions	No. of personnel Qualified	No. of Munitions	Remarks
Grenades	1	2	
RPG (Rocket & grenades)	1	1	Together or no entry (not to be handed in as separate items)
Smoke Grenade	1	4	
Ammunition	1	150	Single or linked

Source: Nelson Alusula, "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia" *DDR and Human Security: Post-conflict Security-Building in the Interest of the Poor*; Center for International Corporation and Security (CICS), (Bradford, 2008), 12.

In order to participate in the DDR process, the UNMIL required that an ex-fighter must submit a firearm in good working order or 150 rounds of ammunition. Women and child soldiers who were part of arms groups were also included in the disarmament process making it one of the most inclusive to date. Between 2004 and 2005, around 11,000 children were demobilised. Of these, 8,523 were boys and 2,440 girls. UNICEF which contributed 1.3 million dollars to demobilizing child soldiers took charge of coordinating the process with support from other local and international bodies.³⁸

When the DDR process started it was divided into phases. First phase centred its focus on Monrovia. It started on the 7th of December 2003 however by the 27th of the month, logistical and infrastructural problems had caused the programme to be suspended temporarily for the purpose of restructuring. The number of ex-combatants that eventually showed up for DDR was for more than initially expected, this resulted in rioting because of dashed expectations regarding the allowance to be paid for demobilization³⁹ By the 15th of April 2004, the second phase took off after intensive publicity driven by UNMIL early in January. This

38. Liberia, <http://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/desarme/mapa/liberiai.pdf>. (Accessed 10th Nov. 2012), 3.

39. Liberia: Needs Assessment and Sector Report on Demobilization, Disarmament, Rehabilitation and Reintegration [Revised draft], 2004; Monrovia, 21 January.

phase which took place in four stationing camps built close to Monrovia and ended on the 14th of September while, the last phase started on 17 August in four more remote stationing camps and concluded at the end of November.⁴⁰

Table 8: *Disarmed Combatants per Group*

Disarmed combatants per group				
Group	Phase I	Phase II	Phase III TOTAL	TOTAL
AFL	4,164	6,830	1,260	12,254
LURD	48	19,721	14,504	34,273
MODEL	11	2,854	10,283	13,148
Government/militias	12	5,107	10,476	15,595
Other	8,890	16,957	1,902	27,749
TOTAL	13,125	51,469	38,425	103,019

Source: Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration, 2003-08. <http://escolapau.uab.cat/img/programas/desarme/mapa/liberia08i.pdf> (Accessed on 10th Nov 2012).

All three phases of the DDRR program took place in 11 separate areas around the country. UNMIL personnel collected, separated, and then destroyed weapons and ammunition at specific sites. Daily, explosives teams destroyed ammunition at disposal sites around the country, while the weapons themselves were temporarily stored in containers until they could be transported to Monrovia.⁴¹

Prior to their destruction, personnel collected, re-counted, and catalogued by type and serial number all weapons. An American company, ORD Safe, dismantled the weapons using circular saws and a large shredding machine. Local organizations used some of the scraps for parts. The rest was disposed of.⁴² By the time the entire DDR process concluded in November 2004 the NCDDRR, reported that a total of 103,019 ex-combatants had been disarmed, from the inception of the program accounting for a total of 28,314 weapons and 6,486,136 small arms ammunition.⁴³

40. Ibid.

41. Ryan Nichols. "Disarming Liberia: Progress and Pitfalls" in Nicolas Florquin and Eric G. Berman, *Armed and Aimless: Armed Groups, Guns and Human Security in the ECOWAS Region*, Small Arms Survey (Geneva 2005), 114.

42. Ibid, 114.

43. Nelson Alusula. "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia, 9.

Post DDR Small Arms Control in Liberia

No matter how effective DDR programmes are, it is impossible to obtain 100% arms mop up. A certain percentage of arms still remain in circulation. In the case of Liberia, the DDR was clearly not as effective as it should and the volatile nature of the region made Liberia a transit point for weapons. There was a need for long term control measures to be put in place to mop up the remaining arms that slipped through the filters of the DDR process.

Consequently, in 2006 the UNDP designed the Small Arms Control Programme in Liberia under the ECOWAS Small Arms Control Programme (ECOSAP). The central focus of the programme was to create an enabling environment for free surrender and voluntary weapons collection to take place. It would also utilize support to grassroots communities, civil society and national institutions to maximize human security and in the process aid peacebuilding and development.⁴⁴ The project was linked with UNDAF/UNDP Country Programme Annual Plan (CPAP) and was structured in three major components, namely (1) Arms for Development (AfD), (2) Capacity Building for the Liberia SALW National Commission (NC), Liberia National Police (LNP) and Civil Society and (3) Public Awareness.⁴⁵

The spearhead of the new project was the Arms for Development (AfD) Program which was designed to respond to, and help actualize Liberia's strategy for national recovery. It consisted of three approaches that included community participation and ownership, cross border coordination and capacity building and public awareness.⁴⁶

Regarding community participation, the targeted communities were expected to initiate grassroots disarmament in order to earn a weapons-free certificate. While the 2003 to 2005 DDR process was operated on the basis of individual incentive, the Arms for Development initiative were based on community incentives. Communities that successfully surrender arms catches or large

44. The Government of the Republic of Liberia, UNDP, "Small Arms Control Programme, Project Document," March 2007.

45. Ibid.

46. Ibid.

voluntary deliveries were allowed the choice of a development project as a reward. The communities were first issued a 'Weapons Free Certificate' and then encouraged to identify, design and execute a development project that would prove beneficial to the entire community in question.⁴⁷

After the initiation of The Liberian Community Arms Collection for Development (CACD) or AfD project in January 2006 the pilot phase of the programme which concluded in June, operated as a preparatory assistance phase of the UNDP within the framework of the Recovery and Reintegration Programme. The programme was first spread across four chiefdoms for the duration of the preparatory assistance phase.⁴⁸ After the pilot phase was concluded the programme was extended throughout the country via the District Development Committees (DDCs), which were trained by the UNDP Community Based Recovery (CBR) program to initiate voluntary weapons collection schemes in which the communities hand over arms in exchange for community-focused projects of their choice such as clinics, schools, agro-processing machines, solar energy, food and banks.⁴⁹

The successes recorded by CACD were largely dependent on public awareness and educational campaigns about the dangers of small arms and light weapons. The pilot initiatives in Lofa, Nimba, Grand Gedeh and Bong counties put the program on solid footing. The DDC's which the UNDP helped in setting up consisted of government officials, civil society representatives and private individuals. Their responsibility was to source information regarding local arms caches and alerts the police and UNMIL to collect them. Once the weapons have been identified and collected, the police would award the district a weapons-free status. The DDC would then approach UNDP with its priority needs. UNDP, following analysis of the needs (such as health clinics, sports fields and rural

47. Ibid.

48. Nelson Alusula. "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia," (2008), 25.

49. Yankah Kojo. "The Dangers of Small Arms in Liberia: A National Awareness Campaign Strategy," UNDP Liberia: Small Arms Control Programme, (UNDP 2007), 5.

feeder roads), would provide the technical support necessary for these projects.⁵⁰

The successful completion of disarmament activities in a particular community was pre-requisite to accessing a block grant. First, the community will be certified weapons free by the police and obtain a Weapons Free Certificate; UNDP will then allocate a minimum sum of US\$40,000 that shall be used to finance any the developmental projects mentioned above within the chiefdom. The monies are allocated following a rigorous process.⁵¹ In order to encourage the highest number of small arms collected, a top-up bonus was given to communities that have attained the following result.

Table 9: *Arms Collection and AfD Grants.*

Arms Collected	Related Grant
Less than 100:	US\$ 34,000
Between 100 & 124:	US\$ 36,000
Between 125 & 149:	US\$ 38,000
More then 150:	US\$ 40,000

Source: The Government of the Republic of Liberia, UNDP, "Small Arms Control Programme, Project Document," March 2007, 12.

By November 2007 the program had only collected 500 arms and 45,000 munitions. A total of 19 community projects had been implemented. These projects included administrative buildings, hospitals and schools.⁵² Community policing was utilized to supplement activities of the Liberian police so as to maintain its weapons-free status. The training of community stakeholders including youths, women and elders in basic intelligence skills enabled quick detection of arms in transit through the districts.⁵³

50. Nelson Alusula. "Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (DDRR) in Liberia," 25.

51. The Government of the Republic of Liberia (UNDP), "Small Arms Control Programme, Project Document," March 2007, 12.

52. Liberia: Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration (2003-2008).

53. Nelson Alusula, 25.

Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) and ECOWAS Small Arms Programme (ECOSAP)

As earlier noted the UNDP designed the Small Arms Control Programme in Liberia under ECOSAP the regional program run by the ECOWAS community. The program of action of ECOSAP was essentially coordinated by NATCOMs in the subject countries and in the case of Liberia; this was Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) which had emerged from the structure of the NCDDRR. The Commission was established in 2005 as a Technical Working Group but actively commenced work in March 2006 as the Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA).

The establishment of LiNCSA was Consistent with Article 24 of the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Related Materials, entitled: "Institutional and Implementation Arrangements. In March 2006, the transformation of the Transitional Working Group (TWG) on Small Arms and Light Weapons into Liberia National Commission on Small Arms (LiNCSA) was completed. The National Focal Point/Persons at the onset was Hon. Conmany B. Wesseh and it operated under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs pending the formal legislative enactment.⁵⁴

The general mandate of the Commission consisted of:-

‘formulating and ensuring the implementation of policies and measures aimed at addressing the problem of small arms proliferation and illicit trafficking; and to coordinate and monitor all private and public sector efforts to prevent, combat and eradicate the proliferation and the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons within and across the borders of Liberia’.⁵⁵

LiNCSA's activities came into full drive with the Community Arms for Development Programme that was launched in 2006. In November of that year, the Commission held the first of a series of

54. The Republic of Liberia, Liberia National Commission on Small Arms and Light Weapons (LiNCSA) "Report on the Implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action to Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Illicit in Trade Small Arms and Light Weapons in all its Aspects (UNPoA)," January 2010, 2.

55. Ibid, 3.

Consultative Conference on Armed Violence for the nation. The conference brought together youth groups, students, government officials and the entire public. The Commission collaborated with ECOSAP to commence Liberia's Small Arms and Light Weapons National Survey in October 2007. This survey was very crucial in creating databases for the control of small arms and light weapons in the country.⁵⁶ Workshops and training have also been conducted by the commission in collaboration with other relevant agencies in several control efforts.

The commission recorded its first legislative success when through its efforts and in collaboration with the Liberian Action Network on Small Arms (LANSA), the ECOWAS Convention on Small Arms and Light Weapons and their Related Materials was ratified in June 2009.⁵⁷ In November of the same year, the Commission organized a two-day training workshop for members of key security institutions on the management of stockpiles⁵⁸ and followed up with intense community mobilization and massive sensitization campaign for the test elections in Montserrado County Liberia, an intervention described as very useful and timely, the lack of which could have resulted in serious electoral violence.⁵⁹

LiNCSA's collaboration with UNDP's Small Arms Control Programme through the Community Arms for Development Programme yielded a total of 552 arms and 125,461 rounds of ammunition. 1566 unexploded ordinance (UXOs) were also collected and demolished by UNMIL. Between 18 July 2006 and 28th December 2007, 38 arms, 1421 ammunition, 111 magazines and accessories, 17 explosives items were also collected and destroyed.⁶⁰

56. Ibid, 7 & 8.

57. Ibid, 7.

58. Ibid, 5.

59. Mohamed Lamine Coulibaly. "ECOWAS ECOASP Progress Report January to September 2011, Presented at the 7th ECOSAP Steering Committee Meeting October 6, 2010," 7.

60. United Nations Programme of Action Implementation Support System, "Country Profile Liberia," <http://www.poa-iss.org/CountryProfiles/CountryProfileInfo.aspx?Col=111&pos=30> (Accessed on 21st November, 2012).

The Legal Framework for Small Arms Control

In the wake of the two-phase Civil War, the problem of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons was very visible. Post-war DDR's and weapons collection programmes were on; however, the need to restructure small arms control legislation to meet the prevailing realities is of utmost necessity. To further strengthen the legal framework for small arms control in the country, the Liberian president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on the 27th of December 2006 issued an Executive Order No 6. for a total ban on firearms.⁶¹ The order sighted the fact that although the 1956 Act had permitted the ownership of firearms after registration, the registration process fell into abeyance in the years of conflict and as such the government believes that the presence of firearms in Liberia at that present time except those that are permitted in accordance with United Nations Security Council Resolution 1683, presents a grave danger to public safety and national security.

Consequently with the intention of achieving a firearms-free Liberia, until such time as the security situation may permit the introduction of an appropriate and effective firearms registration system for privately held firearms and ammunition, the executive order effectively suspended among several others the right of Liberians to own arms. All previous registration of arms under the 1956 Act was forfeited.⁶²

A key requirement of the United Nations Program of Action (UNPoA), was the need for participating states to adopt adequate legislation that covered offences regarding possession, trade, manufacture, stockpiling and usage of small arms and light weapons. Consequently, in an attempt to implement the UNPoA the process of amending the 1956 Act was initiated in 2006. A competitive tender for revising the law was thrown out and after careful consideration, the contract was awarded to a local NGO, the Centre for Democratic Empowerment (CEDE).⁶³ Via the

61. President of the Republic of Liberia, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Executive Order No 6. "Total Ban on Firearms," 27 December, 2006.

62. Ibid.

63. Abiodun Alao. "Evaluation of Small Arms Control and Micro Disarmament Programme in Liberia," Evaluation done for UNDP/BCPR Small Arms and Disarmament Unit; September, 2006, 8.

services of a consultant, the centre undertook the process of revising the law. The use of focus groups was implemented to acquire broad-based consultation with several communities throughout the country. Government and civil society were also involved as key stakeholders that eventually produced a Draft Firearms Control Act. In the draft act, the Liberian police would be saddled with the responsibility of registration and monitoring of firearms in the country.⁶⁴ The final draft of the proposed National Firearms Control Act was presented to the Technical Working Group (Later to become Liberia National Commission on Small Arms -LiNCSA) on the 21st of April 2006.⁶⁵ The draft was subsequently forwarded to the legislative house for adoption and the bill was finally passed into law on 12th May 2016.

Conclusion

The extent to which legal structures like the 1956 Fire Arm Traffic Act, the ban and subsequent amendments to the Act went in controlling the proliferation and use of small arms and light weapons is very difficult to judge. However, the combination of these processes with the DDR's and weapons collection programs that followed had far-reaching impacts. More importantly, the role played by embargoes and sanctions during the long period of conflict represents classic forms of collective and cooperative security strategies to mitigate the conflict. The failure to redress the progression to a state of sovereign collapse in Liberia was a function of a confluence of factors that were at cross purposes with the goal of cooperative security. The inability of the cooperative nations in the region to desist from funnelling weapons into the conflict for financial and geopolitical gain is a prime culprit.

64. UNDP Press Release. "Revised Draft of Firearms Act Presented to Technical Working Group on Small Arms," April 24, 2006, Monrovia.

65. Ibid.