



ISS Seminar Report

Title: Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR), and Security Sector Reform (SSR) in the Democratic Republic of Congo – Current situation and the resolution of the conflict

Place: ISS Conference Room, Pretoria

Date: Friday, 13 February 2009

Speaker: Colonel Prosper Nzekani Zena, DRC Ministry of Defence: Small Arms and Light Weapons (SALW) expert and Supervisor in charge of specific operations of integration

Chair: Mr Henri Boshoff, Analyst, African Security Analysis Programme, ISS.

Rapporteur: Ottilia Maunganidze, Intern, African Security Analysis Programme, ISS.

The geo-strategic position of the DRC and its mineral wealth has led to recurrent conflict within the country and the region. In an effort to ensure that conflict in the region ends, the National Defence Force of the DRC began programmes of Demobilisation, Disarmament and Reintegration (DDR), and Security Sector Reform (SSR). These programmes were designed to fulfill the agreements of peace accords that were signed in Lusaka in 1999 and Pretoria/Sun City in 2003 calling for the creation and integration of a structured security sector in the DRC that would ensure peace, security, economic revival and stability in the region.

On Friday, 13 February 2009 the African Security Analysis Programme (ASAP) of the ISS hosted a seminar, the main aim of which was to gain an in-depth understanding of the DDR and SSR programs currently being undertaken in the DRC. The speaker, Colonel Nzekani Zena, a military professor and the head of the national DDR programme in the DRC (*Programme national de désarmement, demobilization et reintegration* – PNDDR), discussed the nature of the DDR program. In his discussion he outlined the two phases of the DDR, the cost of the programs and the progress that has been made since 2004, including an assessment of the current situation in the DRC with a focus on the Eastern region of Kivu.

From the outset, he outlined the importance of DDR in the DRC. He pointed out that the DDR process in the DRC is atypical and as a result it is taking a longer time than would normally be expected. He argued that the reason why the DDR process is atypical and never ending is because of the fact it is the first of its kind in a country the size of the DRC. He noted that the involvement of ten rebel forces and the government army (*Forces Armées de la République Démocratique du Congo* – FARDC) made it difficult to

effect proper DDR, but that this is only a hurdle and that there is hope that the programmes will be a success. It was highlighted that because of its atypical nature, it was necessary to conduct DDR simultaneously with SSR.

The DDR and SSR programmes in the DRC began in 2004 and are made up of two phases. The first phase began in November 2004 and ended in June 2008, the second phase began in July 2008 and is expected to end in December 2009. The first phase was launched with co-financing grants from the World Bank (International Development Association [IDA]) and the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP); both gave USD 100 million each.

The ambitious first phase, which targeted 300 000 combatants, set out to:

- Effectively demobilize 120 000 ex-combatants
- Liberate 30 000 child soldiers (*Les enfants associés à des groupes armés* – EAFGA)
- Help support the return of 150 000 demobilized ex-combatants to civilian life;

The main objective was to assist in consolidating peace and promoting economic stability and sustainable development in the DRC and the Great Lakes region

With regards to disarmament and demobilization, Col. Nzekani Zena pointed out that the first phase managed to reach 186 000 people and of those 102 014 (2610 of whom were female) were demobilized and received reinsertion payments of USD 110 each. Further that 30 219 EAFGA were freed and the FARDC managed to collect 104 455 arms. Insofar as reintegration is concerned, 88 055 of those demobilized have been physically installed into areas across the country, with most of them placed in Kivu (North and South). 54 000 of those demobilized were placed in several projects across the country; the majority were relocated to Province Orientale. There were 35 projects of reintegration, with a total cost of USD 22 181 882 and 89 826 of those demobilized received security payments of USD300 each.

After the termination of the first phase, the needs of DDR and SSR had not all been met. The programme had not reached its target, with a shortfall of 40 000 ex-combatants and there was a pertinent need to disarmament and demobilization. The government and its financial backers agreed that a second phase of the PNDDR be launched in July 2008. The second phase is scheduled to last for 18 months and will terminate in December 2009.

The second phase aims to:

- Target 98 703 combatants (19 600 armed groups)
- Demobilise 35 700 combatants (12 700 armed groups)
- Free 8000 EAFGA
- Reintegrate 75 700 of those demobilized (40 000 of whom constitute the shortfall from the first phase)
- Put in place a specific strategy to deal with approximately 10 000 female combatants (*Femmes associés aux forces et groupes armés* - FAFGA)

The total cost of the project is expected to be USD 75 million, with USD 50 Million already received from the IDA.

Col. Nzekani Zena pointed out that there are several projects to reintegrate approximately 52 280 demobilized ex-combatants that have been put in place by CARITAS, IDA, the Association for the Economic Development of Kasai Oriental (ADEKOR), the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) amongst other key players in the region. There is currently a project awaiting the approval of UNICEF that will benefit EAFGA.

The appointment of a consultant and the approval of an intervention strategy are in the pipelines to aid in dealing with the rehabilitation of those wounded in the war and the handicapped. There are also projects dealing with strategic intervention regarding FAFGA that are awaiting approval.

Current Situation in the DRC

In Col. Nzekani Zena's opinion, the security situation in the East of the DRC has developed favourably, facilitating the execution of DDR in DRC. Recent developments include, amongst others:

- Joint operations between the DRC and Uganda and between the DRC and Rwanda.
- The recent split and eventual disbanding of the *Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple* (CNDP – National Congress for the Defence of the People) and the cessation of hostilities on its part and on the part of the Mayi-Mayi
- The harmonization of the PNDDR and the Amani Programme (a UN peace initiative in the eastern DRC province of Kivu created at the Goma Conference in January 2008)
- Development of DDR activities
- The availability of 10 000 provisional certificates of disarmament

All of these are in preparation for the beginning of the demobilization process that is expected to start on the 18th of February 2009 in Kivu.

DDR and conflict resolution in Kivu

The conflict in the DRC is concentrated mostly in the Eastern provinces of North and South Kivu, where ethnic tensions coupled with the desire to control the rich mineral wealth in the region perpetuate the cycle of conflict. DDR and SSR are important in this region, because the conflict has negatively affected the DRC's neighbouring countries to the East.

At the moment, the CNDP have allegedly disbanded following the arrest of the rebel leader General Laurent Nkunda and are in the process of being integrated into the FARDC to help combat the *Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda* (FDLR – Democratic Federation for the Liberation of Rwanda). The integration process can either happen in one of two ways, through accelerated integration or through traditional integration.

The DDR and SSR efforts in Kivu have suffered several setbacks, mainly brought on by the complexity of these programs in a country the size of the DRC without a defined hierarchy and the large varied rebel movements operating within the region. Another difficulty is the persistence of insecurity in eastern DRC coupled with the delayed funding from the African Development Bank.

Conclusion

According to Col. Nzekani Zena, the DDR process is progressing although not at the speed initially hoped. Progress has been made in disbanding the CNDP following the arrest of Gen. Laurent Nkunda, but the FDLR still poses a significant threat to the DDR and SSR process. The DDR can best be implemented in an environment of peace and the ongoing conflict has aggravated the efforts of the Congolese army. The pursuit of peace is integral to successful DDR and SSR programs in the DRC.