

# Côte d'Ivoire

## DDR Process in Côte d'Ivoire: Reintegration is a critical condition for success

Following the agreement on 9 July 2005 by the Ivorian government and the *Forces Nouvelles* (who are controlling the northern part of the country since the September 2002 armed uprising) to start a Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) program, Amnesty International believes that the following measures should be implemented as a matter of urgency.

The organization is convinced that:

- priority has to be given to the reintegration of combatants into society
- financial support should be secured for an effective demobilization program.
- the international community, the Government of Cote d'Ivoire and leaders of the *Forces Nouvelles* should declare their long-term commitment to a sustainable demobilization and reintegration of combatants, including children, women and girls who may have been engaged in any aspect of the war

These measures are essential to avoid that combatants return to combat or engage in criminal activities.

Amnesty International urges donors, the Ivorian government and the *Forces Nouvelles* to devote particular attention to the following aspects:

- To provide all demobilized combatants with education, job creation and medical support programs, including psychological counselling, as necessary. Disabled or ill ex-combatants should receive additional benefits to rehabilitate and reintegrate them into their communities;
- To assist ex-combatants to establish alternative livelihoods, rather than receiving one-off cash payments. Demobilized combatants should be consulted during the design and implementation of the programs to ensure sustainability and appropriateness to their needs;
- To ensure that the existing *Programme national de démobilisation, désarmement et réinsertion* (PNDDR, National Program for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration) is accountable, independent, well-financed and empowered to supervise the reintegration, including social acceptance and economic self-reliance, of those demobilized. The PNDDR should monitor that combatants remain demobilized, rather than returning to combat, and have not kept weapons. Findings by the PNDDR should inform the ongoing implementation of the demobilization and reintegration process;
- To consider the specific rehabilitation and reintegration needs of child soldiers, including adults who were recruited as children. Child soldiers (including those not directly involved in combat) should have education and job training made available, in addition to psychological counselling for them and their families, as well as other forms of medical support and assistance;
- To pay special attention to the needs of women and girls who were involved in combat. Women and girls should be interviewed separately and discreetly, provided with alternatives to returning to their home communities, and should be empowered to make independent decisions about their future marital and family status; and
- To stay the course, and insist that demobilization, reintegration and rehabilitation programs are adequately funded, implemented and monitored for as many years as there is a need for their continuation.

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