



PRESS RELEASE

Community Leaders gather in Blue Nile State to discuss DDR and Community Security Issues



Damazine, 8 November 2010. Today, the Joint DDR Commission (JDDRC) in Blue Nile State opened a three-day workshop on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) and Community Security and Arms Control (CSAC). The workshop was attended by 50 community leaders from six localities in Blue Nile State, and took place at the Workers Union Hall, in Damazine. Other participants included representatives from State Ministries, local government, the media, the UNDP, UNMIS and international organizations.

The workshop is being organized by the Joint DDR Commission together with the UNDP and aims to further the understanding of local authorities and community leaders of the DDR process in general and to raise their awareness on issues related to community security and small arms control.

As Daud Idris Nasur, Commissioner of the Blue Nile State JDDRC expressed, his “hope that many gains will be achieved during these three days. Various specialists will deliver presentations, and there will be space for exchange of ideas and opinions.”

Momodou Dibba, UNDP Regional Coordinator, explained that the UNDP is proud to be associated with the government of Sudan in trying to deal with the phenomena of armed violence and arms control. He also emphasized the critical importance of working with, and through, traditional leaders, who “have the ear of the political leadership, and also live among local communities, therefore they provide a natural link between the two.”

Supporting such a position, Mak Yousuf Hassan Adlan, Blue Nile Native Administration Chief, expressed his firm belief that the Native Administration is best placed to help control small arms in the region. “In order to succeed, arms control should be led by the communities and Native Administration, and not imposed from the top.”

Finally, in his opening address, the Honourable Zaied Issa Zaied, Minister for Agriculture and Deputy Wali of Blue Nile State, reiterated the important role to be played by the Native Administration, and explained that “this is a big programme, which needs a big effort from all sectors of society to push it forward. This includes the Head of State, State governments, the United Nations, Native administrations, and communities themselves.”

The three day workshop will sensitize community leaders on various DDR and arms control issues. Group discussions will allow community leaders to share their current perceptions on these various issues, and discuss the role they can play in the programme. They will also look at how best to communicate their messages to local communities, and be equipped with the required tools to do so. Following the workshop, participants will take part in a one-month project where they will conduct these focus groups among a cross-section of the population, including women and youth. The outcomes of the workshop and of the focus groups will be carefully analyzed by the Joint DDR Commission and the UNDP in order to streamline and deliver effective DDR and CSAC programs.

The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) calls for the DDR of ex-combatants and special groups, and the promotion of community security and arms control. The DDR is a nationally-owned programme aimed at contributing to creating an enabling environment for human security, and supporting post-peace-agreement and social stabilization across the Sudan, particularly in war affected areas.

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