



Interim Stabilization

Balancing Security and Development  
in Post-Conflict Peacebuilding



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The Stockholm Initiative on DDR also published its *Final Report* and a compilation entitled *Background Studies* in 2006 and *Testing the Principles* in 2007.

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Nat J. Colletta, Jens Samuelsson Schjørlie & Hannes Berts



FOLKE BERNADOTTE ACADEMY



REGERINGSKANSLIET

**Ministry for Foreign Affairs  
Sweden**

## Acronyms

AIA	Afghan Interim Authority
AMF	Afghan Militia Forces
ANBP	Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme
ANA	Afghan National Army
ANC	African National Party (South Africa)
AUC	Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia
BCB	Bloque Central Bolívar (Colombia)
CONANDER	Commission Nationale pour la Démobilisation et la Réinsertion (DRC)
CPA	Comprehensive Peace Agreement (Nepal)
DDR	Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration
DRC	Democratic Republic of the Congo
ELN	Eljército de Liberación Nacional (Colombia)
EUSEC	EU security sector reform mission in the DRC
FAA	Angolan Armed Forces
FAR	Forces Armées Rwandaises
FARC	Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia
FARDC	Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo
FBA	Folke Bernadotte Academy
FUNCINPEC	Front Uni National pour un Cambodge Indépendant, Neutre, Pacifique, et Coopératif (Cambodia)
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IGO	Inter-Governmental Organisation
IS	Interim Stabilization
KFOR	Kosovo Force
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
KR	Khmer Rouge (Cambodia)
LRA	Lord Resistance Army (Uganda)
MDRP	Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program
MFA	Ministry for Foreign Affairs
MILF	Moro Islamic Liberation Front (Mindanao)
MNLF	Moro National Liberation Front (Mindanao)
MONUC	UN Mission in DR Congo
MPLA	Movimento Popular de Libertado de Angola
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PCRD	Post Conflict Reconstruction and Development (African Union)
PN-DDR	The DRC National DDR-Plan
PPA	Paris Peace Agreement (Cambodia)
RPA	Rwanda Patriotic Army
SANDF	South African National Defence Force
SIDDR	Stockholm Initiative on DDR
SSR	Security Sector (System) Reform
TJ	Transitional Justice
UNITA	União Nacional para la Independencia Total de Angola
UNMIK	United Nation's Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UPDF	Uganda Peoples Defence Forces

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Stockholm and Sarasota, December 2008

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# Executive Summary

In the early phase of a transition from war to peace, numerous political aspirations and concerns of individuals and groups must be carefully balanced. Moving from military conflict to sustainable peace requires a gradual adjustment by the conflicting parties from a dependence on military sources of power to an ability to operate as civilian actors in a peacetime society. Many DDR and SSR processes fail because the political environment (i.e. primarily the trust and confidence that each party will stick to what have been agreed) are not ripe at the time of signing an agreement. Mediation efforts, program planning and even terminology must be sensitive to cultural, economic, social and historical circumstances, allowing for ownership of a peace process, by its relevant stakeholders.

The Stockholm Initiative on DDR recommended that *“In order to avoid gaps between the short-term and the long-term focus, consideration might be given to temporarily maintaining ex-combatants, who are designated for a DDR programme, in a military structure, i.e. ‘holding pattern’. Such an interim solution would provide the time and space for debriefing and demilitarisation of the mindset of ex-combatants.”* (Final Report, 2006). Further studies were recommended on *“transitional mechanisms that would allow control over armed groups while awaiting political solutions”* (Testing the Principles, 2007).

To better understand such transitional mechanisms for balancing security and development, this study has been conducted by the Folke Bernadotte Academy and Sthlm Policy Group during 2007/08. It elaborates on the idea of “holding patterns”, as a possible means of dealing with some of the obstacles to peace. The study develops the concept of Interim Stabilization (IS), defined as measures that *MAY be used to keep former combatants’ cohesiveness intact within a military or civilian structure, creating space for a political dialogue and the formation of an environment conducive to social and economic reintegration.*

In addition to a review of available literature, the study includes three in-country case studies where Interim Stabilization measures have been put to the test:

In Cambodia, we have studied the process in which former Khmer Rouge (KR) commanders were “de facto” provided an autonomous region within the state

in which internal reintegration could be handled without external interference. (Study carried out by the Advocacy Policy Institute).

In Colombia, our case study examines the processes of collective reintegration of paramilitaries, with command and control structures kept intact, and simultaneous individual reintegration of FARC and ELN rebels in civil-military roles during ongoing conflict/negotiations. (Study carried out by Fundación Ideas para la Paz).

In Uganda, we have studied the example of the Labora farm, where LRA (Lord's Resistance Army) troops were offered civilian alternatives in farming for themselves and their families, with their military organization partly intact. (Study carried out by the Kampala International School of Ethics and the Uganda Amnesty Commission).

The main rationale for IS-measures, common to all the cases examined in this study, has been to help put an end to a situation of spiraling violence and reduce the risk of resumption of hostilities by holding former combatants in formal structures, thereby maintaining a critical level of security. We have identified a typology of five categories of arrangements that fall within the IS-definition: 1) *creation of civilian service corps*; 2) *military integration arrangements*; 3) *creation of transitional security forces*; 4) *dialogue and sensitization programs and halfway-house arrangements*; 5) *different forms of transitional autonomy*. These categories are not precise or mutually exclusive. In fact, in many cases Interim Stabilization measures contain elements resembling the characteristics of two or more of these categories.

The objectives of interim stabilization relate to the *state level* (to solve outstanding issues relating to *powers-sharing* and *institutional frameworks*) as well as to *community-* (to allow for *initial sensitization* preparing for the return of ex-combatants, and a thorough analysis of *transitional justice* and *reconciliation* needs) and the *individual level* (guarantee security through the maintenance of *cohesion* through familiar structures, the sense of *agency and legitimacy* through transitional *livelihood*, and/or room for life skills training and psycho-social support).

It is important to note that the concept of Interim Stabilization is not proposed as a mandatory first step in peace building, nor should it necessarily be conceived as a new component of a DDR-SSR process. In fact, it may be considered a pre-DDR programme to manage security risks of premature demobilization. The underlying assumption of the study, however, is that sometimes, conventional tools are not sufficient to deal with security concerns in the immediate aftermath of violent conflicts. In such situations Interim Stabilization could be introduced to allow for other enabling factors to fall into place.

# I. Introduction

The necessity to interlink security and development oriented activities forms the basis for contemporary international peacebuilding efforts. A number of peacebuilding tools are available to facilitate the war to peace transition. The concepts of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Security Sector Reform (SSR) are two such tools. They can be employed to facilitate the transfer of control over the security and military apparatus to civilian authorities (i.e. breaking existing command structures) while continuing the political dialogue and building confidence between former rivals through power sharing mechanisms. The concept of Transitional Justice (TJ), dealing with crimes committed by one or both sides to a conflict, is another key concept in peacebuilding processes. Although TJ modalities are not the primary focus of this study, it is important to recognize and address justice concerns when implementing DDR and SSR programs to ensure legitimacy and accountability, especially through the application of transparent vetting processes.

The successful employment of these peacebuilding tools is dependent on a certain level of stability, often lacking in the immediate aftermath of a violent conflict. This study sets out to explore ways in which minimum levels of security and stability can be attained in the early phase after a peace agreement has been negotiated and signed or when a cessation of hostilities is agreed. The working hypothesis is that political processes to build sustainable peace take time – often more than is available in the fragile period following a peace agreement. Lack of quick results on the ground and impatience on both sides are often serious challenges. A rush to declare peace (and in the case of the international community – to mark an exit strategy), in the absence of stability and opportunities for successful implementation of peacebuilding initiatives, is one major risk factor for relapse into violence.

This race against time in early peacebuilding is at the heart of the topic of this study. The tool – or menu of options – that is proposed can be described as a time-

out or a “holding pattern”, in order to allow for continued political dialogue and measures to prepare institutions, communities and combatants for long-term peacebuilding and reintegration efforts. The term *Interim Stabilization (IS)* is used to conceptualize this phase of preparing for a sustainable transition. Unlike other peacebuilding tools and concepts, *Interim Stabilization* aims to describe a type of measure defined by its timing and purpose, rather than a concrete measure defined by its design. Hopefully this concept (and an understanding of the key contextual factors shaping its use) can help broaden the range of options available to negotiating parties, mediators and peacebuilding program designers in the field. Throughout the study, we will go through a number of possible designs of IS-measures and analyze their respective strengths and weaknesses. The aim is to draw general lessons and conclusions from relevant cases and experiences while maintaining that no blueprint can be established that is universally applicable.

The research stems from the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration (SIDDR), and has been commissioned by the Swedish Government through the Folke Bernadotte Academy and financed by the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. In the following section, the background and purpose of the research project is outlined.

## The Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration

In recent years, processes of Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of former combatants have been placed at the center of the international community’s support for peace processes (See for example SIDDR; UN IDDRS; the OECD/DAC CPDC-network; EU concept for support to Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration; the AU Framework Document for Post Conflict Recovery Development – web pages provided in references). The DDR-concept has gradually emerged from the lesson that a peace agreement and deployment of peacekeeping operations does not automatically lead to long-term stability. It has become clear that in order to consolidate peace, these efforts must be coupled with longer-term peacebuilding initiatives. DDR links the initial post-conflict phase of stabilization, disarmament and demobilization with programs for more long-term social and economic reintegration of combatants.

However, in spite of this approach where the security and development nexus is taken into account, many DDR-processes fail to sustain a peaceful development. Still, almost half of all conflicts that end through negotiated agreement relapse into violence within five years (see Uppsala University, Department of Peace and

Conflict Research Database). All too often, DDR has been approached from a primarily technical perspective, neglecting the importance of the surrounding political and social environment.

In 2004, the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs initiated the Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament Demobilization Reintegration (see SIDDR Background Studies, Final Report and Testing the Principles). Aware of the challenges and opportunities of DDR in post conflict peace processes, the aim was to create predictable frameworks for successful implementation of such programs. The SIDDR was organized as an international working process, including non-governmental (NGO) and inter-governmental (IGO) organizations as well as government representatives. In 2006, a Final Report was presented to the Secretary General of the United Nations. The Report states that the primary aim of DDR is to contribute to a secure and stable environment in which an overall peace process and transition to sustainable development can be achieved. It is only in this kind of ‘enabling’ environment that political and security oriented reforms, as well as social and economic reconstruction and longer-term development, can take root.

The Stockholm Initiative on DDR elaborated on the early phase of post-conflict situations, where there might be a peace agreement signed at the high political level, but where the options and opportunities for individual soldiers are often very scarce. The SIDDR unbundled the concept of reintegration, proposing an immediate short-term focus on transitional reintegration of former combatants aimed at primarily stabilizing a fragile peace. This early reintegration was referred to as Reinsertion, using the terminology of the United Nations (see reference to the UN IDDRS below). In fact, the terminology and concept of “Reinsertion” was initially introduced as a “transitional safety net phase” in the 1996 multi-country study on demobilization and reintegration programs undertaken by the World Bank (Colletta, Kostner and Wiederhofer, 1996). Although the primary focus would be to guarantee that former combatants do not need to return to violence to make a living, all initiatives must be tied to a long-term plan for sustainable economic and social development.

In 2006, working in parallel with the SIDDR process, the United Nations’ inter-agency working group on DDR established the Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS) as guidance for technical support, financing and implementation of DDR programs. Through the IDDRS, common definitions of the terminology: Disarmament, Demobilization, Reinsertion and Reintegration, were established (See [www.unddr.org](http://www.unddr.org) or Annex 1 for definitions).



## Generative Dialogues in Promoting Peace Processes

The SIDDR working process identified a need to further explore the relationship between the DDR concept and the context in which DDR-programs were implemented. The Swedish Government Agency, Folke Bernadotte Academy, was mandated to run a follow-up project; testing the recommendations and conclusions of the SIDDR Final Report. Whereas the SIDDR report focused on the concept of DDR and its role in relation to parallel peace building concerns (e.g. SSR, justice, governance, and socio-economic recovery) the follow-up project elaborated further on the political dynamics of the DDR-SSR interface. The findings of the SIDDR were brought to the field and introduced to parties and negotiators in ongoing peace talks.

The SIDDR had asserted that mediation efforts, program planning and even terminology must be sensitive to cultural, economic, social and historical circumstances, allowing for real ownership of the DDR-process by its relevant stakeholders. Experiences from the follow-up project suggest that dealing with disarmament and reintegration of former combatants under an adapted terminology, such as ‘demilitarization and economic mainstreaming’ (as in Mindanao) or ‘management of armies and arms’ (as in Nepal), can help establish the trust and confidence necessary to maintain a process of dialogue. For the sake of consistency, this report will use the concept DDR as defined by the SIDDR and IDDRS, understanding that the determinants of successful DDR, especially reintegration, must be identified and defined within the context of each particular peace process.

## Rationale for a Study of Interim Stabilization (or “Holding Patterns”)

While the vast majority of available literature advocates that DDR programs should be designed and implemented within an overall peace strategy, there is little precise guidance to be found on the topic. The determinants of effective reintegration among individual combatants are often difficult to pin down (Humphreys and Weinstein, 2005). This is particularly apparent in relation to the early phase where the conditions might not yet be optimal for a DDR process.

From an implementation point of view, the knowledge-gap regarding the formative initial stages of DDR program design and implementation leaves a number of urgent questions unanswered. For example: How to deal with large numbers of poorly educated and unskilled former combatants, and mid- and

upper-level commanders in an economy with very limited labor absorption capacity? How to restructure a security sector while simultaneously absorbing combatants into that sector? How to guarantee that a “security vacuum” is not inadvertently created? Unsettled issues of political power sharing and positioning often further complicate the situation.

The follow-up project noted that many DDR processes fail because the political circumstances are not ripe at the time of signing an agreement. Often, what is primarily lacking is mutual trust and confidence between the parties. Further studies were therefore recommended on “*transitional mechanisms that would allow control over armed groups while awaiting political solutions*” (SIDDR Testing the Principles p 35). This was in line with the SIDDR Final Report’s statement that “*In order to avoid gaps between the short-term and the long-term focus, consideration might be given to temporarily maintaining ex-combatants, who are designated for a DDR programme, in a military (or civil)<sup>1</sup> structure, i.e. ‘holding pattern’. Such an interim solution would provide the time and space for debriefing and demilitarisation of the mindset of ex-combatants*” (SIDDR Final Report p 25).

In light of these challenges in the early phase of war to peace transitions, this study seeks to elaborate on the idea of “holding patterns”, referred to in this study as *Interim Stabilization*, as a possible means of dealing with some of the obstacles to peace outlined above. The working hypothesis is that reshaping “command” structures, but keeping former combatants in their existing organizational “control” structures (i.e. maintaining their social cohesion) for a limited period of time, before integration into the (reformed) security apparatus and/or reintegration into productive civilian lives, might be a more effective interim stabilizing strategy than poorly planned demobilization and reintegration programs or premature Security Sector Reform.

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1. Author’s parenthesis added



## 2. Setting the Stage: Challenges in Early Transition and Peacebuilding

### Understanding the Key Contextual Factors

In the early phase of a transition from war to peace, numerous political aspirations and concerns of individuals and groups must be carefully balanced. Moving from military conflict to sustainable peace requires a gradual adjustment by the conflicting parties from a dependence on military sources of power to an ability to operate as civilian actors in a peacetime society. While adjusting to a civilian political arena may be imperative for the leadership level, a war to peace transition often entails serious implications for individual combatants as well. In a civilian society, they must find realistic alternative livelihoods, without the use of military force. With an average implementation timeframe of 3–5 years, as suggested in a recent analysis from *Escola de cultura de pau* (Caramés, Fisas and Sanz, 2007), looking at all active DDR programmes 2006; the rapid launch of a programme does not guarantee a shortened disarmament and demobilization period.

Generally, peace-agreements cannot reflect the concerns and aspirations of every stakeholder in a war-torn society. Many stakeholders may not even have a seat at the negotiating table. For the sake of long-term stability, it is crucial that peace-agreements are formulated so that they create an environment and a platform for continued political dialogue and a framework for a long-term augmented process towards lasting peace.

Understanding the key contextual factors that shape war to peace transitions helps prepare the ground for a successful long-term peace process. Such factors are:

#### I. Nature and duration of the conflict:

- › Underlying causes of conflict and the interests and agenda of the fighting parties (i.e. ideological, cultural and/or economic etc.).
- › The level of trust and confidence in political commitments between conflicting parties and in society at large (is there a tradition to stick to agreements? Is there a war fatigue within the communities etc.).

#### II. Nature of the peace:

- › Manner in which the conflict ended (i.e. imposed, negotiated, or third party mediated peace);
- › Framework for dealing with war-time trauma, reconciliation and accountability (Transitional Justice).

#### III. Governance capacity and reach of the state:

- › Ability to provide security for communities and returning combatants;
- › Possibilities for alternative livelihoods in the military services and other parts of the security sector;
- › Capacity to organize transitional employment such as labor intensive public works and in the long run, to create opportunities for economic development.

#### IV. The state of the economy:

- › The base of the economy and market opportunities (access to land and/or property rights, capital, technology, natural resources etc.);
- › Capacity of the economy to absorb unskilled labour.

#### V. Character and cohesiveness of communities and combatants:

- › Level of ethnic homogeneity in the country and in communities (i.e. both in relation to the causes of the conflict and the opportunities of communities to work towards socio-economic development for all ethnic groups);
- › Local cultural norms toward arms bearing and use;
- › Human capital of combatants (vocational and life skills);
- › Aspiration amongst the combatants and of their political and military leaderships as well as level of psychological capacity in the communities to absorb and accept returning combatants;
- › Nature of social cohesion among the combatants and the conflict affected communities.

## Balancing Security and Development – Stability and Change

There seems to be a general consensus amongst researchers and practitioners that post-conflict peacebuilding is ideally to be seen as a multidimensional process, including security, political and socio-economic aspects that reinforce and strengthen each other (see for example UN Secretary General's High Level Panel Report, 2004). These dimensions are not linear. They must be balanced at each

point in time. A main objective of peacebuilding should be to improve the *Human Security* situation. Although it is still debated whether the *Human Security* concept should encompass anything beyond mere physical security, i.e. livelihoods and “social security” (Tadjbakhsh, 2005), the introduction of the concept has facilitated the merger of the security and development agendas. The notion of security has been extended to include not only the security of state institutions and power structures, but also the security of individual citizens (see Human Security Report, 2005). This study rests upon this understanding.

Downsizing the security apparatus too quickly, without finding realistic alternatives, may threaten the peace process and the progress made in the political sphere. Ex-combatants cannot be reintegrated into communities lacking sufficient capacity for labor absorption without risking that these combatants return to violence to secure their livelihoods. Likewise, attempting to establish DDR programs without dealing with issues of justice and reconciliation could lead to stigmatization and, in the worst cases, persecution. Indeed, in the aftermath of a peace agreement, overcoming fear, mistrust and uncertainty amongst former combatants is one of the most difficult challenges (Walter, 1997).

Once the leaders agree to disarm and demobilize their troops they essentially lose the bargaining power they have in the peace process. Should the other party renege on its agreements they can suffer grave consequences. Warring parties can thus find themselves in the classical “prisoner’s dilemma”, where individual rationality trumps collective good. The parties have no way of overcoming fundamental distrust and uncertainty. The risk – or perceived risk – of taking the first step is often simply too large.

DDR-programs have a symbolic as well as a functional value. They can signal a cessation of hostilities, thereby severely undercutting the legitimacy of warring militia, and re-establish a state monopoly over the use of force under a reasonably legitimate government. They can also, if the potential of Transitional Justice and dialogue are properly integrated, contribute to a sensitization process in which combatants’ mindsets are shifted towards a civilian life and the communities are supported to deal with atrocities committed during the conflict. However, there are still gaps in our understanding of exactly what factors can create environments conducive to successful transitions. Establishing and sustaining trust between former rivaling parties remains one of the key challenges.

## Linking SSR and DDR in Post Conflict Peacebuilding

Security is often the number one concern in the immediate aftermath of a violent conflict. Even in cases where an international peacekeeping force is present, safety and security can rarely be provided and guaranteed for all groups and stakeholders. A premature disarmament and demobilization of a rebel group or militia, which may be the only provider of security in a community, risks creating a security vacuum in which criminal groups take over (Schnabel and Ehrhart, 2005). Crime waves may undermine popular faith in the peace process and empower authoritarian actors (Call and Stanley, 2001). The dilemma becomes even more complicated in situations where the parties to a peace process are controlling different parts of a country. With a *Human Security* approach, there may be reasons for postponing a DDR process, and relying on existing security forces with paid and trained individuals for the provision of *transitional security*. Gradually giving former rebels a share in the state-monopoly over the provision of security could further be a valuable strategic instrument in achieving sustainable peace.

A thorough analysis of the entire security system – i.e. military and paramilitary forces, intelligence services, security management and oversight bodies, justice and law enforcement institutions and various civil and military institutions (including both civil society organizations and non-statutory security forces) – provides important information on the general security situation, the possibilities of the state to provide security to its citizens and the capacity to absorb former irregular combatants into the national security apparatus. The concept of Security System Reform (SSR), as defined by OECD/DAC, does not only aim at reconstructing the state security and justice apparatus, but to achieve stability and security for both the state *and* its citizens. This often entails incorporating non-statutory security forces and civil society groups as non-state oversight mechanisms within the overall reform framework. (OECD/DAC 2005).

While conceptually different, DDR and SSR are synergistic (Brzoska, 2006) and can help us with at least two components of peace building; understanding the macro determinants of demilitarization and; overcoming obstacles to successful long-term social and economic reintegration. While the decision to reform the security system can sometimes be taken without a parallel process of demobilization and disarmament, the decision to undertake reintegration of a large number of ex combatants requires some clarity on the shape and size of the future security sector. DDR is normally dependent upon a functioning security system – for general stability but also for capacity to absorb ex-combatants into the regular security apparatus. Similarly, weaknesses in DDR-programs can often be explained by identifying flaws in the existing security system.

## 3. Conceptualizing Interim Stabilization

### Clarifying the Terminology

For the purposes of this study the concept of *Interim Stabilization* (IS) is defined as:

- › Stabilization measures that *may* be used to keep former combatants' cohesiveness intact within a military or civilian structure, creating space and buying time for a political dialogue and the formation of an environment conducive to social and economic reintegration.

In studying the potential of such measures as a means of maintaining minimum levels of security in the immediate post-conflict period, it is interesting to take note of a study by Hoddie and Hartzell (2003) showing that one third of all peace processes since 1990 have included components of *Military Integration* (MI), i.e. integrating former rebels into the national army. They go on to argue that successful MI increases the chances for sustainable peace.

Military integration and redeployment of armed groups as transitional security forces (as mentioned above), present two options that may be suitable in some post-conflict settings. However, an Interim Stabilization measure, as defined in this study, could also be shaped as a civilian program where *intact groups* of former combatants are given civilian duties or simply provided with life-skills training and/or socio-psychological support. An Interim Stabilization measure could thus be employed as a military-, civilian-, or civil-military program. These choices are heavily dependent on the specific context and needs of each particular situation (see section on key contextual factors above).



Presently, little literature exists on this type of military and similar civilian or civil-military programs and the contextual factors, incentives and institutional arrangements conditioning their use and determining their success or failure. Similarly, there is no documented knowledge as to their organization, management and implementation arrangements, vetting procedures, specific program activities, costs and degree of effectiveness. A recent work by Glassmyer and Sambanis (2007) hint at some of the potential conditioning factors which may inform the strategic use of military integration or transitional civil/military mechanisms, for example, economic opportunity; clear military victory or negotiated peace settlement; and the existence of a broad multi-dimensional peace process. The subject of the present study is broader in focus, aiming to fill a gap in documentation and understanding of contextual factors, institutional modalities and incentives shaping the formative early post-conflict period.

## Creating Space and Buying Time for Peacebuilding

The main objective, common to all variations of Interim Stabilization measures, is to help put an end to the violence and reduce the risk of resumption of hostilities by holding former combatants in formal cohesive structures; maintaining a critical level of security and social support in order to “buy time” and create a space for:

- › Continued political dialogue and a settlement of outstanding issues relating primarily to the security sector and political power-sharing;
- › Trust and confidence to emerge allowing for political dialogue;
- › Formation of provisional bureaucratic structures and legal instruments;
- › Proper assessment of absorption capacity in different sectors of society and initial economic reconstruction (i.e. alternative options available for demobilized combatants);
- › Sensitization of communities, and;
- › Socio-psychological adjustment of combatants.

This list indicates that the primary objective of Interim Stabilizations – allowing for an environment conducive to social and economic reintegration to emerge – relates to the **state level** as well as to **community-** and **individual levels**.

At the **state level** a window could be created to resolve outstanding political issues relating to powers-sharing and institutional frameworks. This is central for the ability to establish a sustainable post-peace-agreement process towards sustainable peace. Through maintaining a critical level of security, IS measures could also buy time for thorough needs-assessments and careful planning of SSR initiatives (if

needed) and DDR-programs. Unilateral defection by individuals and groups from the peace process would also be made more costly as the benefits inherent already in the IS phase would be foregone.

At community level, space is created for initial sensitization preparing for the return of ex-combatants and a thorough analysis of Transitional Justice (especially vetting) and reconciliation needs. The postponed return of combatants also gives program planners room for a careful assessment of the absorption capacity of local economies and labor markets as well as preparing community based programs and strategies for socio-economic reintegration.

From the individual's point of view, an IS-phase could guarantee security through the maintenance of familiar group structures (even if the command is broken) and social cohesion, the sense of agency and legitimacy through transitional employment as a soldier on a wage and/or life skills training and psycho-social support preparing ex-combatants for life in a peace-time society and economy. More often than not ex-combatants feel excluded and marginalized from society. Their only bonds and support are their comrades in conflict and their commanders. They often lack: a) An understanding of a civilian economy; b) Hope and a sense of opportunity; c) The feeling of agency through new found economic and social skills and; d) Legitimacy and positive recognition to counter negative stereotypes .

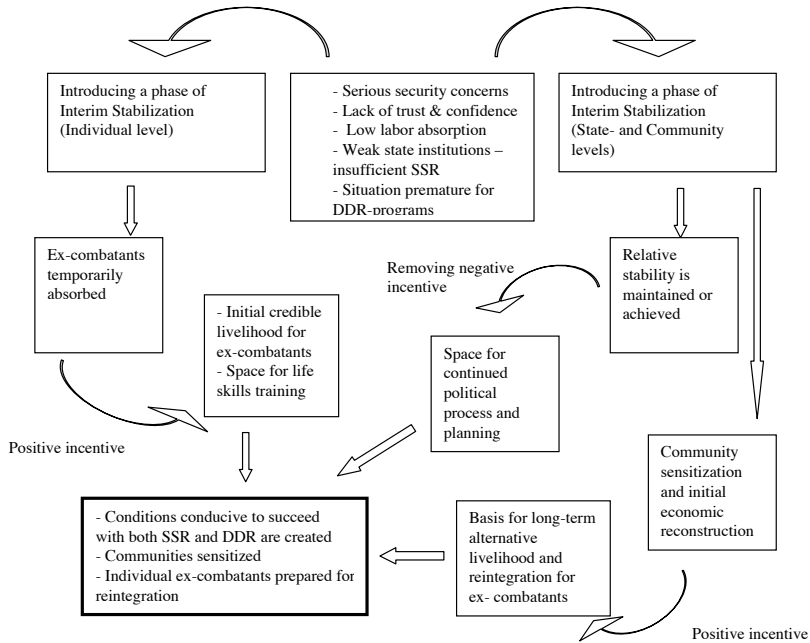
If carefully balanced, a period of Interim Stabilization could provide individual combatants with the crucial basic elements of a successful long-term reintegration; a sense of agency, transitional livelihoods, and the comfort of civic legitimacy and social acceptance.

## Strengthening Prospects for Durable Peace

It is important to note that the concept of Interim Stabilization is not proposed as a mandatory first step in peacebuilding; nor should it be conceived a necessary element of a DDR-SSR processes. The purpose of this study is not to offer a new program to be implemented in the peacebuilding process; rather to conceptualize and learn more about the menu of stabilizing options available in the period of transition between a peace agreement and its implementation. If the context of a post-conflict situation allows for successful reinsertion packages or extended periods of encampment within a conventional DDR-framework, there may not be a need for additional mechanisms. The underlying assumption of the study, however, is that sometimes, conventional tools are not sufficient to deal with

security concerns in the immediate aftermath of violent conflicts; especially where there is no clear victor in the conflict, weak local governance persists (especially in the provision of security), and the labor absorption is limited. In such situations a phase of Interim Stabilization could be introduced to the negotiating parties, with the purpose of preventing the recurrence of violent conflict and allowing for conditions necessary for a sustainable peacebuilding process to fall into place.

Figure 1 – Interim Stabilization in Context



The figure illustrates how this type of Interim Stabilization, or “holding pattern”, could stabilize a fragile post-conflict situation, provide space for political dialogue and program planning, and remove negative incentive thus turning potential spoilers into stakeholders

## 4. Study Objectives and Methodology

### Interim Stabilization as a Strategic Peacebuilding Measure

This study aims to identify, analyze, document and disseminate best practice and lessons learned in early post-conflict stabilization efforts to balance security in the near term with medium- to long-term peacebuilding under varying conditions. A central study objective has been to better understand the underlying contextual factors that strategically shape the choice, timing and sequencing of reintegration programs, which contain military and civilian dimensions.

The conceptual framework and lessons that have emerged from this study should be of value to peace negotiators, mediators, and DDR-program designers. The ultimate objective is to provide peace negotiators (negotiating parties, mediators and facilitators) and DDR program design teams with lessons and best practices in order to impact negotiations as well as the design, outcome and sustainability of peace-making and peace-building efforts. The report thereby also enforces the overarching SIDDR recommendation that technical expertise on DDR, SSR or the “management of arms and armies” as such, should be made available at early stages of peace negotiations.

### The Methodology: From Desk Review to Fieldwork

The work of this report is based on a preliminary desk study of select post-conflict countries and programs resembling the type of IS measures described in previous chapters. Through the desk study, presented in summary fashion in this report, three particularly interesting cases were identified for deeper in-country field research: Cambodia, Colombia and Uganda.

The fundamental aim of the field research was to understand, evaluate and hopefully contribute to filling the knowledge-gap in relation to “Holding Patterns” and similar Interim Stabilization programs. Teams of consultants and local lead researchers have carried out field studies focusing on a number of ongoing and past reintegration programs that followed or involved a visible transitional element – thereby falling under the study-definition of Interim Stabilization. For the sake of saving space in this study report, the case studies have been modified from their original versions by the editors (full versions of the studies can be downloaded at the Folke Bernadotte Academy’s web page; [www.folkebernadotteacademy.se](http://www.folkebernadotteacademy.se)). One of the overarching aims has been to identify gaps and obstacles in these programs and to garner an indication of how to address future cases. Preliminary best practices has been extracted and outlined.

Primarily through in-depth individual and focal group interviewing, the field research has aimed at developing a deeper understanding of the key elements and issues underpinning the programs studied (see Annex 2). The selection process of interviewees has been ‘purposive’ rather than necessarily ‘scientific’ (randomized). A broad spectrum of information and opinions on the selected cases has been surveyed – including, whenever possible and of substantive interest, government officials, army staff as well as representatives of paramilitary and rebel groups, representatives from bilateral and multilateral organizations, local and international civil-society actors (including media), ex-combatants themselves and local community leaders. The use of multiple sources of information from varying programmatic perspectives has allowed for ‘triangulating’ and cross verifying information in the pursuit of relevant insights and patterns of response.

In February 2008, a seminar was held in Stockholm; discussing the preliminary findings of the study and the conceptual framework on which it is build. Participants included key members of the SIDDR-network, the UN IDDRS and other practitioners, policymakers and academics. Comments and contributions from this seminar have been integrated into this study report.

## 5. Review of Select Interim Stabilization Approaches

In this chapter a number of past cases, illustrative of Interim Stabilization-like measures (military-, civilian- and civil-military programs) along the line of the conceptual discussion above, are reviewed. The background and rationale of such programs – as well as the issues they have come across and lessons that have emerged – are analyzed. The purpose of the review is to provide a basis for a comparative analysis of the different approaches to Interim Stabilization arrangements that have emerged throughout the research project.

Five rough categories of arrangements have been identified: 1) Civilian service corps; 2) Military integration arrangements; 3) Transitional security forces; 4) Different forms of transitional autonomy; and 5) Dialogue and sensitization programs and halfway-house arrangements. These categories are not precise or mutually exclusive. In fact, in many cases IS measures contain elements resembling the characteristics of two or more of these categories.

*Civil Service Corps* – This category is demonstrated by the cases of the South African Service Corps and to some extent the Kosovo Protection Corps in the sections below. Transforming former military groups into transitional civilian organizations primarily addresses the need to employ former combatants, and potential spoilers of the peace, in some form of meaningful activity. This type of arrangements can prove effective both from a state- and individual perspective. It may allow the time and space needed for the political process and early recovery efforts, while at the same time allowing individuals to ease into the idea of civilian life.

*Military Integration* – The concept of Military Integration has been outlined above. Below, the strategy of Military Integration as a vessel for Interim Stabilization is

exemplified by the “*brassage*” process in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and the demobilization of rebel group UNITA in Angola. Variations of the MI strategy has also been employed in many of the other cases examined in this study; Afghanistan, Rwanda, South Africa, Uganda (demobilization of rebel groups in the late 1980s and early 1990s).

*Transitional Security Forces* – The creation of transitional security forces is one of the most obvious IS measures; addressing the need for transitional security, meaningful employment of former combatants, and the need for a temporarily maintained cohesion that many former combatants experience. The Afghan Militia Forces and the Sunni Awakening Movements in Iraq provide illustrative examples from which some lessons can be drawn.

*Transitional Autonomy* – The effects sought by establishing various IS mechanisms can also be obtained by allowing a certain level of autonomy during a transitional period. The primary example of such schemes is the agreement between the Government of Cambodia and the Khmer Rouge in Cambodia, with Hun Sen’s win-win-policy. Certain elements of this approach were also employed in the Labora farm experiment in Uganda. Both Cambodia and Uganda were subject to in-country case studies and will be discussed in Chapter VI. Another example provided in this literature review is the Peshmerga in Iraq.

*Dialogue and Sensitization Programs and Halfway-House Arrangements* – This category is demonstrated below by the Rwandan *Ingando*-process, through which former combatants were gathered in camps for dialogue and trust building after the deep trauma of the Genocide in the spring and summer of 1994. Many of the characteristics of this category can also be seen in the cases of Labora farm in Uganda and the creation of a non-governmental organization for former paramilitaries in Colombia. These cases are discussed in-depth in the next chapter on in-country case studies.

## Civil Service Corps

### South African Service Corps

#### Background and Rationale

The South African Service Corps, established in the aftermath of the abolishment of apartheid, is an example of an Interim Stabilization measure that addressed primarily the community and individual levels. South Africa’s transition from

apartheid was remarkable in that the two major parties, the ANC and the National Party (NP), managed to agree on an entirely restructured political system, without an external mediator. It has been argued that the strong inclusion of grass roots dialogue parallel to formal negotiations was a key contributing factor to the success. Potential spoilers were neutralized in the process and solutions could be found to difficult challenges of power sharing and control over the security apparatus.

The new South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was formed by several former rival groups; the former South African Defence Force (SADF) along with; the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) (of the Pan African Congress (PAC)); Umkhonto we Siswe (MK) (of the African National Party (ANC)) and the former homeland armies and various other forces. The process to form the SANDF involved integration of no fewer than eight different armed groups. (Bouckaert, 2001)

Those who did not meet the requirements of the SANDF were to be demobilized and reintegrated into communities. A reintegration package consisting of a cash gratuity and a voluntary two-week counseling program was offered for demobilized individuals. They were also offered to join the Service Corps for a maximum of 18 months.

The Service Corps was instituted within the SANDF in September 1995. Its purpose was to *assist with the reintegration of ex-service members into civil society by upgrading the standard of education, vocational and life skills to enable members to find employment or start their own enterprise in the private sector, provide career guidance on a continuous basis and assist with the social reintegration of members where possible* (South African Defence Review, 1996). The Service Corp was designed to train close to 22,000 combatants, primarily from APLA and MK, between 1995 and 2001.

## Challenges and Issues

The Service Corps experienced a number of inter-related challenges and problems (Williams, 2005). There were problems of getting the Service Corps operational. Poor planning and management of the Corps, at least initially, produced an image of a questionable organization with little to offer those who urgently needed a means to move away from their life as a rebel and attain skills necessary for a civilian life. This resulted in many of the demobilized combatants simply taking their demobilization gratuities and leaving the assembly camps instead of waiting for vocational training to commence.



No credible evaluation of the rate of employment and unemployment among former Service Corps trainees was undertaken. Eventually, the impression became widespread that those who went through the training were unable to secure a successful career or profitable employment afterwards; inevitably discouraging potential recruits (Mashike, 2006). The lack of evidence of participants having profited from the experience can surely explain why few former combatants completed training.

There were also administrative problems in handling information concerning results and use of resources. An independent audit, presented in September 2000, concluded that despite the considerable budget of 30 million SA Rand between 1995 and 2000, the Service Corps had only trained 604 ex-combatants. Official figures from the administration of the Corps, however, estimated that the total of some 4,600 demobilized APLA and MK combatants had been trained during the period 1995 to 2004. (Mashike, 2006)

The Corps focused on lower level combatants and did not actively engage senior officers. Thereby, some of the most critical personnel to any demobilization process were left out. The lack of focus on upper level commanders in post conflict recovery programs may result in an increasing risk for such spoilers to influence the outcome of events.

This also created the perception that the Service Corps were merely a “dumping ground” for former guerrilla fighters with few chances of finding a role in a civilian community. Many former combatants were therefore reluctant to join the Corps (Williams, 2005). This perception was reinforced by the fact that only the least educated soldiers were directed towards the Service Corps.

The fact that the Corps was an institution under the Ministry of Defense and not a civilian oriented ministry created the perception that it was in fact a part of the military. For many combatants, with a will to distance themselves from their former roles and positions, this became a sign of stagnation and an obstacle to progress.

## Key Lessons

Despite many difficulties, the South African Service Corps is an interesting example of an effort to include former warring parties in one overall structure with the dual aim of enhancing and developing individual capacities (individual level) and creating mechanisms for societies to receive returning soldiers (community level) with limited skills of civilian livelihood. The Service Corps

show that creating a halfway-house for those combatants who are not eligible, or willing, to join the national armed forces, can be used as a strategy to phase the entry into civilian life.

Continuous monitoring and qualitative evaluations are not just important tools to show donors that their money is well spent – it can also reinforce the effect of the program itself by showcasing success and opportunities for beneficiaries (creating a positive perception).

The South African experiences point to the importance of solid planning, organization and partnerships with all key stakeholders. Depending on the context, it may also be important to involve all levels of former rebel groups in the program scheme. Involvement of commanders in the Service Corps could have ameliorated the perception that the Corps was merely a “dumping ground” for those with weak prospects for the future. Rival parties that are negotiating on the future size and shape of the security sector can draw from the experiences of the South African Service Corps. By learning from past mistakes they could find solutions for redundant armed groups without risking losing either face or their bargaining power.

## The Kosovo Protection Corps

### Background and Rationale

In the spring of 1999, NATO launched a three-month air campaign to stop ongoing aggression by Yugoslav and Serbian forces against the mainly Kosovo Albanian civilian population in Kosovo. When the war ended, there was a dire need for stabilizing measures in the area. Security Council Resolution 1244 established international civilian (UN) and military (NATO) presence in Kosovo to create and uphold a full administration, pending a process determining the final status of the area (Alexander and Sabic-El-Rayess, 2005).

The Kosovo Albanian non-state armed group KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army), who had been fighting the (Serbian) Yugoslav National Army and Serbian paramilitary groups, was the main military and political power in Kosovo when the Serbian forces withdrew in June 1999. With the initial agreement between Comdr Hashim Thaci<sup>2</sup>, the representative of KLA, and Commander Jackson of KFOR, former fighters of KLA were drawn into the overall security scheme and into the much needed demilitarization process. Disarmament and demobilization

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2. Hashim Thaci is President of the Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK) and since November 2007 Prime Minister of Kosovo.

was to be achieved through the creation of a civilian emergency response organization; the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC).

Neither the UN mission (UNMIK) nor the NATO led KFOR intended for the KPC to be a continuation or legitimization of the KLA. Officially the KPC was an entirely new civilian creation. The mandate included protection of citizens from natural disaster and abetting in reconstruction initiatives, including de-mining and rebuilding of infrastructure (for a summary of Legal Framework and Summary of Principles, see Kosovo Internal Security Sector Review, 2006). Members of the KPC were precluded from holding public office or from actively engaging in political affairs. All inhabitants of Kosovo ethnic societies, including Kosovo Serbs, were eligible to join but interest among groups other than the Kosovo Albanians was weak. The formation was modeled after the *French Sécurité Civile*. In practice, however, the organization basically retained the military structure of the KLA, including military uniforms and ranks; a precondition of the KLA to accept the terms (Petersen, 2005).

## Challenges and issues

To the chance observer, there was very little visual differences between the KPC and KLA. In many Kosovo towns uniformed KPC members appeared just as they did when they were KLA and the KPC red-black shoulder emblem had striking similarities with the former KLA emblem (ICG, 2000). While international observers viewed the KPC as a civil emergency service with no role in defence, law enforcement, or internal security, Kosovo Albanians viewed it as “an army in waiting” (i.e. for the Future Status of Kosovo) (Rees). Serbs both inside Kosovo and in Serbia proper considered it a criminal organization with terrorist tendencies.

Nevertheless, the KPC was the principal mechanism by which the KLA would be drawn into a domestic arms control regime. The Corps was to be allowed 2,000 weapons of which 1,800 would be “held in trust” in KFOR secure weapons facilities. The remainder would be available for the guarding of installations and security when units were deployed. (Human Rights First)

While its role as a civilian emergency service fell partially within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Public Services and Department of Emergency Services as a “reserved power”, its chain of command extended upwards to the Commander of KFOR. This meant that oversight of KPC was beyond the control of Kosovo civilians. (Kosovo Standard Implementation Plan, 2004)

The KPC's exclusion from other general development programs of Kosovo created a problematic relationship with the donor community. The creation of the KPC also undermined the faith, within the Kosovo community, in the impartiality of KFOR and UNMIK. The two Serbs serving on the UN Transitional Council withdrew from the body in protest at the establishment of the KPC, arguing that it had violated the declared multi-ethnic nature of Kosovo. (Rees)

The KLA itself justified the desire for the KPC structure on the grounds that the Kosovo Albanians needed a deterrence force against the Serbs. Symbolically, the retention of an organization resembling an army, irrespective of its effectiveness, would also represent an important affirmation of sovereignty and statehood further representing a step along the path towards the KLA's ultimate goal; independence from Serbia.

The so called Ahtisaari plan of 2007 stipulated a transitional process in which the KPC would be dissolved and transitional self-governance supervised by the international community would lead up to independence. In February 2008, Kosovo declared its independence with immediate recognition by many EU members and other states. The proclamation preceded a planned change of mandate from UNMIK to EULEX, leaving Kosovo's status hanging and the future functions and role of the KPC unknown.

## Key Lessons

The KPC is illustrative of how the interests of relative stability and alternative civilian livelihoods can be combined through transforming one or more military groups and redirecting them towards civilian tasks. The creation of KPC into a Civil Service Corps, had both strengths and weaknesses. The initial goal of the program was achieved and the dominant military unit in Kosovo was transformed into a civilian entity. However, the ambiguity of the purpose and long-term aim of the KPC (civilian emergency response organization or nucleus of a future army of an independent Kosovo) proved to be a major problem; leading to serious difficulties in recruiting individuals from minority groups, as well as to considerable international skepticism.

The creation of the KPC could be understood as an integral part of a demobilization process designed to create employment for former KLA combatants who might otherwise return to violence or crime, as had been the experience in other post-conflict demobilization processes. Additionally, one can argue that the creation of the KPC, alongside with other initiatives in Kosovo,

had the benefit of giving the KLA a stake in the reconstruction process; thus transforming the former military organization into a civilian actor. This provided the international community with a source of leverage over the KLA, something that it did not originally have.

The Kosovo experience also shows the importance of local or national ownership and the strengthening of civilian institutions as part of the overall strategy. As noted by Rees; the creation of the Office of the KPC Coordinator (OKPCC) proved to be a successful move – although it could have been placed under indigenous civilian control, management and oversight. Similarly, the KPC Donors Conference in December 2003 successfully placed the KPC within the general public security debate – but it could have been organized earlier and within a long-term strategic framework, involving local communities and stakeholders. (Rees, 2005)

## Military Integration

### The DRC Brassage Process

The “brassage” process in DR Congo is an example of an IS-measure initiated while awaiting further political negotiations on a plan to strengthen and downsize the security sector. The *Military Integration* (MI) strategy, i.e. integrating all forces under one national army, was chosen to establish a sense of power-sharing between rival groups during the transition period. The governance capacity and the reach of the state to provide security were weak and there was an urgent need for a transitional security apparatus. Also, the communities in the war struck areas of the country had to recover to allow for return of combatants. Thus, the “brassage” process is an example of an attempt to establish Interim Stabilization, in the form of MI, aiming at the state-, as well as community- and individual levels. Unfortunately, however, it also provides a warning example of the inevitable failure deriving from a process lacking political leadership.

### Background and Rationale

During the past decade, the DRC has experienced several outbursts of violence. The war between 1998 and 2002, known as “the African World War” involved seven African countries and has led to the death of approximately 4 million people (International Crisis Group, 2006). After four years of bitter and devastating conflict, a Global and All-Inclusive Peace Agreement was signed in December

2002 in Pretoria, South Africa. In June 2003, a transitional government was established, which included both members of the former government and of different belligerent groups that had fought in the conflict. Two key components of the peace agreement was the disarmament demobilization and reintegration into civilian life of former combatants and the reform of the security sector, including the creation of an integrated national army.

The establishment of an operational national defence force was critical because aside from MONUC (Mission de l'Organisation des Nations Unies au Congo) the national army, FARDC (Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo), would constitute the only legitimate deterrent to spoilers. The main armed groups to be integrated into the FARDC were the FAC (Forces Armées Congolaises) from Kinshasa (100 000 combatants) and the RCD-G (Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie-Goma) based in Goma and backed by Rwanda (45 000 combatants). These and some other belligerent groups have all signed the Pretoria peace agreement, but the militias in the Ituri region were excluded from the agreement. This led to continued fighting in the eastern parts of the DRC. (Boshoff, 2005)

The transitional government requested the UNDP and the MDRP (the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program governed by the World Bank) to work with them in the development of a national program for DDR. The National DDR Plan (PN-DDR) was developed in a consultative process between the transitional government, the UNDP, MONUC, UNICEF, MDRP, the World Bank and the Belgian mission. (Ball and Hendrickson, 2006)

PN-DDR consisted of two differentiated tracks: One for candidates for integration into the FARDC. One for candidates for demobilization and reintegration. However, these two tracks shared a number of activities mandatory to all individuals whether intending to integrate into the new army or to demobilize. It was therefore named the "tronc commun" (combined core). The primary step of this process involved information and sensitization activities, which also included civilian populations affected by the conflict. Thereafter, the combatants from various armed forces were regrouped in military operated regrouping centers, to be followed by the disarmament, release, registration, safekeeping or destruction of combatants' weapons and the transfer of disarmed combatants for identification to orientation centers operated by CONADER (Commission Nationale pour la Démobilisation et la Réinsertion).

At this stage in the process, the individual combatant would be regarded as

either a potential candidate for enrolment in the FARDC or for reintegration into society as a demobilized combatant. After a stay in the orientation centre of approximately two weeks, adults opting for a placement in the FARDC were moved to integration centers (*centres de brassage et de recyclage*), operated by the military, for basic training of around 45 days and integration into a newly-formed FARDC brigade. (Boshoff, 2005 & Amnesty International, 2007) These were called mixed brigades as they would consist of representatives from several different former armed groups.

The draft PN-DDR aimed to limit the FARDC to 130 000 people. In May 2005, the transitional government adopted a strategic plan for army integration, visualizing a three-step process: The first step was the creation of six light infantry brigades in the run up to the elections; step two was the creation of a rapid reaction unit and finally the formation of the main defence force by 2010. (Boshoff, 2005 & Sebahara, 2006)

Delays suffered by the army reform process led to the formulation of an emergency plan for the reform. According to the emergency plan, all armed units would be regrouped under the instructions of the Chief of the General Staff. Activities in the regrouping centers would include identification, leading to the separation of eligible and ineligible elements, and initial selection and orientation. Combatants would then be moved to *centres de brassage* where they would be intermixed and retrained. This would be followed by final selection and placement of the new units.

The emergency plan was intended to be a short-term solution to facilitate the integration of six initial brigades prior to the elections in 2006. It was seen as a solution to the transitional government's immediate need to stabilize the east of the DRC. The plan called for training personnel from Belgium and South Africa to be deployed in the DRC. Budget proposals were submitted, but met little response. This reinforces the experience of the difficulties to secure donor funding for Interim Stabilization type programs administered by the Ministry of Defense.

## Challenges and Issues

The DDR and army integration processes have made some significant progress worth noting. The bodies responsible for the implementation of the PN-DDR are in place. The law on defence and armed forces was promulgated the 12 November 2004. The first step of the strategic plan for army reform has been successfully implemented, through the formation of six brigades in the centres de brassage before the elections in July 2006.

Yet, the processes have been plagued by severe delays and problems. At first, these were attributed to competing agendas and deep-seated distrust between the elements of the transitional government and an accompanying unwillingness to compromise. (Sebahara, 2006)

The coordination of the processes has been inefficient. Implementation of the multiple structures has been significantly delayed. The reasons were both a lack of funds for military integration and a lack of financial control mechanisms within the transitional government. The main reason for the shortfalls has, however, been a complete lack of political will within the transitional government, and the subsequent elected National Government, to deal with the issues.

A contact group has been set up to establish a common donor position on SSR; and especially army integration. The EU also created the EUSEC in order to support the Congolese authorities and FARDC with coordination. These two initiatives significantly improved the coordination between different role players. (Boshoff, 2005 II)

## Key Lessons

Due to capacity constraints, CONADER was unable to set up orientation centers for the identification of combatants for the DDR process. As a result, the orientation phase was left out and the combatants were immediately regrouped and transported to the *centres de brassage*. This process was implemented by the FARDC, supported by different donor countries. Mobile teams were set up to perform the functions that were to have taken place in the orientation centers to ensure that this short cut did not affect the activities carried out in the *centres de brassage*. (Boshoff, 2005 & 2005 II )

The centers, however, were severely under-funded and lacked basic hygiene and medical facilities as well as food supplies and proper shelter. This resulted in dozens of soldiers dying and thousands deserting. Irregular payment of salaries resulted in unpaid soldiers preying on the local population for survival. EUSEC has put much energy into improving the conditions in the *centres de brassage* and the routines for payment of salaries. (Amnesty International, 2007 & Walters and Boshoff, 2006)

The continuing poor socio-economic situation in combination with the culture of impunity, which has been rooted in the DRC over the past twenty years, has influenced the increase in human rights violations committed by the FARDC



soldiers. Civilians have been killed, raped and abducted and private property has been looted and houses set on fire, especially in the eastern DRC where the war with various rebel groups rages on. (Amnesty International, 2007) A grave obstacle to the military reintegration process is the continuous fighting in the east of the country. Recent conflict in the region of North Kivu has shown that the integrated FARDC brigades do not have the capacity to counter the rebels without the support of MONUC. (Walters and Boshoff, 2006 & Boshoff 2007)

Despite commitments made to a peace processes, recently in the Nairobi protocol, the Congolese presidency shows little sincerity to end violence in the east. So far, international players have not significantly criticized the use of violence by the government of DRC or the supply of weapons to various armed groups. As part of its mandate to support stabilization and the democratically elected government, MONUC has even provided the national army with logistical assistance and training. In practice this has meant that the international force has backed offensives, against the rebel groups still operating in the country. The main international players have been considered as proxies, not as partners. At the time of writing to the extent that they are directly threatened by rebel attacks in the city of Goma.

The DRC case demonstrates the importance of accountable, committed and legitimate national counterparts for international actors supporting a war to peace transition. Despite the limited success of integrating former rivalling parties into a unified command and control structure of the FARDC, the almost complete lack of parallel military (and full Security Sector) reform initiatives has in practice made little difference to the civilian population targeted by the armed groups. With few alternatives to establish a civilian livelihood, these soldiers continue to “make their way” by military means, this time under the umbrella of the national army. Lingering unresolved political conflicts risk tearing the peace process apart.

## **Angolan Ownership of the Military Integration Process**

### **Background and Rationale**

After nearly four decades of war, Angola has come a long way towards achieving lasting peace. The two national resistance movements, Movimento Popular de Libertado de Angola (MPLA), and the Unido Nacional para la Independencia Total de Angola (UNITA), who had fought against the colonial authority and liberated Angola from the Portuguese colonial authority in 1975, failed to form a joint transitional government as intended and were fighting each other for power.

Two peace accords were signed in the beginning of the 90's. Both agreements were breached by UNITA. Finally, the Luena Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in April 2002 (World Bank, 2002) as a result of a successful offensive against UNITA and the death of its leader; Jonas Savimbi. The Luena MoU was essentially a modified version or continuation of the Lusaka agreement of 1994 with slight modifications (Imogen, 2004). In August 2002 the military branch of UNITA was formally dissolved (World Bank, 2002).

In June 2002, over 80 000 ex-combatants from UNITA had presented themselves to the quartering areas across Angola. By August, 5 017 of them were integrated into the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA). The remaining UNITA combatants were also incorporated into the FAA, but as a temporary Military Integration strategy, i.e. only in anticipation of being demobilized. The government of Angola assumed responsibility for demobilization of the new caseload of the Luena MoU, with financial support of the World Bank under the MDRP. (World Bank, 2002)

In the Military Integration scheme, the ranks of UNITA combatants were considered equal to those of FAA soldiers. The demobilization process started in September 2002. Given that all UNITA combatants had formally been incorporated into the national army before demobilization, the responsibility for demobilization and related activities fell under the FAA. (Human Rights Watch, 2003)

## Challenges and Issues

Although the MoU had anticipated approximately 50 000 UNITA combatants to be demobilized, the final process showed a total of 138 000 combatants (105 000 UNITA and 33 000 government forces). (Caramés, Fisas and Sanz, 2007 – Angola) In total it is estimated that 100 404 UNITA combatants were demobilized, but only 5 000 posts were available to them in the national army. In the end, 5 007 UNITA combatants were integrated into the national army and another 40 into the national police force. Eighteen UNITA generals were integrated into the national army.

By prioritizing those UNITA members conceived as potential threats to the peace process the government chose to “buy off” senior generals and officers and offer them high ranks in the national army. In this manner the high ranked officers and generals were permanently cut off from their leaders, as well as low-level combatants, a strategy that proved effective. (Parsons, 2004) The Government of Angola used this approach as a strategy to neutralize spoilers. This strategy

was not as successful in the DRC, where the president refused one general of integrating into the national army only to realize that he later mobilized his old soldiers and resumed fighting in the province of Kivu.

To ensure an effective and sustainable demobilization and integration of UNITA combatants into the national army, the government outlined four fundamental principles. The overall objective was to create trust in the process, something that had been lacking in the former two demobilization attempts. (Doria, 2004)

- › The “commanders first” principle meant that the commanders of UNITA were integrated into the national army before the other combatants. The purpose was to make sure that the UNITA combatants were received by their own commanders when demobilized and in this way create trust.
- › Within the “no tails behind” principles, the families of UNITA combatants were also gathered in quartering areas in order to make sure that UNITA combatants would not see it as an opportunity or incitement to leave the demobilization process as deserters.
- › “Availability of vacant posts” indicated that the FAA had made sure that a certain number of posts, both in the leadership and at lower level were vacant in order for the national army to effectively absorb the UNITA combatants.
- › “No foreigners in the process” referred to the fact that the whole process of army reform was managed and financed by the government in an attempt to show the governments genuine intentions to secure peace and create trust among various actors.

## Key Lessons

The demobilization of UNITA in Angola is an example of a program where Military Integration was successfully used as an Interim Stabilization strategy. It is also an illustrative example of how potential spoilers can be dealt with and neutralized through transitional programs. However, evaluations show that obstacles to reintegration have remained in Angola as a result of the delayed start of the reintegration programs, social stigma, persisting poverty and lack of minimal conditions for resettlement due to destruction and lack of infrastructure, etc. This further underlines the need for parallel efforts to establish an environment conducive to reintegration. Interim Stabilization is not a goal in itself and cannot be undertaken in isolation.

## Nepal – Exploring Opportunities for Interim Stabilization

The signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), in November 2006, is an evidence of the burgeoning relationship between DDR and SSR in Nepal. The CPA stipulated the formation of a special committee under the Interim Council of Ministers to inspect, integrate and rehabilitate the Maoist combatants. This committee would also advise the Council in the preparation and implementation of a detailed action plan of democratization of the Nepali Army, including tasks such as determining the right number, preparing democratic structures reflecting the national and inclusive character and training them to perform democratic principles and values of human rights.

Unlike the conventional language and process, the CPA established a separate agreement on “The Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies” without reference to DDR or SSR terminology as such. This agreement outlined the process of redeployment and concentration of forces in cantonments and barracks. It also provided an opportunity for weapons storage and control, similar to the Northern Ireland “decommissioning process” (see for example de Chastelain, 2004 for details), under the surveillance of a civilian UN mission. (For details see the “Full text of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement held between the Government of Nepal and Community Party of Nepal (Maoist)”, November 22, 2006. Also see “Monitoring of the Management of Arms and Armies”, 2006, Peace Secretariat, Kathmandu, Nepal).

The question of ownership is evident in the Nepal case where the parties apparently drafted the CPA with little outside input. The peace talks were initiated without a clear victor to the conflict and as a result a negotiated settlement has emerged; cantonment and arms storage were part of the transitional first steps to build confidence and trust. Despite the recent elections in April 2008, establishing the new government, there are still some disagreements regarding the “integration”. The details of the integration process are still far from agreed.

The Maoists interpretation was to “professionalize of the Maoist fighters and democratize the Nepali Army”. The top level of the national army could not, however, see Maoist fighters being integrated without having completed the expected training and in addition being placed in the “proper” positions of the hierarchy.

The interface between DDR and SSR<sup>3</sup> also allows for the critical application of a transitional justice mechanism of “vetting”. Here, vetting can become a subtle but powerful means of applying transitional justice, while keeping the door open for safeguarding against impunity. This mechanism can help ensure that a truth and reconciliation process does not become an open-ended, immutable amnesty program.

This reinforces the important lesson for negotiators and advisors alike that, while keeping a holistic framework in mind as to how various component elements of a war to peace transition relate, understanding the contextual factors (cultural, historical, political, economic and social) shaping the nature of the war and the deriving of peace, is critical in *determining the timing and sequencing* of peace building actions, particularly security and development related matters.

Again, balancing real political concerns (the distribution of power, particularly in the security sector) with economic realities (the ability to absorb labor into the fledging economy) provides an opportunity to explore IS initiatives to ensure stability and security in the early stages of the war-to-peace transition.

Utilizing lessons from the Service Corps and Military Integration cases, a short term IS measure prior to integration and DDR might be a way forward in Nepal, combining military incorporation with civilian reintegration programs of Maoists forces. Special brigades such as building, conservation and border patrol units within the formal Nepal Army structure may or may not be an attractive option for the Maoist fighters, but if it is utilized as a short-term remedy to limited possibilities for integration at higher ranks and or reintegration into a sunken economy, then it may be acceptable and should be followed carefully.<sup>4</sup>

Two lessons are again confirming the SIDDR report recommendations: First, that each conflict requires its own discourse (language) and process to reflect the objective conditions on the ground and aspirations of the key stakeholders. Second, that the phasing and sequencing of conventional lockstep DDR approaches may vary considerably depending upon the political-military manner in which the conflict ended (i.e. stalemate, clear victor etc.). Although the notion

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3. The concept of SSR is understood as much wider than merely military reform. Ideally a right sizing of the Nepal army should be part of a more comprehensive strategy, including police, justice and oversight issues.

4. In discussions on social and economic reintegration options in Nepal, several possibilities were mentioned ranging from agricultural based industries and non-timber forest based livelihood activities to contracted overseas employment. Given the state of the economy, it is highly unlikely that skill training in itself will ensure employment.

of ownership in Nepal is very strong, the Nepali peace process has so far been successful in adapting international knowledge to cultural and historical concerns of the country's own situation.

## Transitional Security Forces

### The Transitional Afghan Militia Forces – a Necessary Initial Step

#### Background and Rationale

The signing of the Bonn Agreement on 5 December 2001 created the structural conditions for assembling, under a united command and control, the various armed factions that had participated in the internal fighting in Afghanistan from the Soviet invasion in 1979 to the fall of the Taliban in 2001. The Bonn Agreement created the Afghan National Army (ANA), which would be placed under the jurisdiction of the civilian Afghan Interim Authority (AIA). The ANA would incorporate former Mujaheddin, the Afghan armed forces, and other armed groups in the country.

However, while the Bonn Agreement was being negotiated, the Afghan Militia Forces (AMF) was created by unifying various anti-Taliban faction to provide and control over the armed groups in Afghanistan, under a loose but single command (Thruelsen, 2006). This represents a form of Interim Stabilization, where a new transitional military structure is created to establish and maintain minimum levels of security; keeping armed units occupied while more permanent structures and programs are put into place.

Having established the new ANA structure, the Ministry of Defence would pay the salaries of the combatants embedded in the AMF until these combatants were able to return to civil life and until the communities were ready for them. The AMF program hopefully precluded these combatants from instigating an insurgency in the power vacuum that occurred between the fall of the Taliban and the creation of the ANA. The successful long-term establishment of a new national army, however, would require a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration program for the AMF.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) conducted an extensive survey to identify and assess the approximate quantity of combatants to be disarmed. At the same time, the Ministry of Defence (MOD) sent out

some 1,500 officers to perform a similar survey. After roughly two months, the UN assessed that there were some 94,000 combatants to be disarmed, while the MOD survey found that an estimated 250,000 combatants needed to be included in the programs. The difference in the identified number of combatants by the two institutions and the problems concerning the identification process in the field turned out to be one of the biggest challenges for the Afghanistan's New Beginnings Programme (ANBP) (Thruelsen, 2006).

When the Ministry of Defence identified a unit for disarmament, the regional ANBP office took over the verification of that unit. This was done through a verification committee consisting of ANBP staff and local senior leaders of that particular region. The extensive verification process was relatively successful. The system enabled the program to exclude free riders from the process and gave it legitimacy – something all too often lacking in DDR processes (Thruelsen, 2006).

## Challenges and Issues

The program did experience a number of challenges. The subversive behavior of local commanders and their unwillingness to demobilize and disarm seems to have been one of the main reasons for the delayed DDR process in Afghanistan. One contributing factor in this was that only the warlords and commanders who supported the Minister of Defense were enrolled into the AMF (Thruelsen, 2006), leaving a number of unaffiliated armed groups out of the process. This, naturally, compromised the legitimacy of the process as a whole.

There also seem to have been a number of *de facto* disincentives to demobilize and disarm built into the ANBP program and the ANA and AMF structures. Peter Thruelsen hypothesizes that the difficulties in determining the actual number of combatants had to do with the mechanism for payment of salaries to the AMF. The salaries were channeled from the Ministry of Defense to the combatants through their respective commanders, giving commanders an incentive to keep their soldiers mobilized as long as possible. The setup also enabled the commanders to earn extra money by reporting artificially high numbers of soldiers in their units. The actual turn up at disarmament was only about 50 percent of the total strength initially stated by the commanders (Thruelsen, 2006).

In the end of the summer 2004, almost three years since beginning ANBP, the Government began to use the threat of sanctions against the non-cooperative commanders. Two kinds of sanctions were used.

The first sanction, a combination of public announcements and the withholding of salaries, was directed against the petty and middle commanders. The Ministry of Defence would first cut off money from the commanders who did not meet for disarmament. Then the unit would be decommissioned and the individual soldiers would lose the possibility of joining the reintegration program. This pitted the prospect of reintegration against the soldiers' loyalties to their commanders and gave soldiers an incentive to turn against uncooperative commanders.

The second type of sanctions introduced followed from the constitution of Afghanistan, stating that no leader of a political party with his own militia could run for public office in an election. This resulted in two of the more powerful warlords in the country joining the DDR program in order to be allowed to participate in the parliamentary election. It is interesting to note that public opinion polls at the time showed that the number one priority of the Afghans was disarmament of the AMF in order to achieve security and economic development.

The Afghan program has been subject to criticism. For example, the maintenance of military structures is said to have helped commanders fortify positions in their respective regions and strengthen their role as middlemen in the opium economy. Another issue is that the ANBP did not allow for a weapons-for-development or other community-based programs when disarming the AMF. After demobilizing a unit the process became individualized and each soldier would enter reintegration on their own. Some of the problems experienced in the implementation process could perhaps have been remedied by experimenting with community-based programs. (Thruelsen, 2006)

Close coordination between SSR initiatives and the process of disarming and demobilizing armed groups, such as the AMF, is critical. In many respects however, the Afghan Interim Authority viewed disarmament, demobilization and Security Sector Reform as separate, autonomous activities. Only about 3 percent of the demobilized combatants from the AMF have actually joined the ANA (Thruelsen, 2006).

## Key Lessons

By establishing the AMF (i.e. an Interim Stabilization strategy) and paying the salaries of the soldiers, the Government bought time for the initiation of a formal DDR process. The system was designed to establish and maintain a critical level of security while the political situation was sorted out. However, the Afghan experience also further highlights the importance of including all stakeholders,



especially potential spoilers, in the process. Armed groups, or disgruntled commanders, left outside of the formal process will almost inevitably find ways to sabotage peace efforts.

Much can also be learned from the apparent weakness of the system of paying ex-combatant salaries through commanders and local warlords. This lesson has also been learned the hard way in other DDR-processes. As always, a careful balance must be struck between the importance of a sense of real local and national ownership on one hand and accountability and efficacy on the other.

Once the process entered a phase where some groups were showing tendencies to leave or misuse the process, the introduction of a system of carrots and sticks (incentives and sanctions), reduced the risk of individual combatants or commanders turning into spoilers. The successful disarmament was dependent upon a clear demobilization and reintegration strategy, antithetical to the traditional view of disarmament occurring first.

## The Sunni Awakening

While currently unfolding, the emergence of the “Awakening Movements” in Iraq is a recent phenomenon worth noting in the context of Interim Stabilization. These are essentially coalitions between tribal Sheikhs and the Government (as well as Coalition Forces) to ensure local security in the form of local armed militia or ad hoc armed forces providing local or community protection under traditional leadership structures. The Sunni tribes in Anbar province have been particularly successful with this Interim Stabilization-like model. As of September 2007 the leadership of 25 of the 31 Anbari tribes was cooperating with the government under the aegis of the Anbar Salvation Council while six have been associated with al Qaeda in Iraq. Agency and livelihood in the form of wage incentives are being provided for local guards. Cohesiveness and legitimacy (aged tribal bonds and leadership) are part of the arrangements.

The outstanding risk factors are what will become of this local militia after peace and security has been restored. Will they be integrated into the formal Iraqi army, police and border forces? Provided training and assets for reintegration into a normal productive civilian life? (Roggio)

## Transitional Autonomy

The two case studies on Cambodia and Uganda provide a deepened discussion of examples of transitional autonomy (see Chapter 6). In this section, the case of the Peshmerga in Kurdish Iraq is presented as a brief illustration.

### The Peshmerga in Kurdish Iraq – Autonomy in the Making

Similar to the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) in Kosovo in 1999, the *Peshmerga* – a regional guard in Iraqi Kurdistan – fought alongside American and Coalition forces during the invasion of Iraq in 2003. Since then the *Peshmerga* has been given full responsibilities for the provision of security in the region. There are an estimated 75 000 active *Peshmerga* and an unknown number has been integrated into the reformed and coalition-trained Iraqi Security Forces (Katzman and Prados, 2006).

The “Transitional Administrative Law”, agreed upon by the US and the Iraq Governing Council in November 2003, allowed for “regional control over police forces and internal security” and this regional competence over internal security matters was retained in the Iraqi Constitution, approved by a referendum in October 2005. According to article 121 of the Constitution the regional government *shall be responsible for all the administrative requirements of the region, particularly the establishment and organization of the internal security forces for the region such as police, security forces and guards of the region* ([http://www.uniraq.org/documents/iraqi\\_constitution.pdf](http://www.uniraq.org/documents/iraqi_constitution.pdf)). This provides the legal basis for the *Peshmerga* to persist within the new Iraqi security structure.

The *Peshmerga* in Iraq thus represents a model of an Interim Stabilization evolving into a more permanent part of a states reformed security structure. With the threat of partition of the country looming on the horizon, the question of whether the *Peshmerga* will transform into a national army and police or if a demobilization of former *Peshmerga* fighters into the civilian work force, is yet to be answered.

## Dialogue and Sensitization (Halfway-House arrangements)

### The Rwandan Ingando-process

Most of this section on the Ingando-experiences in Rwanda is based on a paper prepared by Francis Musoni, senior DDR planner and chief reintegration officer, Rwanda Demobilization and Reintegration Commission. The paper was written

for a seminar arranged to discuss the results and findings of this research project. Lessons and analysis also take the seminar's comments and critiques into account, and does not necessarily reflect the views of Mr. Musoni.

## Background and Rationale

The Arusha protocols, signed in 1993 between the Government of the Republic of Rwanda and the Rwandese Patriotic Front (later RPA), stipulated that both forces should merge and form an integrated National Army after the conflict. On April 6 1994, following the death of the President of Rwanda in a plane crash, ethnic extremists seized government power and launched a campaign of genocide throughout the country. During the course of the following three months, over one million Rwandans, mainly Tutsis and moderate Hutus from opposition parties, were massacred. In July 1994 the Rwanda Patriotic Army (RPA) defeated the national army "Forces Armées Rwandaises" (FAR) and formed a new government. The FAR split into three groups. One group comprised mainly forces loyal to the genocide regime. This group fled to Congo with the informal militias (*interahamwe*) and civilian refugees. The second group comprised soldiers who simply returned to their communities and either settled or went into hiding. The third group consisted of soldiers captured by or voluntarily surrendered to the RPA.

Demobilization and reintegration of excess fighters had been adopted as a policy already in the Arusha peace agreement in 1993. The security, political, social and economic realities, however, was significantly different immediately after the genocide and civil war than at the time of signing the agreement. The protocols were articulated to provide for a gradual process of military integration and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. After the cessation of hostilities in mid-1994, there were thousands of defeated soldiers showing interest to integrate into a new Rwandese Army. Others were waiting to be officially demobilized or hiding out in communities unsure of their fate under the new administration.

The situation called for urgent attention. The RPA sought to establish a temporary, Interim Stabilization-like program for the ex-FAR members who were still in the country. All captured, surrendering and hiding members of ex-FAR were gathered in two separate camps for screening, sensitization and consultations on integration and DDR. The programs came to be called *Ingando* after a traditional method of solving difficult problems by gathering to consult in isolation from everyday life. The RPA had initiated *Ingando*-processes already during the war, as a strategy to deal with captured enemy combatants and sensitiz

communities to their cause. The Rwandan *Ingando*-process entailed the gathering of former enemy combatants in camps for “problem solving” dialogue sessions recounting the causes and taking ownership of the tragedy, exposing mutual myths and stereotypes and endeavouring to rebuild trust after the deep trauma of the Genocide (see Rusagera, 2004).

All officers were gathered at Gako Military School in the Eastern Province while their soldiers camped at Rubona in the Southern Province. When these camps were set up, in the early aftermath of the war, there was still a war-like situation. Institutions had been shattered and the security situation was very fragile. Both the communities *and* the ex-FAR needed protection and assurance for their safety.

The *Ingando*-programs provided a sense of security, while also creating an opportunity for screening for skills (and of participation in the Genocide or other war crimes) among the ex-FAR; consultations on integration and DDR; workshops on government programs such as National Unity and Reconciliation, Economic Recovery and Development, National and Regional Security Challenges, rebuilding government and social institutions etc; and sensitization exercises and recreational activities such as sports, music and dance. After completing the *Ingando*-process, each individual had a choice either to integrate into the RPA or to go through formal DDR.

During the process the ex-FAR were free to go home and visit their families and the camps were open to visitors. In a way, this helped to build trust and confidence and helped attract some of the ex-FAR hiding in the communities. When the registration and orientation program for ex-FAR closed in 2005, approximately 13,000 former combatants had signed up for the demobilization and subsequent reintegration.

## Challenges and Issues

Providing security in the interim between war and development, and establishing a minimum level of trust and confidence between former enemies, were the primary concerns when the *Ingando* programs were conceived. In a broad sense, these objectives were achieved. A critical level of human security, for communities and former combatants, was maintained and a basis for reconciliation was established. Alternatives were provided for ex-combatants from both sides of the conflict. The ex-FAR combatants with skill and a reasonably clean record could opt for integration into the RPA. The process also gave the moderate ex-FAR an opportunity to distance themselves from the extremists and architects of the Genocide.

During the initial stages, the program lacked sufficient resources. State institutions had broken down and looted by fleeing officials of the ousted government. The donor community was initially focused on refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). Tax collection was generating only minimal revenues. This was remedied in part when the UNDP intervened with funding for the program. Since *Ingando* is undertaken after disarmament of combatants, the program did not experience the same difficulty in securing international funding as some other Interim Stabilization programs examined in this study.

While the *Ingando*-process has helped Rwanda to stop further divisions and to form a basis for reconciliation in the country, the model is not uncomplicated. There is a natural temptation, built into any sensitization scheme of this magnitude, for the leading party to make use of the campaign for political purposes. There have been serious allegations aimed at the *Ingando*-process in this regard (see for example Mgbako, 2005). These allegations will not be dealt with in depth here. For the purposes of the present study, it suffices to raise the issue of possible misuse as a risk factor in designing Interim Stabilization measures on the basis of broad sensitization and political re-education programs.

## Key Lessons

The Rwandese *Ingando* model illustrates an Interim Stabilization measure built around the need to form a basis for long-term reconciliation in a society ravaged by one of the most brutal civil wars and most effective genocides of our time. It is impossible to understand the dynamics of the current *Ingando* process outside of its unique context. However, it bears important lessons for the study of Interim Stabilization as a tool in post-conflict peace building.

The *Ingando* clearly aims at creating an environment in which returning combatants feel safe. This type of halfway house in which ex-combatants are given space to get used to the idea of returning to communities proved to be an effective pull factor for combatants in hiding or still involved in fighting. It also managed to generate an increased sense of confidence in the peace process.

In undertaking combatant focused programs it is essential to remember the needs of communities and to balance efforts and support activities. Sensitization programs for receiving communities are key to form a basis for successful reintegration down the line. Reports vary significantly regarding the success of community sensitization programs in Rwanda. Given the trauma suffered by the entire population of the country the task has been immense.

However, in any program aiming primarily at achieving reconciliation through a strengthened sense of national unity, there is a risk of misuse for political gain by one or more parties. The line between unifying history lessons and political indoctrination can be very thin in post-conflict settings. It is absolutely essential to strike the right balance and allow for openness, critical examination of facts and mutual dialogue throughout these processes.



# 6. Selected Country Fieldwork: Cambodia, Colombia and Uganda

## Cambodia

The case study on Interim Stabilization experiences in Cambodia was conducted by Sinthay Neb and Sven Edquist of the Advocacy Policy Institute ([www.apiinstitute.org](http://www.apiinstitute.org)) in Phnom Penh. Comments and reflections at the February 2008 seminar in Stockholm have been taken into consideration in editing the text below.

### Background and Rationale

When, in January 1979, the Vietnamese army invaded Cambodia and put an end to Pol Pot's authoritarian regime, the Khmer Rouge fled westwards towards Thailand. In the decade that followed, Cambodia was engulfed by civil war between the Vietnamese installed government in Phnom Penh and the Khmer Rouge, protected by Thailand and China. Two additional guerrilla groups, the Royalist group, FUNCINPEC, led by King Sihanouk, and the Khmer People's National Liberation Front (KPNLF) led by Son San, formed the Coalition Government of Democratic Kampuchea (CGDK) to push out the government, led by Hun Sen.

Peace negotiations in the late 80-ies led to the "Comprehensive Political Settlement of the Cambodia Conflict", in October 1991; allowing for the Paris Peace Agreement (PPA), which entrusted the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) to supervise the unification of the fighting forces in the country and the subsequent demobilization from the unified army



of approximately 140,000 soldiers. When the demobilization program was completed in May 1993, about 28,000 soldiers had officially been demobilized, mainly from the regular armed forces. The UNTAC plan did not encompass any comprehensive reintegration support. (<http://www.khmerinstitute.org/docs/PPA1991.htm>)

As a result of the first national election, the new Cambodian Constitution was written and a coalition government was established with Co-Prime Ministers, Prince Norodom Ranariddh (FUNCINPEC), and Hun Sen's Cambodia Peoples Party (CPP) – from 1993–1998. Unconvinced about their prospects in the 1993 election, the Khmer Rouge had pulled out of the PPA in 1992 and retreated to their safe havens in the west of the country; the fighting continued.

Unity within the Government was needed to fight the Khmer Rouge and the Government managed, in July 1994, to adopt a bill officially outlawing the movement and calling for severe penalties against its members. However the coalition and the power-sharing agreement in Phnom Penh quickly collapsed and the two parties began battling for full power. Both parties had searched for weapons and allies and began separate negotiations with the Khmer Rouge.

The CPP was by far the stronger of the two government parties and was therefore able to offer the most concrete incentives for the KR defectors. Hun Sen seized power in a coup (claiming that the action was merely a pre-emption of a coup planned by the FUNCINPEC) and articulated his desire to put an end to the political and military conflict and bring peace to Cambodia. As part of this strategy Hun Sen visited the KR areas Samlot, Pailin and Malai and announced his Win-Win policy (see below).

On 23 February, 1996, a Khmer Rouge top leader, Keo Pong, defected to the Government in Phnom Oral, Kampong Speu province. This marked the beginning of the end of armed conflict between the Khmer Rouge and the Cambodian Government. In August 1996 the Khmer Rouge-held zones of Pailin and Phnom Malai in Cambodia's northwest surrendered to the Government. This heralded a chain of defections that ended in 1998 in the movement's ultimate demise. After three decades of conflict and violence, the war was finally over.

## The Demise of the Khmer Rouge

While Cambodia has faced numerous challenges in the decade since the Khmer Rouge defected, peace has been kept. It has been argued that the Khmer Rouge's

demise in 1998 was inevitable. The movement was increasingly outdated, emaciated and marginalized and it was no longer able to face the rigors of rebellion, let alone revolution.

However, the Khmer Rouge had shown a remarkable resilience to survive and strike fear into the hearts of its opponents over four decades of political and three decades of military struggle. The KR's barbarism had come to overshadow the fact that it received significant support from the weakest section of the Cambodian community – the downtrodden rural peasantry who felt they were suffering severe injustices and that the Khmer Rouge would change things for the better. The ideas of the Khmer Rouge are still today strongly held by people living in the KR strongholds of Pailin, Phnom Malai and Samlot.

There appears to be two main factors causing the Khmer Rouge to return to negotiations in 1996–1998: First, there was an internal conflict between the hard-line ideologues based in Anlong Veng – who wanted to continue the struggle under the leadership of Pol Pot – and those under the leadership of Ieng Sary based in Pailin and Malai – who wanted to avoid persecution and retain the financial and other benefits gained during the conflict.

The Ieng Sary groups were based in an area rich in natural resources and with greater economic prosperity and freedom. They were increasingly reluctant to continue fighting and to take orders from the central Khmer Rouge control. Here, the concepts of democracy, freedom and private ownership were growing along with increasing trade across the border with Thailand. People were able to move freely between their zones and Government-held towns as well as into Thailand. In Thailand they were able to purchase goods unattainable at home. Ieng Sary's faction saw the opportunity to break away when the Khmer Rouge leadership based in Anlong Veng attempted to re-impose 'collectivization' of property threatened internal repression. This coincided with the deteriorating health of Pol Pot.

Secondly, the political turmoil in Phnom Penh, and the success of Hun Sen's CPP, had produced a powerful counterpart for negotiations, who could be trusted to deliver on offered incentives. The Win-Win policy offered an attractive exit strategy for the KR leadership as well as for combatants.

## The Win-Win Policy: Pragmatism Prevails in the Short Run

Hun Sen's Win-Win Policy states:

- › *First-* to guarantee personal and family safety for those willing to end the war and return to live in the society.
- › *Second-* to guarantee people's careers by providing enough opportunities to enable them to continue their past professions.
- › *Third-* to guarantee the safety of people's property from confiscation and alteration.<sup>5</sup>

In addition to these points, the government passed the "Law to Outlaw the Democratic Kampuchea Group" (in 1994), which codifying the criminalization of acts committed by the Khmer Rouge, but also provided a six months amnesty period for defectors. The amnesty was indefinitely extended in 1995, something that certainly worked as an incentive for many Khmer Rouge leaders having been a part of Pol Pot's regime in the 1970's. However, there was no amnesty and no statute of limitations to crimes of genocide (see Law to Outlaw the Democratic Kampuchea Group, preamble §8).

FUNCINPEC, being traditionally closer to the KR, had fought in the jungle against Hun Sen's government alongside the KR and were partners in the UN recognised government. The CPP saw its own political survival as dependent upon forging peace with the KR, making them an ally and further isolating FUNCINPEC.

## Interim Stabilization Through Defacto Autonomy

The Win-Win policies allowed the Khmer Rouge to keep everything they already had; they could remain in their lands; they retained their military ranks and community positions in the civil administration; and they were allowed to own houses and land.

Three levels of reintegration was implemented:

- › **Military integration** – All defected KR soldiers were integrated into the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces. The mid-level commanders continued to lead their soldiers under the Cambodian Armed Forces structure.
- › **Administrative reintegration** – The Khmer Rouge leaders were allowed to either keep their old positions or accept alternative positions in their own

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5. Extract from a copy of Samdech Hun Sen's speech for closing the Open Academic Forum on the 15th Anniversary of the Agreement on a Comprehensive Political Settlement of Cambodia Conflict, organized by International Relations Institute of Cambodia (IRIC), October 21, 2006

communities. Pailin was established as a city; Samlot became a district within Battambang province; and Malai, Kamreang, Sampov Loun, and Phnom Prek became districts within Banteay Meanchey province. Today, ex-Khmer Rouge leaders still hold great sway in their former zones.

- › Socio-economic reintegration – The Government granted these KR areas autonomous economic development zone status: no taxes for three-years and permission to open a number of 'Border Economic Gates' with Thailand to promote trade.

The economic development helped create social harmony, which was of crucial importance in the reintegration process. Land was fairly distributed within the autonomous zones. Each combatant and his or her family were provided with two cows, five hectares of land and 5,000 Baht. Many still live peacefully on this land.

## Challenges, Issues and Key Lessons

The exact details of the agreement made between the CPP and the defecting Khmer Rouge commanders are not known. Apparently, it was solid enough to stop the violence and allow for a period of stability and peace. The amnesty that was offered the former leadership of Pol Pot's genocide administration, however, has also delayed a much-needed national reconciliation process.

Some aspects of the process, which were considered successful at the time, may in retrospect seem counterproductive and detrimental to the democratic, social, and economic development. For example, the three-year tax exemption in KR areas led to a rush to exploit the natural resources in the areas within this period. The results have been devastating from both economic governance and environmental perspectives.

Some of the interlocutors interviewed also held that the only reason that Cambodia had enjoyed a sustained peace was the dominance and control of the CPP. The CPP controlled all state institutions and the nation's main resources. In a properly functioning democracy, where governing parties come and go, it may not have been possible to sustain peace.

It may also be argued that by 1996 the Khmer Rouge, or at least its effective fighting forces, might have been prepared to concede defeat on a lot less generous terms than those offered by Hun Sen's Win-Win policies. They were divided, undermanned and under-resourced. They had lost all international support and practically all domestic credibility; they were exhausted.

However, despite the seemingly terminal state of the movement, the Khmer Rouge was still in existence. During the past three decades they had shown an astonishing resilience. This resilience and the KR leadership's general disregard for the lives of their countrymen, make case for the importance of the Win-Win policies to end the fighting.

Due to the trade-off between justice and peace, Cambodia has never established a Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The Win-Win policies and the Khmer Rouge defections served peace but did not address the need for national reconciliation and justice. The government was content with granting amnesty in exchange for peace. In this rush the government failed to involve civil society actors and establish what role they would play in a democratic society.

The program was not integrated into a wider scheme to establish a culture of respect for human rights. Because the government's primary concern was to end the war – and for the CPP to boost its powerbase – no concrete system was put in place by the government to properly deal with the post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration process.

By offering a “win-win policy”, the Cambodia People's Party was able to establish concrete incentives to KR defectors. Defectors were ensured a guarantee of personal and family safety, safety of property and opportunities to continue the professions previously held. Providing these incentives within the framework of transitional autonomy allowed for the Khmer Rouge to remain on their lands and retain their military ranks and community positions (i.e. social cohesion).

Being an (at least originally) ideologically driven fighting force, the Khmer Rouge followers also sustained a strong common identity and social cohesiveness. The transitional process in which areas under former Khmer Rouge control have gradually been integrated into national administrative structures, may also have contributed to a sensitization process. Many of the KR fighters and families knew nothing but the Khmer Rouge political propaganda.

The plan did succeed in helping to establish the foundation for sustainable peace in Cambodia. Nonetheless, it raises a number of issues. The KR Interim Stabilization scheme illustrates the need to tie any transitional measures into a longer-term peacebuilding strategy, including, as appropriate, reintegration and national reconciliation programs. It also highlights the importance of not closing the door on future justice processes dealing with crimes committed during the conflict. The singling out of specific crimes of genocides as exceptions to the Law to Outlaw the

Democratic Kampuchea Group has allowed for recent arrests of former Khmer Rouge leaders. Another issue is the environmental impact of the total KR control over the natural resources of the *de facto* autonomous areas.

In the Cambodian context, it is also interesting to ask whether involvement of the international community would have made a difference. It is likely that a number of control- and safety functions would have been built into the program, had international actors been involved. On the other hand, it is far from certain that the minimum conditions acceptable from an international community perspective (i.e. democratic governance, judicial procedures to deal with international crimes, environmental controls etc.), would have been accepted by the parties.

## Colombia

The Colombian case study was undertaken by Alexandra Guáqueta and Gerson Arias, Fundacion Ideas Para la Paz ([www.ideaspaz.org](http://www.ideaspaz.org)). The preliminary results of the study were discussed at the February 2008 seminar in Stockholm and the main points raised in these discussions are reflected in the summary below.

### Background and Rationale

There are around 46,000 demobilized combatants in Colombia. Most of them, 31.671, are right-wing illegal paramilitary. This group demobilized between December 2003 and August 2006 as the result of negotiations between the Álvaro Uribe government and the Autodefensas Unidas de Colombia (AUC). The AUC claimed to be a counterinsurgent organization forced into existence because of the failure of the state to protect citizens from guerrilla harassment but many of its members had close ties to drug trafficking mafias and were involved in criminal activities, most notably extortion.

The remaining 14.329, mostly guerrillas, deserted on their own. Of these so called “individually” demobilized, 8.268 belonged to the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia (FARC), 1.944 to the Ejército de Liberación Nacional (ELN) and 435 are dissidents from other guerrilla groups. The FARC and the ELN, who embrace a left-wing ideology, formed in the 60s claiming to redress social and political grievances. They have shunned any peace agreement with the Colombian government and are the main targets of the Colombian Armed Forces, particularly the FARC who increasingly since the 1980s resorted to the illegal coca industry.

The remaining 3.682 of the individually demobilized combatants are paramilitary who did not demobilize in the “collective” negotiations but chose to reintegrate away from their blocs. Collective demobilized combatants (paramilitary groups who struck a deal with the government) and individually demobilized combatants (essentially guerrilla deserters), are two separate populations. They pose different threats to peace and security and they have followed different reintegration paths.

## The Paramilitary (AUC)

In May 2002, Álvaro Uribe won the presidency and soon thereafter, the paramilitary began reaching out to the government. Besides war fatigue, those in favor of demobilization and against ongoing drug trafficking feared increasing US pressure on Colombia to combat paramilitary drug trafficking and US extradition requests. Their only way out was a swift conversion into a political organization. After much discussion among paramilitary commanders and various informal conversation with church clergy and government officials, they decided to issue the *Declaracion por la Paz de Colombia*. The document formally announced a cease-fire effective as of January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 and the willingness of the AUC to initiate formal talks.

In December the Uribe government created an Exploratory Commission in charge of the talks. Meetings with the AUC, the Bloque Central Bolívar (BCB) and Vencedores de Arauca and the Eastern Alliance began in January 2003. All along there had been increasing pressure by the US, who had issued arrest warrants and extradition petitions for various paramilitary leaders. The exploratory talks defined the main issues that had to be negotiated and formally ended on July 15, 2003 with the publicly announced *Santa Fe de Ralito Agreement*. The exact commitments as well as tacit understandings by the different parts are unknown. The official document is vague. The paramilitary commit to demobilizing all its members, support the Government’s purpose of having a Colombia without drug trafficking and will concentrate their commanders in specially designated zones. In return, they expect the government to follow the Exploratory Commission’s recommendations: that the government finds “legal alternatives” to make the peace agreement possible, gives priority to paramilitary regions of influence when implementing development and security policies and adjusts the government reintegration program.

The government submitted to Congress a bill regarding paramilitary demobilization that proposed an “alternate judicial” regime (the so called “Ley de Alternatividad Penal”) allowing combatants to forgo standard sentences for a

variety of crimes, including human rights abuses, crimes against humanity, drug trafficking and other economic illicit activities. The bill sparked a heated national and international debate, as different actors were opposed to the concessions being granted to the paramilitary in exchange for their demobilization.<sup>6</sup>

In August 2006, president Uribe ordered all paramilitary commanders, who up until then had had special permits to move freely back and forth from the Santa Fe de Ralito zone to other places, to transfer permanently to a detention center in La Ceja, nearby Medellín to begin complying with their prison time. 60 commanders complied but several others escaped.

In December, the last major crisis of the process occurred when the commanders were transferred to the Itagüí prison. Báez, the paramilitary spokesman for the peace process said the settlement was off and implied they still held sway over their men and could rearm the various groups. The threat never materialized but some argue there are new illegal counter-insurgency groups emerging, which are not necessarily under the command of those who participated in the peace process. (Rubini, 2008) All along there were ongoing problems related to middle-rank commanders that never turned themselves in.

## Corporación Democracia – a Transitional Institutional Arrangement

The Bloque Cacique Nutibara (BCN) demobilization was the first paramilitary group to disarm. A tripartite agreement was negotiated and signed between the BCN, the national government and the Medellín Mayor's Office. The agreement was that local authorities would administrate and, to an important extent, fund the DDR program, which would last 18 months. The BCN was given some "assurances" in the form of a proactive role in the development and follow-up of the reintegration process.<sup>7</sup>

For that purpose, a BCN-run non-for-profit organization, the Corporación Democracia (CD), would be created. The real functions of CD as well as the tacit expectations by both combatants and official authorities are unclear. Was the government settling for disarmament and a sort of "ceasefire", as opposed to demanding a full dismantlement of the organization and its function in the criminal world?

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6. Analyses of the different bills and opinions by key actors can be found in FIP's *Siguiendo el Conclito: hechos y análisis de la semana*, volumes 1–3, compiled in 2005–2007.

7. See "Acta de Compromiso entre la Oficina del Alto Comisionado para la Paz y la Alcaldía de Medellín", November 13, 2003.



There were two key arrangements that implied the BCN would maintain its chain of command. One was joint policing by former BCN and Medellín police forces of areas formerly controlled by the BCN. This was meant to provide security guarantees to BCN members while at the same time allowing greater police control over the *comunas* to which it had no access in the past. Former combatants would be given radios, no weapons, to patrol alongside police units. They would facilitate the entry of police forces into the neighborhoods and be in permanent contact with the rest of the “boys” in order to receive information on the local situation.

The second arrangement was the appointment of BCN “zone coordinators”, meant to liaise between the Mayor’s office and the boys. They would monitor whether the combatants were attending training sessions and appointments with the social workers and psychologists, hear whether the local communities had complaints on the behavior of any of the boys, and communicate any news from the program. In addition to these arrangements, up until his own demobilization, Don Berna, the former BCN leader, still commanded the BCN and had “La Terraza” band at his service.

The decline of violence more generally in Colombia was one of the major achievements of the ceasefire commitments and the peace negotiations, which helped the Uribe government justify the process to Colombian and foreign audiences. The BCN demobilization, however, has been strongly criticized by local NGOs, who argue that the “boys” still act as alternate authorities in the *comunas*, follow orders from Don Berna and have connections with the criminal world.<sup>8</sup>

## Shareholder Agro Business as an Interim Stabilization Measure

In 1997, the BCB (Bloque Central Bolívar) emerged as a paramilitary group and by 2004 it had reached a force of 6000 combatants. Following the agreements with the government, and after the Justice and Peace Law passed through Congress, the BCB demobilized 8 regional groups between July 2005 and January 2006. For the government, the BCB demobilization was crucial given their size and power. This point touches on some of the conundrums of the paramilitary peace process: on the one hand, it was hard to justify a “peace” deal with organizations who were not

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8. For early reactions see “10 preguntas para pensar”, Revista Semana, December 1, 2003. Interviews by FIP staff to local communities, clergy and NGOs in various visits in 2006 and 2007. See also Instituto Popular de Capacitación (IPC), “Narcotráfico desestabiliza a Medellín”, March 14, 2008; IPC, “Cartel del Norte del Valle tras la hegemonía armada en Medellín”, November 3, 2007; IPC, “En Medellín, reinsertados de las Auc venden propiedades expropiadas ilegalmente”, August 21, 2007.

entirely politically-driven and should have been simply imprisoned; on the other hand, such structures wielded great power and state authorities had not been able to control them. A deal seemed to be the only viable option.

Before disarming and demobilizing, the BCB began setting up agro-businesses where they expected lower ranking combatants to work. The ownership of the land and who exactly would benefit from any profit accrued was unclear. The government suspected that at least one function of these farms was to launder paramilitary ill-gotten land and monies. These farms would also enable leaders to maintain ties with the combatants, reward and help those whom they considered important and preserve physical presence and influence in certain territories. Fernando Soto, from *Buscando Caminos Buenos*, argues that the projects had an additional rationale; to pose as reparation and reconciliation initiatives to gain public acceptance of the peace process.

For public opinion, the possibility that commanders would enjoy economic wealth derived from crime and human rights abuses became morally unacceptable. The first Santa Fe de Ralito agreement actually endorsed the idea of social investment by the paramilitary leadership aimed at reintegrating its combatants. In favor of such a model was the perception among some sectors in government and society that it was unfair for tax payers to subsidize a resource-rich illegal armed group. There were also practical considerations; in many places the paramilitary had better logistical capacity and local connections. Commanders could exercise control to keep combatants from defecting from the reintegration process if necessary.

The BCB made sure to make these projects appear as legitimate as possible and the BCB was effectively dismantled (by Colombian standards). When the bloc demobilized it created two NGOs; *Buscando Caminos Buenos* and *Semillas de Paz*. Both worked on economic projects for former combatants and other members of the communities, as well as a variety of social projects usually embedded in a politically-correct reconciliation discourse. The idea of creating an NGO with these functions stemmed from the precedent set by Corporación Democracia and the “good” reputation that came along with the NGO status.

It seems that in the case of the BCB, a real or perceived security dilemma (besides personal interests in drug trafficking) has undermined its commitment to the peace process as well as influenced developments in other blocs. Since the DDR process began, BCB leader Macaco believed his security depended on keeping other blocs, criminal organizations or guerrillas from filling the vacuums left by the BCB, not just in terms of territorial control but taking over illegal businesses.

## Individual DDR: Cooptation of Combatants

In 2002 and 2003 desertions from FARC and ELN rose sharply. The new Democratic Security Policy had launched a tough military offensive against the guerrillas, especially FARC, thereby increasing security risks for the rebels. War fatigue due to fierce paramilitary pressure since 1997; and intense propaganda by the government, which focused on the advantages of living a normal life away from “the bush”, inspired many to take part of the benefits offered by the new reintegration program.

Deserters had to spend up to three days in detention, being debriefed by military intelligence, who would act as a first filter to confirm the identity of the combatant. After that, the deserter would enter the *Programa de Atención Humanitaria al Desmovilizado* (PAHD) run by the Ministry of Defence. PAHD would locate them in temporary homes and provide them with basic assistance until they had passed the second filter, verification by the Attorney General’s Office on their criminal history. If the combatant had not committed war crimes, he or she would receive a special certification and go on to the *Programa de Reincorporación a la Vida Civil* (PRVC), run by the Ministry of Interior and begin a reintegration program that lasted two years and that would end in the setting up of a business with a 4,000 USD grant.

Even if not the sole and original purpose, deserters from the guerrilla groups increasingly became a valuable source of information on the active rebel groups, whom the Armed Forces had to combat. The term of transit through the Ministry of Defence’s PAHD program was lengthened to two months. Demobilized combatants, who would often turn themselves in to the nearest military brigade or police station in rural zones, would not be sent to Bogotá according to the established calendar. The military would keep him (or her), not against his will and in accordance with the law<sup>9</sup>, for weeks and months at the brigade to obtain information and collaboration.

Very often, demobilized combatants accompanied operations as “guides”, at times armed, to point at hidden weapon deposits or identify guerrilla members. Intelligence agents, police investigators and tax authorities working on terrorism, drug and weapons trafficking or specific homicide cases, also found demobilized combatants useful sources. In exchange they were granted financial compensation.

The use of demobilized combatants in this particular security function was

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9. Decree 128 of 2003, the legal basis for the new reintegration program included language that allowed such collaboration.

criticized for being a means of war- not peace-building. It entailed serious risks to former combatants and could easily lead to distortions of the information provided. Former combatants reported that often, military and civilian authorities threatened not to grant the person the benefits he's entitled to unless they provide information.

## The “Soft Policing” Track

In late 2004, the High Peace Commissioner, the PRVC and the Director General of the Police created a new formula to occupy former combatants that responded to several needs at the same time: the *auxiliares cívicos en convivencia y seguridad ciudadana*, security civilian aides; a type of “soft policing” mostly in towns, cities and main roads. The idea was to offer former guerrilla and paramilitary, whether individually or collectively demobilized, to temporarily serve under the command and supervision of the Police. In this way, they could remain occupied and earn some money while they completed vocational training and found other more steady jobs in the market.

In the case of former guerillas, the program would also help them build trust towards the state and public security agencies – their old enemies. The function was also framed as “service to the community”, in which former combatants could “repair” the harms inflicted on society. (Colprensa, 2005) The program includes training on citizenship competences, human rights, first aid, social communication and basic policing. Combatants are not allowed to carry weapons and they can serve as forest rangers, road safety assistants, tourist guides and surveillance assistants in bus stations.

## Challenges, Issues and Key Lessons

The paramilitary DDR process in Colombia is different from most other similar processes for two principal reasons: 1) The paramilitary are not typical rebel organizations; and 2) Colombia is a relatively developed democracy and thus not going through the typical war to peace transition. The ultimate expected outcomes of the process are: An absolute dismantlement of the paramilitary phenomenon; a good dose of punishment for committed crimes and a power-sharing agreement facilitated by a transitional justice regime. The Justice and Peace Law and the DDR programs were designed to move toward disarmament and demobilization of the paramilitary but stop short of achieving full dismantlement. This would have had to entail neutralizing economic and political influence of the paramilitary groups.

Interim stabilization in the case of Colombia has allowed flexibility in peace negotiations and the demobilization process. The government was given a space in which it could establish legal instruments, bureaucracies and necessary budget-lines for a long-term reintegration program. At the same time, however, there is a risk that complete demobilization of all the groups is endangered and that the demands by the groups will only increase.

Halfway-house arrangements, in which commanders are allowed to maintain influence over their troops but with a civilian focus of activities, can help ensure stability and control over ex-combatants. Combatants are not left alone and they become part of a wide range of initiatives. This helps them maintain social cohesion while undergoing a sensitization process, gradually adjusting to civilian roles. But the proximity of the demobilized troops to their networks and contacts within the criminal world can also expose them to a greater risk of being re-recruited.

Linking the demobilized personnel to transitional security forces, such as the soft policing, under the supervision of civil authorities, instead of incorporating them into the Armed Forces increases legitimacy and facilitates the work of State security structure and helps ex-combatants trust the system.

Breaking the links to old command structures may be a crucial factor in the reintegration of combatants who are exposed to recruitment by criminal organizations. If combatants are somewhat isolated from criminal contacts and networks and located in relative safe places, they may stand a chance to initiate a new life with a legitimate livelihood. Such combatants need, however, steady employment that fulfils his or her expectations with regards to salary and status.

Training ex-combatants for work in private security companies regulated by the State is an alternative to having them join public forces. However, given that in general the control over these companies in the countries in conflict is weak, the risks seem greater than the possible benefits.

The paramilitary are not a conventional rebel army, but a coalition of groups that may ally or compete depending on their needs. Each group is a mix between a criminal organization and a counterinsurgent army. On the one hand, it can be argued that allowing the groups to maintain some cohesion, in the absence of strong economic projects that could compete with salaries offered in the drug business, has been counterproductive and that it has so far prevented the reintegration of many combatants. On the other hand, it may be argued that this

was a necessary transitional trade-off, maintaining security, while moving toward more competitive (with criminal options) and sustainable reintegration options (livelihoods).

The case of individual guerrilla deserters is very different, as they have not demobilized all in one block. In Colombia's past guerrilla demobilizations, the groups made a relatively smooth transition from being combatants to becoming political parties and NGOs. The temporary integration of demobilized guerrilla combatants into national security structures is performed during an ongoing conflict but could become a model for Military Integration in an eventual peace deal. At the moment any political agreement between the rebels and the Government seems far away and the future of FARC and ELN, and the way in which these combatants will be brought back into the fabric of society, is still an open question.

## Uganda

This section is based on a case study undertaken by Fred Mugisha, and a presentation by the chairman of the Uganda Amnesty Commission, Justice Peter Onega, at the February 2008 seminar in Stockholm organized to discuss the findings of this research project. The analysis is also influenced by the findings and impressions from a field visit in Northern Uganda in the summer of 2007. The conclusions in the section are therefore the sole responsibility of the research team.

### Background and Rationale

Uganda has a complicated political history of internal violence and power struggles. Since President Yoweri Museveni consolidated power in 1986, at least 22 separate groups have taken up arms against the government and a number of separate peace deals have been made over the years. Reintegration programs therefore have a fairly long history in Uganda, dating back to the late eighties. Yet the scope and sequencing of reintegration efforts have often been insufficient. One clear example is transitional economic reintegration. After ex-combatants come out of rehabilitation centers (part of formal programs) they often end up in low opportunity environments such as IDP camps. In this context, thinking in terms of buying-time through transitional programs for former-combatants, and creating opportunities to address short-term needs, such as a public-works corps, might be a viable alternative.

The two decade long insurgency of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in northern Uganda, however, still awaits a durable resolution. Using bases in neighboring

countries, the LRA have raided villages and refugee camps in northern Uganda to plunder and abduct new recruits for their struggle against the Uganda Peoples Defence Forces (UPDF). At the height of the conflict, over 80% of the population in northern Uganda was displaced living in refugee camps across the north.

To provide incentives for LRA fighters to surrender, the Ugandan Amnesty Act was enacted in 2000. The law grants immunity to any combatant or collaborator who returns and renounces the rebellion. Those who return are called reporters, as most of the combatants have been forcefully recruited or kidnapped at very young ages. The reporters are entered into reintegration programs, administered by the Uganda Amnesty Commission. To date, a total of 23 000 reporters have passed through the Amnesty Commission programs.

Since 2006, the Government of Uganda (GoU) is engaged in peace negotiations with the LRA in Juba, southern Sudan. During these negotiations, the security situation in the north has improved considerably. As there are fewer confrontations, and thereby fewer opportunities for combatants and abductees to escape from the LRA or be captured by Ugandan forces, the number of reporters returning has decreased since the beginning of the peace talks. There are, however, still an estimated 2000–3000 people (combatants and families), who are expected back to Uganda if the peace negotiations are successful.

Strategies resembling the Interim Stabilization measures subject to this study have been employed in Uganda in the past. One of the most interesting of these examples is the Labora farm pilot case in Gulu, where the GoU provided farmland for cultivation by former LRA combatants. The Labora farm pilot was based on the notion of a need to let LRA-soldiers ease into a civilian life, while allowing nearby communities get use to the thought of the combatants returning. It thus mostly resembles the category of “Dialogue and Sensitization Programs and Halfway-house Arrangements”, described above.

## The Labora Farm Experiment – a Halfway-House Arrangement

The former LRA brigadier-general Kenneth Banya and his contingents were provided with plows, seeds, and tools and left to themselves at the farm. The Ugandan authorities did not meddle in the leadership- and social structures at the farm. This was left to the LRA-commanders.

The project was funded through the Northern Uganda Social Action Fund (NUSAF), under the World Bank; US\$ 100 million worth of ODA-funds were

invested. An important factor in the Labora farm project was also that the security of the former rebels at the farm was guaranteed by the UPDF. Information varies, but at the height of the project about 1,000 persons reportedly commuted daily from the nearby town of Gulu to the farm. They were not permanently resettled on the farm, not returned to their communities of origin, nor placed in IDP-camps. The purpose was to provide temporary alternative livelihoods for former LRA combatants, awaiting a lasting settlement of the dispute and preparing combatants for reintegration into their communities. In a way, the Labora farm was a reception center functioning as a holding pattern for former LRA commanders, combatants and bush families.

A range of opinions on the Labora farm project was offered to our field-researchers. One central issue, on which most interlocutors were in agreement, was the fact that the military ranks and chains of command of the LRA were allowed to be maintained on the farm; recreating the oppressive structures that had developed in the bush. This had particularly adverse affects on the lives of women and children on the farm.

The critics of the Labora farm pilot project, among them many of the human rights groups active in the area, argue that the experiment not only granted impunity to the LRA-commanders, but also allowed for a continuation of the abuse. There were serious accusations exploitation of children and women on the farm and reports of despotism of General Banya. After some years General Banya was replaced by Ray Apire (former LRA Bishop), who led the Farm in a somewhat softer style. It was argued, and this turns out to be one of the main lessons of the project, that the Labora experiment could only work in a civilian structure.

Some members of nearby communities also criticized the project for focusing on the needs of the ex-combatants rather than helping the community to get back on its feet. They felt as if the combatants were awarded for the crimes they had committed. This type of criticism is not uncommon in relation to projects supporting returning combatants and it represents a risk that must always be considered when designing support programs. The SIDDR suggested a dual window funding mechanism, where the second window would focus on communities balancing whatever support is provided for returning combatants.

There were also positive sides to the experiment. According to the Paramount Chief of the Acholi, the Labora farm enabled the following important transitions: (a) it provided a secure place for the LRA to rest their minds and to clarify their feelings; (b) it allowed for rehabilitation through productive farm labor, an



alternative to armed violence as a means of subsistence; (c) it facilitated a sense of self reliance as they produced their own food, not reinforcing the dependency syndrome of the IDP-camps; and (d) it created an alternative attraction to others to come in from the bush free of fear, community stigmatization, and reprisals.

A general conclusion seems to be that the Labora farm project was a good idea that was poorly executed. A key lesson learned is that any program under which a rebel group, or parts thereof, is kept intact, some form of accountable, civilian authority must be established.

## Strategic Military Integration

The case study also established that some of the returning LRA-combatants opt to join the national armed forces. By and large, the process of joining the UPDF is voluntary. According to the fourth Division Commander in Gulu, “These ex-combatants are given full military training and passed out in various categories. Some as part of the Uganda People’s Defence Forces (UPDF) and others as Local Para-militias”.

This case study did not examine the merits of this process. Nevertheless, it is clear that the practice of MI in a way has addressed the security issue in some parts of the country, particularly in Eastern Uganda where these militias were able to repulse the LRA advances in the Teso region.

This practice has also drawn serious criticism from domestic as well as international institutions and commentators. Allegations are based on the contention that the government is using the ex-combatants as human shields in the process of military confrontation with the LRA. The option of Military Integration during an ongoing conflict is always difficult (as the case on Colombia has also confirmed) and the risk of coercion and exploitation must be carefully monitored.

## Uganda National Rescue Front II

Another example of a Ugandan experience resembling Interim Stabilization is the peace agreement with, and the reintegration of, the *Uganda National Rescue Front II* (UNRF II) – a rebel group from the West-Nile sub-region. In December 2002, a peace agreement was signed between the GoU and the group. At the time of the signing, the UNRF II was based in the DRC. The agreement provided for a gradual return of the group to Uganda – in total approximately 2 500 combatants.

The group was allowed to stay intact, step-by-step re-establishing contacts with relatives and communities of origin. It is interesting to note that the agreement was implemented without international involvement and without thorough program planning. Things were left to unfold as the process moved forward. Problems were dealt with as they arose.

The process satisfied the dual needs of avoiding a stream of restless former combatants into communities that were not ready to receive them, and providing a zone of comfort in which combatants could start adjusting to lives in peace.

Around 700 of the UNRF II fighters were eventually integrated into the UPDF, while the remaining 1 800 were reintegrated into West-Nile communities. The agreement stipulated that the UNRF II should establish a liaison office within the Office of the Prime Minister to monitor implementation of the peace. While voices have been raised concerning the pace of implementation, the process has been largely successful.

## Challenges, Issues and Key Lessons

The lessons drawn from the Uganda case study will focus on the experiences of the Labora farm pilot project. The project is an example of Interim Stabilization by keeping former combatants occupied with civilian tasks, but separated from civilian communities, for an initial period of time. On paper, the project seems very attractive – keeping demobilizing ex-combatants into safe and productive farm labor rather than the destructive, dangerous and frustrating environment of the IDP-camps. However it experienced serious problems and has drawn heavy criticism from domestic as well and international actors.

Some members of nearby communities have criticized the project for focusing on the needs of the ex-combatants rather than helping the community to get back on its feet. They felt as if the combatants were awarded for the crimes they had committed. This is a common objection against post-conflict reconstruction efforts aimed at former combatants. This brings us back to one of the central recommendations of the SIDDR Report that there is a need for parallel windows of funding, targeting communities as well as returning combatants (see Recommendations page 44, SIDDR Final Report).

The heavy criticism by human rights groups, that the LRA-commanders were effectively awarded impunity and that they were allowed to recreate the same oppressive structures at the farm as in the bush, is highly relevant. The key lesson

of the Labora pilot therefore, is that there is a need for a truly accountable, civilian authority, even if the aim of the program is to temporarily keep the structure of the group intact. Transparent communication to surrounding communities about the purpose of the program and ideally parallel sensitization and reconciliation initiatives would also be helpful in gaining support for such Interim Stabilization initiatives.

The balance that needs to be struck is far from easy. Grass roots and lower level combatants need to be empowered without severely tilting the social cohesion of the group in question. Stakeholder ownership must be balanced against reasonable demands for respect of fundamental values. If another attempt at a similar program were to be undertaken, it would therefore be necessary to carefully monitor the implementation and maintain a preparedness to intervene if oppressive structures are recreated.

If anything should be taken from the Labora farm experiment it is primarily the general idea of engaging former combatants in productive labor buys time for other important things to happen while awaiting properly planned long-term programs. As noted above – such programs hold the potential to provide combatants with the much needed sense of security, socio-psychological rehabilitation from physical and productive labor, a transitional alternative livelihood, and it may create an attraction for other ex-combatants to join the program. The potential positive effects on the general peace process are enormous. In designing and implementing such a program – the Labora experience provides ample illustration of potential pitfalls.

# 7. Comparative Analysis: Contextual Factors Shaping the Choice of IS Measures

In this chapter, the results of the preliminary overview of relevant experiences in chapter V, and the three country case studies, are critically examined and compared. The first part of this comparative analysis is built around a number of key contextual factors and strategic choices in the formation of Interim Stabilization measures. This is followed by brief discussions on the establishment of incentives and institutional arrangements to turn potential spoilers into stakeholders in the peace process and the management of risks in implementing Interim Stabilization (IS) measures.

## The Importance of Contextual Factors

As previously noted, understanding the contextual factors in which a violent conflict is or has been fought, is vital for anyone involved in peacebuilding. The following contextual factors are instrumental in shaping war to peace transitions, and must be carefully analyzed by stakeholders in peace processes:

1. The nature and duration of the conflict;
2. Nature of the Peace (i.e. the manner in which the conflict ended and nature of the peace process);
3. Governance capacity and reach of the state;
4. The state of the economy, especially labor absorptive capacity and property rights; and
5. Character and cohesiveness of communities and combatants;

## I. The Nature and Duration of the Conflict

The type of Interim Stabilization measure suitable in each given situation depends very much on the nature of the war – whether it is predominantly driven by ideology, identity, or a struggle for resources. In an ideological driven conflict such as that of the Maoists in Nepal or the FARC and ELN in Colombia, political power and territorial control are overriding objectives. When asked about the demobilization and reintegration of Maoist combatants, the leadership simply replied that no such thing was going to happen. What they sought instead was a merger, in which the Maoist army was made more professional, while the national army was democratized. This would not imply either a subsidiary relationship in a reformed security sector, nor demobilization and reintegration of their combatants into a normal productive civilian life. The Maoists seek a continued command and control of forces and territory and a gradual integration of the two forces.

Sub-national conflicts, such as that of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in Mindanao, tend to be more identity driven. Groups are often seeking some form of *de facto* if not *de jure* territorial control or regional autonomy. Such aspirations could be met within an IS-framework which combines a mix of integration and control over a regional security (military and or police) force and reintegration into a productive civilian life. Indeed, this is a current issue in the deposition of forces in the ongoing peace negotiations between the Government of the Philippines and the MILF. An earlier agreement with the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF) actually resulted in an integration of some 3,000 plus ex-combatants, combined with an unsystematic demobilization and reintegration of remaining forces without formal disarmament as such. The absence of a complete DDR program in parallel with the military integration program for the MNLF might very well have been the factor that helped fuel the MILF armed struggle. (This case is elaborated in a report from one of the fact finding missions that were undertaken in the planning for this study, the report can be obtained from the Folke Bernadotte Academy.)

In Cambodia, the struggle of the Khmer Rouge started out as ideology driven conflict and gradually transformed into a resource based struggle. Claims for limited control over territory and resources became a basis for an IS-like situation when *de facto* autonomy was granted to the Khmer Rouge in the northwest of the country, which combined with a self-organized demobilization and reintegration program for the KR in that area. Note that formal disarmament was not a part of this process. The situation in Colombia, especially with the FARC, share some of the Cambodia characteristics as ideology blends with resource and territorial control reflecting features of both armed conflict and criminality.

In protracted conflicts, combatants often lack even the basic life skills necessary to lead productive civilian lives. After years, and in some cases decades, in the bush these combatants are particularly vulnerable to recruitment into criminal gangs or splinters of their former rebel movements. IS-measures, providing a sense of safety, agency, legitimacy and temporary alternative livelihoods, may serve as the lifeline needed for them to stay committed to peace. This was one of the main rationales behind the Labora farm experiment described in the Uganda case above.

Similar dynamics characterize extremely brutal conflicts where combatants, as well as communities, have suffered severe trauma. The challenge in these cases, as in post-Genocide Rwanda, is to prepare the ground for bringing these ex-combatants back into the fabric of society as an initial step in reaching a broader based societal reconciliation. This task requires parallel efforts targeting combatants as well as communities. The process often takes time and a period of IS may create the stability and space needed to plan, organize and kick-start recovery and reconciliation programs.

## II. The Nature of the Peace

In cases where there is a “clear victor” Military Integration (MI) can be used as a first step towards the establishment of integrated and reformed national armed forces. Through such interim solutions, similar to the notion of Interim Stabilization, a window is created for properly planned DDR and for planning and launching a comprehensive Security Sector Reforms, which is usually needed but difficult to initiate at the early stages of a peace process.

With the African National Congress (ANC) in power following the fall of apartheid in South Africa, the various rebel factions were initially integrated into the overall South African Defence Force and later demobilized under the nomenclature of a “military rationalization program”, not under a classical DDR program. In Uganda, the major demobilization and reintegration program occurred some four years after the Museveni government had consolidated power. The government had by then absorbed various rebel factions into the military before gradually downsizing the national army essentially for economic reasons; freeing up public expenditure from security to development. In Rwanda, former Forces Armades Rwandese (FAR) combatants were continually integrated for periods of time before being vetted, re-socialized and demobilized. Finally, in Afghanistan, the multiple warlord armies were initially nominally integrated into an overarching Afghan Militia Forces and paid monthly salaries in an informal

holding pattern before the formal launch of the “New Beginnings” DDR program. Studies show that such IS-measures, in the form of Military Integration, without (or before) the launch of any broad effort to reform the security sector, is a hallmark of over half of the peace agreements that stick. However, in all of these cases, the war ended with a clear victory by one party.

The MI option was also utilized in Cambodia and is currently used for some of the FARC and ELN ‘defectors’ in Colombia. In Uganda today, the process also appears to be moving in this direction as LRA defectors often emerge as frontline Ugandan army fighters and local militia under government auspices. The Ugandan situation is not unlike the soft or civil policing and intelligence options for the former Colombian AUC and FARC combatants in urban areas. There are of course a number of problematic issues coupled with this type of strategic military integration of ex-combatants into the national armed forces during an ongoing violent conflict (see section on ‘*Managing Risks*’ below).

A second type of situation is when a peace settlement has been negotiated, and there is no clear victor. In these situations other IS-options may be more viable (even though MI strategies have also been employed as part of negotiated settlements – for example the DRC – and could be a solution for the current situation in Nepal). The Labora farm example, with the previously indicated necessary modifications, could serve as a model in situations where time is needed to get the necessary reconstruction and reintegration programs in place.

A third type of situation is illustrated by the case of Kosovo, where the peace was forced by an international intervention. The primary aim for the international community after the armed intervention was to establish minimum levels of security (for Kosovo Albanians and Serbs alike) and achieve a peaceful dialogue and negotiation on the future status of Kosovo. At the same time, something needed to be done about the large number of heavily armed fighters of the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). In effect, balance was struck between the interests of the parties to the conflict – the KLA formally disarmed and demobilized taking on the face of a civilian emergency response organization (Kosovo Protection Corps). On the other hand they were *de facto* allowed to retain important elements of their organizational structure and cohesiveness with the hope of one day becoming the national armed forces of an independent Kosovo. The level of consciousness of this strategy by the international community is difficult to determine. In any event, the model did allow for a window of number of years during which the negotiations on the future status of Kosovo could continue in search for a peaceful resolution.

### III. Governance Capacity and Reach of the State

The capacity of the State to ensure security and administer justice, as well as providing other basic services, for ex-combatants and communities, was weak in all three countries where in-depth case studies were conducted. This was especially so at the sub-national level where territorial control was often disputed, the legitimacy of the state itself was contested and the duration and intensity of conflict had been greatest. In this regard, Interim Stabilization or similar arrangements could allow for the provision of security for combatants and communities, while some form of vetting and transitional justice materializes.

The Cambodian KR de facto autonomous zone, the Labora Farm in Northern Uganda, and the Colombian agro-businesses and ‘soft policing’ units (like the Kosovo Protection Corps, the South African Development Corps, the Afghan Militia, and the Pesh Merga) all represent IS-like measures, buying time and allowing for other economic and social psychological adjustments to take place, and for legal and bureaucratic structures to be developed and strengthened. In effect, Interim Stabilization measures can compensate, temporarily, for weak state capacity to provide security and basic services.

At the time of the signing of a peace agreement, there is usually no comprehensive agreement on long-term power sharing and state institutional arrangements. In situations where there is a lack of patience in society and within the various fighting groups, a phase of Interim Stabilization might provide the time-out needed to sort out difficult political disagreements. The Kosovo Protection Corps is an illustrative example, where the final status of the former KLA was to be determined within the framework of the negotiations over the final status of Kosovo.

### IV. The State of the Economy: Labor Absorption and Property Rights

As previously noted, one of the main challenges of post-conflict peacebuilding is securing sustainable livelihoods for returning combatants. Reintegration programs thus tend to be more successful in situations where the number of combatants has been very low or where the agricultural economy has been strong enough to effectively absorb returning soldiers without creating new conflicts. In environments where these conditions are lacking, a thorough analysis of market potential and alternative livelihoods is even more needed. All too often, compensation or micro-credit programs have been launched with little connection to local economic realities.



As noted in the Cambodia case, access to land and assurance of property rights may be one of the most fundamental assets in an economy with limited capacity for labor absorption. It has been held that the availability of arable land in Uganda and Mozambique and northwest Cambodia, as well as easy market access to neighboring countries such as Kenya, South Africa and Thailand, have been the key conditions for successful reintegration in these countries.

Obviously, in a conflict where access to the economic assets is one of the causes it is even more important to assess the available opportunities or market forces at play; from land to credit. The illegal drug trades in countries like Afghanistan and Colombia provides attractive incentives for combatants and warlords to continue life as they know it. Simply offering them a reintegration package of money or allowances will doubtfully suffice. Creating platforms, such as NGOs or civilian service corps, could become components of a transformational process, in which the mindset of combatants are gradually shifted and some sense of legitimacy or acceptance in the broader society is valued over purely material incentives. Initial stabilization measures that can help develop the possibilities for a society based on the rule of law may change aspirations when combatants notice the lower risk of entering into political life or being a part of the legal economy.

## V. The Character of Communities and Combatants

Most cases examined in this study have displayed the following common characteristics: Negligible asset bases (poverty); low levels of education among combatant; limited vocational and life-skills (even the ability to interview for a job or open a bank account) combined with a weak capacity for labor absorption in the economy.

In such environments, Interim Stabilization could provide an opportunity to raise vocational skill levels through proper training, strengthen life skills through counselling and advisory services and build an opportunity/asset base through efforts to create opportunities, ensure property rights, and inspire and facilitate entrepreneurship.

Facing a negligible asset base, the risk of combatants turning to 'illegitimate' activities such as criminality or re-recruitment to rebel groups is exacerbated. A period of Interim Stabilization could effectively provide an acceptable transitional alternative.

## Maintaining Social Cohesion and Control Structures

In addition to the political factors shaping the transition from war to peace, the nature and extent of social bonds and trust (i.e. social capital) are extremely important. Especially the bonds between former combatants and their commanders may engender a form of internal cohesiveness of the fighting units, which in turn provides social and psychological comfort. However, such inward looking bonds of survival among combatants can be transformed into cross cutting bridges of opportunity between combatants and communities if a new social compact is created. In this process time and space is essential to allow for alternative leadership (civil rather than military), organizational and legal peacetime structures to be established and social psychological adjustments to take place. The timely provision of counselling and life skills socialization for combatants becomes as important as vocational skills in terms of their adaptability to a normal civilian life.

In Colombia, within the Medellin reintegration program, an IS-like solution evolved in the form of life skills training program combined with the mixing of regular police with unarmed former AUC combatants (so called *security civilian aids* or *soft policing*) into integrated units.

The counterfactual to this approach is perhaps the poor outcome of the Labora farm in Uganda, where LRA structures were kept intact but totally isolated from the normal civilian structures of surrounding communities and the political life of Uganda. Security and agricultural inputs were provided at arms length by the Government, but the former LRA-commanders were, in effect, allowed to recreate the same oppressive structures on which their control in the bush was based. One of the key lessons here, for the purposes of the present study, is that maintaining social cohesion of the rank and file combatants may be an effective instrument for ‘control and social support’ during the transition (a time bound period); but that some form of civilian authority is essential in order to provide legitimacy and manage such risks.

## The Importance of Agency, Livelihood, and Legitimacy

In addition to cohesiveness or social support during the transition, agency (i.e., a sense of efficacy and self management or control), livelihood, and legitimacy become the operative constructs in a successful social and economic reintegration framework. These elements constitute a carefully considered Interim Stabilization program as part and parcel of an unbundled and phased reintegration program. One Khmer Rouge commander took on the civilian status as provincial

administrator, gained three years of *de facto* autonomy by negotiating a pledge of support from the national government in exchange for a pledge of loyalty and non-resistance. The KR provided each family in the autonomous area with the material incentives of two cows, five hectares of agricultural land, and five thousand Baht; thereby ensuring their livelihood. They maintained a cohesive organizational structure with ranks in the Royal Cambodian Armed Forces and positions in the local government. They shared (though the extent of sharing is unknown) the lucrative ‘asset base’ of logging and mining concessions conceded to the KR. Providing a sense of *agency*, maintaining organizational cohesion, ensuring access to land and *livelihood*, and giving *legitimacy* became the key ingredients of the Cambodian Hun Sen Government’s “Win-Win policy”.

The Paramount Chief of the Acholi noted that, despite the drawbacks of the Labora farm experiment, the farm allowed for the LRA to: (i) Experience rehabilitation through productive farm labor; (ii) gain a sense of agency and self reliance as they produced their own food, not reinforcing the dependency syndrome of the IDP camps; (iii) establish a secure, legitimate place for them to rest their minds and clarify their feelings and; (iv) the Farm also created an alternative attraction to others to come in from the bush free of fear, community stigmatization, and destitution. These are all important constructive functions contributing to stability. The key thing to do differently, as noted above, would be to place the project under civilian authority, strengthening the legitimacy of the farm and its leaders by providing a transparent and accountable local governance structure for the program.

## Establishing Incentives through Transitional Institutional Arrangements

The conventional economic mantra espouses that if one gets the prices and wages right then everything else in the economy will fall into place. With regard to the successful transition from a war to a peace economy, getting the institutions and incentives right becomes paramount.

The institutional arrangements and incentives are at the heart of achieving a successful Interim Stabilization. Regarding transitional institutional arrangements, the country case studies brought out some interesting examples. The Khmer Rouge (KR) in Cambodia negotiated a *de facto* autonomous zone. The Government of Uganda sponsored the Labora agricultural farm for the LRA, providing what could have been a similar organizational holding pattern in Northern Uganda. In Colombia, the *Auxiliares cívicos en convivencia y seguridad*

*ciudadana* (i.e. *security civilian aides or soft policing*) under the Mayor's office in Medellin, the NGO *Corporacion Democracia* (CD) and the *Buscando Caminos Buenos* (BCB) agri-businesses, were also all legitimate transitional institutional arrangements for para military groups. The same is true for the transformation of armed groups into civilian service corps and similar organizations in South Africa and Kosovo.

The incentives are similar in all case studies and most of the other relevant experiences surveyed, that is: (i) agency or a sense of efficacy and control; (ii) meaningful alternative work and material sustenance and; (iii) conferred legitimacy within a framework of social cohesion and mutual support. As expressed by an Acholi Paramount Chief in discussing the redeeming benefits of the Labora farm: "It allowed their minds and bodies to rest under acceptable conditions of security and rehabilitation through productive labor". When a reintegration package, or a civil servant wage, cannot compete with the offers from warlords or criminal gangs, some form of societal legitimacy when coming out from the shadows can be a powerful additional incentive.

Whether these institutional arrangements were conceived as measures of Interim Stabilization or not is a moot point. They all provide some form of agency (social cohesion and efficacy), livelihood, and legitimacy whereby time, space, and stability is provided for adjustment and preparation of broader transitional programs and reform initiatives.

Of course, freedom from prosecution or extradition is the final desire of rebel or militia groups such as KR, LRA, and AUC alike. This brings the importance of transitional or restorative justice into play. A means of addressing past crimes short of blanket amnesty needs to be balanced with some form of justice, accepted by perpetrators and victims alike. As mentioned above, a key function of Interim Stabilization in this respect would be the provision of time and space to undertake proper *vetting* for crimes committed during the conflict and to put into place the necessary institutional framework for dealing with such crimes.

## Converting Potential Spoilers to Stakeholders

Transforming spoilers into stakeholders is the crux of the war to peace transition. Reintegration is a complex, slow and long process comprised of political, economic and social psychological dimensions. It cannot simply be reduced to a set of quick technical fixes (e.g. providing skill training and micro-credit) or rearranging of the parts (targeting communities rather than combatants). In effect, the Cambodia

case further breaks these processes down into the pragmatics of:

(i) Military Integration; (ii) administrative integration into public structures and services, and; (iii) socio-economic reintegration or access and participation of groups into the civilian social and economic life of the local, regional and national communities.

Taken in their totality, the social (institutional) and psychological aspects may in the end be more important than the economic and political dimensions, especially for groups which have experienced long standing patterns of marginalization. The KR, the FARC, and the LRA particularly fall into this category. Attending to the social compact between the combatants and their communities, between the State and its citizens, particularly at the edges or in sub-national areas or ungoverned territories is one of the main current challenges to contemporary war-to-peace transitions.

As has been shown by a number of the cases examined in this study, inclusion of all potential spoilers in the peace process is crucial to avoid a relapse into conflict.

## Managing Risks

There are a number of risks associated with Interim Stabilization measures. As we have seen in the cases discussed above, for example, IS measures run the risks of reconstructing oppressive structures, providing impunity from justice, facilitating criminality and maintaining illegal networks (drugs, money laundering, etc.) and promoting the continuation of illegitimate control over natural resources. Like other peacebuilding efforts, IS measures also run the risk of creating new dependencies, or becoming isolated from other main pillars of the peacebuilding process. These are valid concerns that need to be managed. Placing any IS-program under civilian authority (transparent and accountable governance structures) may be a key to managing such risks. Establishing clear time frames or sunset clauses for such transitional arrangements or holding patterns, may be another risk management approach.

Strengthening socialization programs through promoting social-psychological assistance, introducing courses on “citizenship competencies”, and generally raising the focus on life skills as well as vocational skills (as was done in Colombia) can also contribute to managing the risks of retaining pernicious command and control structures during the transition.

The case studies have illustrated a number of difficulties and risks connected to the implementation of IS-measures. However, it can be argued that this is merely indicative of the difficulties involved in all war-to-peace transitions. Innovative, high risk and high gain measures such as the establishment of temporary IS-measures, or holding patterns, may in some cases be just the trade-off needed to address weak state institutions, faltering economy and potential security vacuum immediately after a peace agreement.



## 8. Conclusions and Recommendations

### Buying Time and Space During Early Transition

Post-conflict periods in war-torn countries are often beleaguered by ongoing occurrences of violence among warring parties. Even when large-scale peace operations are in place (as in Bosnia and Kosovo) distrust is rife among former enemies, often making it impossible to demilitarize and disarm (Colletta and Nezam, 1999). Finding means to end cycles of violence through disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of combatants back into their communities is therefore a prerequisite for building sustained peace (Annan, 2006). DDR programs can fill a number of important functions in a post-conflict setting: Signalling a cessation of hostilities; downsizing and undercutting the legitimacy of warring militia; and if successful re-establishing a monopoly over the use of force by a legitimate government. However, DDR-programs must be meticulously planned and implemented in an environment with at least a minimal level of stability and security.

This study has aimed at providing support to negotiators, facilitators and mediators in peace processes who face the challenges of balancing the need for security and stability with longer-term demilitarization, institutional and economic reconstruction, transitional justice and development efforts. The abstract notion of Interim Stabilization has emerged as a more sharply defined concept, providing alternative options in situations where there is a need for a time-out or holding pattern in order to buy time and space to prepare the ground for the continued peace process.



Putting Interim Stabilization to use, as a transitional peace-building tool, requires negotiators and mediators to have a firm understanding of the contextual factors shaping the timing and sequencing of such measures in relationship to other peace-building elements: The nature of the war and the nature of the peace; the governance capacity of the state; the condition of the economy; the human capital and the labor market; and the social organization and cohesiveness of the parties to the conflict. These are all critical variables to be weighed in the planning and design of Interim Stabilization measures, preferably already during the negotiation process.

## Getting the Transitional Incentives and Institutional Arrangements Right

Institutional arrangements and incentives are critical variables in the equation of sustainable peace. Negotiators could therefore, as an alternative to stalemate, consider transitional organizational arrangements such as semi-autonomous zones of control, the creation of non-governmental bodies, civilian service corps, and public sector employment under civil control, retaining for a limited period of time the organizational and social cohesiveness of former rebel factions but under civilian authority. Such transitional institutional arrangements may hold the keys to transforming “perverted” social capital into “virtuous” or bridging social capital<sup>10</sup>, and linking this shift with effective, transparent and accountable governance.

The incentives need to address agency (i.e., a sense of efficacy or control) and social cohesion as well as economic (asset transfer and livelihoods) and political (power sharing) requisites in creating a durable peace. Agency and Legitimacy are central constructs in the renegotiation of the social compact between communities and rebels – States and citizens. Maintaining organizational coherence, position and structure, as commanders become foremen and warlords become governors with combatants becoming employees or shareholders in economic enterprises, may be an essential compromise in making stakeholders out of potential spoilers, ending the bloodshed and enabling conditions for peace and development to take hold.

Already in the early transition period, greater attention needs to be given to a more customized reintegration program focusing on the social and psychological needs, and the citizenship and life skills of former combatants. Reintegration and integration should not simply be reduced to vocational training and political power

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10. For an elaboration on these concepts, see Colletta, Nat J. and Michelle Cullen, (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*, The World Bank: Washington, D.C.

sharing in the military. In this regard, buying time may be essential for both the human and the market dimensions to adjust from wartime to a peacetime economy. All this is not to say that justice should be swept under the carpet of stability, allowing those who have committed crimes against humanity to go unpunished through a blanket amnesty. Again, it is a question of timing and sequencing. Leaving the door open for justice (a central recommendation of the SIDDR Final Report), is essential. This was done in the Cambodian law abolishing the Khmer Rouge, through an explicit exemption of crimes against humanity from the general amnesty. As illustrated by the continuous revision of the Colombian Peace and Justice Law, striking a balance between amnesty and justice is a work in progress. Justice delayed does not necessarily have to result in justice denied.

## Key Recommendations to Negotiators, Mediators, and DDR-SSR Program Planners

In conclusion, the following general and preliminary recommendations are offered to peace negotiators, mediators, and program planners:

- › Assess the contextual factors (e.g. nature of war; nature of peace; labor market; state capacity and reach; etc.) shaping the needs and opportunities in each given situation, and consider the feasibility of an Interim Stabilization measures (or “holding pattern”).
- › Provide options for relevant Interim Stabilization, including organizational arrangements (e.g. NGO front, political party, semi-autonomous zone of control, rural agri-business or other commercial enterprise, urban public service delivery, military, police, customs, and intelligence service integration, etc.), incentives and concrete destigmatizing activities as means for continued trust building.
- › The incentives need to address agency (i.e. a sense of efficacy or control) and social cohesion (social psychological support) as well as economic (asset transfer and livelihoods) and political (power sharing) requisites in creating a durable peace.
- › Include all stakeholders and potential spoilers in the process to strengthen the support of agreements and the provision of accountable, committed, and legitimate national counterparts for international actors; friends and supporters of the peace process.

- › Place the Interim Stabilization measure under a transparent and accountable civilian authority; respect for basic human rights should always be maintained.
- › Do not close the door for dealing with crimes committed during the conflict further down the line, for example by offering a complete blanked amnesty for crimes against humanity.
- › Consider the fit of the Interim Stabilization within the DDR-SSR nexus in particular, and the overall peacemaking and peacebuilding framework, e.g. security, justice, elections and governance, economic reconstruction, etc, in general.
- › Identify financing requirements and sources for an Interim Stabilization measure.
- › Establish coordination and monitoring mechanisms for the preparation and implementation and maintain preparedness at the level of the civilian authority to intervene if the IS arrangement derails.

For peace negotiators, the concept of Interim Stabilization may prove vital when attempting to simultaneously find political solutions, manage the armies and arms – the fear and uncertainty of thousands of former combatants and affected communities during the reintegration and recovery process – and eventually reform the entire security sector. Providing further detailed guidelines emanating from this study to peace negotiators and reintegration program designers would make an important contribution to the field and practice of peace building and post conflict reconstruction.

# Annex 1

## Definitions of DDR terminology established by the UN

**Disarmament** is the collection, documentation, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. Disarmament also includes the development of responsible arms management programmes.

**Demobilization** is the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups. The first stage of demobilization may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). The second stage of demobilization encompasses the support package provided to the demobilized, which is called reinsertion.

**Reinsertion** is the assistance offered to ex-combatants during demobilization but prior to the longer-term process of reintegration. Reinsertion is a form of transitional assistance to help cover the basic needs of ex-combatants and their families and can include transitional safety allowances, food, clothes, shelter, medical services, short-term education, training, employment and tools. While reintegration is a long-term, continuous social and economic process of development, reinsertion is a short-term material and/or financial assistance to meet immediate needs, and can last up to one year.

**Reintegration** is the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. Reintegration is essentially a social and economic process with an open time-frame, primarily taking place in communities at the local level. It is part of the general development of a country and a national responsibility, and often necessitates long-term external assistance. (Secretary-General, note to the General Assembly, A/C.5/59/31, May 2005).



# Annex 2

## Methodology: Interview Guide and Sample Thematic Questionnaire

### Balancing Security and Reintegration:

A Study of Military Transitional Programs for Addressing the Reintegration of Former Combatants<sup>11</sup>

### Interviewer Guide

In-depth interviews are meant to draw specific information and lessons, as well as to initiate dialog with key-informants. Each interview should start with an introduction to set the tone of the interview and to define the vocabulary that we are using. Cogently define a military transitional program so that the respondents have complete certainty of the concept. Then reiterate its relationship with early reintegration.

Interviewers may utilize the following definition:

Military transitional programs, MTPs, are programs that keep the former combatants' chain of command generally intact within a military or civilian structure, while providing early and short term reintegration assistance such as transitional economic safety net, job training, counseling, and general information to the vast majority of these combatants.

Yet in many cases we introduce the concept of an MTP only as a heuristic to help explain our aim of managing early transitional reintegration phases.

### Key-Informant Interviews (sample frame)

The protocol questions for the key- informants are very similar. The questions move in sections designed to elicit an understanding of the problem at hand (contextual factors), the response it received through program specifics (program

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11. This was the working title of the research project. The term "Military Transitional Programs" was subsequently abandoned for Interim Stabilization (IS).

design), its implementation, costs and sources of financing, and impact on the security environment/ reintegration.

The crux of these interviews – especially with key informants that have a hand in designing and implementing programs – is to: (i) get a clear sense of how the conflict ended and what programmatic features defined early and transitional reintegration attempts, and ii) understand how these features addressed or did not address security sector issues and the preparation for long-term social and economic reintegration in the future.

Figure 1.  
Relationship Between Transitional and Long Term Reintegration

<b>I. Beginning Phase</b> Early and Transitional Reintegration	<b>II. Mid- to Late- Phases</b> Sustainable Reintegration
<b>Focus</b> Stability/Security	<b>Focus</b> Livelihood/Social Acceptance

Once key informants are identified in reintegration processes, one can gather the above information through the interviews. Key informants include program designers, monitoring and evaluation supervisors (teams), key members of agencies who implemented the programs, leaders who were either responsible for aspects of the program or dealt first hand with the effects and implementation of reintegration programs, donors who financed the program, and the excombatants themselves.

Four sections of protocol questions comprise the “key-informant” interviews.

**I. Problem Identification: What were the Key Contextual Factors that Shape the Emergence of early transitional reintegration?**

This focus of this section is to understand and evaluate socio-economic conditions shaping the post-conflict environment, the nature of political settlement after violence, and the capacity of the state vis a vis military capacity, and finally labor market structure. This is perhaps the most important information if we are to give political advice to peace negotiators interested in dealing with former combatants in the moment’s right after violent conflict has ceased.

## 2. The Program: What's the Program Rationale, Objectives, Activities, and Costs? (Design Characteristics and Details)

This section should seamlessly move from the contextual questions into program specifics. The protocol questions are formulated to get “quick-and-dirty” responses in regards to the form and content of reintegration programs that we identify, their cost and resource information, and the important societal actors associated with their creation.

## 3. Implementation Arrangements: How, who, what was implemented?

For implementation the protocol questions should guide dialog about the obstacles that different reintegration programs face when they are set in motion. So while the prior section might identify a particular design strategy – community based approach, public works programs, etc – the implementation of them is just as crucial.

## 4. Program Impact and Effectiveness: What were the major impacts (positive and negative), Effectiveness, and Lessons Learned?

In the closing section the protocol questions are devised to close the gap between early transitional reintegration and long-term (sustainable) reintegration (Figure 1): this information and set of responses are invaluable in helping to define early transitional programs as a viable policy alternative in the early phases of reintegration. Thus questioning should seek to evaluate if clear linkages and causal associations can be made between the content and implementation of transitional reintegration and the “preparedness” for long-term reintegration in the future.

### Former Combatant Interviews (Individual)

Interviews with the ex-combatants have a different focus than the key-informant ones. In these, the principal aim is to evaluate ex-combatant perceptions of the effectiveness of the reintegration programs in early phases that they were a part of, e.g., what was useful and why? Other background information is still essential. The sections move as following: (i) Demographic characteristics, (ii) Needs assessment, (iii) Aspirations, and finally (iv) program perceptions. Note that this is an opportunity to assess combatants' propensity to take voluntary part in disarmament and reintegration programs in order to overcome distrust and fear (Walter 1997).



# Sample Thematic Questionnaire

## Key Informant Interview

### Problem Identification and Program Objectives

1. Nature of the settlement:
  - a. What problems were most pressing regarding the combatants: Stability? Security? Management of a peace agreement / ceasefire? Reduction in the intensity of conflict? Maintaining the status quo?
  - b. What specifically did the peace agreement / negotiations specify to do with the combatants / groups of combatants? Why?
2. State Capacity:
  - a. Generally, what was the state capacity at the time of the settlement?
  - b. How much of a role did the state play in the peace agreement?
3. Economic conditions:
  - a. What was the state of the economy with regards to labor market stability, i.e., can labor markets absorb waves of ex-combatants?
4. How was the program intended to address these problems?

### Program Design

1. Targeted groups:
  - a. Who were the combatants to be managed / what groups of combatants were to be managed?
  - b. How did the program define “combatants?”
  - c. Was there a “vetting” element of identifying combatants who might later be tried under transitional justice mechanisms?
  - d. Approximately how many ex-combatants were served?
  - e. Which groups were left out?
2. Implementers:
  - a. Which actors were involved in planning this program?
  - b. Are these the same actors charged with implementation?
  - c. What was the level of interaction between those implementing the program and the state?
3. Needs of ex-combatants:
  - a. Which needs of these combatants did the program address?
  - b. How were these needs identified?

- c. In retrospect, were there other needs that also should have been addressed?
4. Programs Activities:
    - a. Describe the services or other assistance offered through the program in preparation for formal / sustainable reintegration?
    - b. How were economic needs addressed?
    - c. How were health and psychosocial needs addressed?
    - d. How were educational/training needs addressed?
    - e. What other needs were addressed?
    - f. Were other ex-combatant populations treated differently (egg. Gender, Age)?
    - g. What organizations delivered these services?
    - h. What was the duration of assistance?
  5. How much did the program cost? Who funded it? Were the costs enough? If not, why, and how could the program have been funded differently and or more effectively?
  6. What kind of resources existed for the transitional program (i.e., source, amount, duration)?
    - a. Staff
    - b. Personnel
    - c. Equipment
    - d. Locations / space
    - e. Were the resources sufficient?
      - i. If no, what resources were missing or lacking, and in what programmatic area?
      - f. What trade-offs were made due to limited resources in terms of determining what type of assistance to provide? How were these decisions made?
  7. As far as sequencing of programs went: was there an adequate distinction between short- medium- and long- term goals?
    - a. If so, what variables were these distinctions based off of? How did the distinctions translate into different programmatic aspects?
    - b. If not, why?

#### Implementation

In planning the transitional program, what were the working relationships with other Government actors?

International organizations?

Local NGO's?

Local communities?

How was success defined?

Was the program a success?

What were the biggest obstacles encountered?

Were they overcome and if so how?

In retrospect, how could the obstacles have been handled differently?

What were the “lessons learned?”

### Impact

1. How many ex-combatants took part in the program?
2. Did a formal / sustainable reintegration program follow the transitional program?
  - a. If yes, what did / does it look like?
3. To what extent did the transitional program affect the success of long-term reintegration?
  - a. How many ex-combatants from the transitional program took part in sustainable reintegration efforts?
  - b. Did the ex-combatants view the program as a success?
4. What were the working relationships with other
  - a. Government actors
  - b. International organizations
  - c. Local NGOs
  - d. Local communities
5. How was success defined?
6. Was the program a success?
7. What were the unforeseen factors affecting the success of the program?
  - a. Security factors
  - b. Societal factors
  - c. Economic factors
  - d. Political factors

# Annex 3

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