

CHAPTER TWO

Setting up the Commission

Introduction

1. During the discussions on the Sierra Leone Human Rights Manifesto adopted by civil society in June 1999, the then UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Mrs Mary Robinson, undertook to provide appropriate technical assistance for the establishment of the Commission. In a letter of 15 July, 1999 accepting the offer of assistance by the High Commissioner, President Kabbah pledged the unqualified support of his Government to the process of reconciliation.
2. Since the Lomé Peace Agreement¹ granted a blanket amnesty, under Sierra Leonean law, for violations committed by the armed factions, civil society at various conferences within and outside Sierra Leone insisted that the enabling law of the truth commission should contain provisions for the grant of reparations for victims of the conflict and a mechanism to deal with their anguish. Following a conference in September 1999, civil society set up a Truth and Reconciliation Commission Working Group under the auspices of the National Forum for Human Rights. Prominent amongst the recommendations at the conference was that the Commission should consist of both national and international commissioners. It was believed that international commissioners, free of parochial interests, would bring a fresh perspective to the Commission.
3. Pursuant to the commitment made at the declaration of the Human Rights Manifesto, the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) developed a project to support the establishment of the Commission. This could not be immediately implemented due to the resumption of armed conflict in Sierra Leone in May 2000. Following a reassessment of the operational environment in September 2000, a revised project was developed in March 2001.
4. The observance of the Ceasefire Agreement signed in Abuja, Nigeria in November 2000 and the commencement of disarmament in May 2001 among the armed factions increased the momentum for the establishment of the Commission. Furthermore, the Security Council in resolution 1346 adopted on 30 March 2001, encouraged the Government of Sierra Leone, together with the Secretary General of the United Nations, the High Commissioner for Human Rights and other relevant international actors, to expedite the establishment of the Commission.
5. Between July and December 1999, OHCHR organised a number of consultations with civil society and representatives of Government and the RUF where the preliminary issues related to the establishment of the Commission were canvassed. In December 1999 OHCHR submitted for the consideration of

¹ For the full text of the Lomé Peace Agreement, see the Appendix section of this report.

the Government and civil society the draft terms of reference for the Commission.

6. On 29 December 1999, OHCHR through UNAMSIL forwarded a draft statute on the Commission to the Government with the understanding that it represented technical assistance and did not impede the sovereign right of Sierra Leone to determine the exact nature of the law to be adopted.
7. The Government prepared a bill which substantially reflected the recommendations contained in the draft statute.² On 22nd November 2000, the Parliament of Sierra Leone unanimously passed into law the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Act.³
8. At the time of adoption of the Bill, OHCHR representatives were in the country consulting with Government and civil society on the preparation of a detailed plan of activities for supporting the Commission. The plan included support for the selection process of commissioners, a strategic framework for a public awareness programme, research on traditional methods of conflict resolution and conflict management, a project to identify violations and abuses committed during the conflict and to 'map' the key incidents; and a project to establish an interim secretariat for the commission.

Preparatory Activities before the Establishment of the Commission

9. Following the enactment of the TRC Act, OHCHR began the implementation of a technical co-operation project entitled, "Support to the Preparatory Phase of the Sierra Leone TRC" to assist the establishment of the Commission. The project covered the following areas:
 - a. Public information/education campaign;
 - b. Mapping of the conflict i.e. compilation of information regarding key defining events within the period of jurisdiction of the Commission;
 - c. Research on the traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation among the different cultural groups in Sierra Leone;
 - d. Selection of Commissioners, and;
 - e. Preliminary identification of the facility requirements of the Commission, for instance, the form of the secretariat required including staffing and logistic requirements;
 - f. Provision of a forum for the clarification of the relationship between the TRC and the Special Court authorised to be established by Resolution 1315(2000) of the United Nations Security Council;
 - g. Provision of technical support in developing mechanisms for the commission to fulfil its additional mandate regarding juvenile offenders;
 - h. Provision of assistance to the commission during the three months preparatory period immediately following its inauguration as provided for in Article 5(2) of the TRC Act which states that during this preparatory period, the Commission "will undertake all tasks necessary to ensure that it is able to work effectively from the commencement of its operations."

² Richard Bennett, Op. Cit.

³For the full text of the TRC Act, see the Appendix Section of this Report.

a. Projects on Public Education and Sensitisation.

10. The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights provided a grant to the International Human Rights Law Group (“the Law Group”) to start a campaign of public education and awareness about the Commission. The campaign used several media including radio, television, songs, drama and posters, among others, to create awareness and momentum for the establishment of the Commission. The Law Group partnered with Sierra Leonean civil society groups in implementing the campaign.⁴ OHCHR also provided financial support to a number of Sierra Leonean civil society organisations to conduct sensitization programmes on the Commission. These included the National Forum for Human Rights and the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights. Other NGOs including the Forum of Conscience sought and obtained independent funding with which they engaged in substantial public education programmes on the Commission.

b. The Mapping Project

11. The final project sponsored by OHCHR, provided for a preliminary investigation into the human rights violation and abuses that occurred during the conflict. This was to enable the Commission to understand the trends and patterns in the conflict and in the violations and abuses that occurred. With this information, the Commission was expected to have a structured way of carrying out its statement taking exercise, as well as identify window cases for investigations and map the key issues on which to conduct research. A Sierra Leonean NGO, Campaign for Good Governance, executed the project, under the technical supervision of an OHCHR consultant.

c. Project on Traditional Methods of Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation

12. The OHCHR, approved a third project on traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation. A Sierra Leonean NGO, Manifesto 99, implemented the project. The aim of the project was to provide guidelines to the Commission on how to integrate the traditional institutions and processes into its work. It was necessary for the Commission to understand how the different ethnic groups in Sierra Leone dealt with crime, punishment and reconciliation and how these attitudes could be utilised by the Commission to promote accountability and reconciliation in the country.
13. While Christianity and Islam are the main religions in Sierra Leone, a large number of people are traditionalists, with differing secret societies. Major decisions affecting local communities are sometimes taken in the sacred secret society bushes (groves/shrines). Many crimes and transgressions such as rape are culturally addressed. Sierra Leone is 70% illiterate⁵. The research argued that the bulk of the population, being illiterate, can relate to the Commission much more easily from a cultural context.

⁴ A full report on the public education programme managed by the Law Group is contained in the Methodology Chapter of this Report.

⁵ UNDP Human Development Report, 2002

14. Since traditional beliefs play a major role in the lives of Sierra Leoneans, it suggested that the processes involved in the Commission should be responsive to the diverse traditional beliefs and customs of the fourteen tribal groups in the country.⁶

d. Selection of Commissioners

15. The Commission's Act provided for seven commissioners, four Sierra Leoneans representing the diversity of the country and three international commissioners. An elaborate process for the appointment of the Commissioners was approved by the Act. The four Sierra Leonean Commissioners were selected through a process managed by the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) who was the Selection Coordinator.
16. Sierra Leoneans from all over the world put forward nominations of suitable persons. The Selection Coordinator, with the assistance of an Advisory Board and after broad consultation with a cross section of Sierra Leonean society and with the High Commissioner for Human Rights, drew up a shortlist of finalists from 65 nominees. Each of the finalists was interviewed by a Selection Panel of six persons representing the President, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council, the Inter Religious Council, the National Forum for Human Rights and the National Commission for Democracy and Human Rights as set out in the Lome Peace Agreement. The Selection Panel then ranked and provided comments on each of the finalists to the Selection Coordinator who recommended four of them for appointment to the Commission by the President.
17. Suggestions for the international members of the Commission were submitted directly to the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, or to the Selection Coordinator, who forwarded them to the High Commissioner. The High Commissioner for Human Rights recommended three persons as international commissioners for appointment to the Commission. Their names were first submitted to the Selection Panel for comments and finally submitted to the President for appointment. The selection process was concluded in March 2002.

e. Preliminary Identification of the Facility Requirements of the Commission

18. The OHCHR had received assurances from UNAMSIL that it would provide all necessary technical and logistical support to the Commission. Upon the establishment of the Interim Secretariat, UNAMSIL provided two offices and one desktop computer and printer to the Interim Secretariat. The Interim Secretariat operated out of the UNAMSIL facilities until late in April 2002, when it moved to rented temporary premises in Freetown. While the Secretariat was located at UNAMSIL, the Interim Secretariat had access to all UNAMSIL facilities including telephones, the internet, workstations and use of the mail room.

⁶ See Manifesto 99, "Traditional Methods of Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation of Possible Complementary Value to the Proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission". July 2002.

f. Provide a Forum for the Clarification of the Relationship Between the Commission and the Special Court.

19. An agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations saw the creation of a Special Court to try those who had committed breaches of the Lomé Peace Agreement and international humanitarian law. The UN Secretary General's Report to the UN Security Council⁷ suggested a relationship and cooperation agreement between the proposed Special Court and the Commission. In a second report to the UN Security Council, the UN Secretary-General urged that the Special Court and the Commission should operate in a complementary and mutually supportive manner, fully respectful of their distinct but related functions.
20. OHCHR felt it was part of its responsibility to assist in clarifying the relationship between the two bodies. In November 2000, it organised an international workshop in Freetown in collaboration with UNAMSIL on the issue. The workshop recommended the establishment of a consultative process to work out the relationship between the Commission and the Special Court.⁸ In 2001, the Secretary-General reported that UNAMSIL and OHCHR would be preparing 'general guidelines' for the relationship between the two bodies.⁹
21. In December 2001, OHCHR and the Office of Legal Affairs of the United Nations Headquarters, New York, organised an experts meeting on the Commission and the Special Court in New York. The meeting agreed on a number of basic principles without suggesting any guidelines for a relationship. It also did not suggest any modality for cooperation but called for an agreement institutionalizing cooperation between the Commission and the Special Court, and, where appropriate, in their respective rules of procedure.¹⁰

g. Provide technical support in developing mechanisms for the Commission to fulfil its additional mandate regarding juvenile offenders

22. The OHCHR initiative in this area focused on the research study on traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation, which was expected to provide the Commission with input on how various groups in Sierra Leone approached juvenile crime. Additionally, UNICEF, in 2001, organised a consultation on the participation of children in the Commission. The report of that consultation was a comprehensive study on how the Commission could partner with UNICEF and the child protection agencies in facilitating the participation of children in the Commission and ensuring that their rights were protected in the process.

⁷ UN Doc. S/2000/915 issued on 4 October 2000

⁸ UN Doc. E/CN.4/2001/35, p.13, paragraph 41

⁹ 'Eleventh Report of the Secretary General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone'; UN Doc. S/2001/857; at paragraph 47.

¹⁰ S/2001/40, paragraph 9. See also S/2000/1234.

h. Provide assistance to the Commission during the preparatory period.

23. The TRC Act provided that the Commission was to have a preparatory period of three months and an operational period of 12 months subject to extension for another six months. It was widely accepted that the three months preparatory period would be insufficient for the Commission to deal with all the issues prior to opening its doors. OHCHR therefore supported the establishment of an Interim Secretariat, which was to prepare the ground for the launch of the Commission and allow it time during the preparatory period to focus on the substantive aspects of its work. The Interim Secretariat was established in the period immediately preceding the conclusion of the selection process in March 2002. To ensure the full support of government institutions its head was recommended by the Government of Sierra Leone and remunerated by OHCHR.

THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT

24. The terms of reference of the Interim Secretariat included:
- a. Assisting in the determination, location and establishment of office premises for the Commission in Freetown.
 - b. Establishing a data base for the Commission.
 - c. Establishing logistical needs such as communications, transport, computers, power supply and security.
 - d. Establishing a financial management system, including a Trust fund for the Commission.
 - e. Negotiating support and assistance that may be provided to the Commission by UNAMSIL, the GOSL, and other bodies.
 - f. Identifying suitable regional offices for the Commission subject to the approval of the Commissioners and other decentralisation issues.
 - g. Organising, designing and developing skills transfer for national staff of the Interim secretariat.
 - h. Conducting a national public awareness campaign with the support of contracted parties.
 - i. Developing policy and preparing briefing materials issues such as the relationship with the Special Court, women's issues, children's issues, traditional methods of reconciliation and witness protection.
25. The Interim Secretariat was established on 25th March 2002 with the appointment of an Interim Executive Secretary. Three international consultants were recruited as technical advisers for the three departments in the Interim Secretariat: administration and programming, policy and operations respectively. They supported the work of six Sierra Leonean consultants who were responsible for the six operational units namely: Media and Public Education; Reconciliation and Witness Protection; Research, Investigation; Legal Affairs and Finance.
26. Problems arose almost immediately in the Interim Secretariat with the recruitment of the six national consultants. No clear guidelines or minimum standards of qualification for recruitment were published by the Interim Executive Secretary, neither were the positions advertised. No interview board was set up to interview prospective candidates. The only candidate who

appeared for an interview was found unsuitable by the advisers, but was nevertheless employed as a consultant. The rest of the consultants were simply appointed by the Interim Executive Secretary to their positions. The process of recruiting the consultants created dissension within the Interim Secretariat.

EVALUATING THE INTERIM SECRETARIAT

a. Location and establishment of office premises.

27. The Interim Secretariat was housed in a rented building in the city centre with inadequate office space and parking. The Interim Secretariat was unable to finalise agreement with the Government on the provision of an appropriate office accommodation for the Commission. The Commission eventually settled on the old Brookfields Hotel and persuaded the Government to make the building available. The Government also agreed to renovate the complex. The Commission was only able to move into its permanent home long after the commencement of its operational activities.

b. Establishing a database for the Commission.

28. Preliminary contacts had been made with the American Association for the Advancement of Science to assist the Commission in the design and construction of its database. However by the time the Commission began its operations; it did not have an operational database. The database was established in January 2003.

c. Establishing other logistical needs such as communications, transport, computers, power supply and security.

29. The strategic action plan identified all the logistic needs of the Commission and charged the management of the Interim Secretariat with responsibility for facilitating their procurement. The Interim Secretariat received technical support from UNAMSIL with computers, a telephone network linked to the UNAMSIL exchange and hand-held radios. The Interim Secretariat, through UNDP, placed orders for the supply of three four wheel jeeps and one saloon car. These vehicles were not delivered until September 2002. The Interim Secretariat also contracted a security company to provide services to the Commission.

d. Establishing a financial management system, including a Trust Fund for the Commission.

30. The Administration and Logistics Consultant created an adequate financial management system for the Interim Secretariat. This dealt with procurement processes, inventory procedures and financial controls. UNDP provided financial management and oversight services for the Commission.

e. Identifying suitable regional offices for the Commission, subject to the approval of the Commissioners and other decentralisation issues.

31. The Interim Secretariat did not receive any offers of office space in the regions from the Government. Much of the public infrastructure in the regions was destroyed and even Government institutions experienced difficulties finding

office space. Efforts were made to identify suitable office accommodation in the three regional capitals.

f. Organising, designing and developing skills transfer for national staff of the Interim Secretariat

32. The Interim Secretariat organised two workshops before the launch of the Commission. The first was the strategic planning workshop while the second was a training programme in conflict resolution and reconciliation.

g. Conducting a national public awareness campaign with the eventual support from contracted parties.

33. A sensitisation programme was launched throughout the country which included a range of training programmes and media activities.
34. The Interim Secretariat was not able to fund the sensitisation campaign. It had to rely on the efforts of the civil society groups who had obtained funding from sources such as the OHCHR, to carry out sensitisation and public education. Regrettably, these were one-off grants and were not renewed once they expired and the programme could not be sustained.

h. Compiling international and national documents for the Commission (the beginning of a resource centre)

35. The Interim Secretariat hired a research consultant from the Fourah Bay College of the University of Sierra Leone whose responsibilities included establishing a research agenda for the Commission as well as establishing a resource centre on transitional justice and on the Sierra Leone conflict. By the launch of the Commission little progress had been made which placed the research staff at considerable disadvantage. The staff had to rely on electronic resources or materials that were brought in from outside the country.

i. Implementing preparatory activities including preliminary investigations

36. OHCHR had provided funding to a Sierra Leonean NGO, Campaign for Good Governance, to carry out a preliminary investigation to establish initial evidence from key events. This activity commenced in March, 2002 and concluded by July, 2002. The Interim Secretariat worked closely with the NGO in monitoring the progress of the investigation and providing direction on the areas in focus. Regular presentations on progress were organised by the Interim Secretariat and, by the time the project was concluded more than 1,300 testimonies had been collected from victims.
37. OHCHR also commissioned another research project on traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation.¹¹ The Interim Secretariat provided monitoring and oversight of this project. However the project was not concluded as some of its key personnel prematurely left the project before completion. The research report presented to the Interim Secretariat was poor and of little use to the Commission.

¹¹ See research report by Manifesto 99 on "Traditional Methods of Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation of Complementary value to the proposed Truth and Reconciliation Commission", July 2002.

j. Developing policy and preparing briefing materials for the Commissioners

38. These functions were poorly handled by the Interim Secretariat. Few briefing documents were made available to the Commissioners prior to the launch of the TRC. The Operations Department managed to prepare some briefing and policy materials including an operational plan for the substantive phases of the Commission's activities.

Managing the Administrative Crisis

39. The launch of the Commission was supposed to herald the commencement of its three months Preparatory Phase. During the Preparatory Phase, the Commission was to engage in the following activities:
- a. Procurement of office space,
 - b. Preparing a budget and securing funds,
 - c. Hiring of staff both national and international,
 - d. Adopting procedures on methodology,
 - e. Designing and undertaking a public education campaign,
 - f. Undertaking preliminary background research,
 - g. Designing and putting in place a database,
 - h. Collecting supporting materials for its investigation,
 - i. Holding training workshops for Commissioners and staff,
 - j. Review of materials prepared during the Interim Secretariat phase, including the reports of the commissioned research projects.¹²
40. The operations of the Interim Secretariat suffered due to the poor management skills which impacted negatively on the first six months of the Commission's operations. The Commission found itself in the midst of an unfolding administrative crisis.
41. The first issue that the Commission had to deal with was a budget. The Commissioners were shocked to discover that it had no funds to operate with. An indicative budget of \$9.9 million was prepared by OHCHR and UNAMSIL. In February, 2002, an appeal for funding was launched on the basis of this budget. OHCHR which was coordinating the fundraising for the Commission was experiencing donor resistance due to the size of the budget and advised the Interim Secretariat to review it. Subsequently, the indicative budget was considered by the commissioners and revised downwards to \$6.5 million in July, 2002. The Commission requested OHCHR to continue to fundraise for its operations. Faced with continued scepticism by donors and a considerable shortfall in funding relating in part to earlier difficulties in the Commission, the budget was further revised downwards in March 2003 to \$4.7 million.
42. Delays in the finalisation of the budget slowed down the release funds made available through OHCHR due to its internal project approval processes. The Commission now had an agreed budget but no monies could be released until the Project Review Committee of OHCHR had approved the budget. OHCHR facilitated the early consideration of the budget by its PRC and the budget was

¹² See S.5(3) of the TRC Act, 2000.

approved within six weeks. However, it meant that six weeks into its life the Commission was unable to spend any money.

43. Staff members became polarised between those who supported the Interim Secretariat and those who did not. The Commissioners were not being supported in a systematic manner. There were no minutes of Commission meetings prepared even months after the meetings had taken place. Activities in which Commissioners were to participate were ad-hoc and not planned ahead of time. As the Interim Secretariat was to be subsumed into the Commission, the Commissioners sought to deal with the crisis by requesting a personnel audit by UNDP to determine the suitability of staff prior to their absorption. The result of the audit indicated that most of the staff members were unqualified and not suitable for the positions they were occupying. It recommended the immediate disengagement of the unqualified staff and a re-designation of the surplus staff or their disengagement as well. Their positions were to be advertised and a transparent recruitment process was embarked upon.
44. Regrettably, the Commission was unable to implement the report of the staff audit. All the unqualified staff stayed on in their positions, while UNDP stopped the payment of their salaries until the conclusion of the Preparatory Phase. Following the inability of the Commission to deal with the managerial crisis, the international staff left. It took the direct intervention of OHCHR in consultation with the Government of Sierra Leone to restore the Commission's operations in October 2002.
45. In a very scathing analysis of the Commission's first six months of operations, the International Crisis Group concluded that the Commission had permitted an impression to develop in the public eye that it lacked leadership and was unprepared for the challenges that lay before it. It hoped that the Commission would take measures to restore public confidence and speedily begin to implement its activities, which were already running behind schedule.

THE PREPARATORY PHASE OF ACTIVITIES

a. Procurement of office space

46. The Government made available to the Commission, the sum of \$90,000 for the renovation of the Brookfield Hotel premises which had been thoroughly vandalized by members of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) who had occupied it since 1999. On 9 March, 2003, the Vice President, Hon. Solomon Berewa, formally opened the new premises at a colourful ceremony.

b. Hiring of staff

47. With the departure of the international staff and the termination of the contract of the Interim Executive Secretary, the Commission had no remaining staff. An emergency measure was quickly agreed to between the Commission, OHCHR, UNDP and the Human Rights Section of UNAMSIL. This was to establish a Caretaker Committee, which was to provide secretarial services to the Commission pending the recruitment of permanent staff. Recruitment of staff commenced during the operational phase of the Commission's work and is dealt with elsewhere in this report.

c. Designing and undertaking a public education campaign

48. By the end of July 2002, the Commission had commenced a weekly briefing session for the media and members of the public. These sessions were to continue throughout the Commission's lifespan.
49. People outside Freetown, particularly in the provinces, wanted to feel part of the process and engage directly with the Commissioners. In September, 2002, the Commission started its 'Barray (Town Hall) Phase" of activities. During that period which lasted until November 2002, the Commission visited each of the twelve districts and the Western Area. A Commissioner, accompanied by volunteer staff, spent an average of one week in each district, holding meetings and interacting with civil, community, chieftaincy and faith organisations.
50. During these visits, the Commission discussed the setting up of support structures for the Commission. These structures were to support all aspects of the work of the Commission, including statement-taking, hearings, providing psycho-social and mental health counsellors, healers and interpreters. They were also to identify focal points for the Commission in each district. Finally, the Commissioners explained the operations, methods and procedures of the Commission including the relationship with the Special Court, and issues such as reparations and confidentiality.
51. The Barray Phase had mixed success. In some districts, active district officers had taken the time to sensitise their communities for the arrival of the Commissioners and succeeded in organizing well attended meetings. In other districts, some of the district officers did not bother to receive the Commissioners or to notify chiefs and the people about their arrival. In such cases, the Commissioners from house to house in different villages summoning people to assemble at the town barray. Following these experiences, the Commission paid district officers to send runners to communities that were to be visited during the week, to prepare them for the arrival of the Commissioners.
52. The trips were poorly planned. They occurred when the Commission did not have any staff members and had to rely on volunteers. The Commission put too much faith in the ability of the Ministry of Local Government to mobilize the district officers and the chiefs. None of the district administrations had any transport to send people ahead to notify the communities. Some of the district officers were still operating out of Freetown or the regional capitals and in a number of cases actually arrived at the same time as the Commissioners at the district headquarters.
53. The visits brought home to the Commissioners the magnitude of the problems the Commission would be dealing with. For many people, this was the first time that an institution associated with the Government had visited them and their communities. It conveyed a message that the Commission cared and was willing to come to them as it implemented its processes. The visits also consolidated the sensitisation campaigns being carried out by NGOs on the work of the Commission.

54. The Commission also established a collaborative partnership with the Women's Task Force on the Commission, a network of women's NGOs that included FAWE and the Women's Forum. It sought to create partnerships with other relevant stakeholders such as UNICEF, Centre for the Victims of Torture, The Amputees Association, and NGOs working with combatants. A number of meetings were held with the Inter-Religious Council to solicit the partnership of the faith community and with a view to organizing an international workshop on the role of religion in reconciliation. The workshop was held in January 2003.

d. Designing and putting in place a database

55. In January 2003, the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) dispatched two consultants in order to set up the database. One of the consultants was then recruited to manage the database on a full time basis.

e. Collecting supporting materials for its investigations and prioritising its work

56. The OHCHR "Mapping project" carried out by the Campaign for Good Governance had commenced in March 2002. The mapping report revealed patterns and trends in the violations that occurred as well as the geographical spread of the violations. The project implementers organised several briefings for Commissioners and staff, where they received substantive input on how they should proceed with their investigations and research. The Commission identified 40 window cases for investigation pending the completion of the Commission's statement-taking exercise.

f. Training for Commissioners and staff

57. The administrative crisis adversely affected training plans for the Commissioners and staff. During the briefings after their inauguration, the Commissioners had participated in a one-day programme on strategic planning and team building organised by the operations department. Regrettably, there was no follow up to this programme. The International Centre for Transitional Justice organised a one-day 'experience-sharing' session for the Commissioners, to compare how the Sierra Leone experience differed from other truth commissions.

g. Conclusion

58. The administrative crisis cost the Commission six months of operational time and it struggled to make up for this lost time. It abridged programmes and sought creative short-cuts to mainstream its activities and restore confidence in the Commission. The crisis created a perception problem that plagued subsequent fund-raising efforts.

MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE OF THE COMMISSION

59. The initial operational plan developed by OHCHR recommended the establishment of six departments namely: reconciliation and protection; administration and programming; research; public information and education; legal; and investigations. It also proposed the establishment of regional offices in each of the three regions. The commissioners would be responsible for

providing policy guidance while implantation rested with a management committee headed by an Executive Secretary and the departmental heads. The proposed departments were subsequently revised following discussions with the commissioners. The departments were reduced to four namely: legal and reconciliation; administration and programming; information management; public information and education.

- a. **Legal and Reconciliation:** Responsible for providing the Commission with legal opinion and advice on its operations as well as on issues of international human rights law. Responsible for the reconciliation mandate by developing strategies for reconciliation and healing while taking into consideration existing traditional methods of conflict resolution and reconciliation. It would also be responsible for the design and implementation of strategies for the protection of witnesses and victims where necessary.
 - b. **Administration and Programming:** This unit would be responsible for administrative functions as they related to personnel, finance, information technology, donor reporting and funding.
 - c. **Information Management: With two sub-units namely: Research and Investigations:** The Commission decided on the merger of research, investigations and data process departments into an information management unit. The Research unit would be responsible for research and data collection. It would supervise the conduct of extensive research into the background and causes of the conflict as well as the collation of statements from victims and witnesses. The Investigation unit was charged with following up all relevant information that come into the possession of the Commission as well as investigating trends and patterns in the violations and abuses.
 - d. **Public Information and Education:** The unit would be responsible for coordinating all public information activities of the Commission and work closely with the Ministry of Information, UNAMSIL Public Information Section and UN agencies in disseminating the Commission's activities and ensuring public involvement in them.
60. The revision of the organizational structure of the Commission also translated into a downward revision of its personnel requirements.
61. The Commission was to have full-fledged offices in the three regional capitals, each headed by a regional administrative officer. There was to be a full complement of staff. The regional offices were to supervise statement-takers and coders and entry clerks who were to enter the statements on mini databases in the regions. The mini databases would have a remote link to the main office in Freetown where the central database would be situated. The Head Office would access all the statements in the regional offices and build a comprehensive database of violations and abuses. However, due to a shortage of funds, this plan was amended by the Commission to provide for only a regional coordinator in the respective regions. The regional coordinator would be responsible for supervising the statement taking teams in the various districts.

62. While the Commissioners travelled in the districts they facilitated the establishment of district support committees. The Commission had hoped that these committees would act as the catalysts in leading civil society organisation involvement in the districts.

THE CARETAKER COMMITTEE OF THE COMMISSION

63. Between September and November 2002, the Commission did not have any staff members. In consultation with the Government, the Commission, UNDP and UNAMSIL, the OHCHR established a Caretaker Committee to manage the Secretariat of the Commission pending the recruitment of substantive personnel. The mandate of the Committee was to support the commencement of statement-taking and supervise the recruitment of personnel for the Commission. The Caretaker Committee was composed of the chairman of the Commission, one Commissioner, and representatives of the Human Rights Section of UNAMSIL and of UNDP.
64. A skeletal staff composed of an office manager, and two of the departed international staff members, the operations adviser and the administration and logistics adviser, supported the committee.
65. The Caretaker Committee issued advertisements both locally and internationally, for positions in the Commission. Interviews were conducted either directly with candidates present or remotely by telephone. Reports of interviews were discussed by the Caretaker Committee which forwarded its recommendations to the Commission. The full Commission considered the recommendations and approved the recruitment of staff. Between November 2002 and February 2003, the Caretaker Committee conducted interviews for most of the positions in the Commission. Recruits began to assume their positions from the end of January 2003 until late in March, 2004 when the majority of the newly recruited staff members finally assumed duty.
66. The Caretaker Committee was largely successful in steering the Commission through a very difficult time in its operations. The mandate of the Caretaker Committee and the role of the Office Manager lapsed with the appointment of a substantive Executive Secretary by the Secretariat of the Commission.

Conclusion

67. Most of the Commission's staff arrived in March 2003, just as the Commission was completing its statement-taking programme and getting ready for hearings which were to commence on 14th April 2003.
68. The Commission had managed to weather the storm that threatened to tear it apart and moved quickly to consolidate its activities, with a view to restoring donor and stakeholder confidence in its activities. Much credit is due to the staff members of the Commission who managed to complete the main objectives of the truth and reconciliation process through adversity and against the backdrop of many setbacks.

APPENDIX ONE

STAFF OF THE COMMISSION

Executive Secretary:

1. Yasmin Jusu Sheriff - Interim Executive Secretary (25th March 2002 to 19th October 2002)
2. Malika Akrouf – Office Manager, Caretaker Committee (9th November 2002 to 17th February 2003)
3. Frank Kargbo – Executive Secretary (17th February 2003 to 31st December 2003).
4. M. Ozonnia Ojielo – Officer in Charge (1st January 2004 to 31st August 2004).

Staff Members

1. Abu Joseph
2. Adekara Daniel
3. Ahmid Noella
4. Alghali Olu
5. Alie Joe
6. Alie, Lakoh
7. Allen Paul James
8. Amadu Jenneh
9. Amara Emmanuel
10. Anthony, Fanta Naomi
11. Apori-Nkansah Lydia
12. Bah Isatu
13. Bah Mariama
14. Bah Tijanie
15. Bangura, Abdul Karim
16. Bangura O. Ahmed
17. Bangura, Amy
18. Bangura, Anita
19. Bangura, Fatmata G.
20. Bangura Henry
21. Bangura Ingrid
22. Bangura Mabinty
23. Bangura Mohammed
24. Bangura, Mohammed Saalam
25. Bangura, Rosemary
26. Bangura Yabu
27. Barrie, Jogo
28. Bassie Massah
29. Benya Desmond
30. Bockarie, Sannoh
31. Bocharie, Daisy
32. Brown Charlris
33. Bockarie Buanie, Konyon
34. Bundu L T Augustine
35. Bureh, Catherine

36. Carew, Alfred
37. Carew Mohammed
38. Casey Greg
39. Ceasear Chinsia Ethleen
40. Charm Abdulai
41. Charm Isatu
42. Dr. Coker Eugenia
43. Cole Cordelia
44. Cole Cordelia Davies
45. Cole Hashim Tejane
46. Conibere Richard
47. Conte, Thomas
48. Conteh Kadie
49. Conteh Wusha
50. Dabo, Sarah
51. Cauda Christian
52. Ms. Davies Ursula
53. Dixon Robert
54. Finoh Tamba
55. Fitzmahan Maureen
56. Fofana, Mohammed
57. Fofana Osman
58. Rev. Forna Usman
59. Fornie Maada
60. Fullah Abdul
61. Ganda Mary Rose
62. Gandi, Joseph Tamba
63. Gbla Abubakar
64. Gborie Kasay Sahr
65. Ms. George, Augusta Jamiatu
66. Masie Bah Gibril
67. Goba Sylvia
68. Hanciles Osmond
69. Humper Thomas
70. Hussan Javed
71. Jalloh Foday
72. Jalloh, Alimamy Foday
73. Jalloh Kaday
74. Jalloh Mariama
75. Jimmy Martin
76. John Princetta
77. Johnson Charles
78. Jusu Marian
79. Kabba Alie Madi
80. Kai Aminata Foday
81. KaiCombey, Victor
82. Kailie, Thomas
83. Kaima, Arnold
84. Kain Gladys
85. Kaindaneh Florence
86. Kakay Ibrahim
87. Kallon Mohammed
88. Kamanda, Mohammed

89. Kamara, Abdul
90. Kamara, Adbulai
91. Kamara Abu Baker
92. Kamara Allie
93. Kamara Augustine
94. Kamara, Catherine J
95. Kamara Foday
96. Ms. Kamara, Hajia Mariama
97. Kamara Hassan
98. Kamara Ibrahim Sorie
99. Ms. Kamara, Isatu
100. Kamara, Michael S.
101. Kamara Mustapha
102. Kamara Abdul Rowland
103. Kanu, Mabinty Lucy
104. Kargbo, Alie
105. Kargbo, John
106. Kargbo, Peacemaker
107. Karimu Emmanuel
108. Kebbi Florence
109. Kellie, Kumba Judith
110. King Franklin
111. Koi Edwin
112. Ms. Koroma Ada Ann
113. Koroma Allieu V
114. Koroma Amidu
115. Koroma Daniel B.
116. Koroma Dauda
117. Koroma, John B.
118. Koroma Kussan
119. Mr. Koroma Momoh
120. Koroma, Moses
121. Koroma Osman
122. Koroma Philip
123. Koroma, Syl
124. Koroma Umaru
125. Kowa Johannes R
126. Kposowa Abdul
127. Lake Ralph
128. Lax Ilan
129. Ms. Lewis, Elisabeth
130. Ms. Maddy Elfrida
131. Mahoi, Ajaratu
132. Mansaray, James
133. Mansaray, Prince Philip
134. Mansaray Salif
135. Manye Bondu
136. Marah, Nene
137. Marah Samba
138. Mbawa Henry
139. Moiwa Safea
140. Mariatu Mustafa
156. Nallo Alex

157. Ngevubar, Aisatu
158. Ngombu Augustine
159. Nicol Valerie
160. M. Ojielo Ozonnia
161. Olivant Justina
162. Owusu Edwina
163. Peacock Maude
164. Pessima Michael
165. Rogers, Sarah
166. Sah, Konde A.
167. Sah, Martin R.
168. Saidu Cecilia
169. Samba, Alice
170. Samura Kadie
171. Samura Margret
172. Samurah Alhaji
173. Sandi, Alice
174. Sandi, Hawa
175. Sandi Philip
176. Sankoh, Abdulai
177. Sankoh Kadiatu
178. Schotsmans Martien
179. Sei Mohammed
180. Sesay, Abdul Rhaman
181. Sesay, Daniel B. K.C.
182. Sesay Denis
183. Sesay, Foday D. .M.,
184. Sesay Abdul Hakim
185. Sesay, Isata
186. Sesay, Kanku.
187. Sesay Kiphu B
188. Sesay Mohammed
189. Shyllon Reuben
190. Silah Abdul Karim
191. Simpson James Gavin
192. Smith Eddy
193. Smith Eva
194. Smith, Rose-Marie
195. Songo, Muniru
196. Swaray, Hawa
197. Taylor Sophie Amadu
198. Thomas Christine
199. Thompson Jesse Thompson
200. Thompson-Shaw Josephine
201. Turay Francis
202. Turay Unisa
203. Wright Rita
204. Valcarcel Princess
205. Varney Howard
206. Wihelm Alberta
210. Williams Donella
211. Wright Aisha Nancy
212. Wvede-Obahor Nwanne

213. Yilla Alhassan
214. Yillah, Nabieu Yayah
215. Yopoi, Juma
216. Zoe Dugal

Consultants

1. Annor Nimako
2. Allotey Ohui
3. Aragonés Patricia
4. Asher Jana
5. Dr. Ball Patrick
6. Betts Wendy
7. Cibelli Kristen
8. Gaima Emmanuel
9. Handicap International
10. Hughes Charlie
11. King Jamesina
12. Professor Kofi Kumado
13. Luseni Dennis
14. Murungi Betty
15. Seigrist Saudamini
16. Sesay Mohammed Gibril
17. Triolo Anthony
18. Theuermann Bert
19. Udenta Jude
20. Williams Yada
21. Dr. Abdullah Ibrahim

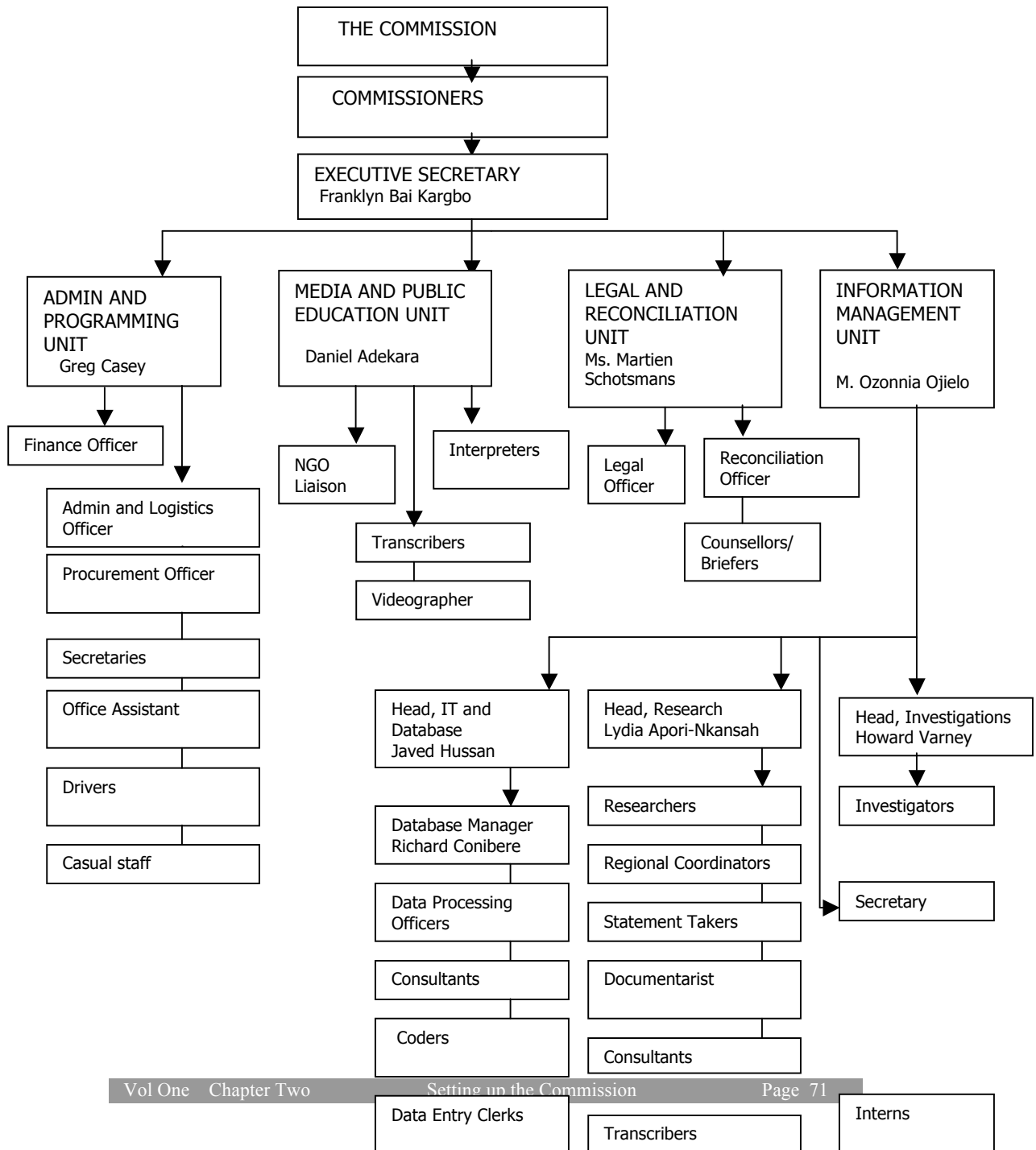
Interns

1. Abulaye Joseph
2. Barnicle Jeremy
3. Barrow Marrie
4. Conteh Kadie
5. Christodoulou Artemis

Artemis Christodoulou, a PhD student from Yale University, was an intern at the Commission during 2003. In May 2004, she returned to Sierra Leone to promote the National Vision for Sierra Leone. While returning to Freetown from Makeni, she was seriously hurt in a car accident. At the time of writing, Ms Christodoulou remains in a coma with severe brain damage. The Commission pays tribute to the selfless dedication that Ms Christodoulou gave to the people of Sierra Leone. Her work on amputations, memorials and the National Vision for Sierra Leone has advanced the cause of peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone.

6. Darkwa Linda
7. Flattau Isaac
8. Hewett Dawn Yamane
9. Kamara Joseph
10. Mahoney Christopher
11. Verelst Sabastian
12. Sandon Shogilev
13. Vibeke Norgaard
14. Zervos Anthea

**APPENDIX TWO
ORGANOGRAM OF THE COMMISSION**



APPENDIX THREE

COMPONENTS OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

The following were some of the components of the strategic action plan:

Mission Statement:

To develop a menu of operational strategies, create an enabling environment and lay the foundation for the successful implementation of the TRC as a unique Sierra Leonean experience

Vision:

To create a flexible, pro-active, accessible team committed to the establishment of a functional and successful TRC by the 5th July 2002 when the Commission was to be inaugurated.

Values: The values, which were set out as underpinning the work of the Interim Secretariat, included the following:

- a. Training for all staff
- b. To be gender and child sensitive
- c. Encourage life long learning
- d. To be ambassadors of reconciliation
- e. Show respect and dignity to and be aware of the 'victims'
- f. Respect for each other and demonstrate team spirit
- g. Human Rights knowledge and the basis for such rights
- h. To be hands-on and pro-active managers
- i. Be rooted and integrated in the community
- j. Transparency, honesty and accountability

The strategic action plan also focussed on how to transform the terms of reference of the Interim Secretariat into achievable targets. Some of the most important goals identified include the following:

- a. Partnership with the Government in securing an appropriate office accommodation.
- b. Appropriate human resources in the Commission through screening, recruitment, training, supervision, assessment, job descriptions and terms of reference.
- c. Financial management through review of the TRC budget, effective financial system, engaging in fund raising for the Commission, private sector supplies, donations and fund raising services.
- d. An administrative framework including recruitment procedures, resource material inventory procedures and control, administrative regulations, reporting requirements (internal and external), leases and contracts and evaluation and assessment.
- e. Partnership with members of the international community through exchange of letters, a work plan for assistance from UNAMSIL, finalise a memorandum of understanding, create framework for receiving logistics assistance.
- f. Training for Interim Secretariat and Commission staff.

- g. Design security plan (information and materials, physical security, witness security, protection of evidence).
- h. Design and implement a national public awareness campaign at zero cost, since OHCHR funding for public education has been given to NGO partners: identify partners and what they can offer/contribute, press conferences and briefings, visits to schools and institutions, radio/TV magazine programmes, other activities including songs, drama, poetry, logo, stories, jingles, sponsored walks, flags and booklets. It also included the preparation of a media and NGO strategy for the Commission.
- i. Development of a resource centre and collection of documents from different sources including UNAMSIL, embassies, NGOs, ECOMOG, Sierra Leone Police, Sierra Leone Army, Media (local and international), etc.