



UNMIS Photo Release

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Women help show the way at Blue Nile DDR ceremony

The first ex-combatant to be demobilized in this week's historic launch of Sudan's Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programme was a former member of the People's Defence Forces (PDF) named Fatima. She was one of five women among the first 15 ex-combatants who shed their military status at the 10 February ceremony and stepped back into civilian life.

Up to 25% of all DDR participants in Blue Nile State are female. The Joint Commission and integrated UN DDR unit expects to receive about 900 women from the Damazine area in the coming three months.

The demobilization site in Blue Nile State has been designed with both women's and men's needs in mind. This complies with nationally agreed Gender and Demobilization guidelines, which have been endorsed by the North and South Sudan DDR commissions. The inclusion of women in the 10 February launch reflects the commitment of both Commissions and the UN family to ensure that women, as well as men, equally benefit from the DDR process. It also lays an important foundation for women's ongoing role in peace building in Sudan.

This historic step for peacekeeping operations helps make a reality of resolution 1325 on Women Peace and Security in Sudan, which calls upon all parties to build gender responsive DDR programmes. Women played key roles in armed groups throughout Sudan during the conflict, both as active combatants and in roles providing essential support to soldiers from all parties.



During the demobilization process in Ed Damazin, women among ex-combatants from north and south symbolically handed over their weapons and then registered and received a DDR ID card, cash, non-food items and a coupon for WFP food rations

Photos: Johann Hattingh/UNMIS

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