

## CHAPTER 4

# DD&R IN ANGOLA: THE CURRENT STATE OF PLAY

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### **The Memorandum of Understanding**

National ownership of the DDR process is very high. The Luena peace process is home-grown, resulting from a Government military victory over UNITA. Disarmament and demobilization have proceeded entirely under Government control, with relative success to date.<sup>55</sup>

The signature on 4 April 2002 of a 'Memorandum of Understanding for the Cessation of Hostilities and the Resolution of the Outstanding Military Issues Under the Lusaka Protocol' between the military leaders of the FAA and UNITA put a definite end to Angola's protracted civil war. To be sure, the circumstances surrounding the signature of this memorandum, including the death in combat of UNITA's leader Jonas Savimbi in February and this movement's impending military defeat after more than three years of unstoppable FAA advances, are at the core of explaining the end of Angola's war. As we have pointed out elsewhere, 'the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) undeniable victory over a severely weakened UNITA must be considered central to this conflict's ripeness for resolution'.<sup>56</sup> And this, more than any other factors, helps explain the pace at which the belligerents agreed on a comprehensive cease-fire agreement as well as their unhindered political will demonstrated in the resurrection and completion of the Lusaka peace process.

In this sense, although sometimes mistaken for a *new* peace accord for Angola, the 'Memorandum of Understanding' merely continued the Lusaka peace process, replacing annexes 3 and 4 of the Lusaka Protocol, which remained the accepted and legitimate framework for peace in Angola.<sup>57</sup> The 'Memorandum of Understanding' regulated and updated the military components of the Lusaka Protocol, governing the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration of UNITA troops as well as concluding the integration of the armed forces.<sup>58</sup> Some of its provisions necessarily and inevitably reflect the fact that this was a 'home-grown' initiative, the result of a military victory and a product of intensive negotiations between the military leaders of the FAA and UNITA in the eastern Moxico town of Luena. This is its major distinction

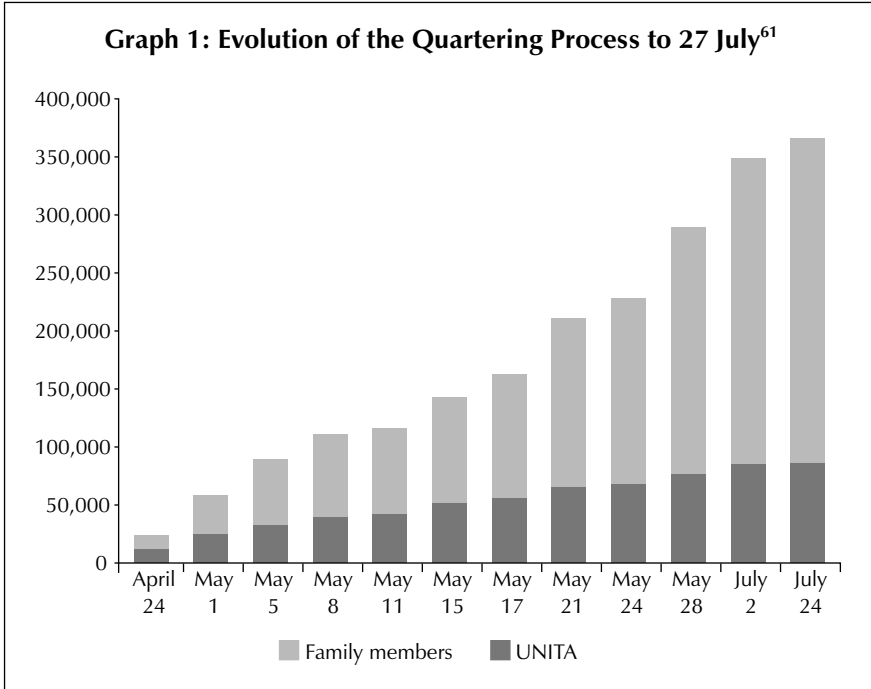
from previous DDR processes, and must not be underestimated. A further reflection of this lies in the reduced role of the international community in the process. There was no provision for formal third-party monitoring, although the Troika (Portugal, Russia and the United States) and the United Nations were invited as observers.<sup>59</sup> Two institutional structures were created to oversee the coordination and management of this process. The first, the Joint Military Commission (JMC), was composed of the chiefs of staff of the two belligerents and 11 military observers from the United Nations and presided by a military representative of the government. It bore responsibility for promoting and overseeing the application of the 'Memorandum of Understanding'. A Technical Group (TG) was also created with the responsibility to assist the JMC in the performance of its duties, including the drawing up of detailed timetables and definition of specific activities to be carried out to guarantee the application of the provisions of the 'Memorandum of Understanding'

The government of Angola, through the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA), assumed the management and financing of this process in the Joint Military Commission, concerned by the need to secure its military advantage and the maintenance of the cease-fire as well as its expressed wish to proceed with the disengagement, quartering and conclusion of the demilitarisation of UNITA's military forces as rapidly as possible.

## **Quartering of UNITA combatants and families**

The quartering, demilitarisation and demobilisation process of UNITA began immediately following the signature of the 'Memorandum of Understanding' on 4 April. However, while the Memorandum of Understanding planned 80 days for the completion of the quartering, disarmament and demobilisation of 50,000 UNITA soldiers in 27 quartering areas, no one, including UNITA's Management Commission, anticipated the number of soldiers and family members that presented themselves in the quartering and adjacent family reception areas.<sup>60</sup>

In fact, on 27 July, a total of 85,585 UNITA soldiers were quartered in 35 quartering areas and approximately 280,261 family members were gathered in family reception areas in 16 Angolan Provinces. These quartering and family areas were headed by a representative of the FAA, with day to day management of the camp assumed by UNITA. The exponential growth in the number of UNITA soldiers and family members can be seen in the graph and table below.



Although positively interpreted as evidence of UNITA's political will to comply with the provisions of the 'Memorandum of Understanding', the unforeseen growth in the numbers of UNITA soldiers and their family members gathered in quartering and family reception areas created serious logistical problems for which the government and humanitarian partners were unprepared. This led to concerns that localised criminal activity would increase, unless assistance to the quartering and family reception areas was substantially enhanced. Jaka Jamba, UNITA member of Parliament observed at the time that 'it is the government that is in charge of the logistics, because with the speed that they want us to implement the agreement, if they don't provide the means – the necessary logistics to cover 50,000 military personnel and 300,000 relatives – the people will leave and start to go to the villages'.<sup>62</sup> The table below, based on press statements by the Joint Military Commission, clearly shows the growth in the number of UNITA combatants and their family members that constitute the focus of the current demobilisation and reintegration effort. In addition, as of February 2003, the estimated number of UNITA family members in family reception areas had reached a staggering 350,000 raising the combined number of ex-combatants and family members to approximately 435,000.<sup>63</sup>

| <b>Table 1: Evolution of the Quartering Process to 27 July<sup>64</sup></b> |                     |                   |                   |                   |                   |                    |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
|   | <b>24<br/>April</b> | <b>1<br/>May</b>  | <b>5<br/>May</b>  | <b>8<br/>May</b>  | <b>11<br/>May</b> | <b>15<br/>May</b>  |
| UNITA<br>Soldiers   | 11,868              | 24,553            | 32,208            | 39,250            | 42,153            | 51,354             |
| Family<br>Members   | 12,202              | 33,697            | 57,073            | 71,575            | 73,800            | 91,234             |
| Total   | 24,070              | 58,250            | 89,281            | 110,825           | 115,953           | 142,588            |
|   | <b>17<br/>May</b>   | <b>21<br/>May</b> | <b>24<br/>May</b> | <b>28<br/>May</b> | <b>2<br/>July</b> | <b>27<br/>July</b> |
| UNITA<br>Soldiers   | 55,618              | 65,343            | 67,967            | 76,654            | 84,618            | 85,585             |
| Family<br>Members   | 106,763             | 145,819           | 159,659           | 212,881           | 264,225           | 280,261            |
| Total   | 162,381             | 211,162           | 227,626           | 289,535           | 348,843           | 365,846            |

At the end of May, the initial 27 quartering areas had been expanded to 35, with seven satellites, and although the movement of UNITA soldiers to quartering areas was expected to end on 7 June, it continued into July and August. Nevertheless, on 21 June, while combatants were still making their way to the quartering areas, a spokesman for the Joint Military Commission announced that the task of assembling and disarming Angola's former rebels had been completed at a cost of \$44 million entirely financed by the government of Angola.

## **The Humanitarian situation**

The levels of malnutrition and disease evidenced by a vast number of UNITA soldiers and their family members arriving at quartering and gathering locations contributed to a dire humanitarian situation, recognised by the Joint Military Commission during May 2002 as well as by several humanitarian agencies present on the ground.<sup>65</sup> Malnutrition rates were initially very high, with mortality rates well above emergency thresholds and in some places a famine situation.<sup>66</sup> The United Nations and other NGOs have been accused of being slow to react (famously by Medecins Sans Frontieres), as OCHA insisted on first securing government permission to enter the quartering areas. This may reflect

in part at least the government's reluctance to significantly involve the UN in the process after the experience of Lusaka. On the other hand, the remoteness and inaccessibility of a large number of these quartering locations may partially explain the difficulties involved in tackling the critical situation described.

Responsibility for assistance to ex-combatants was firmly the responsibility of the FAA, while family members could be supported by NGOs and humanitarian agencies. The World Food Programme has taken the lead in providing food aid, while other international and local NGOs have been active in distribution of food, non-food items, seeds and tools, family tracing and reunification and so on. Conditions have generally now stabilised, resulting in the closure of therapeutic feeding centres and the withdrawal of many NGOs. The situation with regard to access has only worsened, however, as the rainy season has set in, with many quartering areas (since the disbandment of UNITA called gathering areas) difficult to access and at least one, Sambo in Huambo Province, cut off from assistance due to a serious landmine incident. WFP continues to distribute food aid to populations in the gathering areas, as does the Government. Seeds and tools have also been provided, although following a lengthy debate between agencies as to the potential political and social effects of this. It was feared that this may result in the creation of permanent 'UNITA settlements', in a situation where conflicts have already been reported between ex-combatants and surrounding communities.

## **Demobilisation and integration of ex-UNITA into FAA**

Although the quartering process was still ongoing, albeit slowly, the Joint Military Commission made public on 11 July that the demobilisation of 84,000 ex-soldiers would begin in earnest on 20 July, when a number of UNITA soldiers (approximately 5,000) would be integrated into the FAA and the National Police in accordance with a selection process that had been initiated on 15 July.

The Joint Military Commission went ahead with the integration of the agreed UNITA contingent into the FAA while the conclusion of the demobilisation stalled, leading Presidential spokesman Victor Carvalho to announce that demobilisation had been 'postponed sine die' and that technical teams were being sent to the quartering areas to assess the situation. Yet, less than two weeks later, on 2 August 2002, the Joint Military Commission announced that the demobilisation and demilitarisation process was complete and that UNITA military forces had ceased to exist, having been administratively absorbed into

the Angolan Armed Forces (FAA) only awaiting reintegration. At an official ceremony to mark the extinction of UNITA armed forces, government and UNITA officials announced the formal end of rebellion, and Defence Minister General Kundi Pahyama observed that 'from now on, the conditions have come together for stability in Angola'.

However, eye-witness accounts have pointed out that the demobilisation process was far from complete at this date and that in fact, quartering areas exhibited contrasting degrees of logistical capability for the collection of personal identification information as well as for the registration and verification of weapons, actions at the root of any demobilisation process. In this regard, the World Bank led mission to Angola during August 2002 observed that the FAA had just initiated registration of ex-combatants and had begun the process of taking photographs for military ID cards, while the collection of socio-economic data in 24 of 35 quartering areas had also been initiated. The mission also confirmed that information on demobilisation was being entered into a pre-existing database (dating from post-Lusaka) and that the data was being analysed for reintegration planning.<sup>67</sup> Even in January 2003 not all ex-combatants had received all their demobilisation documentation, after the official closure date for the Gathering Areas, which the government had set for 31 December 2002.

## Disarmament

A similar picture characterised the disarmament of the FMU, which can partially be seen in the table below. As pointed out by the World Bank,

International observers from the Troika indicated relative satisfaction with disarmament of FMU. In total some 30,000 small arms were collected – proportionate, according to some observers, to actual number of active FMU at the time of the cease-fire agreement. Troika also reported that FMU has cooperated in identifying large weapons caches which in some instances have been destroyed in situ. Verification of disarmament activities has been undertaken to the extent possible although UN military observers have had a very limited role in the verification to date.<sup>68</sup>

Yet, a UK Department for International Development (DFID) technical assistance mission report points out that although the overall man to weapon ratio was considered satisfactory, 'given the strong command and control structures

**Table 2: Disarmament of UNITA, Weapons handed over as of 22 May<sup>69</sup>**

| <b>Province</b> | <b>Number of quartering areas</b> | <b>Arms</b>   |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|---------------|
| Uige            | 2                                 | 2,479         |
| Zaire           | 1                                 | 312           |
| Bengo           | 2                                 | 754           |
| Kuanza-Norte    | 1                                 | 966           |
| Malange         | 2                                 | 1,327         |
| Lunda Norte     | 2                                 | 1,212         |
| Lunda Sul       | 2                                 | 614           |
| Moxico          | 3                                 | 728           |
| Huambo          | 5                                 | 4,448         |
| Bie             | 3                                 | 1,727         |
| Benguela        | 5                                 | 4,697         |
| Kuanza Sul      | 2                                 | 2,066         |
| Huila           | 1                                 | 1,642         |
| Kunene          | 1                                 | 217           |
| Kuando Kubango  | 3                                 | 1,988         |
| <b>Totals</b>   | <b>35</b>                         | <b>23,450</b> |

within UNITA/FMU, which had submitted itself by units as opposed to individuals, there would be a need at some point to review rations as well as the quality of weapons submitted. There is a possibility that not all weapons were collected from the combatants with many weapons in the civilian population'.<sup>70</sup> This is an issue that warrants further research, partly because DD&R processes are usually not sufficient to reduce the number of arms in circulation in post-conflict environments, and partly because they often do not deal with arms in the hands of civilian populations. Interviews conducted in Luanda during February 2003 revealed that close to 90% of UNITA's weapons had in fact been submitted during the DD&R process, while the remaining 10% are thought to be in the hands of civilians and small groups that are increasingly turning to crime (in particular illegal alluvial diamond exploration).

The issue of weapons in the possession of civilians presents perhaps the most pressing security threat in the short to medium term as regards the sustainability of the peace process. Rough estimates point to between 3 and 4 million small arms and light weapons in the hands of civilians throughout the country. The Angolan National Police (PNA) and the FAA have expressed concern that such weapons might jeopardise stability in the country and compromise development at local and Provincial level. Reflecting on this issue in other contexts, Kees Kingma has correctly point out, that 'a direct link between [the] demobilisations and the potential for future conflict at various levels exists through the availability of small arms and light weapons'.<sup>71</sup> The economic and security value attached to weapons in the hands of former combatants and civilians in the context of deprivation that characterises Angola must therefore be taken into account if effective alternative arms control measures are to be implemented. As Berdal points out, 'disarmament and weapons-control measures have limited value unless those that are being disarmed are reasonably satisfied with the security and economic incentives offered in return'.<sup>72</sup>

As to the breakdown of figures, table three indicates that slightly over one of every four interviewees (in a sample of 30,000 ex-combatants) delivered a personal weapon or military hardware. The most common weapons collected were AK-47 and AKM assault weapons, with few AK-74 and AKCs. No record was made in the registration forms about collected ammunition or other heavy military equipment.

## **Return and reintegration**

The demobilisation and demilitarisation of ex-combatants has been largely ad-hoc in nature, a result of the scale and complexity of the operation as well as the government's announced priority of closing all quartering areas as rapidly as possible. Of the 35 gathering areas scattered in 16 provinces, however, only 5 have been closed as of 18 February 2003 (Malonge and Passe in Benguela Province; Ionde in Cunene Province; Amboiva in Kwanza Sul Province and Mimbotá in Buengo Province). This uncertainty has had a negative effect on ex-combatants morale, as well as, in some locations at least, preventing them from beginning agricultural activity which they could by now have harvested, had they known the real length of time they would be forced to stay in the gathering areas. In December 2002 OCHA reported that a combined total of approximately 45,360 ex-combatants and families were relocated from gathering areas during November and December 2002, and a further 3,700 spontaneously returned.<sup>74</sup> Two months later, in February 2003, the Minister of

**Table 3: Types of Weapons Delivered  
(Sample of 30,000 out of 85,500 ex-combatants<sup>73</sup>)**

| <b>Weapon</b>   | <b>Frequency</b> | <b>Percent</b> | <b>Valid percent</b> |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------|----------------------|
| AK-47           | 4 626            | 15.3           | 55.5                 |
| AKM             | 2 773            | 9.1            | 33.3                 |
| AK-74           | 268              | .9             | 3.2                  |
| AKC             | 195              | .6             | 2.3                  |
| PKM             | 120              | .4             | 1.4                  |
| AGS-17          | 79               | .3             | .9                   |
| G-3             | 40               | .1             | .5                   |
| SU              | 32               | .1             | .4                   |
| DCHK            | 25               | .1             | .3                   |
| RPK/RPD         | 25               | .1             | .3                   |
| RPG-7           | 24               | .1             | .3                   |
| L Granada       | 22               | .1             | .3                   |
| Pistola         | 18               | .1             | .2                   |
| GP-25           | 14               | .0             | .2                   |
| M-79            | 10               | .0             | .1                   |
| M 200           | 9                | .0             | .1                   |
| Missil          | 9                | .0             | .1                   |
| M-16            | 7                | .0             | .1                   |
| R 5             | 7                | .0             | .1                   |
| R 4             | 6                | .0             | .1                   |
| FN              | 5                | .0             | .1                   |
| SPG-9           | 5                | .0             | .1                   |
| Mauser Carab    | 4                | .0             | .0                   |
| RPG-22          | 3                | .0             | .0                   |
| SVD             | 3                | .0             | .0                   |
| MR              | 2                | .0             | .0                   |
| FDP             | 1                | .0             | .0                   |
| Sterling        | 1                | .0             | .0                   |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>8 333</b>     | <b>27.5</b>    | <b>100.0</b>         |
| Missing/None/NA | 21 976           | 72.5           |                      |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>30 309</b>    | <b>100.0</b>   |                      |

Assistance and Social Reintegration, Joao Baptista Kussumua, declared that 22,643 ex-combatants and 70,694 UNITA family members had been resettled and returned.<sup>75</sup>

As a consequence, there are still 30 gathering areas, with only slightly more than 20% of the estimated total either resettled or moved to transit camps. In addition, as of end of January 2003, it is estimated that close to 80% of all ex-combatants have received demobilisation documents and have been paid 5 months of salary by the Angolan Armed Forces. In this respect, Joao Baptista Kussumua has said that the 5 month salary component was paid to 71,434 ex-combatants at a total cost of approximately \$26 million, while 9,500 ex-combatants are still to receive this payment.<sup>76</sup> The result of this, however, was a 'consumer boom' in the gathering areas, with prices in markets leaping and ex-combatants celebrating by buying alcohol and goods such as radios.

As to the delivery of resettlement support kits, the coming of the rainy season made the distribution of these kits very difficult and only a few ex-combatants have received them. According to IRIN problems also occurred in procurement, as the Presidential associate contracted was unable to complete the work, and the job has now been re-allocated. Distribution of contingency money has also not yet taken place and will not be done until international support is approved.

The future of social and economic reintegration and of reconciliation with communities is as yet impossible to predict as very few ex-combatants have as yet returned home, those who have being primarily women family members.