

Sudan / UNMIS / UNDP Joint Press Release



KARTHUM, Sudan, April 30, 2009/African Press Organization (APO)/ — Qazi commends DDR progress and calls for necessary funding.

In an address to the National Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Coordination Council (NDDRCC) yesterday in Khartoum, Ashraf Qazi, the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General (SRSG) for Sudan, commended the significant progress made in the implementation of DDR programme in Sudan, encouraged the parties to maintain the momentum, and called for adequate funding.

SRSG Qazi saluted the important work carried out by the National DDR Coordination Council as well as the North and South DDR Commissions with the support of the UN and the donor community. He also stressed the importance to keep the momentum and to avoid a pause in the DDR process.

Noting the achievements made since the successful launch of DDR on 10 February 2009, SRSG stressed that the Joint North and Southern Sudan DDR Commission has demobilized nearly 2,500 ex-combatants in Blue Nile and has prepared two demobilization sites with United Nations' assistance, one in Kadugli and one in Julud. The reintegration process for these participants has also started, he added.

SRSG Qazi also noted that in Southern Sudan, the Government of Southern Sudan working in coordination with the United Nations has agreed to a concept of operations for the demobilization of to 35,000 individuals due to begin in early June 2009 in Juba.

SRSG emphasized the need for adequate and timely funding of one the most complex and largest DDR operation of its kind in the world. He informed the NDDRCC that the UN budget committee in New York has agreed to triple UNMIS resources to support DDR operations in Sudan and called on the Government of National Unity and the Government of Southern Sudan to make available the human and financial resources necessary to effectively lead the DDR process.

SRSG Qazi expressed his deep appreciation of the generous pledges made by donors at the DDR Roundtable Conference held in Juba on 16 February 2009 that amount to about US\$88 million. However, despite the generous contributions of the donors that are expected to reach US\$50 million by the end of 2009, the DDR programme is facing a serious shortfall, he said.

SRSG Qazi stressed that the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of 35,000 Special Needs Groups from the SPLA and 30,000 combatants to be demobilized in the Three Areas, require approximately US\$135 million. However, currently available funds will only support the reintegration of approximately 20,000 ex-combatants, or roughly one third of the first phase caseload, he said.

Emphasizing that DDR is one of the most indispensable processes for moving the Comprehensive Peace Agreement forward, SRSG Qazi expressed the hope that the international donor community will respond favourably to the need to maintain the momentum that has been jointly built up over the last year.

SRSG Qazi paid tribute to the leadership of the Government of National Unity and the Government of South Sudan. He reiterated the full cooperation of the UN in making the DDR programme a successful part of peace and stability in Sudan.

SOURCE: Mission of UN in Sudan