

OVERVIEW OF AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT 2005

**CONFLICT IN AFRICA AND THE ROLE OF DISARMAMENT,
DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION IN POST-CONFLICT
RECONSTRUCTION**

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	African National Congress of South Africa
APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
AU	African Union
CAR	Central African Republic
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECOSOC	Economic and Social Council of the United Nations
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
G8	Group of Eight
GNP	Gross National Product
HAP	Hague Appeal for Peace
HDI	Human Development Index
ICG	International Crisis Group
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGAD	Inter-governmental Authority on Development
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IOM	International Organisation for Migration
IPA	International Peace Academy
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MDRP	Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme
MONUC	United Nations Mission in Congo
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OCHA	Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs
OSAA	Office of the Special Adviser on Africa
IPRSP	Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
REC	Regional Economic Community
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SADC	Southern Africa Development Community
SIDDR	Stockholm Initiative on DDR
SSR	Security Sector Reform
UN	United Nations
UNDDA	United Nations Department for Disarmament Affairs
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNIAWDDR	UN Inter-Agency Working Group on DDR
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
WFP	World Food Programme of the United Nations

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Africa has witnessed many major conflicts in the past four decades. Some countries have been in continuous conflict for over twenty years. Children born during these conflicts have grown up without ever experiencing peace. While there are some countries that enjoy relative peace, their security and stability are constantly jeopardized by conflicts in neighbouring countries. Conflicts are not confined by national boundaries but often cross borders into neighbouring countries thus rendering large regions insecure and unstable.

2. The African people have suffered unparalleled hardship due to conflicts. Tens of millions of Africans, mostly civilians, have lost their lives because of conflicts. Most of them died as a result of the deprivations that war engenders: hunger and malnutrition, unclean water, lack of basic medical care and inadequate clothing and housing.

3. Human rights have been trampled. Children have been abducted to serve as porters or as soldiers and sometimes forced to commit atrocities against their own families. Women and young girls are raped and abducted for use as so-called “bush-wives”; captives forced to have sex and perform domestic duties for their captors. Entire communities have been brutalized and subjected to acts of genocide. African countries have had the highest share of refugees in the world for many years. In some countries more than 50 per cent of the population in areas impacted by conflicts has been displaced at one time or the other¹. Conflicts, and the resulting large scale impact on social and economic life in the countries directly concerned, and on their neighbours, constitute significant constraints on the socio-economic development of the region.

4. As conflicts have proliferated, regional and international efforts to resolve them have intensified. The African Union, the successor to the Organisation of African Unity, has deployed political missions to countries in conflict as well as countries showing warning signs of impending conflict. The United Nations Security Council has approved the deployment of 25 peacekeeping missions in Africa since 1960 and has also authorized the fielding of political missions to many African conflict and post-conflict countries.

5. Among the key challenges of peace agreements intended to restore peace and stability to countries in conflict is how to reintegrate former combatants into civilian life. Programmes for the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants have been recognized as critical for the reestablishment of peace, security and stability in post-conflict situations. This publication draws on the outcome of the conference on DDR and Stability in Africa that was held in Freetown from 21-23 June 2005, jointly organised by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) and the Government of Sierra Leone. The conference originated from a Ministerial roundtable breakfast, “*Do Current Practices of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Lead to Stability and Development in Africa?*” organised by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) during the ECOSOC High-Level Segment on 29 June 2004.

¹ Populations in communities in Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo, Bujumbura Rural (Burundi), Southern Sudan, Sierra Leone and Northern Uganda have been frequently displaced and for long periods.

6. The overall objectives of the conference were to:
- capture the views of African DDR stakeholders on the challenges of DDR and stability,
 - provide a platform for African perspectives to be articulated for incorporation into current DDR reform frameworks,
 - provide a forum for African DDR stakeholders and practitioners to build networks.
7. The conference provided African stakeholders and practitioners at all levels an opportunity to share experiences in the implementation of DDR programmes, and benefit from lessons learned from DDR operations in different countries. Fifteen countries at different stages of post conflict management and peace consolidation participated in the conference. It is intended that implementation of conference recommendations (attached in Annex) will enhance the contribution of DDR to peace and stability in Africa. Conference deliberations revealed an acute interest in further in-depth exploration of the linkages between the reintegration elements of DDR and long-term development programmes and identified some additional concerns that should be addressed. This overview paper builds on the outcome of the Freetown conference and addresses those concerns.

II. CAUSES OF CONFLICTS

8. Many factors are responsible for the conflicts in Africa. These include historical, internal, external, economic and others specific to particular country situations. The Secretary-General's Report on Causes of Conflicts and the Promotion of Durable Peace and Sustainable Development in Africa which was presented to the General Assembly and the Security Council in 1998, document A/52/871-S/1998/318, explained them in detail. The principal causes of conflicts in Africa are summarized below.

A. HISTORICAL

9. Africa's colonial history has significantly contributed to many of the conflicts in the region. The arbitrary manner in which the Congress of Berlin in 1885 imposed Africa's borders by scattering relatively homogeneous communities among several countries and joining others which had no affinity with each other. African soldiers accounted for more than half the French troops who landed in southern France in August 1944 which went on to liberate Paris². The return of African soldiers from Europe and other theatres of war following the end of World War II created an expectation among Africans that they too would soon enjoy at home the freedom they had fought to secure for others during the war. However, the hope that France would liberate African countries that had helped liberate France went unrealized. Instead, colonial authorities instituted a series of increasingly repressive measures in their African colonies such as discriminatory laws and confiscation of land. This intensified the liberation struggles which precipitated the independence of most of Africa by the end of 1964.

² *France at War*, Leonard G. Shurtleff, President of the Western Front Association
<http://www.worldwar1.com/france/tseng.htm>.

B. INTERNAL

10. Post-independence Africa saw the emergence of internal rivalries within countries for the control of political power which led to violent and sometimes prolonged conflicts. This started with the problems in post independence Democratic Republic of Congo that led to the overthrow of the elected government in 1960 and subsequent assassination of the country's first Prime Minister. Bad governance, including the non-respect of constitutions, centralization of political authority, patronage, nepotism and wanton abuse of human rights have all contributed to conflicts. Greed, corruption and the embezzlement of public funds have impoverished populations and fueled conflicts. Inter-tribal rivalry, monopolization of the military and other security forces, and diverging opinions on the proper role of religion in politics and law have also provoked and sustained Africa's conflicts.

C. ECONOMIC

11. The leaderships of the Revolutionary United Front in Sierra Leone, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the National Union for Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) had as major objectives the control of diamond operations and the use of proceeds from illegal diamond exports to finance their military operations. Struggle for the control of oil resources in Sudan intensified and prolonged the civil war between the North and the South. In some countries, especially in the Great Lakes Region, competition over limited land resources and unclear land ownership rights exacerbated by long-term displacement of populations have contributed to conflicts.

12. The exploitation of natural resources such as oil, diamonds and timber by multinationals has generated local armed resistance in many countries. Neighbouring countries in the Great Lakes Region and West Africa have also taken advantage of chaos in countries in the region to illegally exploit the resources of those countries. Profiteers from chaos, such as arms merchants and warlords, have fueled many conflicts in the region. Perceptions of marginalization in the Niger Delta Region of Nigeria over the use of oil revenues, differences over the place of religion in the society in Sudan and parts of Nigeria and increased sensitivity to ethnicity in Côte d'Ivoire have all contributed to conflicts. Ethnicity was also at the base of the genocide in Rwanda and the prolonged conflicts in Burundi and Eastern Democratic Republic of the Congo.

III. COST OF CONFLICTS

13. The enormous social costs of conflicts weigh heavily on women and children. The first casualty of war is human rights as the various factions brutalize and intimidate populations to coerce their support. Childhoods are suspended en masse as thousands of children are forcibly recruited at gunpoint by the various factions. Children living in conflict areas cannot go to school due to the lack of classrooms and teachers. Insecurity further widens the enrolment gap between boys and girls as parents keep their daughters at home. Women and girls are subjected to sexual abuse and abducted for use as so-called "bush-wives", captives forced to have sex and perform domestic duties for their captors. The movement of combatants and displaced persons within and across national boundaries and the breakdown of family and social structures lead to an increase in rape and sexual abuse which contributes to the spread of HIV/AIDS and further constrains Africa's development. The destruction of hospitals and health centers in conflict areas leads to the breakdown of primary health care and many persons die from easily controllable diseases.

14. Freedom to dissent is often the second casualty of conflict. The autocratic manner in which governments and rebel movements in countries in conflict are usually organised seldom permits civil political discourse. People with diverging views are often imprisoned without trial, subjected to physical and psychological torture and sometimes summarily executed. The lack of security that conflicts engender, and the wanton abuse of human rights, provokes massive displacement of populations in search of security and protection. Most of the displaced remain within their own countries as internally displaced persons (IDPs) and others cross national borders and become refugees. Women and children constitute a very high proportion of the IDP and refugee population worldwide and Africa is no exception. Inhabitants of some communities badly affected by conflicts are forced to remain in hiding in the bush for many years deprived of the basic necessities of life. Thousands of Ethiopian, Eritrean, Somalian and Sudanese children who were born in refugee camps in neighbouring countries lived there until adulthood and have never visited their native countries.

15. Refugees flowing into neighboring countries place additional stress on limited resources and fragile environments and institutions and add to the social and economic problems of the host countries. The table below shows the number of IDPs in selected countries in conflict, the number of people fleeing those countries as refugees, and military expenditures as a proportion of national budgets.

Table 1:

Social and economic costs of conflicts: IDPs, refugees and military expenditures in selected countries³

Country	IDPs (1000)	Percent population displaced	Refugee out-flow (1000)	Military expenditure as % of National budgets	
				1998	1999
Angola	900		329	34	31
Burundi	523		531	27	25
Côte d'Ivoire	600		--		
Democratic Republic of the Congo	3000		453		28**
Liberia	500		353		
Rwanda	600*	7.0	2000	36	31
Somalia	--		402		
Sudan	4000		606		
Uganda	1200			12	18

Source: Composite table from UNHCR's Refugees by Numbers, 2004 and Internally Displaced Persons, 2004.

Military expenditures are from World Bank Report No. 23869-AFR, 25 March 2002.

* World Bank Report 23869-AFR.

** Data for 2001.

16. A significant proportion of the population of countries either in conflict or recently emerging from conflict live in absolute poverty. In Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia,

³ IDP figures are difficult to confirm as a significant proportion does not stay in camps.

Sudan, and Uganda more than 35 percent of the population live on less than 1 dollar a day. The lack of reliable data may understate the problem. The destruction of social and economic infrastructure makes it difficult for Africa as a whole, and post-conflict countries in particular, to meet the Millennium Development Goals (MDG)⁴. In many of those countries the gaps are getting wider and the composite Human Development Index (HDI) has been on the decline for decades. The Human Development Report 2005 indicates that 13 of the 18 countries that have experienced development reversals in terms of declining HDI between 1990 and 2003 were in sub-Saharan Africa.

IV. PROGRESS IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION

EVOLUTION OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION

17. The international community and the UN have focused priority attention on the peacekeeping, peacebuilding, humanitarian, rehabilitation and reconstruction needs of countries in conflict and those in post-conflict situations in order to contain and reduce human suffering. The UN's first peacekeeping operation in Africa was in the Democratic Republic of Congo in 1960 after the collapse of that country's post-independence government. Since then, the UN has deployed peacekeeping missions to not less than 15 African countries. The United Nations spent \$2.3 billion in global peacekeeping operations in 2003-2004 and approximately \$4.5 billion in 2004-2005 of which \$3.3 billion was spent on Africa. The UN has spent more than \$36 billion on peacekeeping worldwide since 1948, a large part of this in Africa. At the end of June 2005, eight UN-led peacekeeping missions out of a total of 17 worldwide were in Africa. The UN has also deployed political missions and established political offices in countries conflict or emerging from conflict but in which the UN does not have peacekeepers⁵. The purpose of such offices is to facilitate negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the underlying destabilizing factors.

18. African countries, sub-regional bodies, the African Union and its predecessor, the OAU, have all engaged in efforts to settle conflicts in the region. The international community and the United Nations have also supported a number of African peace initiatives. In the post-WWII period the UN played a vital role in accelerating the pace of independence in Africa. The Trusteeship Council in particular protected the interests of the former German territories of Cameroon, Namibia, Tanganyika and Togoland and ensured their advancement to independence although there was considerable bloodshed in Cameroon and Namibia. The OAU placed high priority on the total liberation of Africa and provided valuable political, financial and material assistance to liberation movements in Africa.

19. This assistance had a positive impact on the independence movements of African countries including South Africa and the Portuguese colonies in West Africa. The OAU deployed political missions to countries in conflict (Burundi, Chad, Comoros, Democratic Republic of the Congo and Rwanda) and military observer missions to Burundi and Chad. The African Union has adopted a more robust and proactive strategy in the search of peace and stability in the region. Troop deployment to the Darfur region of Western Sudan is a clear demonstration of the resolute commitment of the AU to peacebuilding in Africa. The establishment of a Peace and Security

⁴ The Millennium Summit held at the United Nations in 2000 adopted a set of eight development goals aimed at significantly reducing poverty by the year 2015.

⁵ Central African Republic, Guinea Bissau and Somalia. The Somalia Office is located in Nairobi, Kenya.

Council by the AU as well as the efforts underway for the constitution of an AU stand-by military force⁶ will further strengthen the capacity of the AU to prevent and resolve conflicts in Africa.

20. Sub-regional bodies have been vigorously engaged in the search for peace in Africa. ECOWAS has engaged in preventive diplomacy in several countries, most recently in Togo, and deployed peacekeeping troops to Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea Bissau. The international community supported the ECOWAS troop deployment and UN peacekeeping missions eventually replaced the ECOWAS forces in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia and Sierra Leone⁷. A significant SADC military intervention in the Democratic Republic of the Congo⁸ contributed to stabilizing the situation until the deployment of a UN peacekeeping mission (MONUC) to the country in 1999. IGAD is at the forefront of the search for peace in the Horn of Africa and in central Africa. ECCAS is involved politically and through the deployment of forces in the Central African Republic.

21. Individual African and non-African countries have taken particular interest and leadership roles in facilitating peace processes in various African countries. Italy played a prominent role in Mozambique, France in Côte D'Ivoire, USA, Norway and Kenya in Sudan, South Africa in Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire and Democratic Republic of the Congo, Nigeria in Liberia and Sierra Leone, Tanzania and Uganda in Burundi and Rwanda. In most cases the UN and AU, sub-regional bodies, and individual countries have acted in a collaborative and coordinated manner. These efforts have been largely positive and many of the countries are now moving towards the peace consolidation phase.

22. Other partners such as the European Union and civil society organisations have also been engaged in the consolidation of peace in Africa. The EU was engaged for many years in the Great Lakes region and deployed troops to the Ituri District of the Democratic Republic of the Congo to contain the chaos and insecurity that followed the withdrawal of Ugandan forces. Many NGOs and civil society organisations, African and non-African, have supported peace processes in the region. Santo Egidio's⁹ critical role in facilitating direct negotiations between RENAMO and the government of Mozambique which resulted in a peace agreement is an example of the important contribution that NGOs and civil society organisations can make.

23. These peace efforts have impacted positively on post-conflict countries such as Mozambique, Namibia and South Africa and led to the restoration of peace and stability. Other countries such as Burundi, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau and Sudan are moving towards peace consolidation. The process has not been smooth in all countries. The UN and the international community have had to intervene militarily several times in some countries: Angola, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Somalia¹⁰.

⁶ The AU approved the establishment of the Peace and Security Council and the African Standby Force at its First General Assembly in 2002. The Standby Force is to be organized on a sub-regional basis with each of the five RECs maintaining one brigade.

⁷ United Nations Mission in Liberia (2003) and United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (1999).

⁸ Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe deployed troops to DRC in support of the government.

⁹ A Catholic NGO based in Rome, Italy.

¹⁰ Angola, Dec. 1988 to May 1991, Feb. 1995 to June 1997 and June 1997 to Feb. 1999; Central Africa Republic, UN Mission from April 1998 to Feb. 2000 and ECCAS peace support mission; DRC, July 1960 to June 1964 and Nov. 1999 to present; Liberia, Sept. 1993 to Sept. 1997, ECOWAS to October 2003 and UN Mission from Oct. 2003 to present; Sierra Leone, July 1998 to Oct. 1999 and Oct. 1999 to present; Somalia, April 1992 to March 1993 and March 1993 to March 1995.

V. ROLE OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION

24. Conflicts lead to the recruitment of large numbers of soldiers and members of irregular rebel forces. In many countries communities also organize self-defense militia. Some of the recruits, including women and children, are forced into service by government and rebel forces. At the end of conflicts the combined strength of the regular and irregular forces is much greater than post-conflict military and security needs. Surplus troops have to be discharged from service. In order to avoid the possibility of large numbers of armed ex-combatants harassing the population and threatening the security of the State, special programmes are established to disarm the discharged troops prior to their demobilisation from their military units. Increasingly, efforts are being made to help the demobilized former combatants reintegrate into communities of their choice and acquire skills which enable them to engage in productive activities. Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programmes consist of three principal and critical components.

25. Disarmament is a process in which former combatants surrender their weapons, preferably on a voluntary basis. Where peacekeeping troops are deployed (UN, AU, sub-regional) they are usually charged with the collection, safe storage and eventual disposal of the weapons collected. This is a critical operation that takes weapons that have been used in conflict out of circulation and thus creates a secure environment in which the peace process can be consolidated. Although voluntary disarmament is the preferred practice, cash for weapons programmes have been undertaken in some conflicts¹¹ where the urgency of taking weapons out of circulation was thought to outweigh any negative consequences resulting from such payments.

26. Cash for weapons programmes are often perceived as rewards to ex-combatants for taking up arms. Additionally, cash incentives contribute to the cross-border flow of weapons by armed groups which move from one country to the next to exploit more attractive cash for weapons programmes¹². Non-cash incentives have been used successfully in some countries to encourage the surrender of weapons even after the formal end of DDR¹³. Disarmament is sometimes coercive. In situations such as the Ituri district of the Democratic Republic of the Congo where the prevailing insecurity has made armed groups reluctant to voluntarily disarm, forced disarmament has been approved¹⁴. This entails a considerable degree of risk to the forces charged with the operation. It is therefore authorized only in exceptional cases.

27. Demobilization is the process through which disarmed ex-combatants who are not selected to be part of the new national army renounce their military status, are separated from their former military structures and are discharged from the military. Demobilized ex-combatants usually receive reinsertion payments to enable them to have access to some basic necessities for the recommencement of civilian life. Demobilization operations are used to reduce the overall size of the military forces in post-conflict situations and thus free financial and human resources for development.

¹¹ Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia.

¹² \$300 paid in Liberia as against the \$1000 planned for neighbouring Côte d'Ivoire.

¹³ A catholic charity in Mozambique has exchanged building materials, seeds and agricultural tools for weapons many years after the end of DDR in 1994.

¹⁴ Owing to the resistance of the many armed groups in Ituri to disarm voluntarily, the UN Security Council authorized the use of force. Resolution 1484 (2003). Significant quantities of arms have been collected, many armed group leaders arrested and jailed but at the cost of the lives of some peacekeepers.

28. Reintegration is the process through which disarmed ex-combatants and their families return to communities of their choice, engage in the social and economic life of the host communities and are accepted by the host communities. Reintegration is a long-term process that requires considerable human and financial resources for training, skills development, jobs creation and microcredit.

29. Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration programmes (DDR) have become critical components of post-conflict recovery in the post-cold war era. They are used to stabilize post-conflict situations and reduce the likelihood of renewed violence, facilitate society's transition from conflict to normalcy and development, strengthen trust between former opposing factions and enhance momentum towards stability by creating environments favourable to the full implementation of peace agreements. The United Nations, because of its recognized neutrality and an accumulated DDR experience of more than fifteen years, is well placed to assist post-conflict countries with the design and implementation of DDR programmes. However, DDR programmes are highly dependent on the political will of the former protagonists of conflicts for their success.

EVOLUTION OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION

30. Disarmament was originally thought of as simply the technical process of collecting weapons from ex-combatants by the victorious armies. Early UN-led DDR focused on the quantities and types of weapons to be collected and their storage and disposal, with little attention paid to the ex-combatants. Disarmament is complicated by the fact that not all combatants carry weapons owing to shortages or lack of confidence in the combatants on the part of leaders. This is particularly so for child combatants and women and tends to exclude them from the disarmament process and consequently from the demobilisation and reintegration processes and benefits. The frequent relapse to conflict following supposedly successful DDR programmes provoked a rethinking of the entire process. The persons from whom weapons are collected now receive more attention. Some efforts are made to ensure that the non-possession of a weapon does not block children and women who have been associated with armed groups from participation in DDR. Weapons storage and destruction facilities are constructed to ensure that weapons do not get recycled. Attempts are also made to properly define what constitutes a weapon, which is very important because irregular forces such as the community defense forces in Sierra Leone and the Mai Mai in the Democratic Republic of the Congo did not rely on conventional arms.

31. Demobilisation was historically considered a post-disarmament phase of DDR during which ex-combatants were held in centres for a few days to fill out forms, receive money and provide some basic information about themselves. Over the years the focus of DDR practitioners has shifted from paperwork and payments to understanding the broader needs of ex-combatants. The special needs of children and women are now emphasized, and efforts are made to separate them from the group leadership as soon as possible to avoid further abuse. Awareness programmes are implemented focusing on the particular risks that women are exposed to, especially HIV/AIDS. Special efforts are made to locate the parents of children and unify children with their families. Ex-combatants –child ex-combatants in particular– who have witnessed, participated in or committed atrocities to members of their own families or communities need psychological counseling and support to return to normal life. Women and girls who have been sexually abused during their association with armed groups experience particular difficulties in returning to their communities of origin and to their families. Some women may be returning to their husbands and families with children born in the bush.

32. Consensus has emerged that the demobilisation phase is too short and that advantage should be taken of the presence of ex-combatants in demobilisation centres to train them in life skills that would enable them to reintegrate successfully into civilian life. The demobilisation phase now lasts a few weeks, during which time ex-combatants have access to food and primary health care, receive briefings and information that will facilitate their return to civilian life and are encouraged to participate in reintegration activities in their respective communities of choice. In addition, efforts are made to evaluate ex-combatants' employment preferences, organize training programmes and provide the financial support needed for the successful use of newly acquired skills.

33. Reintegration was previously thought to take place automatically following disarmament, demobilisation and return of ex-combatants to their communities of choice. However, since ONUCA, consensus has emerged that reintegration is a lengthy process which requires greater attention than was previously thought. Ex-combatants have to be converted from military mindsets to civilian ones and from the use of their weapons to meet their financial needs to the management of productive activities or to the acquisition of skills that would facilitate employment. The conversion from a military to civilian mindset is not automatic. People who have spent considerable portions of their lives in war and who have relied on weapons to settle conflicts and gain access to resources need time and support to change their mindsets.

34. DDR programs are also expanding their reach by collaborating with the host communities to ensure more successful reintegration. Communities are encouraged to welcome and accept ex-combatants. Sensitization programmes for ex-combatants and host communities to prepare them both for reintegration are receiving more attention. Radio programmes operated by peacekeeping missions and other communication channels are used for this purpose. Additional efforts are being made to identify and implement work programmes which both ex-combatants and other members of the host communities can participate in together. This is to allay the misgivings of those who did not take up arms who perceive reinsertion and demobilisation payments as rewards for taking up arms. Except for reinsertion payments that are made at demobilisation centres, most demobilisation payments and reintegration allowances are paid to beneficiaries in their host communities in order to stimulate local economies. Benefits that accrue to child ex-combatants are increasingly channeled to communities to support activities that will benefit a wider group of children. This evolution in thinking has enhanced the prospects of successful reconciliation between ex-combatants and members of host communities.

35. Reconciliation is now recognized as a key factor that influences the reintegration of ex-combatants and their families into host communities. Members of host communities who stayed behind, suffered deprivations and abuse, witnessed the killing of family members or saw their daughters or wives raped are pained by the attention received by ex-combatants. Communities that suffered atrocities committed by their own abducted children find it difficult to forgive and accept the children when they return, sometimes as adults. In some communities children are expected to undergo certain traditional ceremonies¹⁵ before leaving the village but such ceremonies were not performed before abducted children went to war. The need for medium to long-term reconciliation programmes, including the public acknowledgement of wrongs committed during conflicts, has gained recognition. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa significantly contributed to the healing process and the peace and stability the country now enjoys.

¹⁵ Mozambique and Sierra Leone.

36. In countries such as Rwanda and Sierra Leone it has been necessary to establish special international tribunals for the prosecution of those who committed acts of atrocity during conflicts. Illegal acts committed by the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) in Sierra Leone and the genocide in Rwanda, if allowed to go unpunished, would have seriously jeopardized reconciliation efforts in both countries and served as excuses for future conflicts. The question of justice has remained flexible, applied on a case by case basis with due regard to the particular circumstances of the country concerned and the impact criminal prosecution could have on reconciliation, peace and stability.

37. More recently, administrators of DDR programmes have recognized the need to organize specific programmes aimed at demilitarizing the minds of ex-combatants and populations emerging from conflict. This is essentially a process by which the mindsets of populations, ex-combatants and civilians are changed from choosing violence as a means of settling disputes to choosing non-violent means as the preferred option to resolving disputes¹⁶. Programmes to introduce culture of peace education have been successfully piloted by UNDDA, UNDP and the Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP)¹⁷ in four countries: Albania, Cambodia, Niger and Peru. Positive attitudinal changes were recorded in youths and adults, ex-combatants and civilians who participated in the programmes. Unfortunately the programmes have been halted for lack of funding. The positive results registered in these four countries justify the continuation of the programmes and their introduction in other post-conflict countries in Africa.

Culture of peace education programme in Niger

The Republic of Niger was rocked by armed rebellions in the 1990s by the Tuareg, Tubu and Kanouri ethnic groups. After years of conflict peace agreements were signed in 1995, 1997 and 1998. At the end of the conflicts the country was awash with small arms, especially in the Diffa region which borders Chad and Nigeria. The UN's Department for Disarmament Affairs (UNDDA), and UNDP launched Weapons for Development programme in the area in 2002 with the aim of reducing the number of weapons in circulation and enhancing security and stability in the region.

UNDDA and the Hague Appeal for Peace (HAP) decided in 2002 to extend to Niger a pilot programme on culture of peace education that they had started in Albania. The two-year pilot project was established in N'Guigmi district, Diffa region, in February 2003 to complement the presence of the Weapons for Development programme and also to support the disarmament effort. A baseline survey in N'Guigmi revealed that:

- 100 per cent of all those interviewed had witnessed armed rebellion and were psychologically affected
- 66.7 per cent of elementary and secondary school students thought that one should carry a weapon to feel secure
- Only 16.67 per cent of elementary school students thought of resorting to conciliation

¹⁶ Demilitarizing the mind entails a process of education in which a culture of peace programme is introduced to schools and communities and in which ex-combatants and other community members participate. UNESCO has been supporting a culture of peace programme since the 1990s.

¹⁷ The Hague Appeal for Peace is a civil society organization that emerged from the International Peace Conference organized in the Hague on 11-15 May 1999 by a group of civil society organizations.

as a means of resolving a conflict whereas 83.33 per cent thought of revenge.

Prior to launching the pilot programme, representatives were dispatched to the area to undertake consultations with a wide group of stakeholders, select a local coordinator and set up a working group for coordination of programme activities. The working group of 12 included representation from all stakeholders including Chiefs and Griots who are competent in the use of traditional peacemaking methods including cousinage¹⁸. Project planning included consultations with government agencies and departments at central and local levels. The High Commissioners for Peace and Arms Collection were fully consulted.

Teacher training workshops were organised and eleven schools with a total of 2,465 students, 1,896 elementary and 569 secondary, were selected. The Rights of the Child Declaration¹⁹ was a valuable resource for teachers. Theatre and storytelling were used to motivate and teach. Some secondary school students were designated Messengers of Peace. They organised discussion groups and seminars and traveled to communities to speak on the culture of peace, peacemaking and the non-violent resolution of conflicts. A conference on the culture of peace in schools was held on 24 October 2004 which enabled students to voice their experiences, fears, regrets, losses and hopes for the future. A "Flame of Peace" ceremony at which weapons, mostly knives, were burned was held in N'Guigmi on 5 April 2004. Some 2000 community members attended the ceremony. Teacher training manuals and an interactive curriculum for elementary and secondary schools were prepared by the project. The government endorsed and distributed the documents to all 90 schools in N'Guigmi district. A youth centre with meeting rooms for the messengers of peace, books, computers and sports facilities was built.

V. ENHANCED PARTNERSHIP

38. DDR programmes are complex to design and implement. They also require flexible financial support adaptable to the specific requirements of each DDR programme. Partnerships between a consortium of stakeholders and partners is the best hope for raising the resources required and the flexibility needed to ensure successful implementation of DDR programmes.

39. National ownership, which includes the transitional government, if any, and all other national entities involved in the conflict is critical to the successful implementation of DDR programmes. All parties should be fully and visibly engaged in the design and implementation of DDR operations. It is important that leaders of the various factions be seen to be working together in good faith to restore peace and stability in their country. This increases the likelihood of their followers actively participating in DDR programs. However, countries in post conflict situations often have weak institutions and need considerable capacity-building support from the international community.

40. The trend has been to establish new institutions for the implementation of DDR programmes. New mechanisms are indeed necessary to ensure effective coordination of the many national and international, governmental and non-governmental actors involved in the

¹⁸ Cousinage is a traditional conflict resolution practice in which one person confronts another with grievances as a way to discharge complaints and restore peace.

¹⁹ The 1989 World Summit on Children adopted a Convention on the Rights of the Child.

implementation of DDR programmes. However, existing national institutions should implement the various DDR activities. Where they are weak they should be strengthened in order to ensure sustainability of effort. Programme implementation should be decentralized as much as possible in order to capitalize on local knowledge and capacities. Local government and community based organisations, including women's organisations, should be included in the design of DDR programmes, especially reintegration activities, in order to improve their relevance to the needs of communities.

41. Sub-regional organisations and the African Union have made considerable efforts to ensure successful peace processes in Africa and have taken steps to enhance their participation in DDR programmes. The AU and sub-regional organisations participate in negotiations leading to peace agreements and have increasingly taken the lead in deploying peace support missions to conflict and post-conflict countries. The AU has been proactive in Sudan and has deployed a support mission in the Darfur region of Western Sudan to halt the conflict and create an environment conducive for negotiations and the implementation of DDR.

42. AU leadership has been complemented by efforts undertaken by sub-regional organisations. ECOWAS has played a significant role in West Africa, particularly in Liberia and Sierra Leone, where ECOWAS troops were instrumental in separating rival forces, stabilizing the respective countries and implementing the preliminary phases of DDR. In Central Africa, ECCAS led the effort in the Central African Republic to disarm and stabilize the country enough for elections to be organised and for disarmament and demobilisation to be undertaken. In the Southern Africa sub-region SADC intervened in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and deployed forces which helped stabilize the situation and facilitated negotiations which led to the deployment of UN peacekeeping troops, the signing of a peace agreement and implementation of DDR.

43. AU and sub-regional organisations work with many partners, the UN, bilateral and multilateral donors and NGOs. This broad partnership needs to be strengthened and the AU provided with support to ensure that it has adequate capacity to exercise its leadership role in the handling of conflict and post-conflict situations in Africa including DDR. The AU has set up a Peace and Security Council to facilitate discussion of security issues and agreement on common regional positions. This is very helpful for coordination with international partners.

44. The United Nations, in accordance with its mandate to maintain peace and stability, has intervened politically and militarily in African conflicts. The UN historically played a fairly limited role: separation of forces and some disarmament. The UN has now assumed a much broader mandate that encompasses the facilitation of peace negotiations and DDR, the provision of humanitarian assistance, and peacebuilding support. This more holistic approach of the United Nations has made it an indispensable partner in the search for durable peace in Africa. The 2005 UN summit reaffirmed this holistic role and approved measures to ensure that the UN will be in a better position to fulfill this mandate²⁰. The United Nations and its many agencies and funds intervene at various points in DDR programmes. Some provide humanitarian assistance during the disarmament and demobilisation stages while others provide assistance with rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery operations during the reintegration phase.

²⁰ The 2005 World Summit in its Outcome document supported the development and implementation of a peacekeeping capacity of the AU, establishment of a Peacebuilding Commission and establishment of a Trust Fund to provide multi-year funding for peacebuilding.

45. The Department of Political Affairs (DPA) spearheads the UN effort during peace negotiations. Other departments, agencies, funds and programmes participate as observers to assist parties in structuring DDR programmes. These include the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO), Department of Disarmament Affairs (DDA), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations International Children Emergency Fund (UNICEF), United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the UN World Food Programme (WFP). They bring considerable financial and material assistance to populations affected by conflicts. Peacekeeping missions approved by the Security Council are managed by DPKO which leads UN efforts at the country level. These peacekeeping operations have become more comprehensive and include activities that were previously organised by other UN entities. UN Peacekeeping Missions now include Child Protection, Human Rights and Humanitarian Affairs Officers and Gender Advisers.

46. In order to enhance the contribution of the UN to DDR programmes a UN Inter-Departmental Working Group on DDR (UN IAWG DDR) was established to seek ways to strengthen coordination among the UN entities and improve coordination between the UN and other partners. The initiative to synergize the activities of all the UN entities working in conflict and post-conflict situations, which was approved by the Secretary-General in 2000, is underway. The work of the UN IAWG-DDR on an operational concept note is near completion and will be launched by the Secretary-General near the end of December 2005. This will rationalize the responsibilities of the various UN agencies, funds and programmes where peacekeeping missions are deployed, place all UN offices at country level under the responsibility of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and all DDR focal points in one unit.

A. MULTI-COUNTRY DEMOBILISATION AND REINTEGRATION PROGRAMME (MDRP)

47. The international donor community, including the Breton Woods institutions, is a major partner in most DDR programmes in Africa. Many donor countries facilitate or participate in peace processes, provide financing, and act as guarantors of peace agreements. The participation of many donors increases the level of flexibility in financing available to DDR programme implementers to address issues such as the early extraction of children from armed factions and the establishment of special programmes to address the needs of women. Among the donors are several members of the Security Council which determine the overall size, structure and nature of UN participation in peace processes and DDR programmes. Without the active participation of donors many peace processes would fail due to lack of resources and the credibility needed to ensure a sufficient degree of confidence on the part of national stakeholders in peace processes and DDR programmes.

48. The multiplicity of donors sometimes leads to poorly coordinated actions. This is particularly important for voluntarily funded reintegration activities which require regional cooperation, such as the repatriation of refugees and foreign ex-combatants, and those that require multi-year funding. The World Bank has taken the lead and established a Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Programme (MDRP) that addresses national aspects of DDR and regional implications including the repatriation of foreign ex-combatants and refugees. MDRP supported operations are multi-year and provide a degree of stability and predictability in the availability of financial resources for reintegration that is not found in other DDR programmes. MDRP is underway in seven post-conflict African countries and has made

significant positive contributions to the implementation of DDR particularly in the Greater Great Lakes Region²¹ and the West African countries of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

B. STOCKHOLM INITIATIVE ON DDR (SIDDR)

49. Sweden is leading a review process (the Stockholm Initiative on DDR) which focuses on political and funding aspects of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR). DDR is recognized as an essential part of peace processes and parties in conflict need assistance as they formulate peace processes and initiate the design of DDR. The Stockholm Initiative focuses on ways in which political aspects of DDR can be integrated such as the inclusion and participation of all parties involved in a conflict in the design of programmes, the transformation of warring factions into political parties and other actions that would reduce political tension in the course of the implementation of DDR programmes.

50. Resource mobilisation for DDR as an integrated programme is complicated by the practice of using assessed budgets to support disarmament and demobilisation while reintegration is financed from voluntary contributions. The Stockholm initiative seeks to ensure that funding for DDR is available early in the implementation of peace agreements and that resource for reintegration are adequate, predictable and provide sufficient flexibility to DDR implementers to take advantage of opportunities when they arise, for example, the early demobilisation of child ex-combatants.

C. CIVIL SOCIETY OPERATIONS

51. Civil Society Organisations (CSO) both national and international, play critical roles in the implementation of DDR programmes. These organisations are present in communities before, during and after the outbreak of conflict. They come with varied skills and competences ranging from the defence of human rights, conflict resolution and reconciliation, the provision of humanitarian assistance and implementation of longer-term development activities. They are therefore well placed to assist communities, national governments and the international community including the United Nations in the design and implementation of DDR programmes and especially so, reintegration.

52. Civil society organisations present in local communities are often the first to identify potential problems that may lead to conflicts. They offer fora for the discussion of problems and facilitation of reconciliation, which could help the country prevent full-scale conflict. Whereas local CSOs may be constrained either by fear of retaliation by governments or other local pressure groups, international CSOs such as the International Crisis Group have identified and communicated to national and international stakeholders issues that if left unresolved could result in new conflicts in the region or the resumption of war. Efforts made at national and international levels to harmonize and coordinate CSO activities with those of other stakeholders have contributed to improving DDR design and implementation. This is evident in the increased focus of DDR on communities and groups with special needs, including children, women, the handicapped and the elderly.

53. The skills and experience of CSOs are critical for the implementation of humanitarian programmes in conflict and non-conflict situations. Their close proximity to populations and

²¹ As defined by the MDRP in World Bank Report No. 23869-AFR: Angola, Burundi, Central African Republic, Republic of Congo, DRC, Namibia, Rwanda, Tanzania, Uganda Zambia and Zimbabwe.

relative impartiality gives them access to populations and parts of countries that may not be open to governments or rebel movements. UN specialized agencies, funds and programmes, in particular UNHCR, UNICEF, UNDP and WFP have signed agreements to rationalize the division of responsibilities amongst relevant CSOs. The participation of CSOs in the international conference on DDR held in Freetown Sierra Leone in June 2005 was very helpful to the sharing of information and experiences regarding the implementation of DDR programmes in Africa.

D. FREETOWN INITIATIVE

54. An international conference on DDR jointly organised by the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations was held in Freetown from 21 to 23 June 2005. The objective of the conference was to facilitate an exchange of views and experiences among African DDR stakeholders and practitioners and their international partners on the implementation of DDR programmes in the region and from lessons learned formulate practical recommendations that would improve DDR implementation. African stakeholders and practitioners from 14 countries²² in post-conflict situations and several bilateral and multilateral partners also participated. African stakeholders and practitioners raised many key issues and shared experiences on the implementation of DDR under different country settings. They agreed to strengthen networking among themselves with a view to enhancing partnership. The conference formulated practical recommendations aimed at enhancing partnership and improving DDR programme implementation. Participants decided to continue the Freetown process and recommended that a follow-up conference should be organised every two years to review implementation of the recommendations and their impact on DDR programmes in the region. The complete report of the Freetown conference, including the aforementioned recommendations, can be accessed at www.un.org/africa/osaa/.

The African Union And NEPAD

The African Union has taken bold steps to address conflict and post-conflict situations in the region since its inception in 2002. The African Union has built on mechanisms for conflict resolution set-up by its predecessor, the OAU, but has also established new instruments and mechanisms and is working to fully define its role in conflict resolution and post-conflict management in Africa as mandated in Article 5(2) of the constitutive Act of the Union.

Recent landmarks in the evolving role of the OAU and AU include:

- The Cairo declaration adopted in June 1993 on a Mechanism for Conflict Resolution;
- Establishment of a Joint OAU/IPA Task Force in 1995;
- Adoption of the Protocol Relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council and a Standby Force by the AU in 2002;
- Deployment of a Peace Support Mission to Burundi;
- Establishment of the Post-Conflict Reconstruction Committee in July 2003 to address the reconstruction needs of Sudan;

²² Angola, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, DRC, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Liberia, Mozambique, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

- Deployment of a Peace Support Mission to the Darfur region of Western Sudan in 2005;
- Organisation of a brainstorming workshop in Durban in September 2005 to initiate consultations on the preparation of a Framework for Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development.

The AU has established cooperation agreements with UN specialised agencies, funds and programmes with the aim of drawing from the experiences, capacities and resources of partner agencies in the discharge of its mandate. The European Union has made a major commitment to support the AU's peace management efforts, allocating 250 million Euros for the AU's peace support mission in Sudan. The UK has also committed itself to supporting the AU's peace management role, allocating 400 million pounds for this purpose.

As the AU further develops its capacity to manage conflict situations it should also seek to intensify its cooperation with the UN Secretariat, specialized agencies, funds and programmes. In this regard, the AU needs to engage heads of UN Specialized agencies, funds and programmes on future collaboration in support of African DDR programmes. The Economic Commission for Africa has considerable capacity that could be usefully exploited by the AU as it develops its strategy and planning and programming capacity for DDR programmes in the region.

One of NEPAD's major contributions to conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction is through the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)²³. Governance issues that may contribute to conflicts are addressed during reviews by APRM teams. Such reviews in post-conflict countries will assist in the prevention of relapses to conflict.

NEPAD commissioned papers on security, governance, justice, socio-economic reconstruction and coordination and management of post-conflict situations that were discussed at a conference held in Durban in October 2004 to develop a strategic AU/NEPAD framework for post-conflict reconstruction in Africa. NEPAD's focus will be on programmatic aspects of DDR and will take the lead on advocacy, provide space for meetings to exchange views and permit countries to learn from each other, serve as a partnership forum and a platform for the accumulation and storage of knowledge on DDR programmes.

NEPAD and the AU will define further the sharing of responsibilities between them to ensure that African DDR programmes contribute to sustainable peace, stability and development of the region.

VI. CHALLENGES

55. The implementation of DDR programmes face many challenges that impact on their contribution to stability and development in Africa. Some of these challenges are directly linked to delays in the design of DDR programmes while others are due to the absence of qualified and experienced DDR practitioners in peace negotiations and pressure from major partners to have peace agreements implemented in the shortest timeframe possible. Key challenges to the positive

²³ African Peer Review Mechanism is a voluntary programme of NEPAD in which teams of Member States of the African Union review the implementation of good governance practices by participating Member States.

contribution of DDR to peace, stability and development include the early inclusion of DDR in peace agreements, early start of reintegration, meeting the needs of special groups, tackling security sector reform, balancing the interests of ex-combatants and communities, youth unemployment, addressing regional issues arising from conflicts and securing adequate, predictable and sustainable resources. These critical challenges are discussed below.

A. EARLY INCLUSION OF DDR IN PEACE AGREEMENTS

56. Many conflicts in Africa have lasted several decades, destroyed communities, displaced significant portions of the population and inflicted undue hardship on many millions of people. Faction leaders and individuals have gained political and economic leadership positions through the use of arms and the illegal exploitation of natural resources. War crimes have been committed and the perpetrators are afraid of being tried at the end of conflicts. Many youths have gained some form of employment and "respect" by bearing arms. Peace negotiations are thus slow and take many years from the first contacts to the signature of peace agreements as the leaders and many others fear losing acquired power, wealth or social status.

57. Under such circumstances, DDR is far from the top priority of leaders of armed movements. They are more concerned about their personal safety and seek protection through negotiated leadership positions in the post-conflict period. The challenge is how to meet this concern, accelerate the pace of negotiations and ensure the inclusion of DDR at an early stage in peace negotiations. Evidence from the Mozambique negotiations indicate that the inclusion of neutral parties such as the UN and NGOs early in the peace process can contribute to allaying the fears that impede progress. In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the third party mechanism²⁴ did accelerate peace negotiations significantly.

58. In many African conflicts, the perceived sponsorship of rival armed movements (Angola and Democratic Republic of the Congo) by important external powers and interference by neighbours do complicate negotiations of peace agreements. International support for the peace process in the Great Lakes region, evidenced by joint visits to the Great Lakes Region by the Foreign Ministers of France and UK²⁵, the Development Ministers of Netherlands, Norway and UK²⁶, the Vice Prime Minister of Belgium and Foreign Affairs Minister of the EU, the Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of the EU Commission, members of the Security Council and the Secretary-General of the United Nations²⁷, publicly demonstrated serious engagement on the part of the world community in peace processes in the region, increased the confidence of the regional leaders, and contributed to the finalization of peace negotiations in both Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo that included DDR.

59. However, even where DDR is included in peace agreements, it is normally the principle rather than the details. Persons with skills and experience in the design and implementation of DDR programmes do not normally take part in the early phases of peace negotiations. It takes

²⁴ President Mbeki of South Africa and UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan decided in July 2002 to serve jointly as a third party in the conflict between the DRC and Rwanda. This encouraged agreement by Rwanda to withdraw its forces from DRC territory.

²⁵ The Foreign Ministers of UK and France undertook a joint visit to Great Lakes Region in January 2002.

²⁶ Development Cooperation Ministers of UK, Netherlands and Norway visited the Great Lakes Region in 2003.

²⁷ The Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Belgium, the Foreign Affairs Minister of the EU and the External Affairs Commissioner for Foreign Affairs of the EU Commission visited the DDR assembly point in Kamina, DRC, in November 2002. The members of the Security Council effected visits to countries involved in the conflicts in the Great Lakes Region in June 2001, May 2002 and November 2004.

many months after the signature of peace agreements for DDR programmes to be designed. In some cases details of reintegration activities are worked out several years after the signature of peace agreements and the official conclusion of disarmament and demobilisation activities. In post-conflict countries where transitional governments have been installed, the new governments may be too weak or the members of government still too suspicious of each other for full participation in DDR. They may resort to inflation of their military strength in order to include as many sympathizers as possible in the programme or deliberately conceal fighting forces in the bush, in case peace efforts fail.

B. EARLY START OF REINTEGRATION AND LINKAGES TO MEDIUM AND LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

60. Reintegration is complicated and tends to be the last element to be tackled and, even then, only partially in peace processes. The "R" in DDR is understood to include reintegration, rehabilitation, resettlement, repatriation of refugees and in some conflicts repatriation of foreign ex-combatants. This multiple signification of "R" necessitates the involvement of many skilled and talented partners in the design and implementation of the various components of reintegration. The experiences of nationals and in particular those from areas impacted by the conflict are critical in the design and implementation of reintegration activities. Flexibility in structures, capacity and resources should be allowed to permit the seizing of opportunities as they arise. All of these concerns tend to delay further the start of DDR and require concerted coordination efforts from all actors.

61. Reintegration programmes attempt to respond to a myriad of needs of ex-combatants and communities. This makes the implementation of reintegration programmes time consuming and technical assistance intensive. Training ex-combatants to acquire the level of skills required to successfully exercise the various trades of their choice is not only difficult but also requires a large number of qualified personnel. However, the main challenge to having a successful reintegration programme is to introduce the notion early in peace negotiations and to ensure that funding is available to initiate activities at the same time as disarmament and demobilisation.

62. Participants at peace negotiations normally focus on military and political concerns. They may understand the need to disarm and demobilize surplus troops but not necessarily the need to design specific programmes that would lead to the reconciliation and reintegration of ex-combatants with their host communities. Reintegration is expected to occur automatically following the return of ex-combatants to their communities of origin or choice. In reality, many ex-combatants especially those from rural areas do not wish to return to their areas of origin. Activities have to be designed that would occupy the ex-combatants and assure them sustainable livelihoods. This is difficult under conditions of peace and is doubly so in post-conflict conditions.

63. An additional concern for reintegration is the issue of reconciliation. This is perhaps the most critical aspect of peace processes but it receives only passing attention. The rehabilitation and reconstruction of physical infrastructure, important as it is, cannot guarantee sustained peace and stability. Reconciliation is a more solid foundation on which to build peace and stability. The process of reconciliation is long-term and requires a change in mindset not only on the part of ex-combatants but of community members as well. Ex-combatants have to switch their conflict resolution and livelihood strategies from the use of violence to the use of non-violent means. Members of communities who may have been brutalized by some of the ex-combatants have to develop a spirit of forgiveness. Working together in community development activities

contributes to lessening hatred and building mutual trust. Given the short duration of DDR programmes, reintegration activities should be linked to other medium and long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction, recovery and development frameworks to ensure their sustainability.

C. RESPONDING ADEQUATELY TO GROUPS WITH SPECIAL NEEDS

64. Groups with special needs, in particular children and women require specific early attention in the design and implementation of DDR programmes but it has been difficult to include their concerns early in peace negotiations. The DDR of child ex-combatants should be guided by the Rights of the Child adopted by the Summit of Heads of State in 1990 and the Cape Town principles adopted in April 2002. Although parties to conflicts are aware of international agreements and Security Council resolutions²⁸ prohibiting the recruitment of children into armed forces, they still do so. The number of child soldiers in various armed factions is grossly understated for fear of possible criminal prosecution of leaders of armed groups. Some armed groups manifest their intention to release child soldiers and other children associated with them even prior to the signature of peace agreements but there are no appropriate structures to receive the children nor are funds available for such pre-DDR activities. This was a particular problem for children released by the government in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The lack of structures and funding delayed the release of child soldiers by the Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie (RCD)²⁹.

65. Child ex-combatants participating in disarmament need to be separated from adults and leaders of armed groups as soon as possible to avoid further abuse. They need to be issued with identification cards to enable them to benefit from education, health and other programmes directed towards children. Family reunification programmes that facilitate the early return of children to their families and communities need additional impetus. Child ex-combatants may need psychological counseling, special education, and skills development programmes including traditional apprenticeships to prepare them for a productive and fulfilling life.

66. Women form a significant part of armed groups, especially the irregular armies. They serve as soldiers, cooks, carriers, bush wives or dependents of male combatants. Their numbers are however understated. In disarmament programmes the question of who is a female combatant poses difficulties for a large number of women associated with armed groups many adopt a narrow definition that favors male combatants and blocks females from participating in DDR and getting access to benefits. Women are in some cases reluctant to come forward and participate in DDR for fear of being stigmatized. They simply walk away and are missed by the programme. Specific actions need to be taken to make disarmament and demobilisation centers more women friendly, such as separate housing and facilities and programmes such as HIV/AIDS testing and counseling, and to encourage women to participate. Support to women's groups that protect the interests of women ex-combatants would also be helpful.

67. Sensitization programmes targeted at leaders of armed groups, women associated with armed groups, combatants and non combatants, and implementors of DDR programmes need to

²⁸ Security Council resolutions 1539 (2004) of 22 April 2004 and 1612 (2005) of 26 July 2005 specifically prohibit the recruitment and use of child soldiers and call on all parties concerned to abide by the international obligations applicable to them relating to the protection of children affected by armed conflict.

²⁹ DRC expressed the wish to release child soldiers in the course of the peace negotiations but there were no appropriate structures to receive them. The few hundred child soldiers released by the DRC government were held in a reception center for a long period without appropriate support.

be launched early in peace negotiations to highlight the needs of women. Proactive actions to protect the rights of women associated with armed groups whose husbands died in the conflict are needed to ensure their access to reinsertion, demobilisation benefits and widow's pensions.

D. SECURITY SECTOR REFORM

68. Peace agreements usually include measures to ensure reform of the security sector, the army and other law enforcement institutions. This normally includes the formation of new national armies and police forces. The practice is to fuse the rival forces on the basis of agreed proportions reserved for each force or in the case of a military victory, the token incorporation of some elements from other forces. Security sector reform takes much longer than expected as rival armed groups seek to gain advantages over each other by claiming strategic positions in the command structure and by including as many of their troops as possible in the new security forces. Security sector reform is normally led by bilateral donor agencies. Multilateral institutions including the UN, the World Bank, the IMF and Regional Development Banks avoid taking part in security sector reform³⁰. The challenge is twofold: ensuring an early start in security sector reform and ensuring a truly national character for the new security forces.

69. An early start in security sector reform depends largely on the political engagement of the national political leaders, especially the transitional government or the leaders of the victorious faction in case of a military victory. The formation of an army that is truly national is even more difficult. Pressure from the international community is in favor of small professional armies with the excess troops to be disarmed and demobilized. Leaders of the former rival forces are more preoccupied with the protection of their men and women than with the formation of truly national armies that reflect the ethnic or regional composition of the country.

70. Professional armies serve well in countries with functioning and stable political and social systems that do not allow leaders to misuse military and other security forces for political ends. In most African countries the "national" armies are not national. They are composed essentially of persons originating from some regions or ethnic groups that have militaristic traditions or from the area of origin of the political leaders. The armies thus tend to be used to suppress political opposition. This is a basic underlying conflict factor in many African countries that is not normally addressed. A real challenge in post-conflict situations and also in countries enjoying relative stability is to engage in processes that would lead to the creation of truly national armies in which the population can have confidence rather than fear. A small professionally trained army with a large conscript component would constitute a significant response to this challenge. It may not be possible to create a largely conscript army in the years immediately following a conflict but this could be phased-in in the course of a decade. A largely conscript army would bring several advantages:

- Enable young persons from various regions and ethnic groups to live, train and work together in defense of their country;
- Engage a much larger number of youths than a professional army, impart discipline and keep them from moving to the next conflict country;
- Offer opportunities for large numbers of youths to engage in skills development programmes that would serve them in civilian life;
- Reduce military expenditure in the long-term.

³⁰ Multilateral organizations do not have a mandate or capacity in security matters and are therefore reluctant to get involved. A review has been requested by MDRP partners to enhance coordination between SSR and DDR.

71. Conscript armies could be phased out after several decades when political, social and law enforcement institutions have gained sufficient stability to withstand attempts to destabilize the country. Although good governance and respect for human rights would considerably reduce the extent to which professional armies are used to abuse and suppress populations, and the APRM will contribute to this, every effort should be made to have national armies that reflect the population composition of countries.

72. Lack of adequate support for police forces poses a serious challenge to the successful implementation of peace agreements and DDR. All stakeholders and practitioners are convinced that the early establishment of a functional police force is essential in the peace process and DDR. Many donors and partners are eager to support the training of police forces and the supply of equipment but few are willing to support salary payments for police officers. This is a matter for serious concern as poorly paid police officers are more likely to be corrupt and constitute an element of instability.

E. BALANCING THE INTERESTS OF EX-COMBATANTS AND COMMUNITIES

73. It is critically important that persons who have taken up arms in a conflict be given other viable alternatives at the end of the conflict to earn a living and thus dissuade them from using their weapons for that purpose. This was the main focus of early reintegration activities. The impact of conflicts on those who did not move from their communities, have not received much attention. The exclusive attention to ex-combatants returning to their communities of choice at the end of a conflict in the form of reinsertion and demobilisation payments, reintegration allowances and other post-conflict support measures including skills development training has generated a certain amount of resentment on the part of those who remained in their communities. The challenge is to design and implement reintegration activities that encourage reconciliation with returning ex-combatants, not resentment and suspicion.

74. New strategies have been developed to reduce resentment within communities. These include the payment of most demobilisation entitlements to ex-combatants in the communities of their choice rather than at the demobilisation centres to stimulate local economies and the channeling of funds to support reintegration to communities. Emphasis is also placed on the design and implementation of training courses and community development programmes for the rehabilitation of essential infrastructure that benefits entire communities and also provides opportunities for ex-combatants and other community members to work together.

75. Additional efforts are needed to reduce residual resentment that people who have remained in communities feel towards ex-combatants. Working together and sharing more broadly the financial benefits derived from the implementation of peace agreements would facilitate reconciliation and a positive change in mindsets. The design and implementation of activities that promote participation of both ex-combatants and community members should be based on an analysis of the underlying causes of conflicts not just the creation of new community assets that could be destroyed in the next conflict. DDR programmes are important in providing secure environments that permit the establishment of democratic and credible government institutions and the design and implementation of medium and long-term development programmes. However, these institutions and programmes will remain fragile if there is not genuine reconciliation between the former warring factions and between ex-combatants and communities. Programmes that promote reconciliation and culture of peace education programmes aimed at

changing the mindsets of populations affected by conflicts need greater support. These are long-term in nature and require a secure and sustainable funding base.

F. YOUTH UNEMPLOYMENT

76. Youth unemployment is a key challenge to be addressed in post-conflict countries. Economic dislocation and the destruction of economic infrastructure caused by conflicts result in the loss of employment opportunities in the productive sectors: agriculture, mining, forestry and manufacturing. Many governments in post-conflict situations are unable to pay the wages of civil servants and are not in a position to offer new employment. Self-employed artisans and small-scale entrepreneurs exercise their trades and businesses with great difficulty due to insecurity, decreasing purchasing power of the population and displacement. Unemployment and under-employment total over eighty-five percent in some countries in post-conflict situations and this is even higher among youths who have drifted from rural areas to urban centers in search of non-existent jobs.

77. Unemployed youths are easy targets for recruitment into armed groups and they form the bulk of troops of warring factions in Africa's conflicts. DDR programmes accord priority attention to disarmament and demobilisation but only limited resources are available for reintegration activities in support of training and skills development for youths. Resource poor post-conflict governments have to operate within constraints set by multilateral financial institutions and are unable to design and implement large-scale public works programmes that would provide employment opportunities for youths.

78. The challenge of youth unemployment has to be addressed early, starting from peace negotiations, and fully developed at the design stage of DDR programmes. Unemployed youths are not only easy targets for recruitment to fight within their countries but also to serve in armed groups of neighbouring countries. Banditry that has become a problem in many post-conflict countries is largely the work of unemployed youths. Should the current state of affairs continue, the large pools of unemployed youths in Liberia, Sierra Leone and the countries of the Great Lakes Region would constitute a grave danger to peace, security and stability and may lead to relapse into conflict in some of the countries now in transition from war to peace, stability and development.

G. REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS

79. African conflicts have posed particular challenges to stability in neighboring countries and entire sub-regions such as in the Great Lakes region and the Mano River Union³¹ in West Africa. The large-scale movement of armed groups from one country to another has led to generalized insecurity in these sub-regions and has contributed to the transfer of conflicts across borders. A key challenge is the need to strengthen the African Union and the Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to be able to prevent conflicts and, when they do arise, contain them within national borders and limit any negative impact on neighbouring countries.

80. There are many sub-regional bodies in Africa. These include the Regional Economic Communities; ECOWAS in West Africa, ECCAS in Central Africa, SADC in Southern Africa, IGAD in East Africa and the Magreb Union in North Africa. There are also smaller groupings of countries within Regional Economic Communities that deal with monetary matters and the

³¹ Mano River Union is made of Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

management of river and lake basins. Others cut across Regional Economic Communities and deal with trade and general cooperation. All of these bodies provide opportunities for dialogue and preventive diplomacy. The Regional Economic Communities are involved in conflict resolution and they have structures and capacities that could be strengthened to enable them to play even more positive roles in conflict prevention, resolution and management including the implementation of DDR programmes.

81. The international community including the United Nations is increasingly working with the African Union to strengthen its peacekeeping and peace-building role in the region. An enhanced conflict management capacity within the African Union would facilitate cooperation with the international community to strengthen the conflict management capacities of the Regional Economic Communities. Sub-regional bodies with augmented capacities would be in a position to implement weapons registration and control programmes, coordinate multi-country disarmament activities, encourage and support joint security actions along common borders and coordinate repatriation programmes for foreign ex-combatants. Sub-regional coordination would also be beneficial to UN agencies such as OCHA, UNHCR and WFP and non UN bodies such as the International Organisation for Migration that provides the bulk of support for the repatriation and resettlement of refugees.

82. Political will and a spirit of trust and cooperation is needed on the part of sub-regional political leaders to overcome the frictions that lead to mutual accusations and suspicion regarding the harboring and provision of support to opposition groups. Working together within the African Union, Regional Economic Communities and other sub-regional bodies, parties would be better able to deal collectively with potentially destabilizing issues before they become problems. The international community can contribute significantly in building this spirit of cooperation through mechanisms such as the Conference on Peace, Stability and Development in the Great Lakes Region organised by the United Nations in November 2004³².

H. PREDICTABLE AND SUSTAINABLE FUNDING

83. Peace agreements generate considerable support by the international community and large amounts of financial resources are committed for the maintenance of peacekeeping missions and implementation of DDR programmes. DDR programmes represent only a small fraction of the costs associated with the implementation of peace agreements but only the disarmament and demobilisation activities are normally fully funded from assessed contributions. Reintegration activities are normally not fully funded and their funding is from voluntary contributions that are neither timely nor predictable. Only small portions of reintegration activities included in “quick action projects” receive funding from assessed budgets. The challenge is to establish resource mobilization mechanisms that would provide adequate resources for the implementation of all DDR activities including those in support of reintegration and provide for the release of adequate funds in a timely, predictable and flexible manner. Most UN funds, programmes and specialized agencies receive short-term funding to respond to emergency and humanitarian needs of populations in conflict and post conflict situations. WFP’s Protracted Relief and Recovery funding window permits a considerable degree of linkage between meeting short-term emergency and medium-term reintegration needs.

³² A conference was held in Dar-es-Salaam, Tanzania, in November 2004 with the aim of encouraging discussion on a wide range of issues among countries involved or affected by the conflict in the Great Lakes Region and to contribute to security, stability and development in the region.

84. Ideally, reintegration activities should be integrated into long-term development programmes such as Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) that would ensure a predictable resource base for the continuation and sustainability of reintegration activities started under DDR programmes. However, the preparation of PRSPs takes time and post-conflict national institutions and transitional governments may not be in a position to undertake negotiations with international financial institutions and donor agencies that are needed to reach agreement on medium to long-term development programmes. In some post-conflict situations international conferences have been called for the purpose of discussing a medium to long-term rehabilitation, reconstruction and recovery programme and raising the resources for its implementation.

85. Although post-conflict peace-building conferences have proved to be useful, there have been wide variations in the level of resource commitments. Some countries have received generous support while others have not. Peace-building conferences need to be organised to ensure support and funding over a period of time with appropriate review mechanisms to ensure that pledges are honoured. Such conferences and their review mechanisms could serve as launching pads for the preparation of PRSPs and other medium to long-term development programmes. Additional mechanisms that are not country specific and that would facilitate contributions from the international community in support of reintegration activities are needed. In this regard, the decision of the 2005 World Summit to authorize the Secretary-General to establish a Standing Trust Fund for peacekeeping and peacebuilding is a major improvement over previous funding arrangements for DDR. If fully resourced, the fund would provide predictable, timely and flexible financing in support of DDR and lead to improved overall effectiveness of programmes to support peace, stability and development in Africa.

VII. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. DDR programmes should be planned and designed early in peace processes and early implementation opportunities should be exploited.
 - a) Concerted efforts by the international community to ensure funding for DDR programmes are needed.
 - b) Resources for DDR programmes should be adequate, flexible, timely and multi-year to ensure their effective use and seamless support to various components of DDR.
 - c) The convening of post-conflict peace-building conferences to support and raise funds for implementation of peace agreements including reintegration activities for a period of three to five years should be systematized and appropriate review mechanisms incorporated to monitor the conversion of pledges into financial resources.
 - d) The Multi-Year Trust Fund for post-conflict peacebuilding approved by the sixtieth anniversary summit of the United Nations should be established and resourced as soon as possible.
 - e) Existing instruments such as MDRP and UN consolidated appeals for humanitarian activities should be strengthened. UN funds and programmes should consider adapting WPF's Protracted Relief and Recovery Operations (PRRO) resourcing arrangements to their specific situations.
 - f) The SIDDR review process should be completed as soon as possible to ensure improved coordination of donor funding policies.
2. Serious consideration should be given to the funding of security sector reform from multilateral resources to facilitate early and more transparent SSR operations.
 - a) The African Union should develop standard operating procedures and practices and build capacity to assist countries in post-conflict situations to design and implement security sector reform strategies. The UN, multilateral financial institutions and bilateral donors should provide support to the African Union in this regard.
 - b) Security sector reform that is transparent and inclusive would contribute significantly to restoring confidence in the population and reconciliation.
 - c) The new national armies and security forces emerging from security sector reform should be truly national in composition. The integration of former rival forces does not necessarily result in a national army. Recruitment strategies such as including elements of a conscript force should be used to ensure broad national representation.
 - d) Special efforts should be made by the international community to support the early establishment of police forces in post-conflict countries including the payment of salaries.
3. The needs of children, youths and women do not receive adequate attention in the design and implementation of DDR programmes.

- a) Children associated with armed groups should be demobilized and reunited with their families and reintegrated into their communities as soon as possible.
 - b) Opportunities for the early separation of child ex-combatants should be exploited even prior to the signature of peace agreements. Where possible, child demobilisation should be used as a pre-condition for armed groups to gain places around peace negotiation tables.
 - c) DDR support funds should have inbuilt flexibility to permit programme implementers to seize opportunities that arise for early separation of children and women associated with armed groups from their captors.
 - d) Special effort should be made to respond to the particular needs of girls associated with armed groups to overcome stigmas associated with bush wives and single mothers.
 - e) Every effort should be made to include women ex-combatants in the design and implementation of DDR programmes.
4. Reconciliation and forgiveness are critical for successful reintegration. Peace agreements focus particular attention on political, military and security issues but it is successful reconciliation and reintegration that guarantees that countries in post-conflict situations do not relapse to war.
- a) Reintegration schemes should place emphasis on long-term reconciliation activities including those aimed at demilitarizing the minds of ex-combatants and sensitizing host community members.
 - b) Lessons learned from successful pilot projects on culture of change education in Albania, Cambodia, Niger and Peru should be used to design an expanded culture of peace education programme to be implemented in African countries in post-conflict situations.
 - c) Reinsertion and demobilisation payments to ex-combatants and reintegration allowances that are targeted to ex-combatants often raise issues of equity as victims are normally excluded.
 - d) Reintegration activities and benefits deriving from them should be targeted as much as possible to all victims of conflicts and communities affected by conflicts through activities that permit broad participation in community development.
 - e) Demobilization payments and reintegration allowances intended for child ex-combatants should be channeled to programmes benefiting all children in a community.
5. Economies of countries in post-conflict situations are in near collapse and unemployment especially among youths is very high and poses particular danger to the sustainability of peace processes.

- a) Employment creation and training and skills development for self-employment of ex-combatants and other community members with a special focus on youths, including young girls, should be accorded high priority in the design and implementation of reintegration programmes in order to stabilize them and discourage their recruitment into armed groups for conflicts in neighbouring countries.
 - b) The international community should support Governments of post-conflict countries to formulate and implement large-scale public works programmes to rehabilitate and reconstruct damaged essential infrastructure.
6. Small arms trafficking constitutes a major risk factor for DDR programmes and to peace and security in post-conflict situations.
- a) Every effort should be made to ensure the collection, safe storage and disposal of weapons used in a conflict. Where the civilian population has acquired a large number of weapons, special weapons collection programmes for civilians should be implemented. Such programmes should continue for several years after DDR.
 - b) The international community should support regional weapons collection, registration and control programmes. In this regard, the UN should strengthen the DDA regional office in Lomé. Given the critical need for effective weapons collection and control programmes in West and Central Africa, including the Great Lakes Region, a second office should be established for the Great Lakes region.
7. Most African conflicts have regional implications and therefore solutions should be regional in scope.
- a) Weapons trafficking, the cross-border movement of ex-combatants, cross-border insecurity arising from armed groups and bandits and the repatriation of foreign ex-combatants should receive high attention from the African Union, NEPAD and regional bodies.
 - b) The African Union, NEPAD and sub-regional organisations should strengthen existing mechanisms for conflict resolution and post-conflict management including DDR, to ensure that regional concerns are adequately addressed.

ANNEX

Recommendations of the Conference on Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration and Stability in Africa 21 to 23 June 2005 in Freetown, Sierra Leone

The Conference, co-organized by the Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone and the United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA) adopted the following recommendations:

1. DDR should not be overburdened by all post-conflict demands. Rather, it should be linked backward and forward to the broader peace process (including peace agreements) and peace-building programmes. DDR should always be accompanied by parallel relief, resettlement and rehabilitation efforts for all war-affected populations, especially in the context of local communities as well as by Security Sector Reform
2. National ownership of DDR programmes is critical for success. In this regard, efforts should be made to genuinely support national stakeholders (government, civil society and warring factions among others) through technical assistance and capacity building.
3. The international community should support and work in genuine partnership with national DDR stakeholders and it should also better coordinate its own efforts and make its DDR funding mechanisms more flexible and timely.
4. Every effort should be made to include regional perspectives in the design and implementation of DDR programmes.
5. The special groups associated with warring factions (particularly women, children and the disabled) should be provided with special protective measures in the design and planning stages of any DDR programme.
6. The complexity of DDR programmes was recognised by all. It was therefore recommended that an integrated approach, involving national and international stakeholders, including humanitarian agencies, should be used in the planning process of DDR programmes.
7. Provision or non-provision of a reinsertion package (cash or in kind) to demobilized ex-combatants to support their transition to normal civilian life should be given careful consideration at the design phase of a DDR programme.
8. All stakeholders should be aware of the importance of small arms collection and control following the conclusion of formal disarmament programmes.
9. To promote long-term stability following a DDR programme in a given country, participants agreed that longer-term development programmes that address the root causes of the conflict (e.g. Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) and other national recovery frameworks) as well as programmes for the prevention and control of HIV/AIDS should be initiated and adequately funded.

10. The network of African DDR practitioners needs to be strengthened to share experiences and innovative ideas and convey their perspectives to the UN and other international partners. In support of these efforts, the Conference proposed that African DDR practitioners and stakeholders meet every two years to review the progress made and seek ways of further improving DDR programmes and their contribution to stability in Africa.

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