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## The DDR Pledge

### **Formulated by the DDR community as an output of the International DDR Symposium, 3-7 June 2024**

Today the number of armed conflicts across the globe is on a steady upward trajectory and conflict-related deaths are reaching their highest numbers in several decades. Armed conflicts are increasingly complex – enmeshed in global and regional dynamics. In the face of this complexity, armed conflicts are also increasingly protracted – resistant to tried models of conflict resolution. In these fragile environments, armed groups have proliferated at an increasing pace. In turn, criminal and trafficking activities- including of illicit arms- as well as acts of terrorism, grow in lockstep. These trends produce catastrophic consequences for peace, security, and human flourishing – as well as for the pursuit of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Against this backdrop the UN Secretary-General has released his policy brief, *The New Agenda for Peace*, which outlines a comprehensive set of action recommendations for addressing today’s complex peace and security challenges. *The New Agenda for Peace* specifically identifies Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) as a key approach to addressing conflict drivers and related grievances. Heeding the UN Secretary-General’s call, the DDR community has formulated this *DDR Pledge* in order to operationalize its commitment to *The New Agenda for Peace*, and to serve as a rallying point for shared purpose and common action.

*The DDR Community,*

*Affirming* that the pursuit of sustainable peace and security is a collective responsibility.

*Acknowledging* the UN Secretary-General's call to action and recommendations outlined in his policy brief on a New Agenda for Peace.

*Recalling* the recognized role of Disarmament, Demobilization, & Reintegration (DDR) in pursuing sustainable peace and security, as explicitly outlined in the New Agenda for Peace.

*Recognizing* the DDR Community's efforts as directly linked, in various degrees of involvement and depending on each context, to:

- Action 2: Boost preventative diplomacy in an era of division.
- Action 3. Shift the prevention and sustaining peace paradigm within countries.
- Action 4. Accelerating implementation of the 2030 Agenda for sustainable development to address the underlying drivers of violence and insecurity.
- Action 5. Transform gendered power dynamics in peace and security.
- Action 6: address the interlinkages between climate, peace, and security.
- Action 7: Reduce the human cost of weapons.
- Action 8: Strengthen peace operations and partnerships.

- Action 9: Address peace enforcement.
- Action 10: Support to African Union and subregional peace support operations.
- Action 11: Prevent the weaponization of emerging domains and promote responsible innovation.
- Action 12: Build a stronger collective security machinery.

## **The Primacy of Politics & DDR**

1. *Affirms* the primacy of politics remains a central tenant of Integrated DDR Processes, which can include DDR programmes; DDR related tools - such as Transitional Weapon and Ammunition Management (T-WAM) and Community Violence Reduction (CVR) projects; and Reintegration support.
2. *Recalls* the role that DDR Processes play as a key component of the implementation of political resolutions for the end of armed conflicts – including as a part of Comprehensive Peace Agreements (CPA), Cessation of Hostility Agreements, Ceasefires, and beyond.
3. *Emphasizes* that even when political resolutions for the end of armed conflict do not exist, DDR Processes can support the establishment of environments conducive to such political processes through a context-specific application of principle-based DDR, including through a specific focus on the critical role of youth in shaping the political future.
4. *Commits to support* Member-State’s efforts to establish comprehensive DDR institutional frameworks with the policy, strategic, legal, operational, and communication elements, – both those enabling the collective demobilizations as part of peace processes as well as the voluntary disengagement from non-state armed groups in the absence of a political resolution for the end of armed conflict.
5. *Further Commits* to ensuring Women's full and meaningful participation at all stages of DDR processes, including by early engagement to build capacity of women in the political spheres and security sectors, in order to support gender responsive design and implementation of DDR processes.

## **Conflict Prevention & DDR**

6. *Endorses* the commitment to support the integration of DDR processes into the development of and support of long-term multi-year national prevention strategies, as part of a sustaining peace approach- that addresses the different drivers and enablers of violence and reinforce state institutions, civil society, and social cohesion.
7. *Emphasizes* that human rights should be at the heart of national prevention strategies and DDR processes, with an emphasis on gender and youth inclusion, to protect against marginalization and discrimination, address grievances and support resolution of grievances in constructive, nonviolent, ways, address root causes and drivers of potential violence, and ensure overall conditions of inclusion.
8. *Commits* to supporting regional DDR strategies that will also contribute to conflict prevention, and in doing so to always consider sub-regional, national, and local dynamics and approaches – including through a gender lens.
9. *Further commits* to integrate crime prevention and arms control strategies into DDR processes to simultaneously address conflict drivers and the impacts of conflict on organized crime, with a view to promote alternative livelihoods and reconciliation in order to build resilient and peaceful communities.

10. *Agrees* to mainstreaming a climate lens into DDR Processes - recognizing the operational implications of climate change and ensuring that climate action and peacebuilding reinforce one another.
11. *Pledges* to leverage the diverse organizational mandates, comparative advantages, resource bases, and expertise of DDR actors across the Humanitarian-Development-Peace Nexus (HDPN) to build integrated, coherent, tailored, and gender-sensitive support packages for Member-States, seeking to establish or strengthen national infrastructures for peace as tools for conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

### **DDR in support of Peace Operations, Enforcement, and other efforts**

12. *Affirms* that the DDR Community stands ready to fulfill the call to action outlined by the UN Secretary-General in a New Agenda for Peace to *"Accompany any peace enforcement action by (...) non-military approaches such as disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, addressing main conflict drivers and related grievances"*.
13. *Notes* that in contexts where Armed Groups Designated as Terrorist Organizations are present and active, the DDR Community has provided knowledge and expertise supporting voluntary exits from these groups; the DDR community should advise relevant authorities in these contexts to support community dialogue initiatives when appropriate and to always uphold accountability and justice mechanisms, through complementing frameworks to DDR Processes and/or Prosecution, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (PRR) strategies, including complementarities between the two approaches when appropriate.
14. *Commits* to supporting countries and regional organizations with capacity building, knowledge transfer and direct support to ensure that peace operations and enforcement actions align with the United Nations Charter, international humanitarian and Human Rights Law, the international counter-terrorism framework, and involve effective and transparent accountability measures, including to the Security Council.
15. *Commits to support* the development of clear, prioritized, achievable, sufficiently resourced, and adaptable DDR Mandates as part of peace operations, which align with other cross cutting agendas like the Women Peace and Security and Youth Peace and Security Agendas.
16. *Further Commits* to creating an inclusive mechanism for systematizing and prioritizing our DDR engagements in a coordinated manner, across the UN and other partners. Acknowledging that the new normal of conducting DDR involves supporting both operations authorized under the Security Council, as well as national, regional and sub regional organizations' DDR efforts.
17. *Stands ready to support* the implementation of SCR 2719, specifically, Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) components within them by assisting the African Union (AU) in leading these operations.

### **DDR and Reducing the Human Costs of Weapons**

18. *Emphasizes* that efforts to prevent and combat the illicit proliferation, diversion and trafficking of weapons to fragile, conflict and post-conflict settings in order reduce their human costs.
19. *Affirms* the DDR community's unwavering commitment to protecting civilians and supporting the protection of civilians' agenda by building national security institutions' capacity to implement arms control regulatory frameworks and support TWAM activities.

20. *Recalls* the role of DDR practitioners and Weapon and Ammunition Management (WAM) experts and criminal justice practitioners in supporting regional, subregional, and national instruments and road maps to address challenges related to the diversion, illicit proliferation, and misuse of small arms and light weapons and ammunition.
21. *Commits* to supporting whole of government approaches that integrate small arms and light weapons control into development and violence reduction initiatives at the national and community levels, as well as in national prevention strategies.
22. *Further Commits* to partnering and collaborating with the Arms Trade Treaty, The United Nations Firearms Protocol, and other mechanisms to control small arms and ammunition before, during, and after conflicts to help address the human cost of firearms misuse.
23. *Commits* to supporting the AU efforts to implement their *Silencing the Guns in African Agenda*, which is now a flagship initiative of the AU's 2063 Agenda. Agenda 2063 is Africa's blueprint and master plan for transformation, which strives to end all conflicts in Africa including by supporting DDR efforts as outlined in the AU's master roadmap for the *Silencing the Guns* Agenda (indicator 8).

### **Partnerships and Sustainable Finance for DDR**

22. *Affirms* DDR's commitment to mobilizing resources including by exploring new, predictable, and sustainable financing approaches based on increased partnerships and collaboration, such as establishing a multi-stakeholder trust fund for DDR.
23. *Notes* the catalytic effect of the UN Peacebuilding Fund to spearhead DDR initiatives as the basis for designing and implementing DDR processes and mapping different pathways for funding, including by supporting funding for CVR projects and Reintegration Support, and nurturing relationships with multilateral banks and international financial institutions.
24. *Commits* to formalizing relationships with key partners and stakeholders, across sectors and levels, for sustainable financing of DDR processes; crucially including with international finance institutions.