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Round Table Meeting on Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration

SRSG urges parties to sustain DDR momentum

Khartoum, 9 April 2008: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) in the Sudan presents an unprecedented and unique challenge, which will require a high degree of commitment and flexibility, said UNMIS Special Representative of the Secretary General, Mr Ashraf Jehangir Qazi, addressing the Round Table on Disarmament, Demobilizations and Reintegration this morning in Khartoum.

The current number of DDR participants is 182,900 of whom 51,000 are already pre-registered, the SRSG said. Over 1,000 children formerly associated with armed forces have been returned to their families and communities for reintegration. Numerous small-scale initiatives in the North and South have been undertaken to strengthen the security of the communities into which DDR programme participants will eventually re-integrate, he added.

The SRSG paid tribute to the two parties for their pragmatic partnership. However, he acknowledged that several outstanding issues need to be addressed by partners at all levels in order to maintain this positive momentum. He said the Sudan Donor Consortium (SDC) meeting in early May represents a key opportunity for the United Nations and national partners to work together to secure adequate and timely funding for reintegration within the larger context of Sudan's recovery and development.

The SRSG also appealed to donors to make funds available for the reintegration of ex-combatants, so that the programme can start this year.

Demobilization and short-term reinsertion (covering a period of 6 months after demobilization) would be funded through the UNMIS budget and he would personally make a strong case at the upcoming UN budget committee session for continued support for this important activity, he added. "The overarching objective of the DDR process is to contribute to creating an enabling environment to human security and to support post-peace-agreement social stabilization across the Sudan, particularly in war affected areas. The DDR programme shall take place within a comprehensive process of national reconciliation and healing throughout the country as part of the peace and confidence building measures", he said.

SRSG Qazi pledged the full cooperation of the UN in making the DDR programme a successful part of peace and stability in Sudan.

[Background Note: On 9 April 2008, the National DDR Coordinating Council (NDDRCC) organized a Roundtable on DDR with GONU, GOSS, the UN and representatives of donor countries. The Roundtable is held prior to the Sudan Donor Consortium (SDC) with the objective of engaging bilateral and multilateral partners at an early stage.]

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