

MDRP Meets With Partner UN Agencies and Colleague NGOs in New York City

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Members of the Multi-Country Demobilization and Reintegration Program (MDRP) Secretariat went to New York January 18th and 19th, 2006, and met with United Nations (UN) partner agencies that administer MDRP special projects in the greater Great Lakes Region and non-governmental organization (NGO) colleagues concerned with peace and security in the area.



International Crisis Group (ICG): Sullman Baldo, Director, Africa Program and Amnesty International (AI): Bernedetta Gea Pacifico, Associate

The meetings aimed to strengthen communication and relations with UN agencies and MDRP counterparts, provide for an exchange of ideas with partners and colleagues concerning regional peace and security-related issues, and discuss and address any MDRP implementation problems.

At the UN, discussions with Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Assistance (OCHA) and the UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) focused on the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Republic of Congo, Uganda and Burundi. OCHA, UNIFEM and the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) also spoke of the general status of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) activities in MDRP countries, and identified DDR-related issues of mutual interest, such as gender and children. Meetings with the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and UN Development Program (UNDP) concerned their respective MDRP-supported projects in the DRC, Burundi and CAR. Both agencies described good working relationships with MDRP, and reiterated their willingness to identify and remove operational stumbling blocks.

MDRP members also met with representatives of Amnesty International, Care International, the International Crisis Group, Oxfam and Save the Children. The meetings were deemed constructive and productive by both sides.

"Save the Children greatly appreciated the MDRP team initiative to meet with NGO partners to share findings and observations," said Görel Bogårde, UN Representative of the International Save the Children Alliance. *"Children make up a*



Save the Children Alliance (STCA): Görel Bogarde, UN Representative

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significant number of MDRP beneficiaries. The discussions



Oxfam International (OI): Nicola Riendorp,
Head of New York Office

furthered understanding of different problems and will help us find ways forward. We hope for a continued dialogue on joint policy and program work, so we can improve delivery to this vulnerable group."

During the frank and forward-looking conversation, MDRP and NGO members discussed problems of disconnect between demobilization/reintegration and security sector reform in the region, donor coordination, and the role of the World Bank and advocacy NGOs in fighting corruption. The NGO representatives also confirmed the value of sharing MDRP information and lessons learned; they in particular urged MDRP to share experiences with the new UN Peace Building Commission.

MDRP was very pleased with the results of the meetings in New York. MDRP's Program Manager, Maria Correia, said, *"We genuinely value the knowledge and experience of our UN partners and colleagues in dealing with the complex issues of DDR, and peace and security generally, in the Great Lakes. MDRP will pursue the constructive suggestions which the UN organizations made on how to improve our collaboration. We also benefited a great deal from our exchange with NGOs, and hope to build on this relationship in the future."*

For more information on MDRP, please visit www.mdrp.org or contact Bruno Donat, Communications Officer, MDRP Secretariat, World Bank at info@mdrp.org.

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