

**A STRUCTURAL APPROACH TO THE DEVELOPMENT  
OF A DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILISATION &  
REINTEGRATION STRATEGY**

## 1. Introduction

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1. Since 1994 there have been 34 DDR processes (of which 22 have taken place in Africa)<sup>1</sup>. Some of the countries concerned have gone through more than one process, and about half of them have subsequently reverted to violence. The failures occurred in states which were largely classified as “failing states” with a low governance capability<sup>2</sup>. In these states the DDR process had been generally treated as a purely military requirement to be managed by soldiers. In the African context, where the areas of conflict were beset by low governance levels, this singular emphasis was understandable. In the non African contexts where the level of governance was generally higher and significantly more stable<sup>3</sup>, a more integrated political approach was evident. In recent times, there has been a more generalised acceptance that DDR<sup>4</sup> is but a part of the wider political strategy which is required if the underlying reasons for the conflict are to be addressed and a peaceful, developing social, and economic environment is to be achieved. That process requires a coherent and integrated political strategy designed to attain a specifically defined political objective or out-turn. There has been a tendency for DDR to be divorced from political considerations and neglected as a political tool. An initiative to address this inherent weakness has now been taken by the UN not least in the policy work of the UN agencies on DDR<sup>5</sup>. DDR, therefore, is not only a strategy for inclusion in a final plan for peace but can also play a key transitional role in preparing for peace. The primary determinant as to which DDR strategy is most relevant, peace process or transitional process, will be the extent to which the final political settlement has been developed, its parameters agreed and the degree of political acceptance achieved.
2. This paper addresses DDR within the context of a wider peace building strategy. It outlines a conception of DDR that identifies the role which DDR can play in the development of a successful peace process. The paper also makes reference to historical events, whilst highlighting the key elements which contribute to success and the absence of which give rise to failure.

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<sup>1</sup> The Stockholm Initiative on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (SIDDR)

<sup>2</sup> Somalia, Liberia, and the Ivory Coast are some examples.

<sup>3</sup> South Africa; Former Yugoslavia; Northern Ireland

<sup>4</sup> Kosovo is the best recent example. UN Resolutions demanded not only DDR but also the creation of entirely new systems of governance.

<sup>5</sup> Recently, the UN has formulated the Integrated DDR Standards (IDDRS) which aims to clarify and improve DDR operations and increase coordination.

## 2. Preparing and Managing DDR

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### *DDR - An Overview*

3. The terms Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) have gained a certain currency in recent years. A DDR strategy is now considered to be an essential part of any peace process. The combined association of the three separate but necessarily integrated processes and their usage under the acronym DDR may well obscure the difficulties and complexities which their attainment presents. A cursory glance at each of the terms clearly shows the degree of complexity:-
4. **Disarmament** implies a status change from the active use of the weapons to their removal as an instrument in a conflict. It can be accomplished peacefully by agreement or forcefully by the application of greater military force. Weapons range in scale from the most basic homemade handheld to the most sophisticated weapon systems. The management of their removal requires the deployment of significant intellectual, physical and logistical resources. The organisational structure required can extend from the use of local police to deploying a sophisticated, multidisciplinary organization endowed with huge external resources. Being almost entirely materially based, disarmament tends towards a degree of logistical exactitude which makes successful attainment amenable to effective management.
5. **Demobilisation** is more complex ranging from the standing down of small poorly organised local militias to the removal of defence organisations including land, sea and air arms. While there is a logistical aspect to the process (demobilisation of bases), the political and personnel aspects are of greater importance. It differs from disarmament; it is more concerned with the management of people and ideas rather than material. The management required is much less rigidly quantifiable, needs far more persuasive elements and tends towards the arts rather than the sciences. Demobilisation presents a greater challenge than disarmament.
6. **Reintegration** is the constructive re-engagement of military or paramilitary personnel and material into a productive society. When compared to disarmament and demobilisation, it is profoundly different and many times more complex. The fundamental question is “Reintegration into what Society?” Problems of governance and economy thus are related to reintegration, as DDR strategies go to the very heart of nation-building.

### *Preparing for DDR*

7. The successful preparation of a DDR Strategy must be preceded by the acceptance of four fundamental requirements.

- Firstly, there is the requirement for acceptance by the conflicting parties and their supporters, national and international, that the process is essentially a political one dependent and on a political strategy which has broad agreement as to the ultimate political compromise.
  - Secondly, the strategy to resolve the existing conflict needs to be based on peaceful rather than military means. Allied to this is an expectation that there is a mutual appreciation for what constitutes military means. Some consensus on the state of the security environment and how it is to be managed is also required.
  - Thirdly, the conflicting parties must possess the political resources and the political will (- or, if they lack them, at least a strategy for developing the political will and resources-) to pursue a peace process by peaceful means.
  - Fourthly, the process requires economic and financial resources which must either exist or be created in order to provide the socio-economic environment to underpin the peace.
8. A key aspect of meeting these four preparatory requirements is an understanding of the causes of the conflict. While a shared understanding of the causes of conflict may be helpful, it is not a necessity for a successful out-turn<sup>6</sup>. However, a detailed and objective analysis of the cause of the conflict is a necessary pre-requisite. The degree of trust which exists between the parties will determine the extent to which a shared understanding is possible. The level of trust will ultimately also determine whether the conflict resolution process will be more internally driven or whether it will have to rely more heavily on the support of external actors.
9. Intra-state conflicts currently form the largest number of the world's conflicts.<sup>7</sup> They do not conform to any particular stereotype and arise for a multitude of complex reasons. While the active involvement of external agencies usually facilitates the resolution of intra-state conflicts, such involvement also adds further to their complexity<sup>8</sup>. Understanding the causes of the conflict is important for analyzing the local, national, regional, international and global dimensions of the conflict.
10. The key element of the analysis should be primarily concerned with identifying and addressing the political blockages to the ultimate political solution. There are generally two types of blockages:

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<sup>6</sup> Vietnam; Former Yugoslavia.

<sup>7</sup> The Human Security Report 2005

<sup>8</sup> South Africa; Yugoslavia, Kashmir, Kosovo; Afghanistan, Liberia, Sudan, Somalia, Northern Ireland, Chechnya and the Middle East

- The first is the inherent failure of the protagonists to identify a compromise or to accept a compromise proposed by an external source; and,
  - The second is the lack of the political will to formulate or implement an agreement or the lack of resources to doing so.
11. The formulation and implementation of DDR agreements is linked to the quality of governance. The greater the level of lawful, democratic authority, the more tools will be available for DDR formulation and implementation. Defence-, security- and justice systems rooted in constitutional law facilitate DDR implementation. They provide the skilled resources, legal organizations and the structures to formulate and implement change. In contrast, non-democratic states with weak government and poor governance will have serious limitations in formulating and implementing change. In Africa, where such structural weaknesses are common, the United Nations has been driving DDR. While DDR programmes have successfully halted violence<sup>9</sup>, the implementation of the wider nation-building peace process has proven more elusive.
  12. If protagonists differ widely in their governance capability, the formulation and implementation of a DDR strategy can become fraught. In some cases it can even undermine the wider peace strategy. Understanding the reasons for disparity in governance is important for successful DDR at all stages (negotiation, formulation and implementation). If one of the parties lacks governance capacity, this should be recognized and addressed in the process. Without proper development strategies for improving governance capability, the process may suffer from severe limitations.

### *Initiating DDR*

13. The key players of the peace process are also the key actors for initiating DDR. Normally, this is the activity of political leaders. There are three fundamental steps in any peace process: negotiation, formulation and implementation and DDR impacts on all three phases. DDR itself is largely a function of the political situation. The closer the parties are to a political solution of the conflict, the more important DDR will be. This underlines once more the need for a detailed understanding of the development of the conflict and its dynamics.
14. In Northern Ireland and South Africa, the initiation of the peace process was preceded by a period of secret internal discussions at the highest political levels.<sup>10</sup> Though later on this was to facilitate an early move to the formulation and implementation phases, it was, in the case of South Africa, insufficient to reduce the levels of violence. Violence eventually diminished after church and business

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<sup>9</sup> For examples see Somalia; Liberia, Ivory Coast

<sup>10</sup> Mandela and Botha met and agreed on the framework before formal discussions began. Major and Reynolds accepted a non-paper prepared by Hume and Adams as the basis for the political solution.

leaders had launched a second initiative that helped drive the process forward.<sup>11</sup> In Northern Ireland and South Africa, the initial analysis was thus internal.

15. External analysis is vital where the main parties cannot agree on the parameters for a solution. The conflict in Bosnia & Herzegovina is the most recent example. Since there was no consensus on the parameters of the political solution<sup>12</sup>, the negotiation was managed, controlled and determined at Dayton and constitutes therefore an external process<sup>13</sup>.
16. External agencies can become involved only if they are perceived to be credible by the conflicting parties. Credibility matters because at some stage the “agreement” must obtain the political approval not only of the protagonists, but also of their constituencies. The leaders of the negotiations must eventually win over their own people to accept the compromise. In externally driven processes, top leaders may prefer not to get involved directly so as to retain an opportunity for denial and negotiating flexibility. A major advantage of using external arbitrators is that it helps to create much needed political space for political leaders that enables them to sell the final compromise more easily to a sceptical public.
17. The three elements i.e. disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration will be implemented sequentially unless the region in question is so vast and the security situation so diverse that a locality by locality approach may be needed.
18. Contrary to some beliefs, the cessation of armed hostilities is not a pre-requisite for the formulation and implementation of a peace process. “You make peace with your enemies,” Mandela said. In South Africa, Northern Ireland and the Former-Yugoslavia, for example, violence continued through the analysis and negotiation stage before a political solution conducive to the formulation and implementation of a peace process, was found. In practice, violence was regrettably often instrumentalised as a negotiating tool<sup>14</sup>. *A transitional DDR strategy* can be

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<sup>11</sup> “Leaders of the South African Council of Churches and the CBM took the step of jointly exploring the question of what role civil society could play to halt the slide towards growing polarisation of South African society. They expanded their discussions to include the leadership of the Congress of South African Trade Unions and also made contact with de Klerk’s office. In further discussions (these were all both informal and low-key), key figures from the Dutch Reformed Church, such as its former moderator, were invited. The Dutch Reformed Church was regarded as an Afrikaner church with influence over the Afrikaner establishment. The church and business leaders from the SACC and CBM then met with Buthelezi as well as with President de Klerk” - Gastrow.

<sup>12</sup> The lack of agreement persists with Kosovo unresolved and BiH suffering weak and ineffective governance.

<sup>13</sup> The Accord, the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia & Herzegovina, was signed in Paris on 14 December 1995.

<sup>14</sup> The classic example was the IRA’s strategy to bomb the British mainland between 1984 and 1996 even as secret comprehensive negotiations were underway. Vietnam and the Paris negotiations were no different. South Africa saw the continuation of violence and even the introduction of a new form of violence when the Botha Government secretly armed and funded the Inkatha to attack the ANC. The Western powers ordered NATO to bomb Serbia & Montenegro as part of their Kosovo strategy.

introduced to facilitate the reduction of violence at all stages of the peace process including at the negotiation stage. However, caution is needed, as disarmament failure reduces not only the credibility of the process but also risks undermining the wider strategy for peace.

### ***Timing of DDR***

19. The timing of the introduction of the DDR process is largely conditioned by the security environment. Once an understanding on the broad political solution has been formed, the general security situation should be addressed without delay. The DDR process should be seen as an integral part of the strategy for the creation or the maintenance of the security environment needed for the peace process.
20. Timing is vital. If DDR is introduced too early, it risks losing credibility, especially within the weaker non-conventional force. On the other hand, if it begins too late, there is a risk that any disenchanted elements within both the non-conventional and government forces will undertake independent action. Failed or misused DDR processes not only threaten the success of a peace process, but can also lead to the worsening of the conflict. Furthermore, failure to develop an appropriate economic environment can seriously hamper the wider peace strategy. Disarmament, in an early stage, requires some mutual basic agreement that can encompass a wide range of measures from surrendering some degree of security control to abstaining from using certain weapon systems etc.

### ***Managing the DDR Process***

21. The possibilities of boosting economic development must also be considered in the early phases of planning, as this is a pre-requisite to success. There must, however, be some recognition that economic development takes time and needs the investment of new, scarce resources. It is thus a long-term endeavour. Frustrations are likely to present great political challenges over a protracted period of time. Demobilisation and even more so reintegration increase pressure on budgets, as they demand a major investment of scarce fiscal resources.
22. Comprehensive aspects of socio-economic planning are part of the Demobilisation Phase. Disarmed soldiers (both conventional and non-conventional) need to be persuaded of the potential benefits. Persuasion is even more crucial in situations

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“In many instances, the security forces were playing a sinister role of fuelling such conflicts. In fact 1990, the year that many thought would be the precursor to liberation, democracy and stability, became a year of unprecedented political strife and killings. 3,699 people were killed through political violence, a 163 percent increase over 1989. Hopes for a peaceful change dimmed as the increased political violence prevented constitutional negotiations from commencing. It became clear that if South Africa was to break out of the growing spiral of violence and polarisation, political leaders would have to manage the coming transition more effectively, and rules of conduct would have to be agreed upon in order to minimise the political violence and intolerance.” A Joint Effort - The South African Peace Process by Peter Gastrow\*

where governance is weak. Economic alternatives, in the form of new employment opportunities or further education, are key. For this reason, the DDR process cannot be dissociated from development plans for future state structures, particularly security structures including the new army and police organisations.

### *An Organisational Structure*

23. Oversight of the design and implementation of a DDR strategy requires a properly organized team. Based on best practice, two basic principles can be retained: a) top politicians need to be involved and b) the process requires a multi-disciplinary approach.
24. The most successful implementations of peace strategies<sup>15</sup> have involved the most senior politicians right from the outset (the negotiation phase). In successful examples, the DDR process was also placed directly under their control, which reflects the recognition that a DDR strategy is essentially a political process. Without a high degree of political control the process risks being reduced to its technical aspects and managed by security technocrats. DDR however occurs in a dynamic environment. In order to be sustained, it requires the ability to deal with the unexpected which may include adjustments to strategies and new compromise. These have to fit within the parameters of the already agreed overall political strategy. Variations to and nuancing of agreed strategies require approval and support from the highest political authorities. DDR managers need direct access to the highest political authorities, in order to ensure continued integration of the two related strategies, peace and DDR be multi-disciplinary. Solutions to problems during the implementation phase must have top level support.
25. DDR managers also need to be multi-disciplinary as different skill sets will be required at each stage. Due to its fundamentally political nature, the management of a DDR process cannot be left to the security establishment alone. Disarmament will require military and intelligence skills. But, demobilisation also requires human resource management capabilities and an understanding of individual and societal processes. Reintegration is an altogether much more demanding process, as it additionally requires expertise in finance, economy and industrial development. Given the broad skill requirements, more than one team is normally needed for successful management of DDR.

### *Conclusion*

26. Preparing and managing a DDR strategy is primarily a political process requiring steering from the highest political authorities. While it requires technical security expertise, particularly during the Disarmament Phase and part of the

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<sup>15</sup> South Africa and Northern Ireland

Demobilisation Phase, it would be a serious mistake to entrust the management of the DDR process to security technocrats. There is a need for multi-disciplinary teams that combine expertise in security (including intelligence), human resource management, psychology, sociology, economy, finance and trade and industry.

27. Politics being the art of the possible, there is no rigid sequence for the management of a successful DDR process. The obvious sequence of disarmament followed by demobilisation followed by reintegration should form the basis for the implementation plan. However, the timeframe for each phase will vary greatly so that elements of each phase may well need to be initiated out of sequence. Planning for the reintegration phase, for example, has to begin long before the demobilisation is completed, if it has to create the enabling economic environment.
28. The essence of a successful DDR strategy is to create and sustain the minimum basic security conditions for long term peaceful development right from the outset. This calls for designing and implementing DDR programmes in a way that respects and promotes the social, legal, and economic preconditions of peace. DDR programmes cannot, for the sake of short-term security and stability, sacrifice the legitimate social and developmental expectations of the community at large.

### 3. Limits of DDR

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#### *General limitations*

29. Inherent limitations in the development and implementation of any DDR strategy include political, social and military aspects, as well as constraints related to resources and timing. The biggest DDR limitation is probably its dependence on an accompanying political strategy. DDR is not an end in itself, but rather a subsidiary, supportive strategy to a peace and reconciliation strategy. Where attempts have been made to dissociate DDR from the political strategy, the process has lacked an understanding of the dynamics of conflicts and resulted in failure. In Kosovo, for example, DDR was hampered because of a lack of political coherence within the dominant Albanian Community, and more particularly because of the power struggle between the Democratic League of Kosovo (DLK) and Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA). This dilemma was partly resolved when the 2004 elections consolidated the DLK as the majority party<sup>16</sup> in a coalition government.
30. The DDR process is occasionally used as a negotiation tool in situations where consensus on the political solution is still weak. Parties to a conflict are sometimes drawn into negotiations with the objective of weakening their resistance.<sup>17</sup> Under such circumstances, the parties will reluctantly commit themselves to the process. Aware of the difficulties of reactivating armed opposition after concessions have been made, armed opposition groups react with scepticism until they are convinced that the peace settlement is holding.
31. A shaky security situation can seriously limit DDR. In evaluating the security situation two questions should be examined: (1) How can the level of conflict and/or violence be reduced under the given circumstances? (2) What immediate steps, if any, can be taken to start a disarmament process? While a cessation of armed hostilities would facilitate DDR, in practice it might be difficult to achieve. Experience shows ceasefires to be more easily achieved in conventional warfare with balanced forces. In modern conflicts, where front lines are no longer clearly delineated, ceasefires are more difficult to attain and maintain. Weak governance often adds further to the difficulties and makes ceasefire almost impossible to achieve.
32. In internal conflicts, a major political difficulty is that the government usually rejects the idea that the lawful security forces and the opposition forces are being

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<sup>16</sup> The DLK had been the main political opposition to Serbian control. After the failure to progress through a political strategy, KLA the armed wing came to dominate the political process after the NATO intervention. Both the 2001 and 2004 elections gave DLK a majority but they are now in coalition with the former KLA leaders who formed new political parties. 2004 result DLK 45%; PDK 29%; AAK 8.4%.

<sup>17</sup> Adams view of the 1974 Ceasefire and the discussions that followed.

dealt with on equal footing. In contrast, the opposition group expects a form of “legitimation” as part of any process and will be eager to retain its force capabilities until this has been guaranteed.

33. Another limitation to DDR is that its outcomes have to be measured in the longer term: In Northern Ireland the current peace process has been ongoing for twenty-one years<sup>18</sup>. Consensus between the key external players, namely UK and Ireland, has strongly underpinned the strategy. Marked progress in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration has been achieved, because the final political solution is already well known<sup>19</sup>, if not yet in place. The disarmament process itself has taken almost ten years. While results in disarmament have often been perceived as unsatisfactory, they did not delay the final implementation of the political solution and did not bring the process to a standstill. Aspects of Demobilisation and Reintegration continued and, as a result, the level of violence has been greatly reduced.
34. Bosnia and Herzegovina witnessed dramatic progress in disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. However, this was achieved mainly under external governance, a condition which is hardly sustainable in the future<sup>20</sup>. The security situation has been improved, but with the assistance of a strong international military force, and under the supervision of UN police, and more recently of the EU. In contrast to Northern Ireland and South Africa where the broad political out-turn was accepted, uncertainty as to the ultimate political arrangements continues in Bosnia and Herzegovina and is hampering political progress and more effective governance.<sup>21</sup>
35. With the very notable exception of South Africa, successes on the African continent relate only to some aspects of DDR. In some countries for example, disarmament and demobilisation has been carried out with some success,<sup>22</sup> but with little progress in effective governance so that the reintegration phase lacks a foundation on which it can build and prosper. The failures stem from an excessive expectation that DDR programmes are capable of transforming social relations, achieving reconciliation, solving structural economic imbalances, or helping countries achieve significant developmental leaps. Excessive expectations are common in contexts of weak governance<sup>23</sup>.

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<sup>18</sup> The initial tentative engagement between the UK Government and the IRA took place in 1984 when MI6 initiated contact with Martin McGuinness.

<sup>19</sup> Based on power-sharing between Protestants and Catholics; also consent to the existence of the state by the Catholic minority until a majority votes otherwise.

<sup>20</sup> The Office of the High Representative established under the Dayton Agreement, has imposed law in situations where the Parliament has been unable or unwilling to introduce the change deemed necessary to develop the State or provide for its citizens.

<sup>21</sup> As of 21 November 2005, this issue is being addressed in a special meeting arranged by an American diplomat, Don Hayes, the former Deputy to the High Representative.

<sup>22</sup> Somalia, Liberia and the Ivory Coast are among the best current examples but success continues to elude the DRC.

<sup>23</sup> The Human Security Report 2005

36. Public acceptance may eventually play a critical role and also limit DDR in some circumstances. Within democracies, the role of the public should not be underestimated, as it might question the arrangements from an angle of resources (for the integration phase) and from political acceptability. Public opinion may oppose what it perceives to be “concessions” to “terrorists” and “criminals”.

### *Limitations in a Situation of Armed Conflict*

37. While peace strategies have been successfully pursued during ongoing armed conflict, there is no apparent historical case where a DDR strategy has been successful during active hostilities. Internal armed conflicts are generally less rule-based than international armed conflicts and are therefore less amenable to negotiated arrangements, such as a truce and cease-fires.

### *Disarmament and Demobilisation*

38. The military mindset that prevails in situations of armed conflict can limit the strategic decision-making. When advising the Government, the military and security establishment usually emphasize a hard security perspective and give priority to military rather than political priorities. Without competent political control, there is a risk that military priorities may dominate the strategic decision-making process. Political leaders and external arbitrators should be acutely aware of this potential difficulty and seek to strengthen governance.
39. In many internal armed conflicts, the divisions between political and military wings are often deliberately blurred in order to create space for negotiation. Where military leaders and politicians are more clearly separated by circumstances, mistrust and uncertainty often act as an impediment to progress. In Ireland, the Republican Movement addressed this difficulty by ensuring that the leaders in Sinn Fein were also leaders of the IRA and that negotiating teams included politicians and force representatives. This in time suited all parties and facilitated negotiation as it helped secure commitment from both the political and military wing. In South Africa, Mandela’s charismatic personality acted as a driver to all negotiations and facilitated the effective management of frictions.
40. In internal conflicts, rivalry amongst armed opposition groups often limits progress in DDR. While the legitimate authority finds it comparatively easy to maintain a unity of purpose, insurgency forces generally lack homogeneity. Government is then confronted not to one force, but to a loose coalition of forces. In situations where these forces have a broad agreement on the ultimate political objective, DDR may be a difficult but still manageable process.

41. Removal of weapons is a key component of any DDR process. In a society that has no history of a “gun culture”, this may be a relatively easy task once the removal policy has been agreed. However, in societies with established gun cultures it might not be advisable to seek the removal of weapons belonging to individual households, as their possession is usually associated with “family protection”. The removal of weapons from armed groups is often also complicated when one or several parties consciously conceal parts of their stocks as a type of guarantee in the event of the failure of the peace process.

### *Reintegration*

42. These risks and limitations need to be addressed in the political strategy of the process. At the heart of any reintegration strategy is the question: “Into what society shall integration take place?” The normative framework for governance, including the constitution, may undergo major change.<sup>24</sup> This usually impacts on the allocation of state resources and the various sectors of governmental activity. Adjusting existing norms of governance is a prerequisite to a successful peace process. Without such adjustments the reintegration process will be severely disadvantaged. Ending conflict generally implies greater inclusiveness in governance and hence the acceptance of new arrangements for power sharing and the distribution of state resources. Greater inclusiveness will eventually also enhance the acceptance of national defence and security organizations (armed forces, police, intelligence and justice system) and frees resources for other purposes.
43. In a weak economy with high social deprivation and low employment, intense competition for scarce employment opportunities can be expected. This will present a major challenge to the government and more particularly to any positive discrimination programmes it may wish to implement during the integration phase. Social and economic policies are a vital concomitant of the reintegration strategy, not only for ex-combatants, but also for the local communities that will have to absorb them. If the communities are not properly take care of, social unrest could threaten the peace process. Recent examples show that these problems are relatively smaller, where the dissident political leadership, can continue to count on popular support.<sup>25</sup> .

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<sup>24</sup> The Ohrid Agreement, 13 Aug 2001 which brought about the end of the conflict in Macedonia is an excellent recent example.

<sup>25</sup> The ANC and Sinn Fein continue to have the support of up to 90% of their traditional supporters with significant growth also coming from new supporters. In the West Africa states and Somalia the situation is the reverse where successive political leaderships have failed to establish a national identity or consensus so that a form of mob law rules.

### *Limitations in a Situation of Occupation*

44. As Occupation is only a special form of armed conflict, all the limitations described above apply. The “occupations”<sup>26</sup> in Northern Ireland and Kosovo share interesting common characteristics, which from a DDR perspective are rather negative, and yet in both cases the DDR has proved successful.
45. Under the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relating to the Protection of Civilians at Time of War, the so called “Occupation Law”, the Occupying Power is responsible for maintaining security and orderly government in the occupied territories. As occupation usually triggers armed resistance and a security environment that impacts on the overall security situation, space for the initiation of a peace strategy and a DDR process may be constricted.
46. Given the primacy of a political strategy in a successful DDR process, the Occupier and the Occupied have to agree on a basic framework for a political solution. This in turn will only be possible if the population in the occupied territories have some form of cohesive political expression. Political strategies to achieve internal cohesion vary depending on the strength of the competing parties. As examples illustrate, they sometimes include negotiations, elections or even armed combat<sup>27</sup>. Whichever strategy is used, recent history exemplifies that the problem must be resolved internally without the direct involvement of the occupying power. The process may be externally facilitated, provided that this is accepted by the occupying power.
47. The lack of security is more often the product of the political impasse than the cause of the impasse. DDR can be introduced in a context where the security situation is under imperfect control, but only in a very limited and transitional way. A comprehensive DDR strategy can be initiated if there is no armed resistance. In situations, where the level of armed resistance is under some degree of control, a *transitional Disarmament and Demobilisation* phase is possible. Such a transitional approach can contribute to improving the security environment and to confidence building.
48. The emergency regulations that usually apply during situations of occupation limit not only the exercise of individual and collective rights, but also the functioning of the judicial institutions. While some areas will have no or little civilian policing, others will be under a heavy military regime. Various political leaders may find themselves imprisoned. To overcome obstacles to the process, a compromise will

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<sup>27</sup> In South Africa, Northern Ireland and Kosovo, there was internal dissention which first had to be addressed before the internal political consensus needed for negotiation with the occupier could be reached. Of course the detailed situation in each case differs vastly but the principles are still the same.

be needed. Abrogation of media censorship, prisoner releases and acquiescence in local policing were keys to progress in South Africa, Northern Ireland and Kosovo.

49. The termination of occupation, as any other form of conflict resolution, calls for a change in the policing regime. Creating and maintaining an environment appropriate to for conflict resolution requires a policing system that is different from that which the one is necessitated by war. Respect for human rights, which under emergency law are partly suspended, needs to be restored and the judicial system has to be made consistent with the requirements of the confidence building process<sup>28</sup>.
50. The reintegration of resistance fighters into society can be less difficult than the reintegration of regular soldiers. Resistance fighters more easily return to their former economic and social status with greater ease than regular soldiers or are integrated into new defence and security organisations. New employment opportunities should therefore primarily target mainly the regular soldiers.

### *Conclusions*

51. DDR is possible during armed conflict, but only if it is underpinned by a political strategy and sustained by political compromise. Given the high level of interdependence, the process cannot be implemented without an agreed political strategy. Armed conflict creates a highly dynamic environment, in which the security situation can undergo sudden changes. Strong political acceptance is necessary for dealing with the political downsides that may result from a deterioration of the security situation. The security environment will ultimately will determine the scope and depth of the DDR process. Managing security in such a way that it contributes to creating a favourable environment for DDR requires the active participation of all parties to of the conflict.
52. The timing and sequencing of DDR can be crucial to the wider peace strategy. The risk is that DDR, if undertaken too early, risks failure to fail. The resultant loss of confidence can threaten the wider peace process. As a basic rule, disarmament should not start before agreement has been reached on what can and should be delivered. Successful disarmament comes from a incremental process that sets agreed benchmarks rather than from a “big bang” event.

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<sup>28</sup> Ten years on in the Northern Ireland process the justice issues are the last remaining stumbling block to the final resolution

## 4. Dealing with resistance and assistance

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### *Dealing with internal resistance*

53. Political and military actors on all sides of the conflict can resist DDR. The developing political analysis underpinning the wider peace strategy should have helped the likely sources of resistance and started the process for dealing with them.
54. The KLA in Kosovo was very reluctant to leave the field open only to a political process and maintained a military capacity even after elections were held. The main political party DLK, under the highly respected leadership of Ibrahim Rugova, had difficulty in its dealings with UNMIK as a result. The KLAs' reasoning was that the final political settlement was yet to be attained<sup>29</sup>. The issue was not satisfactorily addressed until DLK won back its central political status in the 2001 and 2005 elections. While a final solution remains still pending, the violence to which elements within the KLA had recourse has greatly diminished. The primary strategy for resolving the constitutional issues is political.
55. Sinn Fein regularly accuses the security technocrats in the UK and Irish governments of delaying and undermining the progress towards peace, but this level of resistance tends to be tactical<sup>30</sup>. They were, however, confronted by a split in the Republican Movement after the 1994 ceasefire and the subsequent 1996 peace agreement. A small dissident element formed a new armed movement and engaged in attacks on the security forces and committed acts of terror<sup>31</sup>. Dissent even at a relatively low level can slow down the overall peace process. In the case of Ireland, it had forced the main party, Sinn Fein, to slow its approach to compromise. It can also be the shield behind which the main party hides while it prepares its own supporters for compromise or to win better conditions or more concessions during the implementation process.
56. The conflict that opposed the ANC and INKATA in South Africa was on an entirely different scale. It was driven by a desire to retain a Zulu tribal power base in an increasingly non tribal South Africa. The flames were also fanned by elements within the South African government who were reluctant to accept the agreed ultimate political solution. The "war" continued until the 1994 election and the appointment of Chief Buthelezi as the Minister for Home Affairs in the new South African Government.

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<sup>29</sup> BICC Brief No 20.

<sup>30</sup> A term of derision introduced by Martin McGuinness to resist the move towards fully integrated policing and to denounce legitimate police investigation into IRA controlled crime.

<sup>31</sup> The Omagh Bombing on 15 August 1998 in which 29 people died and 220 were injured was the most serious attack. It contributed to the loss of public support and the loss of effectiveness.

57. The key to successful management of internal resistance lies in developing a political strategy that brings potential dissenters to join the mainstream reduces their public support and ties them into the process. This may be difficult and time-consuming, but constitutes an important step towards successful overall management of DDR. Groups resisting the process may seek to foster public support by creating security incidents that provoke over-reaction from the Government. Consequently, there is a need for a coherent security strategy to support the political strategy. Developing acceptable security strategies that receive the support from the major players may be particularly difficult at during times of armed conflict. External facilitation and assistance may be needed to overcome mistrust amongst the parties.
58. Security cooperation in the form of intelligence sharing and even joint military operations may be conducive to fostering confidence. In more conventional armed conflicts, both international and non-international, a separation of forces is often the most productive strategy. It was successfully employed in Bosnia and Herzegovina as part of the General Framework Agreement for Peace<sup>32</sup>. However, this separation had to be guaranteed by the deployment of a massive 30,000 strong military force, IFOR. To achieve a separation similar to that of Bosnia and Herzegovina in a context of occupation, is difficult, but not impossible, provided that sufficient external support is made available. External facilitation and force support have been critical in developing a security environment conducive to the advancement of the DDR process.
59. The DDR process is a relatively easy target around which the leaders of any resistance movement can build their opposition strategy. Groups resisting DDR tend to emphasize and politically exploit one or several of the following perceptions associated with DDR:
- DDR initially targets combatants and has limited impact on the wider population;
  - For the occupied, DDR involves giving up fortified positions, surrendering weapons, uncovering leaders; and,
  - For the occupying power, DDR is associated with the surrender of control, the release of “murderers”, open negotiations with the “enemy”, “terrorists” taking over police functions etc.
  - Political leaders will have to determine whether they have the ability to deal with these challenges themselves or whether they need to relay on the role of a neutral intermediary.

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<sup>32</sup> The Annexes to the General Framework Agreement for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina signed in Paris on 14 December 1995.

### *Managing external assistance to DDR*

60. External assistance has proven to be a key driver for the successful implementation of DDR. The South African experience was mainly internal but not exclusively so. Some of the DDR processes in the former Soviet Union were also largely essentially internal in that the assistance was provided by Russia. However, major DDR processes such as those in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Northern Ireland have all included an important significant external component.
61. As the resource requirements vary with each phase, proper resource management constitutes a major challenge. Top policy involvement is needed not only for the development and management of the DDR policy, but also for managing external bi-lateral and multi-lateral assistance.<sup>33</sup> Unless properly coordinated, the process can lead to competition in agenda setting between assistance providers and result in internal divisions, disruption of the administration and confusion in policy design and implementation. The coordinator of external assistance should thus have direct and immediate access to the highest political authority. The receiving state should also make an effort to properly document international assistance efforts, as this enhances internal and external transparency and also helps develop donor accountability. External assistance may include facilitation of negotiation,<sup>34</sup> support in designing, implementing and funding reintegration programmes<sup>35</sup>, and expert counselling etc.
62. An ideal organisational structure reflects the management needs for three separate but integrated phases: Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration. Responsibility for each phase can be assigned to a specific department or agency, with a small unit overseeing the whole process, liaising with top politicians and coordinating external donor assistance. In practice this system works best where the degree of external assistance is rather fairly low and internal governance functions relatively well. It works less well where whole phases are being directed and controlled by external agencies. For DDR programmes that operate with large scale external assistance it is preferable that the high level group has an implementation and not just a coordination function.
63. Not all skills needed to initiate, advance and complete a DDR process may be sourced locally. External skill procurement may therefore be necessary to compensate for possible shortages. However, the deployment of a significant number of external experts may be associated with new difficulties. Different groups may resent the role of external actors in a politically delicate process. In addition, differences in culture, religion, working methods, language and income need to be carefully managed, in order to ensure effective working relations.

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<sup>33</sup> Bosnia and Herzegovina had over 90 donor nations with direct DDR assistance from UN, World Bank, IMF, OSCE, IOM, USA, France, Germany, UK, Turkey among others.

<sup>34</sup> The De Chastelain Commission in Northern Ireland.

<sup>35</sup> The IOM in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Kosovo

64. Funding, which is a major issue in any DDR programme, should ideally be secured in advance for all stages of the process. A detailed cash-flow analysis is needed in order to plan for the cash-flows needed to sustain the process and should be shared and agreed upon with donors sufficiently in advance, in order to make sure that donor pledges result in timely payments. Given the dynamic environment in which DDR often evolves, the degree of planning needed is, in practice, often difficult to achieve. Where the DDR process is transitional, planning for funding is even more difficult. Donor states and organisations have accountancy structures and systems which may not always have the flexibility to match the needs of the process<sup>36</sup>.
65. Typical funding instruments for DDR include the UN, the UNDP, the World Bank as well as state support on a bilateral basis. The new UN Peace Building Commission may provide a further mechanism in the future. At this stage, it is uncertain how it would operate and who would fund it. In recent years the UNDP and the World Bank have also managed multilateral trust funds, which both present some advantages and disadvantages. As it is important to ensure that all funding is coordinated, it is vital to link funding for DDR-activities to the macro peace-building framework.

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<sup>36</sup> “There is a tendency to overload DDR-programs and to make unrealistic claims on such programs. It has been difficult to make proper assessments and evaluations of DDR-programs because of lack of data and sufficient transparency”. SIDDR.

## 5. Final Remarks

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66. There are inherent limitations in any DDR strategy. They primarily relate to the extent to which the political strategy has found acceptance within and between the conflicting parties. Trust, confidence and political acumen within and between senior military leaders are also very important. There are also major resource based limitations. They can be addressed by careful and intelligent application of international aid provided by experienced and respected providers.
67. In the resolution of conflict, there is a requirement to understand that the DDR process is itself just as complex and diverse as are the origins and ultimate solutions to the conflict. DDR is part of a political process with all that implies in terms of governance, compromise, political persuasion, social issues, economic issues, resources and, ultimately, security in its widest definition. Throughout its implementation, the DDR strategy will present major political challenges and to such a degree that individually or collectively they could derail the peace strategy. The strategies, peace and DDR, are each capable of destroying each other. It is vital, therefore, that the implications and limitations of the DDR strategy are addressed as part of the development of the peace strategy. This integration can be achieved if the leadership team is picked from the highest political levels and that it encompasses the degree of authority, experience and skill which these very difficult multifaceted nation building strategies require.
68. Best practice seems to suggest that external expertise is necessary for two main reasons. Years of conflict have often rendered relationships between the protagonists so difficult and hostile that negotiations and painful compromises become almost impossible. Another reason is that the decisions of a third party are often much more readily accepted by a sceptical population. The Northern Ireland process made great use of Senator George Mitchell and several South African politicians. The less successful West African experience has used the UN and key regional politicians including Thabo Mbeki. Particularly difficult issues can be given over exclusively to external management. Again Northern Ireland provides an excellent example.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup> The International Commission on Decommissioning (IICD) The Decommissioning Act, 1997 in Ireland and the Northern Ireland Arms Decommissioning Act 1997 in the United Kingdom enabled such a body, which was then set up in an agreement between the British and Irish Governments on 26 August 1997. The approach to Disarmament had been compounded by the “peace strategy” which Sinn Fein pursued. Their strategy had been to project the Sinn Fein organization as a political party which was separate from the IRA; the army fighting the occupation. Sinn Fein was politically unable to deal directly with the weapons issue while the government policy in the UK and Ireland had barred any direct contact with the IRA. For this and other reasons the parties agreed to establish an independent body to manage the decommissioning of paramilitary weapons.