

Natural Resources and Private Military Security Companies: How Do They Affect Civil War Duration?

A Monograph

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Fort Leavenworth, KS

2019

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REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE			<i>Form Approved</i> OMB No. 0704-0188		
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1. REPORT DATE (DD-MM-YYYY) 16-05-2019		2. REPORT TYPE SAMS Monograph		3. DATES COVERED (From - To) JUNE 2018 – MAY 2019	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Natural Resources and Private Military Security Companies: How Do They Affect Civil War Duration?			5a. CONTRACT NUMBER		
			5b. GRANT NUMBER		
			5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER		
6. AUTHOR(S) LtCol Leroy Bryant Butler			5d. PROJECT NUMBER		
			5e. TASK NUMBER		
			5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER		
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) School of Advanced Military Studies (SAMS) 201 Reynolds Avenue Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-2134			8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER		
9. SPONSORING / MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) Adv. Strategic Leadership Studies Program School of Advanced Military Studies Command and General Staff College 731 McClellan Avenue Fort Leavenworth, KS 66027-1350			10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S) CGSC		
			11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)		
12. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for Public Release; Distribution Unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT The commissioning of mercenary companies, otherwise known today as private military security companies (PMSCs), to enhance military and political capabilities as well as to ensure economic stability for state and non-state actors is well known in the subfield of conflict studies. The conflict studies sub-discipline of civil wars is also well researched with numerous studies that address the four common variables of civil war scholarship: (1) onset, (2) intensity, (3) duration and (4) termination. However, there are few studies that address civil war duration, natural resources, and PMSCs (foreign intervention). The goal of this paper is to identify how PMSCs may affect civil war duration in developing African states with resource wealth. This paper finds that PMSCs can increase the duration of a civil war because of the services provided and the promise of future extraction rights (FER) for natural resources as payment for the commission of the PMSCs by the state government. The two civil war case studies for consideration are the Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) and the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2000). Executive Outcomes (EO) and Sandline International are the two PMSCs that participated in Angola's and Sierra Leone's civil wars.					
15. SUBJECT TERMS Private Military Companies; Private Military Security Companies; Angola; Sierra Leone; Africa; Executive Outcomes; Sandline International; mercenaries; natural resources; diamonds; oil; civil war; civil war duration; future extraction rights; foreign intervention					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Unclassified	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 55	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON LtCol Leroy Bryant Butler
a. REPORT Unclassified	b. ABSTRACT Unclassified	c. THIS PAGE Unclassified			19b. TELEPHONE NUMBER (include area code) 913-758-3302

Monograph Approval Page

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Monograph Title: Natural Resources and Private Military Security Companies: How Do They Affect Civil War Duration?

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Abstract

Natural Resources and Private Military Security Companies: How Do They Affect Civil War Duration?, by LtCol Leroy Bryant Butler, USMC, 55 pages.

The commissioning of mercenary companies, otherwise known today as private military security companies (PMSCs), to enhance military and political capabilities as well as to ensure economic stability for state and non-state actors is well known in the subfield of conflict studies. The conflict studies sub-discipline of civil wars is also well researched with numerous studies that address the four common variables of civil war scholarship: (1) onset, (2) intensity, (3) duration and (4) termination. However, there are few studies that address civil war duration, natural resources, and PMSCs (foreign intervention). The goal of this paper is to identify how PMSCs may affect civil war duration in developing African states with resource wealth. This paper finds that PMSCs can increase the duration of a civil war because of the services provided and the promise of future extraction rights (FER) for natural resources as payment for the commission of the PMSCs by the state government.

This paper will primarily build off the research design of Ross' "How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases," in which he develops nine testable hypotheses about the variables that link natural resources and civil war by using the qualitative case study research method. Ross' research identifies four additional variables after conducting his analysis, and this paper will build off one of these unanticipated variables, the variable affecting civil war duration. The civil war duration variable, which is the promise of future extraction rights (FER) for natural resources as payment to fund military action in support of the state government, will be examined in this paper with one more additional mechanism not addressed by Ross and others in the civil war natural resource subfield, the involvement of PMSCs and their potential influence on the duration of a civil war.

The two civil war case studies for consideration are the Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) and the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2000). Executive Outcomes (EO) and Sandline International are the two PMSCs that participated in Angola's and Sierra Leone's civil wars.

There are four broad insights from this study: (1) the duration of civil wars in resource-wealthy states is prolonged due to the interests of multiple actors in exploiting said resources; (2) during the period studied, mining and investment firms have a significant interest in ensuring that their mining concessions are secure in conflict zones, and more importantly, the state is prohibited from achieving effective governance; (3) these two cases are unique in that EO could shape the PMSC market for ten years before international and regional state reaction to the significant resource exploitation and violence to the general population; and (4) PMSCs had to modify their business model from an offensive role to a more logistical support role as international and regional organizations recognized the exploitative nature of PMSCs and mining companies.

This monograph concludes with five recommendations. The recommendations are: (1) the exclusive focus on the agents of action, the PMSCs, is insufficient and counterproductive to reducing civil war in resource wealthy states; (2) strengthen the central state government to develop and manage both the natural resource extraction process and the exportation process; (3) conduct security force assistance operations by the international community to establish a reliable and responsive legitimate military capable of securing the ungoverned spaces and natural resource sites; (4) empower the tribal leaders to engage with the central government on a recurrent basis to develop mutually supportive initiatives to defend, protect, and build access to rural mining/well sites; and (5) encourage states to reduce and screen foreign investment firms with significant interest in natural resource extraction activities more carefully.

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Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Michael L. Ross and Cambridge University Press for permission to use table 2 and figure 2 from “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 48, 57. I would also like to thank Philippe Le Billon and the Annals of the Association of American Geographers (Taylor and Francis) for permission to use figures 1, 5, and 7 from “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98, no. 2 (2008): 351, 360, and 362.

I want to thank Mr. Russell “Rusty” Rafferty, Chief of Classified Services & Special Collections and Archives at the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, for all of his expertise and time with assisting me in the execution of research for this monograph. I want to thank Mrs. Susan Fowler, Copyrights Coordinator at the Ike Skelton Combined Arms Research Library, for all of her expertise and support in requesting the copyright permissions for this monograph. I would also like to thank my immediate family: Jennifer, my wife, and Marcus, my son, for their patience and understanding during the many hours of research and writing of this monograph. Lastly, I would like to thank the School of Advanced Military Studies for supporting me during the development of this monograph while I was recovering from my surgery.

Acronyms

CAST	Consolidated African Selection Trust
ECOMOG	Economic Community Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West Africa States
EO	Executive Outcomes
FER	Future Extraction Rights
GSC	Gurkha Security Group
IDAS	International Defense and Security
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
MPRI	Military Professional Resources Incorporated
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PMSC	Private Military Security Company
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADF	South African Defense Force
SLA	Sierra Leone Army
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SLST	Sierra Leone Selection Trust
SRC	Strategic Resources Corporation
UN	United Nations
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
USSR	Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

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Introduction

The commissioning of mercenary companies, otherwise known today as private military security companies (PMSCs), to enhance military and political capabilities, as well as to ensure economic stability for state and non-state actors is well known in the subfield of conflict studies. The conflict studies sub-discipline of civil wars is also well researched with numerous studies that address the four common variables of civil war scholarship: (1) onset, (2) intensity, (3) duration and (4) termination. Additionally, studies using the variables of ethnicity, political grievances, natural resources, and foreign intervention are also addressed in civil war research. However, there are few studies that address civil war duration, natural resources, and PMSCs (foreign intervention). The goal of this paper is to identify how PMSCs may affect civil war duration in developing African states with resource wealth. This paper finds that PMSCs can increase the duration of a civil war because of the services provided and the promise of future extraction rights (FER) for natural resources as payment for the commission of the PMSCs by the state government.

This paper will provide the reader with the following: (1) a brief understanding of two post-colonial African resource-wealthy nations affected by civil war; (2) a review of the development and employment of two influential PMSCs commissioned by two independent state governments, each involved in their respective civil war; (3) an understanding of how natural resources can incentivize additional non-state actors; (4) insights from this study for policy and conflict resolution leaders; and (5) hypotheses for future research in resource conflicts.

Methodology

The qualitative case study method is the research design used to examine the potential variables that may influence the duration of a specific type of civil war: natural resource

conflicts.¹ The two civil war case studies for consideration are the Angolan Civil War (1975-2002) and the Sierra Leone Civil War (1991-2000). These two civil wars were specifically selected because of the following characteristics: post-colonial state, an extreme abundance of at least one highly-valuable natural resource, state government-commissioned PMSC, and the presence of additional non-state actors trying to achieve access/possession of natural resources. This study attempts to focus on a counter-intuitive approach of “moving up the ‘ladder of abstraction,’” or “generality” of specific potential variables of civil wars, vice examining large data sets of economic, political, military, and fragility factors to establish positive correlations to explain the particular phenomena studied.² The significance of using this technique is that it “achieves a cumulation of findings via ‘the building block’ approach... each case potentially provides a new component in the construction of a comprehensive ... theory”³ within this topic of conflict studies: civil wars. The power of this approach is the ability “to identify a variety of ... patterns that can lead to the outcome of interest and determine the conditions under which these patterns occur.”⁴ Lastly, this method offers a key benefit to the researcher: these cases can aid in the development of newly added hypotheses from new variables.

This paper will primarily build off the research design of Ross’ “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” in which he develops nine testable hypotheses about the variables that link natural resources and civil war by using the qualitative case study research method.⁵ Table 1 provides the listing of the countries involved in natural resource civil wars from 1975 to 2002 from which Ross develops his hypotheses.

¹ Alexander L. George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2005), 211.

² George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 243.

³ *Ibid.*, 242.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 244.

⁵ Michael L. Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 37-38, accessed December 1, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S002081830458102X>.

Table 1. List of countries involved in natural resource civil wars, 1975-2002

Country	Duration	Resources
Afghanistan	1992-2001	Gems, opium
Angola	1975-2002	Oil, diamonds
Burma	1983-95	Timber, tin, gems, opium
Cambodia	1978-97	Timber, gems
Colombia	1984-	Oil, gold, coca
Congo Republic	1997	Oil
Congo, Dem. Rep. I	1996	Copper, coltan, diamonds, gold, cobalt
Congo, Dem. Rep. II	1997-99	Copper, coltan, diamonds, gold, cobalt
Indonesia	1976-	Natural gas
Liberia	1989-96	Timber, diamonds, iron, palm oil, cocoa, coffee, marijuana, rubber, gold
Peru	1982-96	Coca
Sierra Leone	1991-2000	Diamonds
Sudan	1983-	Oil

Source: Data from Michael L. Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2004): table 2. Reprinted by the permission of the publisher.

In this study, Ross finds several variables affecting civil war onset, intensity, duration, and termination. Ross’ research identifies four additional variables after conducting his analysis, and this paper will build off one of these unanticipated variables affecting civil war duration.⁶ See hypothesis #12 in Figure 1. The variable affecting civil war duration, which is the promise of future extraction rights (FER) for natural resources as payment to fund military action in support of the state government, will be examined in this paper with one more additional mechanism not addressed by Ross and others in the civil war natural resource subfield, the involvement of PMSCs and their potential influence on the duration of a civil war.



Figure 1. Ross’ unanticipated mechanisms. Reproduced by permission from Michael L. Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” *International Organization* 58, no. 1 (Winter 2004): 57, figure 2.

⁶ Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” 56.

Variables

This study focuses on PMSCs and their involvement in developing African resource-wealthy nations. The dependent variable is the civil war duration. The unit and time of measurement for this theory are African countries and the duration of their respective civil war with a natural resource as a potential contributor to the extension of the conflict.⁷ This study concentrates on examining two variables that may influence the duration of civil wars. The first variable is the PMSC commission payment from the state government, which is either in the form of currency or in the way of FER. The second variable is the service that the PMSC provided to the state government. This paper examines two civil war cases that demonstrate the duration of civil wars was extended due to FERs for natural resources and commissioned PMSCs' services, and the paper provides some general observations regarding the variables' effects on the duration of a civil war.

This paper is organized into five parts. Part I examines the existing civil war literature. The analysis of these studies will address the author(s), their area of civil war research, the methodology used, and utility to the literature addressing this problem. Part II introduces the development and history of two PMSCs with public participation in African civil wars. Part III presents the two civil war case studies; Angola (1975-2002) and Sierra Leone (1991-2000), with a focus on their historical development as post-colonial states, the reasons for civil war, and the type of natural resource under contention. Part IV synthesizes the conclusions from Part III. Lastly, Part V summarizes the conclusions from Part IV, addresses additional findings, identifies useful policy recommendations for policy and conflict resolution practitioners, and recommends new possible hypotheses for further research.

⁷ Ross, "How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases," 46.

Definitions

Before continuing to Part I, several terms are defined for clarity. Civil war is “defined as any armed conflict that involved; (1) military action internal to the metropole of the state system member; (2) the active participation of the national government; (3) effective resistance by both sides; and (4) a total of at least 1,000 battle-deaths during each year of the war.”⁸ Natural resources are “natural substances that are produced for satisfying human needs and desires... [and] are materially extracted from nature,”⁹ such as diamonds, oil, timber, gold, diamonds, and rare metals. Mercenarism is “the practice of foreign professional soldiers freelancing their [labor] and skills to a party in conflict for fees higher and above those of soldiers of the state in conflict.”¹⁰ The term “private military security companies” (PMSCs) or its singular version (PMSC) is used throughout this paper due to the unique services that Executive Outcomes and Sandline International provided to the governments of Angola and Sierra Leone, respectively. Some of these services were security only—no offensive combat operations.¹¹ It is essential to establish these definitions since they are vital to this study’s investigation of potential variables that may link the influence of natural resources and the commissioning of PMSCs to the duration of a civil war.

⁸ Meredith Reid Sarkees, *The COW Typology of War: Defining and Categorizing Wars (Version 4 of the Data)* (Washington, DC: CQ Press, 2010), 5, accessed November 28, 2018, <http://cow.dss.ucdavis.edu/data-sets/COW-war/the-cow-typology-of-war-defining-and-categorizing-wars/view>.

⁹ Philippe Le Billon, *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources* (Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2013), 9-10.

¹⁰ Abdel-Fatau Musah and J. Kayode Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma* (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 5, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt18fs91v>.

¹¹ Musah and Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, 8. Musah and Fayemi use the abbreviation PMC for private military companies in their study since their research focuses more on the origins of mercenaries and the first mercenary companies in combat operations vice security operations.

Part I: Literature Review

Within political science, the conflict studies discipline tends to group collective violence for a political aim in a few categories: interstate war, civil war, revolution, or rebellion. Tilly claims that “political analysts have commonly considered violent interaction as marginal (or even antithetical) to politics....”¹² Simply said, the violence used by various actors is nothing more than the means to an end. The field of conflict studies, specifically studies of civil wars, is hugely diverse in techniques and approaches to investigate the onset, duration, intensity, and termination of civil wars.¹³ This study will focus on the duration of civil wars, precisely on the relationship between natural resources and the intervention of PMSCs in support of one of the opposition groups. To rephrase, is civil war duration determined only by the greed and grievance of an opposition group, or does it have to do with the possession of future rights to natural resources with PMSC involvement as a means to a political end? This study looks to answer this question; however, a brief literature review of civil war studies with an emphasis on natural resources and conflict duration follows.

Review of Conflict Studies: Civil War (Natural Resources and Duration)

This study on civil war duration will focus on research about extracted natural resources and their influence on both state and non-state actors via the employment of PMSCs. Several scholars examine the possible effects of natural resources on the outcomes of civil wars. These studies tend to cover civil war onset, intensity, and duration. The scope of this study will be the effects of natural resources on civil war duration; hence, the authors reviewed in this section will

¹² Charles Tilly, *The Politics of Collective Violence: Violence as Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 16-18.

¹³ Lars-Erik Cederman and Manuel Vogt, “Dynamics and Logics of Civil War,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 61, no. 9 (2017): 1992-2016, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022002717721385>.

address this mechanism. Also, this section will also cover studies specifically addressing the use of professional military companies in conflict zones.

Ross' "Oil, Drugs, and Diamonds: The Varying Roles of Natural Resources in Civil War" attempts to "describe how different types of resources have influenced recent conflicts."¹⁴ Ross uses a mixed-mode qualitative method of the most likely case study with typological process tracing to examine "15 recent conflicts in which natural resources played some role."¹⁵ Ross' contribution to the literature on this topic is that "lootable resources... appear to prolong non-separatist conflicts, due to two factors: their tendency to benefit rebel groups, and their tendency to cause discipline problems in the army that exploits them."¹⁶ "These two effects have helped produced long, chaotic civil wars in eight of the fifteen cases in the sample: Afghanistan, Angola, Cambodia, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Peru, and Sierra Leone."¹⁷ Ross published several other studies that examine the relationship between natural resources and civil wars.

Fearon's "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer Than Others?" examines additional possible causal mechanisms that may affect the duration of five types of civil wars.¹⁸ Fearon identifies that "peripheral insurgencies [sons of the soil]—civil wars involving guerilla bands, typically operating near the state's borders... have been remarkably difficult to end."¹⁹ Fearon suggests that "negotiated settlements" may become difficult to secure "... as in 'sons of

¹⁴ Michael L. Ross, "Oil, Drugs, and Diamonds: The Varying Roles of Natural Resources in Civil War," in *The Political Economy of Armed Conflict: Beyond Greed and Grievance*, ed. Karen Ballentine and Jake Sherman (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2003), 47.

¹⁵ Ross, "Oil, Drugs, and Diamonds: The Varying Roles of Natural Resources in Civil War," 47.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, 70.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*

¹⁸ James D. Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?," *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May 2004): 275-301, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022343304043770>.

¹⁹ Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?," 277.

the soil' wars, and when either government or rebels [can] earn some income [from natural resources] during a conflict despite the costs of fighting, as in the case of contraband funding.”²⁰ Fearon uses a mixed-method approach within his study: an empirical method, statistical analysis, and a theoretical method, game theory to examine the factors that prevent negotiated settlements to long-term civil wars where conflicting military expectations are not a plausible explanation.²¹ Fearon uses game theory as an alternate method to conduct his analysis due to a lack of available data regarding insurgencies. Fearon’s contribution to the literature regarding this topic is that rather than succeeding by winning “[the ‘sons of the soil’] may ‘succeed’ by providing the rebels and government agents an income and other benefits that are better than what they would get under a peace deal, due to commitment problems that destabilize mutually advantageous settlements.”²² Plainly stated, the duration of civil wars involving natural resources may be increased or based on rebel or government agents’ access to and economical utilization of resources to fund military activities.

Sherman’s “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” examines the post-Cold War, post-colonial independence of Angola and its diverse political economies.²³ “This paper examines the impact of the clandestine diamond economy [black market] on the civil war in Angola, with a specific focus on [the National Union for the Total Liberation of Angola’s (UNITA)] efforts to fund its operations through diamond trade.”²⁴ Sherman uses the single case

²⁰ Fearon, “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?,” 277.

²¹ Fearon, “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?,” 277-278. Examples of conflicting military expectations can be a conflict between a state military and rebel force that demonstrate equal capabilities, which should create a stalemate and support a negotiated settlement; however, the duration of the conflict is extended due to either side attempting to retain access to natural resources.

²² *Ibid.*, 297.

²³ Jake H. Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” *Journal of International Affairs* 53, no. 2 (Spring, 2000): 699-719, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/24357755>.

²⁴ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 700.

qualitative method of case study to conduct his analysis of this conflict. Sherman's conclusions are "[d]iamonds have proven to be a consistent obstacle to sustained peace in Angola;" "[i]llicit diamond sales have provided UNITA with the means to guarantee its economic viability despite international sanctions, enabling it to replenish its forces and renew fighting;" and "[d]iamonds have likewise provided motivation for UNITA to continue fighting, when the looming settlement might have jeopardized its access to diamonds and profits."²⁵ Although Sherman's study cannot provide a universal theory about natural resources and its effects on conflict duration due to its research design, it does offer a comprehensive examination of multiple variables affecting Angola's civil war, including greed, geopolitics, and the political economy of world markets. What makes Sherman's study so significant in the conflict studies discipline is his identification of "the complex interconnection between UNITA, corrupt government and military officials, international mining companies, private military security firms, and the global economy in both its legitimate and clandestine manifestations."²⁶

Le Billon's "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts"²⁷ and *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources* provide a very well-developed typology of natural resource wars by examining the underlying variables of "human needs and desires"²⁸ and their influences on natural resource extraction for personal and/or state gains. Le Billon's methodology uses a combination of ethnographic, political economy, and

²⁵ Sherman, "Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola," 718.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, 718.

²⁷ Philippe Le Billon, "The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts," *Political Geography* 20, no. 5 (2001): 561-584, accessed December 13, 2018, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298\(01\)00015-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0962-6298(01)00015-4).

²⁸ Le Billon, *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources*, 9. "Human needs and desires" are explained as an individual's self-interest for financial gain and sustained profitability over time in order to provide an effortless existence in a dynamic environment.

spatial science methods with similar case study analyses.²⁹ Le Billon's contribution to the literature regarding this problem has provided the basis for this subfield, especially in the areas of civil war onset, duration, and recently, foreign actor intervention, i.e., private military companies, private security companies, and extraction companies.

The most important studies within the civil war onset subfield are those published by Collier and Hoeffler.³⁰ The authors combined two approaches to the study of civil war: the first approach [econometrics] is concerned with the opportunities and costs to an actor to engage in conflict, and the second approach [political science] is concerned with the grievance or root-cause of a conflict. Collier and Hoeffler argue that the causal mechanism of motivation, which can be separated into the components of greed and grievance, support the onset of civil war.³¹ In their most important study, Collier, Hoeffler, and Sambanis develop an empirical model that analyzes "civil war and rebellion in terms of [greed] and [grievance], but focus on the opportunity as the determining factor of the rebellion."³² The authors use logistical linear regression analysis "to test the difference between [greed] and grievance in 78 civil wars between 1960-1990."³³ The importance of this study is that it provided the strongest correlation of the greed indicators that potentially affect civil war onset, and subsequently, influence the development of policy to combat civil wars at the United Nations (UN), World Bank, and other international organizations.

²⁹ Le Billon, *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources*, 13.

³⁰ Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 56, no. 4 (2004): 563–595, accessed December 13, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oep/gpf064>; Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis*, vol. 1, *Africa*, (Washington, DC: The World Bank, 2005), 1-353; Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler, and Dominic Rohner, "Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War," *Oxford Economic Papers* 61, no. 1 (January 2009): 1-27, accessed November 29, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1093/oep/gpn029>.

³¹ Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis*, 6-8. Examples of greed indicators are extortion of natural resources, donations from diasporas, foreign government support to rebel forces. Examples of grievance indicators are ethnic hatred, political repression, political exclusion, and economic inequality.

³² Paul Collier and Nicholas Sambanis, *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis*, 3.

³³ *Ibid.*, 3.

All three studies used mixed methods of comparative case study analyses and statistical analyses. In “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War,” Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner reviewed the greed and grievance relationship to determine if their findings from their earlier book, *Understanding Civil War: Evidence and Analysis*, were valid. In a surprising turn of events and a shock to the academic and conflict/peace community, the authors adjusted their initial claim regarding greed and grievance and argued that civil war onset is more likely to occur due to the feasibility of conducting such actions, not motivation.³⁴ The authors find little evidence that motivation can account for civil war risk, and they suggest that there is evidence to support their feasibility hypothesis: “[f]actors that are important for the financial and militarily feasibility of rebellion but are unimportant for motivation decisively increase the risk of civil war.”³⁵ An additional conclusion of this study is that the feasibility variable provides the basis for new studies examining contributing factors of multiple actors, control/access to natural resources, and foreign intervention, specifically PMSCs and their motives for soliciting commissions in resource-wealthy states.³⁶ All three studies significantly contribute to the study of civil war onset and duration.

A unique study of the variable of intensity within civil wars is beyond the scope of this paper; however, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* by Kalyvas is included in this literature review due to his assertion that violence and its application in a civil war are more important to

³⁴ Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner, “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War,” 1; Mats Berdal, “Beyond Greed and Grievance: And Not Too Soon . . . A Review Essay,” *Review of International Studies* 31, no. 4 (2005): 687-698, accessed November 29, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0260210505006698>. Feasibility is explained by the authors as the financial and military capabilities employed by a faction to engage in conflict. These capabilities are separated from the greed variable in their earlier study by testing indicators that are not motivationally related, such as francophone security, mountainous terrain (safe havens for forces), and young men aged 15-29. The authors suggest that there is no separation from financial and military capabilities; they are interrelated and conditionally based on the efficacy of a government’s security posture.

³⁵ Collier, Hoeffler, and Rohner, “Beyond Greed and Grievance: Feasibility and Civil War,” 3.

³⁶ Le Billon, *Wars of Plunder: Conflicts, Profits and the Politics of Resources*, 9.

examine than onset or duration. Kalyvas posits that “...coercive violence, which is used to obtain popular compliance—[is] a type of violence that tends to be strategic.”³⁷ The intensity variable reflects “the strategic interaction of at least two actors, [which] are simultaneously present on the same territory.”³⁸ This study states that violence and its intensity is a strategic action that can be implemented by either actor involved in the civil war to affect the civilian population, especially to gain access to resource-rich areas via control of the state or regional power establishment. Additionally, the variable of intensity may provide insights into the origin of the conflict. Kalyvas uses a mixed-methodology approach for his study. He combines comparison case studies with some statistical analysis. Kalyvas’ research regarding violence and intensity is essential to this study because it lays the foundation for examining the role of PMSCs in vigorously-contested, resource-rich environments.

Review of Mercenary Studies: Private Military Security Companies

The study of private military security companies covers a broad range of subject areas from their past involvement in ancient times as mercenaries, to their presence on the continent of Africa in 1960 as private military/security companies, and to their present participation on the modern battlefields in the Near East as contractors. The review of the literature for this study will focus on the historical underpinnings of PMSCs and their involvement in civil wars on the African continent (1975-2002). A significant study that addresses both the history of contracted private armies and their participation on the African continent is the book *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, written and edited by Musah and Fayemi.³⁹ The authors begin with the definition of mercenaries and mercenarism (see footnotes 10 and 11) and then explain how “the

³⁷ Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 31.

³⁸ Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*, 31.

³⁹ Musah and Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, 1-334.

practice of professional soldiering freelancing their labor and skills to a party in foreign conflicts”⁴⁰ yielded private military armies for hire during the post-colonial period in East and Sub-Saharan Africa. The strength of this study is the treatment of the historical development of PMSCs from their beginnings as mercenaries and how these private armies influenced the civil wars on the African continent from 1975-2002.

Additionally, Musah and Fayemi’s book contains “Appendix 1. Mercenaries: Africa’s Experience 1950s–1990,” which lists the involvement of professional military security companies in multiple African countries.⁴¹ This table provides well-documented reasons for their intervention, which party in the conflict commissioned them, the commissioning party’s objective for their involvement, and in some cases, the results of their interaction within the specific conflict. This reference is a key resource in this study.

An additional foundational study on PMSCs is Singer’s article, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and Its Ramifications for International Security.”⁴² Singer intends to “introduce the privatized military industry.”⁴³ “[The article] seeks to establish a theoretical structure in which to study the industry and explore its impact on the overall risks and dynamics of warfare.”⁴⁴ Singer’s methodology involves the qualitative “building block case study”⁴⁵ method to define, classify, and formulate a typology of private military companies for

⁴⁰ Musah and Fayemi, *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, 16.

⁴¹ Abdel-Fatau Musah and J. Kayode Fayemi, “Appendix 1. Mercenaries: Africa’s Experience 1950s–1990,” in *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, ed. Abdel-Fatau Musah and J. Kayode Fayemi (London: Pluto Press, 2000), 256-274, accessed December 5, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt18fs91v>.

⁴² P. W. Singer, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and Its Ramifications for International Security,” *International Security* 26, no. 3 (Winter, 2001-2002): 186-220, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3092094>.

⁴³ Singer, “Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry and Its Ramifications for International Security,” 187.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 187.

⁴⁵ George and Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences*, 78.

future academic studies of a more robust nature. Singer's contribution to the discipline is creating a foundation of terminology, developing a typology to classify the different international security concerns associated with a non-state actor operating in the traditional realm of a state, and the general introduction of private military companies to a broader academic audience.

Singer's second contribution to the study of PMSCs is his book, *Corporate Warriors*, where he builds off his previous article. One of his purposes is to continue educating a broader audience, and his primary research focus is to develop typologies to assist "policy analysis of the [private military] industry."⁴⁶ Singer's contribution to the discipline is that his book "organizes and integrates [the available information, which is known] about the firms in a systematic manner, allowing for the development of underlying theories that can guide [future research]."⁴⁷ Of note, Singer's book is viewed within the discipline as a credible foundational source due to his "copious footnotes to demonstrate where each bit of information came from" due to the limited data available regarding the secrecy of these private military firms.⁴⁸

An article dealing with foreign entities and PMSCs' intervention in civil wars is Regan's "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts."⁴⁹ Regan posits "that [if] interventions are a form of conflict management, [then] we would hold ex-ante expectations that they would reduce a conflict's expected duration."⁵⁰ Regan uses a quantitative statistical approach to examine "150 conflicts during the period 1945-1999, 101 of which had outside

⁴⁶ P. W. Singer, *Corporate Warriors* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2003), ix.

⁴⁷ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, ix.

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Patrick M. Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46, no. 1 (February 2002): 55-73, accessed December 1, 2018, <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0022002702046001004>.

⁵⁰ Regan, "Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts," 2.

interventions.”⁵¹ Regan’s contribution to the discipline is his finding that “... third party interventions tend to extend expected durations rather than shorten them.”⁵²

Part II: Private Military Security Companies

Key PMSCs in Angola and Sierra Leone

This section presents a brief introduction and history of the two private military security companies that participated in Angola’s and Sierra Leone’s civil wars. Executive Outcomes (EO) and Sandline International were commissioned by the respective governments to support them against rebel forces that owned vital access to crucial natural resources. Consideration of how these PMSCs developed and operated during their existence will provide insights to their motives for action in resource-wealthy states, including how these motives can influence the duration of civil war in these states. PMSCs’ offensive military operations and security services facilitated the retention or acquisition of vital natural resources that funded each groups’ military operations during a civil war. PMSCs benefitted from these commissions and sought to continue access to these funding streams by offering various services to ensure profitability. For ten years, EO was able to deploy rapidly highly effective, combat-skilled personnel in several interstate/intrastate conflict zones that had abundant natural resources and obtained FERs to these resources as payment instead of monetary commissions—this was the EO/Sandline business model.

History of Executive Outcomes

Executive Outcomes (EO) is one of the best known private military security companies. It is also considered to be the first successful private military company to implement its business model around the world.⁵³ “Executive Outcomes was founded in 1989 by Evan Barlow, a former

⁵¹ Regan, “Third-party Interventions and the Duration of Intrastate Conflicts,” 2.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 2.

⁵³ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 101.

assistant commander of the 32nd Battalion of the South African Defense Force (SADF) and then [an] agent with the South African Civil Corporation Bureau (CCB).”⁵⁴ Three events occurred before September 1989 that may have contributed to the creation of EO. The first event was the end of apartheid in South Africa, the second event was the end of international involvement and the withdrawal of Cuban and South African forces during the Angola war (1975-1989), and the third event was the termination of South African colonial rule over Namibia.⁵⁵ After the conclusion of these three events, there was a large population of SADF personnel, “as well as ... South African police and intelligence [personnel],” who were available for hire by private military firms.⁵⁶ This wealth of combat experience and subject matter expertise likely contributed to EO’s success in their military business exploits in Angola and also in Sierra Leone; hence, why this company is one of the most examined private military security companies within the mercenary conflict studies discipline.

“In 1991 and 1992, Barlow was contracted by the De Beers and other mining houses to undertake covert reconnaissance missions throughout southern Africa, particularly in Botswana, Namibia, and Angola; these contracts included training the security elements of De Beers.”⁵⁷ During EO’s ten year existence, the company was not just a hired gun but provided a wealth of subject matter expertise on a broad range of military operations, including tactical and operational planning for state governments. EO provided five vital services: “strategic and tactical military advisory services; an array of sophisticated military training packages in [the] land, sea, and air warfare; peacekeeping or ‘persuasion’ services; advice to armed forces on weapons selection and

⁵⁴ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 102.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 102.

⁵⁶ Kevin A. O'Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” in *Mercenaries: An African Security Dilemma*, ed. Abdel-Fatau Musah and J. Kayode Fayemi (London: Pluto Press), 48, accessed December 5, 2018, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/j.ctt18fs91v.9>.

⁵⁷ O'Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 50.

acquisition; and paramilitary services.”⁵⁸ To further illustrate the five key services available to potential clients, EO published their capabilities on their website. EO’s defunct website still displays these capabilities and options for review. EO’s list follows:

1. Military Training, advice, and support services: Advanced Infantry Training, Special Forces Training for the Urban and rural environment, Clandestine Warfare
2. Executive Outcomes' core business provides for Para-Military Services, Peacekeeping Services, Specialist Security Services
3. Executive Outcomes advises clients on aspects such as:
 - a. The development of strategies;
 - b. Training subjects/programs;
 - c. Monitoring of the client's trainers;
 - d. Restructuring programs development;
 - e. Weapon and weapon platform selection;
 - f. The formulation of Strategic and Tactical plans⁵⁹

As of the last update of EO’s website on December 5, 1998, EO supplied a list of current projects to highlight some of the services rendered. EO has been tasked with “... the securing and holding of oil installations in Africa under extremely hazardous conditions to enable recovery of equipment by the client.”⁶⁰ Additionally EO states that it prevented a coup d’état.

To continue to prosper in the conflict-ridden environments of these resource-wealthy nations, EO required external support from actors other than the commissioning state to acquire alternate revenue streams. Since “EO was officially just one subsidiary within a larger South

⁵⁸ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 104.

⁵⁹ Executive Outcomes, “Mission & Services,” Executive Outcomes, last updated on December 5, 1998, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://web.archive.org/web/19981205202613/http://www.eo.com/miserv/miserv2.html>.

⁶⁰ Executive Outcomes, “Mission & Services,” Executive Outcomes, last updated on December 5, 1998, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://web.archive.org/web/19981205202613/http://www.eo.com/miserv/miserv2.html>.

African holding company/venture-capital firm, Strategic Resources Corporation (SRC),”⁶¹ EO was able to gain economic support and country access based on its affiliations with mining companies, such as Branch Energy and the Branch-Heritage Group, and other PMSCs, such as Lifeguard and Teleservices.⁶² “These firms are essentially [the] stay-behind asset protection companies.”⁶³ Some of these mining companies obtained mining concessions directly from the government leaders and required security personnel to secure the access and operations of these mining conglomerates. “The companies deny this and claim that the relations between SRC firms and Branch-Heritage mining firms were simply that of good friends.”⁶⁴ “However, Branch Heritage certainly had a privileged position in the areas where EO operated, reportedly having a right of first refusal on lucrative mining claims....”⁶⁵ Regardless, EO was operating either by design or by serendipity in locations with access to alternate revenue streams; benefiting from these streams became the business model for PMSCs, especially for Sandline International while in Sierra Leone. EO conducted offensive operations to secure oil-producing zones and diamond fields in Angola and diamond fields in Sierra Leone that were in the possession of rebel forces in each respective country.

“On January 1, 1999, EO disbanded.”⁶⁶ This was probably due to two issues: the first was EO’s image as an organization comprised of members who were part of “the apartheid past,” and the second issue was that the new government of South Africa was “embarrassed by EO’s activities;” hence, it subsequently initiated legislation in 1997 to regulate the new trade in private

⁶¹ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 104.

⁶² Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 104; Le Billon, “The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts,” 69-70.

⁶³ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 104.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 105.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 117.

military service with “The Regulation of Foreign Military Assistance Bill.”⁶⁷ This bill required South African PMSCs to “seek government authorization for each contract.”⁶⁸ EO was the only successful PMSC that was able to operate unfettered for ten years before the international community engaged to cease what some viewed as the neo-colonialism of African states.

History of Sandline International

The creation of Sandline International, another prominent PMSC with affiliations with EO and other mining companies, had a very convoluted origin as EO disbanded in 1999. Sandline International, a subsidiary PMSC below the Branch-Heritage Group, was legally created in 1996 and was registered in the Bahamas.⁶⁹ This organization was also “known as Plaza 107 Ltd., and [had] its headquarters in the same building [in London, as the Branch-Heritage Group and EO].”⁷⁰ Timothy Spicer, the first director of Sandline International, worked with EO’s Barlow and the owner of the Branch-Heritage Group, Anthony Buckingham, to create a PMSC that was able to fill in for a troubled EO in 1997.⁷¹ O’Brien and Singer argue that Sandline’s senior executive positions were in fact “staffed by former EO personnel”⁷² and Branch-Heritage personnel.⁷³ However, Buckingham refutes this claim, stating that, “there [was] no corporate link between Executive Outcomes and the Branch Heritage [sic] group.”⁷⁴ However, O’Brien suggests, “[i]t is not ... directly through corporate links that the relationship can be traced, but

⁶⁷ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 117-118.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 118.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 105.

⁷⁰ Ibid.

⁷¹ O’Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 67; Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 118.

⁷² Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 118.

⁷³ O’Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 67.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 67.

first, through personal affiliations and, second, corporate spin-offs.”⁷⁵ Due to the legislative regulations in South Africa, EO’s failing international image, and EO’s realization that it was time to diversify its service portfolio, it pulled out of several contested conflicts, with Sierra Leone being one of the most notable. Sandline International filled the void.

To fulfill the remaining contracts in Sierra Leone and other nations, Sandline International provided logistical support, aviation support, and other resources, which were provided by other corporate spinoffs such as Lifeguard, Alpha 5, Saracen, Ibis Air, and Cape International.⁷⁶ Sandline was instrumental in providing military training to the Kamajors (pro-government local tribal militia), counterinsurgency operations (COIN) against the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and security of the recaptured Kono diamond fields from the RUF.⁷⁷ Sandline was successful on the battlefield in providing all three services to the government of Sierra Leone; however, this PMSC was not successful in the corporate/international realm of arms sales—a new service upon which the company expected to support its growth and diversification for the future.

Sandline International was involved in the “Sandline Affair,” which included the company shipping arms to the region in violation of the UN arms embargo.⁷⁸ Sandline International implicated British Foreign Minister Robin Cook by admitting that “its operations had been [enacted] with [the] full knowledge of the British Foreign Ministry.”⁷⁹ Sandline International, like EO, reduced its operations and morphed into more of a corporate security service with many different subsidiary companies, which are providing services globally.

⁷⁵ O'Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 67.

⁷⁶ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 118; O'Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 68.

⁷⁷ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 113.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 115.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*

Marketing was also a crucial part of this firm's business model, and like EO, Sandline International supplied a list of available services via their now-defunct website. Sandline's list follows:

1. Operational Support: Command, control, communication, and intelligence teams, Special forces units (including counter-terrorist and counter-narcotic), Heliborne reaction forces, Maritime special warfare units, Pilots and engineers, Fire support coordination teams, Bodyguard/close protection teams.
2. Intelligence Support: Provision of electronic, photographic and human intelligence gathering capabilities and information analysis, Design and implementation of intelligence gathering structures and the associated training of local civilian or military personnel in intelligence operations
3. Logistics: Election securing/monitoring, Integration/demilitarization of warring factions, Humanitarian Operations, Securing strategic assets - water, food, electricity, key installations, Convoy escort, Humanitarian and disaster relief command and coordination, Mine clearance, Protection of aid agency personnel, Medical support at all levels, Air support, and Water Purification
4. Strategic Communications: Public relations, International lobbying, Political analysis, Psychological ops, Secure electronic communication, and Support for Law and Order
5. Non-conflict support to law and order: Counter-narcotics programs, Counter-terrorism, Combating organized crime, Protection of natural resources and key installations, Anti-poaching operations, Anti-smuggling operations, Revenue protection, Fisheries protection, and maritime surveillance⁸⁰

Additionally, Sandline publicly addressed one of the most significant criticisms of its business model, the alleged payment of mineral concessions for services rendered by financially depressed states or non-state actors. Also, on their defunct website, Sandline International claims, “[C]ontrary to speculation in the press, we do not seek to be rewarded in the form of mineral concessions or other indigenous assets. All Sandline contracts have addressed the issue of remuneration in an exclusively monetary form.”⁸¹

⁸⁰ Sandline International, “Overview of the Company,” Sandline.com, last modified April 16, 2004, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://www.sandline.com/site/>.

⁸¹ Sandline International, “Overview of the Company,” Sandline.com, last modified April 16, 2004, accessed March 18, 2019, <http://www.sandline.com/site/>.

Part III: Case Study Analyses

In this section, the “most likely” case study method will be used to examine two civil wars that have been identified as being linked to resource wealth: Angola (1975-2002) and Sierra Leone (1991-2000).⁸² Two variables will be used to analyze these case studies in terms of their propensity to affect the duration of civil wars with PMSC involvement. The first is the method of securing the commission, which is either regular payment or promise of future extraction rights (FER) of natural resources. The second is the commissioned PMSC service, which is either military training, securitization of the natural resource, COIN, coup d’état support, or some combination of these activities. The goal of this analysis is not to prove causation, but to show how resource-wealthy governments involved in a civil war with PMSC involvement may affect the duration of the conflict. This empirical assessment identifies future research areas within the conflict studies discipline.

Angola (1975–2002)

Brief History and Causes of the Civil War

Angola, a Central African country, was a colony of Portugal until 1975 and was plagued by civil war for many years following its independence.⁸³ See Figure 2 for its location on the African continent.

⁸² Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” 48.

⁸³ Guy Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa* (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1999), 36.



Figure 2. Map of Angola. Adapted from CountryWatch, “CountryWatch Map Gallery: Africa,” accessed March 15, 2019, CountryWatch.com.

The two primary opposing interstate rivals were the “Movimento Popular de Libertação de Angola (MPLA) [Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola] under the leadership of Agostinho Neto” and the “União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola (UNITA) [National Union for the Total Independence of Angola],” which was led by Jonas Savimbi.⁸⁴ In November 1975, the Portuguese colonial authorities departed Angola and UNITA “announced that it would establish a common government in Huambo until they had driven the MPLA from Luanda.”⁸⁵ The MPLA was recognized as Angola’s official government on February 2, 1976 by twenty-five African states from the OAU due to a failed intervention by South Africa’s military forces on behalf of UNITA.⁸⁶ The MPLA government announced that Angola would be known as the People’s Republic of Angola with Neto as president.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 36; Stephen L. Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002* (New York, NY: Palgrave MacMillan, 2011), 2.

⁸⁵ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 37.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 39.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 37.

President Neto would only have four years to perform the duties of his office due to his death in 1979. Jose Eduardo dos Santos succeeded Neto as the new Angolan President and leader of the MPLA, and the next seventeen years consisted of Santos petitioning the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) for economic and military support for the MPLA.⁸⁸ Savimbi was doing the same by engaging South Africa, France, and the United States for economic and military support for the UNITA.

Angola's fierce fight for independence created a nurturing environment for a proxy war with the MPLA supported by communist USSR and Cuba versus UNITA supported by a democratic United States, South Africa, and France.⁸⁹ "The [USSR] hastened to provide the MPLA with military equipment and airlifted 16,000 Cuban troops into the country to support the MPLA government."⁹⁰ "The Ford Foundation lobbied [the United States] Congress to provide \$81 million in aid to Zaire, [with a portion] of it to be used to fund mercenaries to fight against the MPLA [within neighboring Angola]...."⁹¹ The struggle for the control of the country continued for the "next five years, [and] the Russians would spend the equivalent of four billion dollars propping up the MPLA."⁹² Conversely, UNITA reached out to South Africa for additional troops and supplies, which were provided.⁹³

The United States provided financial aid to UNITA since it politically could not send US troops to counter the Russian and Cuban communist forces supporting the MPLA. The United

⁸⁸ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 41; Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002*, 72.

⁸⁹ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 38.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, 38.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*

⁹² James R. Davis, *Fortune's Warriors* (Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre, 2002), 51.

⁹³ Davis, *Fortune's Warriors*, 51.

States was able to hire “French mercenary Bob Denard to advise UNITA in Angola.”⁹⁴ The use of mercenaries during the first and second portions of the Angolan civil war by UNITA, from post-colonial independence in 1975 to the end of the Cold War in 1989, provided the post-Cold War MPLA government an example of how to counter the former US-supported UNITA rebels for complete control of the only two remaining revenue-producing enterprises: the extraction of oil and diamonds.⁹⁵

In an effort to establish the MPLA’s dominant authoritative position as the ruling party in 1992, dos Santos and the government looked to EO to conduct oil pipeline security, covert reconnaissance for De Beers and other mining houses, and to recover the diamond fields from UNITA.⁹⁶ EO’s support to De Beers is the first example of mercenaries being employed to intervene in an offensive capacity to affect the political power structure in favor of a mining company vice the seated government.

Natural Resources Available

“The Angolan economy consists predominantly of two natural resources: oil and diamonds, both of which exist in abundance.”⁹⁷ These resources have contributed to Angola’s ranking as “... the second largest sub-Saharan oil producer and the fourth [largest] world diamond producer by value.”⁹⁸ Unfortunately, due to the civil war and corruption, it is one of the

⁹⁴ Davis, *Fortune's Warriors*, 60.

⁹⁵ Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002*, 117-118; Le Billon, “The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts,” 59-60, 67-68.

⁹⁶ Musah and Fayemi, “Appendix 1. Mercenaries: Africa’s Experience 1950s–1990,” 267; Weigert, *Angola: A Modern Military History, 1961-2002*, 114-115.

⁹⁷ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 705; Alfredo C. Gurmendi, *The Mineral Industry of Angola* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, 1995), 1, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/1995/9253095.pdf>.

⁹⁸ Philippe Le Billon, “Angola's Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000,” *African Affairs* 100, no. 398 (2001): 57, accessed December 5, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1093/afraf/100.398.55>.

poorest countries in the world. The two opposing forces in the conflict each had one of the resources, which they respectively used to fund their military operations.⁹⁹ The offshore oil fields off the coast of Soyo, the most northern and closest town to the capital of Luanda, were and remained the primary revenue sources for the MPLA government.¹⁰⁰ Conversely, UNITA possessed the diamond fields for six years, 1992-1998, and allegedly “raised between [\$3] billion to [\$4] billion from diamond sales.”¹⁰¹

PMSCs’ Involvement and Post-Conflict Analysis

To review, EO was commissioned by the Angolan MPLA central government for the following services: paramilitary operations and the security of natural resources.¹⁰² EO was initially commissioned in 1992 “to secure Soyo, one of the [centers] of the oil industry, which was in the hands of the UNITA.”¹⁰³ The primary objective was “to secure an \$80 million computerized pumping station owned by all of the oil companies.”¹⁰⁴ “A small force of approximately [eighty] personnel succeeded in early spring of 1993 in securing the station, but UNITA recaptured Soyo when [EO] left.”¹⁰⁵ EO’s services were “commissioned by Buckingham ... on behalf of Sonangol, the Angolan parastatal, acting as the intermediary to Chevron, Petrangol, Texaco[,] and Elf-Fina Gulf [oil companies].”¹⁰⁶ The means of the commission were

⁹⁹ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 705; Le Billon, “Angola’s Political Economy of War: The Role of Oil and Diamonds, 1975-2000,” 79.

¹⁰⁰ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 706.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, 707.

¹⁰² Musah and Fayemi, “Appendix 1. Mercenaries: Africa’s Experience 1950s–1990,” 267, 269.

¹⁰³ O’Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 51.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 51.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*

FER for oil and minerals from the Angolan MPLA government to the mining companies, never to EO directly.¹⁰⁷

EO was contracted for a second time in July 1993 by the MPLA government to re-take the northern Soyo area, allegedly with a 500-man force.¹⁰⁸ “EO routed UNITA and secured the whole oil region of Angola,” as well as “retaking the rich diamond fields of Saurimo and Cafunfo in Luanda Norte province, the source of much of UNITA’s funding for its war effort.”¹⁰⁹ Again, the services required were paramilitary operations and the securitization of natural resources. O’Brien suggests, “De Beers may have provided the \$7 million to the government [to secure EO’s services] ... in return for offshore drilling rights.”¹¹⁰ O’Brien states that “[it] would have been very much in De Beers’ interest to have EO active in Angola, ... [to] halt diamond smuggling.”¹¹¹ As mentioned earlier, oil production was the number one export revenue generator for the MPLA central government with diamonds being the second most lucrative export revenue source. UNITA possessed control of the northern diamond fields “between 1992 and 1994, ... control[ling] approximately 90 percent of the diamond exports.”¹¹² See Figure 3.¹¹³ The requirement to maintain control over these natural resources was essential to the survival of each agent in Angola. EO in some ways acted as an added non-state actor by soliciting violence for profit based on the two actors’ struggle for these critical resources to support their political and military activities over time.

¹⁰⁷ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 712; O’Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 52.

¹⁰⁸ O’Brien, “Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98,” 51-52.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, 52.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 706.

¹¹³ “Note: RUF = Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone; MLC = Movement for the Liberation of Congo; RCD = Rally for Congolese Democracy; RCD-GOMA = RCD faction based in Goma; UNITA = National Union for the Total Independence of Angola.” Le Billon, “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” 360.

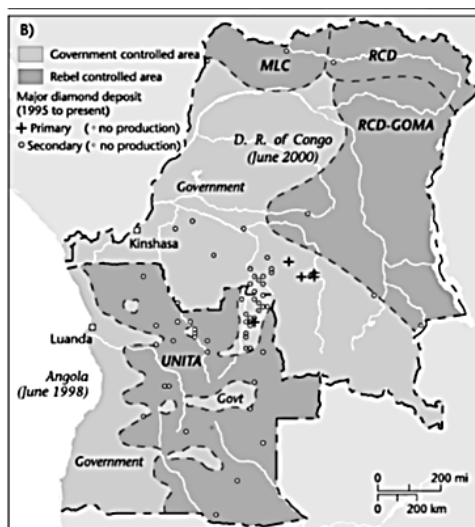


Figure 3. Diamond deposits and rebel-controlled areas. Philippe Le Billon, “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98, no. 2 (2008): 360, figure 5, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00045600801922422>.

Conclusion

Conflict in a resource-wealthy state that is non-homogenous and has a weak-state government can create economic opportunities for additional non-state actors, such as mining companies and export companies.¹¹⁴ The mining and export companies could benefit from a state’s inability to secure and govern natural resource extraction and exportation activities. A civil war further exacerbates a weak government’s span of control in ungoverned spaces and export infrastructure. In this case, the Angolan government’s attempt to acquire and retain its second most lucrative funding resource, the diamond fields, required the siphoning off of critical funding and infrastructure resources to combat oppositional forces. “The contracting of EO by the Angolan government against UNITA from 1992 to 1995 perpetuated the cycle of [related economic] warfare and further demonstrated the similarity between ‘legal’ exchange of oil and

¹¹⁴ Le Billon, “The Political Ecology of War: Natural Resources and Armed Conflicts,” 76.

diamonds for weapons by the government and the ‘illegal’ transactions of UNITA.”¹¹⁵ The promise of FER to EO “... lengthened the Angolan conflict.”¹¹⁶

PMSCs do not want to be so efficient unless they are unlikely to be able to sell additional services. EO was faced with this situation during the subsequent civil war in Sierra Leone. EO had to develop a new business model that would allow it to take advantage of the economic opportunities in these resource-wealthy states as its ability to provide offensive services began to become more and more limited due to its previous successes. The international and regional communities started to notice the extreme violence from this civil war, as well as the exploitative actions of foreign mining and venture capitalist firms, and attempted to restrict the hiring of PMSCs, as well as their services.

Sierra Leone (1991–2000)

Brief History and Causes of the Civil War

Sierra Leone, a West African country, was established as a British colony in 1787. See Figure 4 for its location on the African continent.

¹¹⁵ Sherman, “Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola,” 713.

¹¹⁶ Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” 59.



Figure 4. Map of Sierra Leone. Adapted from CountryWatch, “CountryWatch Map Gallery: Africa,” accessed March 15, 2019, CountryWatch.com.

“Sierra Leone was settled by freed slaves brought there by the British navy in 1787, and became a Crown Colony in 1808.”¹¹⁷ The coastal colony was named Freetown and the outer hinterland “was declared a Protectorate in 1896, and together-[the] Colony and [the greater] Protectorate-Sierra Leone gained its independence from Britain in 1961.”¹¹⁸ From 1961 to 1990, the Sierra Leone government suffered a fate similar to that of other post-colonial African states: the struggle to form and maintain an effective government, not a one-party state or dictatorship, served the best social, economic, and security interests of all the people of the country. Sierra Leone would have several power transitions before the initiation of the civil war in 1991. For this paper, the condition of the state and its multiple factions after 1991 are the focus of interest.

In March 1991, Sierra Leone became involved in an intrastate conflict with the Liberian warlord Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL).¹¹⁹ “Taylor was trying

¹¹⁷ Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 2005), 4.

¹¹⁸ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 4.

¹¹⁹ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 236. Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 5.

to gain control of the diamond producing region of southern Sierra Leone.”¹²⁰ In response to Taylor’s actions, the government of Sierra Leone sent 2,150 soldiers to the Liberian border to combat Taylor’s NPFL while requesting assistance from the United Nations and Nigeria.¹²¹ In May 1991, an estimated “5,000 civilians[,] as well as Liberian refugees, were reported to have been killed in the border fighting.”¹²² At this point in the conflict, the initial fighting between the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) and Taylor’s NPFL was very much like any other intrastate war in the view of the international community. However, after a coup within the Sierra Leonean government in 1992, the war transformed into a brutal display of violence against the rural populace in the southern Kono diamond fields of Sierra Leone. A dissident Sierra Leonean faction based across the border in Liberia, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), would play a key role in supporting Taylor’s attempts to secure the diamond industry while claiming to bring order and legitimacy to the government of Sierra Leone.¹²³

A military coup was initiated on April 30, 1992, in Freetown, the capital of Sierra Leone.¹²⁴ “President Joseph Momoh was overthrown and fled to Guinea[,] and Captain Valentine Strossor became head of state....”¹²⁵ Strossor’s first action with his new government “was to end the border war with Liberia.”¹²⁶ Consequently, Sierra Leone would contribute military forces to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) peacekeeping force, the Economic Community Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia.¹²⁷ The Nigerian military comprised a

¹²⁰ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 237.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 237.

¹²² *Ibid.*

¹²³ *Ibid.*

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*

majority of the personnel, who were temporarily assigned to ECOMOG in Liberia. The government of Sierra Leone supported the multinational peacekeeping force by providing ECOMOG an operational base in Freetown to manage its operations in Liberia.¹²⁸ Taylor responded by supporting Foday Sankoh, the leader of RUF, “with money, arms, and mercenaries” to facilitate a punitive campaign from Liberia into the Protectorate areas of Sierra Leone using indiscriminate violence, such as beheadings and “the amputation of limbs [to de-stabilize Sierra Leone].”¹²⁹ The SLA and ECOMOG were so focused on securing Freetown and attacking the RUF in Liberian territory, respectively, that RUF forces were able to attack in several rural locations to further divide the country along cleavages of “town and country and between the repatriated-slave elite and the indigenous peoples.”¹³⁰ The fighting between the SLA and the RUF would continue for another two years with the SLA achieving some success in the eastern districts adjacent to the Liberian border. This region had many of the diamond mines and was devastated due to the continuous fighting. Disrupted mining operations and the creation of an estimated 800,000 refugees severely reduced export revenues.¹³¹

During the first six months of 1994, the SLA would achieve tactical success by defeating or disrupting the RUF’s bases of operations in the southeastern part of the country; however, the RUF would quickly conduct multiple violent raids of villages. In January 1994, the RUF “killed 100 civilians and raided several villages.”¹³² In June 1994, the “RUF attack[ed] the village of Telu [resulting] in 58 civilian deaths and those of two soldiers.”¹³³ In response to these actions,

¹²⁸ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 111.

¹²⁹ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 111; Jeremy M. Weinstein, *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 6-7.

¹³⁰ Singer, *Corporate Warriors*, 111.

¹³¹ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 237.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 237.

¹³³ *Ibid.*

the SLA “launched a series of attacks upon the RUF positions near the diamond mining center of Kenema.”¹³⁴ The government of Sierra Leone and the SLA were not aware that the RUF had temporarily ceded the diamond fields to the SLA for other villages and districts closer to the state capital city of Freetown to continue its campaign of intimidation and fear. “In March 1995, the [RUF] took Mile 38, another strategic post on the main highway connecting the capital to the rest of the country.”¹³⁵ The government at this time had lost the operational initiative and began to enter negotiations with Taylor and the RUF to end the conflict.

The social and economic impacts from the RUF spreading its campaign of terror into the northwestern districts were significant on the government of Sierra Leone. During the first half of 1994, the RUF made it impossible for the government of Sierra Leone to conduct voter registration activities as a way to disrupt an upcoming vote on the draft Constitution referendum for a post-civil war democratic government.¹³⁶ However, the RUF would not negotiate and continued to fight early into 1995. Additionally, the RUF overran the bauxite and rutile mines, which began to reduce the export earnings of the government by 70 percent.¹³⁷ In mid-December 1995, Captain Strasser decided to request assistance from outside the country when the RUF attacked a village 65 km from Freetown.¹³⁸ EO’s support was solicited for \$15 million; however, the government of Sierra Leone could not immediately pay the commission cost due to the disruption of its mining sector exports.¹³⁹ One of the foreign mining companies agreed to provide the funding for the commissioning of EO on behalf of the government of Sierra Leone, which

¹³⁴ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 237.

¹³⁵ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 92.

¹³⁶ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 238.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 238.

¹³⁸ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 238; Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 92-93.

¹³⁹ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 23.

promised FERs in exchange.¹⁴⁰ Additionally, the government expanded the army to 13,000 personnel and committed 75 percent of its budget revenues to military spending.¹⁴¹

Natural Resources Available

Before 1930, the agriculture industry in Sierra Leone accounted for 30 percent of the gross national product (GNP); however, after 1930 and before 1961, iron ore and diamonds accounted for 60 percent of the export revenues.¹⁴² “[D]iamonds soon came to dominate the economy ... by the time of independence” and the years to follow.¹⁴³ Although Sierra Leone had sustainable resources, the state was ill prepared to manage, protect, and develop the extraction mineral boom due to its weak economy. See Figure 5.¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁰ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 93.

¹⁴¹ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 238.

¹⁴² Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 23.

¹⁴³ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 23; Bernadette Michalski, *The Mineral Industry of Sierra Leone* (Washington, DC: US Department of the Interior, 1994), 769, accessed March 15, 2019, <https://minerals.usgs.gov/minerals/pubs/country/1994/9234094.pdf>.

¹⁴⁴ “Note: (A) RUF (Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone) diamond mining and trading routes. (B) Conflict events intensity (1991–2002). (C) Household victimization events intensity (1991–2002). RUF mining areas and trading routes shifted during the decade-long conflict, with the exception of Liberia. Periods of RUF control of major mining areas: 1992–1993 and 1995 (Kono); 1997 (Kono, Tongo Field, Zimmi—jointly with a military junta); and 1999–2002 (Kono, Tongo Field), the period shown in this figure, when RUF mining was most organized and possibly reached a peak. Many other belligerent groups were involved in mining, including Liberian forces, Sierra Leone Army, and Civil Defense Forces.” Le Billon, “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” 362.

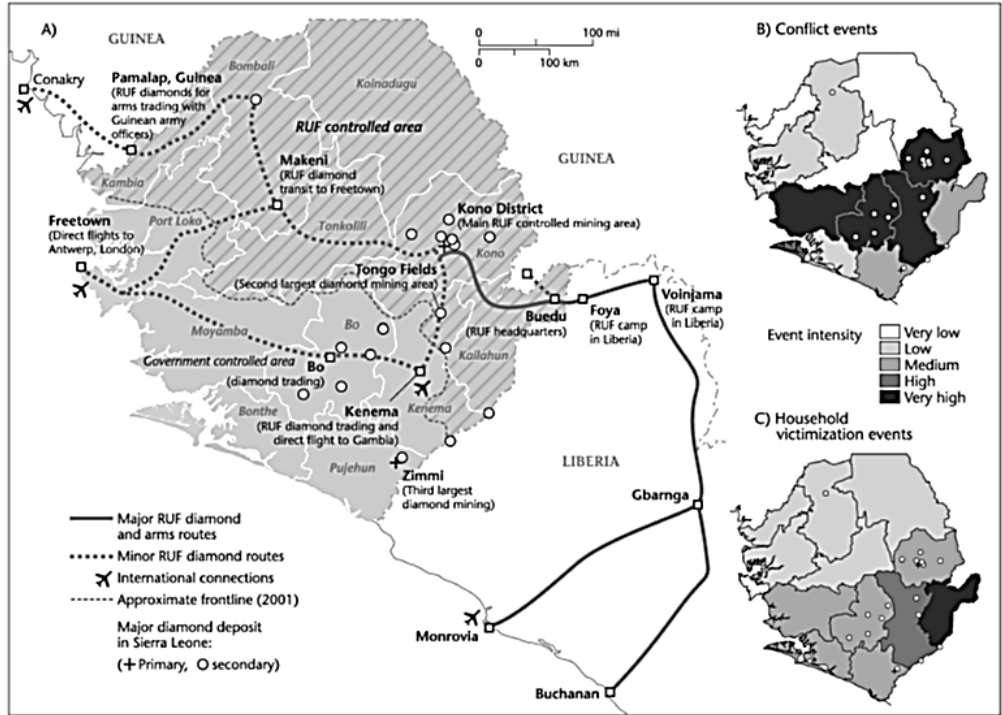


Figure 5. Diamond production and transportation. Philippe Le Billon, “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98, no. 2 (2008): 362, figure 7, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00045600801922422>.

Additionally, the post-colonial government of Sierra Leone had to contend with foreign mining companies, which had been granted mining access to all 27,000 square miles of the country, without any legal or military authority to change these earlier agreements. Before independence, “the Sierra Leone colonial authorities agreed with Sierra Leone Selection Trust, Ltd, a subsidiary of Selection Trust, giving the company exclusive mining and prospecting rights over the entire land for ninety-nine years.¹⁴⁵ With the preconditions of the economy and government set, the conditions for corruption and the establishment of a “shadow state” were optimal for illicit black market activities to develop.¹⁴⁶ This instability in the post-colonial government set the conditions

¹⁴⁵ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 23. Selection Trust was initially owned by the Consolidated African Selection Trust (CAST) Company, which was a British-owned mining company; however, in 1935 Selection Trust was owned by Selection Trust Limited and the De Beers Group.

¹⁴⁶ William Reno, *Warlord Politics and African States* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999), 3. Reno describes the “shadow state” as informal networks used by rulers to pursue power via their

for criminal mining and trade activities, as well as signaling to adjacent states that resources in ungoverned territories were available to be contested; hence, the cross-border actions by Taylor and his NPFL.

PMSCs' Involvement and Post-Conflict Analysis

The PMSCs involved in Sierra Leone were EO, and then Sandline International as EO disbanded. The government of Sierra Leone commissioned EO to conduct COIN operations and to secure natural resources, explicitly securing the mining companies' interests in the southern Kono diamond fields.¹⁴⁷ Sandline International was commissioned to provide "intelligence, logistical and air support during the operation, as well as 35 tons of military equipment purchased in Bulgaria, to the ECOMOG forces."¹⁴⁸ In both contracts, FERs for diamond mines were promised by the government of Sierra Leone to EO and Sandline via the associated mining companies of these two PMSCs: Branch-Heritage and Diamond Works.¹⁴⁹ Both EO and Sandline International did not want to be accused of resource exploitation by means of violence in post-apartheid Africa.

The exportation of diamonds was essential to both the central government of Sierra Leone and RUF rebels to support their military operations. The SLA was a feeble army and could not secure the ungoverned spaces outside of Freetown; hence, the first commission of EO. Taylor and the RUF were "forced to the negotiating table" after a series of offensive military operations

own means and this pursuit becomes indistinguishable from their own private interest. The state largely ignores its bureaucracies and people, unless the people interfere.

¹⁴⁷ Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa*, 23.

¹⁴⁸ O'Brien, "Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98," 60.

¹⁴⁹ O'Brien, "Private Military Companies and African Security, 1990-98," 61; Greg Campbell, *Blood Diamonds: Tracing the Deadly Path of the World's Most Precious Stones* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2002), 77.

by EO.¹⁵⁰ “Over the following 14 months, the [government of Sierra Leone] attempted to establish a peace agreement with the RUF.”¹⁵¹ “In November 1996, the government agreed to grant general amnesty to the RUF fighters,” and in return, the RUF leadership, including the international community, “wanted the removal of all combatants and the withdrawal of EO.”¹⁵² Without EO present to fight the RUF and to secure the critical oil and diamond fields, the drilling and mining companies had to find other PMSCs that could provide security for their extraction sites, as well as logistical, aviation, and weapons to support their operations in unstable zones. Taylor and the RUF began to fight again even though a verbal agreement for re-patriotization and conflict termination had been discussed. Taylor claimed that ECOMOG had attacked his forces and was in violation of the peace process; from 1992 to 1996, Taylor did not participate in any of the peace processes and continued to profit from the diamond fields.¹⁵³ Sandline International was the PMSC commissioned by the government of Sierra Leone to fill the space created by the negotiated departure of EO by the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF.

In December 1997, Sandline International became the new PMSC involved in the Sierra Leone civil war.¹⁵⁴ Sandline was commissioned to supply intelligence, logistical support, and weapons to the ECOMOG forces. The “cost of Sandline International’s operation was going to be met by Mr. Rakesh Saxena, a Thai businessman” representing “a group of investors with mining interests in Sierra Leone.”¹⁵⁵ President Kabbah, Sierra Leone’s newly elected president, entered in two contracts with Mr. Saxena. The first contract “granted certain mining exploration

¹⁵⁰ Christopher Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers and International Security: The Rise of Private Military Companies* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2006), 73.

¹⁵¹ Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers and International Security*, 73.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, 73.

¹⁵³ Arnold, *Historical Dictionary of Civil Wars in Africa*, 276.

¹⁵⁴ Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers and International Security*, 74.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 79.

concessions in Sierra Leone in return for economic and other assistance to the value of \$10 million...,” and the second “was between President Kabbah and Mr. Spicer on behalf of Sandline International.”¹⁵⁶ “Saxena agreed to pay the funds he had committed to the government of Sierra Leone direct to Sandline International as a matter of expediency.”¹⁵⁷ Ultimately, Sandline’s support was called into question in May 1998 when the UN accused the PMSC of violating an arms embargo with tacit approval from the British government.¹⁵⁸ As a consequence of this accusation and subsequent investigation, Sandline International’s contract was canceled, and the civil war continued until 2000 when ECOMOG and the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) peacekeeping forces intervened.¹⁵⁹

Conclusion

The case of the civil war in Sierra Leone highlights a weak post-colonial government trying to manage and secure the rapid extraction of extreme natural resource wealth. The RUF, as one of the non-state actors, waged a violent fight to obtain a revenue source, the Kono diamond fields, while the central government promised FERs to EO via third-party mining companies for the recovery and security of the same diamond fields.¹⁶⁰ After EO was removed from the contract and the country, Sandline International attempted to provide logistical support to the regional peacekeeping force, ECOMOG, and was paid indirectly by the government of Sierra Leone via venture capitalists who were only interested in mining concessions. The civil war in Sierra Leone perpetuated a process of violence for resource concessions, which included multiple state and non-state actors working to achieve their interests. PMSCs have the most considerable flexibility

¹⁵⁶ Kinsey, *Corporate Soldiers and International Security*, 79-80.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 80-81.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 79.

¹⁵⁹ Campbell, *Blood Diamonds*, 90; United Nations, *Report of the Panel of Experts Appointed Pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1306 (2000), Paragraph 19, in Relation to Sierra Leone*, S/2000/1195, (New York: United Nations, 2000), 29, accessed February 7, 2019, <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/431298?ln=en/>.

¹⁶⁰ Campbell, *Blood Diamonds*, 77.

to achieve their economic goals because they can adjust their services to address the needs of their clients. Silberfein illustrates this point in the following passage:

The war in Sierra Leone has provided the perfect microcosm of this process, with a decade-long conflict which followed a cyclic pattern. The RUF rebellion expanded to threaten and overtake areas of resource concentration as well as political targets, then withdrew into remote rural areas. During the retreat phase, the insurgents remained hidden, often in dense brush, like viruses waiting to break out again once resources had been traded for arms and fighting forces had been replenished. These forces could never have expanded following the contraction of their territory without links to international business and criminal or terrorist elements, as well as government entities willing to break sanctions [to] further their own geopolitical and economic goals.¹⁶¹

“[T]he sale of future mineral rights helped to prolong the conflict.”¹⁶² The government of Sierra Leone sold FERs twice to save the capital and government while the PMSCs were prepared to provide all services required to repossess and secure the diamond fields.

Part IV: Analysis

In the cases of Angola and Sierra Leone, the central governments offered FERs for natural resources they either partially owned and controlled, such as a small portion of the diamond fields in Angola, or did not own or control, such as the diamond fields as in Sierra Leone. The willingness of the country’s central government to extend access to resources not currently under their control to foreign actors implies that the wealth-generating capabilities of these mines and oil wells are so excessive that there is enough for all after the fight. However, an environment with so much wealth and a weak governing state enables other, non-state actors to act in their best interest to exploit the natural resources, and inhibits the country from ultimately achieving its goal of regaining complete control of all natural resources and their extraction/export processes. Mining and capital venture companies do not want the state to completely regain control of its resources, as this will potentially allow the state to become a

¹⁶¹ Marilyn Silberfein, “The Geopolitics of Conflict and Diamonds in Sierra Leone,” *Geopolitics* 9, no. 1 (2004): 237, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://doi.org/10.1080/14650040412331307892>.

¹⁶² Ross, “How Do Natural Resources Influence Civil War? Evidence from Thirteen Cases,” 59.

stronger institution. Stronger institutions employ natural resource tariffs, they restrict foreign ownership of state resources, and they skim a portion of the extraction and exportation profits. State weakness and civil war create economic opportunities for mining and capital venture companies, especially in states emerging from colonial rule and possessing a weak state military.

The mechanism of promised extraction rights was a strong motivator for PMSCs such as Executive Outcomes and Sandline International, so much so that EO developed affiliations with companies in the mining and oil extraction fields to gain additional funding under the security umbrella of the base company. In the case of Sandline International, partnering with venture capitalists and mining conglomerates such as De Beers and Branch Heritage Ltd. to provide services to the central government in exchange for FERs post-conflict created large funding streams and could create incentives to prolong the conflict for fear of introducing a stable government.¹⁶³ The role of the PMSC in a conflict zone is not that of a force to settle state and non-state grievances, nor is it tasked to resolve ethnic/tribal differences in a peaceful setting. The incentive for a PMSC in a conflict zone is to complete the first contract, yet seek out other areas of interest in the conflict that can be exploited to secure other profitable funding streams.

As an interesting contrast to this qualitative study, Fearon's quantitative research, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?" is used as a comparison for this analysis. Fearon describes the "sons-of-the-soil" civil wars as those conflicts that involve ethnic minorities in the peripheral regions or ungoverned spaces who engage in insurgencies against migrants and states.¹⁶⁴ Additionally, these conflicts are based on the state's monopoly and exploitation of minerals, oil, and other resources in the peripheral regions or ungoverned spaces belonging to the "sons-of-the-soil."¹⁶⁵ Fearon's analysis of the "sons-of-the-soil" civil wars

¹⁶³ Sherman, "Profit vs. Peace: The Clandestine Diamond Economy of Angola," 699.

¹⁶⁴ Fearon, "Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?," 283.

¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 283.

approximates the ethnic groups and conflicts over resources that are represented by the case studies in this paper; hence, the comparison of the mean duration of “sons-of-the-soil” civil wars versus the durations of the civil wars in Angola and Sierra Leone. Fearon posits “[that] the average duration of all civil wars is 8.5 years, and the average duration of the “sons-of-the-soil” civil wars is 33.7 years.¹⁶⁶ Simply, the difference of each type of civil war is statistically significant.¹⁶⁷ These two case studies reflect this difference. The Angolan civil war lasted 27 years, and the Sierra Leone civil war lasted nine years, both exceed the mean duration of all civil wars, and each duration is in the 95 percent confidence interval for the duration of sons-of-the-soil civil wars. These two civil wars supply a compelling argument that PMSCs can increase the duration of civil wars in resource-wealthy countries by offering military services in exchange for FER of natural resources.

Part V: Conclusion

This study examined the history of these two PMSCs, reviewed the history of each country’s development and primary causes of civil war; the natural resources available in each country; and each PMSC’s involvement in each conflict. Additionally, each commission of a PMSC was examined with attention to the fees or concessions that were provided for the PMSC’s services and the services executed by the PMSC on behalf of the commissioning agent.

Although this study cannot make general causal inferences, this study can provide broad insights into the relationship between civil war duration and PMSC profiteering from natural resources via promised FERs by state governments. The first insight is that the duration of civil wars in resource-wealthy states is prolonged due to the interests of multiple actors, not just PMSCs, in exploiting said resources. The second insight is that in these cases, mining and investment firms have a significant interest in ensuring that their mining concessions are secure in

¹⁶⁶ Fearon, “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last so Much Longer than Others?,” 283.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 285-286.

conflict zones, and more importantly, the state is prohibited from achieving effective governance. The third insight is that these two cases are unique in that EO could shape the PMSC market for ten years before international and regional state reaction to the significant resource exploitation and violence to the general population. The fourth insight is that PMSCs had to modify their business model from an offensive role to a more logistical support role as international and regional organizations recognized the exploitative nature of PMSCs and mining companies, which may contribute to extending conflicts.

EO was hugely successful in suppressing UNITA and recovering the northern oil fields and pump stations, as well as a portion of the diamond fields. EO was hired a second time by the state to acquire a greater share of the diamond fields from the UNITA. EO's success enabled the Angolan government to save itself twice. EO's involvement increased the duration of the civil war by providing violence for resource concessions; however, this paper suggests that other state and non-state actors increased the duration of this civil war because of their interest in exploiting natural resource wealth. Sandline International was commissioned by the government of Sierra Leone to provide logistical support, aviation support, and arms to the regional/international peacekeeping force from ECOMOG, which was trying to counter the RUF. Sandline International was able to provide support to multiple actors: the state, mining companies, venture capitalists, and regional/international actors, thereby extending the conflict by providing support services for resource concessions.

Recommendations

This study used historical case studies to examine the variables of natural resources and PMSC commissioning during two post-colonial African civil wars. The utility to the modern practitioner is that PMSCs are still very active in regions throughout the world, especially in conflict zones with access to natural resources, where national policy may not be clear regarding

a state's application of its military component of national power.¹⁶⁸ This research suggests five recommendations: (1) the exclusive focus on the agents of action, the PMSCs, is insufficient and counterproductive to reducing civil war in resource-wealthy states; (2) strengthening the central state government to develop and manage both the natural resource extraction process and the exportation process; (3) conduct security force assistance operations by the international community to establish a reliable and responsive legitimate military capable of securing the ungoverned spaces and natural resource sites; (4) empower the tribal leaders to engage with the central government on a recurrent basis to develop mutually supportive initiatives to defend, protect, and build access to rural mining/well sites; and (5) encourage states to reduce and screen more carefully foreign investment firms with significant interest in natural resource extraction activities. These recommendations are not exhaustive; they merely layout a few possible suggestions to counter situations that may extend a civil war.

Final Thoughts

This study focused on the role of PMSCs in increasing the duration of civil war. However, PMSCs are only one portion of this integrated and multifaceted system of self-interested state and non-state actors. Future research on this topic could include examining mining companies' activities and relationships and their potential effects on the duration of civil war in other post-colonial countries. Another area of future research is the effect of natural resource corruption on governance in the triangular relationship between PMSCs, mining companies, and state governments.

¹⁶⁸ Aram Roston and Matt Spetalnick, "Exclusive - Blackwater Founder's Latest Sales Pitch: Mercenaries for Venezuela," Reuters, last modified April 30, 2019, accessed April 30, 2019, <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-venezuela-politics-erikprince-exclusi/exclusive-blackwater-founders-latest-sales-pitch-mercenaries-for-venezuela-idUSKCN1S608F>.

Appendix: World Diamond Production and Major Diamond Trading

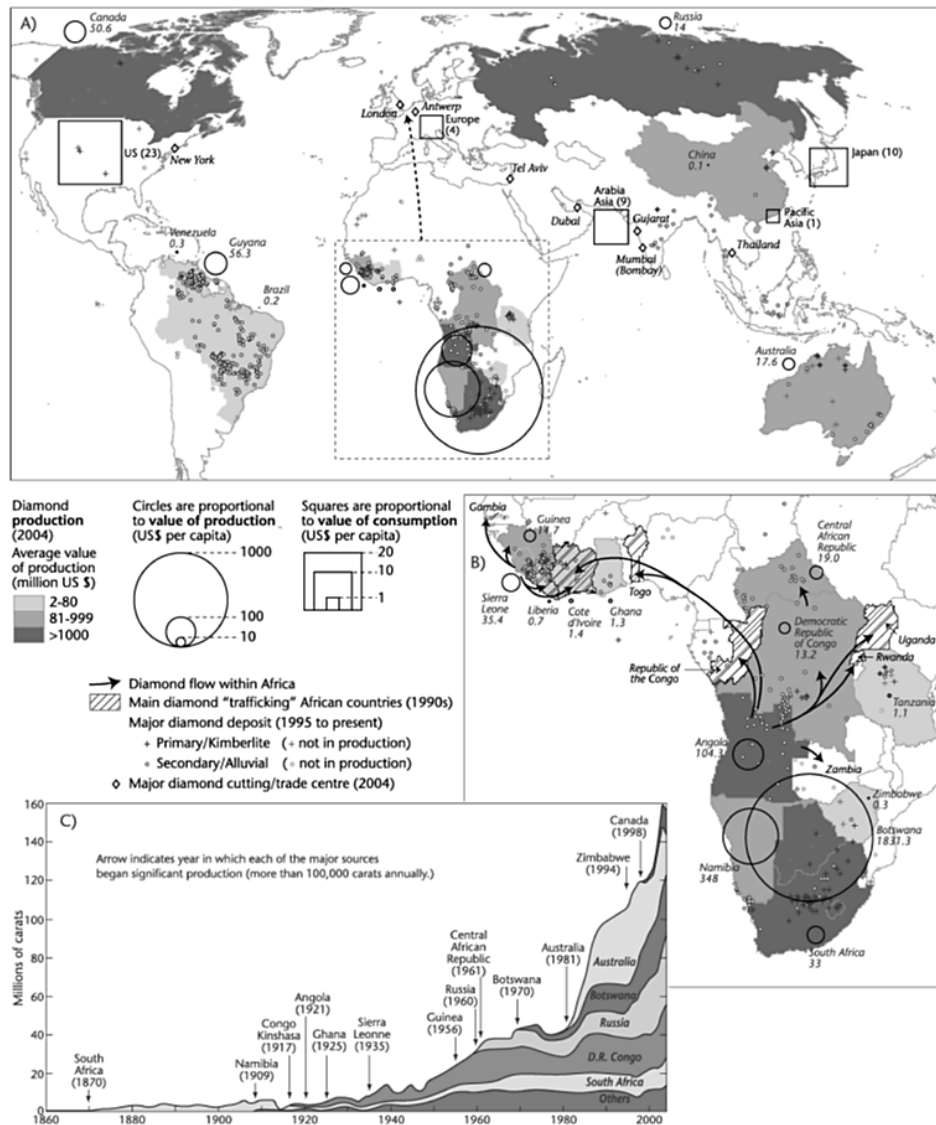


Figure 6. World diamond production and major diamond trading. Philippe Le Billon, “Diamond Wars? Conflict Diamonds and Geographies of Resource Wars,” *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 98, no. 2 (2008): 351, figure 1, accessed December 6, 2018, <https://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00045600801922422>. Note: (A) World diamond production and major diamond trading and cutting centers; (B) Sub-Saharan Africa diamond production and “trafficking” flows; (C) Historical world diamond production (1860–2005). Prior to the 1720’s, diamonds came exclusively from India, then mostly from Brazil. In 2004, most diamonds from Africa were still exported to Antwerp and London, with limited direct exports to Tel Aviv, New York, and emerging diamond trading centers.

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