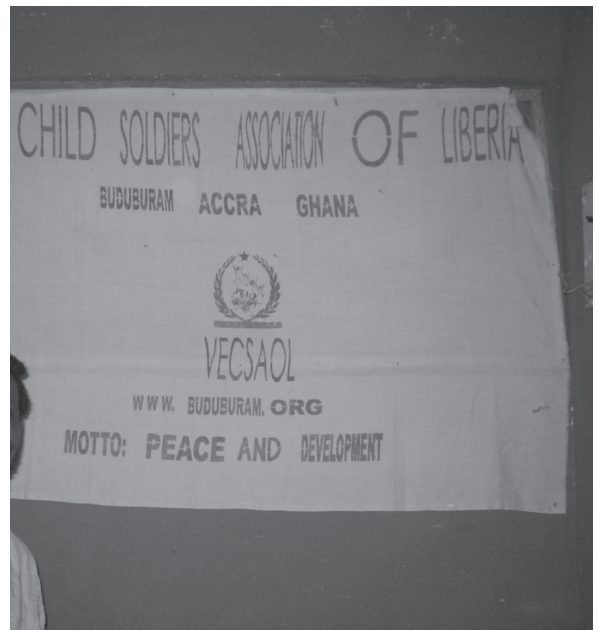


Chapter Nine



Child Soldiers

Chapter Nine. Child Soldiers

1991 was the time I held a gun myself. All the way until 1996 I fought for Taylor...The rebels came and took [my parents] from the house. It was raining. The rebels beat them and made them lie down in the rain and tied their hands behind their back. Then [the commander] came and took me away and made me his personal body guard...I had an AK-47 with a wooden guard not a folding stock. My war name was Kali; I was very slim as a cat and very swift.¹

Child soldiers were used by multiple fighting factions in Liberia beginning in 1989.² Statement givers detailed both their involvement as child soldiers, as well as the gross human rights violations committed by child soldiers. During the conflict, child soldiers themselves were subject to numerous human rights and humanitarian law violations, including abductions, compulsory and underage recruitment, torture, forced labor, rape, killings, and threats. By using children to fight in the armed conflict, factions not only forced children to commit egregious human rights violations themselves, but also deprived them of rights to which they, as children, are entitled.³

In this report, the term “child soldier” is used to refer to any “child associated with an armed force or armed group” and includes any girl or boy less than 18 years old⁴ “recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity,” including as “fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes.”⁵

In armed conflicts not of an international character:

“Children shall be provided with the care and aid they require, and in particular:

- (a) they shall receive an education, including religious and moral education, in keeping with the wishes of their parents, or in the absence of parents, of those responsible for their care;
- (b) all appropriate steps shall be taken to facilitate the reunion of families temporarily separated;
- (c) children who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities;
- (d) the special protection provided by this Article to children who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall remain applicable to them if they take a direct part in hostilities despite the provisions of subparagraph (c) and are captured;
- (e) measures shall be taken, if necessary, and whenever possible with the consent of their parents or persons who by law or custom are primarily responsible for their care, to remove children temporarily from the area in which hostilities are taking place to a safer area within the country and ensure that they are accompanied by persons responsible for their safety and well-being.”

Art. 4(3), Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II).

Estimates of the number of child soldiers engaged in fighting during the Liberian conflict range from 15,000⁶ to more than 20,000.⁷ Although the warring factions forcibly recruited children, some associated themselves with fighting forces for other reasons, usually because there was no alternative for survival.⁸ Children reported joining factions for a variety of reasons: “to avenge the killings of parents, other family or friends; to protect their families from the warring factions; or to get food for themselves and their families” or because “no one was left to take care of them.”⁹

Life for children associated with fighting factions was traumatic and very dangerous as they attempted to survive the rigors of a military existence. Children were put to work as fighters, made to fetch and carry ammunition, and used as cooks.¹⁰ Girls were often raped and used as sexual slaves.¹¹ One statement giver now in Ghana described his recruitment at age seven. “I was in Maryland County, in Harper, when the war started in 1990. One day there was plenty firing around where we were living. The [National Patriotic Front of Liberia] (NPFL) men carried me to cook for them and work carrying wood. I was only seven years old. This went on for many months.”¹²

Children who were used as fighters, like many of their adult counterparts, often received little training.¹³ Instead, they were given drugs and alcohol to make them aggressive and fearless.¹⁴ Under these conditions, children were particularly vulnerable to disease and malnutrition.¹⁵

The TRC mandate specifically addresses the issue of child soldiers. Section 4(e) states that the TRC is to promote “national peace, security, unity and reconciliation” by:

Adopting specific mechanisms and procedures to address the experiences of women, children and vulnerable groups, paying particular attention to gender-based violations, as well as to the issue of child soldiers, providing opportunities for them to relate their experiences. Addressing concerns and recommending measures to be taken for the rehabilitation of such violations in the spirit of national reconciliation and healing.¹⁶

This section of the report summarizes the recruitment of children to serve as soldiers, the experiences of child soldiers, the violence perpetrated by child soldiers, and the status of former child soldiers in the aftermath of the war.

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CHILD SOLDIERS

The available information both from statements and secondary sources on the origins, numbers and demographic characteristics of Liberian child soldiers is limited. Many statement givers’ accounts of atrocities perpetrated by particular groups did not single out child soldiers from among the perpetrators. Statement givers’ descriptions of perpetrating groups and individuals included “boys,” “soldiers,”

“soldier boys,” “rebels,” or “rebel boys,” sometimes with estimates as to the age of perpetrators, but often without reference to age. One statement giver reported that she was raped at age eight by a “rebel boy;”¹⁷ another statement giver reported her rape by two “boys” at age 13.¹⁸ One statement giver recalled seeing a nine- or ten-year-old child soldier armed with a gun and grenade in July 1990.¹⁹

By 2000, the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) estimated that 15,000 children had fought in the Liberian conflict.²⁰ In 2004, Amnesty International estimated that 21,000 children, including approximately 2,000 girls, had been combatants in Liberia.²¹ The United Nations noted “that one out of every ten Liberian children may have been recruited at some time into the war effort both



in Liberia and in the neighboring countries...”²² In 1994, UNICEF estimated that ten percent of combatants, or 6,000, were less than 15 years old.²³ It also estimated that in 1996-97, 18 percent of NPFL soldiers were children.²⁴ The majority of these were between 15 and 17 years old and had served for an average of four years; 27 percent were between 12 and 14 years old.²⁵ It was reported that some child combatants were as young as six years old²⁶ and that ten-year-olds would hold command responsibility at checkpoints and roadblocks.²⁷

Demobilization statistics also provide some insight into the magnitude of the problem. At the war’s end in 2003, between 38,000 and 53,000 fighters of all ages reportedly needed to be demobilized.²⁸ By 2005, UNICEF reported that it had demobilized 11,780 child soldiers and reunited virtually all of them with family or caregivers.²⁹ It was reported, however, that previously demobilized combatants were being re-recruited to fight in Côte d’Ivoire.³⁰

The vast majority of child combatants were boys, although girls were also recruited for combat and sexual slavery. During the 1996-97 demobilization, roughly one percent of the demobilized child soldiers were “girls or young women.”³¹ Between 2002 and 2005, the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) demobilized 10,963 children, of which 23 percent were girls.³²

Child soldiers reported having little education, generally less than a fifth grade level.³³ For those who participated in the fighting, their education was interrupted sometimes for years. Among a group of

ex-combatants interviewed by Human Rights Watch, most reported attending first grade; one boy interviewed could not read or write his name.³⁴ One statement giver, forcibly recruited at age ten, reported that he was the only one in his unit who could read and write.³⁵

RECRUITMENT OF CHILD SOLDIERS

Forcible Recruitment and Conscription

Forcible recruitment of child soldiers by combatant groups occurred in a variety of contexts.³⁶ Former child soldiers described seizure and kidnapping of children from their families in the course of raids or fighting. One statement giver described his recruitment by NPFL forces at age eight in the aftermath of a raid on his village that resulted in the deaths of several adults and children.³⁷ The surviving village children were rounded up and taken away, including the statement giver, who was told by a commander, “My man, from today you’re with me.”³⁸ Another former child soldier, taken away at age ten by Taylor’s forces after they killed his parents in Nimba County, was designated the bodyguard of the commander of the group responsible for his parents’ killings.³⁹ At age 13, another statement giver witnessed the beheading of his father by Taylor’s forces before being taken away by them; the rebel commander then told him that he should fight with them.⁴⁰

International human rights and humanitarian law governing the recruitment and use of child soldiers:

“Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.” States Parties are to take “all feasible measures” to prevent this practice, including prohibitions against and criminalization of such acts. *Art. 4(1)-(2), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict.*

“Conscripting or enlisting children under the age of fifteen years into armed forces or groups or using them to participate actively in hostilities” in non-international armed conflicts constitutes a war crime. *Art. 8(2)(e)(vii), Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court.*

“[C]hildren who have not attained the age of fifteen years shall neither be recruited in the armed forces or groups nor allowed to take part in hostilities” in non-international armed conflicts. *Art. 4(3)(c), Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflict (Protocol II).*

Another former child soldier stated that, when the rebels came to his village in Sinoe County in 1990, they lined up all the village children in front of their families’ houses and asked which child was the oldest in each family.⁴¹ Every oldest child, whether male or female, was taken away by the rebels to fight.⁴² The statement giver explained that 14 of these conscripted children were killed in a single

battle, and the rebels later returned to villages to force second-born children to join their forces.⁴³

The consequences of refusing to join a fighting faction were dire. Children were presented with the choice to join a particular fighting faction or face being beaten,⁴⁴ tortured,⁴⁵ or killed⁴⁶ for refusing to do so. As described by one former child soldier, in 1992 at age 15, he was forced to take up arms by a NPFL general who told him to “choose between life and death.”⁴⁷ A 14-year-old boy, captured and tortured with his father, reported that the rebels forced him to smoke opium, beat him, slapped him and tortured his father in front of him in an effort to persuade him to join their forces.⁴⁸ An 11-year-old survivor of a raid was jailed by the perpetrators for three days and given the option to “join the rebels or be killed.”⁴⁹

Children were also subject to forced recruitment techniques that included seizure at checkpoints⁵⁰ or random abduction from roads or streets.⁵¹ Knowledge that boys were particularly targeted for forced recruitment led many to remain in hiding during certain periods of the conflict.⁵² Some statement givers recounted their fear of sending boys in their families out to find food or water for fear that they would not return. One such statement giver commented that “Liberia was not safe for young men” like himself because of their vulnerability to forced recruitment.⁵³

Other Reasons for Recruitment and Enlistment

According to a 1994 Human Rights Watch report, although some children had been forcibly recruited, some also associated themselves with one faction or another because of “the advantage.”⁵⁴ The “advantage” meant participating to “avenge the killings of parents, brothers and sisters, to protect their families, or to get scarce food for themselves and their families...”⁵⁵ For some child soldiers, it also meant participating for quasi-patriotic reasons – “to fight for my country”⁵⁶ or to fight “for my freedom.”⁵⁷

Secondary sources and statements described how children may have participated in armed groups because they saw it as the only way to access scarce resources after the death or disappearance of parents and family.⁵⁸ One statement giver described his reasons for joining the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) at age 12 after witnessing the aftermath of the Lutheran Church Massacre:

[After my e]xposure to all this terror, horror and violence, I became bitter and decided to affiliate with forces of the Independent National Patriotic Front (INPFL), headed by Prince Y. Johnson. My purpose for befriending the INPFL was to get food daily and for safety.⁵⁹

Another statement giver told the TRC that he managed to stay with his father during the early stages

of the conflict, but in 1996, lost contact with his father at age 15.⁶⁰ Seeing no other choice for survival, he began fighting with the rebels.⁶¹ Another former child soldier described joining the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia – Johnson faction (ULIMO-J) forces at age ten after opposition forces killed his entire family.⁶² The necessity to “preserve my life” was described by one

“States Parties shall ensure to the maximum extent possible the survival and development of the child.” *Art. 6(2), Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

former child soldier as his motive for joining the NPFL during Operation Octopus.⁶³ He witnessed Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) Senegalese peacekeepers arrest and kill tattooed rebel fighters and feared for his own survival, as he himself bore tattoos as a result of his two years serving as a child soldier in Prince Johnson’s forces.⁶⁴

Some child soldiers associated themselves with fighting factions after having been forcibly recruited earlier by other factions. One statement giver who fought for the NPFL for three years following his forced recruitment by that group later associated with the LPC and fought for an additional four years.⁶⁵

Other children joined fighting forces because one or more friends were already members of the group. One statement giver began fighting for the Liberia Peace Council (LPC) at age 11 because his friend was already fighting for the group.⁶⁶ Another statement giver reported being recruited by his friends to fight with them as members of Taylor’s forces, although he declined to join them.⁶⁷

In addition to joining armed forces to meet their basic needs for food, clothing, and protection, some children were motivated by commanders’ promises of financial compensation, usually in U.S. dollars, and by the opportunity to enrich themselves through looting. Fighting groups promised children a part of the spoils they acquired from looting.⁶⁸ Accordingly, children learned to target civilians so as to confiscate their property.⁶⁹

A reverence for the military was prevalent in Liberia and may have contributed to a desire among some children to become involved with an armed group. Children were used as war mascots by early tribal armies, and successful warriors exercised power in their local communities.⁷⁰ Prior to the war, it was an honor to be in the military because it was considered a prestigious group. Many of the recruits for the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) came from indigenous communities and after serving “would return to their hometowns and villages where they would be considered among the elders of their communities; many became chiefs.”⁷¹ Americo-Liberian governments had touted modernization as a means to success; joining the armed forces became a means of upward mobility and guns became a status symbol.⁷²

For many children who joined combatant forces after the death of parents and other family members, their commanders and associates became their new family:



I had no mother or father or brother or sister to tell me what to do. Just my commander...Never really missed my family 'till I left [Liberia] 'cause rebels became my family.⁷³

EXPERIENCES OF CHILD SOLDIERS

Roles, Duties, and Responsibilities

As noted above, a child soldier's service could include both non-combat and combat roles.¹¹² Statements given by former child soldiers describe tasks ranging from combat, to serving as ammunition couriers¹¹³ and water carriers,¹¹⁴ to locating and securing scarce food in villages captured by their forces.¹¹⁵ One statement giver described his initial work for the INPFL as an "errand boy," but said he eventually took up arms during a fierce battle between the INPFL and the AFL:

I had no other option than to fight. INPFL were retreating, so my chances for survival became slimmer and slimmer by the second.¹¹⁶

Human Rights Watch reported that children most commonly: a) worked as porters, laborers, and cooks; b) served as bodyguards, servants, and personal assistants to commanders; c) acted as spies or informants; d) controlled checkpoints; e) carried out ambushes; f) fought on the front lines; and g) executed suspected enemies.¹¹⁷ Additionally, because children on all sides were frequently not paid, they spent some percentage of their time stealing from civilians to survive. Some children reported

Use of Child Soldiers

National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL)

Charles Taylor's NPFL used child soldiers in groups referred to as small boys' units (SBUs). Young children could be easily persuaded to fight for very little and were easier to control.⁷⁴ Many statement givers described child soldiers associated with the NPFL.⁷⁵ In his march through Nimba County, Taylor was described by one statement giver as using child soldiers to "kill their own people" in revenge for Samuel Doe having killed the leaders of Taylor's forces.⁷⁶ According to one statement giver, Taylor recruited "children...as young as six or seven," and "anyone who could carry a gun (some of them barely)."⁷⁷ Other statement givers had family members⁷⁸ or friends⁷⁹ recruited by Charles Taylor, or were themselves child soldiers in Taylor's forces.⁸⁰ A former child soldier "captain," who led almost one hundred men, reported that by age 12, he participated in Operation Octopus;⁸¹ a 15-year-old "general" was reported by another statement giver to have led an attack on a UN facility.⁸² Taylor also used boys, as young as ten years of age, as his personal bodyguards.⁸³

Use of child soldiers under the Taylor Administration

Once Charles Taylor was elected president, use of child soldiers became tantamount to government policy. Government forces were composed of former NPFL fighters, many of whom had been recruited as children.⁸⁴ Many children left Taylor's forces after a demobilization program in 1997,⁸⁵ but the emergence of new factions fighting against Taylor led his security forces, such as the Anti-Terrorist Unit (ATU) and Special Security Service (SSS), to begin recruiting children again.⁸⁶ Reports indicate that many children recruited by the government during the period 2000-2003 were rounded up on the streets, often while traveling to and from school and home.⁸⁷ Children were also recruited into the government forces in raids on internally displaced persons' camps near Monrovia in 2002 and 2003.⁸⁸

United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO)

ULIMO also recruited and used child soldiers.⁸⁹ One statement giver stated that Alhaji Kromah and other ULIMO fighters "mobilized boys, girls, men, older people to fight."⁹⁰ Another statement giver reported that ULIMO-K (Kromah's faction) killed male children because of their potential to become child soldiers.⁹¹

Use of Child Soldiers

Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL)

The rebel group headed by Prince Johnson also recruited and used child soldiers.⁹² Johnson's forces were described by one statement giver as known for including "many Nimba boys."⁹³ One statement giver recalls seeing Prince Johnson's "boys" enter Monrovia – armed and dressed in fatigues – and kill a man.⁹⁴

Liberia Peace Council (LPC)

Like other factions, the LPC recruited and trained children combatants.⁹⁵ One statement giver described how LPC combatants abducted him when he was 12 years old.⁹⁶ They used him as their "playboy" and threatened to drug and force him to fight for them as a small soldier.⁹⁷ Another statement giver, who had fought for the LPC since he was 11, stated that he and other minors in the LPC were given drugs and alcohol.⁹⁸ Another statement giver reported that he fought for the LPC from the age of 11 until he was 15.⁹⁹

Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD)

LURD's use of child soldiers has been well documented.¹⁰⁰ LURD was known for cross border attacks to abduct children from refugee camps¹⁰¹ and for recruiting from IDP centers within Liberia.¹⁰² Some children were also driven to join LURD by the treatment they received at the hands of Taylor's government forces.¹⁰³ Statement givers also told of LURD's recruitment of children.¹⁰⁴ One Buduburam resident recounted how LURD recruited fighters from the settlement in 2001 and 2002.¹⁰⁵ During that time, it was dangerous in Buduburam, and one person was shot.¹⁰⁶ One statement giver stated that LURD rebels entered his house in Newkru town and took his wife and four children.¹⁰⁷ His wife returned to the home later, but without the children.¹⁰⁸ He has not seen his children since the war.¹⁰⁹

Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL)

MODEL began operating in 2003 and consisted mostly of former Doe loyalists. Believed to have had the backing of the Ivorian government, MODEL was reported to have forcibly recruited children from refugee camps in Côte d'Ivoire.¹¹⁰ Human Rights Watch reported that children also were forcibly recruited from the countryside as MODEL began its assault on the southeastern port city of Buchanan.¹¹¹

that they were never paid and relied solely on stealing to survive.¹¹⁸

“States Parties recognize the right of the child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child’s education, or to be harmful to the child’s health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.” *Art. 32(1), Convention on the Rights of the Child*. States Parties are to take measures to ensure implementation of this right, including through the provision of “appropriate penalties or other sanctions to ensure the effective enforcement.” *Art. 32(c), Convention on the Rights of the Child*.

An Amnesty International report speculated that children were used as soldiers because they were “perceived as cheap and expendable, and easier to condition into fearless killing and unquestioning obedience.”¹¹⁹ This fearlessness and inexperience led to the death of children at higher rates than their adult counterparts during fighting.¹²⁰ As one statement giver observed, the young children, “as young as six or seven, grade-school age...were killed very quickly.”¹²¹

Treatment of Child Soldiers

By any standard, child soldiers were treated harshly by combatant groups and were subject to both physical and mental abuse. Life with the fighting forces placed child soldiers in a harsh, volatile, violent environment. Former child soldiers told the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of living in camps in which coercion, beatings, torture, and summary executions were commonplace,¹²² medical care for wounded soldiers was non-existent,¹²³ food was scarce,¹²⁴ and sudden accusations of betrayal or disloyalty to the group could lead to torture or death.¹²⁵ A statement giver described his abduction and detention by the LPC, followed by several months of threats, beatings, and sexual abuse before he managed to escape.¹²⁶ Another told the TRC that in his seven years with NPFL forces, he saw someone die every day.¹²⁷ The climate of violence was so pervasive, one former child soldier described, “Fighting became my hobby at the time. I found pleasure in it.”¹²⁸

Like their adult counterparts,¹²⁹ child soldiers were trained as guerillas,¹³⁰ trained to attack, advance, and retreat and to dismantle, assemble, and shoot guns.¹³¹ For one statement giver, his training as a member of a Small Boys Unit (SBU) lasted five months.¹³² In addition, child soldiers in all of the forces underwent initiation procedures. To prove their loyalty and courage, children were sometimes forced to perform some atrocity, such as killing or raping someone.¹³³ Other initiation or identification rites were usurpations of traditional practices marking the transition into adulthood and involved changes to the child’s physical appearance, such as tattooing,¹³⁴ scarring, and head shaving.¹³⁵ Fighting forces also used traditional amulets and charms¹³⁶ telling children that the items had magical powers that would protect them from bullets or other harm when they entered battle.¹³⁷

Several child soldiers recounted their first combat experiences in their statements to the TRC. One recalled that as the fighters left camp to do battle, they were given a send-off by singing girls; when they returned, there was celebration and a feast, reminiscent of the festivities surrounding a soccer game.¹³⁸ The former child soldier called the event a “bitter first day,” in which he killed people and cried when it was over. He was 12 years old.¹³⁹ Another former child soldier, who at age nine served in the SBU, remembers being told that “everyone was to survive on his own” during the upcoming battle.¹⁴⁰ A third former child soldier stated that during his first battle at age ten, his group was attacked by United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia – Kromah faction (ULIMO-K) forces, and “it was my first time to kill a human being, and from there on I became a killer.”¹⁴¹

“No child shall be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.” *Art. 37(a), Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

Child soldiers reported that, if they spoke up or questioned orders, they were threatened with torture or death.¹⁴² In a statement to the TRC, a former child soldier simply stated that he did not want to do certain things, but had no choice because that was how he survived.¹⁴³ All of the forces generally meted out harsh punishment to child soldiers such as being hung upside down by the feet and beaten,¹⁴⁴ being beaten with cartridge belts, being tied tabay, being dragged through dirty water, or being forced to watch the execution of family members.¹⁴⁵ One child soldier said that soldiers in his camp would hit children with gun butts in the mouth, thereby breaking the children’s teeth, and in the eyes to force the children to train and to follow orders.¹⁴⁶

Children learned quickly to obey. One former child soldier told the TRC about witnessing the accusation and execution of a comrade alleged to have betrayed the fighting group.

“States Parties shall take all appropriate measures, including legislative, administrative, social and educational measures, to protect children from the illicit use of narcotic drugs and psychotropic substances as defined in the relevant international treaties, and to prevent the use of children in the illicit production and trafficking of such substances.” *Art. 33, Convention on the Rights of the Child.*

The general give me an order, and I would do it without question...[I saw] them doing things and knew they could do it to me. So I had to protect myself. So I had to do the same things so they knew [that I was loyal]...If you are ordered to give your mother and father a thousand lashes, you’ll give them one thousand lashes.¹⁴⁷

To encourage them to act without exercising judgment, child soldiers were regularly given alcohol and drugs, including marijuana, cocaine, opium, a mixture of cane juice and gunpowder, and “bubbles,” an amphetamine.¹⁴⁸ One statement giver, forcibly recruited at age ten, stated that the first thing the rebels did was to force him to consume alcohol and smoke marijuana at gunpoint.¹⁴⁹

He thought the commanders provided the drugs and alcohol so that the “children would feel brave and could shoot anybody they saw.”¹⁵⁰ Another former child soldier told the TRC he was given food laced with marijuana, gun powder, and cocaine,¹⁵¹ while a third statement giver said he and other child soldiers were given “[marijuana], cocaine, dugee [tablets] and spirits to make us brave.”¹⁵² Although the children often drank and smoked voluntarily, the drugs were given to them by their commanders, and many children believed the substances were “medicine” for protection.¹⁵³ They believed if they took the medicine and were hit by a bullet, it would bounce right off.¹⁵⁴ One former child soldier stated, “Drugs used to be my food.”¹⁵⁵ He believed that the protection provided by drugs given to him would prevent him from feeling a bullet if he were shot.¹⁵⁶

As discussed in Chapter Six, most soldiers had fighting names that signified their particular characteristics in fighting.¹⁵⁷ Children’s dress and appearance were dictated by the dress and uniform customs of the fighting force with which they were associated. Most fighting factions did not use formal uniforms but instead used colored t-shirts, unusual dress such as wigs and underwear, or a specific hairstyle as unit identification.¹⁵⁸ According to one statement giver, some child soldiers under the command of Charles Taylor wore neither uniforms nor shoes, thus making it impossible to identify the children as fighters.¹⁵⁹

Escape from Fighting Forces

Numerous statement givers told of escaping from combatant groups after varying lengths of time. One former child soldier stated he escaped to Côte d’Ivoire at age 12 during a period of chaotic fighting among NPFL soldiers who were drinking.¹⁶⁰ Another escaped the INPFL through the bush, disguised himself, and eventually made his way to Côte d’Ivoire.¹⁶¹ A third former child soldier served 11 years with the NPFL, during which he tried unsuccessfully to escape. By 2003, he was “tired of hurting people and of carrying a gun,” and took advantage of an opportunity to escape by bush road into exile in Ghana.¹⁶²

“States Parties shall cooperate in the implementation of the present Protocol, including in the prevention of any activity contrary to the Protocol and in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons who are victims of acts contrary to this Protocol, including through technical cooperation and financial assistance. Such assistance and cooperation will be undertaken in consultation with concerned States Parties and relevant international organizations.” *Art. 7(1), Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts.*

One former child soldier, having fought with Charles Taylor’s forces from his forcible recruitment in 1990 at age ten until 1997, ultimately determined that he was in danger of being killed by those forces.¹⁶³ After a series of battles in Maryland County to root out supporters of Samuel Doe, he came to believe that he was in danger because he “knew too much and the rebels would not want the child soldiers around.”¹⁶⁴ The statement giver and ten other child soldiers ran across the border to Côte

d'Ivoire during chaotic celebrations that followed the rebels' success in capturing the villages loyal to Doe.¹⁶⁵

Female Child Soldiers¹⁶⁶

About 2,000 women and girls served in the fighting forces on all sides of the Liberian conflict.¹⁶⁷ Girls often had their own units and participated in fighting as well as in activities such as cooking, domestic work, and portering.¹⁶⁸ Like their male counterparts, females became a part of the combatant forces for a variety of reasons, including forced abduction, the need for protection against rape or other forms of violence, the urge to avenge violence against themselves or their families, a so-called “marriage” to a combatant, as well as for economic benefit.¹⁶⁹

Girls and women associated with combatant groups were routinely raped and sexually assaulted. Several statement givers described their experiences. One statement giver, who was 22 years old at the time, recounted how she was the oldest of five girls abducted by LPC rebels who used them “as cooks and for other things.”¹⁷⁰

One statement giver recounted how a rebel forced her sister to become his bush wife and took her to lower Nimba County.¹⁷¹ “She had to go with him because he was behind the barrel of the gun, and she was forced to have children by this man.”¹⁷²

Another woman who was abducted by rebels and forced to become a bush wife recalled that she had “no choice.”¹⁷³ Amnesty International elaborates that most of the girls and

women abducted and forced to fight were raped at the time of their forced recruitment, and they continued to suffer sexual abuse throughout their time with the forces.¹⁷⁴ Many girls were forced to become “wives” of their abductors, and some young girls were assigned to provide sexual and other services to particular combatants.¹⁷⁵

Through all stages of the release, reintegration and follow-up, “actors should recognise that girls are at risk of being ‘invisible’ and take measures to ensure that girls are included and relevant issues addressed at all stages. It is important that the differences between girls’ and boys’ experiences are understood and taken into account by all actors and that programming for children who are or have been associated with armed forces or armed groups explicitly reflects the particular situation of both girls and boys.” ¶ 4.1 *The Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups, Feb. 2007.*

Violence Perpetrated by Child Soldiers

A review of statements and the available literature supports the conclusion that child soldiers not only witnessed, but also participated in the full range of atrocities of the combatant groups to which they belonged. These atrocities include military assaults, killings, torture, kidnappings, rape, looting, and other violent acts.

Some former child soldiers acknowledged their participation in fighting, but provided vague or no detail related to their activities during the conflict.¹⁷⁶ Other statement givers provided details about aspects of their combat activities, but maintained that they never killed anyone. In meetings with former child soldiers in Buduburam Refugee Settlement, many were reluctant to admit responsibility for their actions during their time as child soldiers. They stated that they were victims rather than perpetrators.¹⁷⁷

Other statement givers described in detail the violence in which they participated. One child soldier, who fought with both the NPFL and the LPC, admitted that as an LPC rebel he killed civilians in response to his commanders' orders.¹⁷⁸ He also described using the torture technique of "dog fat tabay," a modified version of tabay, in which the victim's feet are tightly tied between two sticks, squeezing the feet and leaving the victim unable to walk for a month.¹⁷⁹ A former ULIMO-J child soldier reports that at age ten, he

...[L]ed a group that attacked ULIMO-K and I killed a lot of people [and] soldiers which up to today I regret. The only reason is that I was forced and under the influence of drugs, money and holding a gun.¹⁸⁰

A detailed description of violence perpetrated by a child soldier was provided by a statement giver who was forcibly recruited by the NPFL at age ten, following the murder of his parents in Nimba County.¹⁸¹ He was a child soldier from 1991 to 1996, when he escaped to Côte d'Ivoire.¹⁸² At one point, he participated in a raid that resulted in the killing of several people and the capture of three, including one girl.¹⁸³ According to the statement giver, his group "put a bottle in the girl and just left her like that."¹⁸⁴ He also described the killing of civilians in the course of combat operations.¹⁸⁵ He described torturing and killing enemy combatant forces:

Sometimes you capture someone and you shoot them but they don't die. Tar comes out of the wound, like you put on roads...So you cut them [a] little, or you tie them and put them in a mattress and put stones on it and throw it into the river...You hear a brother crying and find they cut his two arms and hung him by them and cut his navel and pull his intestines and pull them across the road and tie them...You see that happen to your brother and then you capture some of them. Never wound anybody and let them go. I would not even cut a finger, I would rather cut off their head.¹⁸⁶

This child soldier also described other torture techniques, including hanging victims upside down from morning to evening and beating victims rolled up in mattresses.¹⁸⁷ He stated that these techniques were used on enemies: "We did those things because we saw what they did to us."¹⁸⁸ This same former child soldier, a commander, reported killing his own wounded troops because there was no medic

“Children who are accused of crimes under international law allegedly committed while they were associated with armed forces or armed groups should be considered primarily as victims of offences against international law; not only as perpetrators. They must be treated in accordance with international law in a framework of restorative justice and social rehabilitation, consistent with international law which offers children special protection through numerous agreements and principles.” ¶ 3.6, *The Paris Principles: Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups*, Feb. 2007.

available to care for them: “If [my man] is wounded in the gut, he would just have to suffer more, you just have to finish it up.”¹⁸⁹

Some statement givers discussed their perception that child soldiers were the fighters to be most feared. Their age and lack of cognitive development, coupled with the use of drugs, made their behavior extremely unpredictable and violent:

[Y]oung boys were some of the worst of the rebels as they were drugged with cocaine and LSD. These boys had no emotion or remorse and would use AK-47s without a second thought.¹⁹⁰

One statement giver stated that he thought child soldiers killed people in the streets for “fun,”¹⁹¹ further underscoring the incendiary and terrifying combination of an armed child vested with absolute authority over others. Other statements likewise revealed this power dynamic, as does a 1994 Human Rights Watch report stating that child soldiers commonly commanded checkpoints.¹⁹²

One statement giver stated that when passing through a checkpoint, an armed child soldier who had obviously been smoking marijuana threatened to kill the statement giver unless he gave the child all of his clothing.¹⁹³ Children in control of checkpoints sometimes killed people for no reason at all.¹⁹⁴

This dynamic of absolute authority also manifested in the looting by child soldiers. A former NPFL child commander told the TRC that those under his command broke into shops and looted during the events of April 6, 1996.¹⁹⁵ Those who resisted this looting were shot.¹⁹⁶

“States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to this Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service. States Parties shall, when necessary, accord to these persons all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration.” Art. 6(3), *Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflicts*.

A few statement givers told stories of unexpected compassionate actions by child soldiers. One statement giver reported that a child soldier saved her life by vouching for her identity as a teacher.¹⁹⁷

Another statement giver credited a child soldier with not identifying an adult to his commanders, thus saving the adult from harm.¹⁹⁸ A third statement giver recounted how a child soldier told his commander that the child had killed the statement giver, as ordered, when the child soldier had in fact allowed the statement giver to escape.¹⁹⁹

While children were often quickly and easily abducted or recruited to serve as soldiers, years of effective treatment are required to repair or remediate the psychological damage suffered as result of their experiences in a brutal civil war.

Notes

- 1 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 2 Human Rights Watch, *How to Fight, How to Kill: Child Soldiers in Liberia*, Feb. 1, 2004, <http://www.hrw.org/en/node/12180/section/1> [hereinafter *How to Fight*].
- 3 Examples of such rights include the right to education, the right to health, and the right to protection from economic and social exploitation. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights arts. 10(3), 12, 13, G.A. Res. 2200A (XXI), U.N. Doc. A/6316 (1966), *entered into force* Jan. 3, 1976, 993 U.N.T.S. 3. Children are also entitled to rest, leisure, play, a standard of living “adequate for the child’s physical, mental spiritual, moral and social development,” and protection from sexual and economic exploitation and any work that is harmful to the child’s health or development. Convention on the Rights of the Child arts. 27(1), 31(1), 32, 34, G.A. Res. 44/25, Annex, U.N. Doc. A/44/49 (1989), *entered into force* Sept. 2 1990 [hereinafter *Conv. on Rights of the Child*].
- 4 A child for the purposes of this report is anyone under the age of 18. *Conv. on Rights of the Child*, *supra* note 3, art. 1, which has been signed and ratified by Liberia, defines a child as “every human being below the age of eighteen years unless under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier.” The African Charter for the Rights and Welfare of the Child also defines a child as a human being under the age of eighteen. African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child art. 2, O.A.U. Doc. CAB/LEG/24.9/49 (1990), *entered into force* Nov. 29, 1999. International humanitarian law prohibits the use and recruitment of children under age 15 in armed conflict. Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and Relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts (Protocol II) art. 4(3)(c), *entered into force* Dec. 7, 1978, 1125 U.N.T.S. 609; Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court art. 8, *entered into force* July 1, 2002, 2187 U.N.T.S. 90. However, the international human rights community has recognized that children under 18 associated with fighting forces are “child soldiers.” U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF), *Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (The Paris Principles)* § 2.1 (2007) [hereinafter *Paris Principles*], http://www.un.org/children/conflict/_documents/parisprinciples/ParisPrinciples_EN.pdf
- 5 *Paris Principles*, *supra* note 4, ¶ 2.1.
- 6 U.N. Children’s Fund (UNICEF), *The Progress of Nations* 28 (2000), <http://www.unicef.org/pon00/pon2000.pdf>.
- 7 Amnesty Int’l, *Liberia: The Promises of Peace for 21,000 Child Soldiers* 5, AI Index AFR 34/006/2004, May 17, 2004 [hereinafter *Promises of Peace*], <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/info/AFR34/006/2004>; *but see* Human Rights Watch, *Easy Prey: Child Soldiers in Liberia* 3, Sept. 8, 1994 [hereinafter *Easy Prey*], <http://www.hrw.org/reports/1994/liberia2/>.
- 8 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 3.
- 9 *Id.* at 26-27.
- 10 *Promises of Peace*, *supra* note 7, at 4-8.
- 11 *Id.* Human Rights Watch reported that children played the following roles: “Running errands, like bringing food; Carrying ammunition or food; Acting as bodyguards; Acting as spies, carrying out reconnaissance; Acting as informants; Manning checkpoints, checking documents and packages; Carrying out ambushes; Fighting on the front lines; Serving as executioners of suspected enemies.” *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 32.
- 12 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1600.
- 13 *Promises of Peace*, *supra* note 7, at 4.
- 14 *Id.*
- 15 *Id.*
- 16 Also, the TRC mandate addresses the importance of incorporating mechanisms to address the needs of children victims and perpetrators, “not only to protect their dignity and safety but also to avoid retraumatization.” An Act to Establish the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia § 24 (enacted by the National Transitional Legislative Assembly, May 12, 2005), <https://www.trcofliberia.org/about/trc-mandate>.
- 17 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 216.
- 18 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 320. The statement giver used the term “armed men” to describe the first intruders in her home, but used the term “boys” to describe her assailants.
- 19 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1116.
- 20 UNICEF, *Progress of Nations*, *supra* note 6, at 28.

- 21 *Promises of Peace*, *supra* note 7 at 5.
- 22 U.N. Comm'n on Human Rights, *Report of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: Situation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in Liberia* ¶ 15, E/CN.4/2004/5 (Aug. 8, 2003), <http://www.unhcr.ch/html/liberia.doc>.
- 23 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 3.
- 24 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Global Report on Child Soldiers 2001* 266 (Apr. 2001) [hereinafter *Global Report 2001*], <http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/global-reports>.
- 25 *Id.*
- 26 UNICEF, *Progress of Nations*, *supra* note 6, at 28. See also TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1600 (describing his recruitment at age seven).
- 27 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 32-33.
- 28 Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers, *Child Soldiers Global Report 2004* 3 (2004) [hereinafter *Global Report 2004*], <http://www.child-soldiers.org/library/global-reports>.
- 29 U.N. Children's Fund (UNICEF), Liberia: Donor update, May 9, 2005, http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/files/Liberia_DU_9May2005.pdf
- 30 *Global Report 2004*, *supra* note 28, at 3.
- 31 *Global Report 2001*, *supra* note 24, at 266.
- 32 The Secretary-General, *Report of the Secretary-General on children and armed conflict*, ¶ 56, delivered to the Security Council, S/2006/826, A/61/529 (Oct. 26, 2006), <http://www.un.org/docs/sc/Sgprep06.htm>.
- 33 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at § 1.
- 34 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 5.
- 35 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 36 See Chapter 7 for more discussion of tactics used by fighting factions during the civil wars in Liberia.
- 37 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 38 *Id.*
- 39 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 40 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 452.
- 41 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 42 *Id.*
- 43 *Id.*
- 44 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 421.
- 45 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 425.
- 46 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 317 and 325.
- See also TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 63 (describing burying the corpses of those who refused to join Chuckie Taylor's ATU).
- 47 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 402.
- 48 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 421.
- 49 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 317.
- 50 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 460 (describing the abduction of statement giver's 13-year-old brother while passing through a checkpoint, after which he was forced to fight for one year).
- 51 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 875 (describing an "army car" decorated with human genitals stopping as he walked on a road, picking him up, and taking him to a base camp, where he became a member of a Small Boys Unit), 403 (describes the statement giver's conscription after he "met up with INPFL" forces, was put in a car, taken away, and forced to fight) and 120 (describing the statement givers' random abduction from the street by LPC forces).
- 52 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 38, 39, 462.
- 53 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 415.
- 54 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 26.
- 55 *Id.* at 26-27.
- 56 *Id.* at 27.
- 57 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 58 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 27.
- 59 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 230.
- 60 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 836.
- 61 *Id.*
- 62 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1562.
- 63 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 230.
- 64 *Id.*
- 65 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 66 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 176.
- 67 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 426.
- 68 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 29
- 69 *Id.* at 27. See Violence Perpetrated by Child Soldiers in this chapter for more information.
- 70 Carrie E. Kimmel & Jini L. Rob, *Institutionalized Child Abuse: The Use of Child Soldiers*, 50 INT'L SOCIAL WORK 740, 743 (2007).
- 71 AMOS SAWYER, BEYOND PLUNDER 23-24 (2005).
- 72 Kimmel & Rob, *supra* note 70, at 743.

- 73 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 74 U.N. High Comm'r for Refugees (UNHCR), *Background Paper on Refugees and Asylum Seekers from Liberia*, Oct. 1994 (citations omitted), http://www.asylumlaw.org/docs/liberia/unhcr_bpas94_liberia.pdf.
- 75 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 23, 64, 412.
- 76 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 23.
- 77 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 26.
- 78 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs 22, 42.
- 79 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 426.
- 80 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 97, 230, 402, 888, 889, 1462.
- 81 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 82 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 42.
- 83 *LIBERIA: One Rebel Group Says It Stopped Fighting*, IRIN NEWS, Sept. 20-26, 2003, <http://iys.cidi.org/humanitarian/irin/wafrica/03b/ixl12.html>.
- 84 *Global Report 2001*, *supra* note 24, at 265.
- 85 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 14.
- 86 *Id.*
- 87 *Global Report 2004*, *supra* note 28, at 2.
- 88 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 15.
- 89 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 23-24.
- 90 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1652. *See also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1562 (describing his decision to associate with ULIMO-J after the murder of his family).
- 91 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 789.
- 92 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 15-17.
- 93 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 114.
- 94 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 16.
- 95 Jeffrey Goldberg, *Lifting Liberia Out of Chaos*, N.Y. TIMES, Apr. 15, 1996, http://www.jeffreygoldberg.net/articles/nyt/lifting_liberia_out_of_chaos.php.
- 96 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 120.
- 97 *Id.*
- 98 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 176.
- 99 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 100 *See generally* Global Report 2004, *supra* note 28; *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2.
- 101 *See* ROBIN DUNN-MARCOS ET AL., LIBERIANS: AN INTRODUCTION TO THEIR HISTORY AND CULTURE 21 (Donald A. Ranard ed., Center for Applied Linguistics 2005) http://www.cal.org/co/liberians/liberian_050406_1.pdf; *see generally* Global Report 2004, *supra* note 28.
- 102 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 9; *Child Soldiers – Liberia: Preparing for the Transition from War to Normal Life*, IRIN NEWS, Dec. 2003, <http://www.irinnews.org/InDepthMain.aspx?InDepthId=24&ReportId=66996&Country=Yes>.
- 103 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 9.
- 104 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 424 (noting that LURD was forcing small children to fight) and 462 (telling of the NPFL and LURD looking for young boys).
- 105 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 106 *Id.*
- 107 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1079.
- 108 *Id.*
- 109 *Id.*
- 110 Global Report 2004, *supra* note 28, at 3.
- 111 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 18.
- 112 *See supra* note 11.
- 113 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 888 and 889.
- 114 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 317.
- 115 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 116 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 230.
- 117 *Easy Prey*, *supra* note 7, at 32; *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 19.
- 118 *How to Fight*, *supra* note 2, at 25.
- 119 *Promises of Peace*, *supra* note 7, at 4.
- 120 *Id.* at 3.
- 121 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 26.
- 122 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 97 and 403.
- 123 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 124 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 125 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 126 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 120.
- 127 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 128 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 129 *See* Chapter 6 for more information about adult combatants during the civil wars in Liberia.
- 130 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 131 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 403.

- 132 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 875.
- 133 *See How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 9.
- 134 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 230.
- 135 *How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 28.
- 136 *Id.* These initiations provided the children with a sense of prestige, while enhancing loyalty to their fighting groups rather than to their society and community. *Id.* at 30.
- 137 *Id.* at 28. *See also* TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 138 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 889.
- 139 *Id.*
- 140 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 875.
- 141 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1562.
- 142 *Easy Prey, supra* note 7, at 36.
- 143 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 836.
- 144 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 145 *Easy Prey, supra* note 7, at 27.
- 146 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 147 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 148 *How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 28; *Easy Prey, supra* note 7, at 38.
- 149 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 150 *Id.*
- 151 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 875.
- 152 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 176.
- 153 *How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 28-29.
- 154 *Id.*
- 155 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 156 *Id.*
- 157 *How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 25-26. Examples of monikers described to researchers included: “Laughing and Killing” because the boy soldier would laugh when he killed enemy fighters; “Disgruntled” because the child soldier was not satisfied with the fighting; “Captain No Mercy” because the officer would kill if someone disobeyed orders; and “Walking Stick” because a child was made to walk directly behind his commander. *See* Chapter 6 for more information on tactics and fighting factions.
- 158 *Id.* at 26-28.
- 159 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 64.
- 160 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 889.
- 161 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 403.
- 162 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 402.
- 163 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 164 *Id.*
- 165 *Id.*
- 166 *See* Chapter 10 for more information on the role of women in the civil wars in Liberia.
- 167 *Promises of Peace, supra* note 7, at 5.
- 168 *How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 29.
- 169 Int’l Labour Org., *Red Shoes: Experiences of Girl-combatants in Liberia* 27-43 (2005), www.ilo.org/public/english/employment/crisis/download/redshoes.pdf.
- 170 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 261.
- 171 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1551.
- 172 *Id.*
- 173 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1375.
- 174 *Promises of Peace, supra* note 7, at 9.
- 175 *Id.* *See also How to Fight, supra* note 2, at 29.
- 176 TRC Diaspora Statement Recs. 402 and 836.
- 177 TRC Diaspora Project meeting with Veteran Child Soldiers Association, Sept. 30, 2007, Buduburam, Ghana.
- 178 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 888.
- 179 *Id.*
- 180 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1562.
- 181 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 97.
- 182 *Id.*
- 183 *Id.*
- 184 *Id.*
- 185 *Id.*
- 186 *Id.*
- 187 *Id.*
- 188 *Id.*
- 189 *Id.*
- 190 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 788.
- 191 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 40.
- 192 *E.g.*, TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 13; *Easy Prey, supra* note 7, at 32-33.
- 193 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 15.
- 194 *Easy Prey, supra* note 7, at 33.
- 195 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 230.

- 196 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 1462.
- 197 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 70.
- 198 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 115.
- 199 TRC Diaspora Statement Rec. 399.

