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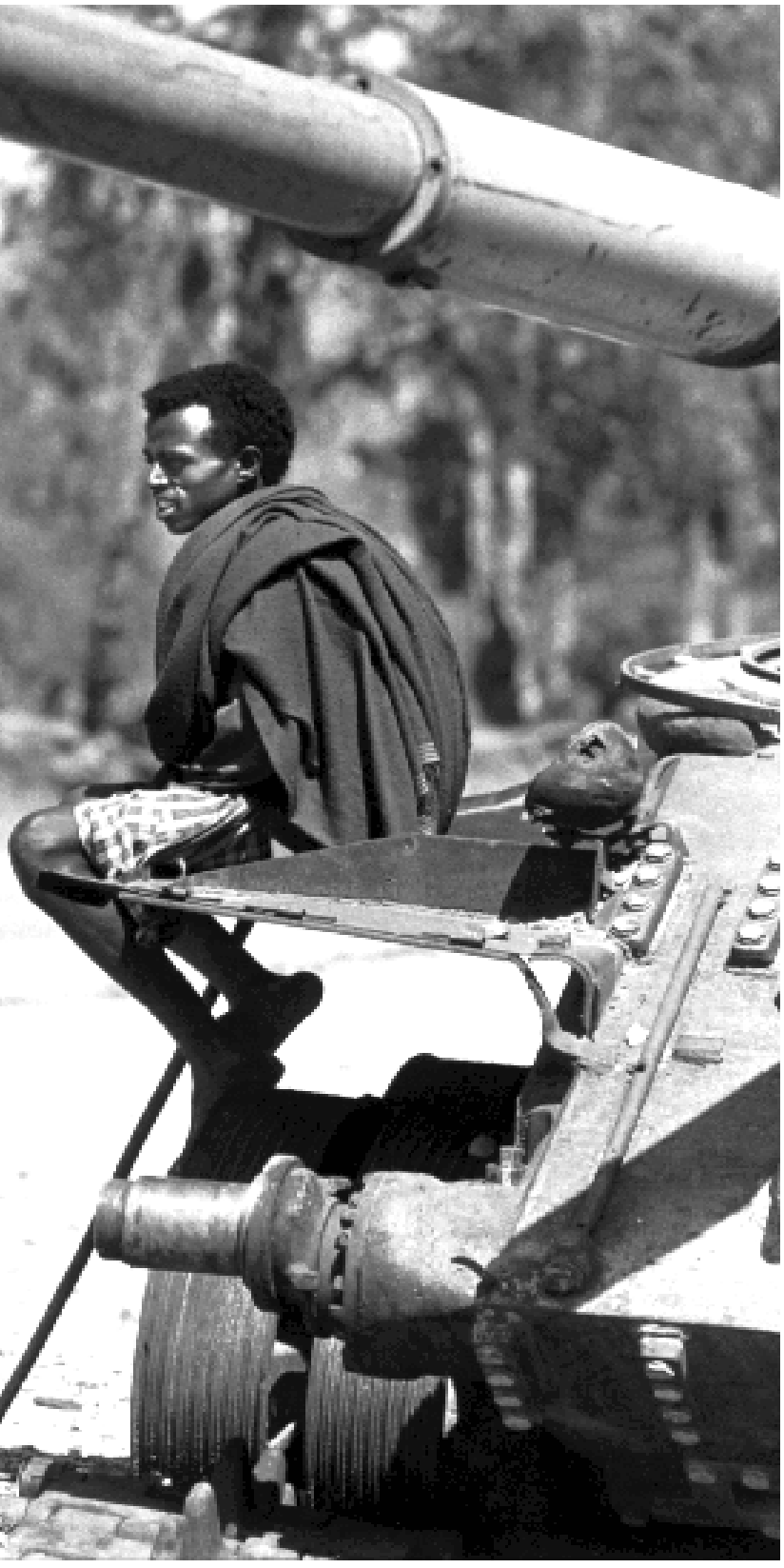

brief 4

Demobilization in the Horn of Africa

Proceedings of the IRG Workshop, Addis Ababa, 4-7 December 1994

june 95

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brief 4

Demobilization in the Horn of Africa

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by
Kees Kingma and
Vanessa Sayers

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Zusammen-fassung

German Summary

Der Workshop 'Demobilisierung und Reintegration am Horn von Afrika´, dessen Ergebnisse mit diesem *brief* vorgelegt werden, wurde von der International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG), gemeinsam mit dem Ad Hoc Committee for Peace and Development, der InterAfrica Group und dem Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC) organisiert. Gegenstand des Workshops war der Austausch unterschiedlicher Erfahrungen, die in Vergangenheit und Gegenwart mit Demobilisierung in Afrika gemacht wurden und werden.

Man wollte aus bisherigen positiven sowie negativen Beispielen Lehren für die Unterstützung des Friedens- und Entwicklungsprozesses in der Region am Horn von Afrika ziehen. Da es am Horn selbst bisher wenig historische Vorbilder gibt, wurden Erfahrungen anderer afrikanischer Länder wie Mosambique, Namibia, Simbabwe und Uganda, in die Diskussion einbezogen. Auch wenn sich die Bedingungen für Demobilisierung am Horn von Afrika als äußerst komplex darstellen und der Orientierungsprozeß langfristig ist, lag in dem Erfahrungsaustausch über andernorts aufgetretene Demobilisierungsprobleme bereits ein wichtiger Impuls des Workshops.

Das Ende einiger langanhaltender Konflikte und der Beginn einer Demokratisierung hat in verschiedenen Teilen Afrikas auch zu verstärkten Bemühungen geführt, Streitkräfte und militärische Potentiale zu reduzieren. Die Gründe hierfür sind sowohl politischer wie ökonomischer Natur. Hinzu kommt, daß Demobilisierung und Reintegration eine wachsende Aufmerksamkeit von internationalen Geldgebern sowie seitens lokaler Nichtregierungsorganisationen erfährt. Der Workshop sah hierin grundsätzlich einen positiven Trend, betonte aber die Notwendigkeit, vor Ort größere Anstrengungen für den Aufbau und die Implementierung wirksamer Programme zu unternehmen.

Zu den zentralen Schlußfolgerungen des Workshops gehört es, daß die Programme folgende drei Elemente bzw. Phasen in einer aufeinander abgestimmten Reihenfoge enthalten sollten: Entwaffnung, Demobilisierung und Reintegration. Nur so kann ein kontinuierlicher Prozeß der Überführung oder Wiedereingliederung ehemaliger Kämpfer oder Soldaten in eine zukünftige zivile Existenz gewährleistet werden. Insbesondere zeigen die Erfahrungen, daß die jeweils nächste Phase sehr frühzeitig geplant werden sollte. Im Idealfall sollte die Reintegrationsphase sorgfältig auf die kuturellen und sozialen Besonderheiten des jeweiligen regionalen Umfeldes der ehemaligen Soldaten abgestimmt sein und ihnen materielle Hilfestellungen und praktische Umschulungs- bzw. Ausbildungsmöglichkeiten bieten.

Die Berücksichtigung weiterreichender sicherheitspolitischer Fragestellungen ist von zentraler Bedeutung für alle den Demilitarsierungsprozeß betreffenden Entscheidungen. So sollten diese die potentiellen politischen Auswirkungen in Betracht ziehen - wie zum Beispiel die jeweiligen ethnischen Verhältnisse der Streitkräfte nach der Demobilisierung oder die Abstimmungsprobleme unter den verschiedenen Demobilisierungsparteien für mögliche Friedensverhandlungen. Die Demobilisierung einer größeren Zahl von Kämpfern und Waffen kann möglicherweise auch destabilisierende Wirkungen haben. In diesem Zusammenhang wurden auch Probleme regionaler Destabilisierung diskutiert: Aus der Armee entlassene Kämpfer neigen dazu, samt ihren Waffen regionale oder Landesgrenzen zu überschreiten, weil dies auch aus ökonomischen Gründen für sie attraktiv sein kann. Deshalb müssen Kooperationsbereitschaft und Regelments zwischen Staaten entwikkelt werden, die sich auf das Management überschüssiger Waffen und die Begrenzung von Waffentransfer beziehen.

Während es bei der Demobilisierung von ehemaligen Kämpferinnen und Kindersoldaten weniger praktische Probleme gibt, bedarf es für die Reintegrationsphase besonderer sozialer Programme und einer größeren Sorgfalt, als dies in der Vergangenheit der Fall war. Die durch die kriegerischen Auseinandersetzungen dauerhaft Versehrten oder Behinderten erhalten zwar in der Regel auch eine erste medizinische Sonderbetreuung, es bedarf aber neuer instititutioneller Konzepte und Maßnahmen für eine langfristige, auch soziale Rehabilitation.

Der Workshop kam zu dem Ergebnis, daß in den kommenden Jahren sowohl die Zusammenarbeit zwischen staatlichen und nichtstaatlichen Organisationen auf dem Feld der Demobilisierung und Reintegration intensiviert werden muß, als auch neue Wege der internationalen Unterstützung für diese Prozesse beschritten werden müssen. Die Gesamtleitung der Demobilisierung sollte jedoch in den Händen der jeweiligen nationalen Autoritäten liegen.

Von den auf dem Workshop erarbeiteten Lehren und Empfehlungen werden die folgenden zusammenfassend hervorgehoben :

- Vereinbarungen zur Demobilisierung sollten ein integraler Bestandteil von Friedensverträgen bzw. den entsprechenden politischen Abkommen sein. Dies beinhaltet die Schaffung eines institutionellen Rahmens mit Festlegungen für den Abbau und die zukünftige Struktur der nationalen Streitkräfte.

- Entwaffnung, Demobilisierung und Reintegration bilden eine Einheit; Reintegrationsprogramme sollten bereits beginnen, während die ehemaligen Kämpfer noch in den Sammelplätzen sind.

- Eine Erschwernis für die Entwaffnung, insbesondere am Horn von Afrika, stellt die Tatsache dar, daß Waffenbesitz kulturell akzeptiert ist. Unter bestimmten Bedingungen könnte der Besitz einer einzigen leichten Waffe erlaubt werden.

- Auch wenn eine internationale Unterstützung des jeweiligen Demobilisierungsprozesses eine wichtige Erfolgsbedingung darstellt, sollte die konkrete Form dieser Beteiligung von der Regierung des betroffenen Landes bzw. den Parteien des Friedensabkommens bestimmt werden, um die politischen, ökonomischen, sozialen und kulturellen Bedingungen dieses Landes oder der Region optimal zu berücksichtigen.

- Eine möglichst große Transparenz im Umgang mit den im Zuge der Demilitarisierung gesammelten Waffen ist unerläßlich. Die Aufbewahrung der Waffen sollte getrennt von den Sammelplätzen der ehemaligen Kämpfer erfolgen; die Bewachung der Waffen sollte vorzugsweise durch eine auswärtige militärische Präsenz sichergestellt werden.

- Der Entwaffnungsprozeß darf sich nicht nur als individueller oder kollektiver Vorgang gegenüber den Kämpfern und ihren Einheiten vollziehen, sondern sollte Bestandteil eines nationalen oder regionalen Programms sein, das auch den sorgfältigen Umgang mit den überschüssigen Waffen einschließt: Der Waffentransfer in andere Regionen sollte unterbunden werden; das eigentliche Ziel jeder Demilitarisierungsaktion sollte die absolute Reduzierung der Waffenarsenale in dem betreffenden Staat bzw. der Region sein. Diese Maßnahmen sollten Bestandteil eines regionalen Sicherheitsabkommens werden.

- Um langfristig wirksame Reintegrationsprogramme zu etablieren, ist die Entwicklung eines allgemeinen Demokratisierungsprozesses unerläßlich.

- Nationale Programme der Reintegration sollten durch eine rechtzeitige, vorausschauende Planung die Bedürfnisse und Befähigungen der ehemaligen Kämpfer einbeziehen.

- Die ehemaligen Soldaten sollten ein einheitliches Demobilisierungspaket erhalten, um die Anfangsschwierigkeiten der Wiedereingliederung zu überbrücken. Flexible Kreditformen sollten die ersten ökonomischen Aktivitäten der Heimkehrenden unterstützen; ein möglichst hohes Maß an Gleichbehandlung unter den Betroffenen sollte dabei angestrebt werden.

- Die Regierungen sollten durch Bereitstellung von Ackerland, Wohn- und Arbeitsmöglichkeiten helfen.

- Technische, handwerkliche und kaufmännische Ausbildung und Schulungsprogramme sind wichtige Voraussetzungen für die Reintegration der ehemaligen Soldaten.

- Die AIDS-Problematik hat alarmierende Ausmaße angenommen und muß bei den Reintegrationsprogrammen für die Familien der ehemaligen Kämpfer eine gesonderte Rolle spielen.

- Kinder sollten eigentlich überhaupt nicht als Kämpfer in Streitkräfte einbezogen werden. Ehemalige Kindersoldaten bedürfen jedoch einer gesonderten sozialen und psychologischen Behandlung in der Reintegration.

- Grundsätzlich gilt, daß die psychosozialen Probleme der Ex-Soldaten, die diese aufgrund ihrer Kriegserfahrungen mitbringen, in der Reintegration stärker beachtet werden müssen.

Summary

The workshop on Demobilization and Reintegration in the Horn of Africa was organized by the International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG), in cooperation with the Ad Hoc Committee for Peace and Development, the InterAfrica Group and the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC). The workshop looked at past and present experiences of demobilization in Africa. Its aim was to learn lessons from successes and failures, which could be used to contribute to the support of peace processes and development in the Horn. As there is little historical experience from the Horn itself to draw upon, experiences of demobilization in other African countries were also discussed. The meeting recognized that in some countries in the Horn the circumstances for demobilization seem a long way off. Nevertheless, when lessons can be learned from past demobilizations, these will provide opportunities, however small, to move in the direction of increased human security and development.

With the end of some long-running conflicts and the spread of democratic practices in several parts of Africa, efforts to downsize military forces are multiplying. Decisions to demobilize are being taken for political as well as economic reasons. Furthermore, demobilization and reintegration are receiving increasing attention from international bilateral and non-governmental donors, and local NGOs. The workshop found that these were positive developments upon which to build, but underlined the need to foster capacity in countries to prepare, design and implement effective programs.

Participants in the workshop concluded that it is vital that comprehensive programs are designed in recognition of the effective continuum which exists between the various elements of transforming individuals from a military to a civilian existence—disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. It was particularly noted that planning for the next phase in the continuum should be undertaken well in advance. Ideally reintegration should pay attention to the need for appropriate, culturally sensitive, social reorientation towards civilian life, as well as material inputs and technical training.

Recognition of the close ties to broader security concerns is also crucial in any decision-making regarding the issues. The decision-making should take account of potential effects in the political arena —for example the ethnic composition of forces after demobilization, or the sensitivity of phasing of the demobilization for parties to peace negotiations. Along the same lines, freeing large numbers of ex-combatants and arms could have a potentially destabilizing effect. It was in this area in particular that the regional perspective was raised. Not only are released men and arms available and able to cross borders, but it is also often economically attractive for them to do so. Political will and cooperation between states must be fostered to encourage mutual acceptance of effectively managing 'surplus weapons' and halting arms transfers.

While in practical terms, female and child ex-combatants can be demobilized without specific programs, their special needs in the phase of reintegration must be addressed more carefully than has generally been the case. There is growing recognition of this requirement, but further expertise and attention should be allocated to it. The disabled do receive different treatment by virtue of their physical need; nevertheless, initiatives to integrate them into normal life as much as possible were lauded as generally more effective and appropriate than large-scale institutional care.

Strengthening national and local governmental and non-governmental capacity and international support for these efforts was considered vital, if demobilization and reintegration were to be widespread and effective in the coming years. Control of these processes, including priority setting, must remain firmly in local hands.

Following are the most important lessons on the best practical methods for implementing demobilization and supporting reintegration, as identified in the workshop.

Lessons Learned

Demobilization

- Demobilization requires a complete cessation of hostilities through either a cease fire agreement that is monitored, or the victory of one of the parties, or an agreement by the warring parties that they can no longer meet their objectives with military means.
- Demobilization is facilitated by regional security and stability.
- Demobilization can be most effectively pursued if it is an explicit part of the peace agreement or political settlement. Such an agreement should establish the institutional framework for the demobilization exercise, including the schedule for downsizing and the future of the national army.
- Effective demobilization requires the presence of a credible central authority, which would for example provide security guarantees for disarmed individuals.
- Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration form a continuum. Demobilization is only possible on the basis of effective voluntary disarmament. Similarly, the success of demobilization efforts is contingent upon effective rehabilitation follow-up; initial phases of reintegration programs should begin while the ex-combatants are still in the assembly areas.
- A complicating factor for disarmament in the Horn of Africa is that ownership of arms is culturally accepted. Licensing of one small weapon per person might be an option.
- If possible, it is generally advisable to bring all the combatants into a unified national force, prior to demobilization. Subsequently, on the basis of the agreed criteria, some of them should be demobilized, leaving a sufficient number to form the national army.
- Financial support for demobilization and reintegration programs is essential, so that they may be carried through to their conclusion. The necessary resources should be ensured in advance of the demobilization exercise.
- While an essential prerequisite of successful demobilization and disarmament is that the international community is committed to supporting it, any international involvement should by dictated by the government or the parties to the peace agreement, within the political, economic, social and cultural climate of the country or region.
- Central assembly points are useful at the early stages of demobilization, for the collection and registration of weapons and to establish documentation, reorientation and counseling. Important in this regard are that the security of assembly areas should be assured and that physical amenities must be in place.
- Transparency with regard to arms collected is vital. Containment for weapons should be well separated from the assembly points of the former combatants; weapons should preferably be guarded by an external military presence.
- The disarmament element of demobilization must go beyond disarming individual soldiers and units, to include national or regional disarmament and appropriate ways of dealing with 'surplus weapons.' Arms should be collected and dealt with in such a way that they are not transferred elsewhere for use, and in a way appropriate to the political and cultural context in the region. The ultimate aim of any action should be to reduce the total stock of arms in the nation and region. These measures should preferably be part of a regional security arrangement.

Reintegration

- To carry out sustainable reintegration programs, a general process of democratization is required.
- The reintegration program must fit in with the overall national development program.
- Early surveys and appraisals are important to establish, in broad terms, the needs, aspirations and capabilities of the ex-combatants.
- Ex-combatants should be given a uniform demobilization package to assist them in the initial stages of resettlement. They should also be given assistance in developing concrete plans for economic activities. Flexible credit schemes should be available to fund these project proposals. In the case in which these loans are subsidized or are even grants, a maximum amount should help to ensure equity among all applicants.
- Governments should facilitate the availability and accessibility of assets, such as agricultural land, housing and space for businesses.

- In designing and managing reintegration programs, one should take full account of the social and cultural values of the ex-combatants and the communities in which they are being reintegrated.

- The problem of AIDS has taken alarming proportions. It should be one of the prime concerns for those managing reintegration programs. National awareness campaigns should be extended to ex-combatants and their families, and veterans could play an active role in these campaigns.

- Technical, vocational and managerial training for ex-combatants are critical for the reintegration process. In some cases it might be useful to provide training before the actual demobilization.

- Management of reintegration support should be as decentralized as possible.

- Reintegration programs should take specific consideration of female ex-combatants, their children and the wives and widows of ex-combatants. Specific support should be provided, including efforts to bridge differences in social and religious values.

- Children should—first of all—never be recruited into any army. In cases where ex-child soldiers are among the demobilized, they should be given special care and assistance.

- Consideration should be given, before and during the reintegration process, to the psycho-social problems of the ex-combatants as a result of war experiences.

- Despite the need for the reintegration efforts to respond as quickly as possible to needs, the real determinant of the time needed for reintegration can only be the successful achievement of their objectives.

Introduction

The International Resource Group on Disarmament and Security in the Horn of Africa (IRG) organized a workshop on Demobilization in the Horn of Africa from 4 to 7 December 1994 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In its work to support initiatives for peace and development in the Horn, the IRG has prioritized the development of practical ideas on how demobilization could contribute to this. The IRG is preoccupied not only with seeing that arms are put down in the region, but also that ex-soldiers are effectively reintegrated into society. The specific aim of this workshop was to create an opportunity for people who have dealt with planning and implementing demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in different African countries and people who might have to deal with such issues in the future, to share their experiences.

The IRG is a group of individuals aiming at stimulating a more focused and sustained exploration of alternative security structures and disarmament measures for the Horn of Africa. The group was established on the conviction that the long-term stability and prosperity of the Horn region depends on the integration of security, humanitarian, political and economic development efforts. The IRG and this workshop are sponsored by church aid organizations from Canada, Germany, Scandinavia and the United States.

This was the first step in a series of activities that provide opportunities for an open exchange of experiences and learning lessons from successes and difficulties of past and ongoing demobilization efforts in Africa. A related purpose of the workshop was to help the IRG to qualify its own analysis of the issues so it gets a clearer impression of where and how it could make a contribution to demobilization in the Horn of Africa. The IRG hopes this may help to induce peace in countries such as the Sudan, which is still in the middle of a terrible and costly internal war.

The workshop was organized in cooperation with the Ad Hoc Committee for Peace and Development (Ethiopia) and the InterAfrica Group (Horn of Africa), both of which promote peace and development through education and dialogue and are based in Addis Ababa. The substantive preparation of the workshop was in the hands of the Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), an independent international institute supporting processes by which people, skills, technology, equipment and other resources are shifted away from military activities and made available for human development.

Participants in the meeting came from several African countries, including Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somalia, Somaliland, Sudan, Uganda and Zimbabwe—from government institutions as well as from non-governmental organizations. Most members of the IRG participated as well (see participants list). Jointly, they drew lessons from successes and difficulties of past and ongoing demobilization efforts. The participants agreed that in most cases the relevant experiences exist—the wheel need not be reinvented. Invitees from 'Mitias,' the Eritrean agency dealing with demobilization, were at the last moment unable to participate. A written contribution from Mitias has been used for this report, however, to at least reflect some important aspects of the Eritrean demobilization experience.

The participants in the meeting recognized that in some countries the circumstances for demobilization currently seem a long way off. However, when lessons can be learned from past demobilizations in Africa, these will provide opportunities, however small, to move in the positive direction of increased human security and development.

This report will not be able to reflect all the details and practical issues raised and debated in lively discussions in the meeting. For the most part, it follows the pattern of those discussions with occasional contextual information provided from background documentation; as such it does not provide a full exposition of the issues involved. Nevertheless, it gives an impression of the many important considerations that must be taken into account in the design and management of effective and efficient demobilization and reintegration programs, and the recommendations from the workshop are the fruit of bringing together some of the most-qualified practitioners and theorists in the region on the topic.

Background

Demobilization in Africa

The military sector in Sub-Saharan Africa currently absorbs about 3 percent of the total GDP in the region. Figures for 1991 show that while in some African countries, such as Gambia, Ghana and Nigeria, the military expenditure was less than 1 percent of the GDP, in some others, such as Angola, Ethiopia and Mozambique, more than 10 percent of the GDP was used for the military. The burden that the military implies for society is illustrated by the fact that several countries, such as Angola, Chad, Ethiopia and Liberia, actually had more soldiers than teachers.

In several African countries, however, the size of the armed forces has been reduced considerably. Demobilization has taken place in the past few years in such countries as Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Namibia and Uganda. In Ethiopia, for example, the army of the previous Dergue regime which totaled almost half a million soldiers—then the largest army in Africa—was demobilized in 1991, following its defeat. Uganda demobilized almost 23,000 soldiers between December 1992 and July 1993 and subsequently demobilized more than 9,000 between April and July 1994. Despite the continuing fighting these days between different armed militias in Somalia, several factions in Somaliland recently started to disarm and demobilize. Other demobilization exercises have taken place on the continent within the last two decades. Zimbabwe began its demobilization in 1981, after the end of its civil war with the 1979 Lancaster House Agreement. Nigeria reduced the size of its armed forces considerably after the end of the Biafra war in 1970.

Reductions in the size of the armed forces are expected in several other African countries in the near future —driven by security considerations as well as by economic and financial pressures. Uganda will demobilize an additional 17,000 soldiers in a third and final phase in 1995. An initial effort to demobilize failed in Angola, when the civil war resumed after the 1992 elections. However, a new peace agreement was reached in November 1994, which again opens the way for demobilization. In addition, the South African defense force plans to demobilize a large number of military personnel, after the different armies and other fighting factions will have been unified into one force. Ethiopia is currently planning for the demobilization of part of its army. In the more distant future—possibly—the end of the conflicts in Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia and Sudan will also allow the reduction of the sizes of the armed forces.

It is generally perceived that spending money on the military is a waste of resources which could otherwise be contributing to development. A reduction of military expenditure and a demobilization of armed forces thus allow for more productive use of financial resources, contribute to limiting the political power of the military, and possibly free manpower and skills for more productive activities (although this is contingent upon the type of army being demobilized). Along with a reduction in the number and size of violent conflicts, these processes could support and facilitate human development; again, human development increases social justice and might reduce tensions that lead to violent conflicts. Nevertheless, experience shows that in order to use this momentum for security and development, considerable investments will have to be made, for example in the reintegration of ex-combatants, demining, disarmament, the disposal of so-called 'surplus weapons' and the enhancement of stability.

The discussions at the workshop revealed clearly that the positive impact of demobilization is not automatic and straight-forward.

Demobilization has its costs and benefits.

And the overall process takes time. Reintegration is by nature a slow social, economic and psychological process.

Demobilization in Sub-Saharan Africa (1985 - 1994)

country	number of people demobilized	total size of armed forces before demobilization	period	context
Angola	demobilization in 1992 failed	82,000 plus 55,000 UNITA (estimate of current sizes)		new Peace Accord November 1994
Chad	15,000	47,000	1992-1994	
Eritrea	26,000 (phase I) another 22,000 (phase II) ongoing	95,000	June 1993 - 1994	defeat of the Mengistu army and secession from Ethiopia
Ethiopia	almost 500,000 plus 22,200 (OLF)	Mengistu army of almost 500,000 totally demobilized	June - Dec. 1991 mid-1992 - 1994 (OLF)	defeat of the Mengistu army and overthrow of regime
Mozambique (data up to early Oct '94)	69,352 plus 20,034 Renamo	79,507 plus 24,546 Renamo	1992-1994	General Peace Agreement in Rome, October 1992
Namibia	32,000 (SAF) plus 13,000 PLAN	32,000 (SAF) plus 20,000 PLAN	1989	UN General Assembly Resolution 435 December 1988
Somaliland	.....	.....		defeat of the Siad Barre army and secession from Somalia
Uganda	32,197	80,000	Dec. '92 - July '94	Act of Parliament October 1992

Source: *Estimates by BICC on the basis of various national and international sources (a.o. IISS, World Bank and papers presented at OAU/GCA Conference Kampala, November 1994).*

Some of the costs of demobilization are direct, such as the demobilization package provided to the ex-combatants. With regard to Eritrea, Mitias indicated that it seems that peace is more expensive in terms of money than war, not only because of the costs of reconstruction, but also due to the fact that the fighters used to be volunteers. Those who have been brought into the army receive at present a monthly salary. However, if they had all gone into the army, the cost of professionalizing would of course have been even higher. Other costs of demobilization are indirect. While the number of soldiers on the payroll of the Ministry of Defense is being reduced, some costs are shifted to other parts of the government budget or to society in general. For example, when most of the demobilized soldiers are old (in countries with low life expectancy), sick (AIDS is a factor here) or disabled, the public health system or the communities and families will have to take up additional burdens.

Efforts to support the reintegration of ex-combatants, after they have been demobilized, are also costly. It should be considered, however, that the long-term costs for society could become even larger if they are not able to reintegrate into civilian life. Failure to support the reintegration process effectively may lead to increasing unemployment and social deprivation, which could result in increasing crime rates and political instability. If ex-soldiers are not properly disarmed and armories not well protected, banditry may increase or arms may end up in other, less stable parts of the region. On the positive side, the skills of former soldiers gained in the army might be very useful in the development of communities and the country as a whole. Many ex-fighters prove to be very entrepreneurial.

Demobilization in the Horn of Africa

The five countries of the Horn of Africa (Ethiopia, Eritrea, Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti), have seen almost constant conflict in recent decades and at least two (Sudan and Somalia) continue to deal with struggle within their borders today. The large percentage of the population which has participated in armed conflict and the high density of arms circulating in the area are testimony to this fact. Since 1991, however, three demobilization exercises have been undertaken in Ethiopia, Eritrea and the self-proclaimed Republic of Somaliland, as relative peace emerged in those areas.

Demobilization in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Somaliland

In June 1991 the army of the Ethiopian Dergue—then the biggest in Africa—was dispersed, following their defeat and the London agreement. Parts of this army were disarmed and encamped in Ethiopia and Eritrea, parts in neighboring countries (Sudan and Djibouti). About 88 percent of the former army's soldiers are estimated to have registered for demobilization—exceeding 400,000 individuals.

In Eritrea, following the defeat of the Ethiopian army and Eritrea's first steps towards full independence in May 1993, the army of the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) began downsizing from its estimated 95,000. This was a response not only to the reduced security threat in the area, but also to the calls from fighters, many of whom had given up to twenty-five years of their life to the war and who wanted to return to civilian life.

Since relative stability had been attained following the Borama conference in 1992, the Government of Somaliland declared itself independent and has made efforts to reduce the number of arms and armed men in the country. A National Demobilization Commission began the work of encouraging and managing the disarmament and demobilization process with assistance from a small UNDP team of Zimbabwean experts. While a number of factions disarmed their heavy weapons during mid-1994, increased instability later in the year halted the efforts.

There are at present no efforts to demobilize in Somalia or Sudan. However, historical experience from the latter—the breakdown of the 1972 peace agreement around the issue of Southern Sudanese soldiers being away from their families—is an object lesson in the area of negotiating demobilization into settlements. More recent experience from Somalia delineates the pitfalls involved in trying to disarm fighters and negotiate disarmament without an authority capable of exerting force if necessary.

Despite continuing unrest in many of the countries in the Horn of Africa and the frequent cross-border nature of some conflicts, there is a recognition—reflected in this meeting—that demobilization and reintegration are intimately tied to regional security. Demobilization has a positive influence on regional security, but it also requires a certain level of regional security: if there is a perceived threat on the border, no government will disarm to the barest minimum. While the level of expertise in handling the practicalities of demobilizing and reintegrating is growing, the larger issues of promotion of peace and stability remain thorny challenges for the leaders and the people of the Horn.

The Workshop

Diversity of Demobilization Experiences

During the workshop, several experiences with demobilization were presented and discussed. In each case, the historical, political and social context of the process was different. In some countries, such as Ethiopia and Eritrea, the demobilization took place after one party in a conflict had been defeated. In the case of Uganda, the armed conflict had already been reduced to a very limited level several years before demobilization was initiated. The NRM regime of President Museveni came to power in January 1986; in 1992 an Act of Parliament was passed with the decision to demobilize 50,000 soldiers. In Mozambique the demobilization followed the 1992 Rome General Peace Accord. As part of the UN-monitored peace process, both fighting parties, the national army and the Renamo forces, demobilized. A much smaller new national army, consisting of volunteers from both parties, is currently being created. This report will not describe in detail the different contextual issues in each experience.

One of the factors in the timing of demobilization may be the state of the economy. In Asia, a number of countries with sharply growing economies are apparently able to afford higher resource investments in the armed forces. The situation in most African countries is quite the opposite. In Uganda, for example, economic constraints clearly had an influence on the decision to demobilize. As a participant from Uganda put it: "We had to take into account our poor economic situation. Too much of the national income was spent on the military!"

The meeting also recognized that demobilization is not a panacea.

...What happens if you demobilize a lot of people and they are not able to find or create jobs?...

Failure of reintegration could indeed lead to banditry or the return of guerrillas to the bush. In some instances, it might even be better to keep soldiers in the armed forces.

Security Environment

Regional Security

Demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants may appear to be a local problem and to require local solutions. However, it is an issue with important regional implications, which demands the attention and participation of the international community. The workshop participants also concluded that stability and security in the region are important for successful demobilization.

The Southern African situation underlines the importance of regional stability. As a result of the unresolved conflict in Mozambique in the past, Zimbabwe was forced to strengthen its military capabilities. In addition, blackmail by South Africa contributed to the Zimbabwean efforts. Thus, while demobilization was undertaken in Zimbabwe, a parallel arming for security purposes was implemented. This process also was directed at addressing internal dissident military groups.

Demobilization is generally facilitated by a climate of security and stability. Regional security arrangements and confidence-building processes would, therefore, considerably improve the environment for demobilization. In some countries, however, demobilization began and continued despite volatile and unstable external conditions. The Uganda experience illustrates this point. The first two phases of the demobilization were carried out despite the continuation of the war in Sudan and the 1994 events in Rwanda. As a participant from Uganda stated: "Demobilization is a signal for peace to neighboring governments." Also, Eritreans indicated that it was decided to keep the army rather small so that neighbors would not feel threatened by its size.

...Demobilization is a signal for peace to neighboring governments...

It should be noted, however, that one of the Ugandan arguments for demobilization was actually a military one. The force had initially been inflated for political reasons, and needed to be reduced to become more efficient and flexible. Indeed, the question what size of the armed forces is justified by security concerns cannot be answered in a simple manner.

Credible authority

For successful demobilization, at least some credible authority needs to exist. Without it security cannot be provided to individuals and groups, as demonstrated by the case of Somalia. The Somali Cease Fire and Disarmament Commission, created by the Addis Ababa Conference in March 1993, could not function effectively as a result of the continued fighting among the warring factions. The UN Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) was unable to implement the program of coercive disarmament. The expectation that the relative power of the different clans would continue to be defined by military capability made demobilization impossible.

Peace negotiations

One of the key conclusions of the workshop was that, in cases where demobilization follows an armed conflict, its success requires a complete cessation of hostilities. This may be the result of a peace settlement or a victory by one of the warring parties. In the case of a cease fire, it should be respected by all parties, and they should continue to find peaceful solutions to conflicts. Demobilization can be most effectively pursued if it is an explicit part of the peace agreement, which should establish the institutional framework for the demobilization exercise. For example, the Rome General Peace Accord was critical for creating the institutions for the demobilization process in Mozambique. It established the size of the new armed forces and created confidence in the implementation process.

Current concerns for the Horn

Security issues such as disarmament and demobilization cannot be viewed as taking place in isolation—certainly not in the Horn of Africa. General concern was expressed in the workshop about an increase in arms and armed forces in the countries south of the Horn, which is partly due to the continuing insecurity in Rwanda, Burundi and Zaire. Despite some demobilization, large armies still exist.

Part of the problem is a lack of trust and knowledge, and confidence between regional leaders, which leaves the area of security open for the military intelligence systems—'the peddlers of security related intelligence.' On the national level, it is symptomatic that security issues are only handled by presidents and a few chosen men. There is usually no debate on such issues in parliaments or among the general public.

Another characteristic of most—if not all—countries in the region is the instability stemming from the fact that large parts of the population—even majority groups—have no real share in power and leadership.

Regional initiatives, in terms of trying to collectively address some of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa, have been sparse, as have the actions or interventions of the Organisation of African Unity (OAU), for which the taboo of 'internal interference' stands in the way. An urgent need exists for new and more stable security mechanisms and institutions among the governments and their leaders. A new generation of African leaders should start daring to address these issues. Positive signs do exist, such as the serious IGADD (Inter-Governmental Authority on Drought and Development) initiative on Sudan and the current attempts to revive East African cooperation between Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda. The OAU has also responded to these needs. In the past year, it has been developing an African Conflict Resolution Mechanism. The recent workshop held in Kampala, together with the Global Coalition for Africa, on "Post-conflict Demobilization in Africa" was one of the first steps in that process. OAU and IGADD initiatives in the Horn should also be able to benefit from the experience of other regions, such as ECOWAS in West Africa, CSCE in Europe and the Asean Regional Forum in the East-Asia-Pacific Region.

International community—interventions

The global community and particularly the United Nations are now facing the thorny question of intervention, often on humanitarian grounds, which has arisen out of the end of the Cold War. Strong voices raised the issue of a specific Western power interfering on one side in the conflict in Rwanda and in the Sudan, thereby aggravating the conflict in those countries. Such intervention by outside powers should be openly criticized—and if African governments were not ready to do so, then other organizations and individuals should take the lead.

Unifying the Army

Benefits

Most participants at the conference suggested that, where possible, bringing all combatants into a unified national force prior to demobilization is usually advisable. Subsequently, on the basis of agreed criteria, a demobilization can be implemented. The experience in Uganda appears to be a good example. After the National Resistance Army (NRA) came to power, it brought a large number of the soldiers of the former army into its ranks; this contributed to the increased political stability in the country. Only after several political issues were sorted out did reduction of the size of the armed forces became an issue. One of the principle guidelines—although not always observed—should be maintaining an ethnic balance in the armed forces.

One potential advantage of unifying the army first is psychological: ex-soldiers can refer to having been part of the national army (victor). It is important that people can identify themselves with success. Members of a defeated army may suffer humiliation when they return to their communities.

Drawbacks

The experience with the unification of the army in Zimbabwe was not always positive. The two guerrilla armies that forced the white minority regime to give up power were subsequently absorbed into the new Zimbabwean army. In this case, however, the former guerrillas were

very dissatisfied. All of them, except for a few generals, had been reduced to the rank of private. The Rhodesian army and police remained basically intact. It was humiliating for them to be trained by their former enemies, who they had defeated and who had bombed refugee camps during the Lancaster House talks.

Demobilization

Preparation

For successful demobilization, preparation is critical. In many cases, however, there is little time. In Uganda, for example, once the Parliament had passed the Act establishing the Uganda Veterans Assistance Board (UVAB) to manage the demobilization, UVAB immediately came under serious time pressure. Most of the soldiers to be demobilized had already been written off the budget by the Ministry of Finance. In 1992-93 the Ministry of Defense could not feed and pay the soldiers that were to be demobilized, and UVAB was forced to move quickly. Decisions on the management of the operation and the composition of the demobilization package had to be made in a rush, and UVAB had to mobilize the resources for these packages. In the first phase of the demobilization, there was insufficient time for pre-discharge counseling, although the staff of UVAB worked around the clock. Nevertheless, they succeeded in demobilizing the first soldiers by December 1992.

Before demobilization, those managing the operation usually have little knowledge of the population to be demobilized, yet for an effective operation the exact number of soldiers and their family members needs to be established. The UVAB in Uganda did initially not know the size of the families and how much luggage needed to be transported. In order to improve their estimates, they conducted a trial demobilization of about 400 soldiers.

...Situation allowed little time to prepare carefully...

In Ethiopia, the demobilization in 1991 was a very complicated exercise and the political and economic situation allowed little time to prepare carefully. After the fall of the Mengistu regime in May 1991, many of the almost half a million soldiers were dispersed in disarray. Some fled to neighboring countries, often taking their weapons with them. After a short period of preparation, in which former military training centers were turned into assembly points, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE) called for demobilization. In two months, registration and classification of all those that reported was completed.

The demobilization in Eritrea, on the other hand, has a different dynamic. Once the Eritrean People's Liberation Front (EPLF) had defeated the Ethiopian (Dergue) army, many of the fighters wanted to begin earning a living immediately. Demonstrations against the Government's call for fighters to continue to work without pay after the referendum in May 1993 pushed the leadership to speed up the demobilization. On the other hand, most of the fighters have been in the EPLF for so long that they see little perspective for themselves outside its structure, and it will certainly take them time to cope with reintegration.

In several instances, a number of soldiers demobilized themselves—rather than going through the government planned and managed process. In Ethiopia, for example, an estimated 50,000 soldiers returned to their communities without a 'package' and with or without their weapons. Little is actually known about them and how they were able to reintegrate and build up a livelihood. 'Self demobilization' also occurred in Somaliland. After the army of the Siad Barre regime had been defeated, part of the fighters were satisfied with that result and went home, while others went through formal demobilization after the peace agreement.

The Ugandan Government considered the creation of a general willingness among the population to help the former soldiers reintegrate into society to be important. Despite the different character and record of the current (NRA) army, the history of Uganda in past decades has caused a general fear and disrespect for soldiers. During the national debates before the demobilization, there were even references to "unleashing the soldiers on the population." To help overcome these perceptions and attitudes, and to create a better environment for reintegration, the UVAB launched campaigns to 'sensitize' soldiers and communities; to this end, meetings and seminars were organized.

Encampment

The first phase of the actual demobilization exercise is usually the encampment. All the soldiers and guerrilla fighters that are destined for demobilization are grouped in locations where they will be disarmed and receive guidance, health care, material support and possibly other support, such as training. The way in which the encampment takes place varies from case to case. In Mozambique, the camps were monitored by the United Nations and representatives of both sides in the settled conflict.

Experience shows that encampment is risky if resources are inadequate. In Somaliland, for example, ex-combatants were encamped for around eight months. With no training programs, job opportunities for only a few hundred of the 5,000 or so encamped, and no packages for reintegration, they finally walked out; many remain unemployed. If ex-combatants are held in camps without adequate food and a clear perspective on improving conditions for themselves and their families, it can easily cause frustration and worse. They will feel imprisoned rather than preparing for building a livelihood for themselves and their dependents. If there is no external assistance, other ways must be found. In cases with insufficient resources, small services to (some of the) demobilized could at least show there is something for them to come, although high expectations should not be encouraged.

These demobilization assembly points play an important role in the management and administration of the exercise, including identification of the different groups of ex-combatants and the production of the necessary documentation, giving the demobilized access to special services. In Ethiopia, the ex-soldiers were divided in four groups:
1) Those who served less than 18 months, and usually had been recruited by force. This group of about 71,000 soldiers returned to their respective communities directly after disarmament and registration.
2) A group of approximately 200,000 soldiers (including 22,000 officers), who had served for more than 18 months in the army, was kept encamped for a maximum of six months while they underwent reorientation courses and other training to prepare them for a return to civilian life. Another 51,000 soldiers underwent reorientation in camps in the Sudan before being airlifted back to Ethiopia and released.
3) An additional 90,000 soldiers were provided with similar rehabilitation programs at a later time, as they only registered with the new authorities later.
4) The fourth group consisted of about 45,000 disabled war veterans, of which some were in rehabilitation centers and others were living in their communities. Thus, an estimated 412,000 soldiers and officers of the defeated Ethiopian army went through the rehabilitation camps.

Participants in the workshop noted that during the time of encampment, it is important to monitor the individuals. Most soldiers have been seriously affected by the war experience; they now have to "become human again." Ex-combatants at the assembly points may be assisted with reorientation and counseling. In Ethiopia, for example, most ex-soldiers went through a program of political and psycho-social reorientation. Discussions were held on the war and its causes and effects. This training provided them with an understanding of why the war had been fought, etc. It should be noted, however, that this approach was questioned by some donors who saw it as 'political re-education.' In Uganda, the ex-soldiers and their dependents went through about one week of pre-discharge briefing sessions, providing details on the content of their demobilization packages, how to open a bank account, how to start income-generating activities, environmental issues, legal issues, family planning, and AIDS prevention.

Demobilization packages and other services

After the period of encampment the ex-combatants are discharged. At this point the ex-combatants are usually provided with a package in cash and/or in kind as well as transportation to their home areas. In Ethiopia, the ex-soldiers that returned to rural areas were given travel allowances and subsistence ration cards sufficient to acquire food for ten months—designed to be enough to feed them to the next harvest. The urban returnees received a monthly stipend of about US $25 and food rations for seven months. The 70,000 soldiers who had been in the army for less that 18 months received only some pocket money and transport. It was assumed that the return to civilian life would be relatively easy for them.

In the camps in Mozambique, soldiers received two sets of clothing, one pair of shoes, three months' payment and access to medical care, training and social activities. After leaving the camps, ex-soldiers received three months' payment, rations of food for soldiers and dependents, and transportation to a resettlement area (organized by the International Organisation for Migration). To enable soldiers to undergo further training, they received reintegration subsidies for 18 months.

In Uganda the veterans were provided with a discharge package worth about 850,000 Uganda Shillings (USh), regardless of their rank or duration of service. Adding the transportation and administration costs, the total average came to about USh 950,000 (equaling about US $1,000). The packages were ini-

tially given in three installments. However, the first installment proved to be too small for the initial expenses needed (food, shelter, clothing, health care). A solution was found by changing to two installments with a shorter period in between the payments. Another problem with which many Ugandan veterans were confronted was paying for the funerals of relatives who had died while they were away. This drained considerable amounts of money that the veterans badly needed for their resettlement.

It is generally important that the packages are available at the time of discharge. This reduces the risk of discontent among the demobilized. Some of the goods could come later, if there is no other way, although this may create a logistical problem. The exercise in Uganda experienced a problem because the iron (roofing) sheets that were part of the discharge package and were committed by the US Agency for International Development (USAID) arrived late in the first demobilization phase. This was due to the fact that they were purchased all the way in the United States, rather than locally or regionally. In the second phase most of the iron sheets were purchased from South Africa and arrived in time.

Different views exist on whether or not the packages should be uniform for soldiers and officers and for people with different durations of service. In Uganda each received the same package. In Mozambique the officers were perceived as a greater threat to internal security, especially those from the middle ranks. They were therefore provided with payments according to their previous rank in the army or Renamo forces. The experience in Zimbabwe showed that the first installment of the package should not be too large. An example was given in which a group of demobilized guerrillas, overwhelmed by so much money, disappeared with their money and spent it all in one night. Their argument was still: "We are not sure of being alive tomorrow, so what is the meaning of money?"

Disarmament

Disarming the combatants

Multiple weapons

The workshop participants agreed that an essential prerequisite of successful demobilization is a careful disarmament of the demobilized combatants. In their experience, this is complicated as many of the ex-fighters own more than one weapon. If they turn in one weapon, another might be hidden elsewhere. It is not uncommon for former guerrillas to pick up their weapons when reintegration fails or when political problems flare up again, such as in Angola in 1992.

Weapon collection and containment

Appropriate methods and procedures for disarmament and the containment of weapons need to be worked out. Transparency with regard to arms collection is vital. For the collection and registration of weapons, the assembly points prove to be useful. Subsequently, arms should be dealt with in such a way that they are not transferred into other conflict areas. To secure weapons, their containment should in most cases be separated from the assembly points of the ex-combatants. In Uganda the disarmament took place in the barracks, before the soldiers were taken to the demobilization centers.

Weapons and culture

A complicating factor for disarmament is that in several parts of Africa, particularly in the Horn, ownership of arms is culturally accepted. In some areas a man without a gun is not considered a 'real man.' At the same time, banditry is widespread in the Horn and most of the deaths in African conflicts occur with small arms. Innovative ways therefore must be found to control the use of these weapons, other than taking them away completely. When disarmament is being negotiated, it might for example be possible to specify which types of smaller weapons would still be allowed. Licensing of one small weapon per person might be an option. In Somaliland, according to the law, nobody can own arms. However, in the business area of the capital Hargeisa, where often the security forces are not able to protect people's property, some businessmen are given special licenses. Eventually, when the number of security forces increases, the number of licenses (and militias) will come down. An example of a direction to go, referred to in the workshop, was that in some regions in Africa owning a weapon is legally allowed, but not revealing it openly.

Surplus weapons

The heritage of old conflicts and processes of armament, such as massive imports of Soviet equipment into Ethiopia, is a burden for development. This type of military equipment can only rarely be used for civilian or development purposes.

...Re-export of such 'surplus equipment' into areas of conflict is one of the inherent dangers...

Various views exist on what to do with these surplus weapons. Some argue for maintaining control over the weapons that had been paid for —or for which the country is still indebted. In Uganda, for example, arms were not destroyed after demobilization, because of security implications. Massive amounts of weapons or weapon scrap is around in Africa (partly uncontrolled)—for example in Somaliland, Eritrea and Ethiopia. In Ethiopia, munitions depots were blown up in the closing stages of the war. One Ethiopian participant in the workshop felt that this—while not without its human and material costs—was better than if these munitions had fallen into the hands of trouble-makers. Often, however, at the end of armed conflicts, groups of people have just grabbed whatever they could, including tanks (as in the case of Somaliland), and used them for their own purposes.

A number of methods to cope with surplus weapons were identified:

- Suppliers could buy the weapons back (weapon buy-back programs)
- Scrapping the weapons
- Civilian usage (e.g., using small arms for the police force, or dismantling air-to-air missiles from the trucks on which they have been mounted, and using the trucks for relief and other transport)
- Letting the weapons decay and rust away (this unintentional method has negative environmental implications, but is rather common, often due to lack of resources)
- Mothballing the weapons
- Export of surplus weapons (often into areas of conflict)

The workshop participants agreed that several initiatives are required to cope with these 'surplus weapons.' First of all, there is a need for an overview of the existing and potential stock of surplus weapons in Africa, particularly in the Horn. Second, countries in the region need concrete assistance in scrapping or converting surplus weapons. Third, monitoring systems are required to stop the flow of arms in the region. It was noted that only limited civilian use of weapons is possible. Creation of political will among the leadership is required for such exercises to be undertaken in the region.

Reintegration

Linking reintegration

For the purpose of analysis and the discussions during the workshop, it appeared useful to make a distinction between the process of demobilization on the one hand, and the reintegration of the ex-combatants into society on the other. However, these two phases cannot be perceived completely separately. Disarmament, demobilization, resettlement and reintegration form a continuum. The success of one phase often depends on the others.

...If the ex-soldiers are not well integrated in their communities, the demobilization cannot be seen as a success...

Challenges

The reintegration, the process in which the ex-combatants find their livelihoods outside the armed forces, is usually extremely hard in economic environments with high levels of un(der)employment and where it is difficult to establish even small enterprises. The skills they obtained in the military are often not appropriate for the existing economic opportunities.

All demobilized combatants must find their own way to build up a livelihood for themselves and their families—often after a long period in the military. Structural adjustment policies which cut social services and civil service size generally do not allow any absorption of ex-soldiers in the public sector. If they intend to (re)turn to farming, land is not always available.

On the other hand, as Mitias in Eritrea argues, opportunities exist to make use of the positive social skills learned by some combatants, such as teamwork, resource sharing, discipline, tolerance, patience and perseverance. It is important to recognize that the nature of the various forces is different. For example in the cases of the EPLF and TPLF several fighters, while trained for military combat, also participated in administrative work and are therefore in a good position to transfer to civilian tasks.

The policy and management aspects of the reintegration process are in fact not dissimilar from general development policy issues. Much could therefore be drawn from the experience in rural development schemes,

employment policies, targeting of vulnerable groups, and food or cash-for-work programs. However, reintegration does have some special aspects, most of which were discussed in the workshop.

The programs currently being developed for reintegration are usually able to provide assistance only in certain aspects of the process and often not to all people involved. Important elements in the design and management of these programs are: the assessment of the needs of the ex-combatants and their families, questions related to the initial resettlement, how to efficiently assist in certain needs such as health care, credit or training, and the requirement of specific assistance to female ex-fighters, child soldiers and disabled veterans. Important is of course also the mobilization of adequate financial resources to implement the programs.

Dependents

The reintegration is a challenge for the ex-combatants, their families and the communities in which they want to establish themselves. The workshop reiterated that in the process of integration it is important to look not only at the ex-combatant, but also at his or her entire family unit. For example, in the two first phases of the demobilization in Uganda about 32,000 soldiers were demobilized. Together, these soldiers had an estimated 90,000 dependents. Family members have common as well as different interests and problems.

Needs assessment

Most reintegration programs have thus far been based on trial and error methods. Demobilization came quickly, and the management of the exercise had hardly been able to plan for reintegration support. In several countries surveys were conducted to find out what the ex-soldiers and their families wished to undertake after demobilization. The lesson learned from the first phase of the Ugandan exercise was that reintegration programs have to be planned simultaneously with demobilization. However, despite the fact that Uganda had a relatively well-managed demobilization exercise and was able to mobilize considerable external funding, little has been done thus far to assess the type of support required for reintegration.

In Ethiopia, time pressure did not allow a survey of the needs before demobilization. However, the Transitional Government of Ethiopia was able to establish where each soldier preferred to go. The majority (some 220,000) of the ex-soldiers decided to return to the rural areas, while about 140,000 people of rural origin chose to try their luck in the urban areas. Before starting the reintegration phase of the exercise in Ethiopia, the Commission for the Rehabilitation of Members of the Former Army and Disabled War Veterans made efforts to identify their social needs (education, employment, health, housing, etc.), identify funds and resources for the program, and identify and involve relevant central and local authorities along with NGOs in the program. Considering the different characteristics of the ex-soldiers in each category, reintegration strategies have been formulated outlining the problems, objectives and the means at the government's disposal to address them. In Ethiopia an important need is perceived for reconciliation after the protracted civil war. Successful reintegration of the ex-combatants into society is seen as an important part of such reconciliation.

In Ethiopia, disabled ex-combatants were treated as a separate category. They were further classified on the basis of the type of injury in order to provide them with the appropriate support compatible with their disabilities.

In Uganda, relatively few ex-soldiers wished to stay in the capital. Out of 33,000 soldiers demobilized, only 300 stayed in Kampala. The experience in Uganda revealed that for veterans that have been in the army and away from home for long it is difficult to realistically assess what they would be able to do there and to identify what they would require for that purpose. Therefore, it is useful for soldiers to visit their homes before they are actually demobilized. It is also important to design and/or amend the programs in dialogue with ex-combatants, especially those that have been home for several months and have already tried certain economic activities.

A survey of Eritrean ex-fighters revealed that 53 percent wanted to work in an office after demobilization, and that there is a reluctance of the ex-fighters to engage in agriculture. Mitias is hoping that with schemes to put fighters together in large agricultural settlements, this may become a more attractive choice with time.

Resettlement

Resettlement is an important link between the demobilization and the reintegration process. In some countries, like Uganda, it is considered to be part of the demobilization. It is important because at that point, the demobilized and their families must live off the demobilization package and must gain access to their future means of production. A critical factor for the success of reintegration is indeed the availability and accessibility of assets such as land, housing and space for businesses. For those that opt for agricultural production, access to land is crucial. In Uganda

that was by and large not a serious problem. In the few districts where it was, the communities were requested to assist, and in some cases the UVAB has acquired land for landless veterans.

Measures and programs to facilitate reintegration

The reintegration into society may be facilitated through several measures, such as training, counseling, the establishment of credit facilities, construction of houses, improvement of social infrastructure and the creation of (temporary) employment. Technical, vocational and managerial training are critical for the reintegration process. To ensure reintegration, governments should therefore design programs which fit in the overall national development plans or programs. In most countries, non-governmental organizations play important roles in implementing these programs.

The workshop participants concluded that demobilized combatants should also be given technical assistance to develop concrete plans for economic activities. Subsequently, flexible credit schemes should be available to fund these project proposals. In cases in which these loans are subsidized or are even grants, a maximum amount should ensure equity among all applicants.

Making credit work

The majority of the ex-soldiers in Ethiopia had an agricultural background. Most of them were able to return to family or community land. They were assisted with inputs (seeds, tools, etc.) to resume farming. This group has experienced the most successful reintegration into their societies, where they were generally well received. The social acceptance might well be due to the fact that many of them had been conscripted by force and their local communities knew it and sympathized with them.

The German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) supports several activities of ex-soldiers in Ethiopia through a financing mechanism managed as an 'open fund.' This facility has already supported about 44,000 ex-soldiers with agricultural inputs, labor-intensive construction schemes (infrastructure given priority), train-ing for self-employment and small low-cost housing projects. The key to success in supporting NGOs and self-help groups formed by ex-soldiers appears to be speed, flexibil-ity, a high degree of autonomy along with continuous feedback from the projects and activities. The management acknowledges that these quickly implemented small projects involve considerable risks of failure. However, the overarching philo-sophy of the program is "rather 100 projects of which ten fail, than just 50 projects."

Institutional issues

The Government of Zimbabwe in the early 1980s attempted to support reintegration through such measures as:

- Encouraging state enterprises to take on ex-freedom fighters. The government itself also absorbed many of them, for example in the police force. Many former freedom fighters found employment in this manner, but the positive discrimination was also misused. Some people employed relatives and friends, saying that they were ex-guerrillas.
- Schools were encouraged to take young ex-guerrillas to (re)join.
- Ex-guerrillas were encouraged and supported in the formation of (agricultural) cooperatives.

Another government initiative in Zimbabwe was the operation SEED (Soldiers Employed in Economic Development), which was not popular among the ex-guerrillas. It provided work, but did not support true integration. The creation of the Board of War Veterans in Zimbabwe did not contribute either, at the scale that was required. The Government suggested that the Board should be able to solve all veterans' problems, but gave it only two million Zimbabwean dollars per year, by far not enough to seriously address the reintegration problems of a significant number of former freedom fighters.

In the second phase of the demobilization in Uganda, a limited amount of resources was made available for reintegration. The UVAB financed some activities, such as continuation of formal education and/or vocational training to acquire marketable skills. In some specially affected districts, loans were made available for poverty alleviation. Other reintegration activities developed later included rural infrastructure improvement (road construction and maintenance) and involving ex-soldiers and their dependents in ongoing rural development projects and in credit schemes administered by NGOs. Some special agricultural projects for ex-soldiers were also initiated.

Ex-fighters in Eritrea are engaged in agricultural work, reforestation and soil conservation, under the supervision of the Ministry of Agriculture. They are also working on the rehabilitation of roads, bridges, dams, airstrips, schools and clinics. The Eritreans are keen to launch a building program of village grain stores as part of food security efforts, and Mitias would like to see the demobilized fighters constitute an ecological task force.

Vocational training

The experience in Uganda, as well as in Mozambique, highlights the importance of vocational training. Most veterans are unskilled and many of them are illiterate. The UVAB encourages veterans to get together in groups of four or five, and communicate to the UVAB what type of training they would prefer. They will then be given the opportunity to talk to and learn from experts in their own language. Some of the veterans already went to technical institutes and schools for carpentry, fishing, etc. Participants in the workshop suggested that in some cases it might be useful to provide training before the actual demobilization.

Monitoring

To effectively respond to problems and changing needs of demobilized combatants, a system of continuous monitoring is required. The UVAB in Uganda has established district offices in each of the 38 districts. Each office is supervised by a 'District Advisory Commission,' which consists of senior district politicians, representatives of technical government authorities (e.g., agriculture, veterinary). Similarly, in Eritrea there are extension offices in each of the nine provinces. Generally, monitoring of internal migration will also provide important indications about the success of reintegration.

Ex-combatants as special group

In most efforts to support reintegration, policy-makers face a dilemma on whether or not to treat the ex-soldiers as a special target group. Support programs have to strike a balance between dealing with their specific needs and not creating discontent among the rest of their often poor communities, which would actually jeopardize a true reintegration. For this reason the GTZ-supported project in Ethiopia is open for joint activities between demobilized soldiers and other needy groups. The 'open fund' uses a key of 40-60: 40 percent of the funds could be provided to projects of other needy community members.

In Uganda the priority is to assist ex-soldiers to reach the level of the rest of the rural population. In the longer term, the reintegration programs aim at improving the veterans' life beyond that of the average rural population. Ex-soldiers are encouraged to be 'motors' of rural development. This is done by encouraging group efforts rather than individual skills. Project proposals submitted by groups of ex-soldiers receive preferential treatment. It is considered to be important that they receive quick support. The UVAB regional and district offices help to channel such proposals to funding agencies.

In Ethiopia care was taken not to give specific treatment to the demobilized soldiers that might place them at a higher level than the rest of the community, who suffered equally as a result of the war. Also, experience in Mozambique has shown that soldiers should not be treated as a special target group for too long, since such special programs may cause resentment within the civilian population. On the other hand, a Zimbabwean participant argued that the ex-guerrillas, who fought and risked their lives for the liberation of their country, are a special group with specific needs and should therefore be assisted as such. An NGO effort to support ex-guerrillas, the 'Zimbabwe Project,' showed a good example in which a group of 150 ex-guerrillas were living in one settlement, but became well integrated in the local community after some initial reluctance.

To some extent this discussion also depends on the perception of the community into which the ex-combatants are being reintegrated. If they are successful liberation fighters who have voluntarily given their service and in so doing missed many opportunities to have a better civilian life, and if they are revered by the community for this, there will be more acceptance of their receiving the rewards due them. If, on the other hand, they are associated with a regime which inflicted suffering on civilian populations, there is likely to be less acceptance of their having any privileges.

Gender issues

The attention paid to the specific needs of women in the meeting and more generally in demobilization and reintegration exercises to date has been inadequate. This is in part due to the fact that in many armies, women do not form more than a tiny percentage. There are, however, exceptions such as the large numbers of women who have fought in various guerrilla movements in Zimbabwe, Ethiopia and Eritrea. More than one fourth of the EPLF fighters were women. In other countries, such as Uganda, the focus lies on women as 'dependents' of male soldiers, where there is now a growing recognition that the family unit should be the target of interventions, rather than the individual ex-combatant.

> ...Women are acquiring new roles during wars...

Women have usually acquired new roles during the wars, and are often expected by their families to return to their traditional roles at the end of the war. Therefore, reintegration

of women creates tensions. Female ex-combatants need to be recognized as ex-combatants. Specific support should be provided, including efforts to bridge differences in social and religious values. In Eritrea, there is growing evidence of the recognition of the 'plight' of female ex-fighters in society in the media, where there are articles about the role of women in the war and the roles they are now expected to play. In the survey conducted to look at the needs of ex-fighters, extra work was done on interviewing women, especially mothers. It was for example found that children are not only affected as orphans, but also because quite a few marriages concluded in the field break up after return to civil life.

In Ethiopia, female ex-soldiers were demobilized along the same guidelines as were male soldiers, but they were gathered for demobilization in three separate sites. Uganda gives no special consideration to gender issues as far as demobilization packages are concerned. However, the UVAB is aware of the special problems women have to face and attempts to assist them. A 'Gender Unit' has recently been established in the UVAB and special funds have been allocated. In Mozambique, no special programs were developed for women during demobilization, but during the reintegration phase special support is to be provided.

Child soldiers

Special support also needs to be provided to (former) child soldiers. Drafting children into fighting forces is still practiced, for example in the war in Sudan, where orphan camps are used as recruiting bases. Often, children (orphans) have come to the guerrillas for security or as the only place or group to which they could turn for protection. In Uganda this practice stopped after the current government came to power. The former child soldiers have become adults in the interim, but because they missed childhood and have had traumatic experiences, they require extra care and assistance. Counseling after the war, as well as educational and vocational training are needed. This should preferably not be done in isolated camps. These ex-child soldiers should as much as possible be brought up with other children.

In Uganda in 1986, 28 percent of the NRA soldiers were below the age of 18. By the time demobilization was started in 1992, however, they had passed the age of 18, and there was no need for a special program for child-soldiers. The young soldiers were encouraged to return to formal education. Some of them have now reached secondary level, but many had problems returning to school. Those who returned to the army after trying and failing were re-admitted. Some even came back after successfully completing their formal training. The Life & Peace Institute in Uppsala is conducting a study on child soldiers in Liberia and the Horn of Africa; there is also a UN study being conducted on the impact of war on children in Africa, under the guidance of Graca Machel, wife of the deceased President of Mozambique Samora Machel.

The participants in the workshop agreed wholeheartedly that strong action should be taken against recruiting children into armies. Norms against recruiting children under the age of 18 into armies are being in-corporated into a supplement to the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, and need to be emphasized by African leaders. Such norms need to be enforced, both by governments and non-governmental authorities in combat.

> "..strong action should be taken against recruiting children into armies.."

Disabled veterans

For the limited number of Ethiopian war veterans who had been living in so-called Rehabilitation Centers for many years, special programs have been set up since 1992 to reorient them to the idea of returning to life in their local communities. This is not an easy process, partly due to the mentality they had developed over the years in the centers, and partly due to their physical and/or mental problems. The first group of 125 will leave the Debra Zeit Rehabilitation Center soon after being given vocational and other training, relevant tools, materials and seed money. They were sent on a short holiday home at Ethiopian Christmas to give them a taste of their future life.

In Eritrea, a detailed survey of the status and needs of the disabled ex-combatants revealed that, while they are entitled to free treatment wherever they go on the presentation of a health certificate provided at the time of demobilization, for many of them a major concern is the proximity to health and other social services if they live in rural areas. Here the link between priorities in reintegration programs and the more general development priorities of a community is clear.

AIDS

The workshop specifically noted that the problem of AIDS in Africa has taken on alarming proportions and that soldiers are one of the high-risk groups. The demobilization processes in Ethiopia and Uganda

for example are known to have increased the spread of HIV infection in these countries. HIV/AIDS should therefore be one of the prime concerns for those managing reintegration programs. National awareness campaigns should be extended to ex-combatants and their families, and veterans could play an active role in the campaigns.

While counseling is practiced (e.g., Uganda), no regular (or compulsory) tests are carried out. In Ethiopia, the issue of the possible spread of AIDS was not addressed during the demobilization of the Dergue army. Furthermore, the Demobilisation Commission stressed that AIDS is seen as a serious problem in general and soldiers should not be perceived as a group singled out for attention, but only in as far as their resettlement can contribute to spreading AIDS.

Psycho-social problems

The problems that ex-combatants face in their return into their communities and the efforts to create their own livelihood are not only economic and social. The psychological and mental adjustment is also difficult. The evidence indicates that it is hard for ex-fighters to adjust their attitudes and expectations, and a large number of them suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder. The workshop concluded that due consideration should be given to the psycho-social problems of the ex-combatants before and during the reintegration process. As little is known about the existence or impact of assistance in overcoming psycho-social problems of ex-combatants, a cautious approach should be adopted which recognizes the significant cultural differences which impact upon the type of psycho-social trauma experienced. It is not enough to transplant Western concepts and learning into the region to address this issue.

Much of the success of the reintegration programs depends on a social process. Humiliation should be prevented. In Zimbabwe, culturally, everybody associated with killing is suspect. However, there is a tradition of 'cleansing' that allows one to overcome these problems.

External Support for Demobilization and Reintegration

In virtually all countries in Sub-Saharan Africa, external financial support was and will be essential to carry the demobilization programs through to their conclusion. Donors of development assistance have initially shown some reluctance to get involved in programs that deal with ex-military people, often as a result of their mandates, which might prohibit assistance to the military (this precludes, for example, their involvement in important pre-demobilization preparation). Nevertheless, by now there are several cases in which donors provide considerable support. In Uganda, for example, a considerable number of external donors—coordinated by the World Bank—supports the UVAB in the implementation of the demobilization and the preparation for reintegration.

...International support is essential...

External agencies could also play a role as a neutral (third) party. In Mozambique, for example, the United Nations played a critical role in the implementation of the General Peace Accord, including the demobilization.

Demobilization is indeed expensive and the commitment and support of the international community are essential. However, the following three comments were made regarding external support:

- It was noted that during wars governments are somehow able to find resources to feed and maintain huge war machines, often without or at least over and above funding from the outside. Planning for demobilization and rehabilitation should therefore also seriously consider all possible domestic funding.
- The participants in the workshop felt that any international involvement in the demobilization process should be dictated by the government or the parties of the peace agreement. The specific role of external actors should be defined in advance.
- The workshop underlined that in designing and managing reintegration programs, one should take full account of the social and cultural values of the ex-combatants and the communities in which they are being reintegrated.

In Uganda, several external donors support the UVAB—the external support is coordinated by the World Bank. Toward the first two phases of the program donors have provided US $36 million. The Ugandan Government has counter-funded the equivalent of US $4.5 million. Estimated costs for the third phase are US $19 million. The UVAB is assisted by consultants sponsored by GTZ for capacity building, project planning and management.

In Ethiopia, the international community has responded favorably to approaches from the Government to support demobilization, especially on the initial needs for demobilization. Support for reintegration was less easily obtained from international donors, but all in all the response from donors was described as good. Some problems were experienced with the ILO, which apparently had tried to take 'the Lions' share' of the international aid to the Ethiopian program.

In Eritrea the Government has borrowed about US $15.5 million from the Eritrean Commercial Bank for the first phase of the demobilization. According to the Government this was a result of donors turning down applications or taking too much time for studying proposals.

The GTZ is one of the most active external agencies in reintegration efforts, providing support in Eritrea, Ethiopia, Mozambique, Somaliland and Uganda. In Ethiopia, for example, GTZ runs a so-called 'open fund,' with which it supports activities such as: provision of agricultural inputs, labor-intensive public works, training, self-help groups, low-cost housing and employment subsidies.

The conditions of the donors have caused some management problems. Slow delivery of the donor funds in Uganda delayed the packages and frustrated the ex-soldiers, as seen in the example of the late arrival of iron sheets from the United States (see section on demobilization packages and other services). The Government of Uganda addressed this problem by calling the donors for a meeting, which helped to expedite the delivery. Similarly, the Government of Ethiopia was forced to borrow funds from the Ministry of Finance to purchase agricultural inputs for reintegration packages, which had been committed by donors. A general lesson to be learned is that donors need to be involved and coordinated well in advance. Many of the in-kind components of the demobilization package can be bought locally or regionally.

It should be reiterated that reintegration is by nature a slow social, economic and psychological process. Also, lessons learned in resettlement schemes and rural development programs point out that for a sustainable impact, the efforts should be well prepared in close cooperation with all the people involved. However, in the context of large-scale demobilization the expectations are high. The need for genuine reintegration puts considerable pressure on the capacity of national governments, NGOs and external aid agencies to deliver services that will have a lasting impact. Nevertheless, if lessons are learned from the demobilization and reintegration programs thus far, their implementation could make an important contribution to human development in the Horn of Africa.

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