

Swords into ploughshares

Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa

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INTRODUCTION

In the past three decades Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa implemented the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of redundant combatants as part of war to peace transitions. Successful DDR is seen as a *sine qua non* for long-term peace and stability. The immediate goal of the process is to restore security and stability through the responsible management of weapons of combatants. The gradual goal is to enable former combatants to become productive members of their local communities. DDR thus has the potential to facilitate security and development by ensuring the human security of ex-combatants through their long-term sustainable reintegration in secure post-conflict frameworks.

The United Nations (UN) was deliberately excluded from playing a pivotal role in Zimbabwe's independence process. Britain, the former colonial power, desired to exclusively control and influence a short transitional period that would not include a burdensome post-conflict peace building role.¹ Following the Lancaster House Agreement on Rhodesia of 21 December 1979, a small British-led Commonwealth team supervised Zimbabwe's cease-fire monitoring and transitional elections leading to genuine majority rule and legal independence. The post-independence regime tackled the integration of a new army amidst DDR. Namibia experienced UN-managed disarmament and demobilisation. In 1989-1990, Namibia was host to the multidimensional UN Transitional Assistance Group (UNTAG) that successfully supervised the country's transition to independence. UNTAG's mandate was specific on the disarmament and demobilisation of all armed groups. Following UNTAG's exit, the independence government established a new and professional military while having to formulate a reintegration policy. In South Africa DDR was internally activated, locally owned and state managed. It was closely linked to the high priority establishment of the new South African National Defence Force (SANDF).

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This paper reviews the country-specific DDR processes and the outcomes in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa. It does so in four sections. The first three deal with the three countries on an individual case basis. The concluding section then draws some practical policy recommendations and food for thought for enhancing future DDR efforts.

Zimbabwean Case Study

Background

Zimbabwe's DDR was formulated and implemented after the end of a protracted, widespread and bitter liberation war or *Second Chimurenga*. The 1960s-70s liberation war pitted the military wings of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) and the Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU)² ZANLA and ZIPRA respectively against the Rhodesian Security Forces (RSF). In October 1976, ZANU and ZAPU merged into the short-lived loose Patriotic Front (PF) tactical alliance in a bid to wage a unified military strategy against the RSF via the Zimbabwe Peoples Army (ZIPA).

However, just as a mutual inter-force hostility existed between the PF and RSF, intra-force hostility existed within the liberation armies' alliance.³ Zimbabwe's experience of a long and brutal armed liberation struggle, in which two fully-fledged guerrilla armies (ZANLA and ZIPRA) actively engaged the RSF against a background of mutual hostility and suspicion, called for a complex post-liberation war DDR process.

Lancaster House Agreement and DDR: Ending the war at the cost of long-term stability?

The Lancaster House Agreement – a “largely preconceived British settlement plan”⁴ – that was not specific on integration and DDR, ended the war. Integration and DDR were neither sticks nor carrots in the peace negotiations and agreement,

despite attempts to have these issues discussed.⁵ The British/Commonwealth mediators, preoccupied with expediently ending the war, conveniently sidestepped these issues, arguing that this would be the responsibility of the elected government. This played into the hands of the RSF commanders who had predicated their participation in the Lancaster talks on the maintenance of the military status quo prior to elections.⁶

While envisaging military victory, albeit at an enormous human and material cost, the PF were pressured into signing the Lancaster House Agreement – a “largely preconceived British settlement plan”.⁷ Mozambique and Zambia had issued ultimatums threatening to withdraw bases for the PF, given savage punitive RSF raids on guerrilla sanctuaries and general infrastructure in these neighbouring countries. The possibility of Britain legitimising the incumbent Muzorewa-led Rhodesian coalition government the ‘second-class solution’ in the event of a PF pull-out from the negotiations, also permanently hung over the peace conference. In addition, the PF predicted electoral victory that would enable them to preside over the post-independence integration and DDR processes. The elite’s concurrence to the Lancaster House Agreement, that skirted DDR and the post-independence status and recompense of PF forces, did not find favour among the common combatants.

The Lancaster House Agreement, effected through a cease-fire agreement between the RSF and PF forces, and enforced from 2400 hours on 21 December 1979, provided for a demilitarisation process by means of the separation and containment of the liberation combatants in designated Assembly Points (APs), and of the RSF in their established bases. The Cease-fire Commission (CFC) and a modest Commonwealth Monitoring Force (CMF) provided the institutional framework for the implementation of the Agreement. Operational deficiencies and organisational flaws did not impede Zimbabwe’s successful transition. Since the Lancaster House Agreement did not provide the legal framework for the process, Zimbabwe’s post-independence government implemented practical DDR alongside the military integration of the three former warring parties, namely the RSF, ZANLA (Zimbabwe African National Liberation Army) and ZIPRA (Zimbabwe Peoples Revolutionary Army), into a national army.

Pre-integration disarmament and demobilisation

Prior to the integration of the three forces, some units of the RSF, including the Selous Scouts, Guard Force, and Muzorewa’s Auxiliary Forces, were disbanded. These units were not eligible for wholesale integration, as they had been established for specific counter-liberation

purposes and were not intended to be permanent forces.⁸ Moreover, these units were associated with atrocities during the war and had become wholly political during the negotiations; reminiscent of the *Koevoet* in Namibia. Many RSF members also withdrew from the forces prior to the integration process. RSF conscripts simply opted out and returned to their pre-enlisting employment. Regular RSF members also took advantage of the Inducement Scheme that provided for the upgrading of officers by one rank on retirement for pension purposes. The war-disabled ex-RSF could also claim compensation in terms of a Rhodesian Act of Parliament.

In addition to the disbandment process, PF combatants who were in the Assembly Points, and were unfit or unwilling to enlist in the military forces, were demobilised. While these combatants were given questionnaires in the APs to compile their profiles and preferred post-war occupations, no elaborate reintegration policy was designed, besides the provision of a demobilisation grant of Z\$400. The opportunity to plan a comprehensive DDR strategy at the earliest possible stage was lost. The limited monetary reintegration strategy resulted in the ineffective reintegration of these demobilised combatants, the majority of whom re-registered under the Demobilisation Programme of 1981.

As the Lancaster House Agreement had failed to provide for practical disarmament, Robert Mugabe, then Prime Minister and Minister of Defence, outlined the government’s policy of disarming combatants as they demobilised, while those awaiting integration would retain their weapons.⁹ The retention of weapons by ex-combatants during the long idle months spent in APs awaiting integration and demobilisation proved catastrophic, as ZANU-ZAPU ethnic-based tensions spilled over from the liberation war. The passage of time did not heal the wounds, distrust and tension between ZANU and ZAPU; this played out against a backdrop of incomprehensive Ndebele-Shona reconciliation. Apartheid South Africa the major economic, political and military force in the region exploited these mutual hostilities to further entrench the wedge between the two parties.

The insecurity threats posed by the retention of weapons materialised in the eventual clashes in the APs between the ZANLA and ZIPRA combatants. Following the prominent Entumbane clash of 9 to 11 November 1980, the government disarmed the guerrillas.¹⁰ Perceiving disarmament as disparate, and designed to buttress the political and military power of the Shona, “many ZIPRA guerrillas left the armed forces and the camps, joining the ranks of those armed

The retention of weapons by ex-combatants during the long idle months proved catastrophic



members of the *lumpen* elements who could be a reservoir of future destabilisation.¹¹ These mutinies were spontaneous and were not part of ZAPU policy.¹² However, Zimbabwe experienced armed dissident activity in Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands from 1981 to 1987, during which some former ZIPRA combatants took up arms against the government.

The government responded to this internal security problem by deploying integrated army units¹³ and the specially created, North Korean trained 5th Brigade, also known as Gukurahundi (Shona for 'the rain that washes away the chaff from the last harvest, before the spring rains'¹⁴) to counter the 'dissident' menace. An estimated 10,000 civilians lost their lives and thousands more were harmed during the 5th Brigade's campaign, as violence and insecurity rocked Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands until the signing of the historic Unity Accord of 1987 by ZANU and ZAPU. This dealt a major blow to post-independence peace, and to nation building and reconstruction.

Zimbabwe's security policy framework shifted, as it also had to strengthen its defences against apartheid South Africa's 'Total National Strategy' against those southern African states that were inclined to Marxism and supportive of African liberation and ANC operatives. Total Strategy in part prescribed the military equipping of the RENAMO surrogate forces, as well as some dissident elements that launched incursions into Zimbabwe. Information that came to light during the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission revealed the South African Defence Force's involvement in Zimbabwe.¹⁵ Force expansion and official procurement of arms gained momentum in order to safeguard newly-won independence by ensuring an efficient, well-equipped defence force. This was an enforced antithesis to demilitarisation.¹⁶ The resultant increase of the army by 10,000 to 51,519¹⁷ was accompanied by constant and substantial defence expenditure.¹⁸ The relegation of DDR meant that the envisaged peace dividend, which should have been characterised by the release of resources for social and economically productive projects, remained elusive.

Demobilisation policy of 1981-1983: Demobilise and scatter?

The integration process resulted in a new army of about 70,000 members, against an initial projected target of 30,000. Fiscal and security objectives underpinned the government's policy decision to plan and implement demobilisation of the over-manned army. The government set up the Demobilisation Directorate in July 1981, appropriately under the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare, to implement demobilisation and reintegration with relevant sister ministries.

The demobilisation policy did not make specific provisions for the rehabilitation and reintegration of

special categories such as the physically disabled and psychologically disturbed ex-fighters, and female ex-combatants, all with specific needs.¹⁹ The demobilisation programme, outlined in a policy document titled "*Demobilisation within the Zimbabwe National Army*", revolved on the provision of:

- Further education for those demobilised combatants who had not finished their primary or secondary education and wished to continue;
- Technical training in motor mechanics, welding, agricultural courses, medical courses, local governance, customs and immigration;
- Expert guidance to ex-combatants interested in seeking employment, self-employment, or forming co-operatives; and
- A demobilisation allowance comprising a monthly stipend of Z\$185 spread over a two-year period, or a lump sum of Z\$4,440.

Employed former combatants were not eligible for the demobilisation allowance.²⁰ Demobilised combatants were provided with Post Office Savings Bank account books, and identification documents authorising them to withdraw the demobilisation allowance from bank outlets countrywide.

At the end of the physical demobilisation exercise in June 1983, 35,763 combatants had been demobilised. (See Table 1 below)

Table 1: Post-Demobilisation Combatant Status

Status	Number of demobilised combatants
Completion of interrupted education	5,700
Training programmes	2,900
Formal employment	5,041
Self-employed	2,179
Cooperatives	6,383
Unemployed	13,500
Total	35,763

Source: Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe Parliamentary Debates, v 18, no. 68, March 1992

Notwithstanding the existence of a dedicated Demobilisation Directorate, there were programmatic and institutional gaps. These included the lack of a broad and consistent socio-economic profiling of combatants, the failure to implement financial management skills training for the many ex-combatants inexperienced in handling (demobilisation) money, incompetent and corrupt directorate staff, an absence of elaborate and workable business or cooperatives support mechanisms, and the lack of a proactive monitoring mechanism. The majority of the ex-combatant enterprises collapsed due to these factors, while agro-based enterprises were also hard-hit by



drought. The ex-combatants had been “thrown into a sophisticated world without adequate preparation”.²¹ Compounded by unfavourable post-independence economic, social, and politico-military frameworks, the DDR process disintegrated. This translated to the absence of a dedicated reintegration policy by government, impacting profoundly on the independent state’s economic, social and political configuration.²²

Despite these obvious programmatic limitations the Zimbabwean government stressed that “those (ex-combatants) who had not furthered their education or gained some skills or training, or were unemployed, would be on their own after the (demobilisation) payments expired”.²³ By 1990 up to 25,000 ex-combatants were unemployed, as indicators of human insecurity dominated their livelihoods. Since the government did not initiate further reintegration assistance beyond the ill-fated 1981 programme, ex-combatants perceived this as official indifference to their plight. Instead of turning ex-combatants into productive civilians, (ineffective) DDR transformed them into war veterans, an identity they would later violently mobilise to achieve varied aims. The Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Association (ZNLWVA), established after the Unity Accord of 1987 between ZANU and ZAPU, offered the ex-combatants the platform to launch their demands.

The groundswell of discontent, and the threat to national stability posed by ineffectively reintegrated and disgruntled ex-combatants, exploded in 1997. This followed the Zimbabwean government’s suspension of the War Victims Compensation Fund (established by government in 1980 to cater for all war-injured persons) in March 1997, and the appointment by President Mugabe of a judicial commission to inquire and report on the administration of the Fund. The suspension was intended to stop further abuse of the fund, but nonetheless, and understandably so, infuriated many war veterans, given that the fund had become their most important escape route from destitution, following problematic reintegration. This created an explosive situation, and government soon found itself at loggerheads with disgruntled ex-combatants who held rolling protests against perceived bureaucratic bungling and mistreatment.²⁴

In response to the demonstrations, government implemented the ‘second policy on demobilisation and reintegration’. Coincidentally, the President is also the patron of the ZNLWVA. The relationship between the ruling ZANU PF and the war veterans has consistently been characterised by “power-seeking agendas, their appeals to the revolutionary liberation,

their use of violence and intimidation,” and their “simultaneous conflict and collaboration as party and veterans manipulate one another.”²⁵ The costs of this programme including an initial outlay of more than Z\$4.5 billion on gratuities and lifetime pensions for over 52,000 war veterans and the negative impact on the country’s broader economy meant that Zimbabwe did not experience the financial dividend of DDR. To date the government is burdened with war veterans’ pensions, which constantly have to be adjusted to keep pace with rampant hyperinflation.

Namibian Case Study

Background

Namibia’s liberation war mainly pitted SWAPO’s military wing; the People’s Liberation Army of Namibia (PLAN), against the SADF from August 1966 to 1989. This meant that Namibia’s DDR would involve one liberation army. The SADF, whose presence in Namibia was declared illegal by the UN, was an external army that could be easily withdrawn from Namibia in the post-war era. South Africa established indigenous forces to fight against PLAN alongside the SADF, such as the South West Africa Territorial Force (SWATF), and citizen and commando forces. The San, also disparagingly known as the Bushmen, whose tracking and hunting skills were considered invaluable in the bush war against SWAPO, were recruited as SWATF soldiers. South Africa also trained the counter-insurgency unit *Koevoet* (crowbar), which terrorised Namibians. These forces had to be included alongside PLAN combatants in the process to establish Namibia’s national armed forces and DDR programmes.

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UNTAG and DDR

The New York Accords of 28 December 1988 (signed by Angola, Cuba and South Africa) facilitated the implementation of Namibia’s independence plan as outlined in UN Security Council Resolution 435 (1978). Disarmament and demobilisation were part of the Settlement Plan and were concretely enshrined in the mandate of the United Nations Transition Assistance Group (UNTAG). UNTAG’s tasks included:

- monitoring the cease-fire;
- ensuring that troops (both SADF and SWAPO) were confined to bases; and
- supervising the rapid reduction and eventual removal of South African military forces from Namibia.²⁶

Resolution 435 also provided for the disbandment of all “ethnic and paramilitary” units that had been



established by colonial South Africa. Disarmament and demobilisation were thus incorporated into the overall strategy to create secure conditions for Namibia's transition to independence. As UNTAG did not have a post-conflict mandate to assist with the reintegration of the demobilised combatants, this was left to the devices of the independence government.

UNTAG's implementation of disarmament and demobilisation was marked by an inauspicious start. The delay in the full emplacement of UNTAG in Namibia had serious consequences for the maintenance of the cease-fire. On the day on which the ceasefire was to come into effect, 1 April 1989, South African forces clashed with PLAN combatants who had crossed the border from Angola into northern Namibia. UNTAG has since confirmed PLAN's explanation that it had been engaged in establishing military bases inside Namibia that would be monitored by UNTAG, only to be ambushed by South African forces. However, at the time, South African forces, authorised by the UN to deploy and enforce the ceasefire, engaged in a major onslaught against the outnumbered and less well-equipped PLAN combatants, in which more than 375 PLAN combatants were killed.²⁷ UNTAG's operational and logistic capacity was expeditiously boosted to enable it to credibly carry out its mandate. The parties' ultimate commitment to the independence process and amenability to UNTAG pressure facilitated significant disarmament and demobilisation.

UNTAG subsequently demobilised the SWATF and the citizen commando forces. The arms, military equipment and ammunition collected from these units were deposited in 'double-locked' drill halls guarded by UNTAG infantry.²⁸ However, South Africa's attempt to maintain its tactical presence in Namibia's security sector, and SWAPO's alleged retention of a strategic reserve force threatened to blot disarmament and demobilisation. For instance, the majority of the SWATF retained their camouflage, maintained contact with their 'former' commanders, and remained on the payroll. In addition, instead of disbanding the paramilitary *Koevoet* unit in line with UN recommendations, South Africa 'infiltrated' about 2,000 of its original 3,000 members into SWAPOL, thereby bypassing the demobilisation provisions. These 'demobilised' personnel were responsible for widespread intimidation and destabilisation activity, including hunting down and eliminating PLAN combatants and threatening the masses, particularly in the sensitive and populous northern areas. Under pressure from UNTAG, South African administrators eventually agreed to the demobilisation of 1,600 ex-*Koevoet* members of SWAPOL under UNTAG supervision by 30 October 1989. The remaining

1,500-strong 'Merlyn Force' was withdrawn after the certification of the elections on 21 November 1989, completing the withdrawal of the SADF and its concomitant military equipment.

Disarmament of PLAN was carried out in Angola. PLAN troops who had been in Namibia on 1 April 1989 were assembled at designated camps before being escorted under UNTAG supervision to assembly points north of the 16th parallel in Angola. In spite of a slow start, more than 5,000 were ultimately confined to bases in Angola.²⁹ The initial difficulties can probably be attributed to the dispersal of PLAN fighters, following the clashes of April 1989,³⁰ and the intimidating visible presence of South African forces outside their bases. UNTAG's small team of 31 military monitors, based in Lubango, Angola, and known as UNTAG A (Angola), supervised the disarmament of PLAN by the Angolan military and their confinement to Angolan camps. Angolan General Ndalú later asserted that all SWAPO personnel retreated north of the 16th parallel.³¹

Creating a time bomb? Post-independence reintegration

The success of the two 'Ds' in DDR was undermined by the government's failure to plan and implement comprehensive reintegration programmes

The success of the two 'Ds' in DDR was undermined by the independence government's failure to plan and implement comprehensive reintegration programmes. Namibia had no constitutionally established defence force at independence. One of the priorities of the new government was the formation of an integrated Namibian Defence Force (NDF) against a backdrop of mistrust and suspicion. The successfully established NDF and the transformed Namibian Police combined absorbed between 8,000 and 10,000 combatants, offering them and their dependants some

stability. However, this accounted for but a fraction of the over 50,000 total demobilised. Prioritising the powerful political imperatives of national reconciliation and nation building, the Namibian government embarked on stopgap reintegration measures for the superfluous ex fighters.

Ex-SWATF members were better placed than their ex-PLAN counterparts. For instance, SWATF ex-fighters continued to receive salaries from South Africa after discharge, until Namibia's independence. This was meant to facilitate their reintegration into civilian life, and to retain their loyalty to the SADF in case Namibia's transition to independence collapsed.³² In 1991/92 South Africa implemented a compensation scheme comprising "a once-off payment of 12,000 Namibian dollars (US\$2,600) to former *Koevoet* and SWATF forces as a gratuity to tide them over until they found employment."³³ In any event, their possession of the standard 8 level of education entry requirement

stood them in good stead for civilian employment and reintegration.

The same cannot be said of the ex-PLAN fighters, whose employment prospects were restricted by their lack of formal qualifications. The majority, unable to be absorbed into limited public sector employment, remained a part of the mainstream unemployed population years into independence. This was at a time when the transition to independence was accompanied by a neo-colonial economic structure and a small private sector that was not immediately restructured to facilitate economic growth and job creation. The government also did not develop the potential of the informal sector to meet the reintegration goals of creating jobs and alleviating poverty among unattached ex-fighters.

Former PLAN combatants were each paid a nominal once-off gratuity of R1,400 in 1991.³⁴ The intention was that this gratuity would be complemented by the succeeding two-year (1991 and 1992) Development Brigade (later Development Brigade Corporation) training programme, designed to impart practical agricultural and construction skills sufficient for sustainable post-graduation income-generation to the unemployed ex-combatants, but which did not quite work out as planned. The Development Brigade was strategically placed under the Ministry of Lands, Resettlement and Rehabilitation (MLLR), as land reform was to be central to its success. However, Namibia's slow and cumbersome land resettlement programme has resulted in the perpetuation of skewed land ownership patterns. Access to land has been problematic, in particular for ex-combatants who are not treated as a specific preferential target group under the national land reform programme. About 3,800 mainly white farmers continued to own 44 percent of arable land.³⁵

Other institutional and operational problems, including a lack of funding, a lack of technical expertise and qualified personnel, as well as inappropriate training, resulted in the Development Brigade programme failing to acquire self-sufficiency status and wean the trainees into productive employment or viable projects. Bilateral donors such as the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) and later the European Community withdrew sponsorship on the basis of negative evaluation reports on the performance and viability of the Development Brigade.

Namibia's initiatives broadly failed to facilitate ex-fighter reintegration. This presented a potential threat to national stability and security. The public disruption and rioting by ineffectively reintegrated and disenfranchised

former fighters in the mid-1990s demonstrated this.³⁶ In a gratifying response to avert full-scale instability, the government decided to implement the aptly named Peace Project, aimed at affirmative job placements, mainly in the public service, for around 11,950 unemployed and registered ex-fighters. A larger civil service was the price that the Namibian government had to pay for earlier botched reintegration. Instead of mollifying the disgruntled and riotous former combatants in the short term with monetary pay-offs, the Peace Project enhanced prospects of the long-term reintegration of its beneficiaries. Instructively, the Peace Project has for seven years managed to prevent new security threats posed by the ex-fighters.

South African Case Study

Background

South Africa's violent anti-apartheid conflict involved seven major armed antagonists. Comprising the apartheid security forces were the SADF and the armed forces of the Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei (TBVC) homelands.

The liberation movements, the African National Congress (ANC) and Pan African Congress (PAC), established their respective military wings; *Umkhonto weSizwe* (MK) and the Azanian Peoples Liberation Army (APLA). The involvement of varied armed formations in South Africa's anti-apartheid struggle meant that the country had a heterogeneous ex-fighter population to deal with under its DDR process. However, a major feature of the anti-apartheid conflict was that there were limited military engagements between the larger and sophisticated SADF and the liberation armies inside South Africa. Jacklyn Cock described

South Africa's conflict as a "low-level civil war".³⁷ The fact that armed conflict was low-key may inadvertently have resulted in the low emphasis on the planning and execution of DDR.

The settlement of South Africa's violent conflict was concluded in a series of minutes and accords. These included the Groote Schuur Minute, Pretoria Minute, National Peace Accord and CODESA Declaration. The Multi-Party Negotiating Forum with the National Party government and ANC elite as major players recommended the creation of an internal Transitional Executive Council (TEC) to supervise South Africa's transition to democracy. A sub-council on Defence (SCD) was established as part of the TEC to implement the military aspects of the transition. The multi-party negotiations emphasised the establishment of a new, unitary SANDF. While this was important as part of a broader strategy to ensure control of the levers of the new state in an uncertain political environment, the

A larger civil service was the price that the Namibian government had to pay for earlier botched reintegration

plan of an essential and comprehensive DDR gave way. For instance, the SCD's major tasks included ensuring compliance by all armed forces with the objectives of the TEC, and research and planning for the new defence forces. Whereas the formation of the SANDF was structured and well thought out, "the demobilisation of former APLA and MK soldiers was an afterthought".³⁸

Disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration: The process and the impacts

Against a backdrop of significant meetings between the apartheid government and the un-banned ANC, the ANC suspended its armed struggle in August 1990. This was under the framework of the Pretoria Minute of 6 August 1990, which reaffirmed both parties' commitment to "moving as speedily as possible towards a negotiated peaceful political settlement." By agreeing that "no further armed actions and related activities by the ANC and its military wing Umkhonto we Sizwe [MK] will take place", the nationalist movement ostensibly opened the opportunity for self-managed disarmament. The Pretoria Minute, however, did not end mistrust, competition and military machinations. The ensuing volatile political and security framework constrained disarmament efforts.

Against this unstable backdrop the South African government and the ANC signed the DF Malan Accord of February 1991. The Accord reiterated the parties' commitment to the upholding of the most pertinent points of the Pretoria Minute that touched on weapons control. The provisions of the Malan Accord included the control over the cadres and arms of MK, which had been increasingly infiltrated into the country. One of the results of the Accord was the registration and legalisation of specific MK firearms after the ANC "raised concerns about the need to protect our leadership", and "this was one of the processes that helped in the disarmament process."³⁹ In addition, a facilitative Government Gazette of March 1991 authorised automatic indemnity for MK members who received military training and engaged in armed military activities up to 8 October 1990.⁴⁰

A result of the above initiatives was the disarmament of some 4,000 MK fighters, and their return to South Africa from camps in Uganda and Tanzania as 'unarmed civilians' during the UNHCR voluntary repatriation operation.⁴¹ Interviews with MK ex-fighters confirmed this. Disarmament and repatriation under the UNCHR was not elaborately linked to ex-fighter reintegration. The repatriated fighters received limited rehabilitation assistance, provided for under the repatriation process.

The weapons collected "went back to the headquarters of the liberation movements because there were some form of records on the movements' weapons and which units were given what. They may not have returned all but people returned their weapons."⁴² The liberation movements then handed over these weapons to the Transitional Executive Council, established by the multiparty negotiations to deal with military aspects of the transition, and they were supposed to be destroyed.⁴³

Further attempts at disarmament included a July 1993 month-long amnesty period, during which people could hand over weapons and be immune from prosecution. However, in a statement that could be strongly construed to imply the retention of weapons by ANC cadres, ANC spokesman Ronnie Mamoepa said, "The ANC will never hand over weapons to this illegal government."⁴⁴ Notably, only three days before the amnesty ended, only 18 weapons had been handed in.⁴⁵ However, South African Police spokesman Captain Louis le Roux attributed the poor response to the possession of arms by criminals who feared to be linked with other arms.

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Disarmament was not in any way complete. This may have contributed to South Africa's multi-causal and destructive small arms scourge. For example, firearms are said to "feature prominently in violent crime and contribute directly to the distinctively high murder rate in SA".⁴⁶ South African Police Services (SAPS) Deputy Provincial Commissioner Africa Khumalo, a former MK commander in charge of disarmament, noted: "Finally, not all firearms were collected. Some of them, we have found in the cash-in-transit robberies. Thus (till) today, the government is still giving amnesties with regards to handing in of illegal firearms."⁴⁷

Demobilisation was secondary to the establishment of the SANDF. It was implemented on the basis of a cabinet decision of 16 August 1995, as an exit strategy for personnel listed on the liberation armies' Certified Personnel Registers (CPR) but ineligible or disinclined to join the SANDF. In 1995 the then Minister of Defence, now late, Joe Modise, announced the demobilisation process as involving the voluntary release of members of the former liberation armies (referred to as Non-Statutory Forces), who, despite being constitutionally part of the SANDF, did not wish to serve in the full-time force or who could not do so due to age, ill health or did not meet the minimum requirements for service in the SANDF.⁴⁸ Lephophotho Mashike argues that the result of the expedient nature of the demobilisation process was that "there was no proper planning for the reintegration of former soldiers into civilian life."⁴⁹



The legislative framework for demobilisation and reintegration was only put in place in 1996 with the institution of the policy White Paper on the Defence and Demobilisation Act. As demobilisation had started in 1995 after the democratic elections, this had to work retrospectively. The demobilised were supposed to be catered for by a three-legged demobilisation and reintegration strategy:

- A gratuity payment, calculated according to length of service in the liberation armies, and at scales approved by Cabinet, with sums in excess of R30,000; subject to normal taxation.
- Counselling and advisory services to guide the ex-fighters on how to manage their gratuities, as well as to advise on the options available to support their reintegration.
- A skills upgrade via the Service Corps training scheme.

Table 2: Demobilisation payments

Category	Years of Service	Amount paid	Numbers
A	22-23	R42,058	172
B	18-21	R34,313	144
C	12-17	R28,721	534
D	5-11	R20,201	1,049
E	0-4	R12,734	2,003
Z	Unspecified		242

Source: James Higgs, *The Critical Component: Personnel Strategies for the SANDF to 2000 and Beyond*, (Johannesburg, SAlIA, 1998), p 15

The once-off gratuity for the common ex-fighter without financial management skills did not effect the upliftment and sustainable reintegration of most ex-fighters. While a noble gesture, the flash funding gratuity would have needed to be relatively substantial and partnered by a solid skills development and entrepreneur-friendly scheme in order to sustainably reintegrate the ex-fighters.

The good intentions of the Service Corps were unhinged by the absence of an enabling and appropriate institutional framework. The location of the Service Corps in the Department of Defence, and its management by military officers was problematic. The military can quite easily train civilians to become military personnel, but is least fitted to reverse the process. In any event, the military was averse to sponsoring a perceived 'non-core' project at a time when international and non-government funding for the resource-intensive venture was limited (except for an initial R141m grant by the Taiwanese government to set up the first vocational training centre). Further technical and financial assistance promised by Taiwan was precluded by the government's political decision to break diplomatic ties with Taiwan in favour of mainland China.⁵⁰

The absence of a timely and comprehensive DDR strategy was aggravated by the post-apartheid economic context, characterised by 'jobless growth', making the large-scale and sustainable reintegration of ex-combatants impossible. Several scholarly studies have confirmed the ineffective reintegration of ex-fighters. For instance, Ian Liebenberg and Marlene Roefs⁵¹ state that 37% of their sample was unemployed. The Centre for Conflict Resolution's study⁵² on the livelihood of ex-combatants found that 66% of ex-fighters interviewed were unemployed with a third suffering psychological problems. The situation was particularly depressing for ex-fighters who had hoped that independence would translate into guaranteed human security.

The fact that the demobilisation and reintegration process lacked clear monitoring and follow-up mechanisms meant that no corrective measures were designed to assist ex-fighters who had failed to reintegrate. This created a potentially disruptive sense of neglect, betrayal and marginalisation among the ex-combatants. The threats to security and stability posed by ineffectively reintegrated ex-fighters became a reality in the form of armed criminal activities, mainly cash-in-transit heists.⁵³ Small-scale protests by ex-fighters⁵⁴ were held, largely "motivated by the needs of the individuals concerned to highlight their grievances."⁵⁵

The government has since enacted the Military Veterans Affairs Act of 1999 as part of the new initiatives to correct the deficiencies of past reintegration strategies. Slow steps are being made towards the establishment of a representative national war veterans association that would facilitate implementation of the support provided under the Military Veterans Act. The full implementation of the Act would mean public expenditure on war veterans translating to an elusive peace dividend, more than a decade into democracy. At the time of writing this article the Department of Defence is also working on the reorganisation of the Service Corps, mainly on matters relating to its appropriate location and partnerships.

Conclusion

This paper has outlined Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa's experience of DDR. DDR featured strongly in the three countries' transition to independence and democracy, following negotiated settlements to lengthy armed anti-colonial struggles. The transitional environment, in all three cases, was characterised by historical mutual mistrust and animosity, as preceding conflict dynamics influenced the establishment of post-conflict unitary armed forces and DDR. The resultant insecurity and uncertainty posed challenges to integration and DDR. DDR was the flipside of the logically strategic establishment of unitary and legitimate national defence forces that were crucial for post-conflict peace and nation building.



Notwithstanding the strategic imperatives of the swift establishment of integrated national defence forces, and the demobilisation of superfluous fighters, the equally important reintegration component of DDR was inadequately addressed in all three countries. The government-led reintegration strategies were poorly implemented where policy statements were in place, but worse when they were an afterthought. This effectively created a gap between the two D's of DDR (disarmament and demobilisation) and the R (reintegration). Despite the fact that some former fighters managed to secure cabinet, government, parastatal and diplomatic postings, the sustainable reintegration of most former liberation fighters remained a problem. The governments that had failed to properly reintegrate ex-combatants later found themselves with a price to pay, as restive ex-fighters threatened national stability. This was a red flag that national authorities could hardly ignore, resulting in the implementation of various new reintegration initiatives.

While DDR occurs in unique settings, the following broad recommendations can be taken from the three case studies, and should be considered when undertaking future processes.

- Crafters and implementers of DDR should understand the dynamics of the preceding conflict of which the process is a product.
- DDR should be an integral part of the peace negotiations, agreement and succeeding peace process.
- There is a strong need to conceive DDR as an interconnected and integrated process with no gap between the two Ds and the R.
- The various stakeholders should follow a comprehensive, coordinated and sustainable approach with regard to DDR.
- The reformulation of the wider economic framework is critical, since DDR is unlikely to succeed in a stagnant or imbalanced economy.
- Genuine national reconciliation should be nurtured, as DDR symbiotically relates to post-conflict accommodation between former antagonists
- Remedial measures that do not disrupt the national economic fabric should be devised.
- Ensuring the human security of ex-fighters through effective DDR facilitates regime and national security, allowing DDR to achieve its promise of supporting peace building.
- While UN peacekeeping operations may have exact mandates to implement under specified timeframes, there is a need to ensure continuity through post-withdrawal synergy with relevant local bodies.

Endnotes

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- 2 ZAPU, led by Joshua Nkomo, was established in 1961 as successor to the banned National Democratic Party. ZANU was formed as a splinter group from ZAPU in 1963 under the leadership of Reverend Ndabaningi Sithole. ZANU established ZANLA in 1964 and ZAPU established ZIPRA in 1965 as their military wings to wage a liberation war against the Rhodesian government.
- 3 Zimbabwe's liberation war movement had competing ethnic, ideological and strategic components. ZANLA was mainly Shona while ZIPRA was mainly Ndebele in composition. ZANLA's liberation war strategy was Chinese influenced and relied on mass mobilisation to sustain a protracted liberation struggle. ZIPRA's strategy was Soviet oriented and placed emphasis on conventional warfare strategy.
- 4 NAN A.636/2, E S Landis Accession S Graves, *Rhodesian Lessons for Namibia*.
- 5 See PF's opening address at the Constitutional Conference Held at Lancaster House, London September to December 1979. While ZANU and ZAPU negotiated as a unitary PF at Lancaster the two split afterwards and contested the independence elections separately.
- 6 N Krieger, *Guerilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe: Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980-1987*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2003), p 37.
- 7 NAN A.636/2, E S Landis Accession S Graves, *Rhodesian Lessons for Namibia*
- 8 Zimbabwe Parliamentary Debates, *House of Assembly*, Vol. 1, 14 May 1980 to 26 June 1980 and 23 July to 15 August 1980.
- 9 Ibid.
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- 15 For more see D Dabengwa, "ZIPRA in the Zimbabwe



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About this paper

Defence integration in the Republic of the Congo (DRC) has been fraught with so many problems. This paper explores the processes in the peace agreement and transitional arrangements from 2003 and 2005. It seeks to put into perspective the challenges faced thus far and argues in favour of a long term approach to defence transformation as opposed to short term political considerations. It also laments the slow progress and urges stakeholders involved to move as quickly as possible and without delay in order to reap the benefits of peace before the winds of change die out.

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Gwinyayi Albert Dzinesa is a doctoral fellow at the Centre for Africa's International Relations, University of the Witwatersrand. This article draws from his doctoral research: "Disarmament, demobilisation, reintegration, repatriation and resettlement (DDRRR) in Zimbabwe, Namibia and South Africa", conducted under the supervision of Professor John Stremlau.

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