



**United Nations Mission in Sudan**  
**Integrated UN DDR Unit**

**Press Release**

**04 November 2009**

**DDR Partnership Hails Progress**

Meeting in Kadugli on 3 November 2009, the DDR Roundtable Partnership acknowledged significant progress since the launch of the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) in February this year, under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement, but admitted that much was still left to be done.

"We have made considerable progress in the implementation of the DDR programme," the Special Representative of the Secretary General, Ambassador Ashraf Jehangir Qazi affirmed at the roundtable, citing among other achievements, the establishment of several assembly areas and demobilisation sites in The Three Areas and in Southern Sudan.

"The momentum built up thus far is impressive and continues to grow as new sites will become operational in the Three Areas and Southern Sudan," Ambassador Qazi declared, adding that the UN has started to work with its Sudanese partners to extend DDR operations to Al-Fula and Abyei.

Speaking on behalf of the UN family in Sudan, SRSG Qazi observed that the DDR process "has given hope to ex-combatants and their communities as they see something concrete being done to promote peace." The SRSG further noted that the DDR was "critical to creating a conducive environment for the upcoming elections."

On the demobilisation of child soldiers, he lamented the current funding shortfall being faced by UNICEF. "It is important we regain momentum on the release and reintegration of children associated with armed forces to prevent children from returning to life in the barracks," the SRSG urged.

The DDR recently achieved the milestone of reaching 15,000 demobilized. Meanwhile, Reintegration counselling and referral has been rolled out to seven states and will be country-wide by the early 2010. Especially in the Three Areas, DDR is making a significant contribution to CPA implementation by fostering trust on both sides, ameliorating security threats and giving ex-combatants, potential spoilers in the future, a solid stake in peace.

Opening the roundtable conference, H.E. Governor Ahmed Haroun hailed the achievements to date and the importance of DDR to restoring stability in Southern Kordofan in particular. The Governor nonetheless insisted that the programme "needs to be expanded."

The DDR Roundtable partnership is a forum major stakeholders of the DDR programme meet at the highest level to review policy and implementation and to ensure the DDR process is on track to meet its goals.

H.E. Ambassador Yuichi Ishii from Japan, a major donor to DDR, spoke on behalf of the donor community. "Today, we witness the collaborative work of the Sudan DDR partners through this Roundtable meeting, and also North and South cooperation here in Southern

Kordofan for the future," the Japanese envoy remarked. "We strongly hope that this occasion will provide leverage for the progress of the DDR programme and show concrete steps."

H.E. General Bakri Hassan Saleh, Chairman of the National DDR Coordination Council, urged increased financial support to the programme observing, "Although the war is behind us, we still have a lot of challenges ahead, which is why we request support to give a better life to our combatants."

At the meeting, the representative from Norway announced an additional pledge of NEK29million (approximately US\$5million) to support adult and child DDR.

After the meeting, a weapons destruction ceremony was held. A pile of weapons collected from the PDF were lit on fire to symbolize the role of DDR in the transition from war to peace and in reducing violence in communities.

The Sudan DDR Programme under the CPA targets up to 180,000 participants from both SAF and SPLA. They will be demobilised and provided with opportunities for alternative livelihoods such as agriculture, micro-business, vocational training or formal education. The North and South Sudan DDR Commissions implement the programme with support from the Integrated UN DDR Unit, comprised of UNMIS, UNDP, UNICEF, WFP and UNFPA.

The roundtable in Kadugli was attended, among other dignitaries, by H.E. Governor Ahmed Haroun of South Kordofan, the Chairperson of the National DDR Coordination Council, H.E. General Bakri Hassan Saleh, H.E. Minister Elias Nyamlel, General Osman Nouri, the Ambassadors of Japan, South Africa and South Korea, UNMIS SRSG Ashraf Qazi and UNICEF Representative Nils Kastberg as well as representatives of the donor community, North and Southern Sudan DDR Commissions and the UN.

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