



Joint Press Release



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Sudan DDR programme launched in southern Sudan, \$30 million pledged by GoNU

The release of \$30 million for the Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) programme in southern Sudan was announced earlier today in Juba at the launch of the DDR programme in the region.

The pledge came from the Government of National Unity. It was announced by Minister of Cabinet Affairs of the Government of Southern Sudan (GoSS), Luka Monoja on behalf of the First Vice President of the Republic of Sudan, Salva Kiir. The funding will be specifically for the provision of good-quality, environmentally-sustainable and low-cost homes for ex-combatants.

Up to 35,000 combatants of the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA) will be demobilised in the first phase of the operation. South Sudan DDR is part of the national DDR programme officially launched last February. Some 4,500 combatants from the Sudan Armed Forces, Popular Defence Forces and SPLA are so far demobilized.

As the DDR programme steadily extends its reach to other areas under the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), Juba becomes the third operational centre after Ed Damazin in Blue Nile State and Kadugli in Southern Kordofan.

A total of 180,000 participants from North and Southern Sudan stand to benefit from DDR by leaving military life and reintegrating into society. The programme is operationally managed by the North Sudan and South Sudan DDR Commissions, with technical and logistical support from the Integrated United Nations DDR Unit.

"We don't want to lose sight of the fact that DDR is one of the many components of the peace process", the Deputy Humanitarian and Resident Coordinator, Lise Grande said representing the UN at the launching ceremony. "Its success depends also on the achievements of all the other benchmarks of the CPA", she added.

The ceremony was also attended by senior officials of GoSS and the Government of National Unity, as well representatives of diplomatic missions in the country.

Speaking on behalf of the donor community, Japanese Ambassador to Sudan, Yuichi Ishi, urged the ex combatants to benefit from this opportunity. "The sustainable peace and development of your country rest upon you and your colleagues". "Japan has been proactively assisting the people of Sudan to implement the CPA with a special focus on DDR", he added.

Signed on 9 January 2005 between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan People's Liberation Movement/Army, the CPA ended the longest civil war in Africa. The DDR programme forms a key part of this agreement.

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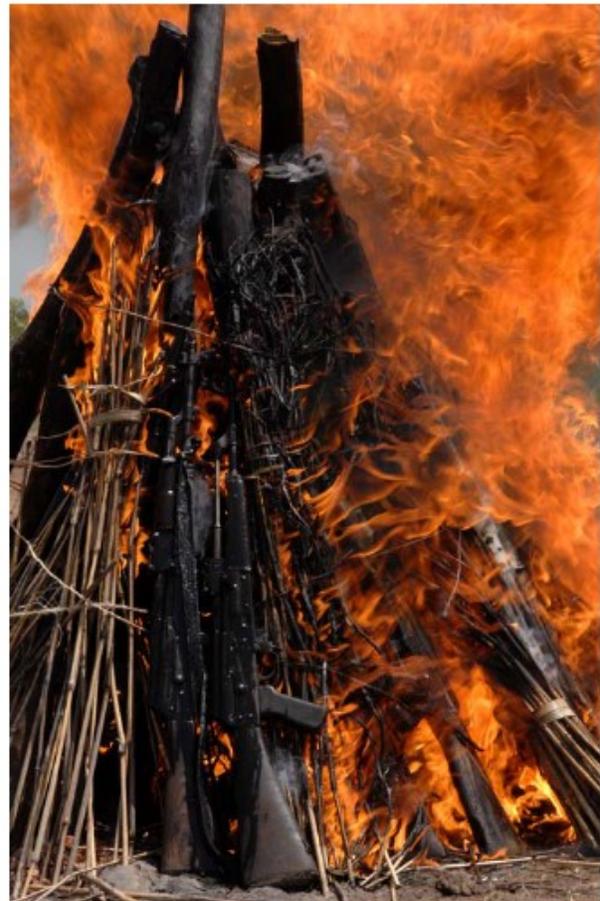
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Mother of four Capt. Caroline Timon Lohure Lomiang becomes the first female SPLA soldier to return to civilian life



One of the 12 SPLA soldiers demobilised today receives his discharge certificate



Symbolic destruction of SPLA weapons and uniforms during the launch of the DDR programme in Juba

Photos: Tim McKulka/UNMIS