

Status of the MDRP in the Democratic Republic of the Congo – May 2007

The status of the PNDDR is relatively unchanged since March. The national program continues to pay monthly Transitional Safety Allowances to all beneficiaries through CELPAY; with all payments expected to be completed next month. In April, concerns were raised that delays in payments were resulting in violence. We have confirmed with CELPAY that since March 2007 it has been paying an average of \$1.5 million per month in more than 40 cash points across the DRC – with no major incidents reported. However CELPAY/CONADER face problems with a number of demobilized ex-combatants demanding more money or trying to make fraudulent claims. Reintegration activities are also proceeding: in April, the MDRP verified that contracts are in place for 56,000 ex-combatants, with 46,600 ex-combatants having completed or currently receiving support. The original PNDDR funds are insufficient to cover the other approximately 40,000 demobilized ex-combatants. **Meanwhile pockets of violence and early indications of re-emerging conflicts persist in the East * (see details below).**

From April 1-7, the MDRP Secretariat and donors carried out a restructuring mission to the DRC jointly with the African Development Bank (AfDB). The mission – which was broadly aimed at examining the status of the PNDDR and the validity of original project objectives, and identifying how to complete the project – concluded the following:

- **There is a consensus that PNDDR objectives remain valid today.** While a significant number of ex-combatants have been demobilized, 40,000 who were demobilized by December 31, 2006 still require reintegration, and a caseload of some 70,000-90,000 plus some 19,700 members of armed groups remain to go through the entire DDR/army integration process. A caseload of 8,700 children and about 10,000 disabled also remain. If not dealt with, the aforementioned ex-combatants could pose a conflict risk.
- **The MDRP is ready to assist the new Government in completing the project.** During the mission, the MDRP met with the Minister of Defense to affirm its commitment to PNDDR objectives but indicated that new resources could only be made available under certain conditions. The conditions include the Government: (1) putting in place new institutional arrangements to execute the project (including the dissolution of CONADER, and the creation of a project unit in the Ministry of Defense); and (2) reimbursing the World Bank/MDRP for ineligible expenses and misprocurement amounting to almost \$7 million.
- **In anticipation that these conditions would be met, both the World Bank and the AfDB are putting in place new financing.** The World Bank is processing an IDA Additional Financing Operation for US\$50 million; and the AfDB a parallel operation of about US\$22 million. New funding will cover the cost of: (1) reintegration support for the 40,000 ex-combatants who were demobilized by Dec.31; (2) a new round of demobilization and reintegration for the FARDC who had not yet been processed (the remaining caseload for demobilization is estimated to be about 22,000); (3) reintegration support to approximately 8,700 child soldiers; and (4) special assistance for an estimated 10,000 disabled soldiers. Both the World Bank and AfDB operations are scheduled to be presented to their respective boards by mid-July.

The MDRP Secretariat and the AfDB are awaiting a response from the Government of the DRC on the aforementioned conditionalities to allow the processing of new monies.

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* Recent unofficial reporting on the **situation in the East** as received by the Secretariat:

- The murder of three students led to protests and violent police reactions in Bukavu which left three dead and 21 wounded, while in Goma there were similar protests, but no loss of life due to more restrained official response. Tensions remain high.
- Meanwhile, the comportment of armed groups and “mixed” FARDC soldiers continues to cause instability.
- On May 10, there was an announcement that Nkunda’s troops would withdraw from “mixed” brigades.
- The “47” (remnants of Mutebutsi’s militia, now considered FARDC), claimed they would join the army integration but then installed themselves in a small village close to Sange / Uvira, causing panic and flight of the population and preparation for combat among FARDC, FDLR and ex-Mayi-Mayi. The “47” are now believed to be recruiting by force at high pace and their numbers are said to have reached 1,000.
- Two remaining ex-RCD units around Beni/Butembo, now considered FARDC, refused to go to *brassage*, insisting that they be directly integrated into the army, causing the population to panic and the Mayi Mayi of the area to prepare for combat.
- A new Mayi-Mayi movement was founded: the “*Patriotes Résistants Congolais*” (PARECO). It is led by FARDC Col. Lafontaine who reportedly issued a declaration demanding the prosecution of those who agreed to *mixage*, and the expulsion of “Rwandese.” PARECO is now trying to convince former Mayi-Mayi to rejoin.
- A new alliance of “Bantu” tribes has also put a declaration in circulation using a language similar to that used by Hutu extremist shortly before the outbreak of genocide in Rwanda.