The Demobilization Process in Burundi

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The objective of the current ingando is to allow participants, soldiers or civilians, to go beyond the feelings of fear and mutual suspicion and speak freely about the conflict which opposes them, to heal the wounds, to accept responsibilities if harm was done, to demystify the negative perceptions of one towards the other, to assume collectively the consequences of the common tragedy and agree on the common future. Ingando is based on the approach of problem resolution, which encourages the participants to analyze their conflict, its causes, and attitudes of one towards the other and post-conflict relationships.

Within the framework of military integration, this methodology comprises four phases. The first phase allows RDF soldiers and ex-combatants to speak out about history and origin of the conflict, with the aim of removing barriers which prevented them from communicating. The second phase consists of appointing the former opponents to various posts. By working together they continue their discussions about the conflict and establish close relations. During the third stage, participants are encouraged to analyze the conflict as a common problem with shared losses and responsibilities. This is done not to utter blames but to analyze the conflict so as to prevent it from occurring again in future. During the fourth stage, ex-combatants appraise all the process. Ingando is the beginning of the resolution of the conflict. The challenge is to always be capable of ensuring an atmosphere which allows mutual respect, recognition of dignity and humanity of each participant.

Between 1995 and 2002, 49,700 ex-combatants were integrated into RDF, while the latter was demobilizing 27,340 soldiers. This process has continued up to date. The country has received dividends from the security climate as a result of this policy of military integration. It has allowed to efficiently fight against uprising of infiltrated elements by cutting ex-RAF and militias from their supply base, since integrated soldiers had become citizens who wanted to protect their families. Besides, these soldiers, once demobilized, transformed themselves into actors of economic development and reconciliation.

Military integration is an important element in the process of reconciliation and restoration of sustainable peace. The success depends on the political and military leadership will, on its insertion at grassroots level and its ownership by communities. International partners will back up local initiatives but the latter do not belong to them. Finally, in the perspective of reconciliation, ex-combatants should also be considered as “victims” of the conflict and consequently losers as well.

The experience of military integration carried out by RDF produced a new example of an integrated institution. It has allowed also to ensure security in the country and to propose a new model of the culture of unity and hope as opposed to the culture of hatred and despair.

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The demobilization process in Burundi, by Col. Isaïe NIYIBIZI

A historical reminder of the major events which occurred before this process is necessary to understand the national program for demobilization and reintegration (PNRR) in Burundi.
The victory of the Front for Democracy in Burundi (FRODEBU) during the elections held in June 1993 was followed by the assassination of the elected President M. Ndadaye. That act was at the origin of the creation, early 1994, of the National Council for the Defense of Democracy (CNDD) and the Forces for the Defense of Democracy (FDD). The launching of demobilization operations started on 1st December 2004 after the Global Accord of Cease-fire which was signed between CNDD-FDD and the transitional government on 16 November 2003.

Demobilization concerned both the Burundian Army Forces (FAB) and the combatants from Parties and armed political Movements. The criteria which were considered were: voluntary service, physical condition, age, discipline, education level, cost of defense and security corps. An organ in charge of socio-professional reintegration of the demobilized had to be set up. And each demobilized person had to receive a demobilization allowance. In total, 80,000 persons from the target groups were concerned plus 20,000 gardiens de la paix and 10,000 activist combatants. But, in reality, the total number of persons to be demobilized amounted to about 55,000.

The process had to go through different phases: confinement, checking, registration, questionnaire on expectations, orientation before the departure, medical screening, voluntary screening for HIV/AIDS, distribution of departure package (9-month salary, the remaining 9 months to be paid in 3 installments after an interval of 3 months) and transport expenses to the provinces of destination.

The guiding principles of reintegration are as follows: the adult demobilized receive the same level of assistance (about US$600) supplied in kind, each ex-combatant chooses him/herself his/her location for reintegration and his/her activity. PNDRR provides special assistance for ex-child soldiers and handicapped ex-combatants. The programme foresees projects of general interest for resettlement communities. Five options were suggested: vocational training, formal education, income-generating activities, entrepreneurship and employment promotion.

In May 2007, the total number of the demobilized amounted to 20,929 (out of 55,000 expected). The biggest number of them comes from FAB (7,347), CNDD-FDD (7,050) and the National Defense Forces (2,859). The gaps could be explained by three factors: the figures inflated by negotiating parties, on-going recruitment by some armed movements during the cantonment period and the difficulties of reintegration (income-generating activities being the only ones to offer real opportunities to the demobilized).

Returning to civilian life for tens of thousands of combatants and militia men has undeniably improved security in the country. Displaced persons and refugees have progressively
returned home. And the demobilized constitute, even though they are ill-prepared for that, a labour force which cannot be neglected. However, the delay in effective implementation of the cease-fire signed between the government and Rwasa’s FNL constitutes a real danger.

The process of demobilization is still going on. It is the reason why it is difficult to appreciate all its results. However, the tendency shows clearly that economic objectives will not be achieved in short or mid-term. On the other hand, objectives which had not been identified during the conception of the program but which are vital for the reconciliation of Burundians have been attained: demobilization has allowed integration of the armed political Movements and the Burundian Armed forces into the National Defense Forces. Let us not forget that it is exclusion or its perception which ran-sacked and pillaged this country for almost half a century.

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THEME IV: ELECTIONS AND ELECTORAL PROCESSES

Elections et challenges to the Democratization process in Tanzania. The interface between administrative reforms and democratization, by Jonas Ewald

Tanzania is an interesting example of conflict resolution in the Great Lakes region because it has developed a political culture of peaceful development. In a context of great poverty, Tanzania has a strong identity and national cohesion; it is also among the countries which are registering the best performances at the level of the African continent in the areas of governance, reforms in economic and public sectors.

As regards elections, the country has known a long experience of elections which were well conducted within the framework of a single party system as well as in the multiparty system. Parliamentary and presidential elections have been taking place since 1992. The quality of these elections improved at every term, except in Zanzibar. For the observers, those of 2002 were free but not fair; in 2005 they were free and fair. From the changes that occurred, one could mention the number of voters which kept increasing (8.93 million in 1995, 10.09 million in 2000 and 16.42 million in 2005). what is a sign of a greater awareness for the political participation on the part of the population.

Since 1995, the party in power, Chama Cha Mapinduzi (CCM) has won elections with an ever more comfortable lead over the opposition (61.8% in 1995, 71.7% in 2000 and 80.3% in 2005). In 1995, the opposition had 46 seats: this number dropped to 26 in 2005, whose 19 were from Zanzibar islands and especially Pemba.

The challenges faced by the process of