



Democratic System and Peacebuilding in Post-conflict Liberia 1997-2012

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ABSTRACT

The last 15 years of post-conflict activities in Liberia had witnessed series of struggles for sustainable peace and democratic system due to mis-conduct in governance that has become barrier to the peace and security of Liberians. This study examines and analyses issues on post-conflict peacebuilding and democratic governance from 1997 to 2012 in Liberia. Internet explorations, magazines, newspaper cut-out, books and journals were the instruments of data collection. Improperly disarmed, demobilised, rehabilitated and reintegrated of the ex-combatants and displaced populations coupled with different scales of human suffering and rights violation, corrupt practices, absence of true democratic governance, sustainable economy plans, etc. were identified as factors that proliferated insecurity across the country. Failure of government to impact democratically on social system metamorphosed into different agitations and protests. Poor visionary and committed leaders were attributed to the parlous state of post-conflict situations to the extent that citizens found it difficult to vote for any candidates due to lack of trust and confidence building. Suggestions for sustainable peace and true democratic practices were proffered.

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Introduction

There is no doubt in 21st Century, one of the challenges facing the international community is how to effectively assist the war torn countries like Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea, Cote d'Ivoire, etc. to implement peace agreements and resuscitate collapsed socio-political institutions. Virtually all the countries in sub-region of West Africa have been devastated by the scourge of socio-political crises at one time or the other. In other words, the most critical element of rebuilding socio-political institutions and preventing renewal of social crises in this region is effective peacebuilding strategy and good governance. This is because factors that cause internal crises and socio-political conflicts are poor socio-political practices and mismanagement of resources. In post-conflict Liberia, democratic process forms parts of efforts of international community to restore peace back to Liberia following its incessant and protracted civil war of 14 years. It was designed to serve as synergy of ending both the civil war and restoring of peace (Adedoyin, 2010).

Meanwhile, "Liberian post-conflict governance started on July 23rd, 1997 aftermath of the elections held, and Charles Taylor, the then warlord won the presidential election and became the 22nd President of Liberia. During the elections, the citizens turned out in numbers to vote for their candidates; and elections were seemingly believed to be peaceful, orderly and monitored by both the domestic and international observers. The objective of Charles Taylor's regime was to build peace and entrench sustainable development, but the regime failed to achieve the set goal. Instead, his regime was never stable but terrified, due to oppressive policies and violations of rights of those oppose his regime. Unfortunately, Taylor eventually finds himself in the exact predicament he accused his predecessor -Doe.

He was later suspected to be on arms and ammunition trafficking that helped the dissident groups to destabilise and prosecute war against their governments. After his exist, Liberia had another transitional government under the leadership of Charlce Bryant who oversaw the country's affairs till January 16, 2006, when the current President, Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf took the oath of office. The failures of Charles Taylor's regime on peacebuilding necessitated the emergence of Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf's regime on peacebuilding. On Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf's regime, little could be said so far about her regime; due to different accusations of nepotism, corrupt practices, poor transparency and accountability, low level of system improvement, poor human security, infrastructural decays, etc. in governance" (Mc Intosh, 2006:).

In other words, Liberian post-conflict transition process since the beginning demonstrates limited potentials for post-conflict elections to facilitate good governance and peacebuilding in the long run. In Liberia post-conflict era, the structures of war remain obvious. Its transition process highlights low level of strength and weaknesses of contending actors and limited opportunities for the new political order established by Abuja peace agreement in 1996 and Accra comprehensive peace agreement in 2003 (UNMIL, 2005). Although their recent elections marked a significant turning point of conflict to peace by providing mechanisms of establishing national authority across the country, access to resources and the fear of renewal of conflict shaped their voting patterns and made elections to be more of referendum on peace than a democratic choice option. The question is "did Liberian elections put in place the leaders and institutions that are capable of sustaining the peace and promoting democratisation in the long run?"

This is because the opportunity for a given election to serve as a tool for peacebuilding is greater than the potential for democratic governance in Liberia. That is, the dual goals of peace and democratisation process could be met if much time is given on electoral education. The flaw of elections in 2005 was attributed to the failure of Charles Taylor's regime that ignites a new round of conflict that resulted into neither a war termination nor democratisation situation. That is, the outcomes of any transition programme after a peace agreement had been signed are critical to the building of a stable society. The election that brought Charles Taylor to power could have served as mechanism of electing new political leadership and institutions that are capable of preserving the peace. It should have served as principal means of legitimatising new leadership and institutional structures that emerged from a negotiated resolution of civil war. Nevertheless, it serves as mechanism for war termination with little democratic orientation.

But in the long run, it becomes a burden to Liberia post-conflict. It failed to address some contentious issues that constituted social disorder, general insecurity and institutional breakdown initially. Capacity for civil society to operate openly and participate effectively with quality transition process that promotes continuous negotiations, joint decision making, effective internal and international support and parties' characters, etc. were lacking. The whole process bounds back to where it started. The July 1997 elections in Liberia suppose to have presented a step in terminating civil war and have a marginal note in encouraging democratisation situation. Nevertheless, the election that brought Ellen Johnson Sirleaf to power and her re-election gave some level of hope for electoral process in Liberia. But it has not gotten to the level of rise and shine on governance for Liberia (Lyons, 2006).

That was why, United Nations Development Programme on Justice and Security asseverated that "accountable democratic process and transparent governance advance people's participatory in accordance with the human rights standards that increase national and local authority's capacity to provide security, manage conflict, prevent violence and assure respect for human rights. Its governing reforms that promote and sustain democratic principles strengthening a decentralise capacity and participatory of the less advantaged groups, as well as effective, responsive, accessible, fair and justice system that promotes rule of law and upholding human rights that involve both the formal and informal processes within the consideration of people's rights were yet to prioritize (Adedoyin, 2010).

Indeed, Liberia post-conflict governance fails to ensure a full array of duties and functions that promote sustainable peace. The Liberian leaders are yet to take the transition programmes of United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) seriously by investing on training of the citizens, most especially, the youth in post-conflict era. The proliferation of unemployed population, small arms and light weapons is impeding peaceful co-existence, stability and economic growth of their country. Citizens suffer poor leadership roles". The arms and light weapons proliferation has not been put under control as part of democratic process that consolidates peace process. "Their democratic process needs to cover all aspects of rebuilding Liberia in the context of vision 2030 agenda of transforming and reconciling citizens (UNDP, 2008)". However, the aim of the study is to examine critical issues in Liberian post-conflict activities in relation

with peacebuilding, while its specific objective establishes how the true democratic governance can entrench sustainable peace and development in post-conflict Liberia. The internet explorations, magazines, Newspaper cut-out, books and journals were the instruments of data collection.

Conceptual Analysis

The intention here was to reveal the relevance of democratic governance to peacebuilding process in Liberia. In other words, democracy is a universal means of peaceful leadership changes. It is a process of actualising governance that can expose electorates and aspirants to an experience competitive power or leadership changes through electoral processes. But misconduct of democratic process in Liberia undermines its true democratic culture and peacebuilding since 1997. Meanwhile, the true representative democratic governance is a system by which members of a society, community or organisation elect one or more persons to exercise their political interest on their behalf. The provision for democratic election in societies is intended for a socio-political power to be exercised with the consents of governs in societies (Mc Intosh, 2005). That was why; democracy is defined as "government of the people, by the people and for the people" -which means; political, economic and social forces need to be freely interacting without any restrictions, limitations, or fear of harassment and intimidation by any governmental agencies. It is a rule by consent of people, multi-parties system, electoral competition, agitation and rule of law. But the reality of governance in Liberia is that the consents of governs had been taken rather than given. Their political choices are limited to the options provided by the few oligarchies. The celebration of democracy in Liberia has little or no chances for the poor persons, but the rich and ex-combatants. The struggle for material things and political freedom force some people to partake in elections. The material needs and survival determine their political freedom.

The democratic system in Liberia receives more impetus from political and electoral failures. The failures which have become a life time threat to the security and economy vibrancy of Liberians. The survival strategies that many Liberians have devised to overcome adversity and reduce vulnerability are electoral malpractices. While the true democratic system acknowledges the right of citizens to dissent, the political liberty and equality of the citizens had been subverted by cheating, fraud, vote buying, intimidation and fears. The true democratic practices are characterised by social integration that ensures habits of tolerance and accommodation of differences over issues and policies possible, which makes democracy a bit superior compares to other forms of governance. It secures the rights and interests of every person from being disregarded. It provides better atmosphere for one to stand on his/her rights. These attributes make it more alternatively preferable to a political dictatorship (Adedoyin, 2011). It determines the country's national success or failure. Meaning, if a nation is not careful, her national character would compel unconscious dictatorship under the aegis of democracy. The problem of trust and fear hinders the success of democratic governance in Liberia. The type of political belief that Liberian government should operate has not been brought into fruition. In other words, the legitimacy that citizens deserved in governance has not been materialised in Liberia. Candidates that are supposed to be fairly elected without intimidation have not been allowed to do so.

Hence, all the citizens should have equal rights to express their wishes without the fear of punishment. They should have right to form a relatively independent association to control government decisions and policies through a constitutional process.

Broadly speaking, the three types of democracy that are widely practiced are plurality, consociation/proportional representation and simple majority. Transplantation of western democracy in Liberia has led to institutional problems like corruption, ethnic cleavage/marginalisation/crisis, insecurity, political and electoral violence, etc. Employment of unlawful forces by the parties' supporters or members is more prevalent in order to intimidate opponents and create unnecessary threats to a democratic process. It is politics of cheating-acrimony, ethnic sentiment and mudslinging, and not of love or brotherhood. It is the politics of anarchy and discord, and not of orderliness and concord. It is the politics of cleavages, divisions and disunity, and not of co-operation, consensus and unity. It is the politics of hypocrisy and charlatanism, not of integrity and patriotism (Lyons, 2000). It is the politics of blackmail, and not of maturity. There is an unbridled flagrancy in the smuggling and use of arms and ammunition by the political support class. Political corruption is pervasive. It affects all the state stakeholders and actors. Its menace is linked with grinding poverty, rising unemployment and value-vacuum and not just within the political classes that are desperately angling for power. For development to manifest in post-conflict Liberia, emphasis of political leader should be on human security and not on traditional security. Liberia leaders need to transcend from ill-defines democratic system to an acceptable global process of democracy.

Similarly, peacebuilding is a mechanism of reconciling and normalising of the warring factions' relationships. Its techniques or strategies include negotiation, conciliation, mediation, arbitration, official and unofficial circular flows of efforts from multi-tracks diplomacy mechanisms. Its activities are complex and multiple in nature that include demobilisation, disarmament, rehabilitation of ex-combatants, reintegration, development of civilian police, reconstruction of state administration and creation of mechanisms for participatory governance, re-establishment of rule of law, and legitimate, effective judiciary system, strengthening of civil society, socio-economic recovery, etc. (Adedoyin, 2012) In other words, "some proactive effort needs to be made to strengthen and make capacity for preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping efficient in post-conflict era. (Omeje, 2009:2-3)".

Peacebuilding is a process of making sure that a country or society creates conditions for sustainable peace. Such conditions could be created when a country is already cessate from hostilities and be in a state of being peaceful. The condition was created to prevent any further eruption of conflict but regains sustainable peace, which may be pre- or post hostility situation that includes transformation of state organs, socio-economic process, democratisation and reintegration of social system (Mpangala, 2004:7). It is a continuous process. "Peacebuilding primarily provides conditions that make inhabitants of a society secure in life and dignify for foreseeable future". Its concept can be expanded to encapsulate conflict prevention, conflict management, post-conflict reconstruction and above all, development (Wallenstein, 2008)". Wallenstein practically applies this to the spectrum of conflict as a whole –such as

pre, during and post-conflict situations. In all cases, the sustainability of peacebuilding process is very important to the achievement of sustainable peace and development.

It involves deployment of peace missions to the regions or countries that are cessating from war situation and hostility to peace. Its transformation process involves how to internally re-organise the states beveled by war base on the principles of true representative and liberal democracy. That was why, international community or organisations support the transformation of states to a true representative and liberal democracy. They have helped many post-conflict states administered elections and encouraged development of such society base on pluralistic democracy and rule of law. However, the liberal socio-political and economic arrangements cannot be solely relying on; the state apparatus reforms that capable of upholding the rule of law and containing social competitions within a peaceful bound need to be put into consideration (UNDP, 2008). One of the major obstacles undermining effective peacebuilding process in Africa is the failure of various international actors to adapt their assistance to the socio-political dynamics and practical realities of the war-torn societies that they wish to assist. Their usual practices are far from establishing or developing liberal democratic politics or models; rather, they renew triple crises of capitalist modernisation and primitive wealth accumulations. That is, the practice of institutionalization of civil and political rights, operation of free press, existence of independent judiciary system and culture of mutual tolerance, possible compromise and accommodation of dissent interests and views are the integral parts of democratisation and state viability. Although few achievements have been recorded in Liberia post-conflict peacebuilding, the country is still confronting with some challenges including limited resources, non-implementation of reconciliatory reports, corrupt practices, poor service delivery, illiteracy, weak judicial system, dilapidated infrastructural facilities, nepotism, favouritism and unemployment.

In other words, peacebuilding is an action that supports structures that tend to strengthen and solidify peaceful atmosphere that devours relapses of conflicts. It involves many actors and activities that ensure peaceful co-existence. It covers entire spectrum of conflict –in terms of pre-conflict where issues on conflict prevention and eradication of structural violence can be achieved, and during the conflict, where emphasis is on mitigation and containment of conflict. Its post-conflict activities address issues among the warring factions or communities, in order to avoid relapses of conflict ((Adedoyin, 2010). The peacebuilding process in post-conflict era aims at strengthening and solidifying political structure in order to address the cause of conflict. It includes mechanisms of identifying support systems that tend to consolidate peace and advance a sense of confidence, well-being, and economic reconstruction. It encompasses different arrays of processes, approaches and stages that transform conflict situation to a sustainable peace atmosphere. It reduces some gaps between the rich and poor through the protection of human rights and realisation of durable just and fair social order where there is no discrimination of race or sex.

In a nutshell, peacebuilding is a continuous process that involves a broad range of activities that aim at consolidating peace and seek to address the root cause of conflict and provide measures for bolstering peace agreement in the aftermath of conflict situation.

It involves transformation of political, institutional, socio-economic and cultural landscape that degenerated into violent conflicts. Although, several steps are involved in peacemaking, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, poor economic development and lack of humanitarian assistance can undermine the effectiveness of peacebuilders in helping to support a long term peacebuilding process. The peacebuilding mechanisms include early warning signals and preventive diplomacy. Effective early warning signal combines historical, socio-political, information analysis and forecast to address any emergence of social conflict appropriately. It is an overall component of identifying or addressing developing conflicts (Adedoyin, 2012).

Preventive diplomacy includes activity that forestalls and prevents escalation of conflict from being a widespread violence. It includes a broad range of actions like confidence building, fact-finding, diplomatic moves that encompass negotiation and mediation, relief systems and rehabilitation efforts, promotion of democratic system through the strengthening of civil society institutions and transparency of electoral processes, good economic and social measures that include developmental assistance, certain targeted-orientation programme and pre-conditions for aid, promotion of national reconciliation through institutional reforms like constitution and re-socialisation, educational and social means. Others are development of civil society institutions like media and peacekeeping forces or military observers. It encompasses multi-tracks diplomacy mechanism activities. Blair (2006:7) states that “political leaders need to take into account the problems of fail states in their foreign policies”. The methods of dealing with armed and civil conflicts, consequence of wars, role of democracy, economic interdependence, membership of international organisations in reinforcing peaceful relationship, practical challenges of peacebuilding process and ideological assumptions need to be well addressed and structured. In other words, the question of state failure includes what are the causes and characteristics of the state failure, as well as how to deal with their associated fragility features? The peacebuilding process seeks to address and prevent recurrence of violence in countries that are just coming out of war or conflict situations.

In post-conflict era, peacebuilding programme needs to be effective once there is a cessation of hostilities and the peacekeepers have been able to secure a post-conflict environment. “Its peacekeepers (military personnel) work maintains a secure local environment, while the peacebuilders (civilians) work to ensure sustainable peace. This makes peacekeepers and peacebuilders inseparable partners. The peacebuilders supervise ceasefire process, demobilisation of forces and destruction of weapons, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants and displaced population back to normal civilian life, etc. Their processes involve designation and implementation of demining programmes, repatriation of refugees and displaced persons, provision for humanitarian assistance, supervision of existing administrative structures, re-establishment of new police force, verification of respect for human rights, designing and supervision of constitutional define, judicial and electoral reforms, observation, supervision, organisation and conduct of elections; and co-ordination of support for economic rehabilitation and reconstruction (Mpangala, 2004). Under normal circumstances, the public order must have been restored in both the state and local environments – and should be progressively rebuilt.

A drawdown and ultimate withdraw of peacekeeping forces is also imperative. These are ongoing in Liberia post-conflict peacebuilding. But for effective, successful and sustainable peace to reign in Liberia, the country’s peacebuilding process needs to involve effective mobilisation and participation of broad possible range of local, regional and international stakeholders –local civil groups and community based organisations, traditional institutions and grassroots communities, government departments, institutions and agencies; (sub) regional organisations, inter-governmental bodies; international civil societies and donor agencies, voluntary organisations, charities, etc. The local participation and ownership of the process is ultimately bulwark of peacebuilding. Without this, sustainable peace cannot be achieved. This has been a big problem in post-conflict Liberia. The grassroots have not been really involved and their opinions have not been given much recognition by the post-conflict governance. Strangely, most of the electorate including political leaders did not fully understand the whole process, and less serious attempt had been made to address this malady (Iroha, 2005)”. In other words, the transition to accomplish dual goals of sustainable peace and democratisation is required. The post-conflict democratic process or governance in Liberia should allow its citizens to participate and have enough roles in social system. Their transition and elections suppose to serve as a context for rapid sustainable peace and development, and a significant accomplishment of accountability and development of human security achievement.

Theoretical Analysis on Democratic Practice and Peacebuilding in Liberia

The theoretical explanation on why Liberia post-conflict peacebuilding’s aim and objectives have not been achieved is through democratic theory. The country’s democratic process has taken different dimensions in both the theory and practice since the beginning. Meanwhile, the global types of democracy are direct, constitutional, participatory, consensus, consociation, representative, liberal, etc. They are not exclusive of one another and may be independent of one another or co-exist in a single social system.

According to representative democratic theory, true representation that elects government officials through electorates is legitimate. It is a simple majority or plurality votes system. Sometimes, representative democracy incorporates elements of direct democracy, such as referendums. Its main characteristic is that representatives are elected by people to act on their behalf. It is where the sovereignty of people is held by representatives. To liberal democratic schools, democracy is a system where those who hold power are elected in competitive elections with a secret ballot and wide franchise, that is, a situation where there is freedom of speech, religion, organisation, and a constitutional framework of law to which the government is subordinated and guaranteed equal rights. The liberal democratic system gives room for negotiation and compromising. It is a representative democracy that emphasises individual liberties, consent of governs and governing. Its representatives are elected in multi-party elections that should be free and fair. The power of representatives in a liberal democracy could only be curtailed by constitution or other measures like independent judiciary, bicameral legislature, etc. so as to balance representative power (Adedoyin, 2010).

Given the requisite analysis, the ultimate goal for Liberia post-conflict governance and peacebuilding is to transform its society and achieve the needed sustainable peace. That is, a transformation from the state of destructive conflict and violence to the one characterised by peaceful co-existence and constructive conflict management. The psychological and human needs relationships of the citizens require a better understanding, which should be well addressed if the aim and objectives of post-conflict peacebuilding in Liberia would be brought into fruition. The conditions for sustainable peace require strategies like true reconciliatory situation, quality service delivery, accountability, transparency, true democratic practice, protection of human rights and implementation of rule of law. The beliefs in human rights sometimes make the people in democratic system feel reluctant to go to war. It changes their orientation about the war. Democratic culture affects the way in which the leaders manage their conflicts, by taking the cognitive routines of the state's law abiding rather than group leaders, and tolerating the differences among individuals. The liberal leader faces institutional constraints that impede their capacity to mobilise the state's resources for war without the consent of the broad spectrum of interests. The credibility of the liberal states allows them to negotiate for sustainable peace. The participation of the public will send clear and reliable information regarding the intentions of the state actors. There may be mistrust and unwillingness to make concessions in a non-democratic society. In other words, Liberia post-conflict governance needs to entrench a true democratic system like representative/liberal democracy in the post-conflict era where the quality service delivery, accountability, transparency, rule of law, system improvement, true reconciliatory system and good governance would be a watchdog, if the aim on peacebuilding would be achieved.

Peacebuilding and Democratic System in the Post-conflict Liberia

After the first phase of Liberia incessant and protracted civil war in 1997, the democratic elections were held and Charles Taylor, the then warlord won the presidential election and became the 22nd President of the country. But his regime became a continuation of the civil war –through which a dominant rebel faction was against a nexus of old and new rebel/militia groups and restive civil society. The interlude of fragile peace was short-lived and ruined by despotism, brigandage and perpetuation of underground war economies. Taylor's misruled encourages another broke out of war as the two new major rebel movements called Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy in Liberia (LURD) and Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) re-grouping some rebel groups that previously fought with Charles Taylor (UNMIL, 2005). They resumed guerrilla warfare campaign that aims at ending Charles Taylor's regime. Similarly, the second phase of war (1999-2003) weakened the Charles Taylor's regime military and economic base. The regime suffered desertions from all its allies, political appointees and aides in the long-run. The biggest blow for Taylor's regime was the universal condemnation of its governance and methods that result in United Nations' sanctions and embargoes on exports and imports of Liberia. The imposition of travelling ban on Taylor, his family and key officials spells the end of the regime, because, it used the Liberian's diamond wealth to acquire weapons, and Taylor the leader was declared a war crime criminal by the United Nations (Adedoyin, 2010).

The situation was compounded by Taylor's war crime indictment by the Sierra Leone international special court.

On June 4, 2003, the international community demanded Taylor's resignation from the office and his warrant of arrest was put out by the International Criminal Court in Freetown. Taylor was charged with 11-count war crime charges on human rights offences and crimes against humanity, for which his arrest and trial were thus sought. This led to his ultimate resignation in August 2003 and a life in exile - Nigeria, in order to leave room for ECOWAS to achieve its needed peace programme in Liberia. However, his exile did not rule out another flare up of conflict, because, the fundamental issues on comprehensive peace agreement, economic and political exclusion of one ethnic group or the other from the affairs of the country have not been addressed. Nevertheless, Taylor's resignation paved way for progressive developments like fresh re-deployment of regional peacekeepers –ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) and the signing of comprehensive peace agreement in Accra, Ghana, by various local conflict stakeholders. The actors/stakeholders in Liberia incessant and protracted conflicts met in Accra, Ghana, from June- August 2003, under the auspices of President John Kufuor -the then Chairman of ECOWAS; in order to work out modalities for complete cessation of hostilities in Liberia and to seek for a way forward (Mc Intosh, 2006).

Article III (1) of the comprehensive agreement provides for a multi-national force –Interposition Force in Liberia, in order to secure ceasefire agreement and creates a zone of separation between the belligerent forces and ...provides a safe corridor for humanitarian assistance and free movement of persons. This prompted a new peacekeeping outfit called ECOWAS Mission in Liberia (ECOMIL) that was deployed to keep peace. The ECOMIL received a warmly welcome from all Liberians unlike ECOMOG in 1990 that received a hostile reception in Monrovia. The ECOMIL was later replaced by the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), which was established by the UN Security Council resolution 1509. The UNMIL came to coordinate the Liberia's post-conflict peacebuilding programme, and has largely been able to keep the peace based on this study. ECOMIL was subsequently absorbed by UNMIL (UNMIL, 2005). The key provisions in the Liberian Peace Agreement include – ceasefire and ceasefire monitoring; disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation and reintegration of ex-combatants; reform of security sector; promotion of human rights; setting up of a truth reconciliatory commission; addressing of humanitarian issues; governance issues; and post-conflict reconstruction. The provision was also made for a transition national government establishment which would oversee the affairs of the country until elections were held. This eventually laid framework for 2years National Transition Government of Liberia (NTGL) led by Charlee Bryant that oversaw the country's affairs till January 16, 2006, when the current President, Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf took the oath of office.

Meanwhile, the failures of Charles Taylor's regime on peacebuilding necessitated the emergence of Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf's regime on peacebuilding. In other words, the deployment of United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and the 2005 general elections led to the emergence of first Africa female president –President Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf. On Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf's regime, little could be said so far.

That was why; Attlee (1945-1951) - the then Labour Party's Prime Minister of Britain states this on post-conflict situation:

We do not envisage an end to this victory. We are determined not only to win the war but to win peace. Plans must be prepared in advance. Action must be taken now if the end of the war is not to find us unprepared... (Vijaya, 2006:15).

In view of this statement, the problems of Liberia post-conflict peacebuilding have not been really tackled by the Sir-leaf's regime since January 2006. The plans of her post-conflict governance have not been really fitted into quality service delivery, accountability, transparency and rule of law. The youth unemployment, mismanagement of country's resources and poor state of social amenities generate a lot of concerns. Unfortunately, these youths were the rebels who have seemingly regrettably become "some quite price commodities" for other trouble makers, even beyond the of shore West African sub-regions. That is, in order to end this unenviable reputation, Liberia needs to put its people back to the legitimate jobs and live normal life-styles.

For example, the Ds (Disarmament and Demobilisation) and seven Rs (Re-habilitation, Re-settlement, Re-integration, Repatriation, Reconciliation, Re-construction and Reform or Re-unification) implementations have not been properly carried out and indeed were very slow. Its target has not been met in the new democratic dispensation of Liberia. Experience over the last fifteen years of peace process in Liberia has underscored the likelihood that new post-conflict peacebuilding programme would lead to good governance. The two former warring factions that joined forces of convenience rejected the outcomes of elections that brought Sir-leaf into power. The finding shows that democratic process has not been transparent in Liberia. The electorates including the leaders of political parties did not fully understand the whole process. That was why; they ended up in law suit, mass confusion, mass demonstration and violence without amicably solution for over ten months. In Liberia post-conflict era, there are over eighteen political parties with possibly three others in making, and having in place development-oriented leadership team in the parties will be a miracle. The parties' proliferation, although, in the absence of any meaningful financial and human capabilities or well articulated philosophy, is often defended in the name of "identity" and "multi-party democracy". There were talks of fostering collaboration among a number of parties in recognition of the existing capacity deficiency, which has not even raised the public optimism barometer (Mcintosh, 2006).

In other words, the outcome had not been different from the past "patch-patch factional governments and the government of "mix-bags" will not in doubt lack necessary cohesiveness, team spirit and commitment as well as require skills. Before 2012 elections, there was no convinced indication that the voters were educated about the electoral processes. While knowing their right is taking a longer time than what it could be envisaged, the illiteracy and poverty rates are alarming and influencing the minds of the citizens. Compounding the problem is the distribution of people across a wide range of geographical space with many living in poor localities and reaching them becomes a serious problem during electoral campaign. The use of radio and television is still far from being feasible as the chance of restoring light is not certain (Mc Intosh, 2006)".

However, democratic governance is an institutional capability of public organisations of providing services demanded by the citizens or representatives of a country in an effective, transparent, impartial and accountable manner, which is subject to resource constraints (World bank, 2000) The conspicuous absence of popular participation and official accountability in governance result in widespread of social injustice and gross of inequalities in Liberia, and thus breed civil crisis.

In actual fact, poor governance is inability or unwillingness to apply public resources effectively to generate society or public goods. The post-conflict democratic governance in Liberia is seemingly institutionalised the criminalisation and privatisation of the country's resources. They chose to govern in the same manner that created schism initially. Liberia crisis under Charles Taylor degenerated into nothing than a struggle to control and appropriate national resources for a private use and benefit. In other words, greed became the primary motivation in his regime. Taylor exclusively preserves good life for himself, family and cronies. All these were happening in the absence of electricity, water, health and other social services. Taylor failed because his regime excluded other ethnic groups from the affairs of the country. The new lease of life which Liberians were anticipated has not been materialised, as Taylor and Sir-leaf, in whom they placed much expectation on are much more interested in entrenching themselves in power (Adedoyin, 2010). One of the main challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding is how to channel the youth energy and creativity toward a constructive agenda. The coalition of their experiences suggests the necessity for a coherent national strategy that could speak to their collective interest as a group. A post-conflict reconstruction that addresses the needs of the youth in general with the inbuilt sensitivity to their differences is more likely to succeed than those that were designed for a particular group of ex-combatants.

In other words, the studying of archetypical governance in post-conflict Liberia is revealing corruption as most dangerous and deadly problem that undermines the sphere of governance in Liberia. It has been sapping the peace and development needed in Liberia. The public infrastructures are either decayed or new ones are yet to be built, because, the resources that are meant for these have diverted to the private ends by leaders. The decisions on public expenditures are tilted toward unproductive investments like luxuries of life for those in governance or white elephant construction projects that deliver large kickbacks to those who awarded the contracts. "The building of transformational democracy is gradually falling in Liberia. For example, from the outset of democratic process that brought President Ellen Johnson Sir-leaf to power in 2006 and her subsequent election in 2012, it is apparent that Liberia is heading for the same unceasing fail paths that contributed to the 14 years devastated civil war. The much anticipated democratisation effort is starting on a wrong note. It was a simple false start that reinforces Liberia's aged fixation, which poignantly reveals Liberians guilelessly. The current professed nascent democracy is deplorably floundering because its institutional reformation was poorly carried out. Some scholars of democracy have hitherto maintained that democratisation could be eventually amount to a "vain and impossible" undertaken, if a functional democratic culture was not established from the outset of any democratisation process.

Thus, the actors who constitute political spheres of democratisation process should be willingly embrace and submit to the norms of democratic institutions and be accountable to the people (Sunwabe, 2012:1)".

In true democratisation process, representative institutions usually grow out of particular challenges, problems, crises, issues of social injustice and conflicts. This malady, if unresolved would plague its society for a long period of time, before it eventually results into full flesh brutality. In the African context, the challenges are habitually manifesting in the domain of wars, violent demonstrations and spontaneous ethnic tensions. The democratic institutions evolve to accommodate societal challenges. It equally embraces and incorporates opinions and views of the citizenry. Democratisation involves a deeper participation of governs, "but in Liberia, arguments could be sustained to the extent that what is existing under the President Johnson Sirleaf could not only remotely resemble or represents institutional democracy; it is awful and execrable "pseudo democracy" that marks with the old sordid African elites' mentality. From the very outset of post-conflict Liberia, the institutional transformation that was supposed to have been targeted on three central institutional issues that include judiciary, public opinion and educational system has not been carried out. Specifically, the roles of judicial system in democratisation process suppose to have been paramount, because, democratisation process involves different interest clashes that require judicial practices (Sunwabe, 2012:2-3)".

Omeje (2009) the role of judiciary system is very crucial and cannot be negotiated in the post-conflict era. But in Liberia, the justice is yet to be given much priority, and power has not been allowed to shift to the majority choices. Instead, the minority, who have been ruling and dominating the affairs of the country enjoy the rarely come-by luxuries of life. The political, economic and social corruption threatens and disrupts democratisation process, and the newly evolves and unpredictable judicial institution that was supposed to act as buffer mechanism of justice fails to meet up with the people's expectation. Therefore, a reform of judicial institutional that can promptly manage disputes and arrest tenuous situation before it is degenerated into a full scale schism needs to be put in place. Apart from functions, a developed and functional judicial institution that tends to control a corrosive and inevitable competition is needed. In Liberia, the political competition is routinely articulated through a blatant appeal for virulent ethnic rhetoric. The ethnic groups are routinely exploited by the charlatans who have resolved to solidify their grips of state power.

Apparently, when a judiciary is functioning well, it would have ability to cement critical needs links between the citizenry and government, and thereby expose and limit corrosive and exploitative impacts of political crooks. But without a strong and predictable judicial institution, democracy will exist nominally. Political competition would bring about or reinforce civil strife (Akindele, 2003). The government legitimacy cannot be derived from the practices that grotesquely dysfunctional and fundamentally flaws. The post-conflict governance in Liberia typifies this description. That is, there was no impartial judicial system in pre-civil war and also not existing under the first African female president. The salient point here is that Liberia needs to develop a functional judicial system that can help to develop and sustain democracy. In other words, to be effective, efficient and held in high esteems, Liberian judicial

system needs to strive for impartial judicial practices in interpretation and implementation of law. Its judicial system needs to help to consolidate democratic gains. The application of Liberia law reflects unwilling, corrupt and induce judicial practices. Cases involve corruption and other related crime acts are seldom prosecuted on paper and not in reality.

For example, "in 2009, a case of corruption was involved one of the Liberia former finance minister - Augustine Kpehe Ngafuan, and President Johnson Sirleaf was swiftly mount a robust but yet feeble defence for the minister. The President took to the airwaves to defend the accused former finance minister. President Sirleaf asserts that she can put "her neck on a shopping board" in the defence of the former minister, because, the former finance minister was not a corrupt person. The President went as far as accusing her then auditor general -John Morlu, for filing a politically motivated corrupt report against the former minister. But, recently, the evidence of the minister corrupt practices emerged from a post financial report stating that the former minister was corrupt while in office. Notably, in a true democratic setting, the investigation and prosecution of the corrupt practices are not the job of the presidency; but rather, the duty of an impartial judicial system that can initiate, investigate and act on the accusation of corrupt practices against the political office holders. In the case of Liberia, President Sirleaf hurriedly defend her former finance minister by concerted with ministry of justice to initiate an independent inquiry on the report that implicates her former finance minister by given the notion that the judicial system is an extension of Liberian presidency. In other words, the Liberian judicial system is disgustingly corrupt, incompetent and lacks capacity to prudently apply the laws of the nation without the interference of presidency. It has failed to hold dominant political elites accountable for their transgressions against the laws of the land. The judicial practices in Liberia are all about highest bidders. The country's judges are routinely and openly solicited for bribes in an exchange for judicial leniency and favouritism. The only judicial competition that takes place in Liberia is all about who gets the bigger share of the judicial corrupt pies, the lawyers and jurors likewise fight for their own shares to the end.

Obviously, any judicial system that does not has capacity or ability to be impartially needs to be dismissed and resented by the citizenry. For instances, the corrupt and incomplete "institutional arrangements" like Liberian institution would find it difficult to improve on justice. The sustained corrupt practices and ruinous acts of bribery impeded the enforcement and prestige of judicial system. The international aid, budgetary allocations and other targeted reforms become a mere publicity stunts (Sunwabe, 2012:4)". That was why, the Department of State in United States, Amnesty International, Judicial Watch and United Nations recently described Liberian judicial system as the "most corrupt" institution. The Liberia's chief justice -Johnny Lewis also tends to agree with the international assessment of his country judicial system. Nevertheless, he did not accept the responsibility of the corrupt practices alleged against him. The chief justice denounced and derided the clerks of the courts as primary culprits of the corrupt practices. Whenever citizens demanded for justice, it is the same judicial system that the President Johnson Sirleaf refers them to in order to seek redress

In other words, the actions and policies of the current government in Liberia concert with its abysmal failure to embark on serious institutional reforms, which have despondently reversed the marginal efforts made by the international community. Her regime has not taken the case of rule of law, accountability and justice very serious. The post-conflict governance in Liberia operates with the high level of insincerity and insensitivity. The governmental bribes, collections of kickbacks, fraudulent contracts and mortgaging of national mineral resources or assets under the disguise of job creation are prevalent. The judicial system that is pivotal of promoting democracy and sustaining peace is uncorrupted, and whenever a justice is denied, a conflicting situation may not be farfetched. Its consequences would be inevitable. In Liberia, until when the justice is prevailed, there would not be sustainable peace and stability. There is need for neutral crimes court that can try all the parties that involved in war crimes and guilty.

Other post-conflict governance problems are non-implementation of the Truth Reconciliatory Committee's reports, trafficking of small arms, light weapons, drugs and human beings, especially the women and children; roaming mercenary militias of the ex-combatants and child soldiers; international migration associated with the refugees; international terrorism and HIV/AIDS infection. The country also lacks true democratic system of governance where the interest of all ethnic groups could be protected. Its legislative and judicial systems are at the mercy of the president; that is, president still retained some reserves power. The creation and strengthening of institutional capacities of state to provide or facilitate basic social services delivery to majority have not been properly done. The problems associated with the weak governance are identified as issues of major concern by the interlocutors throughout the country... Little progress has been made to combat corrupt practices, building of institutional capacity, promotion of inclusive political processes and popular participation, as well as decentralisation and strengthening of judiciary system, rule of law and respect for human rights.

In the context of rotten governance in Liberia, "individuals seek government positions in order to collect rents and accumulate personal wealth by converting public resources into their private goods. They have less commitment to the public goods and communities' confidence building as well as seeking immediate governmental jobs and favours in zero-sum struggle for a stagnant and potentially fleeting stock of resources. Thus, there is no respect for law and order. Government decisions and transactions are deliberately opaque in order to hide their corrupt nature and evade embarrassing disclosures. Information about how government works and how contracts are awarded is simply unavailable. Exposure of corrupt deals typically brings little than embarrassment, because, the rule of law does not function to constrain or punish the wrong behaviour of the public officials (Diamond, 2004). Attitudes of the judges and lawyers to deny weak and poor citizens justice for a reward have not been changed in any significant way. Few courts are now opened in various counties to administer justice, but incapacitated in terms of personnel, equipment, and logistics to do the jobs. Nothing could be said on truth reconciliatory commission's (TRC) activities, because, the post-conflict governance has failed to recognised and implement its report due to President and other government officers' indictment by the report.

Power is heavily centralised, and institutions of scrutiny and accountability function only on paper, or episodically, to punish the more marginal miscreants or the rivals of the powerful stakeholders. It lacks a sense of public purpose, discipline, and esprit de corps, the civil service, police, customs and other public institutions function poorly and corruptly (Diamond, 2004:224-225)".

In post-conflict Liberia, the level of poverty, illiteracy, damage done to the infrastructure, economy underdevelopment and very high youths' unemployment among other things, make post-conflict governance difficult. The ill-defined process of Disarmament Demobilisation Rehabilitation Reintegration (DDRR) programme and the continuing disagreement among the stakeholders do encourage the possibility of future eruption of armed hostilities if the conditions are further exacerbated by the economic hardship. The social problems in terms of ex-combatants, internally displaced persons, and refugees that the crises created put a lot of pressure on Sir-leaf's regime. General lack of commitment to the peacebuilding activities on the part of the national actors makes the present precarious situations possible. What else could one have expected? When, most of the national actors on ground were the same actors that partook in painful vicious activities. There is no major conflict per se but the potential for one still hangs over the country. It seems the country is sitting on a time bomb. A sizable number of internally displaced persons were still living in the dilapidated building (Mc Intosh, 2006:9).

On economy, nothing is so visibly happening. The price of commodities is outrageous despite the high rates of unemployment and lower wages. Corruption is everywhere and very little is done to ensure transparency, accountability and efficiency in management. Governance is conducted as usual, and resistance to change has let the international community seemingly eased their attention away from Liberian post-conflict recovery and reconstruction. The law and order has not been fully established. The post-conflict police training ended and left numbers of the officers trained far below the require numbers to secure peace and order. They were ill-equipped. Emphasis on security coverage has been on traditional security than human security; which is even limited to Monrovia and few Counties' capitals. The reduction of UNMIL soldiers in Liberia made people provide for their own security. Several cases of tensions' reports were received by the national government in Monrovia, but something positive is yet to be done on it. This shows that the unfulfilled human security needs such as food, safe drinking water, primary health care; housing, basic education and employment opportunities constitute the primary components of threats to the peace and security in Liberia. The basic elements of human security also include global human rights agenda. Indeed, till now, the Liberian post-conflict peacebuilding is still leaving much to be desired for the international community, and if care is not taken, its present situation may still lead to the previous precarious situation.

Recommendation

The following steps are suggested for the true democratic governance and peacebuilding in post-conflict Liberia, which is hoped, would minimise its political crisis. This is because to facilitate none infringement of citizens' political freedom, democratic and peacebuilding processes need to involve people of high integrity and reputation.

People who have never been directly or indirectly involved in questionable characters. In other words, the good democratic governance in post-conflict Liberia is regarded as a mandatory and a pre-requisite for sustainable peace and development. Hence, the following recommendations were proffered: a, true reconciliatory programme implementation; b, reconstruction, re-integration and re-settlement processes; c, rule of law and justice; d, job opportunity and poverty alleviation programme; e, stringent anti-corrupt practices crusade; f, human security and infrastructural facilities; g, civic education; h, transparency and general accountability; i, public awareness and participatory system; j, gender sensitivity and women empowerment; k, true nationalist leaders; and l, good democratic governance

Conclusion

From the foregoing account, it is evident that Liberia democratic governance and post-conflict peacebuilding are yet to raise the hope of average Liberians. The activities of political players leave much to be desired. In these circumstances, there is need for national reorientation for both the political class and governs to understand that life is not all about politics with bitterness. The post-conflict activities need to be well focused on peacebuilding and democratic culture/governance in Liberia.

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