



Crossing Boundaries. Sub-Regional Conference on Civil Society and Security Sector Cooperation

30 April – 1 May 2008 – Mamba Point Conference Hall – Freetown, Sierra Leone

Conference Report

Organized by
Conciliation Resources in partnership with
Mano River Women's Peace Network
Search for Common Ground/Talking Drums Studio
Centre for Development and Security Analysis

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Abbreviations

CBO	Community-Based Organization
CEDSA	Centre for Development and Security Analysis
CID	Criminal Investigation Department
CR	Conciliation Resources
CS	Civil Society
DFID	Department for International Development (UK)
DISEC	District Security Committee
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ETC	Emergency Travel Certificate
GOSL	Government of Sierra Leone
INGO	International Non-Governmental Organization
JIC	Joint Intelligence Committee
MARWOPNET	Mano River Women's Peace Network
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MRU	Mano River Union
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSC	National Security Council
NSCCG	National Security Council Coordinating Group
ONS	Office of National Security
PROSEC	Provincial Security Committee
RSLAF	Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SCS	Strengthening Citizen Security
SFCG/TDS	Search for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studios
SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SSG	Strategic Situation Group
SSR	Security Sector Reform

Day One

1. Opening Ceremony

The meeting was called by the facilitator Mr. James Vincent. Christian and Muslims prayers were offered. This was followed by renditions of the national anthems of the three Mano River Union (MRU) countries – Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

1.1. Welcome address – Conciliation Resources

Sofia Goinhas, West Africa Programme Director, Conciliation Resources (CR)

Ms. Goinhas welcomed all participants and thanked them for coming. She explained that the conference sought to facilitate networking and experience sharing between civil society (CS) and the Security Sector institutions across the MRU countries in order to address key challenges in sub-regional security policies and implementation. She noted that the aim of the conference was to close the existing gaps in communication and cooperation between the two sectors with the ultimate intention to bring together practitioners and professionals of both sectors to utilize their capacities and experiences for peaceful development in the MRU countries.

Ms Goinhas outlined the objectives of the conference as follows:

- Familiarize participants on the security structures within the MRU countries
- Identify key challenges within the MRU countries' security sector policies and implementation that relate to citizens' involvement in security issues
- Exchange ideas and lessons learned on the role of civil society in the security sector
- Facilitate network development and strengthen cooperation among civil society groups in the MRU countries
- Produce a 'Statement' with Recommendations for sustained and enhanced Civil Society and Security Sector Cooperation in the MRU countries.

Furthermore, participants were informed that the conference is a part of a wider "Strengthening Citizen Security" (SCS) Project being coordinated by CR in partnership with the Centre for Development and Security Analysis (CEDSA), the Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) and Search for Common Ground and Talking Drums Studio (SFCG/TDS). She concluded her address introducing Mr. James Vincent as an experienced facilitator who also works with security sector reform issues.

1.2. Background to the Strengthening Citizens' Security Project

Rosalind Hanson-Alp, West Africa Programme Coordinator, CR

Ms Hanson-Alp explained that the SCS Project was developed in response to some of the recommendations of the 2005 Security Sector Review in Sierra Leone. She stated that this 15 months pilot project is unique in terms of its focus on civil society engagement with the security sector and in that it aims at cultivating dialogue between civilians and security sector personnel for promotion of citizens' security. The key operational areas of the project are Kenema and Kailahun where CR works with formal partners (aforementioned) and informal partners like the Office of National Security (ONS), the Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP). Within this project, CR's partner organization MARWOPNET has already organized a sub-regional conference on the specific issue on women's role in security, entitled 'Women and Security'.

In conclusion, Ms. Hanson-Alp emphasized that the main purpose of the conference is to bring together grass-root populations, civil society organizations and the security sector to explore how they can collaborate and interact.

1.3. Opening statement for Government of Sierra Leone

Dr. Raymond Kabia, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development

After having expressed his pleasure to be at the conference and satisfaction about the meeting of MRU representatives to discuss security issues, Dr. Kabia underlined the importance of the 15th Protocol of the MRU which made provisions for the establishment of joint border, technical and confidence building committees for security and internal affairs for regional stability. Furthermore, he gave assurance of the Sierra Leone Government's commitment to play an active role in ensuring regular security meetings of the above committees for the security of the MRU borders. He promised to alert the MRU Secretariat about the need to call joint border security committees at the earliest possible time. The speaker also reiterated the need for more effective structures to promote collaboration between the CS and the Security Sector. He encouraged participants to make strong recommendations that would be considered by the revitalized committee meetings.

1.4. Statement one for the MRU

John Vincent, Representative of the Secretary General, MRU Secretariat

Mr. Vincent conveyed greetings from the MRU Secretary-General and congratulated the organizers of the conference for their timely initiative.

He recalled earlier effort to encourage civil society in the MRU to form an umbrella organization and said that the conference served to remind everyone about the security loopholes that exist in the MRU countries. Mr. Vincent reiterated the value of the 15th Protocol as an instrument of collaboration and harmonization of security mechanisms in the MRU sub-region. Participants were informed that the Ivory Coast will become a Member of the MRU in May this year. Attention was drawn to the fact that the conference would serve

as an early warning mechanism, which will provide ample opportunities for maintaining peace in the MRU sub-region.

1.5. Statement two for DFID, Government of United Kingdom

Garry Horlacher, Security Sector Coordinator, UK Department for International Development (DFID)

Mr. Horlacher expressed the pleasure of the UK Government to be sponsoring the SCS Project by CR of which this Conference is part of the project's sub-regional component. He noted the long standing relations between the UK Government (through DFID) and the Sierra Leone Security Sector. Mr. Horlacher underscored the need for ownership of the various security sector architectures in the three countries and emphasized the need to engage people from all levels in the security arrangements, as there is the tendency to forget citizens in such arrangements. In order to guarantee citizens' safety, their concerns should be taken into account and efforts made to engage them in order to gain their trust

Mr. Horlacher applauded the work of CR and her partners in Sierra Leone in striving for enhanced communications and relations between urban and rural communities and the security sector. Participants were encouraged to take this opportunity to articulate their concerns and making relevant proposals for strengthening CS and Security Sector interactions.

2. Security structures within the MRU Countries

2.1. Sierra Leone

2.1.1. *Presentation by Larry Bassie (ONS)*

Mr. Bassie gave a background to the SSR (Security Sector Review) measures taken in Sierra Leone. The SSR process has its genesis in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) signed between the United Kingdom (UK) as the main funding agency of security matters and the Government of Sierra Leone (GOSL) during the period of 1999-2007. The SSR was a participatory process. It created the Office of National Security (ONS) in 2002 as the lead agency. It included the reform of the SLP and the RSLAF as primary security institutions responsible for internal and external security and the establishment of the ONS by the National Security and Central Intelligence Act.

Mr. Bassie described the roles and membership of the National Security Council (NSC) which is the highest forum for considering matters of national security for Sierra Leone. Its membership includes H.E. the President as chairman and key cabinet Ministers, Sub-committees of the NSC in closing the National Security Council Coordinating Group (NSCCG), the Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC), the Strategic Situation Group (SSG) and the Provincial and District Security Committees (PROSECs and DISECs).

Mr. Bassie described key reform measures as follows:

- (a) Army: establishment of civilian control of the army through various directorates, clear definition of the roles of police and military, rightsizing of the army from 17,500 to 10,500 men.
- (b) Capacity built to respond to crimes and outbreaks of public disorder, institutional reforms (establishment of Family Support Units to address domestic violence and a committee for complaints against Police excesses), decentralization of police command and community participation in police operations through Local Police Partnerships Boards.

In terms of external oversight of the security sector there are plans for developing parliamentary oversight. There is need to strengthen civil society participation in SSR especially with regard to popularizing it in grassroots communities.

Key challenges to SSR include:

- Sustainability of political will and the need for government ownership of the entire SSR process
- Resistance to reform by the security forces and civil servants, weak capacity of the state/non-state actors and limited analytical and planning skills
- Delay in funding
- Youth employment and harnessing wealth from natural resources.

In conclusion, Mr. Bassie opined that in spite of the challenges to SSR, Sierra Leone has made great strides given the short space of time after ending the war in 2002, particularly through the integration of human security concept and efforts to enhance civil society and security sector collaboration.

2.1.2. *Question and Answer Session*

- What is the difference between intelligence and information?

The main difference between intelligence and information is that the former is covert and derived from covert sources. It is not accessible to the public. On the other hand, information is open, accessible and derived from open sources. Other categories of classified information are: top secret, secret, confidential and restricted.

- What is being done to promote greater civil society involvement in the security sector, especially with regard to making the security mechanisms more open and friendly to women?

The integration of CS into the security sector is done in a structured manner. There is provision for community or organization representatives nominated by their constituents to be co-opted into the security committees. This is in recognition that such representatives will be in a position to explain issues affecting the wider

community to their groups. There is a bid to bring security to the doorsteps of the people. PROSEC meetings are held in various regions.

- What is the new quality of the Armed Forces in Sierra Leone that makes them distinct from the old Army?

The distinctive quality of the new army personnel is their accountability to the public. The new training has impacted positively on the military. Public perception studies indicate that civil society now has more confidence in them. Now the military is confined to barracks. On the whole, the Sierra Leone military is a more credible force compared to others in the sub-region.

- What mechanisms exist for the reintegration of discharged army personnel?

Downsizing the army is being done in structured phases, which minimizes threats to security. Discharged officers were disarmed. Those who opted out were given a financial package and skills training.

- What strategies have been put in place for training army and police personnel to be more conscious of their role to secure the lives of ordinary people?

Even though lower and middle level cadres have been given some training, it is recognized that more needs to be done to enable personnel meet the requirements for providing an enabling environment for the people. Some Police Partnership Boards are functioning effectively while others are not. However, civilians should make their presence felt on the Boards to ensure sustained ability upon the phasing out of the CR project.

2.2. Liberia

Presentation by Frederick Gbemie (Secretary of the Security Pillar/LDRC)

After Mr. Gbemie had expressed his delight to be present at this conference, he stated that the rationale for SSR in Liberia was in response to the irregularities that were in existence even before the outbreak of the war eg, mismanagement of resources and a corresponding lack of capacity among the state security actors to cope with the situation. He opined that the reform process in Liberia was people-centred based on a conceptual shift from state and individual security to human and personal security. Initially consultations were held across the country to ensure inclusion of civil society. There has been recognition of the need for strategic direction, institutional participation, capacity development and adequate territorial protection.

The Liberian security architecture was described as follows:

- The National Security Council (NSC) is the highest policymaking body in matters of security. It is chaired by H.E. the President.
- The Office of National Security (ONS) coordinates the activities of the National Security Council. It approves all security matters including formulation of strategies for civil society involvement.

- The Ministry of Justice and Defence coordinates the activities of the Police, Immigration, Fire Service and other bodies connected with the security sector.
- The National Security Strategy gives direction to the operations of the security sector reform process.
- SSR working groups that include civil society organizations have been established.
- There is a national Bureau of Investigations and Drug Enforcement Agency.
- Training of the Liberian Army is undertaken by private security agencies under the supervision of the US Government and the Government of Liberia. The Police are trained by UNMIL.
- It is envisaged that changes will occur later in order to streamline existing structures, especially transform the police into a national force and set up an Anti-Corruption Commission.

It was pointed out that a major challenge facing the SSR process is how to absorb the 17,000 army officers that were laid off into the economic system.

Furthermore, civil society involvement in the process will be encouraged through the creation of an enabling environment to help them determine what constitutes threats to their national security. In this connection, moves will be made to empower knowledgeable civil society groups to participate in community policing fora which information collected would be incorporated into the national information gathering system.

2.2.1. Question and Answer Session

- Administration of security in the counties

Every security arm is represented in the counties. Coordination of their activities is done at the centre. Regular joint security meetings are held and reports are channeled through heads of various institutions on to H.E. the President. Cross cutting issues are dealt with by all actors to minimize overlapping.

- Relationship between the state security sector and the armed component of the Liberian Police

An integrated approach is adopted: the Ministry of Justice and Defence coordinates the activities of the Police and other security bodies.

- Strategies used for channeling human security issues into the security structure

Security personnel are made to realize the importance of human security issues through appropriate training in this direction.

- How are cadet graduates mainstreamed into the armed forces

Cadet graduates will be mainstreamed in accordance with new security sector reform procedures.

- The integration of cross border issues in the security sector

Constant and regular meetings are held to facilitate frequent exchange of information. The over-arching goal of the border policy is the protection of lives and property of Liberian citizens.

- Impact of inclusive approaches to SSR on cohesion of the security forces

Efforts are being made to harmonize national security with local government authorities, to ensure greater cooperation of the defence forces to have greater regard for civilian authority (chief authority). This is in line with efforts to demilitarize the security sector.

- Preference for an individual act or an overall act to govern national defence

There is a preference for a uniform national defence act to be derived from the national security strategy. This act will have to go through the parliamentary law-making process in order to become law.

2.3. Guinea

2.3.1. *Presentation by Mamadouba Camara (Ministry of Interior)*

The speaker explained that the overall focus of the Security Sector in Guinea is national security. For this purpose, information is gathered and disseminated to the government. Problems that impinge on state security are closely monitored.

The architecture of state security was described as follows:

- The Security department is headed by the Minister of Security
- There is a General Directorate of Police Services
- The central Directorate in charge of security has the following arms:
 - o Police
 - o Criminal Investigation Department (CID)
 - o Border Units (Immigration)
 - o Directorate of General Intelligence
 - o National Office for Drug Abuse
 - o Directorate to fight against corruption
 - o Confidence Building Directorate
- Regional Directorates (Prefectures) to manage the authority of jurisdictional units

- Headquarters for urban safety and security – manned by special Police Officers to carry out specific operations eg road safety.
- Airport security. They are managed by technical directors and personnel from headquarters.
- The National Gendarmerie. This structure is headed by the Minister of Defence like in other armies. It is managed by the Chief of Staff at communal headquarters.
- Each region has a military commander, a customs unit and military battalions. There are also regional and prefectorial headquarters.

2.3.2. *Question and Answer Session*

- Distinction between the functions of the regular Police and that of the Gendarmerie

The main distinction between the Gendarmerie and the Police lies in their sphere of operations: Whilst the former operate in the interior, the latter operate in the cities and towns. Both bodies cooperate. However, in the event of any conflict between them, the matter is referred to security committees for mediation. The Gendarmerie is closely related to the military and they are under the authority of the Ministry of Defence.

- Procedures for recruitment of personnel into the regular army

Recruitment into the army poses challenges because of fear of recruiting unsuitable personnel. The Guinean army is mainly concerned with matters relating to external aggression. The Police sometimes with cooperation from the Gendarmerie manage issues of internal unrest.

- Mechanisms for involving civil society in national security operations

Civil society are recognized as key actors in maintenance of security given their advantageous position to furnish state actors with much needed information about incidents in their communities. They are encouraged to apprehend armed robbers and hand them over the police. They are compensated for this. This has been yielding dividends as fewer attacks are now reported. Civil society also sit on the surveillance committee.

- Guinea's position on the continued occupation of Yenga in Sierra Leone by Guinean troops.

The Yenga occupation is not considered a security threat. Sierra Leone is regarded as a sister country and so Guinea would not do anything to jeopardize her security. Furthermore, the peace of Guinea depends largely on the security situation in the neighboring countries.

- Identification of challenges facing the Guinean government that are likely to necessitate security sector reform

Guinea has not contemplated reform in the security sector as all the sectors are functioning well. However, the state is committed to denounce illegal activities, protect civilians and encourage improved civil-military relations. One major advantage in enhancing civil-military relations is that the Minister of Internal Security is a police officer; he has been engaged in organizing meetings at national and regional levels to discuss issues and concerns involving civil society and government engagement.

- Relationship between the sous-prefect and the military personnel in the communities.

The Sous-Prefect (Governor), who is a civilian, is the overall authority in the regions. The Director of Safety and Security, a military officer, is directly responsible to him. In spite of this administrative structure, there have been cases of insubordination on part of the military. This is attributed to indiscipline and lack of training.

2.4. Statement by Brig. Alfred Nelson-Williams, Sierra Leone¹

In his statement the Brig. Nelson-Williams noted that there are linkages between security and development as there are development costs to insecurity. The new concept of human security developed by the UNDP broadens the understanding of security by including eg, removal of threats to jobs, health and environment security, human rights, good governance and other elements that reduce threats to human survival. Concerning state boundaries, the speaker stated that these were often cut across cultural and tribal boundaries. In view of this, he called to cooperation, collaboration and coordination for the promotion of democracy and stability in the sub-region. This, he said, can be achieved through joint border security patrols. The speaker went on to highlight the Yenga issue as one of the challenges to the security of Sierra Leone's border with Guinea. He emphasized that the citizens of Yenga are being deprived of their human security through forceful taxation, lack of access to their farm lands and other repressive practices, all of which is increasing their poverty. Brig. Nelson-Williams called on civil society to get involved in settling the dispute so as to complement Government efforts. He called for joint efforts to resolve the problem diplomatically, socially and politically. The overarching goal of Sierra Leoneans is peaceful co-existence and promotion of harmonious relations. He concluded that the security architecture in Sierra Leone is well developed and called on others to learn from its best practices.

3. Experience Sharing - Working Groups

Three working groups of participants were formed and met to discuss the following:

1. Cross border security
2. Formal information flows set up between civil society and the security sector
3. Joint activities between civil society and the security sector

Each working group included participants with direct local experience of the subjects and those with policymaking and implementation interests and responsibilities from both CS and SS.

¹ Brigadier Nelson-Williams requested the floor to make this statement on behalf of the RSLAF

Day Two

3.1. Group Reporting

3.1.1. *Group I: Cross Border Security*

- Drivers should be discouraged from receiving money for customs dues from passengers. The matter should be taken up with the driver's unions in the MRU countries. Citizens should recognize the role of unions as instruments for redress.
- Communications equipment should be installed along the borders to minimize smuggling.
- Citizens' security and their human rights will be ensured if immigration laws in the MRU countries are made uniform.
- There should be more exchange visits between security sector personnel in the MRU countries to promote more cordial relations.
- Massive illegal immigration in each other's country leads to prolonged stay and this poses a security threat as persons in this category are not documented. There is a need to devise strategies for addressing the issue. The idea of registration of citizens should be enforced in all countries.
- Citizens traveling along the borders should form interest groups to address issues of harassment and extortion.
- There is a need to stabilize charges levied at the borders.

3.1.2. *Group II: Formal information flows set up between civil society and the security sector*

- Even though the idea of human security is not a major focus in Guinea, citizens are given a free hand to make reports about excesses of security personnel.
- Guinea should take pro-active measures for greater involvement of civil society in the security sector.
- Guinea should embark on reforms in the security sector in order to make progress and minimize the possibility of full blown conflict
- Guinean participants should inform their government that Sierra Leone and Liberia delegations consider the Yenga issue a threat to security
- Revenue generation should be an integral part of the security system to meet the high costs of maintaining the structures for current information flow. Civil society working groups should be supported for effective operations.
- More efforts should be made for prompt information sharing in all MRU countries.

3.1.3. *Group III: Joint Activities between civil society and the security sector*

From the Sierra Leone example it was seen that joint social activities are undertaken by civilians and security forces. Mechanisms for addressing the communication gap have been set up. The main problem however with these mechanisms eg, TDS radio programmes, is that they cannot be sustained due to lack of funding.

By comparing the different initiatives in the three MRU countries the following similarities and differences were identified:

Similarities

- Communication channels are kept open among the three countries eg, Guinea's involvement in quelling Sierra Leone's civil war in 2001.
- Civilians and police relations are improving in some areas and they have a right to complain about excesses, although the complaints systems are largely within the police force and lack impartiality.

Differences

- Comprehensive reform of the security sector undertaken in Sierra Leone
- Some reform embarked upon in Liberia but non in Guinea

The following challenges were identified:

- Promote the inclusion of women in the security sector. Women should be given leadership roles
- Mobilize greater support from the traditional leaders
- Enhance opportunities for joint activities in sports and drama activities
- Pay more attention to provisions of livelihood skills for youth in the three MRU countries
- Management of donor implementation of projects. Programmes to ensure partnership
- Find ways to increase the performance of the security sector

4. Country Groups

Participants were divided into three groups representing the three MRU countries. Each group was requested to reflect on the issues raised in the previous plenary session, marshal the various points brought out and consolidate these into one statement.

A Drafting Group comprising two representatives from each country (one civil society and one security sector member) was mandated to draft a 'Statement' with Recommendations

for sustained and enhanced Civil Society and Security Sector Cooperation in the MRU countries (see Annex 6.1.).

5. Evaluation and Closing

5.1. Evaluation

The conference was perceived as an eye-opener about civil society interaction with the security sector. It had given participants insights into the potential security threats in the MRU sub-region and indications of how to tackle them. Information has also been provided about the workings of the security architecture and its variations in the MRU sub-region eg, the Ministry of Justice in Liberia coordinates the activities of the para-security agencies unlike in Sierra Leone where coordination of security is done by the Ministry of Defence.

5.2. Follow-up activities

1. Publicity

Participants committed to publishing and disseminating the outcome of the conference at all levels.

2. Structures and mechanisms

A working group committee comprising representatives of credible civil society organizations should be set up to:

- exchange information about the security situation in the three countries
- follow-up on the recommendations of the conference
- relay the statement produced at the conference to the Mano River Union Secretariat. The Secretariat should then transmit the Statement to heads of State of the MRU countries.

The Working Committee should operate through various media eg, the internet, telephone and through Mano River Women's Peace Network. Periodic meetings should be held at the country level and thence in other countries.

3. Dissemination of concluding statement

The Statement developed by the Drafting Group and agreed by all participants should be disseminated to various representatives at the conference and efforts made to table it through to parliamentary committees in each country. Feedback on the statement should be obtained from various arms of the security sector eg, the ONS, PROSEC and DISEC in Sierra Leone. This should be relayed to the appropriate authorities. It should be included in the brief for the President.

4. Strategic actions

- Existing structures should be used to establish virtual chat rooms for information sharing

- Commence visitation to all border areas to ascertain the security loopholes identified at the conference. Action will then be taken if these are confirmed.
- Various constituencies, eg traders, armed forces, MARWOPNET chapters and the General Assembly will be sensitized about malpractices eg, impersonation, harassment of traders, smuggling, passport fraud in the MRU countries along the border areas and actions taken to stop these practices using the regional approach.
- Existing newsletters will be used to publicize issues of national security eg, by the Centre for Development and Security Analysis and the African Democratic Foundation.
- All identification documents should be harmonized in the three countries.
- Training sessions should be organized for civil society about their rights and obligations within the security system.
- All international conventions should be legalized.
- Briefing session will be held with the various bodies in the security sector such as:
 - o The inter-security meeting and the joint force command in Sierra Leone. Journalists will be briefed at the next press conference about the conference
 - o The standing Committee on National Security and Defence and other stakeholders in Liberia
 - o The Federation of Liberia Youth and community organizations in Liberia
 - o The monthly meeting of PRA
 - o Community radio stations
 - o Monthly meeting of the ABC Development West Africa Centre and at provincial level in Kambia
 - o West Africa Network for Peacebuilding and the International NGO Forum

5. Additional topics to be addressed

- Human trafficking
- Drug and small arms abuse
- Sea boundaries in order to address the issue of sea piracy
- Effective linking up with ECOWAS

6. Annexes

6.1. Mano River 'Statement' with Recommendations for sustained and enhanced Civil Society and Security Sector Cooperation in the MRU countries.

A Mano River Statement for Sustained and Enhanced Civil Society – Security Sector Cooperation

The Mano River Union and member states should

- Strengthen the Mano River Union Secretariat so that it can improve the performance of its coordinating functions.

For example to effectively implement joint border patrols, review protocols, exchange learning and convene periodic joint meetings to address security challenges such as: the border area of Yenga between Sierra Leone and Guinea, human, drug and arms trafficking and the downsizing of military forces in Sierra Leone and Liberia.

- Expedite the issuing of the ECOWAS passports in their respective countries.
- Widely disseminate protocols among the populace in more accessible formats such as printed materials and radio broadcasts.
- Harmonize and publicly display cross border tariffs to ensure free movement for MRU citizens.
- Publicly commit to expose and eradicate corruption and other abuses by security personnel and ensure best practice.

The Governments of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone should

- Remain committed to mobilize resources for the security sector to function effectively.

For example improve conditions of service, provide adequate human resources and equipment and build the capacity of security sector personnel.

- Renew commitment to the Mano River Union and its protocols.
- Promote awareness raising activities about security sector structures among the populace and create more opportunities to dialogue with and engage civil society.

- Encourage Parliament/ Legislature to take their rightful role in providing oversight of the security sector.
- Pay special attention to the challenges faced by women in the security sector and to violations perpetrated against them.
- Provide National ID cards to their citizens that are recognized within the Mano River Union.

The Government of Liberia should

- Ensure the sustainability and national ownership of the Security Sector Reform process.

Civil Society Representatives should

- Create a *Sub-Regional Working Group on Security* to support the Mano River Union secretariat and monitor its performance.
- Encourage a broader interest and participation in security matters and exercise their rights.
- Strengthen their capacity to engage with the Security Sector.

For example facilitate meetings between communities and security sector officials.

- Encourage women's inclusion and participation in civil society organizations' involvement in the security sector.

Statement from the participants of the *Sub-Regional Conference on Civil Society and Security Sector Cooperation* organized by Conciliation Resources, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 1 May 2008

6.2. Results from Group Work

Working Group: Security Challenges Related to Cross Border Trading

1 - What are the challenges related to cross border trading?

Border and custom charges

- There are no uniform charges. Officials charge as they please and people are often over-charged.
- Officials either do not know or ignore protocols, i.e. they ignore their duties
- Charges do not distinguish between traders and ordinary civilians
- Traders and civilians have to pay three times: customs, police and military officials
- People lack courage or are ignorant of their rights and do not challenge corruption
- corruption is institutionalized at all borders at all levels

Personnel Capacity

- There is not enough man power and equipment to secure and control porous borders
- Lack of joint cross border security patrols, meetings and information flow
- There is little trust between security officials in each country due to historic reasons (conflict) which hinders cooperation

Specific problems regarding women

- Lack of gender awareness by officials at borders
- Lack no redress mechanisms to report abuses
- Women sometimes have to sleep with officials to cross the borders because they cannot afford to pay charges
- There are serious mentality problems at all levels, which suggests that corruption is not a problem at this scale and not a priority to be addressed

2 - How can mechanisms to promote practical collaboration between cross border traders and the security sector personnel be improved?

Government action

- Pay better salaries to border officials and incentives (eg. if an official confiscates goods that have been smuggled) and create sanctions that are coordinated and implemented at MRU country level

- Mitigate/reduce language barriers (having bi-lingual officers?)
- Better equipment for officials to empower them
- Have a better communication system between the 3 (+1) countries that encourage simultaneous information sharing
- emergency travel certificates (ETC): reduce charge (there should be no charge)
- donor accountability if they ignore these issues
- Monitoring of border security officials, not just place them there (are monitoring mechanisms in place but being misused?)

Awareness

- Conduct awareness raising and refreshers for security sector personnel on MRU protocols and security issues

MRU-institutions

- Have MRU Secretariat work with MRU member states on MRU security: eg, joint border patrols/regular cross border security meetings

Civil Society/Trader action

- Encourage human rights institutions to expose abuses at border
- Facilitate meetings between traders and security sector officials at the borders
- Traders should organize themselves to address issues and be represented
- Challenge the culture of corruption at the high level (ministers know what is happening) these are not considered a violation of our rights or a crime (this is not acceptable). This should be done by civil society /parliamentarians.
- Civil groups to seriously report abuses and corruption (incl. NGOs + INGOs). This should have a sub-regional dimension, not just highlighting one country.

3 - How to streamline cross border policy at MRU level?

Awareness

- Encourage active participation of the legislature to implement MRU policies
- Create massive awareness on protocols and simplify versions
- Raise awareness among traders and civilians about who and how much they should pay (publicly displayed)
- Gender sensitive awareness training for officials

MRU security policies

- Hold periodic MRU level meetings to review MRU security policies and why they are not being implemented (should include civil society participation)
- Identify outdated policies that are detrimental
- Streamline provisions that are related to free movement at borders
- Publicize ECOWAS passport
- Uniform and transparent charges for traders

Women

- Provisions of conditions to keep women safe during border-closed times
- Coordinate a redress mechanism at MRU level
- Display help line numbers at border (report to Minister of Gender as in Liberia)

Working Group: information exchange between civil society and the security sector in the Mano River Union countries

1 – What are the strengths and weaknesses for information exchange between civil society and the security sector in the MRU countries?

Sierra Leone

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The existence of the ONS: having one agency to coordinate information - SSR - The SCS project: it has helped break down the barrier between military and civilians - The existence of Local Police Partnership Boards - Interaction between Security Sector and Civil Society - Weekly radio programmes that give time to the PROSEC and DISECs to share public information (coordinated by Search for Common Ground) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Collecting and sharing information is too slow: How to speed up the process? - Political interference in the security sector - Civil society used to be involved in security sector personnel recruitment but is not involved anymore - Mismanagement of information - Lack of funds to support structures of information exchange eg, LPPB and radio - In most areas there is no practical information exchange from the Security Sector to the public - Information is all audio and not visual - Language barrier in MRU

Guinea

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MARWOPNET – used training for security sector as a strategy to increase information exchange and for the security sector to know their roles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Political interference in security sector - Security sector: some officials are not aware of their roles, including

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Guinean civil society does work with the security sector - After riots: breakdown of relations between Security Sector and Civil Society. Military saw need to work with civil society and created National Reconciliation Civil Military Relations committees. 	<p>agreements in the MRU</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Information exchange within the security sector is a challenge - There is no clear and official structure for information exchange between Government (security sector) and civil society - Security sector is purely state Government – it does not include civil society - Security is considered “state security” - Security sector recruitment is based on ethnicity
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Liberia

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - All training activities in the provinces include security sector personnel – part of the SSR - Community-based radio stations serve as a medium for information exchange organizations (CBOs) - Civil society are part of the recruitment of security personnel – this shall ensure that a perpetrator is not hired in the security sector - Joint collaboration between UNMIL and local security authorities → regular weekly Joint Security briefings through radio - Local Community Watch teams provide intelligence on crime 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Because of the war and the breakdown of the security sector and civil society relations trust is still a challenge. There is mutual suspicion. - Competing security institutions leads to duplication of functions - Information not always exchanged because of lack of trust - Lack of proper structure in the security sector from bottom to top and with civil society - Poor civilian/security sector relations - Lack of prompt information sharing leaves room to rumours and misinformation

2 - How can the strengths of the information exchange system be sustainable?

- SL: DISEC, eg, provincial promotion of information exchange → local radios
- Nationwide (and MRU) PR of security structures
- Develop “pocket size” information brochures on security structures
- Review security personnel recruitment (SL and Guinea) and learn from Liberia
- Discourage patronage and emphasize professionalism in the security sector recruitment
- Stimulate media interest in security, producing “visual programmes”

3 - How can we overcome the weaknesses jointly within the MRU countries?

- Civil society needs to engage in stimulating political will
- Strengthen the MRU secretariat
- Strengthen existing MRU security committees where civil society is included
- Form MRU civil society – security committee independent of state(s)
- Strengthen security sector and civil society understanding of their roles in security
- MRU: intensify exchange learning sessions between security sector and civil society in the MRU (learning between Liberia and Sierra Leone (SSR) and Liberia/SL with Guinea)
- Harmonize national security structures in Guinea and Liberia
- Printing and public dissemination of MRU and other international protocols – especially for Guinea

Working Group: Joint activities between civil society and the security sector

Achievements Sierra Leone

- social fabric has been rewoven
- the army speaks the same language
- civilian children attend military schools
- free movement has resumed in the city
- religious and local leaders have been very supportive in the area of reconciliation

- Radio Kailahun (FM station) has been very proactive in promoting cohesion in the community
- Joint social activities are undertaken by civilians and security forces mechanisms for addressing problems between both sectors have been set up. In Guinea however this is not institutionalized

A key weakness in the system is the absence of mechanisms for replacement of 'Talking Drums Studio' and other organizations implementing security programmes. Also security programmes at rural level should be adequately funded.

Similarities

- Communication channels are kept open among the three countries eg Guinea's involvement in quelling Sierra Leone's civil war in 2001. Ivory Coast's rebellion might have been averted if they had been in partnership with other MRU countries.
- Civilians trust the police and they have a right to complain about excesses.

Differences

- Comprehensive reform of the security sector undertaken in Sierra Leone.
- Some reform embarked upon in Liberia but none in Guinea.

Challenges

- How to promote the inclusion of women in the security sector. Women should be given leadership roles.
- Greater support is required from the traditional leaders.
- Inadequate opportunities for joint activities in sports and drama activities.
- More attention should be paid to provisions of livelihood skills for youth in the three MRU countries.
- How to manage donor implementation of projects. Programmes to ensure partnership.
- How to increase the performance of the security sector.

Country Groups: Country-specific Recommendations -

Liberia

Challenges

- Corruption is prevalent among security forces
- Lack of adequate logistical support for security forces
- Language barrier between security forces and travellers
- Porous border and limited manpower
- Ineffectiveness and /or lack of redress mechanisms to address abuses
- Lack of information on MRU protocols and need to reproduce and disseminate MRU protocols among the security forces and civil society to bridge information gaps

Recommendations

- Interaction between security forces and civil society through community policing forum
- Ensure proper documentation (passport, national ID card) to facilitate free movement of MRU citizens
- Need to strengthen the MRU Secretariat and the MRU Security Working Committee
- Need for sustainability and national ownership of SSR processes in MRU countries

Sierra Leone

Challenges

- Undue political interferences/influence in security sector
- MRU Secretariat's lack of sufficient capacity to carry out its coordinating role
- Yenga issue is not properly looked into or given the attention it deserves
- Absence of recognized National ID cards system which poses a threat
- Absence of complimentary at grassroots for the MRU Secretariat
- Over reliance on audio medium system of communication on security issues
- Absence of uniform tariff system with MRU states
- Weak capacity of civil society to engage security sector

Guinea

Recommendations

Communications entre la société civile et les structures de sécurité

Communication between civil society and the security structures

- Organisation des ateliers de formation entre la société civile et les forces de sécurité
- Organize joint workshops for civil society and the security sector
- Respect des limites de compétence pour les acteurs de la société civile et des services de sécurité
- Respect the limits of competencies of civil society and security sector actors
- La mise en place d'un cadre de dialogue entre tous les acteurs de l'Etat et de la société civile
- Establish a forum for dialogue between all state and civil society actor

Activités conjointes / Joint activities

- Séances périodiques de travail et de concertation au niveau des administrateurs frontaliers et des représentants de la société civile
- Regular working sessions and coordination at the level of border administration and civil society representatives
- Promouvoir les liens traditionnels entre les populations frontalières par des activités culturelles
- Promote the traditional links between the border population through cultural activities

Problèmes transfrontaliers/ border problems

- Uniformiser les documents de voyage et d'identification pour réduire les tracasseries (passeport, CI)
- Standardize travel documents and identification cards to reduce bullying (passport, ID)
- Vulgariser les conventions, textes et protocoles ratifiés par les décideurs à travers la presse écrite, orale, rurale, nationale et internationale et les audio-visuels de tous les pays de la région Ouest Africaine
- Disseminate conventions, texts and protocols ratified by the decision makers through the written and audio media, rural, national and international and audio visual of all West African countries
- Organiser des séances de formation et de sensibilisation au niveau de tous les acteurs impliqués dans le commerce transfrontalier (commerçants, transporteurs, forces de sécurité)
- Organize workshops and sensitization for all stakeholders of transborder traders (traders, transporters, security forces)

- Mettre en place dans les meilleurs délais l'union douanière de l'extension du tarif extérieur commun aux pays membres de la MANO (CEDEAO)
- Establish a tariff union with common external tariffs and common internal tariffs for all MRU member states (ECOWAS).
- Impliquer et responsabiliser la couche féminine dans les structures des syndicats de transporteurs
- Engage and empower women in the transport union structures
- Porter une attention au trafic de la drogue des armes légères, et le trafic des enfants
- Give attention to drug, small arms, and child trafficking.

Evaluation of the conference and ways forward

1 - What was the value of the event?

The Conference

- was an eye-opener and a laudable gesture
- had insight potential into the security threat in the MRU countries
- provided information on Cote d'Ivoire accession to the MRU
- provided information about the various SSR programmes in the MRU countries
- exposed participants to the security challenges in the MRU
- gave participants the opportunity to discuss problems on borders between the MRU countries

2 - Follow-Up

- Link up with ECOWAS and other cross border initiatives
- Wide distribution of the outcomes of the conference
- Form a Working Committee comprising of members from the 3 MRU countries tasked with responsibility to follow-up on the recommendations from the conference
- Participants from the 3 MRU countries to popularize the conference statement
- Pass the conference statement through well-structures institutions – ONS, District, Town and City Councils
- Conference Statement gets to the MRU Secretariat and to the grassroots organizations and communities and later feed back to Secretariat

- How would the working group work?
 - o phone
 - o internet
 - o virtual chat rooms

3 - What needs to be done?

Governments

- Ensure our of our national travel documents are not issued to non-citizens and ensure these are recognized by officials of all MRU States

Conference Delegates

Tasks to ensure dissemination of Conference Report and Conference outcome

Country	Measure	Responsible Person/Group
Sierra Leone	Ensure that rapporteur prepares the report for the Conference	Adam Platt
	Ensure that the outcomes of the conference are made known to the ONS and to the President of GOSL	Garry Horlacher
	Feedback to MARWOPNET's general assembly at the end of May through head of MARWOPNET	MARWOPNET
	Feed conference findings into materials – publications Participate in Joint Working Group to follow-up on conference	CEDSA
	Disseminate to family, CSOs through discussion	Barba Musa (CEM)
	Briefing through Military System and Press Conference, secure both land and sea boundaries	Brig. Nelson Williams
	Develop his role with ONS, use community radio to report on conference, 40 organizations meetings – disseminate	Titus Mansaray
	Eastern Regional Security Committee – disseminate	Boima Kpuagor
	Reporting to colleagues	James Vincent
	Feed back to monthly meeting in Kailahun	Bike Riders Association
	Meet with business partners and explain conference	Mohammed I Kallon (traders Union)
Liberia	Send information to borders of Liberia and maintain communication with participants	Amos Nyenatoh

	Report to Chair of Security Pillar, Senate Committee on National Security, Bureau of Naturalisation → disseminate to all levels through Federation of Liberian Youth, students and leaders of students	Frederick Gbemie
Guinea, Liberia	To inform colleagues about the outcomes of the conference and give reports	Cecil Griffiths, LB, Guinea participants
Guinea	Feed back to friends and colleagues – disseminate through list of participants	Civil Society Guinea participants
	Oral and written reports to Ministry of Interior and propose recommendations to local administration and governors in the regions	Mamadouba Camara

6.3. Press Release

“More cooperation is needed between civil society and security sector in the Mano River Union countries”, say delegates at a sub-regional conference in Freetown

Press Release – 01/05/08

As a result of a two-day sub-regional conference on civil society and security sector cooperation, representatives from Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone released today a joint statement calling for sustained and enhanced civil society – security sector cooperation and proposing specific recommendations to the Mano River Union member-states and civil society in general. Some of the key recommendations are:

- To strengthen the Mano River Union Secretariat to improve its coordinating functions, to effectively implement and review its protocols;
- That Mano River Union member states publicly commit to expose and eradicate corruption and other abuses by security personnel and ensure best practice.
- That Mano River Union member states take measures that enhance the free movement of MRU citizens across borders, such as the harmonization and the public display of cross border tariffs and the prioritization in issuing of the ECOWAS passport;
- The promotion of awareness raising activities about security sector structures among the populace, wide dissemination of MRU protocols and the creation of more opportunities to dialogue with and engage civil society.
- That the three countries remain committed to mobilize resources for the security sector to function effectively.
- To strengthen civil society’s capacity to engage with the security sector and the creation of a civil society Sub-Regional Working Group on Security to support the Mano River Union secretariat and monitor its performance.

The sub-regional conference on civil society and security sector cooperation, organized by Conciliation Resources¹, was held between April 30th and May 1st in Freetown. Forty participants, representing civil society and security sector from Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea, gathered to share lessons and experiences on the role of civil society in the security sector and to identify and address key challenges in sub-regional security policies and how these affect citizens’ security in the three countries.

The conference is part of a wider project, *Strengthening Citizens’ Security*, which aims to address the gaps that exist in citizens’ involvement in their own security and consequent oversight of the security sector. The project brings together a diverse experience through a partnership between Conciliation Resources, the Centre for Development and Security Analysis (CEDSA), the Mano River Women’s Peace Network (MARWOPNET) and Search for Common Ground-Talking Drums Studios (SFCG-TDS). This project is funded by the UK’s Department for International Development (DFID).

For more information, please contact:

Adam Platt, Strengthening Citizens’ Security Project Coordinator,
Conciliation Resources, 17 Kingharman Road, Freetown.
Tel: 076-979474

Ends/

¹ Conciliation Resources is an international non-governmental organization that offers a service for conflict transformation.

6.4. Participants List

No	Country	Name	Institution	Position	Email	Phone
1	Guinea	Mamadouba Sakho	Armée de Terre	Major	diabymohamed99@yahoo.fr	00224 60343528
2	Guinea	Ibrahima Dioubaté	FONAJESC	Mobilité	kassogui77@yahoo.fr	00224 64677232
3	Guinea	Sallay Bayoh	MARWOPNET Guinea	Member/Accountant		00224 30467109 00224 64257483
4	Guinea	Mamadouba Camara	Ministère Interieur et Sécurité	Fichier Electoral		00224 60335058 00224 60203295 00224 30451106
5	Guinea	Pascal Bangoura	Ministère Interieure et Sécurité	Commissaire Central Adjoint		00224 60217688 00224 62400688
6	Liberia	Caroline Bowah	Foundation for Human Rights and Democracy	Project Officer	cbowah@gmail.com	00231 6532820
7	Liberia	Abraham Mitchell	Governance Commission of Liberia	Programme Analyst (SSR)	abarloumitch@yahoo.com	00231 6904318

8	Liberia	Cecil B Griffiths	Liberia National Law Enforcement Association	President	cbgriffiths@yahoo.com	00231 652280
9	Liberia	Amos B. Nyenatoh	Liberia National Police	Chief of Public Safety	abronyen@yahoo.com	00231 6521698
10	Liberia	Frederick L.M. Gbemie	MOD/Security Pillar	Secretary/Focal Point	frederick.gbemie@gmail.com	00231 6522317
11	Sierra Leone	Mohamed Shiaka Kamara	Bike Riders Association Kailahun	C/Man	medka@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76969192
12	Sierra Leone	Musu Lulu Tommy	Business Woman		musu.lulu.tommy@yahoo.co.uk	00232 (0) 33220407
14	Sierra Leone	Barba Musa	CEM - Kenema	Regional Director	cemkenema@yahoo.co.uk	00232 (0) 76660968
15	Sierra Leone	Clifford Kabia	West African Centre for Capacity Development (CENCAD)			
16	Sierra Leone	Christian Tucker	CENCAD	Project Officer	christotucker@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76931610
17	Sierra Leone	Dr. Foday Suma	CENCAD	Director		00232 (0) 76613954
18	Sierra Leone	Abdulai Jalloh	Center for Development and Security Analysis (CEDSA)	Coordinator (Youth)	abdulaiwalon_jalloh2002@yahoo.co.uk	00232 (0) 76629348 00232 (0) 77588701
13	Sierra Leone	Alimamy Conteh	CEDSA	Researcher	alimamymahun@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 33231438
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24	Sierra Leone	Martina Gaebler	Conciliation Resources	CR intern	martina.gaebler@t-online.de	00232 (0) 76278417
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28	Sierra Leone	Titus Masally	Humanist - Kenema	Coordinator		00232 (0) 76934731
29	Sierra Leone	Abdul Karim Bangoura	Immigration	Western Area Immigration Officer		
30	Sierra Leone	Patrick Kpaka	Sierra Leone Police		kpakpatrick@yahoo.fr kpaka@hotmail.com	00232 (0) 33551780
31	Sierra Leone	Olaboni Bournes-Coker	MARWOPNET SL	Project Assistant	bonib2039@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76761288

32	Sierra Leone	Yasmin Jusu-Sheriff	MARWOPNET SL	First Vice-President	marwopnetsl@yahoo.com	00232 (0)33860657
33	Sierra Leone	Hannah Garick	MARWOPNET SL			
34	Sierra Leone	Alfred Nelson-Williams	Ministry of Defence	Deputy Chief of Defence Staff	remoalfria@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76651599
35	Sierra Leone	John Vincent	MRU Secretariat SL	Assistant to Secretary General		
36	Sierra Leone	Mustapha Muhammad Swarray	NGO Network Kailahun	CSM-Chair/Coordinator		00232 (0) 76229686
37	Sierra Leone	Ishmael Tarawali	Office of National Security	Ag Director Provincial and Border Security Department	itarawali@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76629500
38	Sierra Leone	Larry Bassie	Office of National Security	Director of Provincial Section		
39	Sierra Leone	George Kiawu	RSLAF - 1 BN - Kailahun	Intelligence Officer		00232 (0) 76518347
40	Sierra Leone	Saa M Bandabla	SFCG/TDS	OIC - Bo and Project Coordinator	smbandabla@yahoo.com	00232 (0) 76969763 00232 (0) 33463676
41	Sierra Leone	Mohamed I. Kallon	Traders Union	Member		00232 (0) 33467588

6.5. Background Information

Strengthening Citizens' Security Project

The Strengthening Citizen Security project aims to bridge some of the gaps that have historically discouraged civil society's involvement in security and cultivate dialogue across the perceived barriers of secrecy that often shroud security discussions. This project brings together the diverse experience through a partnership of Conciliation Resources, the Centre for Development and Security Analysis (CEDSA), Mano River Women's Peace Network (MARWOPNET) and Search for Common Ground's-Talking Drums Studios (SFCG-TDS).

The project seeks to address the gaps that exist in citizen's involvement in their own security and consequent oversight of the security sector. It is designed as a pilot project that will produce a package of measures to support mechanisms and capabilities within civil society to exchange concerns and security information with the security sector. The project pilot areas are Kenema, Kailahun and Freetown. A guiding assumption of this project is that in a democratic society, civil community groups have an active interest in participating in decision-making affecting their own security.

Project activities have linked community and district level security issues to the national agenda and address some of the specific recommendations from the 2005 Sierra Leone Security Review (SSR). Project partners within the national security sector have been: the Office of National Security (ONS), the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF), Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and Kenema and Kailahun District Security Committees (DISEC).

The 15-month pilot project has provided case studies that illustrate the importance and benefits gained from strengthening the interest and collaboration between civil society and the security sector. The 'Crossing Boundaries' sub-regional conference is a project activity aiming to broaden learning from this project and experience sharing to within the Mano River Union.

Conciliation Resources

Conciliation Resources (CR) is an international NGO registered in the UK as a charity. We work mainly in the Caucasus, Uganda and West Africa in partnership with local and international civil society organizations and governments. We are also involved in projects in Colombia, Fiji and the Philippines. We play an active role in British, European and global peacebuilding networks and initiatives including the Committee for Conflict Transformation Support, the Peace and Security Liaison Group (UK), the Alliance for Peacebuilding (USA) and the BOND Conflict Policy Working Group (UK). Our funding is through grants from governments, independent trusts and foundations. We also publish *Accord: an international review of peace initiatives*.

Our goals are to:

Support people working at local, national and international levels to develop effective solutions to social, economic and political problems related to violent conflicts

Provide opportunities for inclusive dialogue and improved relationships within communities and across conflict divides at all social and political levels

Influence governments and other decision makers to employ conflict transformation policies that promote alternatives to violence

Improve peacemaking practice and policies by promoting learning from peace processes around the world

Challenge stereotypes and increase public awareness of human rights, conflict and peace issues in divided societies.

How we work

Conciliation Resources believes local people have an important role in transforming their own violent conflicts and that the international community has a collective responsibility to help in these processes. To understand our approach, one must take a people-centred look at the challenges of global conflict politics. Most activities to promote peace are not about formal mediation between governments and armed groups. The true picture is more complex. Transforming conflict requires processes that work at all levels of society and involves different people in many roles, from civil servants and NGO activists to local journalists working across conflict divides. Collaborative partnerships lie at the heart of what we do. Our partners in the Caucasus, Africa, Asia and Latin America are exceptional people who have made difficult choices to challenge violence and work for a better future within their societies. We offer long-term and flexible support to help strengthen their efforts and tackle the underlying causes that fuel and prolong conflicts.

Our history

Conciliation Resources was set up in October 1994. In our first decade we have worked with partners in Rwanda, Ukraine, Russia, Somaliland, the Gambia, Liberia, Sri Lanka, the Balkans, Angola, Nepal, the Philippines and Colombia. In the mid-1990s Sierra Leone's civil war had reached brutal heights with half its four million people displaced when we were asked to support a community workshop to help people explore how to make themselves less vulnerable to the violence. This led to further work in Sierra Leone and the creation of CR's West Africa Programme. We now have an office in Freetown, one in Bo and one in Kenema. Until today, Conciliation Resources supports local initiatives to build peace and secure access to meaningful justice for people, especially those from poor and marginalized communities and excluded groups such as youth. The wars in West Africa were fought largely at community level and CR's approach is that, in order to build effective peace, communities must be involved in the process along with other key stakeholders such as government and civil society. Our work also aims to strengthen civil society in the Sub-Region and increase understanding and information between ordinary people and those involved in local governance. With a highly skilled team of dedicated staff and associates, we now enjoy a worldwide reputation as a professional conflict transformation organization with more than a decade of experience of peacebuilding in conflict zones and peace processes.

6.6. Conference programme

Day One Wednesday 30 April 2008

08:30 Arrival and Registration of Participants

09:00 Official Opening Ceremony

Facilitated by James Vincent

Prayers

National Anthems: Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Welcome Address

Sofia Goinhas

West Africa Programme Director, Conciliation Resources

Strengthening Citizens' Security Project Background

Rosalind Hanson-Alp

West Africa Programme Coordinator, Conciliation Resources

Opening Statement

Honourable Raymond Kabia

Deputy Minister for Internal Affairs, Local Government and Rural Development

Statement

Secretary General

Mano River Union Secretariat

Statement

Garry Horlacher, Security Sector Coordinator

UK Department for International Development (DFID)

10:15 Break for refreshments

10:45 SESSION ONE

Facilitated by James Vincent

Security Structures within the Mano River Union (MRU) countries

(15 minutes each country)

Sierra Leone

Presented by the Office of National Security (ONS)

Liberia – Liberian security sector delegate

Presented by Liberian delegation

Guinea – Guinean security sector delegate

Presented by Guinean delegation

Questions & Answers – Outcome

Overview of formal and informal structures and relationships between security sector actors in the Mano River Union countries.

12:30 Lunch break

13:15 SESSION TWO *Facilitated by James Vincent*

Experience Sharing–Working Groups

Collaboration between Civil Society and the Security Sector

Group 1

Subject: Cross Border Security

Group 2

Subject: Information Flows between Civil Society and Security Sector

Group 3

Subject: Joint Activities between Civil Society & the Security Sector

Break for refreshments (served during working group sessions)

16:45 Preparation for Working Group Presentations on Day Two

Identify presenters and other announcements

17:00 Closing

Day Two Thursday 1 May 2008

08:30 Arrival and Registration of Participants

09.00 SESSION THREE

Facilitated by James Vincent

Plenary Session

Presentations by each working group (15 minutes)

Questions and Answers Session

Following each working group presentation (15 minutes)

Outcome

Indications for MRU collaboration: common challenges and learned successes

11:00 Break for refreshments

11:30 SESSION FOUR

Chaired by Assistant Inspector General of Police, Kadi Fakondo (Sierra Leone)

Panel Discussion – Security Sector MRU countries

Implications for Security Sector Policies of civil society engagement in the MRU

Responses to experience sharing sessions by panel of seven Security Sector personnel Military, Police, National Security (Guinea, Liberia, Sierra Leone)

Outcome

Indications for MRU collaboration: policy challenges and reform gains

12:45 Lunch break

13:30 SESSION FIVE

Facilitated by Conciliation Resources – Sofia Goinhas

The Way Forward – Security Sector & Civil Society in the MRU

Highlights of conference sessions with open discussion and recommendations on how civil society and security sector can build on collaboration in the MRU

15:30 Break for refreshments

16:00 Steering Group nomination to prepare: *A Mano River Union Statement with Recommendations for sustained and enhanced Civil Society – Security Sector cooperation*

Two delegates from each country – facilitated by Conciliation Resources

Feedback from Conference – Developing Ideas for Future Networking

Remaining conference participants – facilitated by Conciliation Resources

17:00 Closing Statements

Sierra Leone – Office of National Security & civil society representative

Guinea – Delegation

Liberia – Delegation

19:00 Closing Dinner and MRU Statement Presentation

Mamba Point Conference Room