

***UNMIS Press Release No. 18/07*****Donor Conference Convened at UNMIS Headquarters in Juba to discuss Southern Sudan Security, Focuses on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration**

JUBA- KHARTOUM, 17 September 2007: Government officials and aid agency representatives met on 14 September, at UNMIS headquarters in Juba, to discuss the security challenges facing Southern Sudan.

Focusing on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants, as well as demining and other security sector issues, the donor conference was convened by the Security Sector Budget Working Group, a body of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS) supported by the UN DDR programme. Representatives of several U.S. and European aid agencies attended the meeting, including the European Commission, the Joint Donor Team and U.S.A.I.D.

Brigadier General Arop Moyak Monyoc, Chairman of the Southern Sudan DDR Commission (SSDDRC), and Francis Kai-Kai, Chief of the Integrated UN DDR Unit, opened the meeting.

The Chairman said DDR is one of the top priorities of the GoSS and invited the donor community to join in government efforts to establish a sustainable reintegration programme for ex-combatants. He noted that, out of 25,021 individuals identified by the SPLA as candidates for disarmament, 13,209 had already been pre-registered, in a collective effort by the SSDDRC; the SPLA; the War Veterans Commission; the War Disabled, Widows and Orphans Commission; and the Demining Commission.

He also expressed thanks to the Integrated UN DDR Unit. In addition to its role in organizing the conference, the UN DDR programme has provided air transport and other logistical support for government DDR personnel, who are traveling to 28 locations throughout Southern Sudan to register candidates for disarmament. The UN also offers advice on strategy and policy, and is continuing its child soldier programme, which so far has united more than 1,000 children with their families.

Speaking at the conference, the Chief of the Integrated UN DDR Unit, Mr. Kai-Kai, stressed the need for an approach to DDR based on collaboration between the Southern Sudan DDR Commission and the Northern Sudan DDR Commission.

“Disarmament, demobilization and reintegration is not only useful in Southern Sudan but for the whole of Sudan,” he said.

The SSDDRC presented its plans for the ongoing rollout of the DDR programme, provided an update on current preregistration activities and focused in particular on the crucial reintegration

component of the programme that lies ahead. The conference included discussion on the outlook for assistance from donor countries and the next steps forward in the DDR process.

The Security Sector Budget Working Group is composed of the Southern Sudan DDR Commission (SSDDRC), the Southern Sudan Demining Commission and the Ministry of Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) Affairs. It is supported by the UN DDR programme. Officials attending the conference included Commissioners of the SSDDRC, the Demining Commission, the War Veterans Commission and the War Disabled, Widow and Orphan Commission; and representatives from the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning and the Ministry of Gender, Social Welfare and Religious Affairs.

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