BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

Fighting between Afghan government forces and US troops on one side and various Taliban militias on the other. Struggle for democratic power in a context of political fragility and ethnic divisions.

The professional Afghan army disintegrated in 1992, leaving power in the hands of a large number of militias. Following the fall of the Taliban regime at the end of 2001, many of these militias formed a new military body, the Afghan Military Forces (AMF), controlled by the Defence Ministry. This should eventually become the new Afghan National Army (ANA) in a process that will include DDR. April 2005 saw the beginning of a new programme for the enforced disarmament of illegal armed groups, in conjunction with an anti-narcotics programme.

During 2005, there was a significative raising from violence and attacks by Taliban militias, Armes Forces operations and US troops against those militias, as well as an increasing of suicide attacks, under the figure of 1,400 total deaths.

PEACE AGREEMENTS / PROCESS

The Bonn Agreements were signed in December 2001 following a great deal of pressure from the USA. These agreements set out a transitional political structure for the country and established the formation of an Afghan Interim Authority (AIA), though they are not so much a peace agreement as an arrangement between the victorious parties. As part of the Bonn Agreements, the Security Council called for the creation of an international security force that would provide security in the capital and other urban areas. The Loya Jirga met in June 2002 to elect a transitional authority, and this was endorsed during the elections held in October 2004.

INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

On 28 March 2002, the United Nations Security Council passed Resolution 1401 establishing the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), with the aim of providing support for the country’s reconstruction and assisting the DDR programme. The budget allocated for UNAMA during the period from April to December 2003 was 37,9 million dollars.

The UN Secretary General’s Special Representative in Afghanistan (SGSR) has two deputies, one of whom is responsible for the electoral process and DDR. The SGSR also has a special
adviser who is responsible, among other things, for issues relating to the military and
demilitarization.

In August 2003, NATO took charge of the command and coordination of the International
Security Assistance Force (ISAF), comprising some 8,000 troops, whose aim is to help the
Afghan government maintain security and to assist in the training of the future Afghan security
forces. The EU took over the running of the ISAF in 2004 with the deployment of its Eurocorps
mission and during 2005 it was expended to the west of the country.

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**DDR STRUCTURE**

**Background to the DDR process:**
In May 2002, the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) presented its proposal for a
DDR programme in conjunction with UNAMA, the World Bank, UNDP, UNICEF and the
transitional government, estimating that it could benefit around 175,000 former combatants
(preliminary estimates indicate that the number of former combatants could be as high as
750,000). This first programme was refined during 2003 and entrusted to the charge of the
UNDP and a new Afghan body known as the Afghanistan New Beginnings Program (ANBP),
sponsored by the Japanese government with contributions from Canada, the USA, the
Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland.

**Type of DDR:**
This is a multiple programme that includes the security sector reform, given that the
disarmament and demobilisation of militia members is to a great extent connected with the
setting up of government armed forces during the transition period and political reform. It should
be pointed out that it is taking place against a background of wide-ranging reconstruction in the
country, and that the programme covers a wide variety of different players and a huge number
of child soldiers.

**Basic principles:**
Demobilise the largest possible number of the 100,000 militia members still estimated to be
active around the country. The programme includes the collection of small arms and heavy
artillery and the restructuring of the security sector.

**Enforcing bodies:**
The UNDP, through its regional office. The programme is administered by the Afghanistan
New Beginnings Program (ANBP), a body created in October 2003 by the Afghan government
and the United Nations and allocated an initial operational budget of 41 million dollars. The
ANBP is supported by the Disarmament Commission and the Demobilisation and Reintegration
Commission, and it also coordinates the actions of the Defence Ministry. The ANBP has a
central office in Kabul along with 8 regional offices and is expected to be operational until June
2006.

The ANBP has 8 Mobile Disarmament Units (MDU) at its eight regional offices. It also engages
Implementation Partners (IP), which include both Afghan and international NGOs, who aid
recruitment to the programme with funds from the UNDP.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Body</th>
<th>Defence Ministry Operational Groups</th>
<th>Regional Verification Committees (RVC)</th>
<th>8 Mobile Disarmament Units (MDU)</th>
<th>Regional Offices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duties</td>
<td>Selection of individuals and units in each region</td>
<td>Verification</td>
<td>Disarmament</td>
<td>Demobilisation Reintegration</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Groups to be demobilised:
Initially, the programme was intended to cover the demobilisation of 100,000 combatants from the various militias, many of whom had already joined the Afghan Military Forces (AMF), though this figure has now been reduced to a maximum of 63,000.

Vulnerable groups:
UNICEF estimates that there may be around 8,000 child soldiers. Between February and December 2004, UNICEF demobilised some 4,000 children, the majority of them aged between 14 and 17. This was accomplished in two stages. The first was a local demobilisation phase implemented by reintegration committees run by community representatives and NGOs with support from UNICEF. Each child received a basic pack (registration, photo, ID card, medical and psychological support, advice on avoiding drugs and HIV/AIDS, health education and choices for reintegration). The beneficiaries of this phase were both former combatants and other children in vulnerable circumstances, and by the middle of November 2005 around 3,000 of them had benefited from the programme. The second phase involves deciding whether these children should enter the school system or begin training for jobs.

The central focus of the programme is to engage with children from the same community in order to engender mutual assistance in the reintegration process. The programme has been allocated a budget of 5.3 million dollars.

Budgets:
Reform of the security system has been financed by dividing up the different duties. Japan is taking care of DDR, the USA and Germany are in charge of police training, the United Kingdom is dealing with the drugs problem, Italy with judicial reform and the USA with reform of the armed forces. During 2004, the USA assigned 287 million dollars to this project, and in 2005 it allocated 400 million to the police training and anti-narcotics programmes.

The first budget allocated to the DDR programme totalled 167 million dollars. When the number of combatants to be demobilised subsequently fell, the final budget was also reduced. A report issued by the Afghan government and dated April 2004 estimated spending would reach 117 million dollars for the three year period between 2005 and 2007 and that a further 100 million dollars would be required for the following three years.

In 2005, the DDR budget was finally set at 174.3 million dollars, representing an average of 2,750$ per demobilised combatant. Of this, 3.2 million dollars was to be channelled through the WFP’s programmes for former combatants. Japan has been far and away the largest donor with a promised contribution of 106.9 million dollars.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DDR donors</th>
<th>Amount paid (millions $)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Japan</td>
<td>106.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USA</td>
<td>24.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>16.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Italy</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Netherlands</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Switzerland</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>174.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

By the end of August 2005, the ANBP had spent 74.5 million dollars on the DDR programme. At the end of the same year, UNDP disbursed 2 additional million dollar for the reintegration support of the former combatants support in the east and south-eastern regions, by distributing agricultural tools and vocational training.
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USAID planned to contribute 30 million dollars to the programme through the UNDP during the course of the 2004 financial year. UNICEF has also received 5.3 million dollars for the DDR of child soldiers, with contributions from the USA (Department of Employment), Sweden (SIDA), Germany, the Japan Ogata Initiative and UNICEF itself.

The programme includes a specific strategy for the commanders of the many militias, aimed at encouraging their participation. As a result, they receive special payments and are included in additional programmes of a social, economic and political nature.

Timetable:
This is a three-year programme which is divided up as follows: one year for the pilot programme, a further year for the central phase (disarmament and demobilisation) and a third year for the reintegration phase. It began on 24 October 2003 with a pilot programme for the disarmament of around a thousand combatants in the northern region of Konduz, and will end in June 2006. The disarmament and demobilisation phase will in turn be divided into four stages:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Troops</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>October 2003 – June 2004</td>
<td>8,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September – October 2004</td>
<td>6,800</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October 2004 – March 2005</td>
<td>29,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March – June 2005</td>
<td>The remainder up to 63,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Following the last stage of this disarmament and demobilisation phase there will be a further year to finalise the reintegration of the last people to be demobilised.

Other issues:

- **Justice:** Although it is not mentioned in the Bonn Agreements, Chapter V indicates that all the Mujahideen, Afghan armed forces and armed groups in the country must submit to the command and control of the Interim Authority and reorganise themselves in accordance with the requirements for the new Afghan armed and security forces. Annex III (point 4) of the Agreements also states that the various participants “urge the United Nations and the international community, in recognition of the heroic role played by the Mujahideen in protecting the independence of Afghanistan and the dignity of its people, to take the necessary measures, in coordination with the Interim Authority, to assist in the reintegration of the Mujahideen into the new Afghan security and armed forces”.

In May 2005, the Head of the Peace and Reconciliation Commission offered an amnesty to all armed opposition groups, including the most wanted Taliban leaders like Mullah M. Omar and the warlord G. Hekmatyar, though this offer did not subsequently lead to anything.

- **Security sector reform:** The programme includes the dismantling of the militias that have come together in the AMF (45,000 troops), and replacing them with the new Afghan National Army (ANA) created in December 2002, with support from the USA, the United Kingdom and France. This army will have a maximum of between 60,000 and 70,000 troops and must contain an equal ethnic mix. By February 2005, the ANA already had 21,000 troops, financed mainly by the USA (364 million dollars in 2004), with salaries (between 50 and 70 dollars a month) well above the level of other public sector employees. The National Police will also be restructured (employing some 62,000 people) and the Ministry of Defence is to undergo reforms.

**DDR STAGES**
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The DDR process is organised at two different levels: one for regular troops and one for commanding officers. The former are provided with a total reintegration package valued at 700$. The latter, particularly a group of 470 generals and 70 colonels, are offered 1,200$. There is a special programme worth 20 million dollars for the highest ranking commanders. In spite of this, many have preferred not to relinquish their illegal activities, which bring them huge benefits.

Disarmament:
This officially ended on 30 June 2005. More than 63,000 former combatants had been disarmed since the beginning of the programme in October 2003, and 36,751 small and medium-sized weapons were collected, along with 11,004 items of heavy artillery. Of these, 14,754 pieces have been handed over for the rearmament of the Afghan defence forces. Since this stage ended, no-one is officially allowed to use or carry arms except for security organisations with authorisation from the Interior Ministry.

Mention should be made of an initiative linked with the disarmament process. Known as APMASD (Anti-Personnel Mine & Ammunition Stockpile Destruction), this provides the government with assistance in collecting and destroying any remaining mines and unexploded munitions, thus ensuring the country's compliance as a party to the Ottawa Treaty on Anti-Personnel Mines. The budget for this initiative is 16 million dollars, which has been donated by Canada. At the end of January there were 879,936 boxed arms and 2,473,116 unboxed.

Demobilisation:
This begins on the day after disarmament and lasts for one day, during which the different Regional Offices offer information and advice on the reintegration stage. Each former combatant is given a package containing clothing, shoes and food, along with a diploma and a medal in recognition of services rendered. This stage officially ended at the beginning of July 2005 with the disarmament and demobilisation of 63,000 former combatants.

Reintegration:
This phase begins two weeks after demobilisation and lasts between two and four months. Participants are given a voucher which is redeemed at the end of three months. The ANBP takes charge of various duties such as professional training, home-building, courses to obtain qualifications, jobs, business training and the grant of micro-credits. At the end of January 2006, there were 60,646 on the reintegration stage, which 50% of them choose agricultural activities, 26% vocational training, 15.5% in micro-enterprise and 3% integrated in the Armed Forces (ANA).

Initially, each demobilised combatant received 200 dollars in two instalments, but after several cases of extortion by some of the militia commanders came to light, the ANBP stopped these payments and replaced them with daily payments of 3 or 4 dollars for the reintegration period (between 180 and 480 dollars per person). This amount was added to the salary of those who joined the new armed forces (ANA).

EVALUATION OF THE DDR PROCESS

Though progress was slow during the first year, due to the lack of trust and internal conflicts between militias from different ethnic backgrounds, a total of 63,000 former combatants had joined the programme by the beginning of July 2005, of which 53,000 had entered the reintegration stage. The majority formed part of the AMF. The average age was 27 and 11% were officers (with an average age of 37).

At the same time, 47,000 weapons of all kinds had been handed in, of which 11,004 were heavy armour (including tanks and artillery). More than 2.5 million rounds of heavy munitions (weighing 3,000 tonnes) were collected, along with 73 million rounds of ammunition of all kinds. The heavy weaponry has been stored in the capital under the care of the Canadians.
UNAMA announced that, following the end of the disarmament and demobilisation stages, the reintegration stage for former combatants is expected to last for approximately one year more. For its part, UNICEF announced the beginning of the demobilisation of around 4,000 child soldiers in the west of the country.

Once the DDR programme had been officially completed (under the official auspices of the ANBP) it became the DIAG (Disbandment of Illegal Armed Groups). The aim of this new initiative, which is supported by the ISAF, is to dismantle the 1,800 identified armed groups that include some 120,000 individuals and are causing serious security problems in many parts of the country. This programme will include the creation of a Code of Conduct on the possession of weapons. It should be mentioned that, to date, more than 15,000 arms (both small arms and heavy armour) have been collected under this programme, along with more than 23,000 cases of ammunition. This program is fund by the Government of Canada, with 6.9 million dollar, and Japan with 15 million dollar.

Some of these armed groups are linked with drug-trafficking, while others obtain financing through imposing illegal taxes in the areas they control. The government is implementing two pilot negotiating projects with the local leaders of these groups. For this it has the support of UNAMA and the international military force, as well as the ISAF’s Provincial Reconstruction Teams, which identify local needs and requirements. The UNDP finances these projects with funds from the United Kingdom and Canada, with a budget of 8.5 million dollars.

At the beginning of 2006, ANBP, UNAMA and local police, continued with the armed groups armament collection (DIAG), that had reached 17,000 arms since June, as well as 95,000 rounds of ammunition, and the support of several warlords.

ASPECTS TO BE EXAMINED

Planning:
- Refusal by many militia commanders to submit to the process. It is estimated that some 850 groups, totalling 65,000 militia forces, have not participated in the process.
- Evidence that several “warlords” who participated in the DDR process have retained weapons for their own purposes and continue to control the drugs trade, in spite of the preferential treatment they have received.
- Exaggeration of the number of troops declared by the militia leaders, in order to obtain more financial resources.
- Extortion by several leaders from combatants under their command.
- A considerable number of former combatants appear to have been forced to participate in these programmes.
- Little emphasis on the collection of small arms. Handover of very old weapons and collective rather than individual armaments.

Financing:
- Delay in making payments.
- Failure to collect the funds promised.
- Presence of drug-trafficking.
- Difficulties in reintegration due to the country’s almost non-existence economic growth. Furthermore, it has been found that in some places too many people are being trained for the same jobs, meaning that many of the combatants who have signed up to the programme are having to migrate in order to have a greater chance of finding work.

Other aspects:
- The new police force is more interested in protecting the state than the civilian population.
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- The dividing-up of duties in the reform of the security system has led to a certain lack of coordination.
- Disagreement between the USA and UNAMA regarding the former’s low level of involvement in the DDR process.
- Impunity of the so-called “warlords” and assistance for combatants linked with illegal activities.
- Insufficient attention paid to women.
- Use of combatants by private security companies.

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