

## Peace in the Pool province: Ninja ex-combatants agree to participate in DDR process

Republic of Congo

**N&N no. 8 – July 30, 2008**



Pasteur Ntumi announcing the dissolution of his militia

On June 9, 2008, Pasteur Ntumi – his real name is Frédéric Bintsamou, President of the *Conseil National de la Résistance*, CNR (former rebel group) – announced the dissolution of the armed branch of his movement in Kinkala, the main city of the Pool province where thousands of CNR's armed men (Ninjas) still live.

« Today, we announce the dissolution of our armed branch (...) I no longer want people to die in the Pool because of Ntumi », said the former rebel chief, in a speech made during the official launch of DDR (disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion) activities targeting his former soldiers.

Lucie Malonga is one of these ex-combatants who will soon benefit from reinsertion support. She belongs to the quota of ex-combatants identified in the national program of disarmament, demobilization and reinsertion (PNDDR), which targets Pasteur Ntumi's soldiers entrenched in the Pool region since 1998.

Lucie came to Kinkala to attend the official ceremony launching the DDR program. She says she is tired of living as a recluse. *"It's been ten years that we are in the bush with Papa (Ntumi). We want to go to Brazzaville. The government must do its best to help us"* she says.

To turn her life around, Lucie Malonga counts mostly on the support that has been promised in the reinsertion program to develop income generating activities. *"We want to work, to practice a trade; we are still young enough to do so. The government promised us financial help. We are waiting for this promise to come true."*



Lucie Malonga, a CNR ex-combatant

# News & Noteworthy



Judicaël Samba

In 1998, when fighting erupted between the government army and the CNR, Judicaël Samba was a student in a Brazzaville high school. Like Lucie, his hopes today are rooted in the reinsertion process: *“Demobilization and disarmament are good things. I am waiting for reinsertion to go back to civilian life.”* This 38-year old ex-combatant wants to learn a trade: *“At my age, I can’t go back to school to study. I have to learn a trade. Mason or mechanic, I don’t know yet.”*

Etienne Diafrik Diafouka is remorseful. *“I was intelligent in school. I regret having stopped studying”*, he says, before adding: *“The government must help me to settle down again so that I can build a new life”*.

The majority of ex-combatants active around Pasteur Ntumi do not envisage their reinsertion into the regular armed forces. They favor agricultural activities. According to them, there is nothing better to achieve reinsertion in the villages where they have been living for 10 years. Alain Mboukou, another ex-combatant, plans to invest in agriculture, as long as he obtains enough financial support to do so. *“I have a few agricultural projects, but I need money to start up, at least 700,000 CFA Francs (about US\$1,400),”* he says.

The PNDDR allocates US\$400 for reinsertion per eligible beneficiary. The program implementation unit encourages ex-combatants to pool their resources to develop micro-projects jointly.

While awaiting the identification process, ex-combatants who had been active in the Pool province now work on reconciling with the communities of return. Judicaël Samba answers without hesitation: *“I would like to say to the people who have suffered during the war that they are our fathers, our mothers, in short our parents... We want to reassure them that they will no longer endure hardship in the Pool.”* A promise echoed by Lucie Malonga: *“We want peace”*.

Financed by international donors (World Bank, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, EC, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden and UK) through the MDRP (Multi-country Demobilization and Reintegration Program), the PNDDR aims to provide reinsertion support to 30,000 ex-combatants, out of which 19,000 are self-demobilized, 6,000 are in the police and 5,000 are Ninjas from Pasteur Ntumi’s militia.



Etienne Diafrik Diafouka

For more information on MDRP, please visit [www.mdrp.org](http://www.mdrp.org) or contact Bruno Donat, Communications Officer, MDRP Secretariat, World Bank at [info@mdrp.org](mailto:info@mdrp.org).