

CHAPTER 4 DIAMONDS

"I am scared, but the government doesn't care. They only care about their own money."

-Koidu resident living in an area to be evacuated
for kimberlite blasting

"What they are interested in is these diamonds. When there is war, these things are available. So these people, other companies, may incite violence so they can get access. Conflict between mining companies could cause another war because Koidu Holdings is acting to restrict other investment."

-NGO worker, Kono District

"There has been a total of 21 million dollars of investment here since 1997. We employ over five hundred people at an average salary 300 per cent higher than the industry standard in Sierra Leone. Estimating ten people per household, we support at least 5,000 people in this region. Local women cater for the mine, and we use local labour on civil projects. The expectations of people in Kono are above what we can provide; we are a young mine. But we manage it on a daily basis and we've come a long way since day one."

-Representative of Koidu Holdings, Ltd.

From Blood to Development

In 2000, Partnership Africa Canada published a report called "The Heart of the Matter" alleging that diamonds were central to the civil war in Sierra Leone and that "a highly criminalised war economy had developed a momentum of its own."⁴⁴ In 2002 Greg Campbell published his book, *Blood Diamonds*, which sought to trace illegal diamond trading networks from the alluvial pits of Kono to the dealers in Monrovia, al Qaeda operatives in Afghanistan, and all the way to De Beers in London. The term "blood diamonds" has become part of the popular lexicon, leading to radical shifts in the oversight of diamond sales and marketing in the last five years. The

Sierra Leone Diamond Export Data											
2002 Export Data				2003 Export Data				2004 Export Data			
Month Amount	Export (USD)	Carats	Price/Carat (USD)	Month Amount	Export (USD)	Carats	Price/Carat (USD)	Month Amount	Export (USD)	Carats	Price/Carat (USD)
Jan/02	1,436,570	20,891	68.77	Jan/03	4,612,174	37,853	121.84	Jan/04	6,732,551	55,347	121.64
Feb/02	1,782,849	16,989	104.94	Feb/03	7,087,005	40,612	174.51	Feb/04	9,956,715	67,192	148.18
Mar/02	1,590,820	13,281	119.78	Mar/03	4,827,357	29,566	163.27	Mar/04	12,186,650	61,730	197.41
Apr/02	3,772,768	25,762	146.45	Apr/03	7,363,137	45,259	162.69	Apr/04	12,219,747	72,589	168.34
May/02	3,241,944	29,781	108.86	May/03	5,526,897	41,334	133.71	May/04	9,824,063	49,712	197.61
June/02	4,196,749	29,660	141.49	June/03	7,673,862	56,612	135.55	June/04	17,371,974	89,560	193.97
July/02	4,920,889	37,480	131.29	July/03	5,417,475	37,191	145.67	July/04	12,925,172	59,194	218.35
Aug/02	4,311,833	32,250	133.70	Aug/03	7,527,192	49,182	153.05	Aug/04	9,689,861	50,172	193.13
Sept/02	5,265,133	49,460	106.45	Sept/03	6,828,932	50,068	136.39	Sept/04	9,897,734	51,781	191.14
Oct/02	3,770,189	29,450	128.02	Oct/03	6,789,034	44,032	154.18	Oct/04	9,588,852	46,014	208.38
Nov/02	3,753,079	33,687	111.41	Nov/03	5,868,077	35,121	167.08	Nov/04	9,215,901	51,310	179.61
Dec/02	3,689,308	33,169	111.23	Dec/03	6,465,402	39,903	162.03	Dec/04	7,052,411	37,152	189.82
Total	41,732,130	351,859	118.60	Total	75,969,751	506,723	149.92	Total	126,652,634	691,757	183.09
Value to DACDF (USD)	312,991			Value to DACDF (USD)	521,409			Value to DACDF		N/A	

Source: Diamond Industry Annual Review, Sierra Leone 2004. The Diamonds and Human Security Project

new catch-phrase is “Development Diamonds,” referring to an ideal industry that is transparent and productive, putting money back into communities where mineral wealth originates. Illegal mining, smuggling, child labour, environmental damage, and corruption still plague the diamond industry in Sierra Leone, but there is at least rhetorical progress in acknowledging that communities need to benefit from mining.

The Kimberley Process Certification Scheme (KPCS), initiated in May 2000 by the South African government and coming into international effect on 1 January 2003, has provided a framework to halt the flow of conflict diamonds. More than fifty diamond producing, trading and polishing countries are members. Member countries agree to certify that rough diamonds being exported are conflict-free, and to refuse importation without a certificate. Sierra Leone is beginning to see an increase in export data as more diamonds enter the legal system rather than being smuggled across the border to be sold in Guinea or Liberia. In 2001, the government implemented the Diamond Area Community Development Fund (DACDF) to put export revenue back into the community and give locals a bigger stake in the legal diamond trade. In some areas this led to reported corruption by chiefs who syphoned the money into their own pockets instead of implementing development projects. Nevertheless, the idea is a step in the right direction.

Private Security: A New Old Threat

Now that the civil war in Sierra Leone is over, the dynamics of diamonds in relation to peace and conflict has changed dramatically. With disarmament and community arms collection having operated relatively successfully throughout the country, the new threat to communities and to the nation is no longer diamonds illegally mined by rebels, but rather a familiar force in new guise; former mercenaries who manage security for multinational mining investments. With the advent of peace, millions of dollars of investment has poured into re-opening old mining areas and exploring new ones. Communities, who have been encouraged to give up their weapons for an arms-free Sierra Leone, are faced with security forces, many of whom played a role in the civil war, armed and patrolling around mining areas.

Conflicts over land, evacuation and resettlement for kimberlite blasting, and corporate policies have led to community protests and sometimes harsh security responses. The government has come down unequivocally on the side of the companies, citing the obvious need for investment in the country. As the government is a stakeholder in mining operations (taking up to forty

per cent of profits in tax and fees), communities feel they have no fair forum to redress grievances. In the absence of a mediating presence, a nascent arms race is evolving between private security companies and communities who feel insecure in the absence of government advocacy on their behalf. The two case studies in this chapter profile how these dynamics threaten the long-term peace in Sierra Leone.

Koidu Holdings

In 1995, Valentine Strasser invited the South African private security force, Executive Outcomes (EO), to help fight off a rebel advancement towards Freetown. The Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebels were less than 20 miles from the capital, although their hold on the rest of the country outside of the main diamond mining areas was intermittent. Executive Outcomes was run by Eeben Barlow, formerly of the 32nd Battalion of the South African Special Forces, which was active in South Africa's destabilisation policy against its neighbours in the 1980s. Barlow left EO in 1997 but maintained close links with Sierra Leone, Sandline International, and DiamondWorks, holding shares in the latter. Executive Outcome's initial operation involved defending Freetown in collaboration with Nigerian and Ghanaian troops. In May 1995 this successful operation led to an RUF retreat. Despite the victory, Executive Outcome's operations in Sierra Leone were highly controversial and many Sierra Leoneans still harbour resentment for "the South Africans" who gained mining concessions in exchange for their military services.

In December 1995, EO expanded their operations into rural Sierra Leone, re-taking the diamond mining areas by the end of 1995 and gaining a government concession in Kono under the name Branch Energy. They provided the security enabling internal refugees to return home and started to co-operate with the Kamajors, whom they helped to become a powerful fighting and political force through provision of training and logistical support for the militia under the command of Sam Hinga Norman. In early January 1996, EO retook the Sierra Rutile mine, although the plant was looted by an Sierra Leone Army (SLA) contingent led by Johnny Paul Koroma.

Branch Energy began initial work on the mine in Koidu, Kono in 1996. During the coup in 1997, when Kabbah fled to Guinea and Koroma took power, expatriates were evacuated from the mine but a small security team stayed behind. There were 84 armed local guards and 15 armed expatriates; the 1995 lease had stipulated that the mine could have an armed security force. That team spent eight months enduring RUF control and looking after



The remains of the burned earth-moving equipment belonging to Branch Energy from their mid-1990's activities are still at the original site, now known as Koidu Holdings Limited.

what assets they could. They finally escaped from their 'house arrest' and when they left, the machines were burned, the plant was destroyed, and according to current company representatives, Branch Energy lost fifteen million dollars of its investment.

In 2002 when the SLPP was re-elected, DiamondWorks (the parent company of Branch Energy) decided to look at re-investing. After an initial assessment, they formed a joint venture with the Steinmetz Diamond Group, and the joint venture became Koidu Holdings in January 2004. Operations began before then, on 1 March 2003, with the de-watering of the kimberlite body. The mine began producing in mid-November 2003. USD 21 million in new investments have gone into Koidu Holdings, excluding the 1997 loss. In addition to its two kimberlite mines in Koidu, Koidu Holdings has three other exploration properties, and in June 2004 was awarded a fourth 89 square kilometre property at Tongo Field in an open tender.

Koidu Holdings trains, equips, and maintains a security force according to their original government lease, but the laws against private gun ownership now "make this difficult" according to company representatives.⁴⁵ They struck

a compromise; the government now provides 23 armed Sierra Leone Police to guard mining interests. This is a deterrent and immediate reaction force in case of emergency. One additional contingent with an armed response vehicle is on call from Tankoro Police Station, in addition to 24 officers from the Public Support Unit. The private security team (which is unarmed according to the law) works closely with the police, patrolling with them. A different private security company, Gray Security (parent company: Gray4 Securicor), does access and daily loss control. Other mining companies are supposedly negotiating similar deals with the SLP in co-ordination with their own unarmed teams. The agreement extends to Freetown, where exporting takes place.

The Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) and its Campaign for Just Mining are fighting the presence of Koidu Holdings in Kono, citing unjust practices, relocation (or lack thereof) of people living in areas affected by kimberlite blasting, and inadequate implementation of the Environmental Impact Assessment. The NMJD's National Coordinator in Freetown wrote the following summary of events in 2004 as part of a media packet distributed to interested parties.

We Need Protection! "Democracy" in Sierra Leone and "Kimberlite Diamond Mining" are Two Poles Apart

It's been a difficult time for us here. The Kimberlite Mining Project of the South African and Canadian backed Koidu Holdings (S.A.) Limited (KHL) is here to tear our country apart, devastate our environment, set us (authorities and civil society) at loggerheads, undermine community livelihoods and leave us in abject poverty and disarray.

KHL has succeeded in gaining the total support of our political leadership, compromised our local leaders (Paramount Chiefs) and put us on the defensive. At the moment, we are not allowed to air any show in the only television station (SLBS-TV) and all government owned radio stations in the country or anything that has to do with our campaign, "we have been sternly warned" one of the SLBS workers complained. Prior to this, a few months ago two SLBS reporters were unceremoniously suspended indefinitely for interviewing one of the Campaigners as we were about to undertake an activity in Kono, the diamond district where the Kimberlite mining is taking place.

A few weeks ago, a "27 Minutes" independent documentary show on diamond mining in Kono that featured the kimberlite mining was

stopped halfway and never allowed again to be showed on SLBS-TV. "I enquired and was told that the Director General instructed the Station Manager to stop it immediately until it is previewed again. However, since then they have refused to allow it to be played," reported the author.

A little over a week ago, I was told in no uncertain terms by the Vice President in his office how desperate the government is to do all that is possible to make sure KHL stays and continues to operate the way they are doing. He spent three quarters of the one hour forty-five minutes meeting to intimidate me, impress upon me the government's strong disapproval of our present position on KHL operations and their desire to allow nothing that will stand in the way of KHL to the extent that he even said that we need not compare our standards with that of other mining nations. "We need to lower our standards so that we can attract investors in the mining sector," he warned....

In a situation like this we would like to intensify the campaign, build up more support base, strengthen the networks and get more engaged at various levels across the country with a lot of publicity by both print and electronic means. We also need letters sent to various people especially President Kabba, Vice President Solomon Berewa, Mines and Miners Minister Swaray Deen, the World Bank Country Manager, UNDP country Representative, British High Commissioner, American Ambassador, UNAMSIL Head of Mission (SRSG) and The Speaker of Parliament as well as the Attorney General and Minister of Justice.

-Abu Brima, National Coordinator, NMJD

The main point of contention over Koidu Holdings is the relocation of a specific community to a new housing area safe from the blasting process. The community has complained that some new houses, which have been built, are below standard, and have refused to relocate. The company acknowledges that Phase I of the relocation should have been completed in December 2004 but fell far behind schedule, but qualified their own role in the delay by pointing out that community and civil society representatives are refusing to cooperate in the process. A KHL representative said, "The expectations of people in Kono are above what we can provide. They approve one house design, and then when we build it they don't like it and we have to go back to the drawing board."⁴⁶ The Diamond Industry Annual Review, a newsletter of Partnership Africa Canada and NMJD, reported recently that Koidu Holdings, knowing the status of the concession, did not



One of the homes near the Koidu Holdings blast site in Tankoro. Residents are given notice before blasting, which occurs once or twice a week.

budget for a big relocation, and because of this only 15 houses had been built by mid-2004, leading to community outrage.

In the most interesting twist during 2004, NMJD wrote a letter to World Bank President James Wolfensohn claiming that KHL did not have adequate public consultation on its Environmental Impact Assessment. The World Bank Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), which is responsible for granting insurance to investors in developing countries, refused to grant political risk insurance to the Koidu Kimberlite Project, ostensibly because of the political climate of agitation promoted and sustained by the Campaign for Just Mining. This development concerned the government; afraid of losing investment, it developed a public relations campaign in support of the company. The company's agreement with the government stipulates that up to 40 per cent of Koidu Holdings profits ultimately go to the state. This breaks down into corporation tax (USD 200,000 per year), annual surface rent of USD 25 per acre, and royalties totalling five per cent of diamond sales and four per cent of precious metal sales. With this much money in play, the real questions about how it is eventually spent have only just begun.

A visit to the relocation site revealed very few houses, well-spaced apart, built with cinderblock and tin roofs. There were two distinct designs, one



A community leader and NGO worker look at one of the new houses, as yet uninhabited, at the relocation site.

with a back door and porch that the community members preferred and one without, which had been discontinued after only a few were completed. Several families appeared to be living in some of the houses, which were serviced by a freshwater well and separate latrine facilities. This new but incomplete “neighbourhood” looked better-appointed than some of the dilapidated homes occupied near the blast site, many of which were built illegally when local residents “no doubt sensed a potential compensation scheme.”⁴⁷ Nonetheless, the community does deserve the more open forum it has requested in which to discuss, with the government’s support, its needs and expectations for relocation.

With the national media, government, company executives, and civil society equally engaged in a battle of words, propaganda, and activism towards various ends, the bottom line appears to be a combination of factors fuelling the conflict.

The company, rather than the unmitigated force of evil portrayed by the campaign, is out of touch with the community and has botched its few attempts at public relations by using intimidating language and employing the Vice President to quell protest. The more the government and the company try to silence protest, the more it fans the flames of radical conspiracies and spurs

a perceived need for civil action. This may be the first test of a new democracy; allowing dissent in open forums and engaging in negotiation rather than intimidation. While the battle remains one of words for the moment, the situation at Sierra Rutile (discussed below) demonstrates that it may not remain that way. Communities who feel vulnerable and at-risk after disarmament have a strong incentive to retain weapons or acquire new ones “just in case.”

Koidu Holdings’ relationship with the Sierra Leone Police is possibly the one area that they have not been assailed for in the media. Operating in a security environment where public security forces are understaffed and under funded and there are tens of millions of dollars in investment at stake is a challenge. ‘Contracting’ the Sierra Leone Police to do the armed security work in a country where there is no private legal gun ownership seems like the only legal way to look after corporate interests while obeying the law. However, it does present a clear conflict of interest for the SLP. The SLP, vested with power of arrest, seizure, and detention, are sworn to use their powers to protect and serve communities. When protests against the mine start to get loud, the police are under pressure to remove protesters for the convenience of mine management, and have sometimes jailed non-violent advocates for anti-mine campaigns without justifiable grounds.⁴⁸

Sierra Rutile

Sierra Leone has one of the world’s largest deposits of rutile, a titanium ore used as paint pigment and welding rod coatings. Sierra Rutile Limited, owned by a consortium of US and European investors and managed by South Africans (many of them former mercenaries), began commercial mining operations near Bonthe in early 1979. Sierra Rutile was then the largest non-petroleum U.S. investment in West Africa. The export of 88,000 tons realised USD 75 million for the country in 1990. The company and the government of Sierra Leone concluded a new agreement on the terms of the company’s concession in Sierra Leone in 1990. Rutile and bauxite mining operations were suspended when rebels invaded the mining sites in 1995. In 2003 OPIC agreed to a USD 25 million guarantee to Sierra Rutile to assist with the re-start of operations.⁴⁹

The Sierra Rutile Agreement (Ratification) Act of 2002 “confirms an agreement made for an on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone of the one part and by Sierra Rutile Limited of the other part.”⁵⁰ Number 11.6q, the sub-heading Security under “General Provisions,” reads as follows:

(q) SECURITY

- (1) The Government and the Company recognise that an effective security regime is important to ensure the safety of the Company's assets and personnel.
- (2) In order to achieve an effective security regime, the Company may create and maintain a security force to provide a deterrent, defence and reaction capability to incidents.
- (3) The Company may import such arms and ammunition that are appropriate to such a security force subject only to the prior approval of the Government and the security force may carry and use such arms and ammunition for the purpose of carrying out its functions.

This article permits *carte blanche* a private company to arm and operate its own private militia outside the laws applicable to those living in the community where the company operates. Reports of armed private 'soldiers' abusing the authority of their guns by beating farmers, raping and harassing women, and generally choosing force over communication or negotiation with local residents have led to a three-way standoff between Sierra Rutile, the government, and community members in Moyamba. Unlike the situation in Koidu, open threats of re-armament from a community organiser leave the possibility open that hostilities could escalate into an armed conflict.

Interview with Leslie Mboka, Executive Director, Community Advocacy and Development Project (CADEP), Bonthe, Sierra Leone. 9 November 2004

One contentious issue where we want the government to intervene, is Sierra Rutile having its own private army. Sierra Leone is a country emerging from war. We think the government should solely be responsible for security matter, not leaving it in the hands of private business people and multi-national corporations. These guys are not accountable to the communities, not even to government. They take orders from their corporate managers. They will tell them, "Go and attack such and such a community," and they will go. They follow directives. They do a lot of things: beating women, farmers, and that kind of thing. We want the government to make sure these people are disarmed.

As I speak to you, they have not done anything about it. The guys are still armed, with AK-47s, with G3s, with all these rifles. As a way of

intimidating and denying communities from agitating for what they really want.

Q: How do you respond to the view that the SLP and security forces are stretched too thin, that they don't have the capacity to take care of the huge investments of private companies?

That is absolute nonsense. There is already government presence in that place. They have armed security. They have special security. They are getting complaints from even the government security that these guys are marginalizing them. They don't confer with them. There is a lot of tension between government forces and the private army. This is a security risk, so the idea that there is no capacity in that particular place is a lie. The government is refusing to disarm these people.

Q: Are they importing their own arms and ammunition according to your sources?

The Sierra Rutile agreement of 2002 gave that company the right to import its own arms and ammunition, and to maintain its own private armed security, and we believe that is wrong. Sierra Rutile are bringing items at will. They don't even allow advocacy groups because they don't want people to report on their activity. But what we are sure of is that they are importing arms and ammunition. They have a whole corporate arsenal at my site. I'm telling you. It is very distressing. The communities are lobbying the government, they have raised protest, but the government is doing nothing about it. And it is for the government to disarm that corporate entity. Otherwise, we will forcefully disarm them or we will find a way to re-arm ourselves. Because we have been subjected to a lot of humiliation. They enter our house and they start beating women.

Q: What about avenues of justice that are supposed to be there to address these issues, like reporting to the police or going to court?

Recently, one of the mercenaries was briefly detained and the matter is now in court. They went to a lady and they disgraced her, grabbed her. The police arrested them. I saw one of the guys in town, and I don't know what the outcome is. Pretty soon, they will probably throw the matter out of court, and we have nowhere to seek redress for such issues.

Q: If you took the route of arming yourselves, do you feel that there is an easy supply available?

Well, it's not going to be an easy thing. From what we know, they will come with their big guns and kill all of us. We have told the government, disarm these people. They have refused. If they don't do that, we have to do something about it. The communities will take action. Collective action will be taken to reverse the trend.

Q: How long are you willing to wait and try to negotiate?

We are trying to dialogue with the government on everything from land to guns. One of the issues we start with them is the issue of Rutile still bearing arms in a post-conflict situation. We will take a collective community decision.

Q: Are there still guns in your area other than the ones owned and used by the private security company on the mine?

Yes, yes of course. AK-47s, G3s, that kind of thing. We have these local rifles for bush meat and that kind of thing. Community members gave some of their arms, so we are outgunned by the private company. There is nowhere in this country that you are going to buy a gun just like that, not after disarmament. That is why we are concerned.

Q: You were a facilitator for the DDR process. How successful was it?

My personal opinion is that it cannot be successful because we have people who are non-government security bearing arms. This is ridiculous. Government must get serious about this issue. We are resisting what we call corporate re-colonisation. We have taken it for so long. Sierra Rutile, those guns were only there because of the war, to secure their personnel and assets. Now the war is over, they don't need them anymore. They need to disarm like everybody else. Government, they talk about investment and that kind of thing. But you cannot make the communities as sacrificial lambs. The farmers can survive without the companies; they don't want to be subjected to that kind of intimidation. People are still traumatised from the war situation. People are still traumatised. They need some solace, some comfort. People are tired of seeing guns. You must see how serious the situation is. These people are all over the place. They dress in full military gear. Those uniforms were impounded, but they lobbied the government and the government said okay, give it to them. That is the only private security in this country using military outfits. We don't understand.

Q: Do you know who is responsible for training and managing the security force?

They are South Africans, the Executive Outcomes. Sometimes we call them Gray Security, sometimes Southern Cross, but they are all still the same people from Executive Outcomes. They are still around. And these guys are just waiting for instructions from their bosses. These communities will resist, even if it means fighting.

Q: Is there any way for peaceful co-existence between the mining company and the community?

Yes, but they are merely a guest. They are coming here according to their mandate. They should respect the customs, the traditions, of the host communities. And they are not doing that.

Q: If relationships were built in a more respectful way, this would not be an opposition to mining all together, right?

These guys need to live up to corporate responsibilities. Mining is okay, but not like this.

Q: Koidu Holdings has private security, but those guys are unarmed and they are working with SLP. SLP forwards some personnel to patrol the mining area, and they are armed if necessary, but they patrol with one member per group of an unarmed security force. Do you believe that that is a conflict of interest as well, or is it a better option for Sierra Rutile?

That is a better option. There is no way the government should allow for the creation of a private army.

Q: If the same people who are there now disarmed and worked with the SLP, would that be acceptable?

That would be completely acceptable. The corporate tactics of intimidation, beating community farmers, evicting farmers from their land, we don't like that. They can't do those things if they don't have their own private armed force. But because they have their private army, they do all of those things, and there is nowhere for us to seek redress. So we are reduced to thinking about re-arming ourselves. The communities are strongly against Sierra Rutile bearing its own arms. What emerged from the recent workshop was that they want to see

these people completely disarmed. There should be no firearm in that place. Government should be in total control of national security. There should be no room for any private army.

Q: Are you still negotiating with the government? Are you optimistic?

We are still negotiating. But preparations continue in case it does not work.

Q: There is no firearms law on the books right now that allows private gun ownership. If they created such a law for licensing firearms and allowed private security companies to license those weapons through a legal system, would you still be opposed to the private security at Sierra Rutile carrying weapons if it was done in a legal, more transparent way?

We would still be opposed to that. The reason is simple. We are emerging from a war situation. We don't want the proliferation of small arms. With guns, we cannot see the stability of this country. It is only when this country is free from arms, completely. People carry guns for personal reasons, some for criminal intent, things like that. The only thing we want to see is government in control of national security. This is a very volatile region. There is a war in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, tomorrow we will hear something from Guinea, we need total disarmament. We are strongly opposed to anything less. The company management has fallen out with the indigenes. The only way they can impose their will now is to carry their own arms. Governments should be in total control. Any other armed group de-legitimises the state.

Q: Is UNAMSIL leaving going to make this worse?

It is going to create a huge security gap. We see the departure of UNAMSIL as very premature. The sub region is so volatile. If you look at conflict in Africa, West Africa is the most volatile area. Rebels in Sierra Leone, rebels in Liberia, rebels in Ivory Coast. For the sub region to be stable, UNAMSIL should stay. We are very apprehensive about the Sierra Rutile issue because the borders are porous, and the activities in other countries are well documented. Mercenaries are dangerous elements. There is a lot of criminal activity simply for the purpose of getting concessions, getting to the resources. So we have every reason to be apprehensive. Government is desperate for cash, so it doesn't want to listen to the voices of civil society. But we will continue to remind them, not only for ourselves but for their own security.

Diamonds are no longer a threat to security only in the sense that they may be directly traded for small arms. Their legitimate mining and the distribution of legal profits are creating the next generation of potentially lethal tensions. In other resource-rich environments such as countries with oil (Nigeria, for example) the presence and practices of multinational corporations have been enough to create civil unrest. In a country still raw from war, poor governance and control of corporate mining has the potential to destabilise fragile communities that have only recently been disarmed. The availability of small arms is a cross-cutting factor behind demand; in these two case studies, it may be availability combined with the visibility of privately affiliated armed security that could unravel the weak beginnings of a culture of peace in Sierra Leone.

The role of mining in economic recovery is crucial. In the past, the government has failed at sustaining efforts to regulate the industry, and during the civil war diamonds were the economic fuel for violence that destroyed the entire infrastructure of the country. The relationship between government, communities, and corporate interests must be developed and monitored to ensure the sustainability of peace. Mining companies must be held accountable for their security policies and practices; communities who have been through a disarmament process should not be subjected to open displays of weapons by private security firms or by the Sierra Leone Police who are contracted to corporate interests. On the other hand, communities need government encouragement to forge sustainable relationships with companies to ensure that through dialogue and negotiation they can secure the kind of infrastructure that corporate money will bring in much more efficiently than local government.

