

## ERITREA



### BASIC INFORMATION

<b>Population:</b>	4.4 million inhabitants (2005)
<b>GDP:</b>	986 million dollars (2005)
<b>GNI per capita:</b>	220 dollars (2005)
<b>HDI:</b>	0.454 (157 <sup>th</sup> ) (2004)

### BACKGROUND TO THE CONFLICT

A few years after gaining its independence in 1993, Eritrea became involved in an armed conflict with Ethiopia in a dispute over 390 kilometres of common border between the two countries. This lasted from 1998 to 2000 and led to the massive military mobilisation of the Eritrean population and the displacement of more than a million people.

### PEACE AGREEMENTS / PROCESS

The UN Secretary General named Mohamed Sahnoun as his Special Envoy for Africa, charging him with the task of assisting the AU's mediation efforts. A **Cessation of Hostilities Agreement** was signed in Algiers in June 2003 and, a month later, the UN created the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea (UNMEE). In December of the same year, a General Peace Agreement was signed, establishing a 25 km Temporary Security Zone along the border, with supervision of the agreement by troops from Canada and the Netherlands and the creation of a DDR programme. May 2001 saw the creation of a Boundary Commission (EEBC) which is still operational and has now established a final route for the border. Nevertheless, tensions between Eritrea and Ethiopia have increased during the last year due to stalemate in the implementation of the border demarcation process and the lack of dialogue between the two countries, a situation which became even more evident in November 2005 following troop movements in the border area close to the Temporary Security Zone supervised by UNMEE. This has led to fears of a resumption of hostilities between the two parties.

### INTERNATIONAL PRESENCE

In Resolution 1312 (2000), the United Nations Security Council established the **United Nations Peace-Keeping Force for Eritrea and Ethiopia (UNMEE)**, with a mandate that included the control and monitoring of the cessation of hostilities, providing help to both parties with their security undertakings, verifying the redeployment of Ethiopian and Eritrean troops and patrolling the security zone. There was, however, no explicit mandate to take on DDR duties. The UNMEE force was deployed up to March 2001 and eventually comprised some 4,200 troops, though it currently numbers only 3,622 (in part due to the end of the DDR process), which includes military observers, international and local civilian personnel and voluntary workers. It's mandate extends until the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2007 and an annual budget of 182.24 million dollars.

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UNMEE announced that the military situation between Eritrea and Ethiopia in mid-November 2005 was tense and politically volatile, and the UN Secretary General, the AU and other members of the international community called for it to be contained. The restriction on UNMEE's aircraft movements by Eritrea from October onwards paralysed the mission's ability to supervise the Temporary Security Zone. In view of the seriousness of the situation and Eritrea's refusal to lift its restriction, the UN Security Council decided to adopt a resolution in which it demanded that Eritrea end its restrictions on UNMEE's freedom of movement without any prior conditions, calling on both warring parties to conduct themselves more moderately and refrain from threatening the use of force. It also called on them to return to their December 2004 levels of deployment with immediate effect, completing their redeployment within a maximum of 30 days. It threatened to impose sanctions if these demands were not met. However, Eritrea accused the Council of bias as it had not threatened sanctions when Ethiopia had breached the border demarcation process.

As part of its Crisis Prevention and Recovery programme, the UNDP has assisted in the demobilisation of soldiers and their reintegration into civilian life, the empowerment of the NCDRP and the training of 500 psychologists and social workers for the programme, as well as developing a series of local opportunities.

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## DDR STRUCTURE

### **Background to the DDR process:**

In November 2000, shortly after UNMEE's deployment, the government announced its intention to launch a DDR programme, seeking technical assistance from the World Bank. Eritrea had already carried out a DDR programme in 1993, in which 60% of the guerrilla forces that had fought against Ethiopia (54,000 of the 95,000 combatants) were demobilised.

### **Type of DDR:**

Drastic reduction of the people mobilised and integrated into the country's armed forces during the war.

### **Enforcing bodies:**

The body with responsibility for this project is the National Commission for the Demobilisation and Reintegration Programme (NCDRP), which was legally established for this purpose in April 2001. USAID provided technical assistance and training to the NCDRP between 2002 and 2004 through the UNDP. The World Bank has also been involved in the planning of a number of activities.

### **Basic principles:**

Reduce the armed forces by two thirds and transfer financial resources from the military to the social sector, through the demobilisation of 200,000 troops over a period of around two years. The intention is also to provide these former combatants with help in achieving social and economic reintegration in the community during the next three to four years, with a strengthening of institutional facilities and support for macro-economic stability.

### **Groups to be demobilised:**

200,000 of the 350,000 soldiers mobilised during the war (57%).

### **Vulnerable groups:**

Given that the soldiers to be demobilised are all members of the armed forces, where the minimum recruitment age is 18, there are no specific programmes for child soldiers, though special programmes have been created for soldiers below the age of 25. Other groups that are specially catered for are as follows:

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- *Disabled soldiers*: special assistance is offered during the reintegration stage, such as professional advice and training, loans, employment and subsidies, support with agricultural projects and access to housing. Special emphasis is placed on those suffering from HIV/AIDS, who are offered specific awareness and orientation sessions.
- *Women combatants*: the inclusion of measures to ensure equality and equal access to opportunities in order to maximise economic capacity. Full access to all the activities being organised and the introduction of a gender perspective.

### Location:

The 36 centres established spread across the whole country.

### Budget:

According to a study carried out by the World Bank in April 2002, the total cost of the programme was 197.2 million dollars, corresponding to an average of \$985 per demobilised soldier. The World Bank contributed 60 million dollars, the WFP gave 15 million dollars in the form of food aid for the demobilised troops, the government of the Netherlands assisted in the pilot programme for the demobilisation of 5,000 soldiers through the Multi-Donor Trust Fund, and the World Bank's Post-Conflict Fund gave 0.7 million dollars to help the government prepare the project. The Multi-Donor Trust Fund includes contributions from the Netherlands, Germany, Norway, Belgium, Switzerland and the EU, which gave 6.5 million dollars, among others. In May 2002, the World Bank approved a loan of 60 million dollars for Eritrea's DDR programme, to cover the demobilisation and reintegration of 60,000 soldiers.

Donor	Millions of \$	%
International Development Association (World Bank)	60	30.4
Multi-Donor Trust Fund	107	54.3
Sector programmes	15	7.6
WFP	15	7.6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>197</b>	<b>100</b>

Stage	Millions of \$	%
Demobilisation	9.2	4.7
Reinsertion	120.0	60.9
Reintegration	50.0	25.3
Vulnerable groups	2.0	1.0
Institutional support	1.2	0.6
Executive Secretariat	5.4	2.7
Contingencies	9.4	5.0
<b>Total (estimate)</b>	<b>197.2</b>	<b>100</b>

Broken down into categories, 60.9% of the budget corresponds to the reinsertion package, which includes a cash payment for demobilised soldiers, while 26.4% goes to secondary reintegration projects, particularly microloans.

Component	Millions of \$	(%)
Reinsertion packages	120.0	60.9
Secondary reintegration projects	52.0	26.4
Vehicles and equipment	6.0	3.0
Others	19.2	9.7
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>197.2</b>	<b>100</b>

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The budget by year is as follows:

Period	Millions of \$	(%)
July 2002-June 2003	57.0	28.9
July 2003-June 2004	64.5	32.7
July 2004-June 2005	64.2	32.6
July 2005-June 2006	11.5	5.8
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>197.2</b>	<b>100</b>

### Timetable:

Demobilisation programme of a maximum of two years, in three stages each involving the demobilisation of 60,000 - 70,000 people. The reintegration of demobilised soldiers back into their communities takes between 3 and 4 years. Demobilisation began in October 2002.

### Other issues:

- **Security sector reform:** Given the actual nature of the programme (the demobilisation of ordinary soldiers), the idea is to reduce the number of military troops by two thirds, thus creating a saving of around 60 million dollars a year in state spending.

## DDR STAGES

### Disarmament:

This stage includes the handover of military equipment (uniforms, weapons, etc.), identification, transfer to licensing centres (10 centres), information about the process, medical check-up and subsequent transfer to reinsertion zones in 36 centres around the country. The demobilisation process gives priority to special groups (women, the disabled, veterans and former soldiers who were remobilised for the war). The aim is to demobilise 200,000 soldiers over a period of between 18 and 24 months in three stages, 60,000 to 70,000 being demobilised in each stage. Stage 1 of the demobilisation covers vulnerable groups and soldiers in the general category (national service). The Demobilisation Task Force selects combatants for inclusion in the programme. During this period, soldiers are kept informed of the situation and given the opportunity to appeal any decisions taken (as a result of the transparency of the process), and their social and financial details are recorded. The licensing process takes around a week and is completed at a rate of about 500 soldiers per week per centre.

### Reinsertion:

For a period of one year following demobilisation each soldier receives an allocation from the WFP, based on the cost of a shopping basket of essential items. This stage includes the provision of financial assistance to cover the basic needs of soldiers and their families. The basis for this allocation is the amount that each soldier would have received each month (around \$50). The World Bank calculated that payments in cash had amounted to a total of 105 million dollars, i.e. an average of \$525 per demobilised soldier, though individual payments varied depending on rank and length of service. If the WFP's allocation is factored in, the average rises to \$600 per person. Some disabled people receive additional aid of between \$300 and \$450. Payments are made in several instalments with significant sums being paid at two points. The first of these is paid within three months of licensing and the second between four and six months after licensing. Payments are always made via the banking system.

### Reintegration:

The self-sufficiency of former combatants is a priority, and the process includes social reintegration and financial support, both at a personal and at a community level. Some of the important group activities are as follows:

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- *Social support:* information and awareness programmes, community support, focused psychological and social sessions and strengthening of a secondary assessment process.
- *Financial support:* help for job creation, micro-projects, training and education (for around 70,000 demobilised soldiers), offer of incentives for development and training opportunities, access to support schemes for micro-businesses, support for rural development programmes (such as irrigation projects) and the promotion of public employment.

It is projected that at least 50% of the beneficiaries should be demobilised soldiers, the rest being made up of members of their families and their communities.

## EVOLUTION OF THE DDR PROCESS

The process began with a pilot programme for around 5,000 combatants between April and September 2002, with a view to completing the demobilisation stage for all combatants within a period of two years. In spite of this planned timetable, former combatants were still registering in November 2004 and some 95,000 Eritrean soldiers registered under the process had asked to continue performing national service duties until January 1995. This has slowed the reintegration process which remains pending.

In this connection, the United Nations Security Council called on the Eritrean government to provide sustainable reintegration for these combatants, which would seem to have been included as a structured stage but has yet to be completed.

## ASPECTS TO BE EXAMINED

### Planning:

- Absence of an integrated vision of the process.
- Specific DDR for former members of the armed forces, with no armed opposition groups or special programmes for child soldiers.
- Regional dimension to the project in relation to the conflict with Ethiopia.
- Reluctance of former combatants to give up their military status.

## SOURCES

### International:

- World Bank: *Technical Annex for a Proposed Credit of SDR 48.1 Million (US 60 Million Equivalent) to the State of Eritrea for an Emergency Demobilization and Reintegration Project*, 2002.
- BICC: *Veteran Combatants Do Not Fade Away: a Comparative Study On Two Demobilization and Reintegration Exercises in Eritrea*, 2002.
- UNDP: *Technical Assistance to Demobilize Soldiers*, CPRU, 2002.
- UNMEE, at <<http://www.unmeeonline.org>>.

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