

**Seminar IPS-688: Security and Development  
Dr. Edward Laurance**

**Assessing the Outcomes of the Weapons Collection,  
Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Programs  
Conducted under the United Nations Transitional Administrations**

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## Abstract

In post-conflict countries the disarmament, demilitarization and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants and civilian “fighters” are vital to peace-building actions and regional security, which lead to successful development. If ex-combatants are not properly disarmed, demobilized and integrated, they can retain arms for banditry, violence and uprising, thus causing in-stability and a lack of security, which hampers humanitarian assistance and nation building.

This paper provides a comparative analysis of the success of the voluntary weapons collection program and DDR implemented in Eastern Slavonia in 1996-1997, and the failure to conduct weapons collection and DDR in East Timor in 1999-2001. In these two relatively small geographical areas the United Nations was given an *authority to govern the countries in their transition to independence*. The paper draws on the success of the weapons collection program and DDR in Eastern Slavonia and takes a critical look at the actions of international forces to use a “search-and-seize” approach to demilitarize guerilla forces in East Timor, and further challenges of DDR faced by the UN. The weapons collection programs and subsequent DDR depend not only on the peace agreement but also on the interconnected set of political, cultural and socio-economic factors of the country and its people.

The paper examines the data from the study of D.Boothby<sup>1</sup>, and the data of King’s College London, United Nations, Bonn International Center for Conversion (BICC), World Bank, International Organization for Migration’s reports and interviews<sup>2</sup>. The paper explores the role of the different actors besides the UN, who might have played a vital role in addressing or exacerbating the problem.

The paper concludes that UN Transitional Administration’s failure to conduct comprehensive weapons collection, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants may cause a new nation to fail. Based on the comparative analysis, this paper suggests to address the DDR as a part of a broader political aspect, such as nation building.

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Boothby served as Deputy Transitional Administrator of UNTAES from February 1996 to March 1997.

<sup>2</sup> Interviews with LTG Josef Schoups (UNTAES Force Commander, 1996, Eastern Slavonia) and Natacha Meden (World Bank Officer, 2000, East Timor) were conducted on November 28 and 29, 2003

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## 1. Introduction: Setting the Security and Peace

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) of former combatants plays an important role in providing an appropriate environments for development, especially in post conflict countries. If ex-combatants are not properly disarmed, demobilized and integrated, they can retain arms for banditry, destabilization and insurrection. Unless destroyed or safely stored weapons that become surplus to requirements after the peace agreement may diffuse into society, increase violence, and create in-stability and the lack of security in the region. One critical tool that is increasingly being employed in DDR is the voluntary weapons collection program (WCP). Experience with DDR conducted after peace agreements in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Mozambique, Nicaragua, El Salvador and Liberia) demonstrated the problems that arise if provisions for weapons collection and control are inadequate.

I will explore the impact the weapons collection and DDR programs on the post-conflict peace and security situation in two new independent countries at the time, when they were governed by the United Nations Transitional Administrations until independence. What were the approaches of the UN Transitional Administrations to address the similar problems? And what were the outcomes of the different approaches?

This paper analyzes the weapons collection programs and subsequent DDR in conjunction with the achieved peace agreement. It also looks at the different set of the socio-political and cultural conditions present in the countries, which has influenced the success or failure of the DDR programs.

My *hypothesis* is that *the UN Transitional Administration' failure to conduct comprehensive DDR may cause the new Nation to fail*. In other words this hypothesis attempts to prove through comparative analysis that the successful peace restoration and security stability in the post-conflict region depend not only on the peace agreement but also on disarmament,

demobilization and reintegration programs and interconnected set of socio-political factors of a country and its people

This research utilizes the following key *independent policy variables*: (i) UN Transitional Administration mandates and the guiding principles on the DDR and weapons collection programs; and (ii) the effectiveness of the weapons collection programs.

The paper also examines the effect of *independent situational variables*: (i) the socio-political condition of the country or region in the pre-crisis and crisis stages, particularly what existed prior to the UN Administration involvement, for how long the Transitional Administration was present in the country, how long the war conflict lasted for, etc; (ii) the effectiveness of the DDR (as a context) and guiding principles on DDR; (iii) the volume of weapons in the region and the number of troops to be disarmed, demobilized and integrated

*The dependent variable* will measure the **security and peace** in the country or region upon the implementation of the programs, using the set of the *outcome factors*. The word “security” denotes freedom from various risks. The Oxford English dictionary defines the word as “the condition of being protected from or not exposed to danger; safety... a feeling of safety or freedom from, or absence of danger.” “Peace” means the freedom from disturbance and freedom from or the cessation of war”. The *outcome factors* will reflect peace and security.

## **2. Framework For Analysis**

### **2.1. Cases for the Research: Eastern Slavonia and East Timor**

For a comparative analysis of the WCP and DDR the two UN Transitional Administrations missions would be examined: (i) United Nations Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia (UNTAES, S/RES/1037, 1996) in 1996-1997; and (ii) United Nations Missions of Assistance to East Timor (UNAMET, S/RES/1246, 1999), followed by United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET, S/RES/1272, 1999). These two cases have

been chosen, because there are a number of similarities between these two post-conflict regions. Both regions are relatively small geographically, population- and military-wise; in both areas *the United Nations was given an authority to govern the countries in transition to independence.*

The different sets of socio-political and cultural conditions played different role in the implementation of the DDR and weapons collection in particular.

In most UN peacekeeping operations, the UN missions are not given a complete independence of actions, but have to work with existing governments to implement the mandate given to the operation by the UN Security Council. In case of UNTAES, there was no doubt that the region was a part of the sovereign territory of Croatia, but in accordance with the Basic Agreement and UN resolution 1037 (1996), it was the Transitional Administrator who had the legal responsibility *to govern the UNTAES region.* Practically, the local Serbs were in charge of local authority. But only the Transitional Administrator was in a position to make arrangements with Croatian or Serbian governments and the local Serb authorities (Boothby, 1998, p.13).

The role of UNTAET in the history of UN peacekeeping operations can be recognized in two ways. The first is that while UNTAET has been similar to some other relatively successful multi-functional peacekeeping operations such as those in Cambodia (UNTAC) and Namibia (UNTAG), it has been the first operation when the UN totally took over the responsibility for all departments of the Government: finance, justice, infrastructure, economic, social affairs, and others. The second is that UNTAET, with an authorized large strength of up to 9,000 troops and 200 military observers, has been tested as a so-called "Chapter VII- led operation." This type of UN operations in Somalia (UNOSOM II) and former Yugoslavia (UNPROFOR) has been widely criticized in terms of its strategy and implementation.

I will analyze the WCP and DDR of the soldiers of "Army of the Republika Srpska Krajina" (ARSK) and Serb paramilitaries in East Slavonia, estimating between 8,000 and 12,000

combatants. WCP and DDR of the Armed Forces for National Liberation of East Timor (Falintil) seeing itself as the “people’s army” will be evaluated in East Timor. According to Natacha Meden of World Bank the total number of Falintil vary each year, but is estimated at around 3,000 guerillas.

These two groups will represent the samples to test my hypothesis and arrive at conclusions, generalization and recommendation. And at the end of the paper, I will evaluate the impacts of the WCP and DDR on the peace and security.

## **2.2. Operationalization of Variables**

### **Independent policy variables**

*UN Transitional Administration mandates and the guiding principles* on the DDR and WCP would be simple to operationalize. Some UN Administrations have a mandate to perform the weapons collection and DDR program while others do not.

*The effectiveness of the weapons collection programs*, the process variable, will capture the implementation of the WCP, the storage and destruction of weapons. Whether the program was a part of the broader strategy of the mission? It includes the forms of collection efforts such as voluntary hand in, buy-back, amnesty, enforcement action and etc.

### **Independent Situational Variables**

*The socio-political condition of a country (region)* in the pre-crisis and crisis stages would be operationalized by a broad spectrum of indicators. I would briefly assess: what existed on these territories prior to the UN Administration involvement. The general economic conditions of the regions, cultural and social behavior of the people would be an important qualitative aspect of this variable. The answers to the questions as “*how long the Transitional Administration was present in the country?*” “*How long the war conflict lasted?*” would assist me

in understanding the motives and incentives of various actors to participate in the weapons collection and DDR programs

*The effectiveness of the DDR* would be operationalized as an approach of the United Nations to assist local ex-combatants with demobilization and reintegration into the civilian life.

*Volume of weapons to be collected* in the region would be simply operationalized by the number of the different types and categories of weapons.

### **Dependent Variable**

*The security and peace* in the country or region upon the implementation of the WCP and DDR would be operationalized by the set of the following *outcome factors*:

- (i) the actual weapons collection program results such as number of weapons collected, final stockpiling of the weapons, as well as the impact perceived by the relevant actors and civilian population
- (ii) the actual DDR program results, depicted by the ratio of the number integrated ex-combatants, participants in the reintegration and reinsertion programs to the civilian life or army, to the number of troops to be disarmed, demobilized and integrated
- (iii) whether or not the potential for violence has been decreased. To illustrate this factor I will use the incidence of violence, involving small arms and light weapons, as well as participation of ex-combatants in the acts of violence, which occurred on post-conflict territories
- (iv) whether or not the visibility of the weapons and men with arms decreased or increased.

Primarily, I will compare the number of people with arms before the implementation of the DDR and after.

### **2.3. Program Models and Prototypes**

This paper will use the combination of some parts of the methodology of comparison of case studies to determine the elements of a successful weapons collection design and



implementation in a broader context of peace-building and development proposed by the BICC (Di Chiaro III in Boothby, 1998, p.7). The DDR model of the BICC (Kingma, 2001) will assist me to compare trends and challenges of the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants in post-war and transitional countries and also to compare approaches of the UN Transitional administrations in post-war countries.

Prior to our cases, based on the examples of the peacekeeping missions in Mozambique, Nicaragua and El Salvador, the UN has concluded that the WCP and DDR are the important parts of the peacekeeping process. Post-war efforts to support DDR achieved fairly mixed results. Some have been implemented fairly systematically, while others happened spontaneously. Few went smoothly, while many faced considerable problems in their implementation. In terms of impact, some had a beneficial effect *on peace and security* while others had a neutral or negative effect on these processes (Kingma, 2001).

Once the decision to conduct DDR is taken, practical plans need to be worked out and financing obtained. Successful post war WCP and DDR require reliable data for planning purposes, effective logistics and management, adequate resources for shelter, storage and marking of weapons, registration of ex-combatants, and provision of basic needs. (BICC, 1996; Colletta et al. 1996; Kingma 2000a).

### **3. Socio-Political Overview**

#### **3.1. Historical Background**

##### **Eastern Slavonia**

The land of the region, which borders Danube, is rich with vineyards, orchards and fields producing abundant harvests of wheat, barley, corn, sunflowers and other crops. The largest

urban concentration is the town and port of Vukovar, which was destroyed in 1991, but yet kept the architecture and houses that reflected the wealth of the region.

In May 1995, the Croatian Army launched major offence at the three Serb-populated UN Protected Areas. The previously static front lines in Croatia began to move. This time, the movement was not in favor of Krajina Serbs, who occupied around 30 per cent of Croatian territory. The first area to fall to the re-trained Croatian military was Western Slavonia, or Sector West, after a three-day attack. Three months later, in August, the Army launched Operation Storm, defeating the Krajina Serb forces in Sectors South and North. This precipitated the relocation of more than 170,000 Serbs into Bosnia and Herzegovina and then Yugoslavia (Cilliers, 1999, p.115). Eastern Slavonia appeared to be the next and the last objective of the Croatian Army. To head off an all-out Croatian offensive that could have sparked intervention by Federal Yugoslav military forces in neighboring Serbia, the five-nation Contact Group (France, Germany, Russia, United Kingdom and United States) sponsored talks between the Croatian leadership and local Serbs supported by Yugoslavia (United Nations, 1999).

On 12 November 1995, after four years of the war conflict, the Croatian Government and local Serb leadership in Eastern Slavonia signed a Basic Agreement on peaceful reintegration of Sector East, UN Protected Area, into Croatian territory (Basic Agreement, 1995). The agreement requested the UN Security Council to conduct a demilitarization and reintegration of the region to Croatia.

The UN Secretary General expressed concerns regarding the fragility of the situation (United Nations, S/1995/1028). “In the Serb-controlled area, both an element of lawlessness and a fear of Croatian military and police action were present”. The Croatian government expressed readiness to embark on military action to achieve the reintegration of the territory.

The UNTAES mandate (United Nations, S/RES/1037,1996) was relatively clear and precise in comparison with most other peacekeeping operations. However, it was not spelled out how the mandate had to be implemented. The main points of the mandate were to: supervise and facilitate the demilitarization of the region within 30 days; monitor the voluntary return of refugees and displaced persons; contribute to the maintenance of peace and security in the region; otherwise to assist in the implementation of the Basic Agreement, and others. Demilitarization aimed at all military forces, paramilitary and police, except for the international force and the police operating under the supervision of the Transitional Administration. There was no mention about the control or disposal of weapons that might have remained in the hands of ex-combatants or civilians after 30-days period.

### **East Timor**

The Portuguese colony of Timor declared itself independent from Portugal on 28 November 1975. Nine days later Indonesia invaded East Timor and established a province, which has never been recognized by the international community, except Australia. A campaign on pacification followed over the next two decades, during which an estimated 100,000 to 250,000 individuals lost their lives (CIA, 2003). In 1999 the Government of Portugal and Indonesia under the mediation of the UN decided to conduct a referendum, when people of East Timor had make their choice (Agreement, May 1999). In 1999, the population of East Timor voted for independence and Indonesia withdrew their Armed Force. East Timor has always been a poor region. Now according to the Asian Development Bank the new nation is among six poorest in the world.

A lack of clarity about UNAMET (United Nations, S/RES/1246, 1999) and UNTAET (United Nations, S/RES/1272, 1999) mandates with regard to armed groups contributed to a delayed decision on what to do about the pro-independence guerrilla force (Falintil). Faced with

mounting Falintil discontent about their uncertain status and the poor living conditions, UNTAET decided, almost one year into its mission, to create a Defense Force, whose core would be Falintil. The members of Falintil, not recruited to the FDTL, were to be demobilized and reintegrated into the society. The framework of the new force with Falintil as the core has been approved by the National Council of Timorese Resistance (CNRT), and the East Timor Transitional Cabinet (which was administered by the UN), based on the independent study of the Centre for Defence Studies of the King's College of London in 1999-2000.

### **3.2. Relevant Actors and International Norms**

#### **Actors**

UN Small Arms Conference stimulated a variety of actors, including states, international government and non-government organizations, to be involved in developing norms and policy tools, and implementing programs and policies at different levels: local, national, regional and global (Laurance and Stohl 2002).

Weapons collection, disarmament, demobilization, resettlement, and reintegration are all complex processes, particularly after the end of a violent conflict, and they are often politically sensitive (Kingma, 2000b). Each case of DDR takes place within a distinct political and social context. Each case usually involves a large number of different actors, which have their own objectives and interests. In some cases, such as El Salvador and Mozambique, the international community played an active role in supporting the demilitarization processes of while in others, such as Eritrea, the new Government was in charge and conducted most of the activities itself.

Figure 1 (see Annexes) presents a diagram of the actors in both cases. The figure depicts the range of actors, which were involved in the WCP and DDR programs in the two missions. I will address the role of the United Nations and peacekeeping forces in the both missions. I will

further analyze the role of the actors, outside of the UN framework. In particular, I will look into the role of the government participants and the association of ex-combatants.

### **International Norms**

In 1996, the International and Regional norms to combat the small arms and light weapons were limited. The WCP in Eastern Slavonia used best practices and examples of lessons learned from other missions.

The international community has introduced important initiatives (global norms) calling for the proper integration of weapons collection into conflict-termination agreements, where, I believe, the Eastern Slavonian case significantly contributed to their development. In January 1995, Boutros Boutros-Ghali presented his supplement to an Agenda for Peace (Laurance and Stohl, 2002, p.4) where he urged to conduct practical weapons collection and disarmament in the context of conflicts with the UN peacekeeping involvement. On 26 June 1997, the European Union Council of Ministers adopted the “EU Programme for Preventing and Combating Illicit Trafficking in Conventional Arms” in which both members States and the European Commission express their political commitment to take action to prevent and combat illicit trafficking in arms – particularly small arms. The Programme lays out a framework of activities which fall into three categories, *one of them was to assist countries, especially in post-conflict situations, in suppressing the illicit flow....* The latter includes incorporating appropriate measures into peacekeeping operations and cease-fire and peace agreements; establishing weapons collection, buy-back and destruction programs; setting up educational programs to promote awareness of the negative consequences of illicit trafficking, and; promoting re-integration of former combatants into civilian life.

In August 1997 the United Nations Panel of Government Experts on Small Arms delivered its final report to the Secretary-General (UN). The report recommends: “UN support

for post-conflict disarmament measures such as weapons turn-in programs and disposal of weapons; the integration of weapons collection and disposal plans into peace settlements; and the prompt collection and destruction of all weapons not under legal civilian possession and not required for national defense or internal security”.

In September 1999, the UN Executive Committee on Humanitarian Affairs (ECHA) established a Task Force on Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR), chaired by the UNDP, to develop guidelines on the institutional division of labor and a broad strategy for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The Task Force submitted a report to ECHA in July 2000, outlining strategic directives and guidelines for the coordination of DDR support - with or without Security Council’s involvement, and requirements and measures for the strengthening the UN’s capacity to support the DDR (United Nations, 2000d).

Obviously, the UN Mission in East Timor had not only used lessons learned, but also benefited from the global recognition of the problem in the terms of their availability.

These international norms could play a role in East Timor. The plan of creation of National Forces in East Timor has been given to London King’s College.

Additionally, the existing theory on the WCP and DDR was based on the lessons learned and the handbooks from UN or NGOs, which appeared at the late 1990s-earlier 2000 (e.g. Practical Guide for Collection and Destruction, February 2000, the joint project of Security and Development from Monterey Institute and BICC).

### **3.3. Problems to be Fixed**

#### **Eastern Slavonia**

When UNTAES moved into the region in January 1996, it found a devastated landscape, populated by an estimated 150,000 people - 85 per cent Serbs and 8 per cent Croats, including about 60,000 Serb refugees. Every male over 18 years age was serving in the ARSK. The

Krajina Serb government was in a state of collapse after its relocation from Knin during the previous August.

At the beginning of 1996, Eastern Slavonia was the base of between 8,000 and 12,000 armed Serb soldiers of the ARSK, 11 Slavonia Baranja Corps and a number of small nationalist Serb paramilitary units. Civilians and United Nations personnel were often attacked and robbed as they went about their daily work. In this environment, one of UNTAES' first acts was the demilitarization of the region and provision of a secure environment. Between January and May 1996 UNTAES began its military build-up, growing from 1,600 lightly armed peacekeepers to a force of 5,000 peacekeepers, backed by 50 tanks, 204 armoured vehicles, 21 mortars, 12 artillery pieces, six assault and six transport helicopters.

### **East Timor**

Falintil, the armed wing of the independence movement in East Timor, numbering 3,000 fighters, has led a guerrilla struggle against the Indonesian military occupation for the past 24 years. The two main actors of the violence and war, which owned the weapons in East Timor were the pro-Indonesian militia and the ex-combatants of Falintil. In order to stop the violence and provide security for the implementation of the UNAMET mandate (United Nations, S/RES/1246, 1999), the Security Council authorized the deployment of the multinational forces, led by Australia, with the mandate to demilitarize the Falintil and pro-Indonesian militia (United Nations, S/RES/1264, 1999). Pro-Indonesian militia left East Timor in September 1999, and continued the rare insertions to East Timor to destabilize the situation. However, in general the international troops were able to protect the border. So, the main threat of militia has been posed to the refugees who were still in West Timor. The United Nations in its resolution S/RES/1319 (2000) urged Indonesian Government to demilitarize these militia groups. As a first stage the Coordinating Minister for Politics and Security, Bambang Yudhoyouno, reported "the seizure

under the “voluntary phase of 63 military style guns, 40 grenades and 1,103 home made weapons”. The voluntary phase was completed and the Indonesian authorities have extended the sweep by the army and the police through West Timor to try to collect the weapons.

The Interfet’s approach to disarm Falintil was rejected by East Timorese guerilla leaders.

#### **4. Comparative Analysis of the Cases**

##### **4.1. Implementation approaches: Voluntary versus Search-and-Seize, and Actors’ behavior**

###### **Eastern Slavonia**

The region's demilitarization, as provided in the Basic Agreement, was to be completed within 30 days from the date that the Secretary-General informed the Council that UNTAES' military component had been deployed and was ready for its task. The UNTAES mandate would have been be reconsidered if the Secretary-General reported at any time that the parties failed to comply with their obligations under the Basic Agreement (United Nations, S/RES/1037, 1996).

The demilitarization process formally began on 21 May 1996. The military situation in the region remained stable, and demilitarization has been maintained without incident. In the absence of either a bilateral agreement with the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia on permanent demilitarization of the border area or a declaration by Croatia to maintain demilitarization of the region, the military component of UNTAES has continued to play an important role in local reassurance. It has kept the region demilitarized by checking all incoming vehicles and persons at the international border and crossing points into the rest of Croatia. It has also carried out extensive patrolling within the region.

According to General Schoups all heavy weaponry has been removed from the region to Serbia, Serbian paramilitary units had been disbanded or forced out of the area. The transitional authorities had carefully continued their efforts to control weapons. "If there are any more



undeclared arms in the region, we will confiscate them, buy them off, or register them according to Croatian laws," promised Jacques Klein, UN Special Representative of the Secretary General and Transitional Administrator (Human Rights Watch, 1997).

One of the tasks of the UNTAES military component, authorized by the Security Council was to demilitarize the region: resources for this purpose were provided. However, the United Nations did not allocate sufficient resources for the reintegration of ex-combatants. *All ex-combatants were given equal rights to be integrated into the post-war society*, unless they were involved into the serious crime activities.

In Eastern Slavonia the parties to the conflict cooperated with UNTAES most of the time.

In intra-state conflicts, small arms are the major source of loss of life and destruction, and so disarmament in a peacekeeping environment must address the problem of small arms (United Nations, 1999). Although demilitarization removed all the heavy weapons from Eastern Slavonia, it did not address the problem of large numbers of small arms held by most residents. In an effort to disarm civilian ex-combatants, UNTAES, which was also responsible for establishing, operating and guarding various weapons collection and destruction sites, launched a weapons buy-back program.

The first step of the efforts was the designation of weapons that could be held legally and a system for their registration. The procedure designed by UNTAES was modeled from Weapons Act of Croatia of 1992, as this would eventually be the law in force in the region at the end of UNTAES' mandate. The weapons permitted were defined by exclusion: automatic, semi-automatic weapons with more than ten rounds of storage capacity, silenced weapons, and some others (Boothby, 1998, p.14).

Weapons, which were not prohibited, could be registered for self-defense purposes and could be kept in the owner's home. Permits to carry weapons were issued for hunting and

sporting purposes subject to a distance limit of 10 km from place of residence. The issuance of registration licenses and carrying permits was implemented through local police stations and the arrangements were introduced in late June 1996, shortly after the end of demilitarization.

With these two major aspects in place, the time had come to institute arrangements to take as many of the remaining weapons out of ex-combatant hands as possible (Boothby, 1998, p.15).

Neither the Basic Agreement nor UN Security council resolution 1037 (1996) contained any specific reference to a weapons buy-back program, nor such a reference was expected.

However, the leadership of the mission regarded the Mandate as a floor to reduce the quantities of weapons from the civilian hands with the need to ensure civil law, the maintenance of *peace and security* and preparations for handing over the region, demilitarized and secure, to the sovereign control of the government of Croatia (Boothby, 1998, p.16).

One possible method that was promptly discarded was a house-to-house search. Such a *“search and seize” policy would have been unacceptable, as UNTAES could be regarded as occupation forces.*

But UNTAES had no money to purchase the weapons, even if it had been possible to overcome the position generally adopted by the UN that the organization should never be in the business of purchasing weapons. Who did have strong interests to purchase the weapons? The Croatian Government did. UNTAES requested payments to be made directly by the Croatian representative to Serbs without any money ever touching the hands of UNTAES personnel. Initially the Croatian authorities wanted the weapons to be stored in the Croatian custody, but UNTAES insisted that they should remain in UNTAES custody on the grounds that the Serb population might quickly develop mistrust in the program, if they thought that the weapons were being handed directly to the Croats. The Government of Croatia largely paid for the program, and residents were paid cash in return for weapons.

The UNTAES' soldiers were authorized to disarm anyone openly carrying small arms and weapons, which had not been registered as "hunting" rifles with the local authorities. The weapons collected in Eastern Slavonia were stored in containers in Zagreb and UNTAES alone controlled access to them until the end of the mandate. In May 1997 the Croatian Minister of Interior wrote to the Transitional Administrator of UNTAES informing him of a request from authorized trade agencies of Austria and Germany to purchase the long fire arms in custody for "decorative purposes". Such a sale would have been attractive to Croatia, as it would result in recovering some funds of the buy back program. The Minister confirmed that the arms in question would be de-activated in accordance with the German standards; they would be no longer usable, and deactivation should be monitored by the UNTAES experts. The permission has been granted. The intention was to deactivate 2,000 weapons, and by mid July 1997 362 weapons had been de-activated and sold. (Boothby, 1998, p.21).

In Eastern Slavonia, residents held on to their small arms and munitions beyond official disarmament period. While many weapons were removed from the region, considerable quantities were believed to be in private hands because of long-term security concerns. The Mission developed a procedure, which a) called upon residents possessing illegal weapons and ammunition to anonymously dispose of them at UNTAES military compounds; and b) required those who were entitled to own small arms and weapons to register them. Upon completion of the weapons buy-back program, no monetary compensation was offered to people who deposited illegal weapons and ammunition after the indicated deadline. The program continued until UNTAES' mandate was terminated in January 1998.

On 16 January 1998, with the end of the UNTAES mandate, the UN containers were removed from their locations and the UN keys were formally handed over to the Croatian

authorities, which funded the program, thereby transferring the of the remaining weapons to the Croatian Government. Some weapons were deactivated or destroyed.

In Eastern Slavonia UNTAES tried as much as possible to demilitarize, disarm and demobilize the ex-soldiers with a great deal of sensitivity. This further encouraged them to cooperate in the processes. According to General Schoups, only once did UNTAES use coercion, and that was when one paramilitary unit had refused to demobilize. The Serb military leadership had been informed of UNTAES plans to use force before they were executed, and had not objected. UNTAES' main objective was to have this unit leave peacefully, if possible.

### **East Timor**

There were seeds for the potential conflict between Interfet and guerillas, with Falintil seeing itself as the "people's army", and providing the future security force for East Timor, and the peace keeping force preferring to see all factions disarmed.

The mandate of the Interfet (United Nations, S/RES/1264, 1999) called for disarming the Falintil guerilla army of the East Timorese people. To bring peace to East Timor, Maj-Gen Cosgrove, the commanding officer of Interfet was quoted saying, the Interfet should "take arms out of the hands of those untrained and unsanctioned as a military force" (Boardhost, 1999).

The *search-and-seize or forced approach* to collect weapons from guerillas has started. Six months of work *did not produce any results*, but only clashes between the Australian soldiers and the guerillas. Guerillas argued that only them could protect the villagers from militia and internal violence without international support.

The demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration program of Falintil was a matter of a small group, and was mainly kept in secrecy (Rees, 2003). Finally, in January 2000, as the initial step, 1750 Falintil guerillas were brought together in cantonment near village of Aileu, but United Nations allowed guerillas to keep the weapons. In February 2000, Interfet was replaced

by the peacekeeping forces of UNTAET. UNTAET mandate (United Nations, S/RES/1272, 1999) did not contain any reference toward the disarmament.

In cantonment, Falintil decided to collect weapons on their own, even UN was in official position of the Transition government. *The non-recorded Falintil weapons were stored by Falintil guardians, and were expected to be put on display in a new resistance museum. Interfet did not complete its mandate to disarm "all local factions", the militias and the Falintil.*

In late 2000, UNTAET and Falintil High command agreed on the creation of the Defense Forces of East Timor (F-FDTL) and the selection process to F-FDTL would remain an internal Falintil matter. UNTAET was so dependent on its main connector with the East Timorese community, now President Xanana Gusmao, who has been also a president of the *Association of Veterans of the Resistance (AVR)* that it did not protest.

The decision regarding who would enter F-FDTL was based on internal Falintil divisions, based on personality, political ideas and ideology. The Falintil commanders and their followers admitted to the F-FDTL were mainly Gusmao loyalists. Only 650 out of 1,750 registered ex-combatants have been selected to the first regiment of the new Armed Forces. Those who were excluded from F-FDTL have found a patron in Rogerio Lobato, a member of Fretilin (the leading party in East Timor) central committee and old political opponent to the Secretary of State for Defense, who is Gusmao's loyalist.

In response to the establishment of the F-FDTL, there has been an increase in establishment of paramilitary security groups across the country (involving disaffected former Falintil activists) operating throughout the county. These groups were connected to *another Association of Ex-Combatants of 1975, called AC75*, headed by Rogerio Lobato. Some of them have been politically oriented, while others have criminal motivations. Under the pressure of the

Fretilin and after series of veteran marches across the country, Lobato was appointed as the Minister of Internal Administration.

World Bank, European Union and US Aid funded the Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Program (FRAP). It was launched to help those 1,100 former Falintil fighters, who did not take part in the new Defense Force, to settle back into civilian lives. The program was implemented by the International Organization for Migration and included the transportation home from the cantonment, monthly allowance of 100 dollars during 5 month period, and provision of some basic food (IOM News, 2001).

### **3.4. Comparing Policy Outcomes**

#### **Eastern Slavonia**

##### **Actual Results of the Weapons Collection and DDR Programs**

All heavy weapons, belonging to the local Serb forces, *including 120 tanks, 120 artillery pieces and 140 mortars, were either removed from the region and taken to Yugoslavia or handed over to UNTAES for disposal.*

The weapons buy back was an element of a broader strategy, since one of the primary objective of the UNTAES was to hand over the Region to the Croatian authorities at the end of the UNTAES mandate demilitarized, *safe and secure*. The buy-back program contributed significantly by reducing the number of weapons available to civilians but *without doing that in such a way as to antagonize the local population* (Boothby, 1998, p.22).

During ten months approximately ten thousand rifles, seven thousand anti-tank rocket launchers weapons, fifteen thousand grenades and almost two million rounds of ammunition and numerous mines and other explosives were removed from civilian hands. Figure 2 presents a reported numbers of weapons collected at the program's conclusion

The Croatian Government provided the funds for the payments made in exchange for weapons and ammunition. The provision of this money was not without political difficulties for the government. There were voices in Croatian Parliament and media that strongly objected to the idea of paying the money, since many people kept in memory the violence and brutality committed by Serbs in 1991-1992. It may have very well been for these and similar reasons that the *Croatian Government never made public the overall cost of the program.*

In the final weeks of the program, in August 1997 there was an upsurge collection activities as people felt that they might get money for weapons as long as the program lasted, and once it ended they would receive nothing, but the continued possession of firearms might well lead to difficulties.

*The ARSK then disbanded and its soldiers became civilians in general.* However, the United Nations did not provide sufficient resources for the reintegration of ex-combatants. All ex-combatants were given equal rights to be integrated into the post-war society. The UN Security Council further called upon the Government of Croatia to grant amnesty to all persons who served in the civil administration, military or police force of the local Serb authorities in the former United Nations Protected Areas with the exception of those who committed war crimes. Noting that the recently passed Croatian amnesty law was a positive step, the Council also called on the Government to make the amnesty as comprehensive as possible in order to help maintain public confidence and stability during the demilitarization and demobilization process. A letter dated 20 May from the Permanent Representative of Croatia (document S/1996/357) informed the Council that Croatia had adopted *a law granting amnesty* with the exception of those who committed war crimes.

### **Visibility of Men with Weapons**

The buy back program removed the excess of supply, although UNTAES suspected that some Serbs kept at least one weapon for possible use if threatened by returning Croats. There were few minor incidents of criminality in which handguns or grenades were used to settle old scores (Boothby, 1998, p.24), but in general, the readiness to the use of weapons steadily diminished as time passed. The existence of the buy back program contributed positively to this change in attitude.

In an effort to show that undeclared weapons would not be tolerated while the Croatian authority was in place, the government made a public announcement to the effect that persons who did not turn in their weapons would be liable to prison penalties of up to ten years (Glas Slavonije, 19 August 1997 in Boothby, 1998).

Upon the completion of the Transitional Administration, the Croatian defense and police budget had been reduced. There had been reduction of the Croatian Armed Forces personnel from 73,000 in 1996 to 58,000 in 1997. The Croatian Government had further reduced its Armed Forces to 40,000 troops. (Kingma, 2001).

### **Potential for Violence**

The transfer of weapons from civilian access into the custody of UNTAES certainly decreased the potential for violence. The potential for real violence from the risk of Croatian military intervention or Serb paramilitary across the separation zone never occurred. (Boothby, 1998, p.25). No organized violence has taken place, and have not been used in clashes between Croats and Serbs since the end of the weapons collection program



## **East Timor**

### **Actual Results of the Weapons Collection and DDR Programs**

The norms and the best practices on the WCP and DDR had been significantly developed between 1996 and 1999-2000; nevertheless the DDR program in East Timor faced difficulties.

According to the reports of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All its Aspects some Falintil never gave up their weapons; some weapons have been subsumed into the FDTL armoury; the rest either left cantonment during 2000 with departing Falintil fighters or were placed in a museum. There are *no reliable estimates of the number of these arms still in circulation* (United Nations, June 2001).

The guerrillas of the Falintil, which was destined to become East Timor's own army, were in total disarray. On 1 February 2001, Falintil was retired and Defense Forces of East Timor (Falintil-(F)-FDTL) was established in fact and in law. 650 former Falintil guerillas were absorbed into the first F-FDTL battalion, as a core of the new 1,500-strong defense forces, thereby leaving behind 1,100 registered former Falintil guerillas at cantonment and approximately 1,250 guerillas who denied to stay at the cantonment. (Note: plans are to develop a force of 1,500 active personnel and 1,500 reserve personnel over the next five years, CIA, 2003).

This shocked many Falintil members who had hoped to become F-FDTL. It is important to note that the UNTAET was an authority at that time. However, the UN left the decision to Falintil to decide who would join the first F-FDTL battalion and who would be demobilized under the Falintil Reinsertion Assistance Program.

### **Visibility of the Men with Weapon**

The visibility of the men with weapons increased (see Figure 3). In addition to 3,000 armed forces, there has been created the armed police forces of 3,362, which included 666

members of the Rapid deployment unit with the main task to perform crowd control and special operations (hostage rescue, anti-organized crimes, etc). In addition, those Falintil members who were not recruited into the new Armed Forces, left cantonment with weapons, thus increasing the number of men with weapons.

The total budget for F-FDTL and National Police of East Timor (PNTL) is 7.98 million (11% of the State budget) and 11.11 million dollars (16% of the State budget) respectively. The budget for both sections has increased by 1.6 million dollars for Defense, and by 1 million dollars for the Police in comparison with previous fiscal year. To finance these increases the budget allocation to other areas has decreased. For example, the budget for the education has been decreased by 1 million, which represent an obstacle for the development (2003/2004 Combined Sources Budget).

### **Potential for violence**

The potential for violence increased. Almost every day UN security reported about robbed houses, destroyed vehicles, and the use of small arms in these incidents. Often the local buses were stopped by the “unknown” groups of the armed people and robbed, some villagers were killed. The first serious riots occurred in November 2002 in Baucau, where several people were injured and the PNTL HQ was demolished. The trigger was the practice of recruitment into PNTL, which is one of the few opportunities for the young people.

The most deadly riots occurred in Dili, capital of East Timor, on 3-4 December 2002. Students had been protesting the arrest of one of their colleagues for alleged gang violence. Police opened fire on a demonstration. The rioting left five people dead, about 40 injured, and many shops, hotels and homes, including Prime Minister residence, burned or looted (ETAN, 2002). Part of the city was in ruins. All international organizations have left the offices and have

been concentrated in the UN compound, meanwhile a lot of international businessmen and UN staff left Dili in emergency.

The destruction and violence in East Timor's capital have given people there a sudden insight into the fragility of their small nation.

#### **4. Program Evaluation**

##### **Eastern Slavonia**

The primary goal of the WCP program was to reduce the number of offensive weapons in the region, and thereby reduce the risks of violence. The DDR leads to maintaining the peace and security (Basic Agreement).

The UNTAES approaches and ways to implement the program were innovative. The UN involved in the program the Croatian Government politically and financially. The opposition in the Croatian Parliament did not support the idea of spending money on the Serb's weapons and advocated a military offense, as Croatia successfully implemented it in Western Slavonia and Krajna.

The experience of voluntary weapons collection program contributed to the development of the practical handbook to guide in the effective collection and destruction of small arms. The Mission's successful handling of the demilitarization and disarmament programs *transformed Eastern Slavonia from an armed camp organized for war into a largely peaceful region* (Boothby, 1998, p. 25).

In Eastern Slavonia, while the disarmament and demobilization programs were carefully considered and planned, the reintegration process appeared not to have been considered as part of the continuum, and thus no resources were provided for it. (United Nations, 1999).

## **East Timor**

East Timor has been seriously hampered by the difficulties of the United Nations to address the issue of the DDR and initial weapons collection among the guerillas of the Falintil. UNTAET committed a series of mistakes vis-a-vis the demobilization of the Falintil guerillas, its relationship with clandestine resistance and the related subsequent decision and non-involvement in recruiting of the F-FDTL and PNTL. The biased recruitment to the F-FDTL divided the veterans of the resistance (ex-combatants) into two camps. The two new state's security institutions, the F-FDTL and PNTL, with its Rapid Deployment Unit, have found themselves in a strong opposition. The role of veterans in the new country dominates the community's political symbolic representation from the villages to the capital.

Early decisions regarding demobilization and establishing the defense force and police services were made in a spirit of political and practical expediency rather than with a view to the long-term development of East Timor. A few UN officials in conjunction with a narrow group of the East Timorese leadership guided the process. This resulted in institutions that are characterized by many in East Timor as being illegitimate (Rees, 2003). This is a dangerous situation. Old divisions among ex-combatants are being institutionalized in the new nation with one political group (loyal to the President) as a F-FDTL and dissidents (under patronage of the Minister of Internal Administration) being the police service. The institutionalization of political differences in the defense forces and police service will almost certainly cause East Timor to take a regional approach to democracy. Given these institutions commercial interests, their political differences are compounded even further, and it looks very much Indonesia (Rees, 2003).

Finally, despite years of UN Transitional Administration and billions of dollars spent on reconstruction, *there is a possibility of disintegrating state divided along political lines drawn by division of the ex-combatants and supported by their control of various state agencies.*

The *security situation* in the country is fragile, which significantly undermines the development process.

## **5. Policy recommendations**

There are several risks that inappropriate aid might undermine the piece-building process, if aid create new disparities, if the timing is not right, if its delivery is not sufficiently demilitarized, or if it is manipulated by local politics (Kingma, 2000b). We observed, that in Eastern Slavonia, the UN followed its plan of weapons collection and demilitarization despite the pressure of the Croatian government and Serbian leadership. In contrast, in East Timor the UN leadership was guided by the Falintil leaders, allowing them to control the weapons collection and to select soldiers for the newly established Armed Forces.

From the examined cases we can derive at some recommendations which will enable to avoid the mistakes and ensure the successful completion of the DDR and creation of peace and secure environment in the post-conflict country, which might be governed by the Transitional Administration of the United Nations.

- (i) Demobilization, disarmament and weapons collection should be completed as a single UN operation. DDR of ex-combatants should be regarded as a comprehensive effort and planned accordingly. Weapons collection and DDR should not start without the political agreements of the parties, despite the deficit of the time. Demobilization alone is not sufficient enough to reduce the number of arms in circulation.
- (ii) Reintegration of ex-combatants should be initiated together with disarmament and demobilization programs and continue upon completion of the two. It must be supplemented by

long-term measures, such as confidence-building, which consolidate *peace* and remove the incentive for people to keep weapons.

(iii) Weapons Collection and DDR need to be a part of a broader political process, such as national capacity

(iv) DDR and the weapons collection program should be included into the initial mandate of any Transition peacekeeping mission, supported by experts, budget, and funding.

(v) The United Nations Transitional Administration should be the sole custodian of weapons collected under its authority, to avoid problems in disposing of the weapons during or at the end of the operation. The responsibility for the weapons collection, storage, and accounting should be given to the Transitional Authority (e.g. United Nations), but not to ex-combatants. Destruction of the weapons should be organized and supervised by the United Nations and parties involved into the weapons collection with a wide publicity.

(vi) Experience has shown that it is difficult to collect all small arms in a conflict country. A strategy must therefore be developed to encourage continued disarmament when the official period for disarmament expires. Alternatively, a program, such as compulsory registration, could be established to ensure a better control of small arms.

(vii) Voluntary weapons collection should be adequately planned. The forced and search-and-seize approaches are not recommended for the Transitional Peacekeeping operations. The search-and-seize approach should take into consideration national peculiarities, and the context of war, when people used to be within so-called army, but not banditry. The voluntary WCP should be in place.

(viii) All, or as many as possible, ex-combatants should be covered by the DDR programs, not only a part of them.

## 6. Conclusion

At the beginning of 2000 the UN Secretary General issued a report on the “Role of the United Nations Peacekeeping in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration”, which highlights the importance of the DDR in peace-building (United Nations, 2000a). A prominent panel of experts reviewing the UN peace operations referred to demobilization and reintegration as key factors in post-war stability that reduce the likelihood of conflict recurring (United Nations, 2000b)

Based on the analysis, this paper concludes that *the UN Transitional Administration’s efforts to conduct comprehensive weapons collection, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants is a very important and sensitive task*. A successful completion of this task greatly contributes to the peace, stability and security of a country. On the contrary, a failure to conduct this task properly may cause a new nation to fail. While internationally recognized as a successful peacekeeping mission, ***UNTAET has actually contributed to legacy of mistakes upon East Timor***, which are already causing East Timor’s democracy to slow down, ***and possibly fail in the medium term***. On the other hand, Eastern Slavonia turned to be a success story from the DDR point of view.

The paper’s findings and recommendations might offer many important insights and be applicable to the UN activities in Solomon Islands, in particular to the weapons collection mechanisms and DDR programs, and to the new UN missions in Burundi, Ivory Coast and Liberia.

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