

Report on the

**MANO RIVER UNION PEACE FORUM
INAUGURATION**

FEBRUARY 7TH 2004

Hill Valley Guest House
FREETOWN, SIERRA LEONE

MRU Peace Forum Secretariat
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Table of contents

1.0 Programme	3
1.1 Press Conference	5
2.0 The Mano River Union Peace Forum	6
2.1 Background to the MRU Peace Forum	6
2.2 Project Partners	6
2.3 Roles assigned to the Secretariat and to the Forum	6
2.4 Framework for the MRU Forum Relationships	8
3.0 Launching of the MRU Forum: February 7 th , 2004	9
3.1 Opening Ceremony	9
3.2 Identification of themes and assignment of roles	10
3.3. Closing Ceremony	
4.0 Outputs	13
5.0 Appendices	
• Freetown Declaration	14
• Selected Speeches	17
• Code of Conduct for Management Committee	25
• List of Participants	27

Abbreviations

ADDEF-G	- Association pour la Défense des Droits de la Femme en Guinée
AFLI	- Association of Female Lawyers in Liberia
CGG	- Campaign for Good Governance
COFEG	- Coordination des ONG Féminines de Guinée
CR	- Conciliation Resources
FLY	- Federation of Liberian Youths
FIND	- Foundation for International Dignity
IRCL	- Inter-Religious Council of Liberia
LMWP	- Liberian Muslim Women for peace
LWI	- Liberian Women Initiative
MRU	- Mano River Union
NMJD	- Network Movement for Justice and Development
SFCG/TDS	- Search for Common Ground/ Talking Drums Studio
SLAJ	- Sierra Leone Association of Journalists
SLBSTV	- Sierra Lone Broadcasting Station TV
TRC	- Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMSIL	- United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	- United Nations Development Programme

1.0 Programme

Programme of the Mano River Union (MRU) Peace Forum Inauguration

February 7th, 2004

8:30 – 9:00 : Arrival of participants and guests

9:30 – 11:30 : Launching of Forum presided by Mrs Konah Koromah, Secretary of Development, Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, Sierra Leone.

Addresses¹:

- Oumar Ndongo, Director of the Secretariat of MRU Peace Forum: Brief introduction of the occasion.
- Jeannette Eno, West Africa Program Manager at Conciliation Resources and member of the Management Committee of the MRU Peace Forum: welcome participants and invited guests.
- Nana K. A. Busia, Jr., West Africa Programme Manager at International Alert and member of the Management Committee of the MRU Peace Forum: Background, context and objectives of the Forum.
- H. E. Jallow, Secretary – General MRU Secretariat: Keynote address: The MRU and the Search for Regional Peace and Security.
- Mrs. Kona Koromah, Honourable Secretary of Development, Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, Sierra Leone.

11:30 – 12:30 : Solidarity messages and Regional Approaches to Conflict

- H. E. Ambassador of Guinea to the Republic of Sierra Leone
- Representative of UNAMSIL
- General Arnold Quaino, 1st ECOMOG Commander in Liberia, Conflict resolution consultant.
- Hassan Barry, Trade Unionist and member of the Civil Society Movement.
- Samuel Kofi Woods, Director of Foundation for International Dignity (FIND)
- Mrs. Saran Daraba Kabbah, Representative of MARWOPNET
- Dan Smith, Secretary – General of International Alert : Regional Approaches to Conflict Transformation, IA's Experience.
- Statements by various representatives of invited organisations (TRC, etc.)

13:00 – 14:30 : Lunch

¹ Please see the Appendix for full presentations

14:30 – 15:15:

Group discussion sessions

(Closed session for MRU Forum members only)

- Break up of members of the Forum into session to discuss thematic and geographic (country specific) issues of sub-regional peace, security and good governance.
- The various sessions proposed recommendations directed at the governments, armed groups and where applicable inter-governmental bodies, multilateral and bilateral donors, etc.

Chair : Abbey Onadipe, Conciliation Resources,

Co-chair : Ba Foday Suma, ABC Development.

15:15 – 15:30 : Tea Break

15:30 – 17:30 : Open Plenary Session

- Presentation and deliberations on the thematic and country specific reports and recommendations made during the Group Discussions.
- Adoption of a communiqué and Freetown principles to guide the work of the forum.

Chair : Madame Saran Kabah, COFEG and member of MC

Co-chair : Nana K A Busia Jr, International Alert.

17:30 – 17:40 : Short Break

17:40 – 18:30 : Closing formalities

Chair : Nana K. A. Busia Jr, International Alert

Co-chair : Jeannette Eno, Conciliation Resources

Word of satisfaction from various participants.

19:30 : Reception

- The Director and members of the Management Committee of the forum host party for invited guests.

1.1 Press Conference on February 6th, 2004

Statement to the press on the formal launching of the MRU Peace Forum

Delivered by : Nana K.A. Busia Jr., International Alert

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the press,

We are very happy that you have responded positively to attend this press briefing on the formal launching of the Mano River Union Peace Forum, tomorrow 7th February, 2004, at Hill Valley Guest House, Signal Hill Road, Freetown. This forum is constituted by persons nominated/selected from civil society organisations/social movements of the three Mano River Union countries. The organisations and individuals identified are those working in the following sectors: Youth, Women's issues, Democracy/Human Rights advocates, and traditional as well as religious Leaders. The long-term aim is to work with all organisations focusing on all aspects of human security.

The Forum is being created in response to the realization of the stark reality that the violent conflict which has engulfed the MRU area in the last 14 or so years with its untold hardships is regional in character and therefore a response from the point of view of civil society organisations cannot be that of one country. Useful as that was, it lost sight of the regional dynamics of the conflict. This is not in any way to suggest that there is no national uniqueness to the conflict or that we are unaware of the homegrown problems to the conflict. What we seek to focus is addressing factors, forces and actors responsible for the sub-regional conflict.

It is against this background that the forum has these objectives:

1. The main objective of the Forum is to directly intervene in the Mano River Union conflict by enhancing critical support for and contributing to local and regional processes and capacities for peace through the development of strong network of NGOs and the creation of an MRU NGO permanent forum;
2. The forum being itself a platform for disadvantaged groups, thereby it seeks to empower the members to speak with a unified voice, and to make representations to governments of the three countries, armed groups and intergovernmental agencies on peace and good governance;
3. It should devise a coherent advocacy strategy targeting governments in the MRU with the view to campaign on issues of peace, human rights, anti-corruption, accountability and good governance;
4. It should build confidence among NGOs from different areas of the sub-region where conflict is occurring;
5. It works and gives support to Parliamentarians, government officials and the media in realizing good governance in their respective countries;
6. It should influence the thinking and practice of Development and Humanitarian NGOs on conflict sensitive approaches to development and post conflict rehabilitation.

Management Committee

The Forum is managed by six core partners with two from each of the three MRU countries, plus two international partners International Alert (IA) and Conciliation Resources (CR) and the Director of the Secretariat of the Forum. The Forum is the sovereign body of the NGO network. It adopts policies and strategies at its meetings, once per year. The Management Committee meets every six months to make decisions on how to implement policies adopted by the Forum. It also oversees the work of the Secretariat created by the Forum.

Secretariat

The Secretariat is created by the Forum and its offices are situated within the MRU HQ itself. It is headed by a director with a staff, appointed by the Management Committee. The main duty of the secretariat is to see the day-to-day implementation of decisions made by the Forum.

We want to take this opportunity to express our profound appreciation to the MRU Secretariat in particular its Secretary General Dr Jallow and his Commissioner for Oaths, Mr. Vincent.

2.0 The Mano River Union Peace Forum

2.1 Background of the Project

The conflicts in the MRU region are rooted in the history of the countries, territorial claims, colonial legacies of dysfunctional states and authoritarian institutions, and the settler factor in Liberia and Sierra Leone. Tensions in the sub-region over territorial disputes go back to independence, manifesting themselves in accusations and counter accusations among the three governments of Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone. The combination of such events has caused a mutual air of distrust between all three nations, and has now also resulted in tensions with other neighboring countries including Cote d'Ivoire. The Liberian civil war that took root in the marginalization of indigenous groups by the so-called Americo-Liberian community began in 1989 and soon spilled over into Sierra Leone where home-grown tensions were already leading to difficulties. Warring faction leaders, using Guinea as a base contributed rapidly to the spreading of the conflict to affect the whole region of the Mano River Basin. The conflicts have been going on for more than a decade now. And it is against that backdrop that initiatives have been taken by a certain number of organisations already present in the region to move towards a platform that will help establish a stronger network to address issues of peace building and human security in the region.

2.2 Core project partners

Local Partners are:

ABC Development – Guinea

Confederation des organisations non-gouvernementales féminines de Guinée (COFEG)– Guinea

Inter-Religious Council of Liberia – Liberia

Liberian Women Initiative – Liberia

Campaign for Good Governance (CGG) – Sierra Leone

Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) – Sierra Leone

International Partners are:

International Alert – UK

Conciliation Resources – UK

2.3 Roles assigned to the secretariat and to the Forum

The secretariat's functions include: liaising directly with the inter-governmental MRU body to, initially, formalize relations and then to maintain a regular engagement and sharing of information back to the forum, publishing basic newsletters on a quarterly basis, carrying out research and networking, and preparing budgets and logistics for the six-monthly meeting of the Management Committee and the

annual meeting of the forum; arranging meetings between governments and the forum delegation; implementing day-to-day project activities. The secretariat, under the supervision of the Management Committee, will be responsible for implementing capacity building for local NGOs.

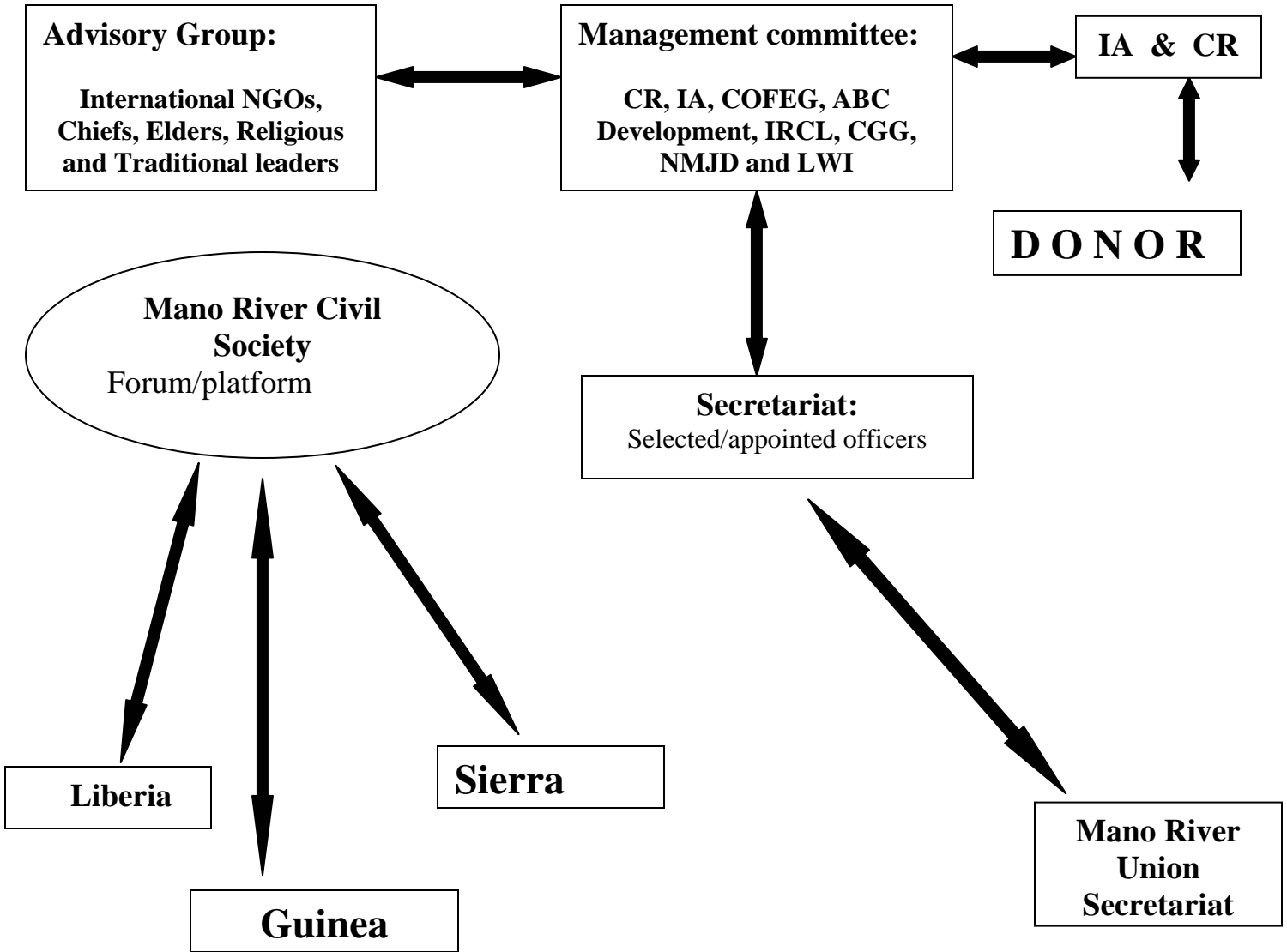
The Forum will be constituted of 18 persons nominated/elected from the three MRU countries and drawn from the following identifiable groups: youth, women, traditional rulers, democracy/human rights advocates, and religious leaders. Criteria for selection to the Forum will be developed by the Management Committee based on consensus. The Forum, which will be under the supervision of the six core partners, shall comprise the six core partners in the project as well as International Alert, Conciliation Resources and the Director of the project's Secretariat. The forum will also be the sovereign organ and its decisions will bind the Management Committee and the Secretariat. Through the Management Committee, the Forum will give directives to the Secretariat. Elected Members from each MRU country will be called National Coordinators. Between the six-monthly meetings of the Management Committee and the annual meeting of the Forum, the National Coordinators will have their own direct link with the Secretariat, mainly in relation to information exchange. Coordinators can be recalled or replaced by their organisations, and the Forum or its delegates can convene emergency meetings. It is envisaged that the Forum will not be geographically situated in any one country to give each a sense of ownership.

The forum's activities would include:

- Creation of a standing forum for the representatives of disadvantaged groups, thereby empowering the members to speak with a unified voice, and to make representations to governments of the three countries, warring parties and inter-governments agencies on peace alternatives to violent conflict;
- Adoption of a code of conduct;
- Appointment of an advisory board comprising three persons from each of the three MRU countries, who may be government officials, reputable academics, traditional leaders, and advocates of women's rights;
- Nomination by each of the three MRU countries of six representatives from the youth, traditional rulers, democracy/human rights advocates, and religious leaders;
- Establishment of a small response fund for use by Forum Members. Administered and overseen by the Forum's Management Committee, members will be able to access the funds in response to a sudden onset emergency – the committee will draw up conditions and criteria for use of the funds;
- Annual meetings to deliberate on all matters relating to conflict and good governance in the region with a view to making decisions and implementing them;
- Holding annual meetings with the advisory board;
- Selecting forum members to undertake one-month study visits to international alert in years one and two;
- Holding of regular meetings between civil society, NGOs and the MRU governments focusing on regional issues;
- Delegate persons to intervene directly in conflicts through the facilitation of dialogue between the warring parties, and the holding of meetings with governments and armed groups;
- Preparing resolutions/ communiqués, which will be passed to MRU intergovernmental body based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, through the Secretariat;
- Networking and Coordinating regional groups with annual visits to other established forums of civil society organisations in the Caucasus, Great Lakes and Sri Lanka;
- Making representations to the UN's West Africa Office in Dakar, UN Mission In Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), ECOWAS and the African Union (AU)

2.4 Framework of MRU Peace Forum Relationships

Mano River Union Forum Platform of Civil Society Groups



CR- Conciliation Resources; COFEG- Coordination des ONG feminines de Guinée; IA- International Alert; IRCL- Inter-Religious Council of Liberia; LWI- Liberian Women Initiative; CGG Campaign for Good Governance; NMJD- Network Movement for Justice and Development

3.0 Launching of The Mano River Union Peace Forum : February 7th, 2004

3.1 The Opening Ceremony

The launching ceremony of the Mano River Union Peace Forum was held on February 7, 2004 at Hill Valley Guest House, Signal Hill Road, Freetown.

The Forum is constituted of representatives carefully selected from civil society organisations and social movements of the three Mano River Union countries. The organisation and individuals identified are those working in the following areas: youth, women issues, democracy/human rights development and traditional and religious leaders. The long-term aim is to work with all organisations focusing on all aspects of human security.

The Mano River Union Peace Forum launching ceremony commenced at 9:30 am with an open remarks including prayer from the chairperson, Mrs. Kona Koromah, Development Secretary, Ministry of Planning And Economic Development. After this, an introduction of various representatives, diplomats and participants from various organisations both government and non-governmental agencies was made under the auspices of the chairperson. A recapitulation of issues on the last meeting was made to reactivate the views of members.

After this recapitulation, Dr. Oumar Ndongo, Director of the Mano River Union Peace Forum was the first to take the floor. After greeting the audience, he focused on the urgent necessity for the Mano River Union countries to come together and think about the development as a sub-regional entity. He then talked about the core organisations that launched the idea of creating a Forum in the Mano River Basin space.

Mrs. Jeannette Eno, coordinator of the West Africa Programme for Conciliation Resources, an international NGO based in London, took the floor to welcome distinguished guests and newly appointed Forum members. On behalf of the management committee, she expressed her commitment and that of her colleagues to making this Forum a permanent platform for civil society organisation across the Mano River Union.

Nana K.A. Busia Jr, West Africa Programme Manager at International Alert, also based in London, made a substantial contribution by examining the root causes of violent conflicts in the sub-region and the prospect of a peace that still needs to be carefully monitored. He stated categorically that peace in any one country of the MRU is impossibility, and that the search for peace must be done collectively by the civil society organisations of the three countries. This standing Forum seeks to provide civil society organisations through training, advocacy, and lobbying programmes, with opportunities to advocate for peace and security in the Mano River Union first and then in the ECOWAS space.

Mrs. Kona Koromah's speech celebrated the vision the initiators of this timely project had in launching the Mano River Union Peace Forum. Civil society organisations and governments must work hand in hand as both entities seek the welfare of the populations. Therefore, on behalf of the Minister of Planning and Economic Development, she reiterated her strong support for such initiatives and looked forward to seeing the action plan of the Forum as it should move toward materializing all the good wishes that had been said during the two day launching programme.

After Mrs. Koromah, many statements were made by guests, notably messages of support from the representative of UNAMSIL; the coordinator of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and the representative of Media services and the executive director of FIND, Mr Kofi Woods. General Quainoo, first ECOMOG Commander, special guest for the launching event made a powerful plea for reinforced

attention to early warning signs so that governments are not taken by surprise by events whose magnitude no one can foresee.

A tea/coffee break followed the messages.

3.2 Identification of themes and assignment of Roles

Identification and discussion of themes

The participants were called again for the second segment of the meeting. At this time of the launching ceremony, members at the Mano River Union Peace Forum were divided into groups or categories to discuss thematic and geographic (country specific) issues of sub-regional peace, security and good governance.

The forum members were divided into three groups based on the following content:

- A. Good governance and corruption
- B. Cross border issues
- C. Refugee issues

A- GOOD GOVERNANCE AND CORRUPTION:

Among issues raised, the Forum identified the following areas as requiring urgent attention:

- 1- Necessity to break government monopoly and control over the media. However, this measure should be accompanied by a code of ethics that ensures professionalism from journalists in private media agencies;
- 2- Strengthening democracy and good governance practices by building capacities and creating the environment for effective decentralization;

B- CROSS BORDER ISSUES:

Considering the consolidation of peace within the sub-region, the issue of cross bordering must be seriously addressed. Participants have reported various obstacles that are hindering the free movement of people and goods within the region. Among those problems are:

- 1- Lack of trained and adequate security personnel in the borders, bribery is the existing order of the day, especially for those smuggling goods across borders;
- 2- Lack of trustworthy and patriotic personnel security in the borders;
- 3- Humiliation and harassment of travellers at borders: a lot of people are being harassed by some security personnel at the border, for instance, even though you do satisfy the immigration requirements, you would be asked to pay an extra-sum which is absolutely contrary to immigration laws.

To ensure sustainable peace and free movement of people within the Mano River Union countries,

We must effectively consider the following preventive methods.

- 1- There must be cognitive recognition and full respect of all Mano River Union countries' immigration laws.
- 2- There must be the creation of joint military security personnel of all MRU countries to secure the various boundaries collectively. Security personnel should

be trustworthy and be patriotic citizens in their respective countries (borders) including police, the navy and the military.

3- Security personnel within the borders must be adequately paid in order for them to carry out their duties effectively.

4- Immigration laws must be promulgated to the people.

5- active patrol forces should be organised by each MRU country to track down all arm smugglers, drug traffickers and other gang squads within the region.

To enhance and consolidate sustainable peace with the sub-region, the above recommendations must be considered.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- ❖ There should be special events organised within the Mano River Union countries that favour sub-regional integration. Those events could be: biannual trade fairs, visits of customs offices by civil society organisations, city twinnings, gathering of legislation experts to harmonize laws at borders, especially ECOWAS protocols;
- ❖
- ❖ Drastic actions must be put in place for those security personnel that would be caught harassing or humiliating any refugee within the host countries;
- ❖
- ❖ Frequent forum, workshop and sensitization programmes must be held regularly between the refugees, military and police personnel of the host country, non-governmental organisation (NGO) and the civilian population in order for them to be secured at all times.
- ❖
- ❖ Repatriation of all refugees must be voluntarily and not forcibly executed. There should be a joint repatriation team between the government and the NGOs in order to facilitate the smooth flow of repatriation of refugees.
- ❖
- ❖ There should be frequent counselling of the refugees within their camps.
- ❖
- ❖ There should be sufficient camps or shelter for the refugees with the basic necessities inclusive.

C- ISSUES OF REFUGEES:

Refugees however are faced with various problems at their camps. Among those problems are;

- ❖ Lack of adequate food supply
- ❖ Lack of proper medical facilities
- ❖ Lack of basic amenities and necessities such as good toilets, tap water, recreational facilities etc.
- ❖ Most of the time, refugees do suffer from war or brutalities from the country they are seeking refuge.
- ❖ Overcrowding which may eventually lead to contagious disease such as HIV, cholera, diarrhea, malaria etc.

For the refugee issues to be addressed properly within the MRU countries, one must consider the following:

- Frequent and timely supply of food and other basic equipment (blanket, spoon, pot etc);
- There should be the supply of adequate drugs in order to prevent further disease;
- Creation of basic amenities and necessities;
- There should be sufficient camps or shelters for the refugees;
- Frequent counseling of the refugees;
- Those in charge of food supply should monitor it effectively;
- Aid personnel should be trained and sensitized to the issue of how to treat refugees adequately;
- Tensions between host populations and refugees should be addressed urgently (especially in Guinea);
- Resettlement strategies should be put in place to ensure smooth re-integration of former refugees.

It has been reported to the Forum that movies from Nigeria are made easily accessible to populations in the Mano River Union area. Those films contain scenes of violence that conflict with the culture of peace that the Forum wants to put in place. Therefore, it has been advised to censor those films in urban as well as in rural areas.

3.3 Closing Ceremony

The Honourable Minister of Social Welfare, Gender Issues and Children’s Affairs chaired the closing session of the day-long launching ceremony. After a brief introduction by Nana K. A. Busia Jr, the Chairman of the Management Committee Dr Foday Ishaga Suma, executive Director of ABC Development (Guinea) reiterated the thanks of the Management Committee. This successful event is the result of a long preparation, he said in substance. However, in his view, this joyous gathering is just the beginning of activities, which are part of the reconstruction process under way in the sub-region – “physical reconstruction is not difficult but the mental and psychological one is more of a challenge to all as people take time to recover from traumas”. Dr Juma affirms in a tone that shows experience and commitment. He finishes his closing remarks by wishing for the Forum to be different, not to be just another Forum, but the one that will put civil society organisations hand in hand with governments to bring peace and prosperity to the sub-region.

Following Dr Suma, Ms Jeannette Eno, West Africa Programme Manager for Conciliation Resources expressed her excitement about the coming prospects. The challenge lies in creating dialogue between civil society organisations and governments, and that this dialogue should reach out to other sectors of civil society.

Dan Smith, Secretary General of International Alert was very impressed by what he saw and what he heard. As a result, for him, there was reason for confidence. However, drawing on his personal experience that took him to the far corners of this world, he stated calmly but compellingly “peace is a slow and difficult business”. In this process, what the Forum needed most is friends. And wholeheartedly he offers to be one, a friend the Forum can count on.

After Dan Smith, His Excellency, the Ambassador of Ghana took the floor to say how important stability and peace are in the development of a country. Taking example from his own country, he expresses his concern about what happened in the past years but remains confident that the peoples of the Mano River Union would overcome the challenges in restoring peace and prosperity.

Chief Bai K. Bafali, representing traditional leaders from Liberia made a significant contribution by delivering a powerful message in his local language. Drawing on his typical African background,

through parables, he illustrated how the West has contributed to violence in West Africa through the manufacture of weapons. He delivered a clear message that there needs to be an end to producing weapons that are used to kill; especially when they are used to kill people who have not made them.

The last speaker was the Honourable Minister Shirley Gbujama. In powerful words that she certainly drew from her mastery of human suffering, she brought all the ideas together in a new partnership where governments are going to have to work with civil society organisations on the difficult task of nation building through peace and sound social practices. She took advantage of the launching of the Forum to announce that the Sierra Leonean government is ready to decentralize, with power to those who should have it: the people. Civil society and government should join their efforts more as government members are now selected from civil society and government members become civil society once they finish their mandates.

The launching ended with a dinner hosted by the Management Committee and the Director of the Mano River Union. This dinner offered good opportunities for Forum members to network.

4.0 Output

The Forum was able to achieve the following:

- 1- Visibility of the Forum among media and government circles;
- 2- Good rapport between Civil society organisations and the Sierra Leonean government;
- 3- Bringing together different groups, especially youths, women, journalists and traditional leaders
- 4- Contribution to the visibility of the intergovernmental body: the Mano River Union secretariat visibility;
- 5- Installation of the Forum secretariat with a director in charge

5.0 APPENDICES

Appendix 1

FREETOWN DECLARATION

February 7th, 2004

1. We, the representatives of civil society organisations from across the Mano River Union Countries of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, join together today to launch the Mano River Union Peace Forum.
2. Mindful of the commonality of our histories, cultures and traditions;
3. Cognisant of the ethnic, racial and religious diversity of our populations;
4. Aware of the common demand throughout our countries for peace, development, stability and good governance;
5. Recalling that MRU countries have suffered from bad governance, military intervention in politics, unequal access to resources and the manipulation of religion and ethnicity for the retention of political power;
6. Further conscious that this state of affairs has led to war, underdevelopment, destruction, poverty in the Mano River Union Region;
7. Concerned that MRU civil society organisations are the stakeholders to the maintenance of peace and security in the sub-region;
8. Recognizing the partnership between civil society organisations and governments to achieving peace and stability;
9. Gratified by recent political changes in the region and new commitments by the international community, and ECOWAS in particular, to work towards achieving peace;

Agree to adopt this declaration as a set of objectives and guiding principles for the Mano River Union Peace Forum, which will hereafter be called the **FREETOWN DECLARATION**.

The objectives of the MRU Peace forum are:

- To constitute and create a standing forum for the representatives of disadvantaged groups, thereby empowering the members to speak with a unified voice, and to make representations to governments of the three countries, warring parties and inter-governmental agencies on peace alternatives to violent conflict;
- To devise a coherent advocacy strategy targeting governments in the Mano River Union with a view to campaigning on issues of peace, human rights, anti-corruption, accountability, and good governance;

- To build confidence amongst civil society organisations from different areas of the sub-region where conflict is occurring;
- To support and develop conflict resolution and peace building capacities of youths, parliamentarians, government officials, students, women’s groups, the media, traditional leaders, societal heads, etc;
- To influence the thinking and practice of development and humanitarian non-governmental organisations, and particularly local organisations, on conflict sensitive approaches to development and post-conflict rehabilitation;
- Preparation of resolutions/communiqués which will be passed to the MRU intergovernmental body based in Freetown, Sierra Leone through the Secretariat;

To guide us in achieving those objectives, the following guiding principles will be followed:

- That while respecting our own national agendas, we must remain committed to adopting a sub-regional approach to conflict resolution and the attainment of peace;
- That we must be advocates for peace and equity in the region and beyond;
- That we must remain impartial when dealing with all parties to conflict and maintain neutrality throughout our work;
- That we are entrusted with being representative of the populations of our countries to the best of our ability;
- That we commit to not undermining the personal security of any MRU Forum Members by maintaining a professional and, when necessary, confidential code of conduct throughout our activities;
- That we will support and defend each other in the pursuit of peace and social justice.

Freetown, February 7, 2004

Signatories:

Oumar Ndongu	Director of the MRU Peace Forum
Lavina Dumbuya	CGG- Sierra Leone
Nana K A Busia Jr.	International Alert, UK
Helen Bash-Taqi	NMJD- Sierra Leone
Ba-Foday Suma	ABC Development- Guinea
Esther M. Kamara	NMJD- Sierra Leone
David Kiazolu	IRCL- Liberia
Saran Kaba Daraba	COFEG- Guinea
Patience Heah	FLY- Liberia
Elizabeth Boyenneh	AFLI- Liberia
Kaba Diakité Samsy	Les Amis du Futur- Guinea
Madame Fatou Keira	COFEG- Guinea

Madame Manfadina Magassouba	ADDEF- Guinea
Alex A. Smith	Search For Common Ground/TDS- Guinea
Specs Manirakiza	Search for Common Ground/TDS-Guinea
Alphonsus Zeon	Press Union of Liberia
Chief Bai K. Bafalie	Traditional Leader
Francis Bunting Graden	Conciliation Resources –SierraLeone
Memunatu Pratt	Peace Studies–University of Sierra Leone
Marcella E. F. McCauley	Centre for Good Governance, Sierra Leone
Alhaji Ibrahim Kabba	Peace Studies– University of Sierra Leone
Abdulai Mansary	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
Jenkins Amara Kallon	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
Emmanuel Musa	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
Salifu Mansary	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
Makieu K Dabah	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
Peter Raven	International Alert – London
Dan Smith	Sec. General International Alert – London
Abbey Onadipe	Conciliation Resources – London
Jeannette Eno	Conciliation Resources - Freetown
Sartah Dempster	Liberian Women Initiative- Liberia
Ordinand Jacques Boston	Anglican Church in Guinea
Kevin Banduah	MRU Peace Forum Office
Emile Cline	MRU Peace Forum Office

Appendix 2

Selected opening addresses from the Inauguration of the MRU Peace Forum HILL VALLEY GUEST HOUSE, FREETOWN SATURDAY, 7TH FEBRUARY 2004

1- Chairman's opening statement delivered by Mrs. Konah C Koroma, Development and Economic Planning Ministry

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen

I am pleased to be here and to serve as Chairman of this Inaugural Ceremony for the MRU Peace Forum and I thank the organisers for choosing me to serve in this capacity. I also wish to welcome our foreign guests to Freetown, Sierra Leone and I hope that you will have a fruitful stay in the country, which is now enjoying the peace dividend of the initiatives of ECOWAS, the African Union and the United Nations. You will agree with me that strengthening mechanisms for conflict prevention, management and resolution, maintaining peace, promoting and protecting democracy and human rights are very important for our socio-economic development.

I say this because we have learnt from the experiences of our various countries in this sub-region that peace, security, democracy, good governance, human rights and sound economic management are all conditions for sustainable development. Therefore, to sustain the peace and security that is gradually being established in our three countries we should put in place policy measures that will address the political and social vulnerabilities on which conflict is premised. Added to this, the need exists to build capacity to manage all aspects of conflict within the sub-region.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, surely our governments will be in the driving seats of these efforts. They will individually and jointly within the context of the ECOWAS and MRU provide guidance and direction and build partnership at a much higher level, consolidate peace and promote development. However at the level of the people, we need to build the bridges and alliances that will ensure that we strive for a common aspiration and vision of a peaceful and developed Mano River Union Basin. It is with this in mind that the efforts of the MRU in setting up this Forum are very important, timely and need commendation. The Forum will serve as a platform for the MRU to enhance the capacity of civil society in Liberia, Guinea and Sierra Leone to promote peace and security in the sub-region, to share experiences, and to mobilize our people to take collective action in favour of peace, stability and development.

I am heartened to note that the Forum's membership is drawn from women's groups, youth, traditional leaders, human rights activists and representations from a broad spectrum of our three countries and our partners. This will indeed make it the voice for the disadvantaged groups and empower them to influence policies and positions of government, political parties and other key actors in the sub-region. It will facilitate dialogue, promote networking, and ensure coordination of peace building efforts. With the bad experience of a civil war behind us, I believe we should continue to consolidate the peace and deepen democracy, because over the long term this will contribute to lasting security. In addition we should ensure that the human rights of all members of three countries are respected because, without this, security cannot be guaranteed. To be successful, peace building and good governance require all of us to play our part to seize the opportunities offered and to work together. Referring to the programme for this Forum, I wish to note that participants will have the opportunity to discuss the way forward and brainstorm on what challenges we need to overcome to make this sub-region stable.

Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, I hope that as a result of the discussions that will be held here, you will all arrive at resolutions and action points that will contribute to the success of the MR initiative in ensuring stability in our countries. I thank you for your kind attention.

2- Adress by Dr Oumar Ndong, Director of Mano River Union Peace Forum

Distinguished guests,

One of the commonalities of the world today is the view that “we must act locally but think globally”- this, in my opinion, bears much significance to the event we are celebrating today – who can deny that we are living in a global village? Distances are no more! What about borders? Malaria knows no country. Are there Guinean or Sierra Leonean mosquitoes? Do we have Liberian viruses that affect only Liberians? When threats become collective, the imperative for communities is to seek collective responses.

The Forum we are inaugurating today is one of those tools made available to civil society organisations for peace building and development. It is true that civil society organisations had been for a very long time excluded from the political debate, I use political in its original meaning as related to the functioning of the city and of society at large. Therefore the creation of this Forum should correct that situation, however reinforcing the capacity of civil society does not mean to exclude political constituencies. On the contrary, we are creating a space that will foster a permanent dialogue between all segments of our societies to advocate for peace in the sub-region, to exploit the potential that nature and hard work can grant us, and to engage our communities in constructive actions that lead to prosperity.

The Forum we are inaugurating today was initiated by 6 organisations: two in Guinea, two in Liberia and two in Sierra Leone – Here Are Their Names:

- ABC Development In Guinea
- Confederation Des Organisations Feminines De Guinee (COFEG)
- Inter-Religious Council in Liberia
- Liberian Women Initiative
- Campaign For Good Governance In Sierra Leone
- Network For The Movement Of Justice And Development In Sierra Leone

Those local organisations partnered with two international ones that are familiar with recent developments in the sub-region: International Alert and Conciliation Resources. Both are known for their unyielding commitment to restoring peace in the sub-region and promoting good governance, justice, respect for human rights and the reduction or even eradication of poverty.

The Forum’s assigned objectives are ambitious yet attainable if each one of us sees himself or herself as an ambassador of peace bringing every day a stone for the new peace constituencies we want to erect in the Mano River Union Basin.

Thank you for your attention.

3 – Keynote address by H.E. Dr A. Jallow, Secretary General of MRU secretariat

Madam, Chairperson/Excellencies, Ambassadors Of Ghana & Guinea.

Distinguished Guests

Ladies and Gentlemen

As a sub-regional organisation committed to finding sustainable peace and security as pre-conditions for socio-economic development, we are naturally always delighted to be a part of a project of this nature that is consistent with the aims and objectives of the Mano River Union. This is precisely why it has been a pleasure for us to host the MRU Peace Forum.

Against this background I would like to take this opportunity, first of all, to wholeheartedly welcome to the fold of the Mano River Union Family, the MRU Peace Forum and its associated partners so that together we can foster the twin-agenda of peace and development.

It is gratifying to recall that prior to 1989, the MRU Basin used to be regarded as the African sub-region of relative peace and security and as such, was the model for other countries, not only in Africa, but also elsewhere in the world.

However, over the past 14 years, the sub-region has been turned into one of the theaters of violent conflict in the world, with devastating consequences in both human and material terms. The major contributory factors often cited for the outbreak of hostilities are:

- I. Inappropriate monetary and fiscal policies that lead to increasing abject and chronic poverty;
- II. A lack of press freedom, democracy and good governance;
- III. Abuse of human rights;
- IV. Mismanagement of resources, etc.

The proliferation and spread of small arms and light weapons have contributed in no small measure to worsening the root causes of the conflict. Further compounding the problems are factors such as the end of the Cold War that has allegedly led to the disposal of large quantities of small arms and light weapons at relatively low cost, most of which have found their way into our sub-region.

This sad state of affairs has thus presented us with the challenges of peace building and conflict management.

Despite the signing of several peace accords between the governments and warring factions, lasting solutions to the crisis have been elusive until it became clear and generally accepted that what exists in the sub-region is a simple system of conflicts with several flashpoints and thus, the best strategy for dealing with the situation is one that recognizes the inter-linkages of the conflicts and fully addresses the sub-regional dimensions using a holistic approach rather than just a national one.

In the search for approaches and strategies to deal with the issue of conflict prevention, and mindful of the need to ensure the security of their common borders, the MRU Member States adopted the 15th protocol on peace and security.

As many of us here are aware, the original mandate of the union was aimed largely at regional integration and economic cooperation. Beginning from 1993 however, it has evolved towards bringing on board the issues of peace and security to address the challenges posed by the conflict in the sub-region. The original mandate was therefore expanded when the three MRU Heads of State signed on may 8, 2000 the 15th protocol to focus on the broader challenges of the MRU Basin. As a result of this protocol a high degree of attention is now focused on peace and security besides economic matters.

Basically the 15th protocol is a conflict prevention mechanism intended to enhance early warning capability. In line with this objective, 23 strategic border points have so far been identified where senior border officials, youth and women groups, the military and police will organise and conduct regular

joint patrols, exchange intelligence and other information and promote cordial relations through cultural, social and sports activities. The protocol also addresses the issues of small arms and light weapons.

Furthermore, the active involvement of civil society in the peace process, although limited, is commendable as it has in no small measure contributed to bringing the conflicts to a manageable level.

Madam Chairperson, distinguished ladies and gentlemen;

Our efforts in the search for peace and security have been focused on managing and resolving the conflict, understandably because unfortunately it is already on our hands. Important as that is, it is also equally necessary if not more so, that as we begin to see positive signs of peace and security in our sub-region, there is an urgent need to look beyond the on-going conflict to pursue a long-term strategic thinking that will involve finding ways and means to prevent future conflict from taking place in the first place. This is one of the greatest challenges facing all stakeholders in the peace process, including civil society, which is expected to play a catalytic role in this regard.

Adopting this approach is the most cost-effective in human, material and financial terms. The starting point for this approach should be the identification of the root causes of the conflict, followed by putting in place measures to address those causes.

I need not further emphasize that conflict prevention is critical to achieving lasting peace and security as it offers the best possible chances to address the root causes of crisis and not just its consequences, thus providing a real opportunity to sow the seed of a peaceful society where harmonious co-existence can blossom.

As we have repeatedly pointed out in the past, during other occasions of this nature, the need for greater involvement of civil society organisations and wider circle of stakeholders in the peace process has now been recognized. But, to become more vibrant, we want to encourage them to strengthen networking and solidarity among themselves in the common quest for peace and security in the sub-region. Doing so, will enhance not only the prospects for a sub-regional approach to peace building, but should also strengthen the capacities of civil society.

Initiatives aimed at developing the capacity of civil society as the MRU Peace Forum intends to do should be encouraged and indeed promoted so as to entrench a culture of preventing conflict. This should also include a system of formal educational activities designed to inculcate within the value system of the people, ideas and orientations for preventing rather than managing and resolving conflict that has already unfolded.

It is gratifying to note in this regard that the MRU Peace Forum, which is founded on partnership, bringing together civil society organisations in the MRU Countries and their sponsor partners in peace building, is a welcome initiative. We value very much a project of this nature because it affords us the opportunity for confronting the great challenges of dealing with conflict in our sub-region. I can assure you of our fullest support and cooperation. We look forward to the practical implementation and overall success of the project.

If we are to succeed in our efforts to create an enabling environment for peace and security, we will certainly need the continued support of our development partners, particularly with regards to post-conflict recovery initiatives that will address some of the root causes of conflict that I mentioned earlier.

I want to also appeal to all stakeholders in the peace process to rally their support behind the efforts of Mano River Union in fostering peace and security.

Madam Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen;

Finally, I want to take this opportunity to congratulate MARWOPNET for winning the UN peace prize and civil society organisations in general for their untiring efforts in steering the peace process to its current favorable level for which they deserve to be applauded. I urge them to come together under one umbrella in their peace building efforts that should now begin to focus on conflict prevention so that an enabling environment for socio-economic development emerges.

I thank you for your attention.

4- Nana K. A. Busia Jr. West Africa Programme Manager of International Alert. Another Fine Day in the Mano River Union Area: The Back Ground, Context and Objectives of the MRU Peace Forum.

Distinguished ladies and gentlemen,

Today marks yet another fine day in the recent history of the MRU. The last two or so years have moved the MRU region from a situation of gross instability to that of cessation of hostilities with processes and mechanisms set in motion for sustainable peace. We cannot carry out our task today without paying a glowing tribute to all who were made to make ultimate sacrifices which have brought about peace in the MRU (rise for moment of silence in respect).

It will be a mark of a high level ingratitude if on a day like this we cannot say thank you to ECOWAS, and thank God for ECOMOG. Equally we commend the United Nations, UNAMSIL and UNMIL for their support.

Today identifiable civil society organisations in the MRU engaged in diverse sectors such as human right, women issues, democracy, development, youth, faith based organisations and traditional rulers have all come together with international partners to constitute ourselves into a forum with the main objective of advocating for peace, good governance and human security as a whole.

Permit me Madam Chair, to put today's event in its right perspective.

Tensions have been inherent amongst the three MRU countries since their formation as colonial constructs by three different imperial powers. This tension was latent, involving issues of territorial claims against each other. From 1989 onwards it was to become a different story. In that year when the war was started in Liberia subsequent attempts were made to get certain armed groups in the region in particular Sierra Leone to fight alongside the armed group that was trying to unseat the then government in Liberia. This was to sow the seed of violence and instability in the region. This state of affairs became more complicated in 1997 when the armed group that started the war led by Charles Taylor was democratically elected the president of Liberia. The Taylor government had both objective and subjective reasons for first suppressing dissent in his own country and then later between 1999/2000 onwards subjecting the whole sub-region including Cote D'Ivoire into a state of constant war. Suffice to say it was good for business by giving jobs to the boys who since 1989 had been fighting. The hostility became not a one-country hostility but that of the MRU region, the same arms moving from one country to another with the breakdown in law and order. Precious minerals were also moving across different countries. Nobody epitomized the regional character of the conflicts of this period in question more than the General Maskita; he seemed to have been a general of the three countries.

It is estimated that between 2000 and 2002, there are about 14 armed groups, made up sometimes of mercenaries and military advisers of some developed western countries all masquerading as pro or anti Charles Taylor fighters. The outcome of this hostility is all too well known by people of the region who lived the experience. Let's remind ourselves about that experience lest we forget. It is estimated over one million people have been killed in the last ten years another three million displaced or made refugees out of a population of 15 million. Guinea alone has hosted close to half a million refugees. The mayhem of rape, human rights violations, wanton destruction of properties, destruction of infrastructure, forceful recruitment of child soldiers all unleashed violence with little parallels in world history, hence giving the sub-region the unenviable accolade of a West Africa World War.

Initial attempts to respond to these wars had a national focus of trying to achieve peace in one country. Useful as this attempt was, it lost sight of the regional dimensions to the conflict. It must be placed on record even at that early period 1998/99 certain attempts were made to have a regional approach to the conflict. The Inter-Faith Council of Liberia heralded this approach however ad-hoc it was. The women as usual led the way when the MARWOPNET heralded the way between 2000 and 2001 when the conflict intensified and it impelled certain organisations to rethink their strategies. The CSM held consultations in-country and among the three countries, as did WANEP. International Alert and Conciliation Resources having worked with partners in Liberia and Sierra Leone, learnt lessons which instructed them that a one-country approach could not be the way forward for peace in the region.

Our MRU project has evolved organically out of the experience and engagement of we the partners in the countries of the MRU. What is new about this forum is that it seeks to be a standing permanent forum, not just an informal network but institutionalised. It is a forum that wants to be seen as legitimate and close to being representative of all the civil society organisations in the region. Lastly, it seeks to work with all organisations working generally on human security issues.

Objectives of the Forum:

The principal objective of the forum is to directly intervene in the MRU conflict by enhancing critical support for and contributing to local and regional processes and capacities for peace through the creation of a permanent NGO platform.

- To constitute and create a standing forum for representatives of identifiable civil society organisations thereby empowering them to speak with unified voice and to make representations to governments of the three countries, armed groups, where applicable, and inter-governmental agencies.
- To interface with the work of the MRU Secretariat. The MRU Secretariat, as an inter-governmental entity itself was created in 1973 by Liberia and Sierra Leone. Guinea joined in 1980, to work towards economic integration, however with realities of war the mandate expanded in 2000 with the adoption of the 15th Protocol to the MRU Declaration to include defence, peace and security. Our aim is to support it by working constructively to ensure that this mechanism works effectively.
- Advocacy on good governance, human rights and peace.
- To support and develop the conflict resolution capacities of parliamentarians and other government bodies.
- To influence the thinking and practice of development and humanitarian NGOs on conflict sensitive approaches to development.

The Structure of the Forum.

The forum itself is constituted by 18 persons nominated /selected from the three MRU countries (6 from each country), working in the following sectors: youth, media, human rights/democracy, women issues,

and religious and traditional leaders. Criteria of selection: by the sector in the country, rural urban balance, gender balance, linguistic balance, etc. It is the sovereign body that makes all the policies and adopt strategies for the year. The forum is managed by six core partners with two each from the three countries, two international partners and director of the secretariat of the forum. The management committee meets twice every year to make decisions on how to implement policies of the forum. The secretariat is created for this forum is physically situated within the MRU Secretariat offices. It is headed by a director with staff who are appointed by the Management Committee whose main duty is to see to the day to day implementation of the forum's policies and strategies.

As a test of our resolve and work, last year during the Liberian hostilities the management committee met with organisations from the three countries and Cote D'Ivoire in an emergency meeting in Akosombo, Ghana to discuss the Liberia peace agreement. They made comments and amendments to the then draft peace agreement and submitted them to chair of ECOWAS, UN and others.

This forum has come to stay and will definitely not be a nine day wonder.

5- Address by General Arnold Quainoo, Former ECOMOG Commander in Liberia

Madam Chair,
Ladies and Gentlemen

I am happy to have been invited here to participate in this event in the cause of peace because the security situation in our sub-region, in spite of all our efforts to date is still very grave.

Millions of our peoples are still engulfed in fear. Millions are still living on one poor meal a day from starvation and millions are still afflicted by deadly diseases without any hope of a cure. That is why throughout the lengths and breadths of our sub-region today various concerns are still being posed :

- A. About how to banish violence as a legitimate option in the settlement of disputes.
- B. How to guarantee fair and just treatment to every citizen.
- C. How to ensure that we utilize the wit and wisdom of every citizen irrespective of his learning in efforts to find solutions to our common problems. These concerns and many other ones are being expressed everyday. But as matters stand now, this is no time for mere verbal experience of concern.

We may now begin to develop organisations and leaders with the capacity to think rigorously about the various passionate issues that confront us, unlike the capacity to take decisions no matter how difficult; with the capacity to relentlessly and meticulously prove evidence and determine objectives that are desirable and sensible. And above all we need to develop the capacity to adhere to ethical standards and values, under any circumstance.

Unless we develop these capacities our seminars, workshop, conferences and Recommendations can never result in concrete realities. We shall continue to move from crisis to crisis; we shall remain in a perpetual state of revolution in our sub-region and coming generations of our peoples will forgive us for our myopia and selfishness.

Madam Chair,

I know that the Peace Forum of the Mano River Union represents few inspired people vision of a better world for our children. A better world in which our children and our children's children can grow without fear and prosper in harmony with each other and in dignity.

I also know that this vision can be realized only through the efforts of so many hands. And that is why many of us been invited here so that together we can gather and draw inspiration from each other.

Madam Chair,

I have experienced at first hand the agony of unnecessary bloodshed and destitution from the Congo in the 1960s to Liberia in the 1990s and I am more than eager to pledge the support of my center for conflict resolution in and that of other Ghana (Ghanaian civil society organisation) as we all begin to develop the experience the expertise and the clout to handle conflict in our sub-region much more creatively and sustainably.

Madam Chair,

As the work for peace is the work of so many generations I'll like to urge the peace forum to develop the mentality and attitude of the long distance runner. The motto must be NEVER GIVE UP.

Courage, steadfastness and resilience must be and must remain the foundation upon which all our efforts must be forged.

Madam Chair,

At this stage I must restate how deeply I appreciate the privilege and the opportunity to associate myself with this great venture which is directed at nothing other than to our common good. May the MRU Peace Forum, its members and all its work in all fields flourish.

Madam chairperson, ladies and Gentlemen, I thank you for the honour.

Appendix 3

Code of Conduct for the Management Committee of the MRU Forum

The Management Committee will be involved in the following relationships and shall be governed by this code of conduct:

- Relationship amongst Management Committee Members
- Relationship with Civil Society in the region
- Relationship with Forum
- Relationship with Secretariat
- Relationship with the Advisory Board
- Relationship with governments in the region: impartiality, etc

Relationship amongst Management Committee Members

- Work together in trust and confidence for improvement of peace and security in the region
- While acknowledging the importance of national issues, these should not overshadow regional consideration.
- Relationships and activities must not be discriminatory
- Exhibit mutual respect in spite of ethnic/religious/gender differences

Relationship with Civil Society

- Cooperate with credible civil society organisations with an overriding objective of peace building and develop a social movement for peace and dignity of all people in the sub-region.
- Act with due care in activities so as not to endanger lives of other civil society actors.
- Act with solidarity with victims of torture, human right violations and abuses.

Relationship with Forum

- Serve as the decision-making body for policies made and resolutions passed.
- Undertake a unifying and convening role within the Forum towards the promotion, consideration and transformation of peace in the region.
- Respect the interests, concerns and resolutions of the Forum to key external bodies.

Relationship with the Secretariat

- Supervise/oversee the implementation of policies/strategies/resolutions made by the forum.
- Line manage the post of Director
- Ensure sound management and financial accountability
- Direct and work with the Secretariat in the management of the rapid response fund.

Relationship with Advisory Board

- Actively seek advice from advisory board on matters of national and regional concern.
- Identify credible persons from within the Mano River Union region working for peace to serve on the advisory board.

Relationship with Governments

- Seek constructive engagement with state and non-state actors without compromising our impartial stand.
- Make ourselves available as resources for human rights and conflict transformation in the region.

- Supporting initiatives that endeavour to mediate in conflict situations in the region between governments and armed groups.
- Fostering dialogue between government opposition groups in the country and in the Diaspora.

Relationship with Intergovernmental Organisations, e.g. Mano River Union (MRU), Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), African Union (AU) and UN (Dakar).

- Initiating dialogue processes on behalf of the Forum
- Formalizing relationship with Mano River Union Secretariat
- Seeking observer status with regional and international bodies
- Make recommendations and representations to these Intergovernmental bodies on peace and security issues in the sub-region.

Note: At the management meeting held on February 6th, 2004, Dr Foday Ishaga Suma, executive director of ABC Development in Guinea was chosen to chair the Management Committee for the coming six months on behalf of Guinea.

Appendix 4

Participants List

No	NAME	ORGANISATION
1	Dr. Oumar Ndongo	Director of Forum
2	Lavina Dumbuya	CGG
3	Dr. Nana K A Busia Jr.	International Alert, UK
4	Augustine Beecher	Standard Times News Paper
5	Elizabeth M. Foray- Reid	Democrat Newspaper
6	Rev. Matthew Quartey	Radio Democracy FM98.1
7	Max Corneh	New Vision Newspaper
8	Isaac Massaquoi	New Vision Newspaper
9	Issa B .M. Kamara	Citizen FM 103.7
10	Helen Bash-Taqi	NMJD
11	Dr. Ba-Foday Suma	ABC Development Guinea
12	Esther M. Kamara	NMJD
13	David Kiazolu	IRCL
14	Ahmed G. Kallon	SLBSTV
15	Bobie Lammy	SLBSTV
16	Dr. Kaba Saran Daraba	COFEG
17	Al-hassan Sesay	New Storm Newspaper
18	Tamba Borbor	AWOKO Newspaper
19	Obi Frazer	Freelance
20	Mike Bitscher	New African Newspaper
21	Patience Heah	FLY
22	Elizabeth Boyenneh	AFLL
23	Kaba Diakitè Samsy	Les Amis du Futur
24	Madame Fatou Keira	COFEG
25	Madame Manfadina Magassouba	ADDEF
26	Alex A. Smith	SFCG/TDS
27	Specs Manirakiza	SFCG/TDS-Guinea
28	Konah C. Kromah	Ministry of Dev. & Eco. Planning

29	Oumar Barry	Interpreter
30	Yacuba C. Sesay	Interpreter
31	Regina Pratt	Concord Times Newspaper
32	Tejan Lamboi	The Democrat Newspaper
33	Awa Dabo	UNDP - Liberia
34	Alphonsus Zeon	Press Union of Liberia
35	Chief Bai K. Bafalie	Traditional Leader
36	Francis Bunting Graden	CR – Kenema (Sierra Leone)
37	Memunatu Pratt	Peace Studies–University of Sierra Leone
38	Alhaji Ibrahim B. Kargbo	New Citizen Newspaper
39	El- Tayzib Bah	SLAJ
40	Marcella E. F. McCauley	CGG
41	Alhaji Ibrahim Kabba	Peace Studies– University of Sierra Leone
42	Abdulai Mansary	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
43	Jenkins Amara Kallon	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
44	Emmanuel Musa	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
45	Salifu Mansary	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
46	Makieu K Dabah	Peace Studies- University of Sierra Leone
47	Peter Raven	IA – London
48	Dan Smith	Sec. General IA – London
49	Abbey Onadipe	CR - London
50	Jeannette Eno	CR - Freetown
51	Rt. Gen. Arnold Quaino	Fmr ECOMOG Commander in Liberia
52	Amara Suma	New Storm Newspaper
53	Sartah Dempster	LWI
54	Ordinand Jacques Boston	Anglican Church in Guinea
55	Habibatu Kromah	LMWP
56	Diallo Ahod	Journalist
57	Kevin Banduah	
58	Emile Cline	

