

## Introduction

Introducing Defence Integration Debates in the DRC Peace Process  
Experts Workshop Report

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Given the history of the Congolese military and security forces, demobilisation and disarmament and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants into civilian life approach to peacebuilding would be appropriate policy recommendation for the security sector reform (SSR) in the post-war Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Instead, DDR is not a priority in the Congolese peace process. Peace negotiators opted for defence integration as a peacebuilding priority. Defence Integration consists of integrating the different warring factions into one single national army before adopting a constructive peaceful DDR. This priority sequencing is rather political than military. Of course, the country urgently needs to equip itself with a professional, competent and credible defence force. But like in many other African countries, defence integration here seems to be a short run political measure that ends violence and hostilities between warring factions and buys time and space for political settlement. The strategy creates a space for democratisation of state institutions to which defence and security forces belong. The Congolese Peace process is better understood as an effort of rebuilding the State starting from the rehabilitation of the public sector. As a component of public sector reform (PSR), security sector reform (SSR) involves defence integration process, DDR, police development etc. The problem is that the process is not systematised. Priorities are implemented according to availability and affordability of funds, not according to the need for equipping the DRC with a professional and credible military and police force that should respond to urgent tasks of securing violent zones in the eastern provinces - the Kivu and Ituri areas, and disarming armed groups.

As a result, the country tends to develop its military capabilities in the marginal of the peace process. For instance, the transitional government just deployed over 15000 troops in the Kivu area following the resumption of violence and fighting in the Bukavu in April 2004. Various sources including local civil society, the UN and EU fact finding reports evidenced the involvement of Rwandan forces in support of General Nkunda and Butebusi's Banyamulenge rebel groups. Over 250 civilians were killed, 200 women and girls raped and estimated US\$ 7 million

worth properties were looted and destroyed. Thousands of Banyamulenge (Congolese Tutsis) are displaced as refugees in Rwanda and Burundi. The situation has exacerbated by the massacre of about 200 Banyamulenge refugees including women and children in Gatumba Burundi. Although Burundian rebels claimed the responsibility, the Gatumba tragedy occasioned inter-state and socioethnic tensions between Burundi, Congo and Rwanda. It also triggered re-armament of states and militia in the DRC security complex and the Great Lakes region. The DRC government's ability to deploy and equip 15000 troops so rapidly clearly indicates that the country possesses substantial defence capabilities.

In fact, military recruitment and training never stopped in Congo. The country has to integrate about 300,000 trained and experienced soldiers and fighters. 2/4 of the 300,000 combatants belong to former Mobutu's Forces Armees Zairoises (FAZ) trained by American, French, Belgian, Israeli, Koreans. About 50,000 are remnants of former Laurent Kabila's AFDL army trained by Rwandan, Ugandan, Tanzanian, Chinese, Zimbabwean, and Angolan defense experts. The remaining bulk belongs to the Mai-Mai militia groups, informally trained on combat fields by various rebel officers belonging to foreign rebel and military groups. Actually, it may be correct to assume that excess in disorganised military capabilities constitutes the major threat to the peace process and the major challenge to the integration process.

In reality, the big problem has been the misuse and/or abuse of the military and police by political and ethnic leaders. Defence integration should thus respond to the need to reduce risks of abuses and privatisation of security, the need to build up a representative national army, and the need to bring about democratic control over the military. This is actually justified by the history of democracy in the DRC. The democratisation movement was triggered by A.A.J. Van Bilsen's "thirty-year plan for the political emancipation of the Belgian Africa" in 1955 (in Flemish) and 1956 (French translation) (in Nzongola-Ntalaja, (2002:82). The rejection of the Bilsen plan geared the democratisation campaign towards a mere political demand for immediate transfer of power from white to black ruling civilian elites.

This movement ignored the political and security role played by the colonial Congolese army known as the Force Publique. Defence issues became a concern on 4 July 1960 when the military of the Force Publique reacted against their Belgian commander's subversive declaration. Inciting the Congolese troops and non-commissioned officers to rebel against Lumumba's government, general Emile Janssens declared: "before independence equals after independence for the men in uniform". This declaration inaugurated the CMR crisis between the new political authorities and the military of the Force Publique five days after Independence Day. About 1,000 Belgian military officers left the country with many other white Europeans. The European population was of 110,000 on the eve of independence

including 10,000 civil servants, 1,000 military officers, 6,000 catholic missionaries and several thousand managers of colonial corporations (Young C., 1998). Public service administration and the military command structure collapsed.

Non-commissioned officers formed the new military elite class. Like the civilian counterparts, military leaders started fighting each other for General Janssens position and the many other higher posts in the command structure. The soldiers mutinied in support of either leader on ethnic basis. Tribalism replaced professionalism throughout this process of immediate Africanisation of all officer appointments. To Lumumba and other politicians' call for military professionalism, soldiers responded with irony: "If higher studies are required for promotions, what higher studies have you done to become what you are now?" (in Nzongola-Ntajala G., 2003:2003). Disappointed, Lumumba co-opted from civil life his secretary, a former corporal, Joseph Mobutu and promoted him to the rank of lieutenant colonel and chief of staff. This appointment phased out the leopoldian and colonial army, the Force Publique. The Force Publique was replaced by the Arme'e Nationale Congolaise (ANC) without proper transition, clear mandate-mission, relevant doctrine or policy. While top military commanders joined the civilian authorities in the struggle for political positioning, the troops continued exerting their colonial roles among the population.

President Kassavubu and Prime Minister Lumumba attempted to gain control over the military after Belgian officers left following the mutiny and revolt against Belgian officership. But their efforts rather created conflict over their respective role. As the head of state and with reference to the presidential system, Kassavubu thought that he was the commander in chief of the armed forces. With the support of Parliament, Lumumba, the head of government and defence minister, considered himself to be the commander in chief. As we mentioned early, substituting General Janssens, the chief commander of the Force Publique was the most critical problem. Joseph Mobutu, the chief of defence staff, took advantage of his position and connection with the Belgian and American intelligence to pursue his political ambitions.

In brief the crisis in post-independence defence integration thus started from immediately after Independence Day. The crisis was characterised by the lack of constitutional provisions and appropriate strategies for effective democratic control over post-independence national security challenges.

Throughout his rule, Mobutu faced two main challenges for defence integration. First, efforts to professionalize the Congolese armed forces were hampered by higher demand for ethnic and regional representativity. Political conflicts of the 1960s were too ethnical and secessionist. As a result, all geopolitical entities

wanted to establish their own protection mechanisms. This trend occasioned secessionist movements in Katanga and Kasai and rebel organisations in central, eastern and northern provinces. Mobutu's attempt to democratise his regime in 1990s was justified by the ethnic security dilemma which Suberu (2000) describes in these terms: "The major institutional mechanisms for containing ethno-political conflicts range from repressive and/or counter-productive solutions such as extermination, expulsion, subjection (control), assimilation and integration to such relatively more creative and effective techniques as democracy, autonomy, proportionality, minority rights, and the broad ethos and values of multiculturalism"(2000:130). Second, the need to modernise the army and police forces failed to materialise because of financial and economic constraints. In the 1970s it became evident that economic performance was unable to support adequately post-independence development and security challenges. The government opted for disarmament and security sector reform. Procurement of new military equipment was halted. The police and gendarmerie integrated the army. But following two attacks by Katangese rebels, Mobutu organised and equipped his own presidential force, appointed his friends and relatives to key command and control posts in the army, police and intelligence. Most officers and soldiers got involved into informal and, even illegal, businesses in order to complement their meagre salaries.

Most military officers were co-opted into partisan politics. They used their positions to reward themselves through kleptocratic practices. Military professionalism was slowly replaced by clientelism within the defence and security sector for non-economic gains such as promotion, and outside the sector for lucrative activities such as rent-seeking behaviours, bribery, and business patronage for public tenders etc. To access public tenders, high income posts in the economy, one needed to be introduced by highly-ranked officers and officials especially the members of the association "Compagnons de la Revolution". Even the Compagnons became obsolete at the end. The national defence and security system became the arena of a small clique of few generals that owe more to links of marriage, friendship and family with the president than professional experience: General Nzimbi Ngbale (Special Presidential Division), Baramoto Kpama Kata (Garde Civile), General Eluki Monga, and Admiral Mavua Mudima. These strong men had their hands in every financial scam including the selling off of the national armoury - fleet of Mirage fighter jets, even the president's helicopter fleet. They even sold weapons to AFDL insurgents despite clear signs of looming war against the same insurgents. They wrested control of the intelligence services in 1990 to only feed the president with misleading data about conditions on the borders and troop morale. The system became self-destructive as Michela Wrong rightly observes. Wrong contends, "The anarchy Mobutu had nurtured in self-protection had reached a point where it risked bringing the whole regime crashing down... Instead of reigning in the generals, he doled out promotions.

Rather than discipline the mutinous troops, he granted salary increases - a fairly pointless exercise given that few ever saw their full pay packets"(Wrong M., 200: 254). Mobutu military regime collapsed in 1997 to Laurent Kabila's AFDL forces. FAZ was in scrambles, completely disintegrated. The state was no longer fulfilling the role of protector of life; even such basic functions as law and order have in the 1980s been communalized in the sense that local vigilante groups emerged in many places to carry out the tasks that in a functioning state belong to the police and other relevant security organs.

In brief, the Mobutu regime finally spent all its time performing survival tasks rather than contributing to improve the entire community system including the modernisation of the security forces. At that time, the Forces Armees Zairoises (FAZ) faced a serious integration problem. The problem was about government's inability to utilise a plethora of personnel of soldiers, special forces, junior and senior officers who were trained in the World's best military academies and by best military trainers from USA, France, Israel, Belgium, China, South Korea. Congo never recovered from governance deficits from Independence day to the current transitional government arrangement. The ruling elites continue to be concerned about their own political survival and capital accumulation rather establishing a functional state system with productive governance structures at central and local authority levels. Governing actual security forces is part of that governance strategy. Actual security forces include state, non-state and foreign forces that are likely to disrupt an established democratic governance system with its service delivery institutions. Currently there is a plethora of trained soldiers and officers suffering from disorganisation, low morale, lack of adequate equipment and non-payment of wages. This evidences a serious governance problem.

Defence integration in Congo is better understood within the framework of peace building from diminished state capabilities. The phenomenon of state collapse reflects the disintegration of structure, legitimate authority, law and political order within the confines of the state where various rivals vie with each other and with attempts to re-establish central authority (Cornwell, 1999:62). Current peacebuilding efforts to form a national army and police force should take into account the pressing need for effective management and control of marginalised professional soldiers, rebel combatants, active freedom fighters etc.

## **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

In consultation with the Chairperson of the SADC Organ for politics, defence and security cooperation, the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) a regional think tank based in South Africa engaged in research on human security in Sub-Saharan Africa through applied policy research and facilitation and Labor Optimus, the Centre for Strategic Studies of Central Africa, a civil society organization based in

Kinshasa and the initiated a South African Development Community (SADC) solidarity visit to DRC. This workshop had three objectives. First, the meeting intended to sensitise Congolese transitional government about the need to utilise available regional mechanisms such as the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation (OPDSC). Through SADC Organ, the DRC government received robust military support from Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe. It is worthy noting that the Lusaka Peace Agreement was also generated through SADC conflict resolution mechanisms. The peace process involves the Inter-Congolese Dialogue and the formation of the transitional government of national unity. South African Government provided substantial support for the implementation of these diplomatic arrangements. The second goal consisted of enabling SADC defence experts to share their personal and country's experiences regarding post-war defence integration. As a matter of fact, the DRC may learn a lot from the region's rich experiences. Angola, Mozambique, Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe are all good cases of post-conflict defence integration in a typical African context. Each case might be unique but the DRC may learn a lot from the integration processes. Thirdly, the workshop provided the opportunity for SADC and the DRC to consolidate their cooperation. In fact, the DRC participation into SADC activities has been passive. Yet, the country signed a defence pact with Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe. Interestingly, post-workshop period witnessed the signing of defence pact between South Africa and the DRC. Besides, the country just intensified its participation into SADC activities including the payment of overdue arrears. It seems that the workshop has impacted on South African and Congolese security authority and the SADC Organ for Politics, Defence and Security Cooperation as well.

The Institute for Security Studies (ISS) in Pretoria felt that the time was ripe for sensitizing both SADC and DRC defence policy makers to take stock of the peace process that they have proudly generated. As Ambassador Swing rightly contends, "I wish to underline that the transition process in the DRC is quintessentially an African process. The milestones that have brought us to where we are today, are African milestones, such as the Lusaka Agreement, the Luanda Agreement, the Pretoria Accords, and the Sun City Resolutions"(2004: preface). Swing elaborates on the major challenges concerning the new integrated armed forces and police in the following terms: reunifying the country, establishing an integrated police unit for the capital city Kinshasa; political commitment by politicians to responsible government starting from politicians' determination to resolve disagreements over the prerogatives of key ministries (defence, foreign affairs, infrastructure, mines and telecommunications), initiating the process of national reconstruction, and preparing the ground for the holding of two free and fair elections keeping in mind that it is not the voting alone that is democracy but also the preparation and the counting (Swing W.L., 2004).

To Swing's list, competent parliamentary oversight of the security sector must be

added since parliament in any real democracy is entrusted with reviewing and monitoring the executive. The security sector is a highly complex field in which parliaments have to oversee issues such as weapons procurement, arms control and the readiness or preparedness of military units. The objection to this democratic rule would be the DRC security dilemma: the country is in and at war. Risks of the peace process collapsing are higher given the level of its acute political, economic, social and infrastructural vulnerabilities to internal and external attacks/threats. However this limitation may be overcome if and only if the current SSR involves regional and international security arrangements through collective and cooperative defence and security protocols or alliances. Joining relevant/efficient security/defence cooperation organisation will have a strong impact on the DRC security situation. In principle, such cooperation enhances national security as it ensures a collective fist against threats (Born H and Fluri P and Johnson AB, 2003:17). The DRC has joined some vital collective defence organisations including the SADC Defence Pact. The remaining challenge is to increase the country's economic capacity to afford the cost of such military alliances without undermining the much needed effort for socioeconomic and political development.

Without proper foreign long-term financial and technical support for the ongoing SSR, the Congolese military risks to continue financing itself through nonconventional mechanisms. In fact, armed forces throughout the world relied on revenue generated from all kinds of economic activity, both legal and illegal, to supplement state funding... the idea that armed forces should be supported from public funds and controlled by civilian politicians rather than military elites emerged relatively recently and is largely restricted to a comparatively small number of Western states (Brommelhorster J and Paes W-C.,2003: 2, 3). Such a risk would undermine the objectives of the current SSR and peace process and, rather, extend the trend towards counter-productive war economy.

War economy as practised in the DRC security complex has proved to be highly counter-productive – destructive to States practising it. The practice has created a model of illegal and informal regional integration that contravenes all best practices regarding government economic role in creating sound macro-economic environment for business and development sector growth. The consequence is that no single Great Lake State runs budget surpluses. Instead, they all have extremely high levels of corruption, with their firms operating in an illegal and informal environment in which there is less respect for contracts, the rule of law and business ethics. Their private sectors are not only stagnating but unable to enhance technological innovation and boost the capacity of economies to operate effectively in the global economy. The practice of war economy has managed to compromise the quality of public institutions which underpin the development process and the level of technological innovation. The end-state is that

governments are engaged in self-destructive diseconomies, the deep cause of self-sustaining armed conflicts and growth in armed rebellion movement. These diseconomies are even not able to sustain the security and defence sector development. It seems thus evident that long-term sustainability of defence integration should be accompanied with three major reforms: successful security sector reform, successful public service sector reform and successful business and development sector. Excesses from defence integration process should be absorbed by the public service sector starting from the possibility of reinforcing police capacity and other law enforcement bodies. Business and development sector generally known as the private sector and community development sector should be able to absorb excesses from the public sector reform. Effective economic management of this chain of reform processes is vital for peaceful integration of SSR excesses from defence integration and subsequent DDR mechanisms. With reference to South African, Namibian and Zimbabwean experiences, the DRC defence integration needs to take into account the fact that sound public and private sector environment has been the main critical success factor in South African, Namibian and Zimbabwean experiences.

## **LOGISTICS AND FUNCTIONING**

LABOUR OPTIMUS was responsible for organising and coordinating the workshop. Logistics and administration of the Workshop were jointly handled by the ISS and LABOR OPTIMUS. The first day of the workshop was a public holiday being the historical day of May 17th commemorating the capture of Kinshasa by the Alliance of the Democratic Forces for Liberation of Congo (AFDL) led by H.E. L-D Kabila. A number of official ceremonies were organized throughout Kinshasa.

Labor optimus in consultation with the department of defence provided a list of themes to be developed during the workshop. Along with the questions posed by the Vice-Minister for Defence during his presentation, these formed the basis for much of the deliberations.

### **I. ARMED FORCES**

1. Brief history of the Armed Forces of the country
2. The place and constitutional role of the Army
3. Organisation of the present Armed Forces
4. Prerogatives of the Head of State
5. Prerogatives of the Parliament
6. Other mechanisms for the control of the Armed Forces
7. Prerogatives of the Minister of Defence
8. Prerogatives of the Chief of Staff
9. Chain of command and disciplinary processes

10. Relationship between the Army and the Police
11. Place of women in the Armed Forces
12. Protection of political authorities (VIP Protection)

## II. POST-CONFLICT REINTEGRATION OF THE ARMED FORCES

1. Political processes
2. Planning of the military process and effective implementation
3. Integration of the command structures
4. Mechanisms of integration into a single Army
5. Equipment
6. Deployment
7. Policy with regards to war crimes

## III. DDR

1. Legal framework
2. Planning of steps
3. Operationalisation
4. Modalities of civil reinsertion
5. Control of small arms
6. Modalities of the reinsertion of the EAFGA
7. Financial resources and technical support
8. Information and monitoring/evaluation systems

Following deliberations regarding the above proposal, the delegation agreed that the above cannot be tackled at one workshop but would require several workshops. It was therefore decided that, the DRC government would be given a chance to present their case/concerns/views upon which the delegation would establish areas and levels of intervention.

## PARTICIPANTS

The SADC Delegation, coordinated by the ISS, was led by Gen. Fisher and included the following individuals:

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Gen. LM Fisher                   | Chief of the Botswana Defence Force  |
| Brig. Gen. AC Shalumbu           | Namibian Defence Force   |
| Air Commodore MT                 | Karakadzai Deputy Secretary (Policy and Procurement),<br>Ministry of Defence, Zimbabwe |
| Maj. Gen. (ret.) Roland de Vries | Institute for Security Studies (SA)  |
| Antonio Tauzene                  | Desk Officer (DRC, Zambia, Malawi),<br>Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mozambique         |
| Col. (ret) Lazaro S Mathe        | Mozambique Ministry of Defence   |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Lt. Col. Robert Ernesta        | Department of Defence, Seychelles   |
| Roger Kibasomba                | Programme Head, SADC Programme, ISS   |
| Jemima Njeri                   | Civil Society Liaison Officer, ISS  |
| Gina van Schalkwyk             | Senior Researcher, SADC Programme, ISS  |
| Vuyo Mxego                     | Programme Assistant, SADC Programme, ISS  |
| Lt. Col. Gregory Nhamoinesu    | Military Attache, Embassy of Zimbabwe   |
| Rafino Miguel                  | Attache de Defence Adj., Embassy of Angola  |
| Col. Fang XiaoFan              | Military Attache, Embassy of China  |
| Lt. Col. Hassan Yahya Ally     | Military Attache, Tanzanian Embassy   |
| PH Macaba                      | Counseiller, V-Presidence/CPDS  |
| Lofembe Ekofo                  | Counseiller au Service du Conseiller Special<br>du Chef de l'Etat en Matiere de Securite,<br>Presidence de la Republique, RDC |
| Gaston Musemena Bongala        | Membre du Cabinet du Conseiller,<br>Counseiller Special du Chef de l'Etat en<br>Matiere de Securite                           |
| Lt. Col. Amundala Monga Dung   | EMG/FARDC   |
| Brig. Gen. Prosembo Ilondjo    | Ancien Comd Ville Kinshasa  |
| Col. Pelete Victor             | Ministry of Defence Advisor, MNDAC  |
| Col. Aguru Namba               | Conseiller du Chef Etat Major General FARDC   |
| Mbwebwe Mumeme                 | Senior Lecturer, UNESCO/UNIKIN  |
| Major Kashale Makuya           | Technician d'Etat Major, MDN Equipe<br>VMIA/RDC   |
| Moebe Sylvain                  | Inspecteur Principal, Labor Optimus   |
| Muleli Kahula                  | Military Expert, Labor Optimus  |
| Andia Nzurea Innocent          | Secretaire Permanent, Labor Optimus   |
| Busenge Faustino               | Major Expert Militaire, Labor Optimus   |
| Lt. Col. Joseph Esandjo        | Military Expert, Labor Optimus  |
| Edison Iwondo                  | Expert, Labor Optimus   |
| Lt. Gen. Mosala Mondjia Ndongo | Labor Optimus   |
| G Kalubi Kabasele              | Consultant "Coeur d'Afrique", Labor Optimus   |
| Richard Bola                   | DGA Laboro/Expert en Dev Rural, Labor<br>Optimus  |