

NOREF Report

Negotiating disarmament and demobilisation in peace processes: what is the state of the evidence?

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Executive summary

This report considers the extent to which disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) and related concepts are accounted for in peace processes and peace agreements. It focuses on the scale and scope of provisions for disarmament and demobilisation in peace agreements, the nature of their sequencing and inclusion in such agreements, and the types of security mechanisms intended to promote confidence among parties. It finds that key provisions for DDR are present in over half of all comprehensive peace agreements (numbering 37 in total) and fewer than 5% of all related peace accords, protocols and resolutions

(numbering 640 in total). This review does not discern clear patterns of where key concepts are located or distributed in peace agreements. In reviewing negotiating experiences, however, it finds that “disarmament” and “demobilisation” are often relegated to the end of talks and/or left ambiguous in peace agreements themselves. Mediators or parties to a conflict thus seldom regard disarmament and demobilisation as preconditions for negotiations. They are nevertheless central to wider questions of security sector transformation and transitional justice in the aftermath of war.

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Introduction

Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) are widely regarded as a mainstay of 21st-century peace agreements and related peace support operations. Since the landmark *Agenda for Peace* (1992) and the *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations* (2000),¹ DDR has been repeatedly emphasised in UN Security Council resolutions, General Assembly declarations and reports of the secretary-general. Prescriptive guidelines, manuals and training materials have been crafted to assist security and development practitioners alike. A growing research community has also emerged to examine DDR policy, practice and outcomes.²

Notwithstanding the widespread consensus about the centrality of DDR in post-conflict scenarios, there is less awareness of the ways in which disarmament and demobilisation (D&D) in particular are negotiated and ultimately institutionalised. Indeed, there is no empirical comparative study of the extent to which such activities are integrated into peace processes and peace agreements. Nor, with one or two exceptions, are there any detailed examinations of how such interventions are brokered before, during and after peace agreements. The following desk review endeavours to begin addressing these and related information gaps.

The report assesses the extent to which D&D (and to a lesser extent reintegration) are present in peace processes and peace agreements. The first section features a descriptive overview of the nomenclature and terminology. Drawing on two key datasets, the second and third sections consider the scale and scope of D&D and related terms in peace agreements and the location of key

terms within them. The fourth section considers how these activities are negotiated and the fifth homes in on emerging security practices.

Defining the debate

It is important to be clear on the definitions of the constituent elements of *DDR*, on the one hand, and *peace agreements*, on the other. Often taken for granted, a crisp nomenclature is critical to ensuring conceptual clarity and methodological validity. Indeed, in undertaking an assessment of the content of peace accords and related agreements, one must not restrict the analysis to “disarmament” and “demobilisation” alone, but must also consider their alternative formulations and synonyms.³ This is because in many settings “disarmament” and “demobilisation” may themselves be considered loaded and pejorative terms, tantamount to “surrender” or connoting “forcible” action by foreign or victorious forces. As a result, the expressions may be deliberately excluded even if provisions exist for voluntary and verified arms control or activities to hand over weapons and ammunitions holdings.⁴

Although there is no consensus definition of “disarmament”, it is generally considered to include the controlled collection, documentation, control and disposal of the small arms, ammunition, explosives, and light and heavy weapons of combatants (and often also of the civilian population).⁵ Disarmament also frequently entails

1 See UNSG (United Nations Secretary-General), *An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peace-keeping*, A/47/277, June 17th 1992, and UNSG, *Report of the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations*, A/55/305, August 21st 2000.

2 For a review of the literature, see M. Berdal & M. Ucko, eds, *Reintegrating Armed Groups after Conflict: Politics, Violence and Transition*, London, Routledge, 2009; R. Muggah, ed., *Post-conflict Security and Reconstruction: Dealing with Fighters in the Aftermath of War*, London, Routledge, 2009; and R. Muggah, “No magic bullet: a critical perspective on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and weapons reduction during post-conflict”, *Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*, vol 94, no. 379, 2005, pp. 239-252.

3 Note that disarmament and demobilisation could also be described as arms control and cantonment. Likewise, in French, Portuguese, Spanish or other languages the concepts are obviously spelt differently. A full search for the purposes of research would thus require searching with British and U.S. spelling, as well as in multiple languages. Likewise, in many cases concepts such as reinsertion, rehabilitation and recovery are often added, resulting in abbreviations for the process such as DDRR, DDRRR and DDRRRR.

4 For example, the use of the concept of disarmament almost derailed major negotiations, including the Bonn Agreement and the Nepal peace process. Thus, wording in the Bonn Agreement was changed to: “Upon the official transfer of power, all mujahideen, Afghan armed forces, and armed groups in the country shall come under the command and control of the Interim Authority, and be reorganized according to the requirements of the new Afghan security and armed forces.”

5 See Modules 4.10–4.11 of DPKO (UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations), *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* (IDDRS), <http://unddr.org/iddrs/framework.php>.

the development of responsible arms management programmes and associated legislation. There is a comparatively rich literature on disarmament, arms control and peace negotiations, and on the security dilemmas they generate. It is also worth pointing out that a number of synonyms are often used for disarmament across different languages,⁶ ranging from “practical arms control” and “weapons management” to “weapons collection” and “weapons destruction”.

According to established UN guidelines, *demobilisation* includes the formal and controlled discharge of active combatants from armed forces or other armed groups.⁷ The first stage of demobilisation may extend from the processing of individual combatants in temporary centres to the massing of troops in camps designated for this purpose (cantonment sites, encampments, assembly areas or barracks). Confusingly, it may also entail a limited phase of disarmament. The second stage of demobilisation often involves the provision of support packages to the demobilised, which is also often labelled “reinsertion”. As in the case of disarmament, there is a wide range of spellings⁸ and synonyms for demobilisation in peace agreements, including “cantonment” and “warehousing”.

Reintegration, although not included in the terms of reference of this review, generally applies to the final stages of a DDR process⁹ and includes the process by which ex-combatants acquire civilian status and gain sustainable employment and income. It may also entail the provision of a support package, as noted above (described as reinsertion), and include a period of “rehabilitation”. Peace agreements on occasion include provisions for the “reintegration” of former combatants into the security services of a given state or their “reintegration” into civilian life. It should be stressed that there is a wide range of synonyms to describe the processes of reinsertion, rehabilitation and reintegration, most

of which are frequently poorly defined, if at all.¹⁰

It is important also to note that a comprehensive peace agreement (CPA) is often described as a written document produced through a process of negotiation. These agreements are effectively prescriptive contracts intended to end or transform armed conflicts. A CPA is comprehensive in that (1) the major parties in the conflict are involved in the negotiation process and (2) substantive issues underlying the dispute are included in negotiations. A CPA is defined by the process and product of negotiations, not the implementation or impact of the written document. In other words, an agreement can still be considered to be comprehensive even if it does not lead to a comprehensive peace. By way of contrast, many types of peace agreements are not comprehensive, including treaties, accords, protocols, pacts and ceasefire agreements. Depending on the definition used, and as the following section makes clear, there were anywhere between 37 and 640 peace agreements between 1990 and the present.

The scale and scope of disarmament and demobilisation in peace agreements

Assuming a measure of agreement on the definitions given above, it is possible to begin assessing the ways in which the D&D processes are (and are not) accounted for in peace agreements. In order to do so, it is important first to consider the scale and breadth of peace agreements and then the extent to which key provisions are included. Literally hundreds of peace agreements have been signed since the end of the cold war, of which a considerable number include provisions for everything from arms embargoes, sanctions and amnesties to DDR and wider security sector reform.¹¹ Moreover, virtually every UN peace support operation has featured a mandate to undertake forced or voluntary disarmament:

6 For example, “disarmament” is also spelt as *désarmement*, *disarm*, *desarmamento*, *controlo des armes*, *gestion des armes*, *controlo de armas*, *gesato de armas*, *gestion de las armas*, etc.

7 See Module 4.20 of the IDDRS.

8 For example, “demobilisation” is spelt *demobilization*, *desmobilização*, *desmovilización* and the like.

9 See Module 4.30 of the IDDRS.

10 Synonyms include *reinsertion*, *rehabilitation*, *reintegração*, *reinserção*, *reabilitação*, *reintegración*, *reinserción* and *rehabilitación*.

11 See K. DeRouen, J. Lea & P. Wallenstein, “The duration of civil war in peace agreements”, *Conflict Management and Peace Sciences*, vol 26, no. 4, 2009, pp. 367-387.

there have been no fewer than 60 distinct DDR campaigns since 1989.¹²

Indeed, there is an expanding research community devoted to studying the relationship between peace agreements and the duration of peace.¹³ Few researchers, however, have focused specifically on the relationship between peace agreements and provisions for D&D and other related concepts. There are, however, a number of *searchable datasets* of peace agreements that can be used to this end: (1) the Peace Processes and Peace Accords (PPPA) database (37 CPAs between 1989 and 2012);¹⁴ (2) the Transitional Justice Peace Agreements (TJPA) database (640 peace agreements between 1989 and 2012);¹⁵ and (3) the Uppsala Conflict Data Programme Peace Agreement database (144 agreements between 1989 and 2005).¹⁶ Each of these datasets offers different inclusion and exclusion criteria and contrasting mechanisms for conducting searches.¹⁷

¹² The first UN-sanctioned intervention combining the hand-over of weapons, the cantonment of former combatants, and their reinsertion and reintegration into civilian life occurred three decades ago in Namibia. Many more soon followed across sub-Saharan Africa, Central America, South-East Europe, South and South-East Asia, and beyond. Although the UN remains the chief proponent of post-conflict DDR, many other agencies ranging from the World Bank to bilateral development agencies are involved. See Muggah, *Post-conflict Security and Reconstruction*, 2009.

¹³ See J. Darby, *The Effects of Violence on Peace Processes*, Washington, DC, USIP, 2001; V. Fortna, *Peace Time: Cease-fire Agreements and the Durability of Peace*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2004; C. Hartzell & M. Hoddie, *Crafting Peace: Power-sharing Institutions and the Negotiated Settlement of Civil Wars*, University Park, Pennsylvania State University Press, 2007; and S. M. Hill, *United Nations Disarmament Processes in Intra-state Conflict*, New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

¹⁴ See Peace Accords Matrix, <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/>.

¹⁵ The dataset includes proposed agreements not accepted by all relevant parties (but setting a framework); agreements between some but not all parties to conflicts; agreements essentially imposed after a military victory; joint declarations largely rhetorical in nature; and agreed accounts of meetings between parties even where these do not create substantive obligations. In cases where a series of partial agreements were later incorporated into a single framework agreement, all of the constituent agreements are listed separately. Where specific pieces of legislation, constitutions, interim constitutions, constitutional amendments or UN Security Council resolutions were the outcomes of peace negotiations, these are included in the database; however, where these were viewed as far removed from the peace agreement they were not included. See <http://www.peace-agreements.ulster.ac.uk/>.

¹⁶ See http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/program_overview/current_projects/ucdp_peace_agreements_project/.

¹⁷ This report offers a short review of some general findings emerging from just (1) and (2).

At the outset, the PPPA database includes some 37 separate *comprehensive* agreements between 1989 and 2005. It allows for a search of all separate agreements across 50 distinct subject areas, including whether terms and conditions for “disarmament”, “demobilization” and “reintegration” are explicitly included in the content of specific agreements. It does not allow for searches for other synonyms or alternative spellings. Even so, the PPPA database allows for a full textual review of the peace accords and timelines for the implementation of key provisions. The value of the dataset is that it allows for thematic, temporal and spatial analysis. A limitation is that it restricts the nature of the search to pre-selected search terms, obviating the possibility of examining different spellings, word combinations or languages.

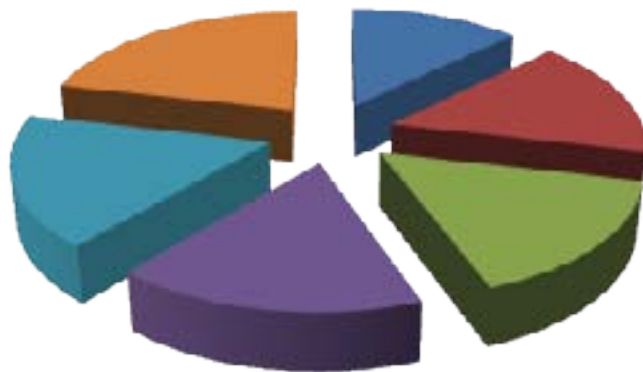
Overall, the PPPA database reveals that well over half of all CPAs include explicit provisions for “disarmament”, “demobilization”, “reintegration” or some combination of the three (see Figure 1 and Table 1). Indeed, 22 of 37 countries – Angola, Bangladesh, Burundi, Cambodia, Croatia, Djibouti, El Salvador, Guatemala, Indonesia, Liberia, Macedonia, Mali, Mozambique, Niger, Papua New Guinea, the Philippines, Rwanda, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Tajikistan, Timor-Leste and Britain – featured these concepts explicitly in the text of CPAs. Intriguingly, three countries did not include disarmament at all: Djibouti, the Philippines and South Africa.¹⁸ In other words, there is considerable attention in *comprehensive* agreements to the issues of D&D.

¹⁸ South Africa (1990 ceasefire and 1993 peace accord), the Philippines (1993 ceasefire and 1996 peace agreement) and Djibouti (1994 ceasefire and 1994 peace agreement) excluded “disarmament” from their peace agreements, opting instead for “demobilisation” and “reintegration”.

Table 1: Reviewing key terms in PPPA (37 agreements)

Terms	Frequency	% of total (37)
Paramilitary groups	16	43
Demobilization	20	54
Reintegration	20	54
Military reform	21	57
Disarmament	22	59
At least one of each term	27	73

Figure 1: Reviewing key terms in PPPA (37 agreements)



- Paramilitary Groups
- Demobilization
- Reintegration
- Military Reform
- Disarmament
- At least one of each term

By way of comparison, the TJPA database includes 640 separate peace agreements (including CPAs) across 85 separate states and territories. Unlike the PPPA dataset, it allows for a much more flexible search function and is not tied to pre-selected subject headings. Yet a search of the database for “disarmament” suggests that just 12 peace agreements, protocols, accords and pacts include explicit provisions. These are Burundi (2002), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) (1999), Georgia/Abkhazia (1994), Guatemala (1996), India/Pakistan (1999), Liberia (1991, 1993), Niger (1997), Sierra Leone (1997, 1999), Somalia (1993) and Tajikistan (1997). A search for “weapons” and “ammunition” extends the total to 24, since El Salvador (1992, 1993, 1994), India/Tripura (1993), Iraq/Kuwait (1991), Nepal (2006), Papua New Guinea (2000, 2001), Russia/Chechnya (1996), the Solomon Islands (1999) and Britain/Northern Ireland (2001, 2004)

are also included.

The TJPA dataset also lists additional references to “demobiliz(s)ation”, “reintegration” and “DDR”. A search for categories of demobilisation and reintegration revealed an additional 24 agreements of various types. In the case of “demobiliz(s)ation”, 16 agreements included Burundi (2003), Colombia (1994, 2004), El Salvador (1994), Guatemala (1991, 1996), Nicaragua (1990) and Sierra Leone (1996).¹⁹ For “reintegration” an additional 20 agreements from Djibouti (1994, 2000), El Salvador (1991, 1992, 1993), Guatemala (1994), Mozambique (1991, 1992), Nicaragua (1990), Niger (1994, 1995), Rwanda (1992), Sierra Leone (1997, 1999) and Tajikistan (1995, 1997) are also included.²⁰ A final search for “DDR” revealed an additional 31 agreements, including Cambodia (1991), the Central African Republic (1998), Colombia (1991, 1993, 2003, 2004), Côte d’Ivoire (2003, 2005), the DRC (2002), Georgia/Abkhazia (1999), Guatemala (1994, 1995), India/Bodoland (2003), Indonesia/Aceh (2000, 2001, 2005), the Philippines (1998) and Sudan (2004, 2006).²¹

Table 2: Reviewing key terms in the TJPA (640 agreements)

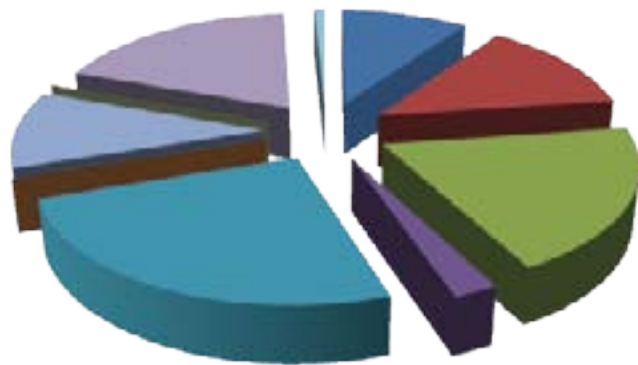
Term	English	All languages	% of total (640)
Disarmament	12	12	1.9
Demobiliz(s)ation	14	16	2.5
Reintegration	19	24	3.8
Reinsertion	3	3	0.5
DDR	31	31	4.8
DDRR	0	0	0.0
Rehabilitation	12	13	2.0
Arms control	0	0	0.0
Arms management	0	0	0.0
Weapons or arms	21	23	3.6
Ammunition	1	1	0.2

19 Note that Burundi (2002), Liberia (1993) and Sierra Leone (1997, 1999) also included provisions for demobilisation and reintegration.

20 Also included in the reintegration category were Burundi (2002), El Salvador (1994), Guatemala (1991) and Sierra Leone (1996).

21 Also included under DDR were Burundi (2002), the DRC (1999), Liberia (2003), Sierra Leone (1999), Tajikistan (1997) and Britain/Northern Ireland (2001).

Figure 2: Reviewing key terms in the TJPA that feature DDR or related provisions (66 agreements)



- Disarmament
- Demobiliz(s)ation
- Reintegration
- Reinsertion
- DDR
- DDRR
- Rehabilitation
- Arms Control
- Arms Management

Thus, taken together, the TJPA dataset includes some 66 distinct peace agreements or other associated protocols, accords and ceasefires with explicit provisions for DDR. In other words, roughly 10% of all reported documents include provisions for DDR. As noted in Table 2 and Figure 2, peace agreements often address various aspects of DDR and not necessarily always in a unified manner. What is noteworthy is not just the scale, but the geographic distribution of these agreements, with countries in Central and South America, sub-Saharan and North Africa, South and South-East Asia, and the South Pacific represented. Missing from this sample, however, are examples from the former Yugoslavia, including Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Serbia and Montenegro.

The location of and emphasis on DDR in peace agreements

It appears that disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration all figure prominently in comprehensive peace agreements, but less frequently in all manner of accompanying accords, protocols and pacts. The overall frequency appears, in fact, to be lower than is often implied in the literature. In order to determine the relative emphasis attributed to these concepts within peace processes, an effort was made to examine a selection of agreements. To this end, the 37 agreements listed in the PPPA dataset were subjected to closer scrutiny to determine the location and relative weight accorded to key concepts. A summary of the key agreements is noted below. It should be emphasised that this assessment is cursory and provisional; it is likely that key concepts occur more regularly in recent peace agreements since 2005 (e.g. South Sudan).

There does not appear to be a clear, discernible pattern in the distribution of “disarmament” across CPAs. For example, in countries where clear provisions exist, the allusion to disarmament tends to be located predominantly in the middle and end of agreements, occasionally appearing on the first page (e.g. Croatia, Macedonia), but more often emerging mid-way through (e.g. Angola, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Djibouti, Indonesia, Liberia, Mozambique, Papua New Guinea, Rwanda, Sierra Leone and Tajikistan) or nearer the end of the text (e.g. Bangladesh, Cambodia, Timor-Leste and Britain). It is also worth stressing that comparatively limited text is given over to the discussion of disarmament, with no single peace agreement providing more than the equivalent of one page in total (see Table 3).

Table 3: Comprehensive agreements and disarmament (1989-2005)

Country	Year	Total pages	Appears first in ...	Appears first on page ...	Prominence (proportion of one page)
Angola	1992	66	Annex 1 of 10	4	0.94
Angola	2002	27	Annex 4 of 6	18	0.33
Bangladesh	1997	11	Chapter 4 of 4	11	0.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995	149	n/a	9	0.94
Burundi	2000	93	n/a	6	0.94
Cambodia	1991	57	Annex 2 of 5	38	0.33
Croatia	1995	2	Article 3	1	0.50
Djibouti	1994	7	Section 8 of 11	5	0.29
Indonesia	2005	7	Section 4.3 of 6	5	0.29
Liberia	2003	52	Article 3 of 35	6	0.88
Macedonia	2001	11	Article 2.1 of 6	1	0.91
Mozambique	1992	57	Protocol 4 of 7	20	0.65
Niger	1995	11	Clause 12 of 27	3	0.73
Papua New Guinea	2001	85	Article 5 of 8	5	0.94
Rwanda	1993	101	Article 23 of 162	20	0.80
Sierra Leone	1996	11	Article 5 of 28	4	0.64
Sierra Leone	1999	28	Article 6 of 36	5	0.82
Tajikistan	1997	45	n/a	10	0.78
Timor-Leste	1999	29	Annex 3 of 3	29	0.00
Britain	1998	35	Chapter 7 of 11	25	0.29

Unsurprisingly, then, there also does not appear to be a clear pattern in the way that “demobilisation” is distributed across CPAs. For example, there are cases in which demobilisation is cited in the first few pages of the document (e.g. Angola, Burundi, Croatia, Niger, Sierra Leone and Tajikistan), but it is also often the case that the term emerges mid-way through (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Cambodia, Liberia, Mozambique and Rwanda) or

closer to the end (e.g. Bangladesh, Cambodia, Djibouti and Indonesia). It should be stressed that, as in the case of disarmament, comparatively little prominence is accorded to demobilisation, with most peace agreements allowing less than one page to the concept and others not doing more than simply using the term a single time (see Table 4).

Table 4: Comprehensive peace agreements and demobilisation (1989–2005)

Country	Year	Total pages	Appears first in ...	Appears first on page ...	Prominence (proportion of one page)
Angola	1992	66	Annex 1 of 10	4	0.94
Angola	2002	27	Annex 1 of 6	14	0.48
Bangladesh	1997	11	Chapter 4 of 4	11	0.00
Bosnia and Herzegovina	1995	149	n/a	15	0.90
Burundi	2000	93	n/a	6	0.94
Cambodia	1991	57	Annex 1 of 5	25	0.56
Croatia	1995	2	Article 3	1	0.50
Djibouti	1994	7	Section 8 of 11	5	0.29
Indonesia	2005	7	Section 4.2 of 6	5	0.29
Liberia	2003	52	Article 3 of 35	6	0.88
Macedonia	2001	11	n/a	n/a	0
Mozambique	1992	57	Protocol 4 of 7	20	0.65
Niger	1995	11	Clause 12 of 27	3	0.73
Papua New Guinea	2001	85	n/a	n/a	0
Rwanda	1993	101	Article 23 of 162	20	0.80
Sierra Leone	1996	11	Article 5 of 28	4	0.64
Sierra Leone	1999	28	Article 6 of 36	5	0.82
Tajikistan	1997	45	n/a	5	0.89
Timor-Leste	1999	29	n/a	n/a	0
Britain	1998	35	n/a	n/a	0

Negotiating disarmament and demobilisation

There is great variability in the ways in which security issues related to the management of arms and former combatants are treated in peace processes and peace agreements. The route is often far from straightforward, and most mediators acknowledge the centrality of timing and levels of engagement. Common to all processes, however, is the fact that the D&D of armed groups is an intensely political process involving a series of tactical trade-offs and symbolic interventions. Thus, while frequently cast as a “technical” process involving a predictable and mechanical exchange of weapons and the cantonment of combatants, D&D initiatives are often hotly contested and routinely fall short of expectations.²² Whether central to the peace process – as in Northern Ireland – or peripheral, the issues of D&D are frequently connected to fundamental priorities associated with the transformation of security and

²² See Muggah, *Post-conflict Security and Reconstruction*, 2009.

justice systems and transitional and restorative justice.²³

Peace mediators are conscious of the ways in which the dynamics of the armed conflicts influence the direction and dynamics of D&D.²⁴ Specifically, how a given armed conflict was initiated, pursued and terminated will influence whether and how warring parties disarm or volunteer their cadres for demobilisation and reintegration. If there is a clear victor in an armed conflict or if soldiers are returning home after waging a cross-border conflict, the terms for D&D may be more straightforward. If an uneasy truce is achieved as a result of a hurting stalemate, then negotiations are likely to be more fraught. For example, during the 1990-92 negotiations between the El Salvadorian government and

²³ See Muggah, *Post-conflict Security and Reconstruction*, 2009.

²⁴ See R. Muggah, ed., *Stabilization Operations, Security and Development: States of Fragility*, New York, Routledge, 2012; and N. Colletta & R. Muggah, “Context matters: interim stabilization and second generation approaches to security promotion”, *Conflict, Security and Development*, vol 9, no. 4, 2009.

the Farabundo Martí National Liberation Front (FMLN), “disarmament” was the last item on the agenda. Indeed, the FMLN insisted on a full “political agreement” before discussing disarmament.²⁵

There are often acrimonious disagreements between groups about pursuing D&D as a precondition for peace talks. Indeed, armed groups ranging from the Nepal Maoists and the Philippines-based Moro National Liberation Front to the El Salvadorian FMLN also rejected demands that disarmament should precede negotiations, let alone demobilisation. This is because disarmament is an intensely political issue and linked to a widely recognised security dilemma for parties involved in or emerging from armed conflict. Without transparent and credible guarantees that the terms of a peace agreement will be enforced and the security of disarmed parties will be ensured, the rational response is to decline the handing over of armaments or the demobilisation of one’s forces. As noted by the former head of the Colombian M-19 movement, “laying down our arms was, to many of us, unthinkable, as we feared treason and the uncertainties of a future without the availability of weapons as an ‘insurance policy’. We had not realized that peace needed to become a one-way journey ... the transition to civilian life risked the end of life as a group, but also an identity forged on the use of arms”.²⁶

The effectiveness of DDR – particularly D&D – is inextricably connected to the types of security arrangements that are put in place. If “voluntary” disarmament is to be pursued, it is vital that any efforts be accompanied with a combination of clear communications and awareness-raising activities about the intent and purpose of the interventions, and routine confidence-building measures to show progress. Too often, disarmament is left to the last minute, the legal and programmatic practicalities are poorly communicated, and the process results in confusing and contradictory

messages being communicated to the public. Moreover, since many of the “beneficiaries” of DDR activities were at one stage on the front line and may themselves have committed atrocities, legitimate concerns are often raised about the justice and ethics of providing support. Human rights advocates and community leaders often fear that, in the pursuit of security dividends, fundamental issues of transitional justice and community reconciliation are compromised.

It is also important to acknowledge the culturally- and socially-specific functions of weapons and armed groups in societies when considering provisions for D&D. Indeed, mediators should understand the dynamic social and historical functions of weapons, including when weapons ownership is symbolic and associated with adulthood and community responsibility.²⁷ For example, in Northern Ireland, the constitution of the IRA explicitly cites the use of violence as a means of advancing the organisation’s struggle and has been interpreted as prohibiting the group from accepting disarmament. Likewise, in Afghanistan, the central place of weapons in society encouraged DDR planners to design reintegration programmes that did not require full disarmament. Incentives were instead provided to individual insurgents and their communities that sided with the government.²⁸ What is more, in many societies weapons are collectively rather than individually owned, as in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and South Sudan. In such situations, it may be unrealistic and even dangerous for mediators to seek full disarmament, since partial disarmament may leave entire communities or ethnic groups vulnerable to attacks from neighbours.²⁹

Other challenges facing DDR are frequently administrative and bureaucratic. For example, the UN and others have frequently had a difficult time undertaking successful DDR because of disagreements and confusion over mandates and budgets. The recent efforts by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) and the UN

²⁵ Likewise, issues of civilian arms control, demobilisation and reintegration were also relegated to later stages of the negotiations. See C. Buchanan & J. Chavez, *Negotiating Disarmament: Guns and Violence in the El Salvador Peace Negotiations*, Geneva, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2009.

²⁶ See C. Buchanan & M. Widmer, *Negotiating Disarmament: Reflections on Guns, Fighters and Armed Violence in Peace Processes*, Geneva, Geneva Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2006.

²⁷ See K. Ong, *Managing Fighting Forces: DDR in Peace Processes*, Washington, DC, USIP, 2012.

²⁸ See Ong, *Managing Fighting Forces*, 2012.

²⁹ See R. Muggah, “Diagnosing demand: assessing the motivations and means for firearms acquisition in the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea”, State, Society and Governance in Melanesia Discussion Paper no. 2004/7, 2004.

Development Programme (UNDP) to pursue an “integrated” approach confronted some challenges, as experiences in Haiti and Sudan attest.³⁰ In both cases a lack of clarity over the direction, terminology and organisation of DDR resulted in the breakdown of efforts to collaborate. In some cases the host government and the armed groups themselves may also try to spoil the process. In most cases, DPKO is responsible for undertaking D&D of former combatants, while UNDP, the World Bank and the International Organisation for Migration support everything from civilian disarmament to reinsertion and reintegration. The so-called Integrated Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration Standards (IDDRS) established by an inter-agency working group of more than 16 UN agencies³¹ are intended to clarify roles and responsibilities, but these are not always observed. Too often, gaps emerge in which funding for critical facets of DDR goes unsupported and the programme stalls.

It is important to stress that there are no silver bullets for all the many security dilemmas arising in a post-conflict period, even if D&D are frequently described as such. Even so, the progressive decline of armed conflicts around the world since the late 1980s suggests that these and other activities have potentially played a positive role in promoting safety and consolidating peace. However, over the past decade many alternative security promotion activities have emerged that have also yielded important reductions in armed violence. For example, community security activities, interventions focusing on at-risk youth, weapons-for-development programmes and specialised urban renewal schemes are examples of innovative practice and are increasingly described as “second-generation” DDR.³² A key lesson, then, is the importance of taking account of multiple possibilities to promote peace in the aftermath of war rather than always resorting in a knee-jerk fashion to DDR or some related combination.

30 See R. Muggah, “Great expectations: (dis)integrated DDR in Sudan and Haiti”, *Humanitarian Practice Exchange*, vol 40, London, ODI, 2007.

31 See IDDRS.

32 See DPKO, *DDR in Retrospect*, New York, DPKO, 2010, http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/publications/ddr/ddr_062010.pdf.

Emerging alternatives to D&D

A number of best practices for DDR and related D&D activities are emerging. Some of these are set out by the aforementioned inter-agency UN working group in the IDDRS.³³ These guidelines were initiated in 2004 and continue to evolve as lessons are learned.³⁴ In the case of peace negotiations and agreements in South Sudan, for example, they were applied to set out a rights-based set of prescriptions to deal with the handing in of weapons, child protection and preferences for “community-based” approaches to reintegration.³⁵ For example, some recent work on interim stabilisation and second-generation DDR has been integrated into the IDDRS, as well as the work of specialised UN agencies such as DPKO and UNDP, which have advanced “community security and social cohesion”, “community violence reduction” and “armed violence reduction” strategies.³⁶

A number of issues are often taken into consideration when it comes to post-conflict D&D and other security arrangements. Firstly, there is a consensus that provisions for arms control and the management of former combatants should be highlighted in peace accords and agreements wherever possible. These are critical to setting out the “rules of the game” and, if informed by the standards set out by the IDDRS, can also potentially ensure that key provisions related to gender equity and minority inclusion are grounded early in negotiations. Secondly, although difficult to achieve in practice, there is agreement that a clear and transparent selection process is required for possible demobilisation and reintegration candidates in order to avoid inflating the expectations of would-be participants or generating conflict among non-beneficiaries. Thirdly, a balance of individual and collective incentives and monetary and non-monetary

33 Consult IAWG (Inter-Agency Working Group), *The New Operational Guide to the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Integrated Standards*, 2011, <http://unddr.org/documents.php?doc=1284>.

34 Recent modules on DDR and security sector reform have been introduced.

35 See A. Baare, “Negotiating security issues in the Juba Process”, in C. Buchanan, ed., *Negotiating Disarmament*, Geneva, Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue, 2008.

36 The World Bank is also frequently involved in supporting national and regional DDR activities, although it is statutorily restricted from becoming involved specifically in disarming warring parties.

packages is needed, depending on the setting. These should be provided over time and with some degree of accompaniment and oversight to avoid moral hazard and wastage. Finally, most experts acknowledge that the “reintegration” component is often the least well managed and financed.

Notwithstanding the abovementioned principles and norms designed to guide DDR planning and practice, a key lesson from past efforts is that context determines everything.³⁷ As noted above, the way a country’s armed conflict is ended and mediated, and the shape of its political institutions, economy and social fabric are critical factors shaping a society’s disposition to disarm and demobilise. The way in which a peace process is managed and the extent to which warring groups and civil society are involved in peacebuilding are equally critical factors. In other words, DDR cannot simply be “grafted on” to a post-conflict setting. It is not merely a technical process: an interim mechanism required before elections and wider development activities are resumed. Rather, it constitutes a highly political set of activities that must be preceded by a clear political settlement lest they be seen as increasing the security of one group at the expense of another.

Conclusions

There appear to be fewer provisions for DDR in peace agreements than often assumed. Indeed, this report has found that there are provisions for a range of related concepts in roughly half of all CPAs since 1989. Yet similar terms feature in fewer than 10% of a much larger group of peace accords, protocols and ceasefires over the same period. What is more, the placement of key concepts is highly variable, with most peace agreements featuring provisions for D&D in the middle or later parts of the document(s). From this superficial assessment it seems that there are no golden rules for when and how provisions for these concepts should be pursued.

A wide range of synonyms and expressions for DDR hinder an exhaustive treatment of the subject.

Indeed, comparative research is frustrated by the sheer range and multiplicity of expressions – arms control, weapons management, micro- or practical disarmament, etc. – and languages in which peace agreements are crafted. It is important to note that negotiators and parties to conflicts frequently object to the terminology of “disarmament” and “demobilisation” precisely because the terms connote a form of submission or surrender. In some cases these concepts are left out entirely or substituted with less-offensive terms. Often, ambiguity is intentional in order to avoid derailing carefully crafted processes with tricky issues of the tools of violence.

The negotiation experiences of mediators and parties to conflicts reveal that D&D are highly political processes. In some cases, these issues are relegated to the end of talks, since they are fundamentally connected to wider discussions on the architecture of the security sector, the distribution of power, and wider issues of criminal and transitional justice. Owing to their highly political nature, it is not advisable that full D&D be necessarily made preconditions of negotiations. Indeed, there is ample evidence from past peace agreements that they were specifically excluded or replaced with alternative concepts. Even so, an emerging set of good practices suggest that they should nevertheless be discussed openly and that a wide range of “security promotion” practices be considered alongside conventional DDR. Examples of second-generation iterations and interim stabilisation efforts are increasingly becoming better known.

³⁷ See R. Muggah & K. Krause, “Closing the gap between peace operations and post-conflict insecurity: towards a violence reduction agenda”, *International Peacekeeping*, vol 16, no. 1, 2010, pp. 136-150.