4.40 UN Military Roles and Responsibilities

Contents

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Summary

In the typical operational environment in which United Nations (UN) peacekeeping missions take place, the primary contribution made by the military component of a mission to a the peacekeeping operation's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme, if it has been mandated to do so, is to provide security. The military component could also contribute through the gathering and distribution of information specifically related to a DDR programme, as well as monitoring and reporting on security issues. Specialist military ammunition and weapon expertise could contribute to the technical aspects of disarmament (also see IDDRS 4.10 on Disarmament and IDDRS 4.20 on Demobilization).

In addition, military capabilities could be used to provide various aspects of logistic support, including camp construction, communications, transport and health, if spare capacity is available. It must be noted that unless specific planning for military DDR tasks has taken place, and forces generated accordingly, then military logistic capacity cannot be guaranteed.

It is essential to the successful employment of any military capability in a DDR programme that it must be included in planning, be part of the endorsed mission operational requirement, be specifically mandated and be properly resourced. If this is not the case, the wider security-related function of the military component will be badly affected.

Involvement in a DDR programme does not take the place of the normal military component command and control chains.

A fundamental assumption in any military involvement in operational aspects of UN DDR programmes is that it is pointless to attempt disarmament or demobilization if it is not clear that reintegration is properly planned and resourced. Put another way, the combatants must see a future if they are to be expected to enter a DDR programme. If this is not clear, such programmes are likely to fail, and elements of the military component (and others) can be exposed to unacceptable risks.

1. Module scope and objectives

This module covers the use of the capabilities under the control of the military component to support a DDR programme carried out by a UN peacekeeping mission. Issues and planning considerations raised here may also be useful in other situations, e.g., to militaries involved in DDR programmes conducted outside of UN peacekeeping missions. The module is aimed at two audiences. Its first aim is to provide guidance to a mainly military audience, at Headquarters, in the field and in Member States, as to what the military component may be expected to provide in support of a DDR programme. In addition, it provides very basic information to a non-military audience on the military component of a peacekeeping operation.

The module does not cover detailed tactics, techniques and procedures, particularly those related to creating and maintaining a secure environment, since these are normal military tasks and are carried out according to national policies.

The objectives of this module are to outline the possible contribution by the military component of a UN peacekeeping mission to the mission's DDR programme, and to discuss various factors that should be considered when employing military capacity.

2. Terms, definitions and abbreviations

Annex A contains a list of abbreviations used in this standard. A complete glossary of all the terms, definitions and abbreviations used in the series of integrated DDR standards (IDDRS) is given in IDDRS 1.20.

In the IDDRS series, the words 'shall', 'should' and 'may' are used to indicate the intended degree of compliance with the standards laid down. This use is consistent with the language used in the International Organization for Standardization standards and guidelines:

> "a) 'shall' is used to indicate requirements, methods or specifications that are to be applied in order to conform to the standard.
>
> b) 'should' is used to indicate the preferred requirements, methods or specifications.
>
> c) 'may' is used to indicate a possible method or course of action."

3. Introduction

The military component of a peacekeeping mission often possesses a wide range of skills and capabilities that could be vital to a DDR programme. As military resources and assets for peacekeeping are limited and are often provided for multiple purposes, it is important to identify DDR tasks that are to be carried out by a military component of a peacekeeping mission at an early stage in the mission planning process.

4. The military component

4.1. General

Although some small military observer missions continue, most UN peacekeeping missions, particularly those with a mandate that includes DDR, rely on a mix of unarmed military observers and numbers of armed troops that are collectively referred to as the peacekeeping force. The primary function of the military component is to observe and report on security-related issues and provide security. Military contingents vary in capability; policies; procedures; and understanding of peacekeeping, humanitarian and development issues from country to country. Each peacekeeping mission has a military component specifically designed to fulfil the mandate and operational requirement of that mission. Early and comprehensive DDR planning will ensure that appropriately trained and equipped units are available to support DDR.

4.2. Composition

The military component can be made up of three groups:

- *Formed units or contingents:* These can include armour, infantry, aviation, engineers and various support units, some of which can provide logistic support, including specialists

in explosives and weapons destruction. Normally the support element of the force is designed primarily for the needs of the military component. The tasking of the logistic support, aviation and engineering units is actually controlled by the mission's chief of integrated support services (i.e., a civilian who is not part of the military component);

■ *Military observers (MILOBs):* MILOBs are unarmed officers normally provided by Member States for 12 months and operating in small teams of between two and six. Where possible, MILOBs are incorporated into the force command structure;

■ *Staff officers:* Although technically part of contingents, individual military officers serve in staff posts, both within the force headquarters and in various specialized positions where they are integrated with civilian staff, e.g. in sections such as Integrated Support Services (also see IDDRS 3.42 on Personnel and Staffing) and DDR.

Annex B provides a table showing various structures and ranks within a military component. It should be taken as a broad guide only, as each contingent will be different in some way.

4.3. Command and control

A peacekeeping force is commanded by a force commander, who, although an active duty member of his/her parent armed forces, is a salaried UN staff member. All Member States retain national command over their own troops and most take a very keen interest in ensuring that their troops are employed as agreed in negotiations that take place (in UN Headquarters) before they deploy. A particular concern will be safety and security. Clearly, the security of unarmed MILOBs will be of special interest; in some situations they are at greater risk than unarmed UN civilians.

5. Military component contribution

Military capability, particularly in specialized capacities such as communications, aviation, engineering, and medical and logistic support, is often difficult for the UN to obtain, and may be used only where it is uniquely able to fulfil the task at hand. Where civilian sources can meet an approved operational requirement and the military component of a mission is fully employed, civilian resources should be used. If mandated, and therefore resourced and equipped appropriately, the military should be able to contribute to a DDR programme in the ways described below in sections 5.1–5.6.

5.1. Security

Security is essential both to ensure former combatants' confidence in a DDR programme, and to ensure the security of other elements of a mission and the civilian population. A military component is often tasked with providing a secure environment so that a UN mission can meet its overall objectives. If tasked and resourced, military capability can be used to provide security that is specifically related to a DDR programme. This can include camp/cantonment security, including security of weapons and ammunition that have been handed in or stored as part of a DDR programme, and security of disarmament and/or demobilization sites. The military component can also be tasked with providing security to routes that former combatants will use to enter the programme, and provide escorts to movement of those participating in the programme. Security is provided by armed UN troops.

If the mandate and the concept of operations specify that military support to DDR should carry out specific tasks, then the need for this has to be factored into the force structure when the concept is drawn up.

The security task can be carried out in such a way that there is a disincentive for former combatants to remain outside a programme. This approach can be linked to wider incentives offered in the reintegration programmes of DDR. This type of coercion should be accompanied by a focused public information/sensitization campaign. Experience has shown that unarmed MILOBs do not provide security, although in some situations they can assist by contributing to early warning, wider information-gathering and information distribution.

The use of MILOBs in remote situations must be carefully balanced with their security requirements. Unfortunately, the UN flag is not a guarantee of security in many of the situations facing UN peacekeeping forces.

To assess the security tasks that will be expected of military units when planning any Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) mission, the planner needs to have a good understanding of the number of combatants expected to join the programme, as well as of the location of proposed DDR sites, in order to draw up of the concept of operations. This pre-planning will serve as a good indication of whether the units have the capacity to carry out their role. Planners are encouraged to plan for area security within the current mandated tasks, rather than deploying specific units for short-term tasks. The use of mobile demobilization camps, where the demobilization process moves from location to location so that other military security tasks are not interfered with should also be considered.

If the mandate and the concept of operations specify that military support to DDR should carry out specific tasks, then the need for this has to be factored into the force structure when the concept is drawn up. It is preferable to provide a single recommendation for the force requirement rather than going back to the UN Security Council for additional forces once a mission has started.

5.2. Information-gathering and reporting

The military component can contribute to DDR operations by seeking information on the locations, strengths and intentions of former combatants who may or will become part of a DDR programme. Parties to the conflict are often reluctant to fully disclose troop strengths and locations, and it would also be naïve to assume that all combatants fully accept or trust a peace process. As a result, accurate figures on weapons and ammunition expected to be collected during the programme may never be available, so the technical part of the programme must include some flexibility.

The information-gathering process can be a specific task of the military component, but it can also be a by-product of its normal operations, e.g., information gathered by patrols and the activities of MILOBs. A characteristic of many DDR programmes, particularly those involving less-structured warring factions, is a tendency of leaders to withhold information about the programme from their rank and file. The military component can be used to detect whether this is happening and can assist in dealing with this as part of the public information and sensitization campaign associated with DDR. A mission's joint operations centre (JOC) and joint mission analysis centre should coordinate the information-gathering and reporting activities.

5.3. Information dissemination and sensitization

The military component normally is widely spread across the post-conflict country/region, and can therefore assist by distributing information on a DDR programme to potential participants and the local population. This is particularly useful when command chains and communications in armed factions are poor. Any information campaign should be planned and monitored by the DDR and wider mission public information staff. Depending on the security situation, MILOBs may be particularly useful in fulfilling this function.

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5.4. Programme monitoring and reporting

If involved in a programme to provide security, the military component can assist dedicated mission DDR staff by monitoring and reporting on aspects of programme progress. This work must be managed by the DDR staff in conjunction with the JOC.

5.5. Specialized weapon and ammunition expertise

The military possesses specialized ammunition and weapon expertise that will be useful as part of disarmament aspects of a DDR programme. Depending on the methods agreed on in peace agreements and plans for future national security forces, weapons and ammunition will either be destroyed or safely and securely stored. However, not all military units possess
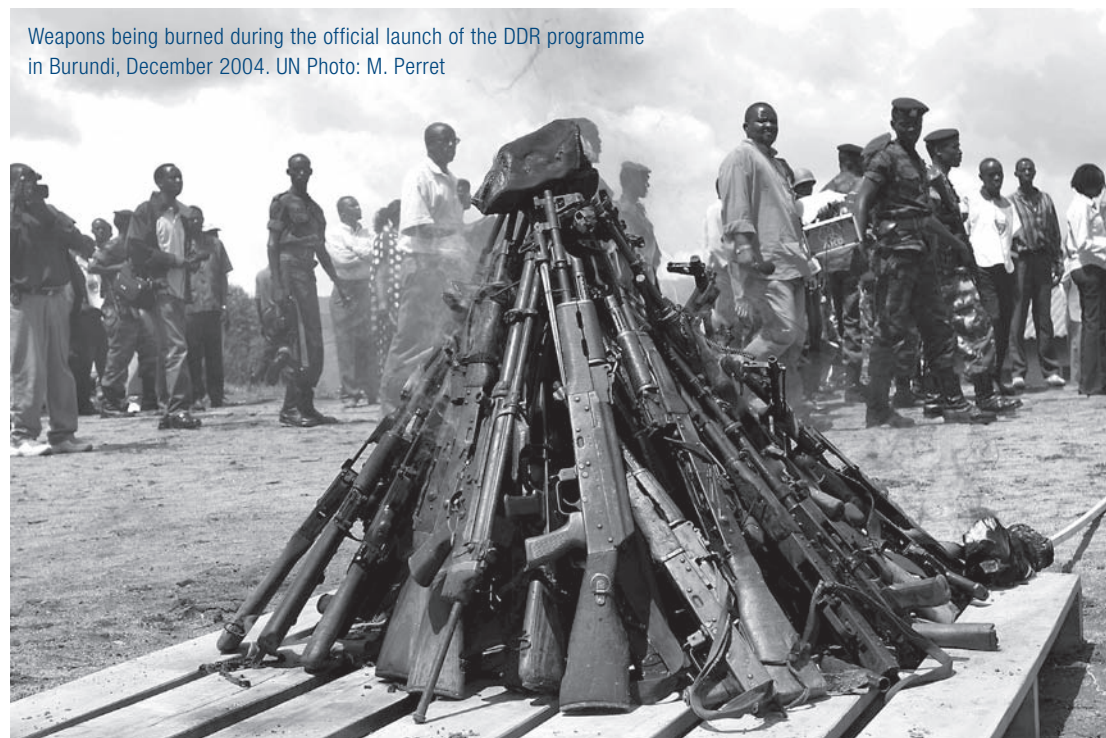
Weapons being burned during the official launch of the DDR programme in Burundi, December 2004. UN Photo: M. Perret

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capabilities of a level that could be used to support the disarmament component of DDR. Early and comprehensive planning should identify whether this is a requirement, and units/capabilities should be generated accordingly (also see IDDRS 4.10 on Disarmament).

5.6. Logistic support

As mentioned above, military logistic capabilities can be useful in a DDR programme. Their support must be coordinated with units that provide integrated services support to a mission.

Where the military is specifically tasked with providing certain kinds of support to a DDR programme, additional military capability may be required by the military component for the duration of the task. A less ideal solution would be to reprioritize or reschedule the activities of military elements carrying out other mandated tasks. This approach can clearly have the disadvantage of degrading wider efforts to provide a secure environment, perhaps even at the expense of the security of the population at large.

UN peacekeepers transporting combatants to disarmament site in Liberia, April 2004. Photo: E. Kanalstein, UNMIL

6. Pre-deployment planning

For the military component, DDR planning is not very different from planning related to other military tasks in UN peacekeeping. As in other military planning, clear guidance is necessary on the scope of the military's involvement.

6.1. Contingency planning

As the UN does not normally possess military staff specifically dedicated to DDR planning, contingency planning for the military contribution of a possible DDR programme will normally be carried out by staff with a broader planning task within the military component of DPKO, specifically the Military Planning Service of Military Division. These officers respond to directions from DPKO's military adviser. Ideally, once it appears likely that a mission will be established, individuals will be identified in Member States to fill specialist DDR military staff officer posts in an integrated DDR unit in a mission headquarters. These specialists could be called upon to assist at UN Headquarters if required, ahead of the main deployment.

6.2. Joint assessment mission

Military staff officers, either from the Military Division or, ideally, individuals specifically allocated as DDR staff for the peacekeeping operation, will participate, when required and available, in joint assessment missions to assist in determining the military operational requirement specifically needed to support a DDR programme. These officers can advise on technical issues that will be relevant to the DDR elements of a peace agreement.

6.3. Mission concept of operations

Once sufficient information is available, a mission concept of operations is drawn up as part of an integrated activity at UN Headquarters, normally led by DPKO. As part of this process, a detailed operational requirement will be developed for military capability to meet the proposed tasks in the concept; this will include military capability to support a UN DDR programme. The overall military requirement is the responsibility of the military adviser; however, the Military Division is not responsible for the overall DDR plan. Similarly with other issues in UN missions that involve more than one component of the mission, there must be close consultation among all components involved in the DDR process throughout the planning process. The concept of operations forms the basis for the report of the Secretary-General that will be presented to the Security Council when a new mission is proposed.

6.4. Mission plan

Ideally, detailed mission plans will be drawn up by individuals who will fill planning and management positions in a proposed new mission. If this is not possible, initial plans will be drawn up by UN Headquarters staff, then reviewed and adjusted by mission staff

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once they are assigned to the mission. Mission plans and concepts of operations will also need to be reviewed, should the Security Council not approve all identified and proposed operational requirements. In addition, as most DDR programmes are owned by governments or transitional governments, mission plans should be flexible and allow for adjustments as the DDR programme is progressing.

6.5. Force generation

The Force Generation Service of the Military Division is responsible for interaction with Member States to acquire the military capabilities identified in the operational requirement. Contributions are negotiated on a case-by-case basis. While much informal interaction can take place before a mandate is given, Member States will not start formal negotiations until the Security Council has mandated a mission. This can delay deployment. For complex missions, i.e., most missions involving DDR, the UN has a target of having troops completely deployed within 90 days. This goal is rarely achieved, owing to the pace of the political decision-making process in many Member States. In addition, once the contribution of troops is approved, there are often delays in obtaining information from a Member State as to what type of troop support has to be moved and from where.

Given that the military operational requirement specifically identified to support DDR programmes is likely to be concentrated on support to disarmament and demobilization, it may be possible to reduce the size of the force after these aspects of the programme are completed. In other words, it may be possible to design a force structure that has an element that will be required only for the disarmament and demobilization phases. However, by their very nature, DDR operations are likely to demand that any force will be dispersed (perhaps in platoon- or company-sized groups) and be working in operational areas where other units have their own tasks and report through a separate chain of command. Also, introducing new forces into a mission means that it is unlikely that they will possess the same knowledge of the situation on the ground as a unit that is already in location and familiar with the environment and personalities. Despite the fact that different types of units perform different tasks in a given operational area, all efforts and activities in that area must be well coordinated.

6.6. Standby capacity

The UN Standby Arrangements System (UNSAS), managed by the Military Division, provides the ability for Member States, or groups of Member States, to place specific units of their forces, called force packages, on standby for specific activities, including DDR. A DDR package could consist of planning officers, public information officers, MILOBs, units designed to provide security specific to DDR sites, construction engineers, demining units, camp management personnel, explosive disposal and weapon destruction units, and language assistants. All components of the package could be specifically trained in DDR; however, some of the disciplines identified — e.g., planning, public information, MILOBs, construction engineers, deminers, explosive ordinance device (EOD) experts — should have the core competencies necessary to adapt to supporting DDR operations. The Military Division usually includes an EOD capability within each battalion deployed. This capability, considered a force multiplier, may also be useful for the destruction of weapons and ammunition in a DDR programme.

No specific DDR unit currently exists in UNSAS, and, arguably, none exists in any other military forces.

7. Integrated DDR unit staffing

Military capacity used in a DDR programme will be planned in detail and carried out by the military component of the mission. Military staff officers could fill posts in a DDR unit as follows. The posts will be designed to meet the specific mission requirements:

- Mil SO1 DDR – military liaison (lieutenant-colonel);
- Mil SO2 DDR – military liaison (major);
- Mil SO2 DDR – disarmament and weapons control (major);
- Mil SO2 DDR – gender and child soldier issues (major).

8. DDR links to security sector reform

DDR is closely linked to security sector reform (SSR), because often, reconstructed or entirely new armed forces will be one result of a DDR programme. For this reason, DDR planning and management should be closely linked to SSR planning and management structures. International support to SSR is normally a bilateral issue between the Member State carrying out SSR and those Member States providing support. At present, the UN does not possess an SSR planning or integration capacity. For this reason, the military staff officers carrying out DDR tasks can become involved with external actors in integrating DDR activities with SSR activities carried out by others.

9. DDR training requirements for military personnel

DDR activities are included in Levels 1 and 2 of the DPKO Standardized Training Module programme. These are available from DPKO's Training and Evaluation Service and from the DPKO Web site, http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/training.

Annex A: Abbreviations

DDR	disarmament, demobilization and reintegration
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
EOD	explosive ordinance device
IDDRS	integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration standard/standards
JOC	joint operations centre
MILOB	military observer
SSR	security sector reform
UN	United Nations
UNSAS	United Nations Standby Arrangement System

Annex B: Military organizations and ranks

ORGANIZATION	COMMANDER	COMMANDER'S EXPERIENCE (YEARS)	EQUIVALENT UN GRADE	PERSONNEL
UN force	Major-general/ Lieutenant-general	30–40	D2–ASG	Varies
Division	Major-general	30–35	D2	15,000+
Brigade	Brigadier or colonel	25–30	D1–P5	1,500–4,000
Battalion or regiment	Lieutenant-colonel	20–25	P4	600–1,000
Company or squadron (3–4 per battalion)	Major or captain	7–15	P3	80–120
Platoon or troop (3–4 per company)	Lieutenant	1–4	P2	25–35
Section or Squad (3–4 per platoon)	Corporal or sergeant	3–5	P1–G7	8–12