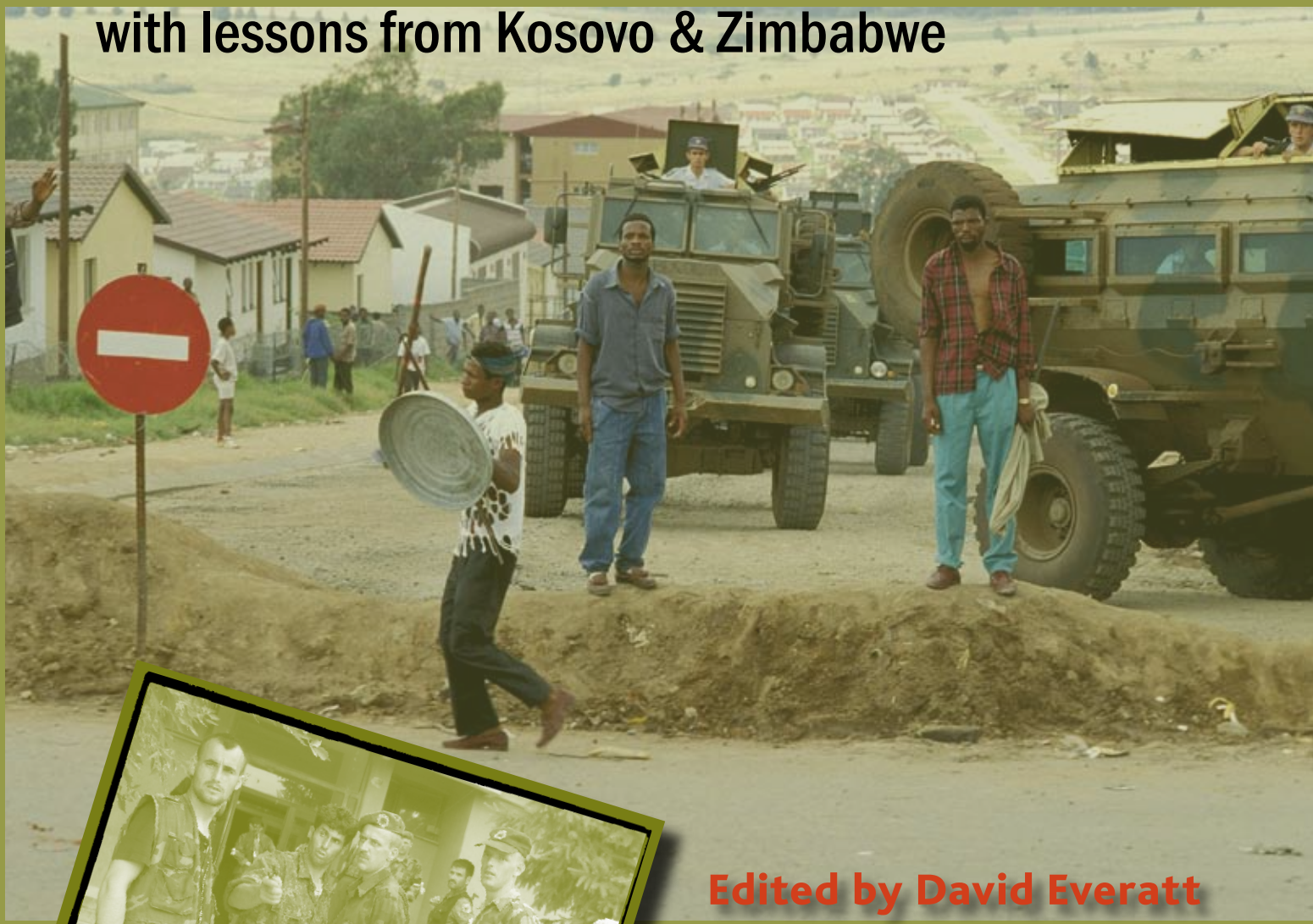
ONLY USEFUL UNTIL DEMOCRACY?

Reintegrating ex-combatants in post-apartheid South Africa

with lessons from Kosovo & Zimbabwe



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The ATLANTIC Philanthropies

S&T Strategy & Tactics

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South Africa lacks detailed information on ex-combatants - the size of the ex-combatant population, its socio-economic status, the needs and aspirations of ex-combatants, and so on. Although research has been undertaken, it is almost exclusively qualitative; the quantitative data that are available do not cover the whole ex-combatant population and are out of date. As a result, a sample survey of ex-combatants was at the heart of the broader project, in order to begin filling our information and knowledge gaps, and to help government, NGOs and CBOs, ex-combatant structures, donors and others better design and target their interventions in the sector. The survey sample was drawn from ex-combatants in Gauteng province and is not representative of ex-combatants in other provinces. It also did not include the white conscripts called up for military service under apartheid; this remains a significant knowledge gap.

ONLY USEFUL UNTIL DEMOCRACY?

A survey of ex-combatants in South Africa

David Everatt
Ross Jennings
October 2006

Executive summary

Introduction

EX-COMBATANTS ARE AN IMPORTANT GROUP IN ANY post-conflict society, but can exert influence way beyond their numbers in transitional and poor societies. The common assumption is that their role will be negative; but this is more often the result of their (real and/or feelings of) neglect rather than an agreed strategy and set of actions on the part of ex-combatants. Trained in conflict, sabotage, weapons use and the like, their negative potential is often emphasised. As a result, ex-combatants are often regarded as potentially deviant or recidivist. The involvement of some ex-combatants in crime heightens these fears of their (broader) negative and disruptive social influence. Alternatively, ex-combatants are cast as damaged, as victims, with frequent discussion of the psychological after-effects of their involvement in conflict. Very rarely are ex-combatants regarded in a positive light, as citizens who may require particular inputs or support but who also have a contribution to make in building the new, post-conflict society. These various perceptions of ex-combatants have been prevalent in South Africa for the last 12 years.

All post-conflict societies have a moment of choice. They may allocate scarce resources specifically to ex-combatants – not the common small, once-off demobilisation grant, but an integrated set of services that deal with psychological issues as well as equipping people for social and economic engagement in the newly 'normal' society. Or, after the demobilisation grant has been awarded, they may regard the needs of ex-combatants as dealt with and (implicitly or explicitly) reject the notion that ex-combatants subsequently have any greater need for resources than women, or children, or people with disabilities, and so on. Ex-combatants are left to compete for resources as members of other social groups. In both cases, ex-combatants are commonly regarded with fear and suspicion. Where they once enjoyed hero status, they come to be perceived as threatening villains.

A distinguishing feature of the post-apartheid dispensation has been the lack of a concerted effort to reintegrate the ex-combatants, estimated at some 80 000, into society. A small number were recruited into the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), but many left soon after, complaining of racism, maltreatment and more; some received military veterans' pensions; but more meaningful interventions were left to a small number of non-profit organisations (NPOs).

In designing policy and programmatic interventions, NPOs and others have relied on inaccurate and sparse data on the nature and challenges of the target group for making decisions about which interventions are most likely to be effective. To improve the quality of the data available and address these gaps, The Atlantic Philanthropies commissioned Strategy & Tactics to carry out a baseline study to establish the needs of the ex-combatant population.

The study included international and local case studies, focus groups, life stories and a survey of ex-combatants. This report details the findings from the survey. This was not a national survey of ex-combatants. Fieldwork was carried out only in Gauteng, because of the enormous complexities involved in accessing ex-combatants. Gauteng has a large concentration of ex-combatants, including informal formations such as self-defence and self-protection units, which we were keen to include in the sample. Although we are not in a position to extrapolate from the Gauteng data to ex-combatants in other provinces, it seems a reasonable assumption that given Gauteng's robust economy, needs elsewhere will be similar but more pronounced; services less accessible; and the space for intervention greater.

Chapter 1: The combat experience

Two-thirds of all ex-combatants were younger than 20 years old when they became part of the conflict that racked South Africa. The primary motivation among all ex-combatants was a desire to fight apartheid, followed by a need to protect one's community as another major motivating factor.

While activities undertaken by ex-combatants in the different armed formations varied from actual combat to sabotage to training, exposure to violence was widespread. The overwhelming majority of respondents witnessed someone being severely injured or killed. A fifth of ex-combatants stated that they had been injured, and had been left with a permanent disability as a result of the injury. This high prevalence rate will impact on service provision; and all service providers must take the needs of ex-combatants with disabilities into account.

Large numbers of ex-combatants still experience a range of psychological and physiological effects as a result of their involvement in the conflict. This, after more than a decade since the event(s), reflects that significant numbers of ex-combatants have not processed the events and suggests the need for professional interventions to deal with the situation. In our sample, and using our particular indicators, we found that one in eight ex-combatants could be classified as experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). These ex-combatants were more likely to be male, aged 31 to 40 and without regular employment. They were also more likely to come from the self-protection units (SPUs), APLA, MK and the SADF.

In any post-conflict society, demobilisation represents a key moment for acknowledging the violent past. It helps ex-combatants transform themselves into engaged, productive citizens of the new society – mirroring the transformation of the society as a whole. However, demobilisation entirely by-passed many former combatants, both from formal and informal armed formations. As a result, only a small proportion received any financial assistance at the end of combat. Similarly, only a small proportion of ex-combatants were part of the integration process. And respondents began leaving the newly created SANDF fairly soon after joining, confirming existing research which has pointed to racism, conflict, suspicion and poorly designed and implemented systems combining to make integration an extremely tough process for ex-combatants from outside the former SADF.

Chapter 2: Current circumstances

Previous research among ex-combatants found that the financial capacities of families to support ex-combatants shaped the experience of social reintegration (Heideman, 2006). Our survey appears to bear out these findings. Bearing in mind that the vast majority of our sample was aged between 30 and 45, we found that almost half of all ex-combatants surveyed are still living in households headed by their parents or grandparents. In addition, six out of every ten ex-combatants remain single, with only a third either married or living with a partner. It would appear that social reintegration has been problematic for ex-combatants since the end of the conflict and the onset of a democratic South Africa.

Compared with the general population in Gauteng, many ex-combatants have sufficient education to compete in the labour market. The proportions of ex-combatants

with matric or post-matric qualifications are very similar to the proportions of the general African population in the province. Furthermore, it is also evident that far fewer ex-combatants have no formal schooling or have only completed some form of primary education, compared with the general population.

Despite the fact that many ex-combatants have sufficient skills to *compete* in the labour market, when we look at the current employment status of ex-combatants, we see one of the largest legacies of their involvement in combat. The rate of unemployment for ex-combatants is a staggering 80%, almost double the national rate of unemployment.

The survey data show that ex-combatants tend to live in female-headed households and that these households display relatively high levels of overcrowding. Three-quarters of all ex-combatant households are living on less than R3 000 per month; with the average household size of 5.5, one can appreciate the economic pressure that these households are under. With the high rate of unemployment among ex-combatants, it is clear that they face a great economic struggle. This situation must be taken into account when service providers design appropriate interventions as it is unlikely that ex-combatants would be able to afford transport to any designated facility, may not be well-nourished, and so on.

Chapter 3: Attitudes and values

While the majority of ex-combatants are unhappy with their lives, which is to be expected given the economic circumstances in which most of them live, they are more or less equally divided on whether life for them has improved or not in the past ten years. One would imagine that if the plight of ex-combatants is not dealt with – that they remain unemployed and feel a burden to their families – then the level of satisfaction with their own lives is going to drop further and, ultimately, they will be unable to see any future improvement in their lives. There is a window period that is slowly closing. Their situation must be addressed now while significant numbers of ex-combatants can still see that life is better today than it was before and that their involvement in the conflict was not in vain; and while they remain open to external interventions.

The survey found that over half of respondents have been tested for HIV, far higher than the national average. A similar proportion told us they had former colleagues now living with AIDS, while two-thirds knew of colleagues who had died of AIDS. This is an exceptionally high figure, suggesting that intervening in the area of HIV/AIDS is of critical importance for ex-combatants, many of whom are too poor to afford either treatment or a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet.

Four in ten ex-combatants know colleagues who have turned to crime – another high number. Their potential for using violence is both terrifying and worthy of censure where it has occurred. But what matters most, in our opinion, is not to spend time pointing fingers at ex-combatants, further demonising them and debasing the struggle in which they played an important part. Rather, the focus should be on preventing this occurring in future by identifying specific groups of ex-combatants and their needs, and helping them deal with both the socio-economic and psycho-social after-effects of their participation in the armed struggle.

One consistent theme in research among ex-combatants in South Africa is the need for recognition and acknowledgement from friends, family and community, for the role played by ex-combatants during the struggle. The data show that the responses of families and communities have been overwhelmingly positive and yet there remains a prevailing sense of betrayal among ex-combatants. The ex-combatants who participated in our survey are clear that political leaders only cared for them until 1994 – hence the title of this report. Once political power had been secured, and political violence diminished, so ex-combatants – and their particular skills – became unnecessary. Betrayal is firmly attributed to political leaders.

Compensation is also a common theme. We are in a situation where over a decade into democracy, many ex-combatants were not officially demobilised, assessed or assisted (financially or otherwise), and are struggling to move out of the past. Given their socio-economic circumstances, compensation is inevitably an important issue, and the inadequacy of compensation (and by implication the demobilisation process) is increasingly becoming a rallying call for ex-combatants. It seems clear that government has to play a central role in working with ex-combatants. This must cover a range of functions: from official recognition (as part of healing),

to supporting reconciliation, to welfare provision, to assessment and appropriate compensation.

Despite many of the negative attitudes and opinions that ex-combatants hold, two-thirds of all ex-combatants were clear that they would do it all again, even knowing what they know now about the consequences for them of post-apartheid democratisation. An even greater proportion is also confident that they and their families will be living a better life a decade from now. These feelings are helping to keep the window open for intervening and working with ex-combatants.

Chapter 4: Outreach

How to access ex-combatants is an important factor to consider when developing any intervention or programme for this group. Media access appears widespread, with the vast majority of ex-combatants accessing each of the three mainstream media types (radio, television and newspapers) on a daily or weekly basis. This is good news for any mass outreach initiative seeking to use these media.

Outreach is also possible through various civil society organisations. Ex-combatants are a highly politicised group, showing high membership of various political parties. They are also likely to belong to neighbourhood watch and community police forums (again in considerably greater numbers than among the general population), as well as to a wide range of sporting, cultural, civic and other structures.

Ex-combatants stay in close touch with each other and seem to retain contact with their military leadership structures. However, they are more likely to maintain contact and continue informal networking with former colleagues than to be members of veterans' associations or structures. The latter are of course important, but are not gatekeepers to *all* ex-combatants; service providers will have to work with them, but also go beyond them and engage in the far tougher work of identifying and working through informal networks.

Chapter 5: Needs and provision

So what is it that ex-combatants want? Nothing out of the ordinary: they want help in starting businesses and help with healing. Skills development and business start-up support were the most popular requests, followed by a second pairing of life skills and support programmes for spouses/families. In other words, economic issues were primary, followed by coping support strategies.

While some ex-combatants have participated in cleansing rituals or undergone therapy, large numbers have not; more than eight out of every ten with potential PTSD have not received any therapy or counselling. Given the cost and inaccessibility of traditional one-on-one therapy, it may not be a solution that can be applied at scale. But the key point is that large numbers of ex-combatants are seeking to cleanse themselves of the hangover of involvement in conflict and violence, and provision to meet this need must be provided, and tailored to meet their specific needs on an appropriate scale.

Ex-combatants may have lost faith in their political leaders, but they have not lost faith in government generally. The survey suggests that the three key players are government, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and ex-combatants' own structures. It suggests that government/NGO partnerships working with veterans via their own structures, could play a very positive role in serving the needs of ex-combatants.

Introduction

The Atlantic Philanthropies

The Atlantic Philanthropies is dedicated to bringing about lasting changes in the lives of disadvantaged and vulnerable people. To achieve this it awards grants to carefully selected organisations that serve disadvantaged people to help these organisations increase their reach and impact, and advocate for social change.

One of its programme areas is the Reconciliation & Human Rights Programme, where it seeks to bring about stable, peaceful, sustainable societies in which disadvantaged and vulnerable people are guaranteed full access to their rights. South Africa is one of four areas in the world where The Atlantic Philanthropies has a Reconciliation & Human Rights Programme. One of the goals for the programme in South Africa is to support organisations that undertake projects aimed at reintegrating ex-combatants into society.

Background and motivation for the study

During the anti-apartheid struggle, large numbers of South Africans were involved in armed activity. Many joined the military wings of the liberation movements ("formal structures"). These operated from bases in the neighbouring states. Inside the country others were caught up in the internecine violence between supporters of the African National Congress (ANC) and the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), which characterised the political transition of the early 1990s. Each side formed armed "self defence committees" ("informal structures") to protect neighbourhoods and communities from attacks by the other. Many of these combatants were exposed to and traumatised by violence.

Ex-combatants are an important group in any post-conflict society, but can exert influence way beyond their numbers in transitional and poor societies. The common assumption is that their role will be negative; but this is more often the result of their (real and/or feelings of) neglect rather than an agreed strategy and set of actions on the part of ex-combatants. Trained in conflict, sabotage, weapons use and the like, their negative potential is often emphasised and as a result ex-combatants are often regarded as potentially deviant or recidivist. The involvement of ex-combatants in crime heightens these fears of their negative and disruptive social influence. Alternatively, ex-combatants are cast as damaged, as victims, with frequent discussion of the psychological after-effects of their involvement in conflict.

All post-conflict societies have a moment of choice. They may allocate scarce resources specifically to ex-combatants – not the common small, once-off demobilisation grant, but an integrated set of services that deal with psychological issues as well as equipping people for social and economic engagement in the newly "normal" society. Or, after the demobilisation grant has been awarded, they regard the needs of ex-combatants as dealt with and (implicitly or explicitly) reject the notion that ex-combatants have any greater need for resources than women, or children, or people with disabilities, and so on. In this case, ex-combatants are left to compete for resources as members of other social groups. In both cases, ex-combatants are commonly regarded with fear and suspicion. Where they once enjoyed hero status, they are now perceived as threatening villains.

South Africa is just over a decade into democracy, and the co-existence of ex-combatants of all races is a new social phenomenon. Ex-combatants appear in the study to be an emerging social group, with a consciousness of common needs and a possible shared identity as ex-combatants overlaying older political differences. To some extent this reflects a kind of camaraderie forged through common experiences during the conflict phase; but experiences during the post-conflict phase, including lack of recognition, lack of resources, poverty and neglect, are also key variables in forging this consciousness.

As our case studies from Zimbabwe and Kosovo suggest, South Africa is now facing a moment that is full of both possibility and danger. It offers the possibility of engaging ex-combatants as a more or less cohesive group in order to meet their needs at scale. But if their needs go unmet, there is a real possibility that, over time, ex-combatants could become a significant force in society with the potential to destabilise the young South African democracy.

A distinguishing feature of the post-apartheid dispensation has been the lack of a concerted effort to reintegrate these ex-combatants, estimated at some 80 000, into society. A small number were recruited into

the South African National Defence Force (SANDF), some received military veterans' pensions, but more meaningful interventions were left to a small number of non-profit organisations (NPOs).

The need for coherent policy and targeted programmes

In designing policy and programmatic interventions, NPOs and others have relied on inaccurate and sparse data on the nature and the challenges of the target group and therefore which interventions are most likely to be effective. To address these gaps The Atlantic Philanthropies commissioned Strategy & Tactics to carry out a baseline study to establish the needs of the ex-combatant population.

The main purpose of the survey is to establish baseline data on the social and economic needs of ex-combatants and the extent of their re-integration into society. It is the intention of The Atlantic Philanthropies that the immediate beneficiaries of the findings will be those organisations working in the sector, which will use the data to design better interventions for the social re-integration of ex-combatants.

Methodology

When we first developed the proposal and methodology for the project, we anticipated that we would be able to use the Certified Personnel Register (CPR) as the sampling frame for a national survey of 1 000 ex-combatants from the various armed formations. We were going to bolster this with a survey of 200 individuals from the informal self-defence units (SDUs) and self-protection units (SPUs) across KwaZulu-Natal and Gauteng. However, the proposal noted that we were unable to be specific about the sampling methodology to be employed until we had accessed the CPR and any other data that was available.

Once we had discovered that the CPR was not useable as a sampling frame, we spent six months gathering as much information as we could from the various armed formations, concentrating our efforts mainly in Gauteng. This process was extremely time-consuming for the following reasons:

- The arena of ex-combatants and their various associations is an extremely divided and contested one. Levels of suspicion and mistrust are high and people needed multiple meetings with us before deciding to share any information with us.
- Many ex-combatants have become disillusioned with their organisations, leading to the emergence of new associations (further splintering the terrain) or causing many to disengage/deregister and therefore become harder to track through these structures.
- Ex-combatants generally feel neglected, demoralised and demotivated. They feel that others (including their associations, research organisations and other companies) have used their names to benefit, but that nothing comes back to the ex-combatants themselves.

Nevertheless, we were able to compile our own database and list of over 2 000 ex-combatants in the province. However, following on this intensive information gathering exercise and the challenges presented, it was clear that a national survey was not feasible. A decision was taken with The Atlantic Philanthropies to shift the focus of the survey to Gauteng only. It was felt that a survey of 1 200 ex-combatants (across all formal and informal formations) would provide a sufficiently accurate picture of the situation of ex-combatants in Gauteng, the province where The Atlantic Philanthropies' partners do most of their work. This comprehensive picture would then allow for detailed planning and programme design on a more focused basis, and therefore still meet the main aim of the study.

To secure access to the ex-combatants in Gauteng, our fieldwork team (FieldFocus) had to work through the various formal and informal associations and groupings across the province.[1] It soon became clear that we would not be able to use our own database to sample from as accessing the individuals proved impossible without the go-ahead and support of the various structures in each of the geographical areas.

From the beginning of March 2006, the fieldworkers moved from area to area, where ex-combatants were called to a central point by the various structures, and the aim and nature of the project and the survey was explained to them. They were then given the opportunity to participate in the survey process or not.

[1] There were some formations that, for a variety of reasons, chose not to participate in the process.

The enormous effort of our fieldwork team and the various organisers/coordinators deserves special mention, as this phase would not have been completed without their efforts. Special thanks also to all the ex-combatants who gave up their time to share often difficult memories.

Limitations of the methodology

This is not a national survey of ex-combatants. As mentioned above, fieldwork was carried out only in Gauteng, because of the enormous complexities involved in accessing ex-combatants. Gauteng had a large concentration of ex-combatants, including informal formations such as self-defence and self-protection units, which we were anxious to include in the sample. Although we are not in a position to extrapolate from the Gauteng data to ex-combatants in other provinces, it seems a reasonable assumption that needs elsewhere will be more pronounced; services less accessible; and space for intervention greater.

The realised sample of ex-combatants is not representative of all ex-combatants in Gauteng. In the absence of any detailed information on all ex-combatants as well as difficulties in accessing ex-combatants known to us, we were forced to survey those ex-combatants who were still in touch with their leadership structures and were willing to participate in the process. As a result we have ended up with a sample that is representative of those ex-combatants in the province who are known to the various formations, both formal and informal.

The sample

The fieldwork process was completed in early May 2006. By this time, 1 196 ex-combatants across the different formations had been interviewed:

Most respondents came from the SDUs and MK. As Table 1 shows, the largest proportion of respondents (41%) was from the SDUs, with MK making up a further third (33%) of the sample. While APLA and AZANLA also had significant numbers of respondents, the SADF and SPUs had relatively few respondents. As a result, differences noted in this report that involve SADF and SPU respondents should be treated with caution.

It should also be noted that while reference throughout this report is made to SDUs and SPUs as formations, this should not be construed to mean that they were homogenous entities with a common political affiliation. However, they are reported in this vein as their informal status serves as a comparison to the formal armed formations of APLA, AZANLA, MK and SADF.

Race, sex and age

Most respondents were African. Respondents were overwhelmingly African, with only two Indian and two coloured respondents in the sample. No white ex-combatants were interviewed. Understanding the impact of combat on Permanent Force and conscripts alike remains a gap in our knowledge of this important social group.[2]

Most respondents were male. Respondents were primarily male (79%), with women making up a fifth (21%) of the sample. While women were found in all armed formations, they were more represented in AZANLA (26%), MK (22%) and SDUs (21%).

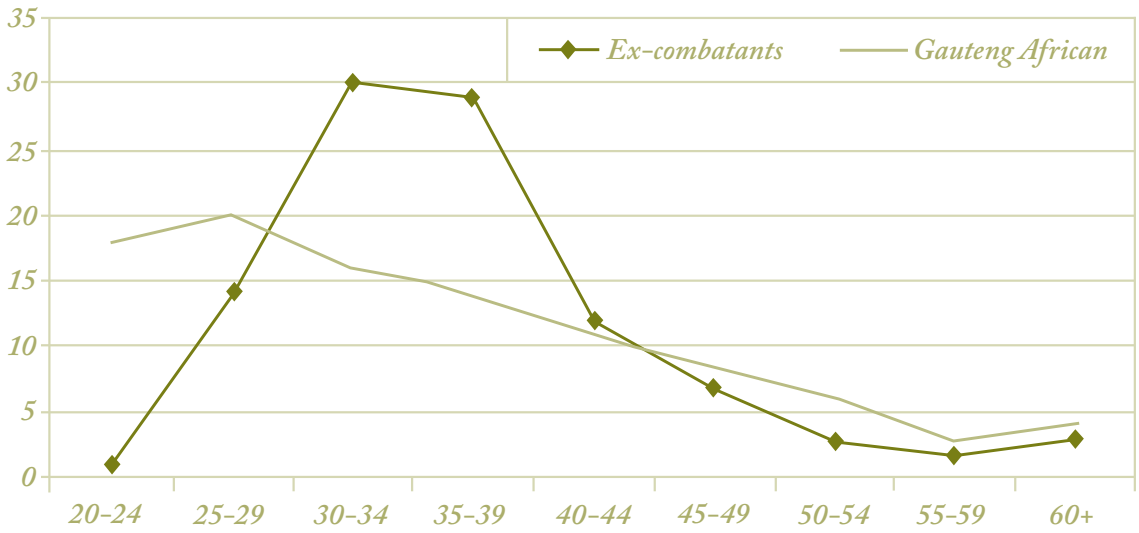
[2] For a qualitative account of the impact of combat on this group, see Thompson, J.H. (2006) *An Unpopular War: From Afkak to Bosbefok*. Cape Town: Zebra Press.

Table 1: Formations to which respondents belonged

Formation	Number of respondents	Percentage of sample
APLA	*149*	*12%*
AZANLA	*120*	*10%*
MK	*393*	*33%*
SADF	*25*	*2%*
Self-defence unit (SDU)	*485*	*41%*
Self-protection unit (SPU)	*15*	*1%*
Other	*9*	*1%*

Respondents' ages ranged from 21 to 79. While seven respondents refused to provide us with any personal details (which included their age), the ages of the ex-combatants ranged from 21 to 79, with the mean age of our sample being 37 years old.

Figure 1: Age cohorts of ex-combatants compared with Gauteng Africans



Most respondents were between the ages of 30 and 45. When compared with the age cohorts of all Africans residing in Gauteng in 2001 (see Figure 1), we can see that the vast majority (70%) of the ex-combatant sample was between the ages of 30 and 45. This is an important life stage as it is often when individuals move away from their parents' homes to establish their own lives and families. We return to this in Chapter 2: Current circumstances.

Given the spread of ages of the ex-combatants, one would also expect there to be significant differences across the different cohorts in terms of their current circumstances, experiences and their wishes and needs for the future. This will be explored throughout the report.

Theoretical premise of the study

Much has been written on the effects of participation in combat on ex-combatants from a range of different perspectives.[3] For the purpose of this report, we have chosen to focus on the current circumstances of ex-combatants, which would put us somewhere in the realm of life course theory. While most of the literature relates to US veterans, the basic thrust of life course theorists is that participation in conflict/combat disrupts the lives of ex-combatants. "They are often separated from their families, are unable to pursue educational and employment opportunities, and experience traumas that scar them mentally and physically" (Heideman, 2006:2). When the conflict ends, these combatants must return to civilian life, where, the literature argues, "they face disrupted family life, damaged community relations, poor employment prospects, and the long-term personal imprint of the conflict" (Heideman, 2006:2).

Life course theorists see participation in armed struggle as a major turning point in the lives of ex-combatants, as it redirects the path they take in life. While the literature may well be overwhelmingly focused on US veterans, it does raise a number of important questions that need to be looked at in order to understand the long-term effects on ex-combatants:

- What was the nature of the combat experience?
- What were the effects of involvement on family life?
- How did involvement affect the education and long-term economic prospects for ex-combatants?
- How did involvement affect the attitudes and headspace of ex-combatants?
- What was available for ex-combatants after the conflict ended?

[3] For a more in-depth look at the literature, see Heideman, L. (2006) 'Recovering from the Revolution: Reintegrating Guerrilla Ex-Combatants'. Unpublished Masters' thesis.

Structure of the report

Chapter 1 looks at the nature of the combat experience, focusing on the level of involvement of ex-combatants and their exposure to various experiences during this time. The chapter also looks at their involvement in the demobilisation and integration processes that signalled the end of combat.

Chapter 2 deals with the current circumstances of ex-combatants, looking at their family lives and their economic situation.

Chapter 3 gives attention to profiling the attitudes and values of ex-combatants by analysing their "headspace". This is done by looking at their attitudes to a range of socio-political issues.

Chapter 4 looks at issues pertinent to outreach, looking at what media ex-combatants use, as well as their engagement and involvement in various civic, social and communal activities.

Chapter 5 looks at the particular needs of ex-combatants and what services and programmes could be provided in order to respond effectively to these needs.

Chapter 1: The combat experience

Introduction

This section focuses on the combat experience of the ex-combatants. It is presented first because we believe that the nature of their involvement and exposure influences their current life situation, their values and attitudes and their needs and wishes for the future.

We look firstly at their life situation on joining the conflict as well as their motivation for joining. We then focus on the nature of their involvement in the combat and conclude by looking at the psychological effects on ex-combatants of their involvement in combat.

Situation on joining

Most ex-combatants were younger than 20 when they joined the conflict. We asked respondents what age they were when they joined the combat. As Table 2 shows, more than one in ten (13%) were less than 15 when they joined. When coupled with the more than half (54%) of ex-combatants aged 15 to 19, we see that two-thirds of all ex-combatants (67%) were less than 20 years old when they became a part of the conflict that racked South Africa for so long.

Table 2: Age on joining the combat

Less than 15	*13*
15 – 19	*54*
20 – 24	*20*
25 – 29	*6*
30+	*7*

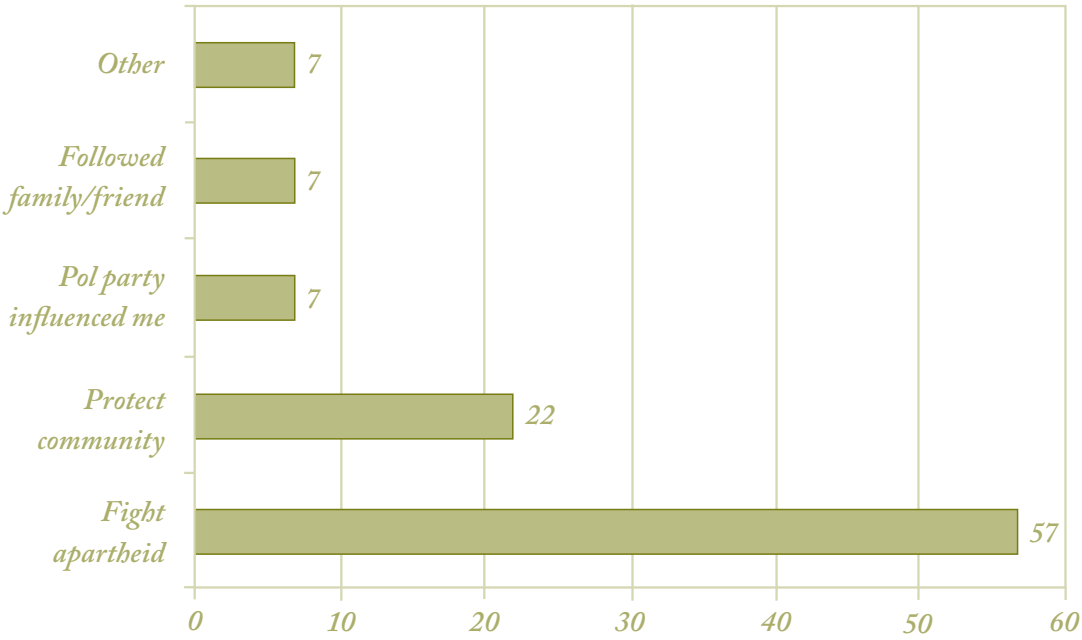
Ex-combatants between the ages of 20 and 24 had the highest levels of education at the time of joining. While there were no significant differences between men and women in terms of the age at which they joined, there was a relationship between the age at which they joined and their education level on joining. As one would expect, the younger ex-combatants had lower levels of education when joining up – for example, more than half (52%) of those who were less than 15 had only had some primary school education as opposed to a fifth (21%) of those aged 20 to 24, who had at least a matric.

Combatants over the age of 25 had lower levels of education when joining. While these findings are to be expected, it is interesting to look at the education levels of those who were older when they joined up, as, in theory, their involvement in education would have ceased at that point in their lives. What we find is that those ex-combatants who were older on joining were more likely to have had lower levels of education – a third (34%) of those aged 25 to 29 had only some primary school education, as did more than two-fifths (43%) of those ex-combatants aged 30 or older.

This raises the question of whether these older ex-combatants were easy recruits for the armed formations as, with their low levels of education, the world of work was unlikely to offer them much. While we are not able to categorically answer this question, looking at where these ex-combatants were to be found fighting, and their motivation for joining the combat, offers some pointers.

Most of the older ex-combatants belonged to the SDUs, which they joined because they wanted to protect their communities. These older ex-combatants were far more likely to have been found in the SDUs than any other of the armed formations. When ex-combatants were asked why they had joined the combat (see Figure 2), a fifth (22%) stated that it was to protect their community. This proportion was far higher for ex-combatants aged 25 to 29 (35%) and those aged 30+ (39%). It would appear that these older ex-combatants, despite having very low levels of education, were not mere cannon fodder recruited by various armed formations. Rather, they were motivated by a sincere desire to protect their communities. However, as Figure 2 shows, the main motivation (57%) across all ex-combatants was a desire to fight apartheid.

Figure 2: Reason for joining the conflict



Most MK, APLA and AZANLA ex-combatants joined to fight apartheid. As one would expect, the reasons for joining the conflict differed according to which formation the ex-combatants were a part. More than two-thirds (69%) of MK ex-combatants were motivated by fighting apartheid, with similar proportions of APLA (66%) and AZANLA (60%) ex-combatants citing this as the main reason. Being influenced by a political party, family member or friend was more common for APLA (26%) and AZANLA (22%) ex-combatants than for any of the other formations. While SADF members also cited protecting their community and outside influence as reasons for why they joined the conflict, more than a quarter (28%) of SADF members were motivated by the need for a job.

As mentioned above, the desire to protect one's community was strong for SDU members (40%) as well as for SPU members (40%). What is surprising is that similar proportions of SDU (46%) and SPU (47%) ex-combatants cited fighting apartheid as their main motivation for getting involved in the conflict. This is surprising given the close relationship between Inkatha (to whom the SPUs were closely aligned) and the apartheid state.

We asked respondents how supportive their families had been when they joined the conflict.

Table 3: How supportive family was when ex-combatant joined the combat

Very supportive	*34*
Supportive	*30*
Average	*7*
Unsupportive	*8*
Very unsupportive	*9*
Didn't know	*12*

Most families were either supportive or very supportive of ex-combatants when they joined. We see in Table 3 that most families were supportive of ex-combatants with almost two-thirds (64%) being supportive or very supportive. At the other end of the scale less than one in five (17%) were unsupportive or very unsupportive. Interestingly, there were no real differences in the levels of family support across the different formations. In case one thinks that the conflict is the domain of the male member of society, there were also few differences between the levels of support for male and female ex-combatants from their families. In fact, female ex-combatants were less likely (10%) to be unsupported than their male counterparts (19%).

What Table 3 also shows is that more than one out of every ten (12%) ex-combatants did not tell their families that they had joined the conflict. Although we are unable to say why this was the case, APLA (17%) and MK (16%) ex-combatants were least likely to have told their families of their involvement.

Activities undertaken

Most of the ex-combatants were recruited, trained and deployed inside South Africa. As we saw above, our sample is balanced between formal and informal armed formations; and should also not be seen as a survey of exiles. In fact, just 22% of respondents had spent time outside South Africa as part of their military service/ training: the vast majority were recruited, trained and deployed inside South Africa.

Most ex-combatants who had been in exile came from MK, APLA and AZANLA. As one would expect, ex-combatants from the formal formations of MK (36%), APLA (35%) and AZANLA (29%) were more likely to have been in exile. However, a small proportion (6%) of SDU members had also spent time in exile. Male ex-combatants were more likely to have been in exile (24%) than their female counterparts (13%).

Of those who had been in exile, the majority had spent more than three years outside of the country:

Table 4: Time spent in exile (of those who were in exile)

Less than a year	*16*
1 – 2 years	*14*
3 – 5 years	*34*
5 – 10 years	*19*
10 years+	*16*

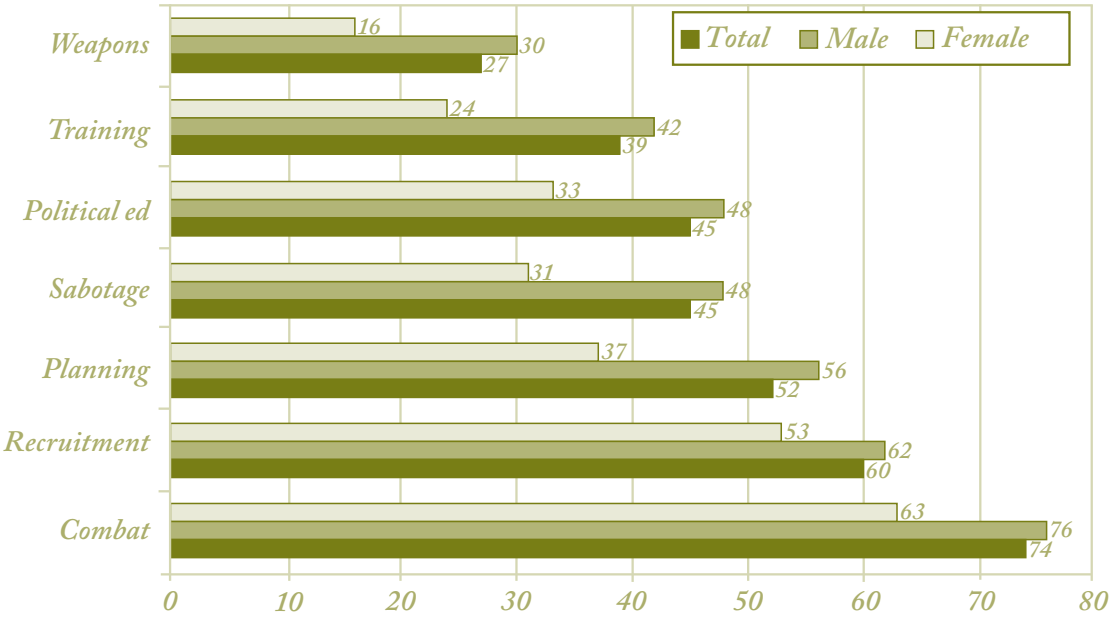
Table 4 shows that a third (34%) of those who had been in exile spent between three and five years in exile with a further third (35%) having spent more than five years in exile. One would imagine that the more time spent away from the country would increase the difficulties experienced in reintegration on return. We shall return to this in the following chapters.

Involvement and exposure

Most ex-combatants were involved in actual combat. During their involvement, respondents participated in a wide range of activities, as indicated in Figure 3. (Numbers do not add up to 100% because respondents could give more than one answer.) Figure 3 shows that the most common activity for ex-combatants was actual combat, with three-quarters (74%) of all ex-combatants involved in this activity. At the other end of the list we see that a quarter (27%) were involved in the transportation of weapons.

Women were significantly involved in combat activities. Noteworthy is that the data again seems to dispel the notion that involvement in conflict – and especially in the realm of actual combat – is mainly the domain of the male. While smaller proportions of women were involved in each of the activities in comparison with men. Figure 3 shows, however, that significant proportions of women were still involved in each of these activities.

Figure 3: Activities undertaken by sex



We now look at the differences in activities undertaken by armed formation:

Table 5: Activities undertaken by formation

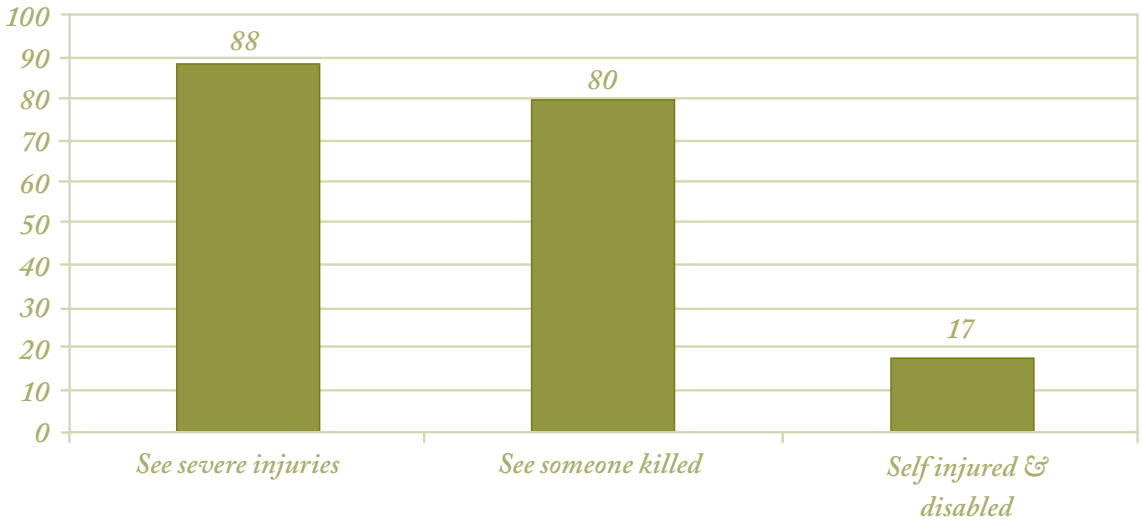
	APLA	AZANLA	MK	SADF	SDU	SPU
Fighting/combat	*58*	*71*	*72*	*44*	*82*	*73*
Recruitment	*70*	*63*	*58*	*12*	*60*	*60*
Planning	*46*	*57*	*49*	*20*	*55*	*60*
Sabotage	*45*	*48*	*44*	*8*	*47*	*40*
Political education	*56*	*55*	*50*	*12*	*36*	*27*
Training	*44*	*46*	*42*	*28*	*33*	*27*
Transporting weapons	*36*	*29*	*28*	*8*	*24*	*13*

The SADF ex-combatants were the least involved in actual combat. While, as Table 5 shows, there are some differences between the different formations and the activities that their ex-combatants were involved in, the main difference relates to the SADF ex-combatants. Far lower proportions of SADF ex-combatants were involved in each of the activities, with less than half (44%) involved in actual combat.

Most ex-combatants were exposed to violence. While activities undertaken by ex-combatants in the different armed formations vary, exposure to violence was widespread (see Figure 4). The overwhelming majority of respondents have witnessed "someone being severely injured" (88%) or "someone being killed" (80%). There were no significant differences between male and female ex-combatants in relation to this exposure.

Fewer SADF ex-combatants witnessed violence. Similarly, there were no real differences across the different formations in terms of exposure to this violence. The only difference was among SADF respondents – only 64% had witnessed someone being severely injured and 52% had seen someone being killed. The lower proportions of SADF ex-combatants who were involved in actual combat and thereby somewhat screened from this violence, can explain this.

Figure 4: Exposure to violence



The rate of disability among the ex-combatants is higher than the rate in Gauteng or the national prevalence rate. Figure 4 also shows that almost a fifth (17%) of ex-combatants stated that they had been injured, and had been left with a permanent disability as a result of the injury. While this is higher than the proportion of ex-combatants who answered the question on whether or not they had a disability (9% claimed to have a disability), the disability prevalence rate probably lies somewhere between the two figures. This is substantially higher than the national prevalence rate (Census 2001 estimated it to be 5%) or the rate in Gauteng (4%). This high prevalence rate will impact on service provision; and the needs of people with disabilities need to be taken into account by all service providers.

Male ex-combatants were far more likely to cite such injuries (20%) than their female counterparts (8%). Differences across the formations were again negligible, with SADF ex-combatants standing out again – only 8% claimed to have been disabled by an injury.

The effects of involvement

To try and explore the effects of their involvement in the conflict, we explained to respondents that some people had told us they saw and experienced some pretty gruesome violence during their involvement and that they could not get these things out of their minds. We then read out a list of possible long-term effects for people who have experienced these kinds of things and asked respondents whether they *currently* experienced each one on a regular basis, sometimes or not at all. The results are shown in Table 6.

Significant numbers of ex-combatants are still experiencing the effects of their time in combat. On average, one in ten ex-combatants claimed to experience each of the possible psychological and physiological effects on a regular basis. When coupled with those who sometimes experience the effects, we found that more than half (56%) still relive the experience(s) while awake with a similar proportion (49%) having bad dreams or nightmares about the experience(s). This, after more than ten years since the event(s), reflects that significant numbers of ex-combatants are experiencing such events and suggests the need for professional interventions to deal with the situation.

Table 6: Psychological and physiological effects

	Regularly	*Sometimes*	*Not at all*
Reliving the experience while awake	*13*	*43*	*44*
Bad dreams/nightmares about the experience	*9*	*39*	*51*
Feeling angry/cross for no apparent reason	*12*	*33*	*55*
Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep	*10*	*30*	*60*
Fear of the places where the experience happened	*11*	*29*	*60*
Unable to remember details of the experience	*6*	*26*	*67*
Severe pain in your neck/back so you can't move easily	*8*	*23*	*70*
Believing that you will not be alive in ten years time	*5*	*20*	*75*
Thoughts about committing suicide	*5*	*18*	*77*
General health problems (ulcers/heart problems/ cancer/etc)	*7*	*11*	*83*

SADF ex-combatants were less affected by their experiences. As we have seen throughout this section, the differences between male and female ex-combatants were negligible. Furthermore, the SADF ex-combatants appear less affected by their experiences – only two-fifths (40%) relive a traumatic experience regularly or sometimes, while only a fifth (20%) have bad dreams or nightmares about an experience regularly or sometimes. This can again be explained by the nature of the activities that the SADF ex-combatants in our sample were involved in.

We now turn our attention to post-traumatic stress disorder to try and provide a more nuanced understanding of the effects on ex-combatants of their involvement in the conflict.

Post-traumatic stress disorder

Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD[4]) is defined as a pathological anxiety that usually occurs after an individual experiences or witnesses severe trauma that constitutes a threat to the physical integrity or life of the individual or of another person. Diagnosis of PTSD is based on certain criteria:[5]

- **Criterion A** – experiencing, witnessing or being confronted with an event involving serious injury, death or a threat to a person's physical integrity which results in a response involving helplessness, fear or horror.
- **Criterion B** – involves the persistent re-experiencing of the event in at least one of several ways.
- **Criterion C** – determined by the presence of three or more symptoms that involve the avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness.
- **Criterion D** – two or more symptoms are required to fulfil this criterion of hyperarousal.

The final point to mention is that the duration of the relevant criteria symptoms should be more than one month as opposed to acute stress disorder, for which the duration is less than one month. Given that the events referred to by ex-combatants happened more than ten years ago, any of the symptoms experienced today are more likely to relate to PTSD than acute stress disorder.

Nearly all ex-combatants meet Criterion A. In terms of Criterion A, almost all (94%) ex-combatants were either directly involved in combat, had seen someone being severely injured or being killed, or themselves had suffered a serious injury resulting in their becoming disabled. We then grouped the symptoms (shown in Table 7) across the other criteria as follows:

Table 7: Diagnostic criteria for PTSD with associated symptoms

Criterion B *(One or more experienced)*	• *Reliving the experience while awake* • *Bad dreams/nightmares about the experience* • *Severe pain in your neck/back so you can't move easily* • *General health problems (ulcers/heart problems/cancer/etc)*
Criterion C *(At least 3 experienced)*	• *Unable to remember details of the experience* • *Thoughts about committing suicide* • *Fear of the places where the experience happened* • *Believing that you will not be alive in ten years time*
Criterion D *(Both experienced)*	• *Difficulty falling asleep or staying asleep* • *Feeling angry/cross for no apparent reason*

The authors are not clinical psychologists and this section should not be construed as a definitive diagnosis of PTSD amongst the sample of ex-combatants. We are indebted to the comments and insights of Naomi Hill, a psychologist, who provided us with some guidance on how to analyse the data related to this section.

[5] Taken from the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, Fourth Edition, Text Revision.*

The proportions of ex-combatants who potentially display the symptoms related to the different criteria of PTSD are shown in Figure 5:

Figure 5: Proportion of ex-combatants displaying symptoms across criteria of PTSD

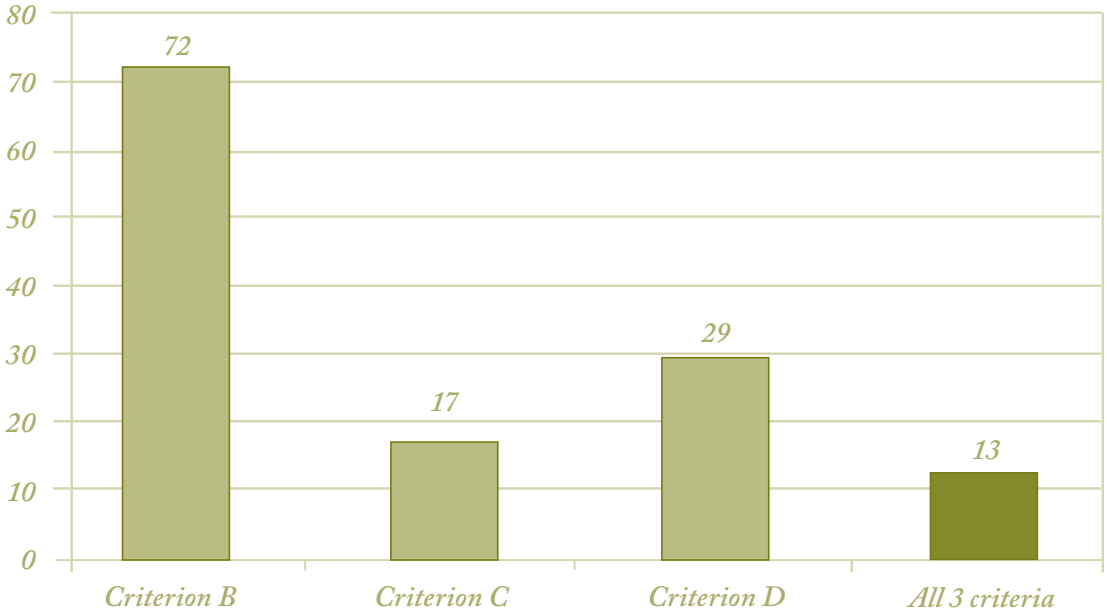


Figure 5 shows that three-quarters (72%) of ex-combatants persistently re-experience the event and experience physiological effects as a result. Less than one in five (17%) ex-combatants display avoidance of stimuli associated with the trauma and numbing of general responsiveness. Three in ten (29%) satisfy Criterion D, displaying symptoms of hyperarousal.

One in eight ex-combatants could be classified as experiencing PTSD. For an individual to be classified as experiencing PTSD, all three criteria need to be satisfied. In our sample, and using our particular indicators, we found that one in eight (13%) ex-combatants could be classified as experiencing PTSD. Male ex-combatants were twice as likely (14%) as their female counterparts (7%) to satisfy all three criteria and potentially suffer from PTSD. The different age cohorts showed similar proportions of ex-combatants who may suffer from PTSD, with the highest proportion (14%) among those aged 31 to 40.

While the differences across level of education were not great, it is interesting to note that the more educated the ex-combatants, the more likely they were to satisfy all three criteria – 13% of those with matric or more satisfied the criteria as did 10% of those with only primary school education. It is not only the uneducated ex-combatant who is in need of intervention, but (even more so) those educated ex-combatants who potentially suffer from PTSD.

There were significant differences in the proportion of ex-combatants potentially suffering from PTSD when we looked at their employment status. Interestingly, the unemployed ex-combatants showed the lowest level (11%), questioning the link between employability and PTSD. However, one in four (25%) ex-combatants involved in casual jobs potentially suffer from PTSD and one must wonder whether their psychological and physiological effects from the combat negate their ability to find long-term employment.

We now look at potential PTSD sufferers across the different armed formations:

Table 8: Proportion of ex-combatants potentially suffering from PTSD by formation

Formation	Potential PTSD (%)
SPU	*20*
APLA	*17*
MK	*17*
SADF	*16*
AZANLA	*10*
SDU	*8*
Total	*13*

Former SPU members show the highest proportion (20%) of potential PTSD sufferers, although this should be viewed with caution due to the small number of SPU members in the sample. Table 8 also shows that APLA (17%), MK (17%) and SADF (16%) ex-combatants were far more likely to potentially have PTSD than ex-combatants from AZANLA (10%) or the SDUs (8%). Ex-combatants who were in exile were also more likely (18%) to potentially have PTSD than their counterparts who remained in South Africa (11%).

Ex-combatants from SDUs were better off psychologically and physiologically. These results, along with others detailed in this section, question the notion that the internal conflict in South Africa was fuelled through the recruitment of uneducated, unemployed youths who witnessed and, often, partook in horrendous acts of violence and were, as a result of this involvement, irreparably scarred. While this may hold true in some instances, one sees that those who staffed the SDUs appear far better off both psychologically and physiologically than those from other formations.

There is a clear need for a concerted intervention around PTSD. We return to this need in a later section.

Demobilisation

In any post-conflict society, demobilisation represents a key moment for acknowledging the violent past by helping ex-combatants to transform themselves into engaged, productive citizens of the new society – mirroring the transformation of the society as a whole. As the case studies suggest, this scarcely ever happens: demobilisation is intensely political and contested (for example, the question of who is eligible), and often occurs among resource-hungry ex-combatants and armed formations, in a climate of mutual suspicion and a degree of violent instability, and so on. This was certainly true in South Africa.

As a result, demobilisation entirely by-passed many former combatants. This included those from formal and informal armed formations, and many who were deeply suspicious of the process, unwilling to give their names and personal details to former enemies, and so on.

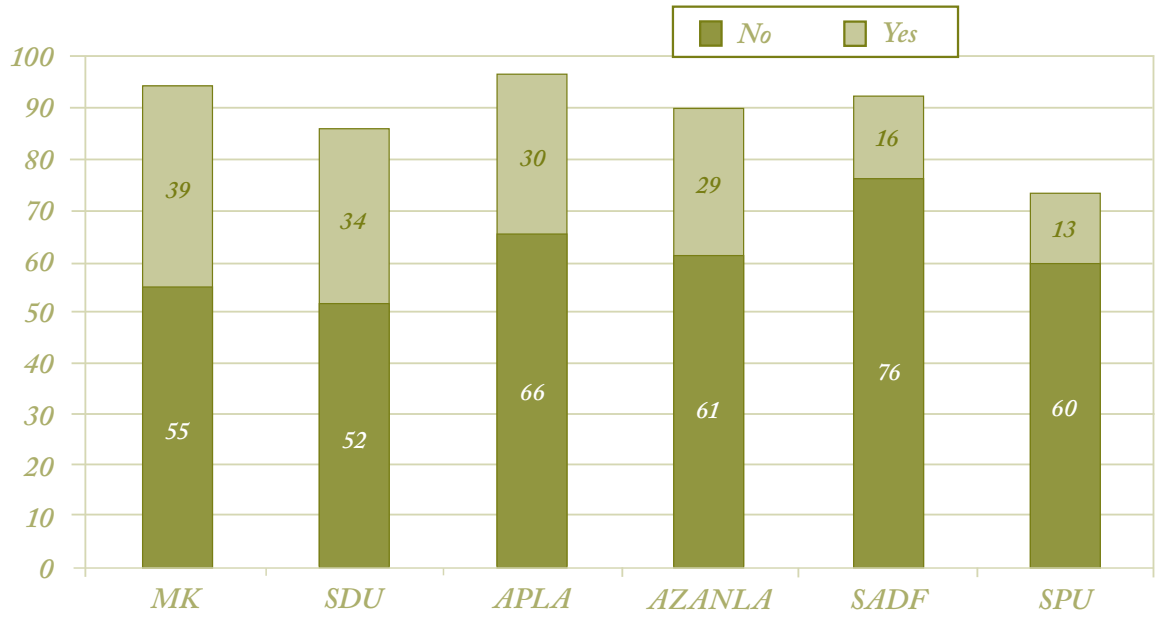
Table 9: Participation in demobilisation by age

Were you part of demobilisation?	21-30	31-40	41-50	51+	Total
Yes	*28*	*33*	*40*	*45*	*34*
No	*61*	*57*	*51*	*45*	*56*
Refuse	*11*	*9*	*10*	*10*	*10*

Only about a third of respondents spoke about being part of the formal demobilisation process. This is reflected in our data, where just 34% of respondents told us they were part of the formal demobilisation process. Over half (56%) of respondents said they had not been part of the process – higher among women (62%) than men (55%) – while one in ten refused to answer the question. Participation in demobilisation increases with age, but does not vary significantly when analysed against other demographic variables, such as education levels, employment status, poverty levels and so on.

Ex-combatants who spent time in exile were slightly more likely (41%) to have participated in the demobilisation process than those who remained in the country (32%). But easy assumptions that (because of the age profile) formal combatants took part and those from SDUs and SPUs did not, are *not* borne out by the data.

Figure 6: Participation in demobilisation by armed formation ("refused" not shown)

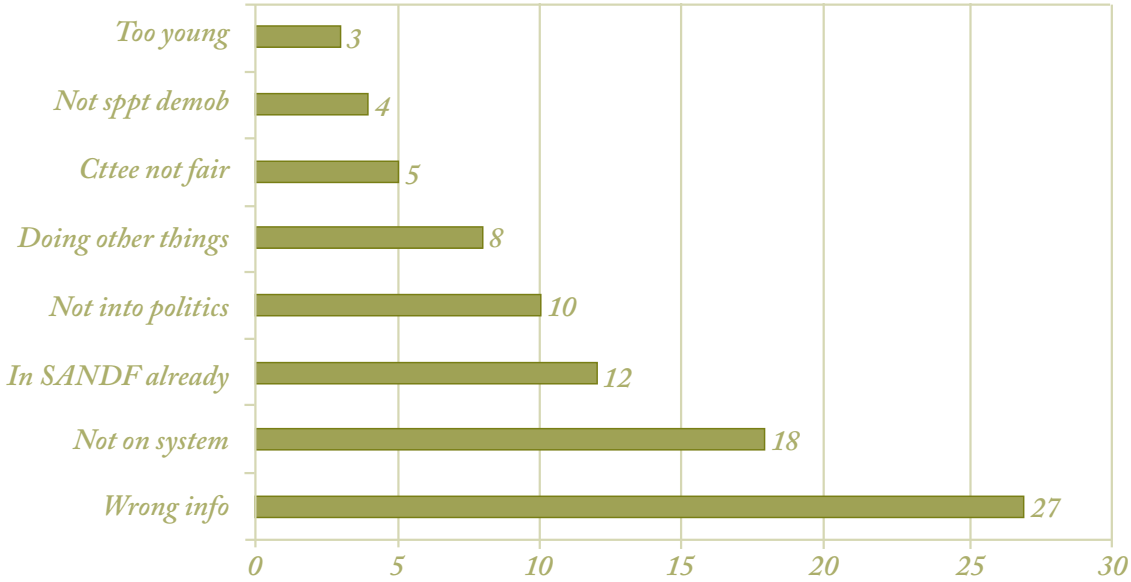


As Figure 6 shows, participation was highest among MK combatants, followed by those from SDUs. It was lowest (below one in five) among combatants from the SADF and SPUs. Moreover, participation in demobilisation seems to have had little if any impact on the "headspace" of former combatants; roughly similar proportions participated in demobilisation across the five groups identified, through factor analysis, who ranged from "happy" and "content" to those clearly unable to move forward, needing recognition, showing high levels of alienation and anomie, and so on. This is a fairly damning comment on the efficacy of demobilisation as a process to ease the transition from combatants to ex-combatants and engaged citizen.

When we asked the 56% who had not participated why they had not been part of the demobilisation process, their answers pointed mainly to administrative problems. For 44% of those who did not participate in demobilisation, this was because (they told us) they were given the wrong information, or were "not on the system" when they tried to demobilise. Another 5% identified unfairness in the committees that confirmed participation, while 3% were told they were too young (aged below 35) to participate in the process. Just 1% told us that the financial assistance offered was not enough of an incentive.

A small proportion of the 56% who had not participated identified political reasons for this, such as their own

Figure 7: Reasons for not participating in demobilisation (those who did not take part: 56% of sample)



political disinterest (which strikes an odd note, given the intensely political nature of combat as well as negotiating the introduction of democracy); or that they did not support the entire demobilisation process. The latter was particularly pronounced among AZANLA and APLA ex-combatants.

Of the 34% who had been demobilised, less than half (41%) had been assessed as part of the process. Incidence of assessment did not vary very much across demographic variables or by the different armed formations. In the absence of any other explanation, sheer administrative incompetence appears to be the main factor at play.

Of those who went through demobilisation, just under a fifth (18%) received financial assistance as part of the process. Put another way, compounding the failure of demobilisation to reach more than a third of respondents, just 6% of the entire sample being analysed here received any financial assistance at the end of combat and the introduction of democracy. Financial assistance tended to go to men not women, and to older and better-educated ex-combatants.

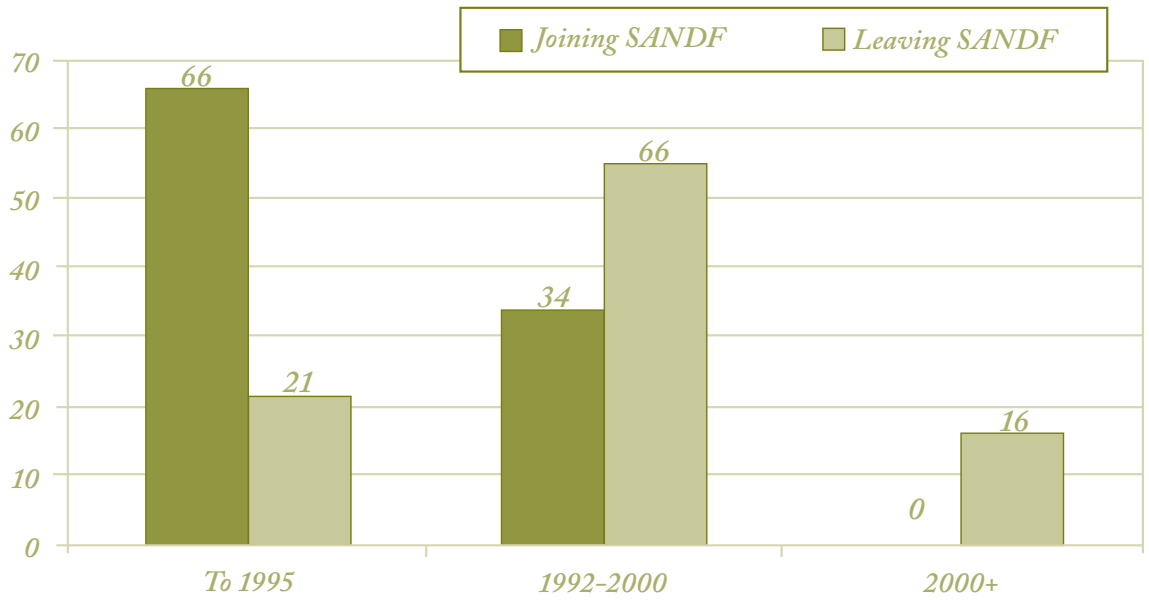
In brief: the survey confirms much existing research on the demobilisation process and the fact that a great many ex-combatants were by-passed or missed out entirely. This is why we lack accurate numbers for ex-combatants and it also partly explains why so many ex-combatants are living in poverty, beset by psycho-social problems, and are battling to find a way out (see below).

Had more passed through the system, we would presumably have found more than 4% receiving a military pension. With such small numbers it is difficult to comment with any certainty on military pensions, but they are more common among male respondents over the age of 50. The armed formation from which a respondent was drawn seems to have little bearing on whether or not they access a military pension.

Blaming "the system" is an incomplete and inaccurate conclusion. As we noted above (and based on published research as well as our own research), many combatants were deeply suspicious of each other, political violence was only slowly ebbing away, and even a well-run process of demobilisation would have battled to reconcile competing and often antagonistic groups and interests. Nonetheless, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that demobilisation was if not farcically incompetent then terminally flawed. Anyone who has seen the "lists" of those who were demobilised can attest to this: there are pages of aliases, single names, real and faked identity numbers, some with and others without contact details. To put it bluntly; it was a complete mess. Ex-combatants attest to the fact that many were told not to participate; others were told to participate but to use "struggle" names rather than their real names; and so on.

Caught between incompetence and suspicion, demobilisation for most ex-combatants was a huge non-event.

Figure 8: Joining and leaving the SANDF (respondents who joined: 18% of sample)



Integration

We also asked respondents if they had been part of the process of creating a single, integrated defence force, the SANDF. Again, a small one in five (18%) respondents told us they had been part of this process. Men (21%) were far more likely than women (6%) to have been integrated into the new SANDF, as were respondents aged from the upper 30s to late 40s, with higher education levels.

As one may expect, given that they tended to be affiliated to the formal armed formations, ex-combatants who had spent time in exile were far more likely (43%) to have been a part of integration than those ex-combatants who had not been in exile (10%). It does, however, raise questions about who was given preference in the whole process. Interestingly, despite high levels of opposition to the demobilisation process among former AZANLA and APLA combatants, 36% of APLA and 4% of AZANLA respondents told us they were integrated into the SANDF, along with 27% of MK respondents, 8% from SDUs, and 40% of former SADF combatants.

A small proportion of our sample (2%) had joined the former SADF in the 1980s, and a further 14% told us they joined between 1990 and 1993. Fully half (50%) of respondents who joined the SANDF did so in 1994; with a further 34% doing so in the years 1995 to 2000. Almost three-quarters (70%) of MK ex-combatants joined in 1994, as did 42% of APLA and 20% of AZANLA ex-combatants. In 1995, another 14% of MK respondents joined the SANDF, as did larger proportions of APLA (21%) and AZANLA (20%) respondents; APLA respondents continued joining in larger proportions than others for the remainder of the 1990s.

Between 1996 and 2000, more than half of those ex-combatants who had joined the SANDF, left. And respondents began leaving the SANDF fairly soon after joining, confirming existing research which has pointed to racism, conflict, suspicion and poorly designed and implemented systems as combining to make integration an extremely tough process for ex-combatants from outside the former SADF. By 1995, a fifth (22%) of those respondents who had joined the new SANDF, had already left. This became a flood in the 1996 to 2000 period, where over half (55%) of those who had joined, then left. Since 2000, a further 16% have left the SANDF: just 8% of those who originally joined the SANDF are still in the army.

This is a damning comment on the process of reintegration. Taken with our previous section, it is fair to conclude that, from the perspective of the 1 200 ex-combatants in our sample, anyway, demobilisation and integration into the SANDF were fatally flawed. Both by-passed the overwhelming majority of respondents; and less than one in ten of those who joined the SANDF managed to stick it out for just over a decade. In this context it is difficult to accept the observation of senior ANC politicians who have stated that as far as demobilisation and assistance for ex-combatants is concerned, "the book is closed".

A final point. Lest ex-combatants in our survey come across as unreconstructed combatants who view the entire transition period and processes of replacing combat with peace and apartheid with democracy as inherently negative or failed, it is worth noting that we asked respondents to rate the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

Table 10: Rate the TRC's work

Good job	*59*
OK job	*22*
Bad job	*20*

In response, 59% said they thought it had done a good job, 22% thought its work had been "OK", while the remaining 20% thought the TRC had done a bad job. Given the criticism, which some academic and political commentators have levelled against the TRC, it would not be surprising to find ex-combatants rejecting it as part and parcel of the transition process that failed them, but the opposite is true.

Those who had been in exile were less positive, with less than half (46%) feeling that the TRC had done a good job. This compares with almost two-thirds (63%) of those ex-combatants who had not been in exile. Against the backdrop of higher proportions of exiled ex-combatants participating in demobilisation and integration, this finding is a concern. As we will see below, exiles are also less positive about their current lives. The report attempts to try to understand the difference.

After demobilisation

Given the results analysed above, particularly the extent to which demobilisation (and attendant processes of needs identification, financial and other support) by-passed the majority of respondents, it is not surprising to find that many are (no pun intended) battling. Much of the remainder of this report outlines the current living circumstances of ex-combatants, their particular needs, and how best those needs can be met. We touch on negative associations that have attached to ex-combatants since 1990: for example, that they are the harbingers of HIV/AIDS, are crime-syndicate masterminds, and the like. But we also deal with many positives, because it is important that we present a balanced view of ex-combatants, also important because we are looking for problem areas in which The Atlantic Philanthropies may wish to intervene.

Chapter 2: Current circumstances

Introduction

This section looks at the current circumstances of ex-combatants in Gauteng, focusing on the possible effects of involvement on family life as well as on levels of education and employment. Attention is then given to the circumstances of poverty in which ex-combatants are living. Where appropriate, the data from the ex-combatant survey are compared with data from Census 2001.

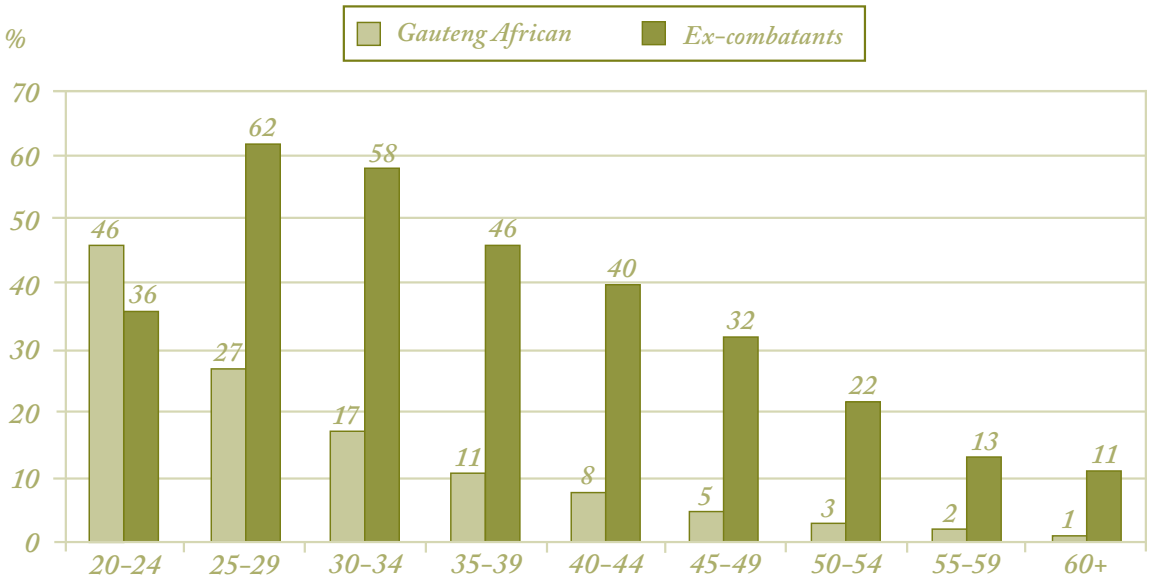
Family life

Heideman found in her research that when MK members returned from exile in the early 1990s, they were "not provided accommodation, so most moved back in with their families" (Heideman, 2006:64). Her research among SDU members also found that the financial capacity of "families to support ex-combatants shaped the experience of social reintegration" (Heideman, 2006:64).

Nearly half of all ex-combatants surveyed are living in households headed by their parents or grandparents. Our survey of ex-combatants appears to bear out these findings. When they first joined the conflict, almost nine out of every ten (88%) ex-combatants were living with a parent or grandparent. Today, two-thirds (67%) of all respondents stated that their mother was still alive while only a third (37%) stated that their father was still alive. Remembering that the vast majority of our sample were aged 30 to 45, we found that almost half (48%) of all ex-combatants surveyed are still living in households headed by their parents or grandparents. There were no significant differences across male and female respondents.

How different is this from the general African population in Gauteng? Figure 9 compares the proportion of ex-combatants still living with their parents/grandparents with the general African population across different age cohorts.

Figure 9: Household head as parent/grandparent by age of ex-combatants compared with Gauteng Africans



Apart from the 20 to 24 age cohort (where the number of ex-combatant respondents was very low), it is clear that in every age cohort, far higher proportions of ex-combatants were living at home with their parents or grandparents than the general African population. For example, two out of every five (40%) of ex-combatants aged 40 to 44 were still living with parents/grandparents compared to less than one in every ten (8%) Gauteng Africans. There were no significant differences across the different formations or between those in exile/not in exile on this question.

It is very clear that ex-combatants are on a different life course from that of the general population and we need to ask whether this is because of their involvement in the conflict. While we are unable to answer this question directly, it would appear that social reintegration has been problematic for ex-combatants since the end of the conflict and the onset of a peaceful, democratic South Africa.

Most ex-combatants are still single. A further possible indicator that social reintegration may be difficult for ex-combatants is marital status. When they joined the conflict, the vast majority (92%) of ex-combatants were single. Years later, six out of every ten (60%) ex-combatants remain single with only a third either married (23%) or living with a partner (11%). There were again no significant differences across male and female respondents.

Gauteng Africans aged 40 to 44 were married or living with a partner as compared with only one-third (34%) of ex-combatants.

Interestingly, ex-combatants from exile were more likely (40%) to be married or living with a partner than their counterparts who had remained in the country (33%). It would appear from this (and the finding above on household head) that social reintegration has not been made more difficult by being in exile.

The fact that more ex-combatants are still living at home and remain single is not necessarily a bad thing; we are certainly not saying that one life course is better or more preferable than another. However, it needs to be borne in mind when looking at the employment status of ex-combatants and their ability to contribute to the financial situation of the households in which they are living.

Figure 10 compares the proportion of ex-combatants married or living together with that of Gauteng Africans.

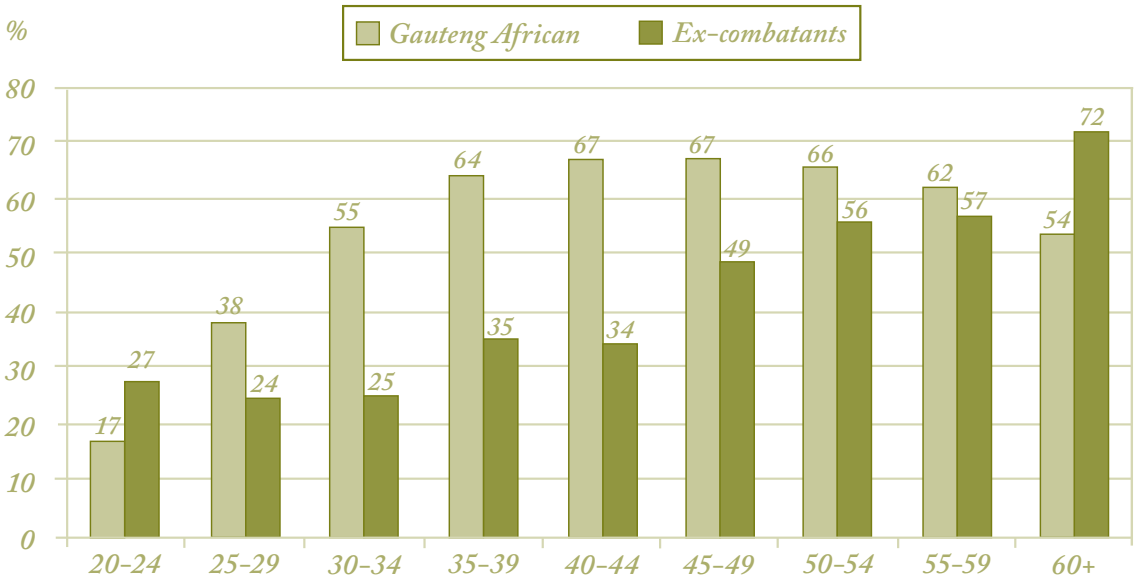


Figure 10 compares the proportion of ex-combatants married or living together with that of Gauteng Africans.

Looking at the lighter left hand columns (that of Gauteng Africans), we see that the general life course in the province appears to be that as one gets older, so the likelihood of being married or living together with a partner increases. While this general trend also holds true for ex-combatants, Figure 10 shows how ex-combatants are further behind in this general trend across almost every single cohort. For example, two-thirds (67%) of

Levels of education and employment

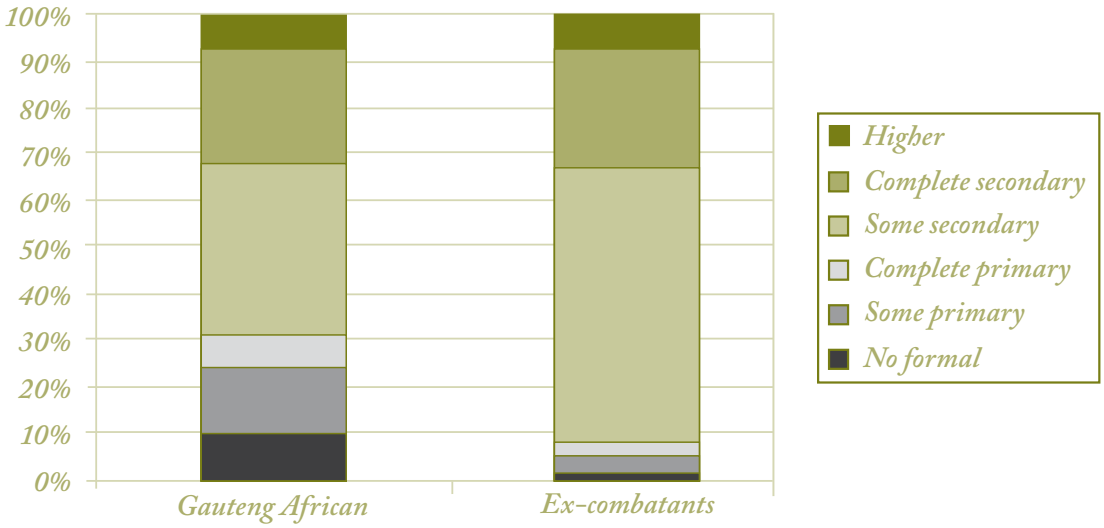
Most ex-combatants were scholars or students when they joined the conflict. A common perception is that ex-combatants disrupted their education to join the struggle and have been unable to recover from this disruption. This appears to be borne out by the fact that almost two-thirds (64%) of all ex-combatants were scholars or students at the time they joined the conflict.

Many ex-combatants have sufficient education to compete in the labour market. A fifth (19%) have education levels below Grade 9; another 17% have completed Grade 10, a third (31%) have completed Grade 11, and 26% have completed matric. One in twenty (5%) have a diploma, and very small numbers have attended university (1%) or have a post-graduate qualification (1%). While this may sound like ex-combatants are not particularly well educated, a comparison with the general African population aged 20 and older in Gauteng shows that this is not necessarily the case.

fewer ex-combatants have no formal schooling or have only completed some form of primary education when compared with the general population.

Most respondents were unemployed at the time of the interview. Despite the appearance that many ex-combatants have sufficient skills to compete in the labour market, when we look at the current employment status of ex-combatants, we see one of the largest legacies of their involvement in combat. Figure 12 shows that a massive 70% of respondents were unemployed at the time of the

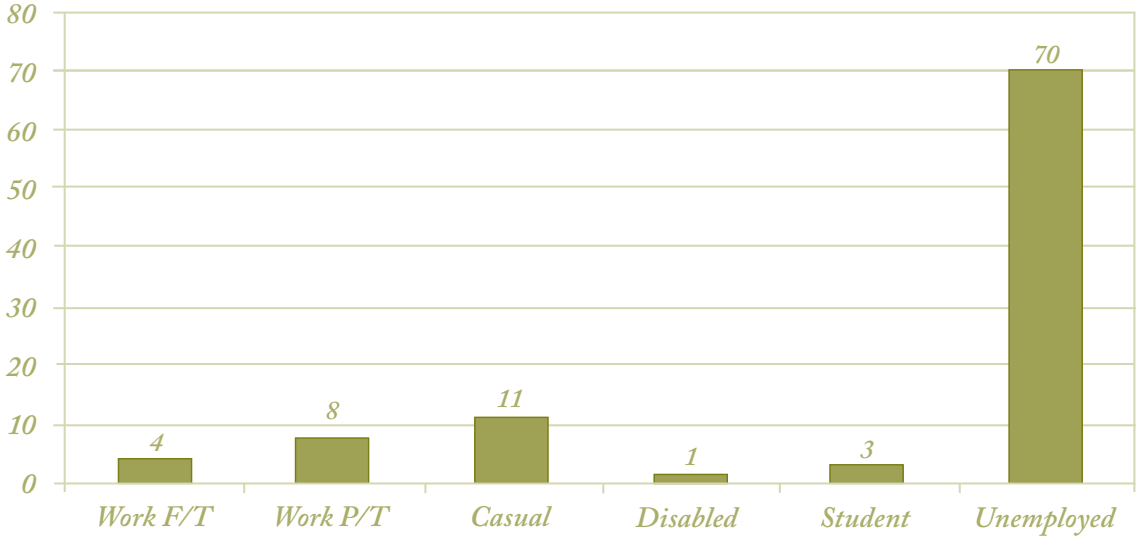
Figure 11: Education levels of ex-combatants compared with Gauteng Africans (aged 20+)



What Figure 11 shows quite clearly is that at the higher end of the education system, the proportions of ex-combatants with matric or post-matric qualifications are very similar to the proportions of the general African population in the province with those same qualifications. Furthermore, it is also evident that far

interview. A further one in ten (11%) had casual work at the time we interviewed them; this may have been retained or they may have subsequently re-joined the ranks of the unemployed. Just 4% of respondents were working in full-time employment, with 8% in part-time employment.

Figure 12: Employment status among ex-combatants



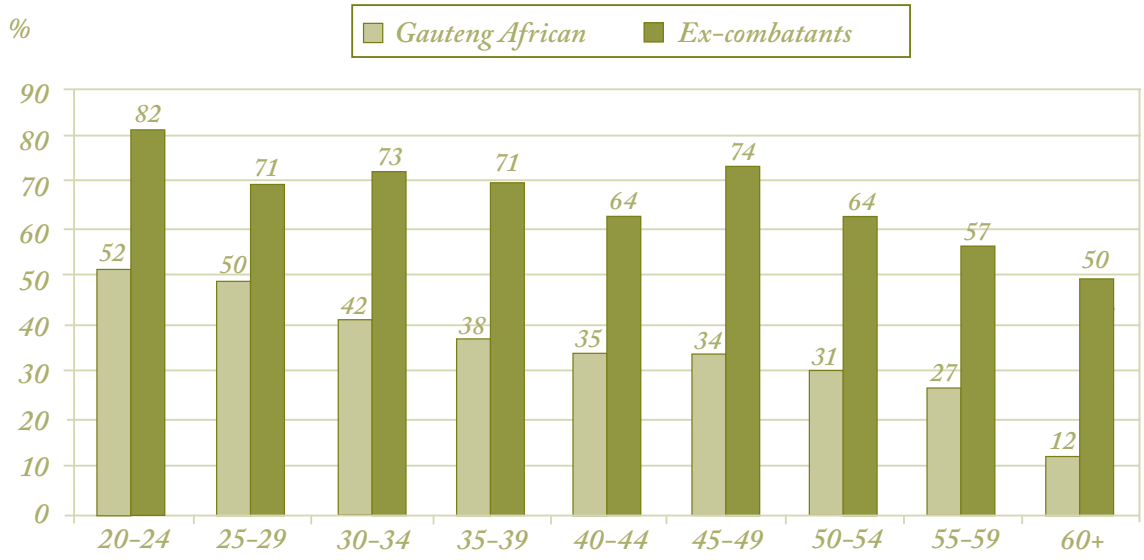
The potentially economically active portion of a population comprises the employed, the unemployed and those deemed unavailable (individuals who are unable to work because of disability, or involved in full-time studying, and so on). A common statistic bandied around when looking at the labour market is known as the rate of unemployment: it excludes those who are deemed unavailable, and recalculates the proportion (expressed as a percentage) of the economically active population who are unemployed.

The rate of unemployment for ex-combatants is a staggering 80%. This is almost double that of the (already very high) national rate of unemployment, which according to Statistics South Africa's *2005 Labour Force Survey* stood at 41% (this is the expanded definition, which includes as unemployed those classified as discouraged work-seekers).

Measuring the levels of poverty among the ex-combatants interviewed

There is considerable debate about the definition of poverty and the appropriate indicators to measure it.[6] Evidence from different countries shows that poverty and standard of living are directly related to resource allocation and income – these resources often include access to water, sanitation, electricity, housing, education, health care and land. When using a composite definition, poverty measures can generally be grouped into four major categories:

Figure 13: Proportion of ex-combatants unemployed by age compared with Gauteng Africans



On the one hand, as we will see later on in this report, the data give real energy to requests by ex-combatants for skills training and business opportunities. But they also make one ask why unemployment is so high in this group, and whether the psycho-social issues discussed both above and in the next chapter actively militate against long-term employment for many of them. Either way, ex-combatants are experiencing an enormous economic struggle.

- **Economic** –monetary indicators of household well-being, ownership of assets
- **Social** – including non-monetary indicators of household well-being, such as access to education, health and other basic services
- **Demographic** – structure and size of households
- **Vulnerability** – issues such as physical insecurity and environmental hazards.

For the purposes of this report, we have adopted such an indicator-based method of defining poverty, using the following ten indicators:

6 See Jennings, R., Ntsime, M. & Everatt, D. (2003) *A poverty targeting strategy for Gauteng.* Johannesburg: Strategy & Tactics.

Table 11: Indicators used to construct the poverty index

Indicator	Definition
Female-headed households	*Proportion of households headed by women*
Illiteracy	*Proportion of ex-combatants who have not completed Std 5/ Grade 7*
Rate of unemployment	*Proportion of the economically available ex-combatants who are unemployed*
Household income	*Proportion of households with a monthly income of less than R200*
Crowding	*Proportion of households with three or more people sharing a room*
Dwelling type	*Proportion of households that do not have brick walls*
Sanitation	*Proportion of households who do not have a flush or chemical toilet*
Water	*Proportion of households who have no tap water inside dwelling or on site*
Electricity	*Proportion of households who do not have electricity for lighting purposes*
Refuse removal	*Proportion of households whose refuse is not removed by local authority*

For each indicator, the relevant proportion (as a score out of a 100) was calculated. The poverty index was then calculated by adding all the scores for each indicator and dividing by ten to obtain an average overall score out of 100. A score of 100 would reflect an extremely high level of poverty while a score of 0 would reflect an extremely low level.

At first glance at the data in Table 12, one gets the impression that ex-combatants are a relatively well-off grouping in South African society. While the national poverty index stands at 33.4 and the provincial index at 20.8, the index for ex-combatants more closely mirrors the provincial index at 19.0.

Table 12: Poverty index for ex-combatants compared with national and provincial index (Source for national and provincial data: Census 2001)

	South Africa Census '01	Gauteng Census '01	Ex-combatants
Female-headed households	*41.9*	*34.8*	*44.1*
Illiteracy	*31.5*	*18.6*	*4.8*
Rate of unemployment	*48.2*	*40.9*	*80.4*
Household income	*23.2*	*19.2*	*15.1*
Crowding	*2.8*	*3.7*	*10.2*
Dwelling type	*31.2*	*25.2*	*12.7*
Sanitation	*45.2*	*16.6*	*5.9*
Water	*37.7*	*16.0*	*4.5*
Electricity	*29.8*	*18.9*	*8.6*
Refuse removal	*42.8*	*14.1*	*3.3*
Poverty index	*33.4*	*20.8*	*19.0*

However, a more nuanced look at the data allows a more complex picture to emerge. On the one hand, the relatively low poverty index is as a result of the good infrastructure and service levels that one finds in Gauteng compared with the rest of the country. (Access to housing, water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal is high.) And the relatively higher levels of education among ex-combatants, as we saw above, also contribute to the low overall poverty index.

Most ex-combatant households live on less than R3 000 a month and are headed by mothers or grandmothers. The data show that ex-combatants tend to live in female-headed households (as we saw above these tend to be their mothers or grandmothers) and that these households display relatively high levels of overcrowding. While overall the proportion of ex-combatant households with no regular income is lower than the provincial average, three-quarters (76%) of all ex-combatant households are living on less than R3 000 per month. With the average household size of 5.5, one can see the economic pressure that exists within these households. This pressure is further exacerbated by the high rate of unemployment among ex-combatants.

The situation in which many ex-combatants find themselves will have an impact on any intervention or programme that seeks to attract this group. Service providers need to be cognisant of the situation and assist through the provision of stipends or transport or the like.

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Chapter 3: Attitudes and values

Introduction

This section of the report spends some time analysing the "headspace" of ex-combatants – their attitudes to a range of socio-political issues, their underlying values, and the different typologies that emerged from multivariate statistical analysis of the data. And lest the reader fall into the trap of seeing all ex-combatants as alienated, angry and a threat to stability, we begin by analysing global happiness, which many ex-combatants experience, despite the considerable challenges they face in their daily life.

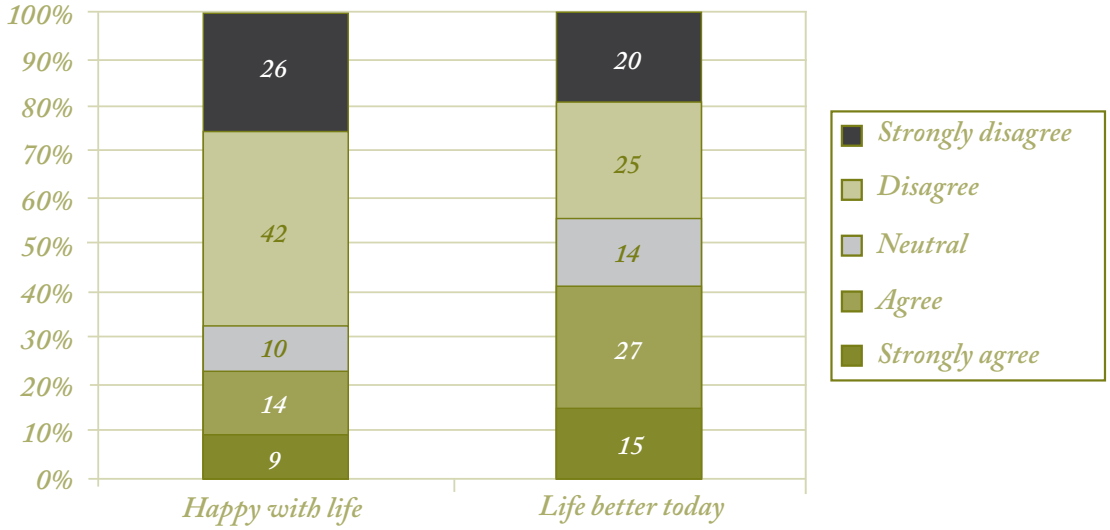
Global happiness

Quality of life is a complex phenomenon that, many social scientists assert, is made up of a range of different aspects, from health to housing to infrastructure to family life. Global happiness is one area often included in any quality of life index. It relates to a respondent's perceptions and attitudes about particular issues, and as such comprises only subjective indicators. These commonly include respondents' levels of satisfaction with their lives and the extent to which they feel their lives are improving or not.

To explore global happiness, we asked ex-combatants to think about their life in general and then see whether they agreed or disagreed with the following statements:

- In general, I am happy with the way my life is at the moment.
- Life for me is better today than it was ten years ago.

Figure 14: Level of agreement with statements about global happiness



Most ex-combatants are unhappy with their lives. Figure 14 shows significant differences in the responses across the two statements. While less than a quarter of ex-combatants strongly agreed (9%) or agreed (14%) that they were happy with the way their life was at the moment, more than two-fifths (42%) did feel that life for them was better today than it was ten years ago. The other side of the coin is the two-thirds (68%) who are not happy with their life at the moment and the 45% that feel life is worse today than it was ten years ago. So while the majority of ex-combatants are unhappy with their lives, given the situation described in the previous chapter, they are more or less equally divided on whether life for them has improved in the past ten years.

Women were more positive than men. There were differences in the responses of men and women, with women being more positive. Three-tenths (29%) of female ex-combatants were happy with their life compared with

only two-tenths (21%) of male ex-combatants. More significant were the majority (57%) of women who felt that their lives were better today as opposed to less than two-fifths (37%) of their male counterparts.

Older ex-combatants were more positive than younger ones. Age also played a role in the responses, as older ex-combatants were more positive about their lives than younger respondents. Interestingly, the employment status of respondents or their poverty level had no significant impact on the responses to these elements of global happiness.

Ex-combatants who spent time in exile were less positive than those who remained in the country. Less than one in five (18%) were happy with their present lives compared with one in four (24%) ex-combatants who remained in the country. Similarly, only a third (32%) of ex-combatants from exile thought that life was better for them today than it was ten years ago, while for those ex-combatants who were not in exile, this proportion was higher at 44%. Possibly those ex-combatants who had been in exile may feel that they sacrificed more for the current democratic dispensation and expected more from it. This is an issue we shall return to later in the report.

We now look at the differences in responses by armed formation, focusing only on those who agreed or strongly agreed with the statements:

Table 13: Proportion of ex-combatants who agree/strongly agree by formation

	APLA	AZANLA	MK	SADF	SDU	SPU
Happy with my life	*25*	*18*	*24*	*28*	*22*	*13*
My life is better today	*40*	*35*	*39*	*48*	*46*	*27*

For the most part, the percentages of ex-combatants agreeing with the statements were similar across the formations: the more negative responses from SPU members and the more positive ones from SADF members could be attributed to the small number of respondents. In a way this similarity is of concern as it points to significant levels of "unhappy" ex-combatants across the different political affiliations and raises questions about the potential emergence of a powerful ex-combatant organisation/movement that harnesses the voices of all ex-combatants.

One must bear in mind that this is a picture taken at a particular moment in time. It would be interesting to track the responses to these statements over time to see which way things are going. One would imagine that if the plight of ex-combatants is not dealt with – that they remain unemployed and feel a burden on their families – then the level of satisfaction with their own lives is going to drop further and, ultimately, they will be unable to see any improvement in their lives in future.

There is a window period that is slowly closing. Their situation must be addressed now while significant numbers of ex-combatants can still see that life is better today than it was and that their involvement in the conflict was not in vain; and while they remain open to external interventions.

HIV/AIDS

HIV/AIDS is a key challenge facing the entire society, particularly those in poorer socio-economic circumstances who struggle to access appropriate health care, as well as to maintain a healthy lifestyle. While ex-combatants fit this in socio-economic terms, gossip frequently links the former exiles among them with earlier exposure to HIV/AIDS (which emerged in many sub-Saharan countries earlier than in South Africa) than those who stayed at home. It implicitly or explicitly intensifies the stigmatisation of ex-combatants and of HIV/AIDS.

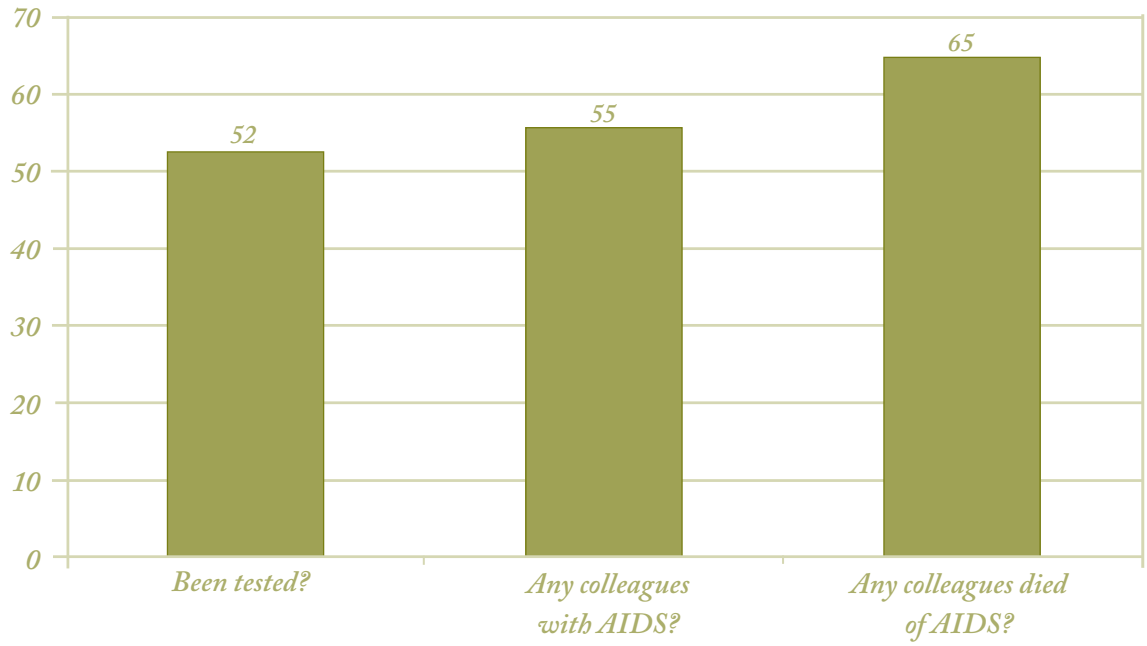
Since 1990, hushed-breath stories have done the rounds of exiles being tested on their return yielding excessively high infection rates. This is precisely the kind of way that combatants get demonised, but there is no evidence to prove the matter either way.

Half of the respondents have been tested for HIV. The survey found that over half (52%) of respondents have been tested for HIV, far higher than the national average. Women (58%) were slightly more likely than men (50%) to have been tested, as were younger respondents and those with higher education levels. While ex-combatants

from exile were more likely (61%) to have been tested, an equally high proportion of those who were not in exile (49%) have also been tested. Poverty and employment status made little impact on whether respondents had been tested or not, suggesting (as do other data from the survey) that ex-combatants are well-informed people who take appropriate action where they can.

But need is also driving them. We asked respondents "projection" questions about HIV/AIDS, (questions about friends and colleagues rather than themselves) which are generally seen as less threatening and more likely to elicit honest answers. The first asked respondents if any of their former colleagues are currently living with AIDS, and the second asked if any former colleagues have died of AIDS.

Figure 15: HIV/AIDS



Over half (55%) of respondents told us they had former colleagues now living with AIDS. This was highest among respondents from informal formations – SPU (73%) and SDU (56%) members. But it remained high across the board, with 57% of AZANLA respondents telling us of former colleagues now living with AIDS, and was true of 54% of APLA respondents, 54% of MK respondents, and 52% of SADF respondents.

When we asked if respondents knew of former colleagues who had died of AIDS, two-thirds (65%) replied in the affirmative. This is an exceptionally high figure, suggesting (with other data reported here) that intervening in the area of HIV/AIDS is of critical importance for ex-combatants, many of whom are too poor to afford either treatment or a healthy lifestyle and balanced diet. Men (68%) were more likely than women (54%) to know of a former colleague who had died of AIDS, as were younger respondents (in the 21 to 40 age cohort). But incidence stayed near constant across all the different armed formations, informal and formal, local and exiled.

HIV/AIDS services must be central to any set of services made available to ex-combatants.

Health

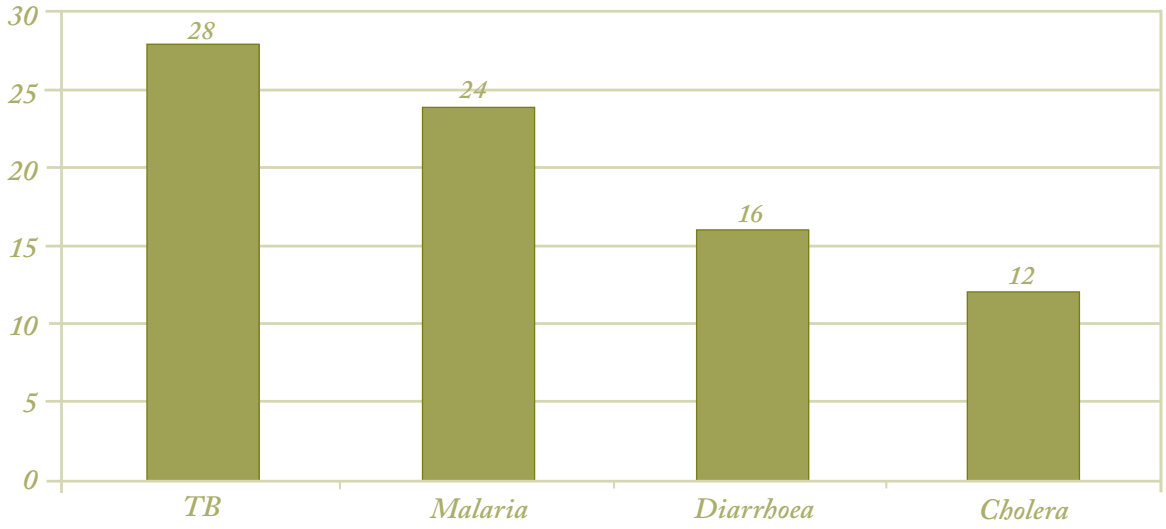
Ex-combatants have other health concerns as well. We asked respondents another set of projection questions: whether any colleagues had been exposed to or suffered from cholera, malaria, TB or diarrhoea during the conflict (see Figure 16).

Figures are considerably lower than those relating to HIV/AIDS, but in part this may be because here we are dealing with treatable diseases picked up during conflict 15 years ago and more. Even so, exposure to TB (a common opportunistic infection for those infected with HIV) and malaria are high, while over one in ten

respondents (12%) knew of colleagues who had suffered from cholera in the past.

Health concerns generally need to be factored into service provision for ex-combatants.

Figure 16: Exposure to disease



Skills ... and crime

Far more men ex-combatants had access to training and education than women during their time in combat. The demobilisation process should have assessed the skills base and needs of ex-combatants and deployed or supported them accordingly. But sadly demobilisation by-passed the majority of respondents. This is unfortunate, as over a quarter (27%) received formal training and/or education – excluding military training – while in their armed formation. The prevailing sexism in the domestic labour market, that sees far more women than men unemployed and far more men than women accessing opportunities for skills development, also existed in the armed formation. Where 30% of male respondents had been able to access training or education, this was true of just 15% of female respondents. Age made little difference, in contrast with the labour market, where youth are consistently discriminated against. Skills training and/or education provision was most marked among respondents formerly in the SADF (64%), MK (32%) and APLA (32%).

While nearly two-thirds (60%) have been able to use their skills since, skills acquisition seems to have had little impact on employment status. A third (34%) of those respondents in full-time employment received training while in their armed formation, which drops to 25% of unemployed respondents. This does show a difference, but one that pales against the size of the unemployment crisis among ex-combatants.

Most ex-combatants were not trained or educated. We did not ask about the kind of skills or education received, and shall not dwell on the topic. Suffice to note that the majority – 73% – were not trained or educated, and would have relied heavily on the demobilisation process to help in this area. Of those who did receive training/education while in the struggle, just 37% went through demobilisation.

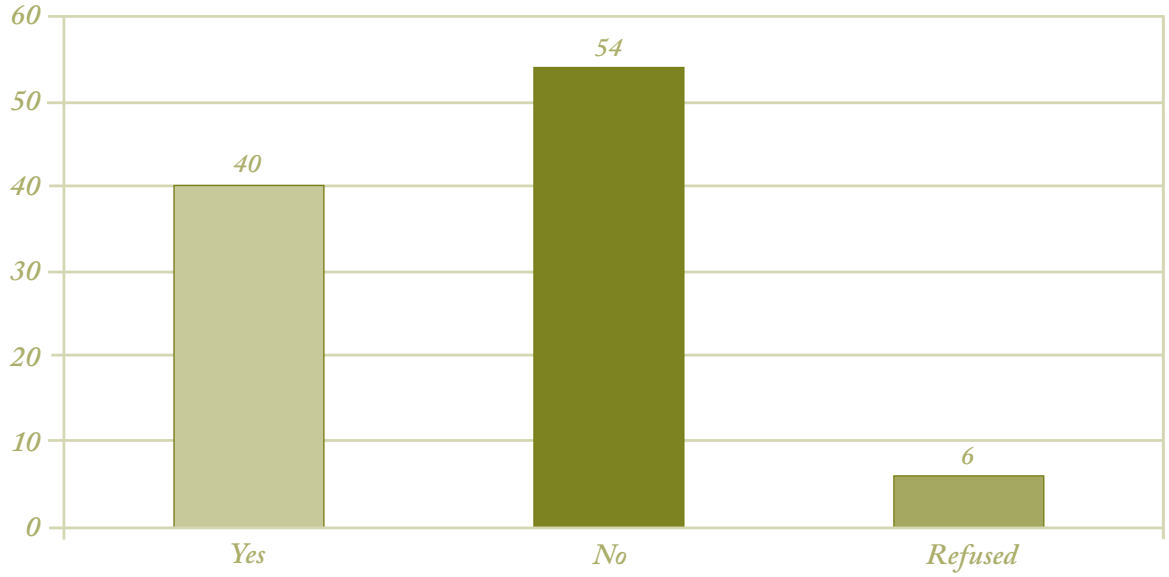
The failure of demobilisation to reach so many respondents meant that the limited number of NGO programmes, as well as some government programmes, were their only option. And given the fact that seven in ten remain unemployed, it is fair to conclude that demobilisation did a massive disservice to most of our respondents.

There is no proof of a clear link between ex-combatants and involvement in crime. Since 1990, South Africa's young democracy has been buffeted by an ongoing wave of violent crime. Ex-combatants – South African and Zimbabwean – have been blamed for many of the more organised and daring robberies, such as cash-in-transit heists and the like. In some cases, former combatants have been imprisoned for their involvement in crime.

There is little if any robust research that demonstrates a substantive link between ex-combatants and involvement in crime.

But that does not mean that no such link exists. As Figure 17 shows, four in ten respondents (40%) told us they knew of former colleagues who are now involved in crime. "Crime" was left undefined, and could range from small- to large-scale acts. There were no significant differences to the responses on this question across the different formations or across those from exile/not in exile.

Figure 17: Former colleagues' involvement in crime



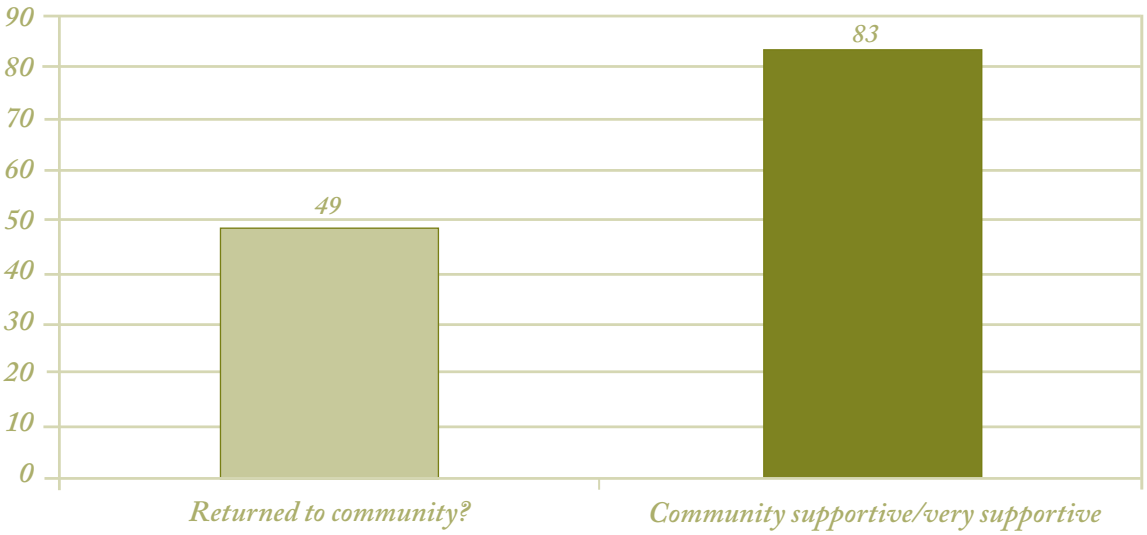
On the one hand, it is deplorable that people, who went to such lengths to help destroy apartheid and usher in democracy, are prepared to betray their principles by taking up crime. But it should also be understood in context: with such widespread unemployment among ex-combatants, it should not be surprising that some – or many – have used their primary skills base to economic advantage. Some may have had a predilection for violence and would have taken it up anyway; others may have been driven by necessity, while for some it is reasonable to assume that taking up crime was a rational choice in response to their environment.

It should be stated quite bluntly that four in ten ex-combatants knowing colleagues who turned to crime is high, and their potential for using violence is both terrifying and worthy of censure where it has occurred. But what matters most, in our opinion, is not to spend time pointing fingers at ex-combatants, further demonising them and debasing the struggle in which they played an important part. Rather, the focus should be on preventing this occurring in future by identifying specific groups of ex-combatants and their needs, and helping them deal with both socio-economic and psycho-social after-effects of their participation in armed struggle; and allowing the police and judiciary to deal with those who have already broken the law.

Acceptance, rejection and acknowledgement

One consistent theme in our research among ex-combatants in South Africa is the need for recognition and acknowledgement from friends, family and community, for the role played by ex-combatants during the struggle, and the lack of such acknowledgement, particularly from government structures or politicians. There is a strong sense of betrayal among ex-combatants. Combined with their difficult socio-economic circumstances and psychological baggage, this makes for a potentially explosive cocktail. It also provides a context for really creative thinking about healing and reconciliation for NGOs, ex-combatant structures and others.

Figure 18: Community support



In our own qualitative research as well as in other research on South African ex-combatants, much is made of the fact that many ex-combatants experience hostility or scorn from community members, especially when they return in subordinate socio-economic positions while others who took no meaningful part in the liberation struggle are doing very well economically.[7] And it is worth noting that only half (49%) of respondents had returned to their communities since exiles returned and political and military units were unbanned in 1990. Exiles were far more likely (92%) to have gone home than those who did not go into exile (36%). This is to be expected as it is unlikely that they would have initially had any other place to go, as well as the "pull" to see one's family again.

Men (52%) were more likely to have returned home than women (37%), as were respondents with higher levels of education, and those in full-time employment. So perhaps returning home is associated with those who are "doing well", who are better educated and employed, rather than those with lower education, who are out of work, and so on.

For those who have returned to their communities, the process was slow and uneven. Already 15% had returned by 1990. Not unexpectedly, the majority of those who did return, had done so by 1994 – 33% between 1991 and 1993, with another third (30%) returning in 1994, the year that saw democracy ushered in and political violence begin to recede. Thereafter, returns became slow and patchy – 7% in 1995, 6% a year later, dropping to 2% by 1997 and a small trickle thereafter.

But when those people did return, the response of their communities was overwhelmingly positive (83%). Of those who have returned to their communities told us the response had been "very positive" (46%) or "positive" (37%), with a further one in ten (10%) saying the response had been "average". Just 7% had a negative (unsupportive) response on their return. There were no significant differences in the responses from those ex-combatants who had been in exile versus those who had not. Interestingly, younger respondents were far more likely to have had a "very supportive" response from their community; while those respondents aged 51 and above were least likely to record positive experiences, though even here, 68% said their community had been positive in its response.

We tested this elsewhere, in the form of a Likert item, which read: "I am treated badly by the community because of my involvement". Respondents could respond across five categories from strongly agree and agree, through a neutral mid-point to disagree and strongly disagree. The Likert item was also slightly broader in referring to "the community" rather than the home community of the respondent, as it encompassed the community in which they currently live. But stigmatisation or maltreatment resulting from involvement in the armed struggle seems limited at best. Almost a fifth (18%) of respondents agreed (10%) or strongly agreed (7.6%) with the statement, which was rejected by 70% of respondents. Demographic analysis reveals no pattern in

7 This is clearly evident in both Heideman and Gear.

these responses – those feeling badly treated came from men and women, younger and older, better and less well educated respondents and so on. The issue is clearly more psychological than socio-economic.

The largely positive data suggest that the 51% who have *not* returned to their home communities may benefit from doing so (accounting for individual circumstances, of course). Again, this creates the possibility for innovative interventions by NGOs, ex-combatant organisations and others, given that three-quarters (76%) of respondents agree or strongly agree "What is really important to me is to be accepted by my community". (Note that it means accepted and not necessarily valorised.)

Family recognition is equally strong. Three-quarters (76%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed "My family is very proud of me for my involvement". Again, this occurs across demographic categories as well as across the different armed formations, suggesting that accumulated experience or a past traumatic event in this area has affected a minority of respondents. But this should not disguise the positive: respondents may be poor, but the majority enjoy family pride and support; and others get this from their community, if and when they return to it.

So if communities are largely positive in reacting to the return of their sons and daughters who went off to fight (among the 49% who have returned to their community) and families are also proud of their involvement, why the sense of betrayal? The answer seems clear: political leaders are the source, not community or family. This is scarcely unique to South Africa: soldiers are not called "grunts" for nothing. Literature on ex-combatants, in the developed and developing world, repeatedly describes situations where ex-combatants leave armed conflict with high (often unrealistically so) expectations only to find that the business of reconstruction is taken over by consultants, as their political leaders are more concerned with politics than delivering to ex-combatants. As Sasha Gear titled her report on South African ex-combatants, they become an embarrassment, feeling that their leaders are "wishing us away".

The danger here is self-evident: the key negative issue is located in the public sphere, in the arena of politics. Many ex-combatants have psycho-social problems that will have to be resolved in the private sphere, or at best with a group of fellow ex-combatants. But these generate a particular anger that focuses on a perceived betrayal by political leaders, which (as we see below) is fuelling an emerging ex-combatant consciousness and group identity. And as we know from our Zimbabwean case study, taken with (real and/or perceived) unmet expectations and sense of betrayal, this can lead to significant instability as ex-combatants hold a society to ransom.

Betrayal

Most ex-combatants feel betrayed by political leaders after 1994. Ex-combatants who participated in our survey feel sure that political leaders only cared for them until 1994. Once political power had been secured, and political violence diminished, so ex-combatants – and their particular skills – became unnecessary. Asked if respondents felt that "political leaders in South Africa did not care about me after 1994", 73% agreed (26) or strongly agreed (47%). Just a fifth (18%) rejected the notion (the remainder chose the neutral option). Men expressed this view more strongly than women, and younger respondents (slightly) more widely than older respondents. But other variables, such as employment status, made little impact on response patterns. In other words, this is not a set of views restricted to unemployed ex-combatants who are angry with their political leaders; it is common to employed and unemployed alike.

There were no significant differences in the responses to this statement between those ex-combatants who were in exile and those who were not. Analysed across the different formations, little variation again emerges, apart from SPU members, 82% of whom feel their political leaders stopped caring for them after 1994, as did 78% of AZANLA respondents. But 71% of MK ex-combatants felt the same, as did 72% of respondents from the SADF, SDUs and APLA respectively. This is a sense of betrayal common to all ex-combatants. And it is a key element in understanding the "headspace" of ex-combatants, which we deal with below. Before doing so, we consider some additional explanatory variables that are also used in helping to analyse and explain the different groupings of ex-combatants, groupings that cut across political, socio-economic and other boundary markings.

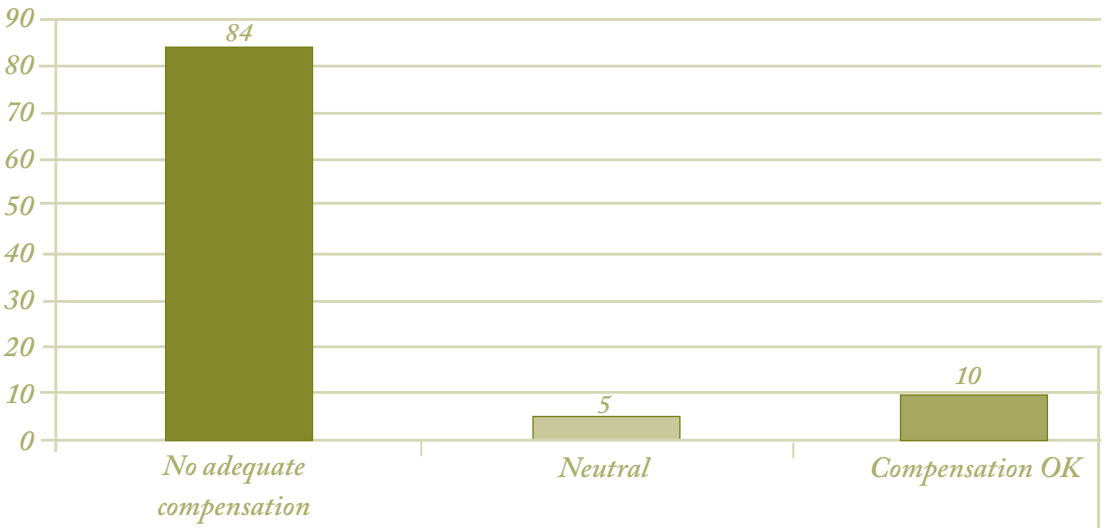
Recognition and compensation

We saw earlier that respondents want community *acceptance*, and when they go to the communities, most receive it. But many also want official *recognition*. When asked about the need for official recognition, respondents split evenly: 44% agreed, 42% disagreed, and the remainder chose the "don't know" option. Interestingly, more women (32%) than men (25%) want official recognition, possibly reflecting the degree to which their own role and contribution remains near-invisible.

No discernible differences emerged when analysed across other demographic categories or between those ex-combatants from exile and those that stayed in the country. But clear differences exist when analysed by formation. Half (49%) of SDU respondents want official recognition, as do 42% of APLA, AZANLA and MK respondents. But just 28% of SADF respondents want official recognition, dropping to just 7% of former SPU members. This may reflect the attitudes of those "on the wrong side" as judged by those who won political power and who thus author the judgements of history. Alternatively, SADF and SPU respondents have made a more sober assessment of what they are likely to receive, and do not see official recognition as likely. (These points are not exclusive.)

We know that a tiny 6% of respondents received financial assistance as part of demobilisation. We posed a Likert item regarding compensation, which read: "I have not been adequately compensated for my involvement in my army". Having seen that demobilisation by-passed large numbers of respondents, it is not surprising to find that the overwhelming majority of respondents (84%) agreed (27.9%) or strongly agreed (57.3%) with this statement.

Figure 19: Compensation



Just one in ten respondents (10%) rejected the statement. Attitudes did not differ by age, sex, level of education or employment status. For example, 81% of those in full-time employment agreed that compensation had been inadequate, as did 84% of those out of work. Exiles and non-exiles were equally strong in their agreement with the statement. And this remains near even across the different armed formations.

Table 14: 'Compensation was inadequate' by armed formation (% agree only)

Compensation was inadequate	% agree
APLA	*90*
SDU	*87*
SPU	*87*
AZANLA	*83*
MK	*82*
SADF	*76*
Total	*84*

We are in a situation where, over a decade into democracy, many ex-combatants were not officially demobilised, assessed or assisted (financially or otherwise), and are struggling to move out of the past and become fully engaged citizens in the (not so) "new" South Africa. Given their socio-economic circumstances, which see seven in ten out of work, compensation is unavoidably an important issue, and the inadequacy of compensation (and by implication the demobilisation process) is increasingly becoming a rallying call for ex-combatants.

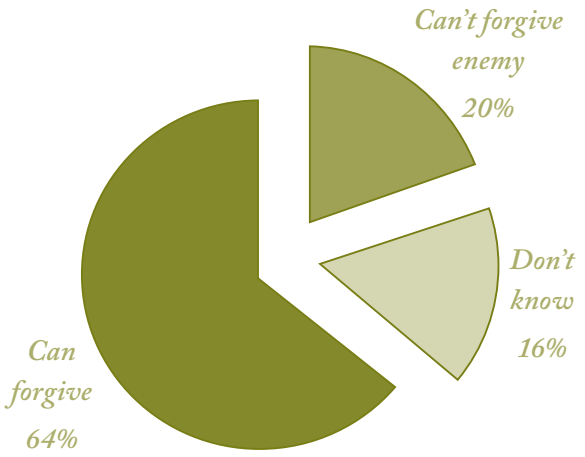
Our case studies from Kosovo and Zimbabwe clearly outlined the dangers facing societies that fail to demobilise and assist combatants. In Zimbabwe, a series of attempts were made to compensate ex-combatants; their ultimate failure led to government effectively giving ex-combatants carte blanche in seizing farms and property to "compensate" themselves. In South Africa, there has been no serious attempt to compensate all ex-combatants. Demobilisation – which we know to have been patchy and uneven in coverage, and whose compensation packages reached tiny numbers of ex-combatants – is regarded as a "closed book" and senior politicians have expressed the need to "move forward", refusing to "re-open that book". We respectfully suggest that this is an extremely short-sighted view that will have very serious implications for our entire society in the long run.

Donors can play an important role in supporting NGOs and ex-combatant structures in various areas of work, but government has to play a central role in working with ex-combatants. This must cover a range of functions, from official recognition (as part of healing) to supporting reconciliation, welfare provision, assessment and appropriate compensation. Failure to do so will have one predictable result: it will strengthen and deepen the sense of betrayal and anger among ex-combatants, strengthen the emerging ex-combatant consciousness and organisational basis, and catapult them into the political arena. The costs to South Africa may be very high if government's response to ex-combatants remains, as it has been, inaction.

Forgiveness

As Figure 20 shows, a proportion of ex-combatants in our survey are "paralysed", stuck in the past and unable to move forward, facing psychological challenges for which they need intervention and help. One of the psychological issues we asked about was the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed that "I cannot forgive those I fought against". While a number of respondents are indeed unable to forgive their old enemies, whom they live among in post-apartheid South Africa, they comprise a minority of respondents.

Figure 20: Forgiving the enemy



As Figure 20 suggests, two-thirds (64%) of ex-combatants in our survey have made peace with their former enemies, while one in six (16%) chose a neutral option. This leaves a fifth (20%) of respondents who find they cannot forgive those they fought against. Worryingly, this is highest among MK veterans:

Table 15: Forgiving the enemy by armed formation (only showing % agree)

Can't forgive enemy	% agree
MK	26
APLA	22
SADF	20
AZANLA	18
SDU	15
SPU	13
Total	20

As Table 15 shows, respondents from the formal armed formations – mainly MK and APLA, but also including SADF and AZANLA – are most likely to be those who cannot forgive their enemies. Respondents who fought street battles in SDUs and SPUs have found forgiveness easier, perhaps because their involvement was for a shorter period (basically the 1990-1994 period), or because they were fighting against neighbours, or because they had lower expectations of what they would receive when the conflict ended.

Those ex-combatants who had been in exile were less positive about their current lives and wondered whether they may feel that they sacrificed more for the current democratic dispensation and expected more from it. This tends to be further suggested by the fact that those ex-combatants who were in exile were far more likely (28%) to be unable to forgive their enemy than those who did not go into exile (18%). For these ex-combatants, the society in which they live has seen a continuance of racial inequalities, for example, that may indeed stick in the craw of those who took up arms to change the system but who have little to show for it, at a personal level.

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that many ex-combatants *need* to forgive if they are to adjust to the society in which they find themselves. The work of the TRC, which many respondents rated positively, needs to be continued – particularly in the area of reconciliation – by others working among ex-combatants.

Healing is critical for a sizeable proportion of ex-combatants – and can probably best be provided by others who have gone through the process and are themselves able to forgive their former enemies. Already an important area of work for NGOs and some ex-combatant organisations; but with appropriate levels of support, this could become a key area of work.

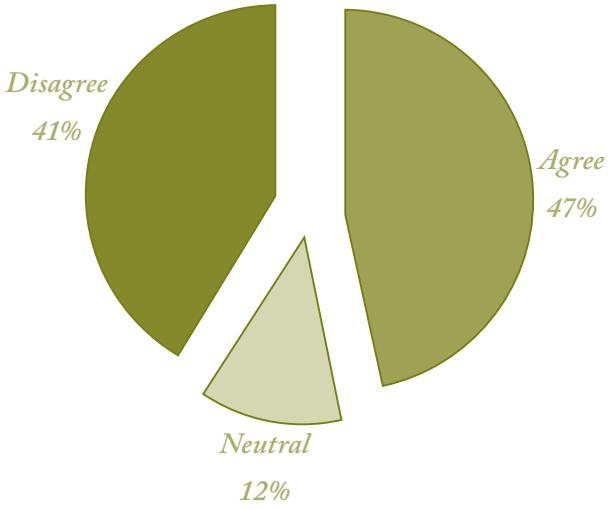
Perceived impact of role in conflict and attitudes to the future

Waste of time?

We went on to pose another Likert item to respondents, which read: "I feel like I wasted my time for nothing". Given the level of commitment required to take up arms in the struggle against apartheid, we expected very few if any respondents to agree with the statement. But a third (30%) *strongly* agreed with the statement, with another 18% agreeing.

While half (47%) of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that they had "wasted their time for nothing", just 41% rejected the notion, retaining some of the positive spirit and drive required of them in the first instance. Men and women were equally likely to say they had wasted their time, true also of respondents with different education levels, different employment status and different age cohorts, apart from those older than 51.

Figure 21: "I feel like I wasted my time for nothing"



Exiles (44%) and non-exiles (48%) were equally likely to have agreed with this statement. Analysed across the different formations, a quite remarkable picture emerges, where respondents from the ANC's armed wing MK, and its informal formation the SDUs, are among those most likely to agree that they wasted their time. Given that the ANC led the negotiations and has held power since democracy, this is a very disconcerting result.

If the "winners" are unhappy, so too are those whose political formations – the PAC and AZAPO – were far less electorally successful in democratic South Africa. These are the respondents from APLA and AZANLA; as well as those who served in the old SADF, half of whom (48%) also believe that they wasted their time. Least inclined to agree are those of whom the opposite may be expected, namely former Inkatha-supporting SPU members.

Figure 21: "Wasted my time" by armed formation (only showing agreement)

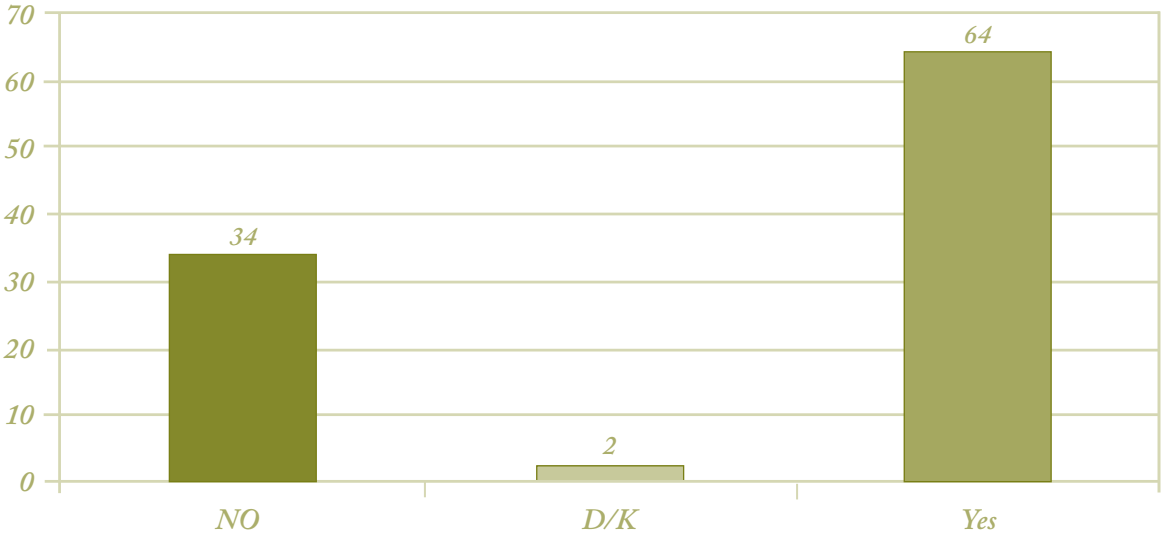
These very high levels of negativity among ex-combatants regarding their own contribution should be cause for concern to both the political organisations they support and for society more broadly.

Do it all again?

Lest we fall into a trap of assuming the entire sample to be dispirited about the present and disillusioned with their past, we asked respondents: "If you were back at the point at which you joined your armed formation/group, would you join up knowing what you know now?"

Most respondents said they would do it again. Two-thirds of ex-combatants (64%) were clear that they would do it all again, even knowing what they know now about the consequences for them of post-apartheid democratisation. Older respondents were far more likely to say they would do it all again. Seventy per cent of those over the age of 51 replied in the affirmative, while the corresponding figure for respondents aged 21 to 30 was 59%. Employment status had no impact on whether respondents said they would do it all again or not, nor did the level of poverty in which they lived. Similarly,

Figure 23: "Would you do it all again, knowing what you know now?"



ex-combatants who had been in exile (61%) were as likely as those who had not (65%) to state they would do it all again. But the particular armed formation did have a bearing on the answer.

Table 16: "Would you do it all again?" (by armed formation)

Would you do it all again?	Yes	No	D/K
APLA	*77*	*22*	*2*
AZANLA	*68*	*30*	*2*
MK	*64*	*34*	*3*
SDU	*60*	*38*	*2*
SADF	*56*	*36*	*8*
SPU	*40*	*60*	*0*
Total	*64*	*34*	*2*

Table 16 shows that the question generated little doubt, as respondents were overwhelmingly clear that they would, or would not, do it all again. APLA and AZANLA respondents were strongest in their conviction that they would do it again, followed by MK and then SDU members. Why respondents from different formations responded in these different ways is open to speculation: one possibility is that those who took up arms to defeat apartheid but not on the side of the ANC, feel less betrayal than MK and SDU members. At the other end of the scale, black former SADF members are equivocal at best, while the majority of SPU members are clear that they would *not* do it all again, knowing what they now know.

On the one hand, the majority of respondents believe heir actions in taking up arms against apartheid were important and would be worth repeating if required, even if they personally do not gain from doing so in material or economic terms. But there is also a sizeable minority (34%) who are clear that – knowing what they now know – they would *not* do it again.

A significant proportion of these come from SPUs or are black former SADF members, who would count as having backed the "losing" side if such an assessment were to have any value. But a fifth of APLA and a third of other formal armed formation respondents are equally clear that they would not do it all again. This negative perception of the value of what respondents had done presumably contributes to the negative trends found among respondents. As we see below, it also makes it very difficult for many respondents to live what they consider to be a normal life.

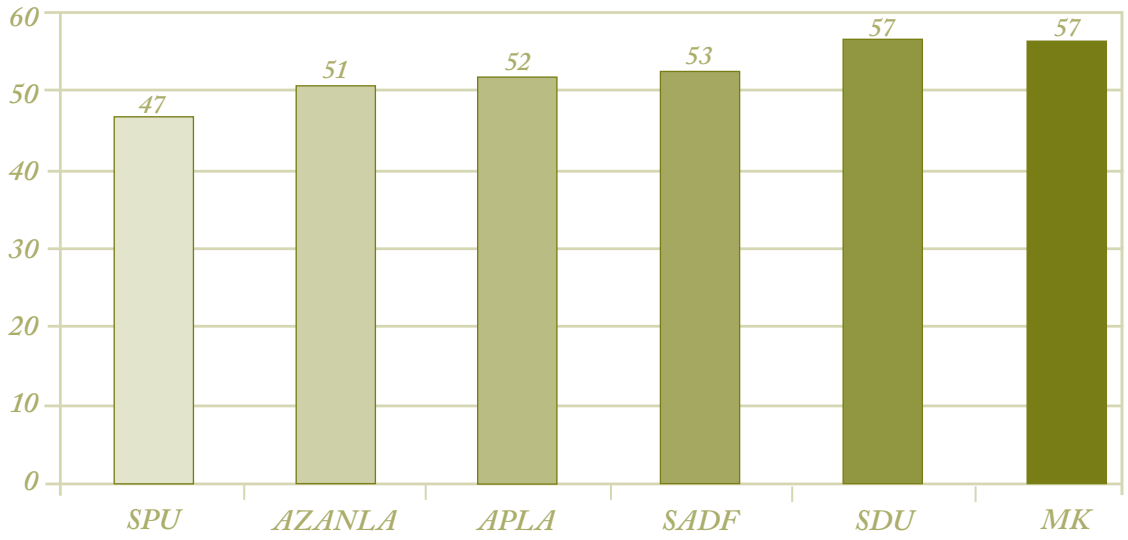
A normal life?

We posed a very broad Likert item to respondents: "I am finding it very difficult to live a normal life". We did not define "a normal life", so there may be some variance in responses that we are not recording or controlling. A sizeable 54% of respondents either agreed (27.5%) or strongly agreed (26.5%) with the statement. Men and women were equally likely to agree, but age made a difference: younger respondents (aged between 21 and 30) and older respondents (51+) were less likely to agree, with 48% of younger and 36% of older agreeing with the statement. In the two middle cohorts, far more respondents agreed: 58% of those aged 31 to 40 agreed, as did 53% aged 41 to 50.

Younger people are generally more adaptive to circumstances; and older respondents, the youngest of whom would have been born in the year of the Congress of the People in 1955, may have had longer in the struggle and had lower expectations when it ended. But those in the middle – the youngest of whom were born a year before the 1976 uprising – are battling to normalise in post-conflict South Africa. This may help NGOs, government departments and others better target their activities.

Employment status made an impact – those in employment (45%) or who are unavailable for employment (48%) were less likely to agree. This rose to 48% among the unemployed and again to 60% of those on the fringes of employment working in casual jobs. Equipping ex-combatants for work, and providing them with an appropriate environment for their businesses to

Figure 24: Difficulty in leading a normal life by armed formation (% agree)



take off, is a key activity for all those working with the various groups of ex-combatants.

While the differences between exiles and non-exiles were insignificant, there are again differences when analysed across different armed formations.

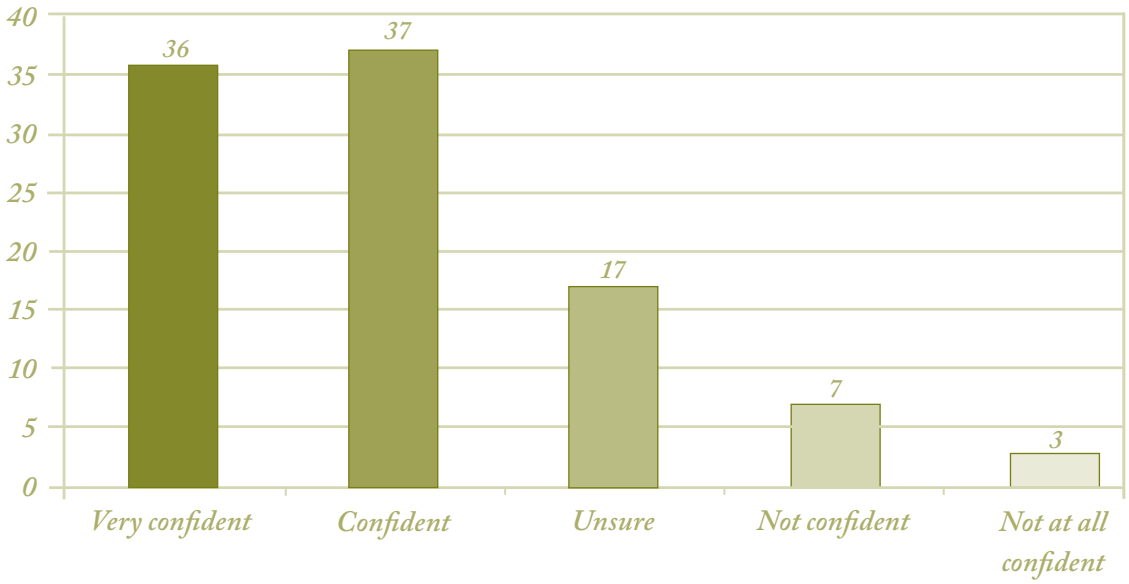
These differences again suggest that ex-combatants from the armed wings of the two leading liberation movements (MK/ANC and APLA/PAC) are struggling more than others. Respondents from the informal formations – SDUs and SPUs – are doing considerably better, although even here half of respondents are struggling to live a normal life. These differences should be borne in mind when we later assess the needs and interventions required to help ex-combatants overcome the problems that are currently stopping so many from living a normal life.

Attitudes to the future

Finally, we asked respondents to think about South Africa in the next ten years and tell us how confident they are that they and their families will be living a better life. Figure 25 reminds us that ex-combatants are not a homogenous group of alienated, angry individuals.

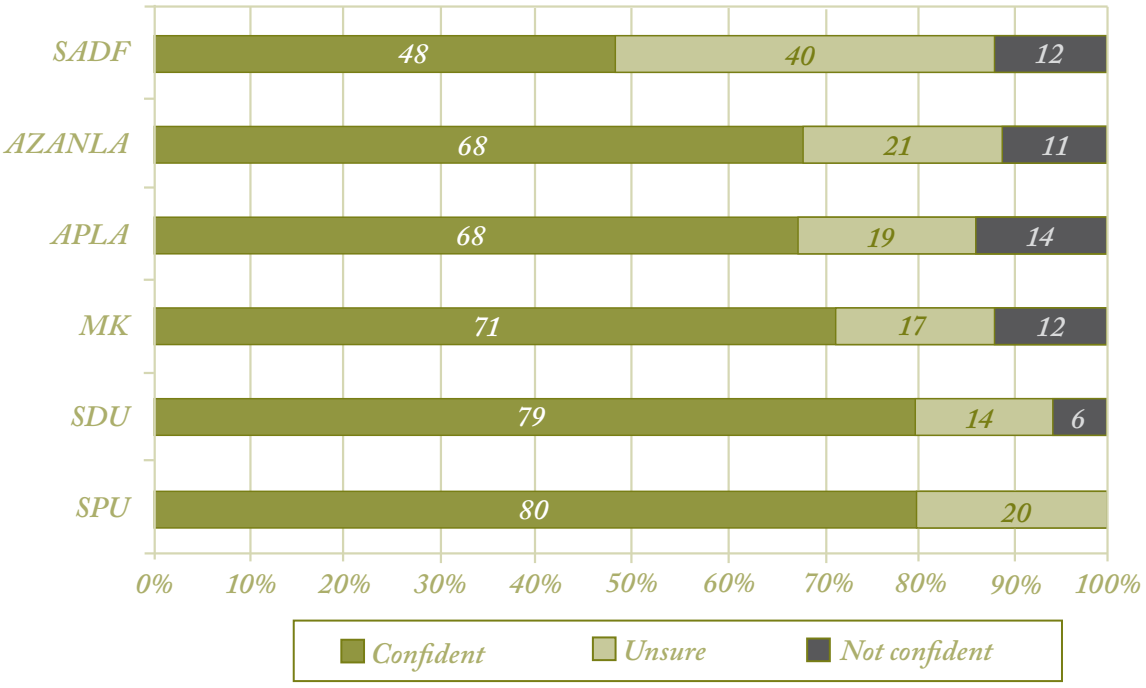
While three-quarters (73%) are either very confident or confident that they and their families will be living a better life a decade from now; just one in ten lack confidence in the future. Women are more likely than men to be positive about the future. Age made only a slight difference, with respondents aged 51+ slightly less confident (at 69%) in the future than their younger counterparts. There was a very slight difference between those in full-time employment (76%) and those out of work (72%), but generally employment status did not impact on confidence in the future.

Figure 25: Confidence in the future



While there were no differences between those who were in exile and those who were not, armed formation again made a strong difference. This reinforces the assertion that the different armed formations need to be taken into account for targeting outreach and recruitment activities.

Figure 26: Confidence in the future by armed formation



Clearly there are major differences among respondents from different armed formations. In contrast with other areas, SPU and SDU members emerge as most confident about the future. This strongly suggests that those whose exposure (while certainly brutal) was short (1990-1994) and entirely spent inside the country have fewest problems envisaging a positive future for themselves and their families. MK, APLA and AZANLA veterans follow them, with seven in ten expressing a positive attitude about the future. This drops to less than half of former SADF respondents.

Looking at the negative side (the right-hand side of the rows), former members of informal armed formations express little negativity about the future. This is quite surprising, given their low scores on a number of other indicators. The level of negativity increases among former members of formal formations, rising from 12% among SADF and MK respondents to 14% of APLA respondents.

The broader point we are trying to make is that on many of the issues analysed above, differences are opaque and it is often difficult to determine if a clear and significant pattern exists in responses. In some cases, differences emerge across demographic variables; in others, demographic variables have little impact, but armed formation does, and so on. In other words, are there relationships within the data that need more complex analytic tools than cross-tabulating standard demographic categories, or armed formations, and so on? The following section seeks to answer this question.

Typology

In order to better understand the dynamics at play among ex-combatants, we ran a factor analysis, a multivariate technique that seeks to identify patterns across a range of variables.[8] Factor analysis is a statistical technique for reducing large data sets to small numbers of "factors"

[8] Factors loading at.472 and above – most above .700 – were used.

required to "explain" the pattern of relationships in the data. In psychological literature, it generates fierce battles between supporters who see it as neutral and scientific and critics who argue that it generates statistical abstractions that have little explanatory value.[9] It is more common in applied social research such as this survey, where factor analysis is extremely useful in reducing large numbers of variables to key explanatory factors. We used factor analysis in order to better describe the different typologies among ex-combatants and to find out if there are commonalities that cut across more obvious lines of division, such as armed formation, socio-economic circumstance and so on.

All respondents score on all items in a factor analysis, which then describes the main trends found in the data. These are not mutually exclusive categories and do not add up to 100%. Rather, the factor analysis identifies main trends among ex-combatants and identifies where these trends are stronger or weaker. We are looking for trends within the data, not exclusive and discrete categories.

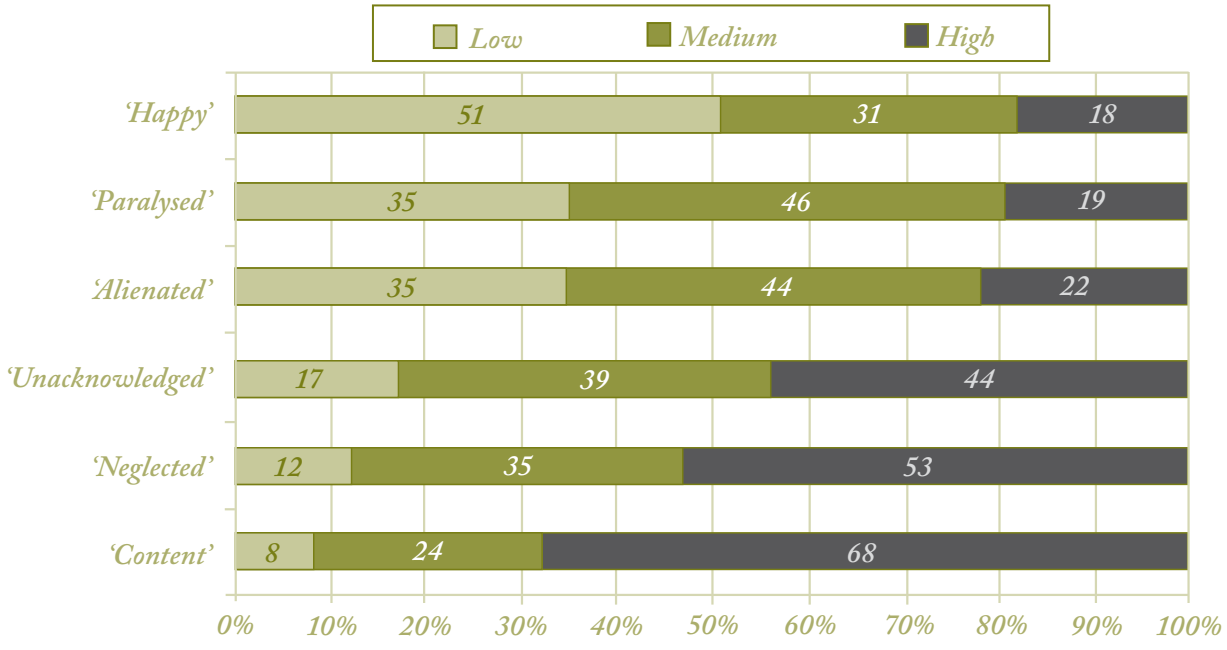
As Figure 27 shows, ex-combatants reveal six main typologies. The easiest distinction is between those who are "content" or "happy", and the remainder, who are not coping very well for different reasons, which include alienation, difficulty in moving forward and feeling unacknowledged.

The dominant trend (if we judge according to "high" levels of the typologies) is what we labelled "content": respondents who share the view that their political leaders *did* care about them after 1994 are also likely to feel they have been well treated by the community. Also important, though far less common, with the lowest ("high") score, is the second positive strand, labelled "happy": respondents who remark on positive changes in the external environment – the notion that "life for me is better than it was ten years ago" – are likely to share a more internal notion, that "In general, I am happy with the way my life is at the moment".

These two factors are important: the majority of ex-combatants in our survey are living in very poor socio-economic circumstances, and show high levels of anger about their treatment and condition. But this is not an adequate description of their situation. As the factor analysis suggests, there are positives combining with the more negative trends, allowing ex-combatants to see how much better the global environment is a decade plus into democracy, while at the same time being aware of how this contrasts with their own lives and what it is in their past that is holding them back.

A third group are labelled "neglected". Regardless of background or current situation, they believe that political leaders did *not* care about them after 1994,

Figure 27: Categories of ex-combatant



[9] www.oup.com/uk/booksites/content/0199253978/student/glossary/glossary.htm

that they have not been compensated for their role in the struggle. Bringing a more negative edge to it, they believe they wasted their time by participating in the armed struggle. This is probably the most fatalistic and angry-sounding of the trends emerging from the factor analysis, and in effect reveals the obverse of "happy" and "content" – the ex-combatants who feel ignored, unsupported and see little in their environment to make them feel they spent their time for a positive cause. This trend scores high in over half of all respondents.

A further typology, scoring high in four in ten respondents, is what we have labelled as "unacknowledged". The lack of acknowledgement – from family, community and politicians – emerged as a key uniting issue among this disparate group, alongside the expressed need for acceptance. Respondents who want official recognition are likely to share the view that they want community acceptance as well. These can both be managed and provided, if a conducive environment can be created.

Those we have labelled "alienated" actually share high scores on both the alienation ("No one cares about people like me") and anomie ("People like me cannot influence developments in my community") measures. They are likely to be withdrawn from community involvement and difficult to reach out to (see below). But this is a key group to reach because of the potentially negative outcomes that this potent mix of alienation and anomic tendencies could generate.

Finally, there is a group we have called "paralysed", in what we hope is not too pejorative labelling. This typology includes those who told us that it is difficult to live a normal life, that they have been maltreated by their community, that they cannot forgive their former enemies, and who also acknowledge that they drink too much (cause and effect are not at issue here). Some remain mired in the experiences and realities of combat and need help to move forward. Others have tried and been rebuffed (for example, maltreated by their community). All need help.

In the negative typologies, we see the way in which feelings of neglect or betrayal combine with other, different variables, to produce different types of ex-combatant. A common strand is the issue of betrayal or neglect, by political leaders and/or community. The importance of acknowledging the contribution of ex-combatants to freedom, at political and community levels cannot be over-emphasised. This is better understood as a process than an event, and will range from developing an accurate historiography and way of describing the role and contribution of ex-combatants, to a formal commitment by political and community leaders to service provision. It will be critical in helping to begin the healing process that – for these respondents – did *not* begin with exposure to violence, but with the post-1994 introduction of democracy.

But the factor analysis outputs go further than this general point. They should allow NGOs, government departments and others to more efficiently target ex-combatants by need and for provision. A basic screening questionnaire will help identify the strength or weakness of the different typology and thus the set of services that may be more appropriate.

To assist with this, we have created a basic targeting matrix, attached as Appendix A, which sets out the main socio-economic characteristics of the six different typologies among ex-combatants. This is an important targeting tool to be used in recruiting ex-combatants to a programme and in better tailoring service provision for needs to be met more effectively.

Chapter 4: Outreach

Introduction

How to access ex-combatants is an important consideration when developing any intervention or programme for this group. This section starts off by looking at the access ex-combatants have to mainstream media. We then look at the civic engagement of ex-combatants. Finally, we examine the social and organisational networks in which ex-combatants are involved.

Media access

An important means of informing ex-combatants about potential service provision in the future is through the media. To ascertain how effective this would be, we asked ex-combatants about what media they use.

Table 17: Frequency of media usage

Frequency	Radio	Television	Newspaper
Daily	*65*	*63*	*48*
Weekly	*13*	*20*	*26*
Monthly/seldom	*12*	*10*	*18*
Never	*10*	*8*	*8*

In most developing countries, and especially in rural areas, radio is commonly the most widely used of the three mainstream media. However, Table 17 reflects the situation in Gauteng, a very urbanised province where the education levels of ex-combatants is quite high.[10] Media access appears widespread, with the vast majority of ex-combatants accessing each of the three mainstream media types on a daily or weekly basis. This is good news for any mass outreach initiative seeking to use these media.

Table 17 also shows that approximately one in ten ex-combatants never access each of the three media types. Fortunately, from an outreach point of view, this is not the same set of ex-combatants across all three. In fact, what is encouraging is that less than 1% of all ex-combatants access no mainstream media at all. It would appear that the media could play a significant role in accessing and informing ex-combatants. The rest of this section will look at other ways of reaching ex-combatants.

10 A recent national survey found the following daily/weekly access figures for Gauteng Africans: radio – 80%, television – 67%, newspapers – 29%. See Everatt, D. and Solanki, G. (2005) *A nation of givers? Findings from a national survey* (Durban: NDA, CCS and SAGA).

Civic engagement and trust

We asked a range of questions about levels of civic engagement in order to assess the extent to which ex-combatants are or are not participating in civil society, political and social processes, and so on. That some are not participating is already evident, suggested by the levels of alienation and anomie discussed above. But it is important to ensure that we develop a fully rounded picture of ex-combatants, rather than resort to easy generalisations.

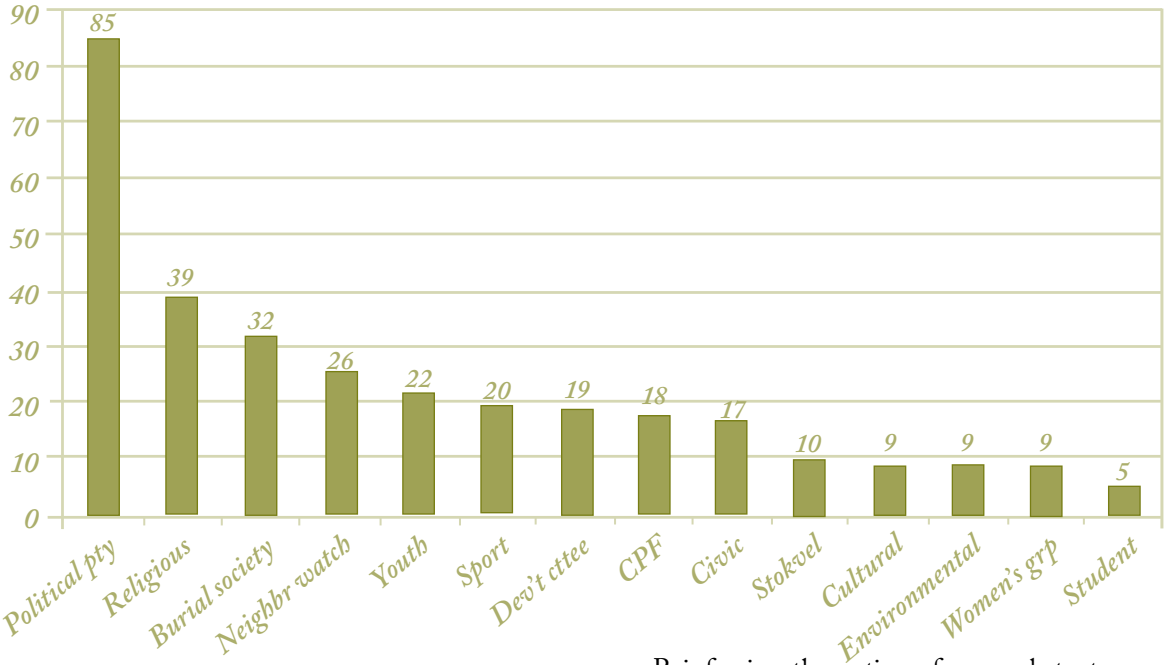
Civic engagement is also important because our country case studies showed how easily ex-combatant structures can become vehicles for politically ambitious ex-combatants. They present themselves as the "true" bearers of the old faith (in contrast with former political leaders now derided as "politicians"), and gain followers who have no other substantive type or form of engaging with community, social or political life.

Many respondents show serious psychological effects of involvement in and/or exposure to violence; alienation and anomie are common; life-courses have been disrupted; and the majority live in exceptionally trying socio-economic conditions. But at the same time, many are positive about the future, and many are also model citizens: they are active members of civil society organisations (CSOs), are registered voters, believe that being politically engaged is important, trust parliament and the Constitution, and show many of the characteristics of "engaged" and informed citizens. Their positive attitudes and the fact that some are CSO members are important in many ways, but particularly for outreach and accessing ex-combatants.

Good citizens

Figure 28 shows that on the one hand, ex-combatants in our sample are members of a wide range of CSOs, which, we noted earlier, is important for their own sense of belonging and contributing, and for outreach. But what is also interesting is how different their profile is from the general public.

Figure 28: Memberships of CSOs

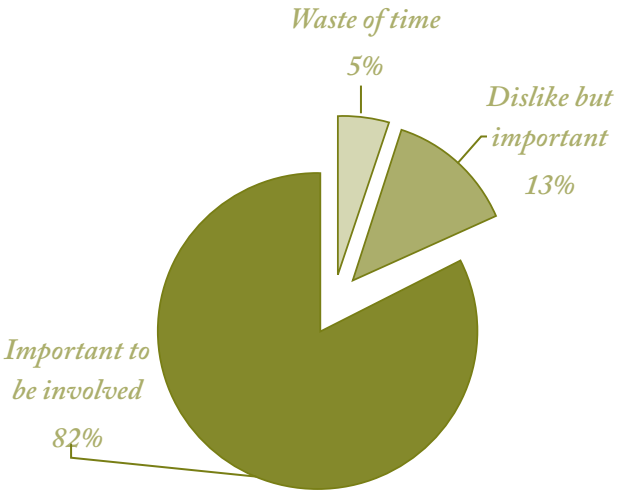


Ex-combatants are a highly politicised group – more than four in five belong to a political organisation. This is significantly higher than among the public, where political party membership rarely makes it beyond one in seven (a recent national survey found membership to stand at 13%).[11] Perhaps appropriately, respondents are also likely to belong to neighbourhood watch and community police forums, again in considerably greater numbers than among the general population.

But respondents also belong to a wide range of sporting, cultural, civic and other structures as well as those mentioned. Just 7% of respondents belonged to no civil society organisation at all, similar to results commonly generated by national sample surveys. We are dealing with small numbers, but it does appear that men are considerably more likely than women to belong to no CSO, as are those out of employment. Analysed across armed formations, it appears that former SDU and MK members are most likely to belong to no CSO; and AZANLA and APLA veterans are least likely.

Reinforcing the notion of ex-combatants as politically engaged citizens, despite their clear sense of betrayal by their own political leaders, just 5% agree, "politics is a waste of time".

Figure 29: Attitudes to politics



[11] See Everatt, D. and Solanki, G. (2005).

The overwhelming majority (82%) agree that "Politics affects everyone, and it's very important to be as involved as possible". There are some demographic differences: younger respondents are more likely to think of politics as a waste of time than their elders, as are men compared with women, but the differences are slim.

While levels of agreement that it is important to be involved in politics were high across exiles and non-exiles, exiles were twice as likely (9%) to state that politics is a waste of time as non-exiles (4%). This again reflects the higher levels of disillusionment and happiness among ex-combatants from exile that we have seen above. Some differences exist when analysed by armed formation: 12% of SADF and 7% of SPU members agreed that politics is a waste of time, but numbers were high across the board regarding the notion that politics affects everyone so they should be involved, peaking at 88% of AZANLA and 83% of SDU members.

Ex-combatants live out what they say. A massive 97% are registered voters. This holds across the board, but dips slightly (to 87%) among former SPU members. Despite their higher levels of disillusionment, ex-combatants from exile were just as likely (96%) to be registered voters as those who were not in exile (98%).

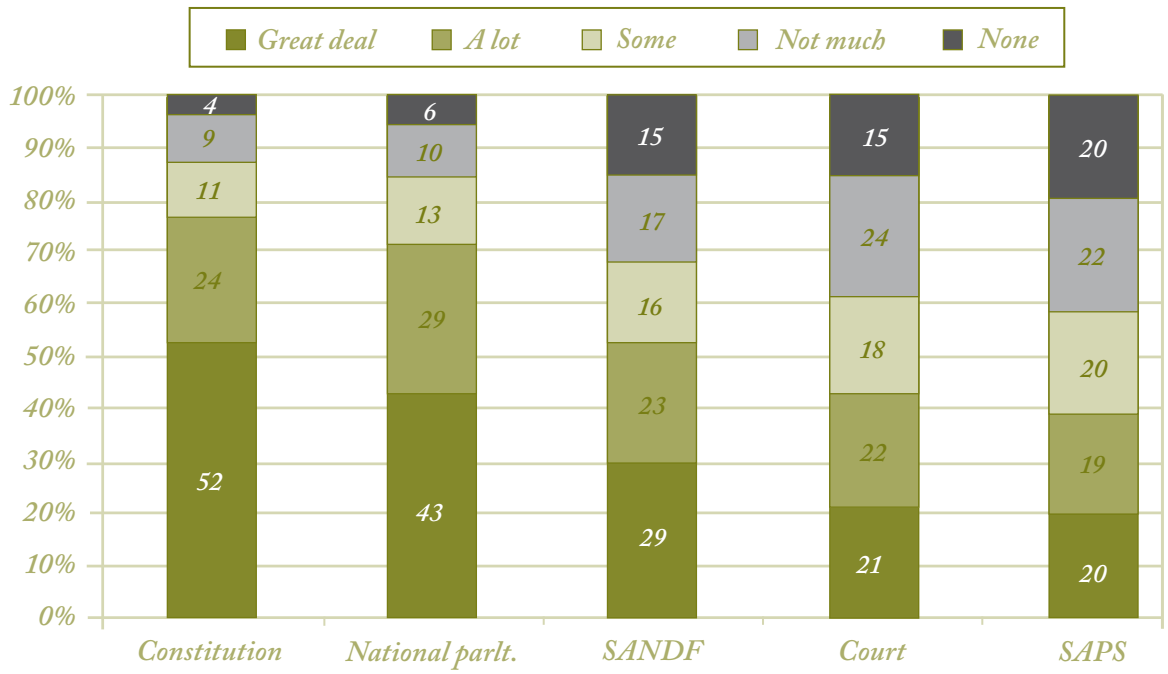
And ex-combatants have voted in numbers far higher than the national average; even where their voting figures dip, for the 1996 and 2006 local elections, their voting figures remain far higher than the actual turnout.

Table 18: Voting behaviour

Did you vote?	% voted
1994 general election	*89*
1995 local election	*86*
1999 general election	*92*
2000 local election	*90*
2004 general election	*94*
2006 local election	*83*

Ex-combatants fought for the right to vote, and have consistently utilised that right, even as they began to realise their political leaders were not going to deliver to them directly. And even here it is important not to blur categories: ex-combatants in our sample expressed considerable mistrust in politicians, but have substantial levels of trust in government institutions.

Figure 30: Trust



The Constitution, which enshrines many of the values for which many of our respondents fought, enjoys a great deal or "a lot" of confidence of 76% of respondents, with another 11% having "some" confidence in the Constitution. This is extremely important for an emerging democracy still trying to develop broad-based support for common values as set out in the Constitution.

National parliament – ironically, the home of the politicians seen to have betrayed ex-combatants – also enjoys widespread confidence among respondents. The courts enjoy rather less confidence, possibly reflecting the experiences of many ex-combatants in the apartheid justice system. While the SANDF enjoys the confidence of over half of respondents, this drops to four in ten (39%) where the police are concerned.

Seen from the perspective of bedding down a young democracy, these are positive findings: institutions that are key for the long-term stability of society enjoy the confidence of this important social group. But the institutions of security, law and order – arenas that ex-combatants know well – enjoy considerably less confidence. This may not be an important short-term area to focus on, given the immediate challenges outlined in this report, but building relationships based on trust between ex-combatants and security organs will be important in the long term.

Consciousness and organisational form

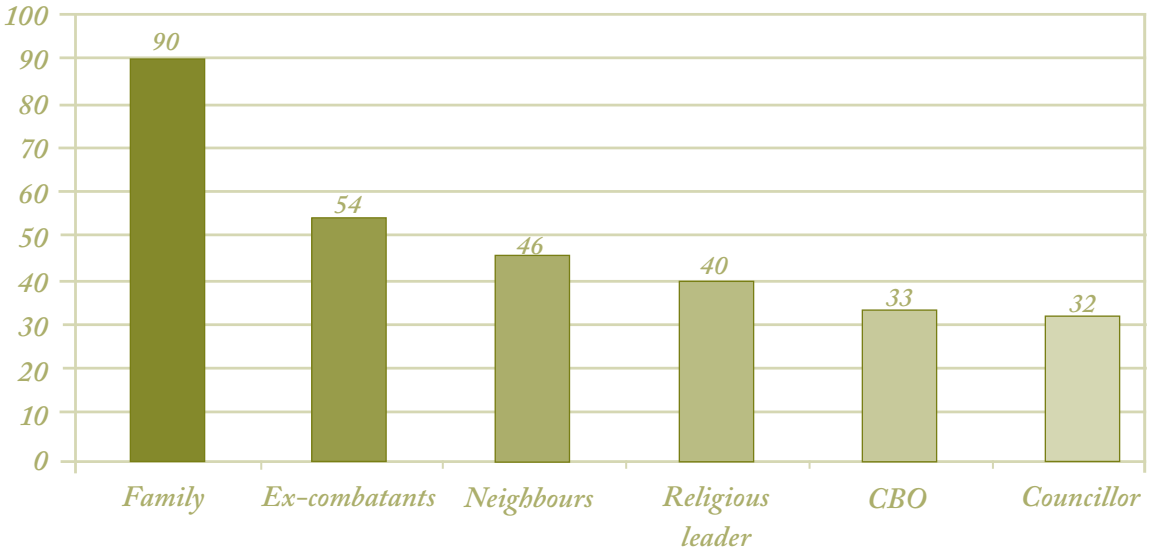
Ex-combatants are in a slightly awkward position, caught between suspicion of politicians on the one hand and intense need for services and support on the other. It is not surprising to find a growing consciousness as ex-combatants (rather than simply ANC or PAC or AZAPO and so on) reflected in growing organisational form.

This can be a positive development, if those organisations are used to engage and reach ex-combatants and source service provision to those in need. But it becomes less positive where the needs of ex-combatants are neither recognised nor met, and their organisations move from service and support to playing an increasingly overt political role. Our Zimbabwean country case study shows how this negative development can play out in practice; and we strongly recommend that government (in particular) takes heed of ex-combatants and uses veteran structures as partners in service provision rather than forcing them into an oppositional stance.

Who do you turn to for help?

It is important to understand the move that ex-combatant structures seem to make from collegiality, support and service provision, to a political role; and to strengthen the former rather than force the latter. For example, we asked respondents: "Think about when you have a problem or urgently need some help. Who do you turn to?" (This was a multi-mention question so responses do not add up to 100%.)

Figure 31: Who do you turn to for help?



Nine in ten respondents, naturally enough, first turn to family when facing a problem. But over half of ex-combatants (54%) turn to "former colleagues from your army", as our instrument put it. This is to be expected: ex-combatants have far more in common with each other than with people who neither went through comparable experiences nor live with their after-effects. (Notably, ex-SADF respondents were least likely to turn to their former colleagues.) Respondents were more likely to turn to former colleagues than to priests/religious leaders, CBOs or their local councillors, strongly suggesting that veteran structures must be an integral part of service delivery strategies for ex-combatants. Respondents scoring high on the "alienation" factor were most likely to turn to former colleagues. This is very important if programmes are to reach those most in need.

Ex-combatants who had spent time in exile were less likely to turn to any of the options given when compared with those who had not been in exile. Except for the category of former colleagues – 59% were likely to turn to former colleagues for help as compared with 52% of those who had not been in exile. This is to be expected, given the close proximity and time spent together in exile and the bonds that must have developed.

Networks

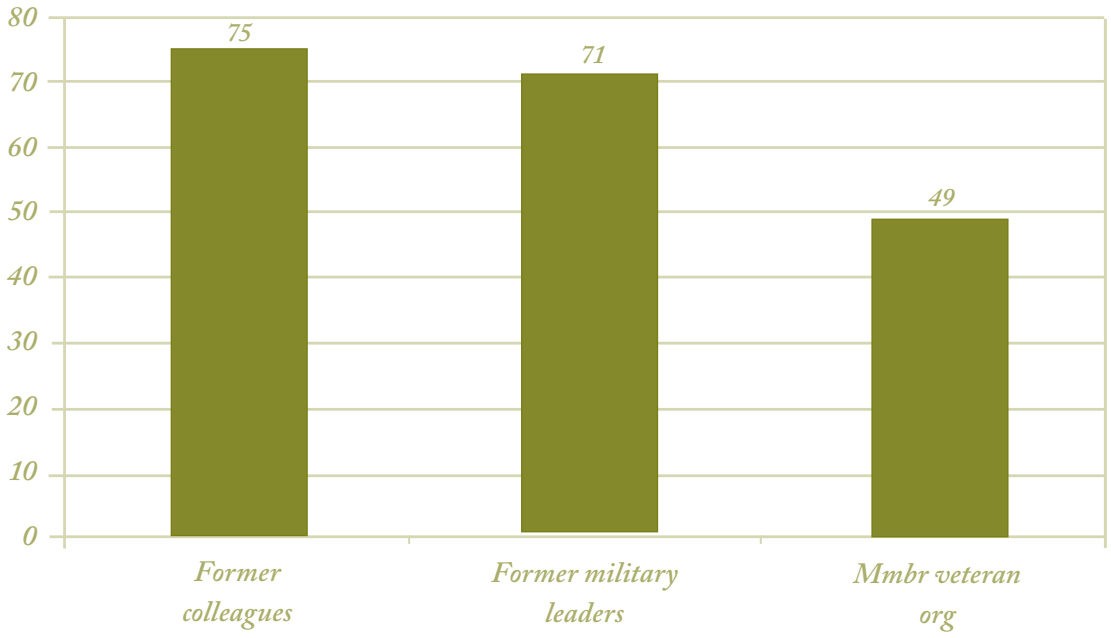
Ex-combatants stay in close contact with each other. Three-quarters (75%) of respondents told us they still keep in touch with former colleagues from the armed struggle; this was slightly more common among older rather than younger and among those with higher rather than lower levels of education. Eight-tenths (80%) of exiles remain in contact with their colleagues, as do 73% of those who were not in exile.

Former SPU members are least likely to keep in touch (53% do so), but others do so in greater numbers: 68% of SADF and AZANLA respondents keep in touch with former colleagues, as do 74% of MK, 77% of SDU and 80% of APLA respondents.

And ex-combatants seem to retain a leadership structure as well. Elsewhere in the questionnaire we asked if respondents "stay in *close contact* with the leadership of your armed formation/group after 1990?" (emphasis in questionnaire). Again, 71% of respondents replied in the affirmative. Men are slightly more likely than women to stay in close contact with their former military leaders, but no other demographic variable made any significant difference to responses. While exiles and non-exiles were equally likely to have stayed in contact with their leaders, respondents from APLA (77%), AZANLA (77%) and SDUs (72%) were most likely to do so. This was followed by MK respondents (68%), dropping to six in ten respondents from the SADF and SPUs.

This is a close-knit set of communities, and as our fieldworkers can attest, it is extremely difficult to access. For services to reach ex-combatants, service providers will need to acknowledge the existing structures and relationships among ex-combatants, and use them as entry points.

Figure 32: Staying in touch (% "yes")



This reflects the fact that seven in ten respondents (71%) believe that their participation in armed struggle had a "very positive" or "positive" impact on their lives. Engaging in a struggle for human rights is not the desperate last throw of the dice by lumpenproletariat who have nothing to lose, nor by recidivists looking to get into "the action". While some elements of these are evident, it is essentially a rational decision by citizens who realise that their lives cannot improve without a rights-based revolution. Engaging in struggle is a critical component of good citizenship.

Participation was more likely to be regarded as positive by female respondents (75%) than males (70%), though by only a small margin. The positive impact is more remarked on by older than younger respondents, rising from 69% among 21 to 30 year-olds to 80% among respondents over the age of 51. We have come to expect that demographic variables only erratically impact on responses, while armed formation variables impact regularly, and this is true here too.

negative (20%) compared with those who were not in exile (15%).

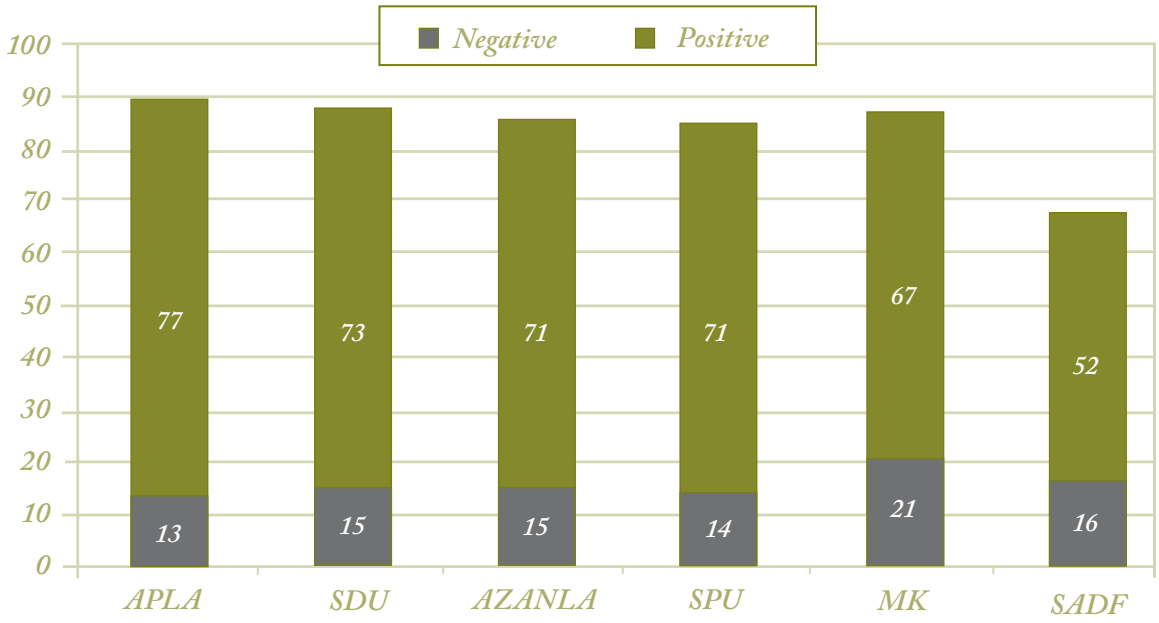
In general, however, the high levels of positive sentiment may help to explain the importance of camaraderie and support among veterans and thus the significance of their organisations.

Organisations

This term needs to be qualified: respondents were more likely to maintain contact and informal networking among former colleagues than to be members of veterans' associations or structures. The latter are of course important, but are not gate-keepers to *all* ex-combatants; service providers will have to work with them, but also go beyond them and engage in the far tougher work of identifying informal networks and working with and through them.

This has important implications for outreach among ex-combatants. For example, 54% of male respondents

Figure 33: Impact of participation in armed struggle (neutral option not shown)



Black SADF members had a tough time while in the apartheid military, and unsurprisingly they are least likely to view their experience as positive. But far more surprising is the fact that just two-thirds (67%) of MK veterans – the "winners" in the view of many – regard their participation as positive, *and* that a fifth of MK veterans (21%) regard their participation as negative – the highest of all armed formations. Exiles were also more likely to rate the impact of their participation as

belong to a formal ex-combatant organisation, dropping to 32% of female respondents. Age made little difference, but education did: 55% of respondents with matric and higher education belong to structures, dropping to 36% among those with education to Grade 7 level.

There were significant differences between exiles and non-exiles in terms of membership of veterans' associations. Three-quarters (74%) of exiles were members of such associations compared with only two-fifths (42%) of

those who had not been in exile. These associations are an important means of accessing ex-combatants who were in exile – not only are exiles more likely to be members and more likely to stay in contact with their colleagues but, as we saw above, these ex-combatants are also more likely to turn to their colleagues when in need of help.

As we have come to expect, armed formation also makes a difference in level of membership, though less (in this instance) than some demographic variables.

Table 19: Membership of veterans' associations/ structures

Membership of veterans' association	% belonging
MK	*59*
APLA	*52*
SDU	*44*
AZANLA	*43*
SADF	*32*
SPU	*28*
Total	*49*

Over half of MK and APLA respondents can be reached via ex-combatant or veterans' movements, but this drops steadily through other formations. In particular, veterans of informal formations (SDUs and SPUs) are unlikely to be reached in substantial numbers in this way.

Why do ex-combatants join veterans' associations?[12] According to almost half (64%) of respondents who belong to such a structure, it is mainly for morale or support. Another fifth (22%) joined for welfare support, 13% because they "liked the army" and 12% to share information.

Members do not regard veterans' organisations as very efficient or effective. When we asked the 49% belonging to a structure how well it looks after their needs, 41% said very well or well, 32% thought it was "OK" and 27% thought their structure was not very good at looking after their needs. On the one hand, ex-combatant structures exist, enjoy membership across the different formations, and are natural partners in service provision. On the other hand, it does appear from these (admittedly limited) results, that ex-combatant structures will need to be developed and strengthened, so that they can be efficient and effective partners in working alongside donors, government and other civil society bodies with ex-combatants.

For respondents, ex-combatant structures offer camaraderie and/or services. They are not seen as political, as a vehicle for furthering a particular agenda or set of demands. But this is a form that similar bodies developed or morphed into over time in other post-conflict countries. It is (at the risk of repeating ourselves) imperative that the South African government takes the lead in allocating resources to meet the particular needs of ex-combatants, and brings veterans' associations on board as partners in service provision, rather than leave them out in the cold where they have to play a more political role in order to be heard. That some ex-combatant leaders may harbour political ambitions is to be expected, but should not be a deterrent in working with their organisations.

[12] This was an open-ended question.

Chapter 5: Needs and provision

Introduction

Underlying this entire study, based on other research and the experiences of people and organisations working with ex-combatants, is the assumption that they form a group with particular needs. This includes the need for healing, to allow them to fully re-engage with society. This section looks at what needs to be provided for ex-combatants and by whom.

What is needed?

We asked an open-ended question to probe this further: "Looking at all the issues that you are facing today, what is the ONE most important thing (outside of money or a job) that you need to make your life better?" We steered respondents away from "money" or "a job", because these are predictable answers and because they are not going to be provided by donors, NGO/CBOs, or government.

So what is it that ex-combatants want? Nothing out of the ordinary. They want help in starting businesses and help with healing. The most common reply was that respondents want skills training (31%) and business opportunities (22%); while a further 12% want to further their education (12%). A few mentioned social service support, such as affordable housing (6%). These are modest requests indeed, given both the contribution made by ex-combatants and the dire situation so many currently find themselves in.

We went on to ask a more detailed question about the type of support respondents may want so that we could rank them.

Skills development and business start-up support were the most popular items, followed by a second pairing of life skills and support programmes for spouses/families. In other words, economic issues were primary, followed by coping support strategies. Study support came some way lower down, and counselling even lower, although it may be inappropriate to expect people who need counselling to verbalise it to an interviewer.

The data in Table 20 are important in reflecting the stated needs of ex-combatants, as well as their prioritisation: given the very high levels of poverty we saw earlier, it is unsurprising that economic matters are given more emphasis than psycho-social matters. But even then, the difference is a matter of a few percentage points, which suggests that a basket of psycho-socio-economic services is needed to help ex-combatants in South Africa.

What has been provided?

That there is a need for healing is suggested by the fact that a third (31%) of respondents have undergone cleansing rituals, and one in ten (11%) have undergone counselling or therapy, shown in Figure 34. Ex-combatants from exile seem to have been accorded more opportunities for healing – 36% have undergone a cleansing ritual (30% among non-exiles) and 17% have received therapy (only 9% among non-exiles).

We saw in an earlier section that one in eight (13%) ex-combatants potentially suffers from PTSD today. These ex-combatants were more likely to have undergone cleansing rituals (37%) or one-on-one counselling (14%).

Table 20: Types of service

Skills development programme	*92*
Business start-up programme	*86*
Life skills programme	*84*
Support programme for your family/partner	*81*
Bursary programme so that you can study further	*76*
Counselling programme	*66*
Referral services (tell you where to go depending on the particular problem/issue)	*63*
Agricultural/farming programme	*57*

While this may be encouraging in the sense that the more needy are more likely to have undergone such interventions, it raises two important issues. Firstly, it questions the efficacy of such interventions, as these ex-combatants remain severely affected by their traumas and experiences. Secondly, the flipside of those who have undergone such interventions are the large numbers of needy ex-combatants who have not: more than eight out of every ten (86%) with potential PTSD have not received therapy or counselling.

Given the cost and inaccessibility of traditional one-on-one therapy, it may not be a solution that can be applied at scale. Group therapy and other forms of healing, such as the wilderness trails used by National Peace Accord Trust, or art as expression, which can also be provided at group level, allow healing among larger groups in place of individuals. But the key point is that large numbers of ex-combatants are seeking to cleanse themselves of the hangover of involvement in conflict and violence. Provision for this need must be adapted to meet their specific needs at an appropriate scale.

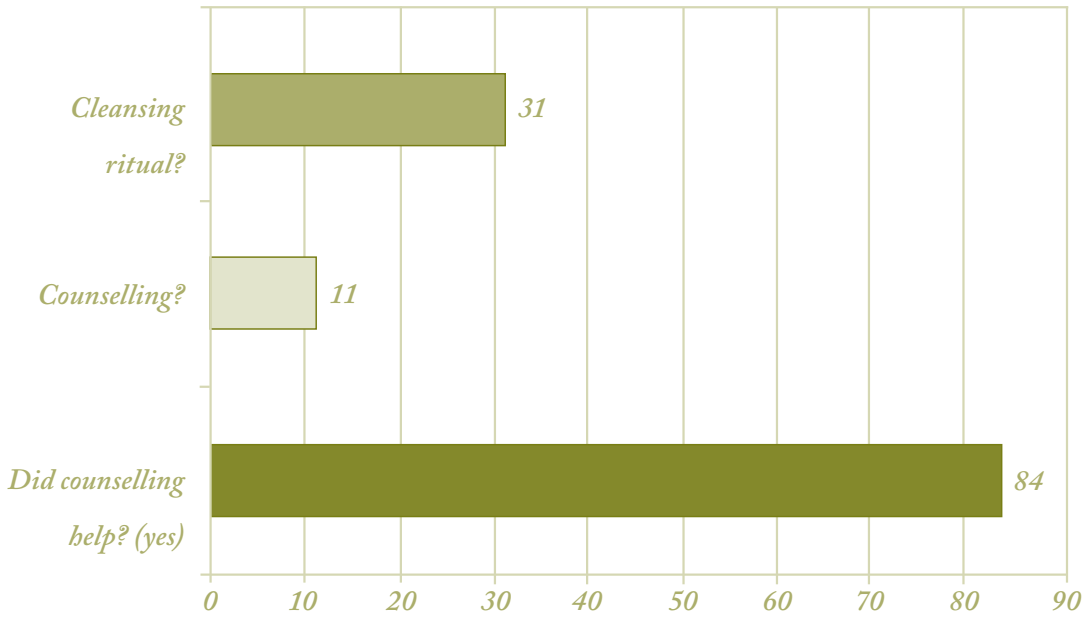
It is worth noting that 43% of respondents who had undergone a cleansing ritual had *also* received therapy.

Figure 34 shows that both traditional and more western forms of healing should be made available, and that it is not an either/or situation. But access is an issue: we asked respondents if they were aware of "any projects or programmes that are taking place in South Africa for ex-combatants". In response, a third (31%) indicated that they were aware of such programmes, and of those, 41% had personally participated in such programmes. Men (32%) were more likely than women (25%) to have heard of programmes for ex-combatants, as were respondents with higher levels of education and those who were better off economically.

Again, ex-combatants who were in exile appear to have been accorded more opportunities, as they were far more likely (43%) to have heard of such programmes compared with those who were not in exile (27%). Armed formation made little impact, except for SPU members, with just 7% aware of programmes for ex-combatants, way below the average of 31%. So ensuring equitable outreach and access will take some work on the part of service providers.

Almost half (41%) of those who knew of programmes took part in them, suggesting that more broad-based and

Figure 34: Seeking help



widely available services would see significant uptake by ex-combatants. Men and women were equally likely to have taken part, although younger respondents were less likely to have done so than their elders. These aside, participation reflected knowledge of programmes: those who took part were more likely to have higher levels of education and to be in employment; and they were from all armed formations. The exception was SPUs, none of whose respondents had participated in a programme.

Participation has had some benefits: two-thirds (65%) of those who had participated in programmes told us the impact had been very positive or positive.

Table 21: Rating the impact of participation in programmes (among those who took part)

Rate impact of participation	%
Very positive	*25*
Positive	*40*
Average	*16*
Negative	*14*
Very negative	*5*

Who should provide the requisite services?

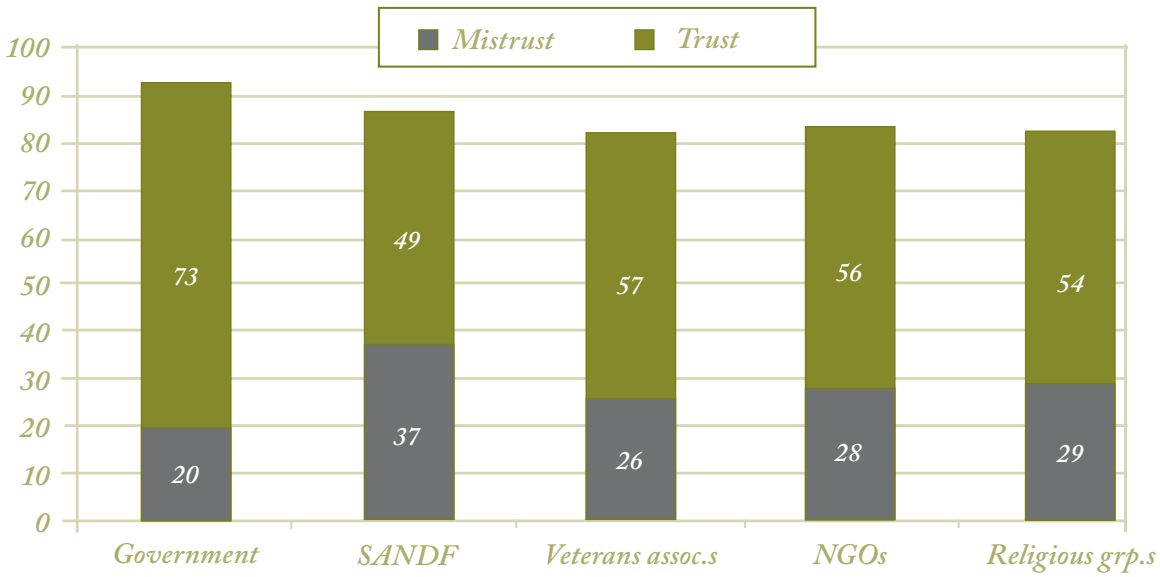
Finally, we asked respondents who they would trust to provide the different services they told us they needed. Trust is an important issue among ex-combatants, both as a result of their former roles and tightly knit networks they have formed, and because of their sense of post-apartheid betrayal.

Ex-combatants may have lost faith in their political leaders, but as we saw earlier when we asked about confidence in institutions, not in government generally, and respondents ranked government highest among potential service providers. Three-quarters (73%) of respondents told us they would trust government to provide the services they need. This was highest among SDU (80%), SPU (73%) and MK (72%) respondents, but dropped among those from the SADF (64%), AZANLA (63%) and APLA (56%).

In South Africa, where religious affiliation is widespread and deeply felt, it is somewhat surprising to find that the faith-based sector is not ranked higher among ex-combatants. In this and other cases, it is clear that ex-combatants will have to be approached with sensitivity, because levels of mistrust are relatively high: at 20%, this is lowest for government but rises to nearly a third (29%) of respondents where faith-based groups are concerned.

Screening tools and careful targeting strategies will be needed to identify ex-combatants and source appropriate services to them on the basis of need. The survey suggests that the three key players are government, NGOs and ex-combatants' own structures. The SANDF is a non-starter, with less than half of respondents trusting it as a service provider. Government is followed by veterans' associations and NGOs, suggesting that government/NGO partnerships, working with veterans via their own structures, could play a very positive role in serving the needs of ex-combatants.

Figure 35: Trust and potential service providers



Appendix A: Targeting matrix

	Content			Unacknow-ledged			Happy			Alienated			Paralysed			Neglected		
	L	*M*	*H*	*L*	*M*	*H*	*L*	*M*	*H*	*L*	*M*	*H*	*L*	*M*	*H*	*L*	*M*	*H*
Total	*8*	*24*	*68*	*18*	*39*	*44*	*51*	*31*	*18*	*35*	*44*	*22*	*35*	*46*	*19*	*12*	*35*	*53*
Sex																		
- Male	*8*	*24*	*68*	*19*	*39*	*42*	*55*	*29*	*16*	*33*	*44*	*22*	*34*	*46*	*20*	*11*	*35*	*53*
- Female	*8*	*21*	*71*	*14*	*35*	*50*	*37*	*38*	*25*	*39*	*41*	*20*	*38*	*45*	*17*	*16*	*35*	*50*
Education																		
- < Gr8	*3*	*31*	*66*	*22*	*41*	*37*	*45*	*32*	*23*	*34*	*43*	*23*	*30*	*51*	*20*	*15*	*36*	*48*
- Gr8-11	*8*	*23*	*69*	*18*	*37*	*45*	*52*	*29*	*19*	*34*	*44*	*23*	*33*	*47*	*21*	*12*	*36*	*52*
- Matric+	*9*	*23*	*69*	*16*	*41*	*43*	*52*	*33*	*15*	*37*	*44*	*20*	*41*	*43*	*16*	*11*	*34*	*55*
Employment																		
- Working	*10*	*27*	*63*	*20*	*40*	*40*	*46*	*35*	*19*	*38*	*42*	*19*	*42*	*37*	*21*	*13*	*34*	*53*
- Casual	*6*	*21*	*73*	*21*	*44*	*35*	*52*	*30*	*17*	*38*	*44*	*17*	*39*	*37*	*24*	*6*	*37*	*57*
- Unemployed	*8*	*23*	*70*	*16*	*38*	*46*	*53*	*30*	*17*	*34*	*42*	*24*	*33*	*49*	*18*	*12*	*35*	*52*
- Unavailable	*11*	*29*	*60*	*22*	*38*	*40*	*47*	*31*	*22*	*31*	*56*	*14*	*40*	*44*	*16*	*16*	*35*	*49*
Age																		
- 21-30	*11*	*20*	*69*	*20*	*41*	*39*	*56*	*30*	*14*	*32*	*45*	*23*	*39*	*45*	*15*	*13*	*31*	*56*
- 31-40	*8*	*24*	*69*	*18*	*36*	*46*	*53*	*30*	*17*	*35*	*43*	*22*	*33*	*46*	*21*	*10*	*36*	*54*
- 41-50	*8*	*25*	*67*	*13*	*42*	*45*	*49*	*28*	*23*	*36*	*43*	*21*	*34*	*46*	*20*	*14*	*36*	*50*
- 51+	*2*	*29*	*69*	*21*	*44*	*35*	*35*	*44*	*21*	*35*	*44*	*21*	*46*	*45*	*8*	*27*	*38*	*35*
Poverty																		
- Low	*8*	*23*	*68*	*18*	*38*	*44*	*51*	*31*	*18*	*36*	*44*	*20*	*36*	*45*	*19*	*11*	*36*	*53*
- High	*7*	*24*	*69*	*17*	*41*	*42*	*52*	*31*	*17*	*30*	*43*	*27*	*31*	*50*	*19*	*15*	*33*	*52*

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SECTION 2

LIFE IN AND AFTER WAR: THREE LIFE STORIES

Ex-combatants are people, although this simple fact is often obscured by the various (usually negative) connotations of their 'ex-combatant' label. As such, we undertook a series of life stories - a lengthy series of interviews resulting in brief descriptions of people from different backgrounds, experiences and formations, but with a common humanity that needs to dominate how we understand, approach and work with them. Many planned life stories never took off while others fell apart part way through the research process, reflecting the complex emotional landscape inhabited by ex-combatants, their feelings of alienation and isolation, and some of the challenges facing those working in this sector. Here we present three life stories that were completed, covering members of AZANLA, a Self-Defence Unit and a Self-Protection Unit.


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Rias' story

"We are just foot soldiers."

Researched and written by Nobayethi Dube[1]

Jabu Tshabalala known as Rias by his close friends and family, after the popular footballer Maria-Maria joined the struggle in 1976. Before this, he was an ordinary township boy going to school, playing soccer and hanging around with friends. He got involved in the student uprisings by coincidence. Students at his school, Hlengiwe Secondary, asked him to represent them in the march that was to take place on 16 June because he was a student representative. He thought he was chosen because he was in the debating team, and also because he was a prefect.

Rias left South Africa on the night of 26 October 1976, travelling in a minibus with 18 other young men. The driver explained that there were fewer roadblocks at night. Rias could only leave the country after his mother granted him permission to go, and getting that permission was important to him.

"It was important to get permission, because I felt that if she agreed for me to go, this means that when I had her blessings for anything that I wanted to do, I would be successful in it."

On the afternoon that he left, he played soccer somewhere in Soweto. With him, he took only two pairs of jeans and takkies and his "rubber shoes".

The group of 18 arrived in Swaziland and were met by two men who took them to the police station to record their presence in the country. They were then taken to a house in Thiloni Park, which they later discovered was a Pan Africanist Congress (PAC) house.

Since he was regarded as a student leader, Rias was expected to brief the leadership of the PAC in that house on the situation in South Africa. On the evening of their arrival in Swaziland, he and two other SRC members were left at the house in Manzini and asked to give their views. They were then told that they should go back to South Africa to recruit more students. Rias refused because he felt that he would risk arrest.

When he left South Africa, Rias did not know which organisation he was going to join. He says he joined the PAC because the person who drove them out of the country was PAC. He had also been exposed to PAC people in Tshiawelo, Soweto. And the fact that he stayed at a place which housed PAC members could also have influenced him. When new recruits arrived in Swaziland there would be two representatives from the African National Congress (ANC) and the PAC who would ask them which organisation they wanted to join. People who were unsure were sent to a camp called Mdutshwana. Rias, however, stayed at the house in Manzini for about two months.

"The first thing that we did is what we called ideological classes. We got exposed to books you know, the Nkwame Nkrumah books, the Patrice Lumumba books, the Mau Tse books, the Karl Marx books. Those are all political books, so reading material was given to us to read."

The aim of the political classes was to make them understand what was going on in South Africa and why. They were also waiting their turn to leave for Tanzania. There were 43 other people staying at the house. Things were not easy. There was not enough to eat.

Rias became involved in soccer again, and played for

1 Edited by Laureen Bertin

a team called Malinza United of Mbabane (now the Manzini Swallows). Malinza United was not paying him, but they were bringing him groceries. He could provide food for almost everyone in the house, which promoted a spirit of comradeship. Some people had fled South Africa with only the clothes they were wearing, and if they wanted to wash their clothes they would have to borrow from others. Girls were moved to other areas, as having them in the house had led to some problems.

Rias did not dare write home to his mother and siblings.

"I would not because I knew letters were being opened".

Rias's "call" finally came in December and he left for Tanzania. Things were very different there the excitement about having travelled so far and about receiving military training. They were given accommodation in different houses and each house had a political commissar. Political classes continued, with evenings devoted to discussing issues, which was to further their understanding of politics.

Rias thought about home when they returned from training centres back to the camps.

"In the camps the only thing that was waiting for us is when are we going home to fight, and that day was not coming."

In 1980, Rias went to Lebanon, where he was terribly homesick.

"There were so many social things that were stressful, and the question of missing home was very, very stressful."

Rias does not specify how long he stayed in Lebanon. He was exposed to a lot of terrible violence and saw a lot of death: babies dying, people being torn apart. He does not want to talk much about this period of his life.

"You see death; you are within death's reach. In the night you pinch yourself and you say 'Am I alive?'"

Rias met a Tanzanian woman in 1978 and they had a son. It was also in Tanzania, in 1982, that he got married to a South African woman, to whom he remains married. While in Tanzania they had a baby girl who died in hospital from malaria.

Rias gives sketchy descriptions of the type of training he received. He does not think the details are relevant, other than that he became a commander in 1979.

Rias was sent to Botswana in 1984 by the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA) on military operations. When he arrived he lied about his past, saying that he had come directly from South Africa. He would have been deported if he had said he came from Tanzania. There was a lot of civil unrest in South Africa in 1984, which he used as a smokescreen. He said he had run away from South Africa because he did not want to be arrested and that he was seeking refugee status.

He was meant to stay at eDukwe refugee camp, in the north. His luck changed, because he met the soccer star Zero Johnson, whom he had idolised during his youth, and again found himself playing soccer, this time for Gaborone United. The football club took responsibility for him, as that was the only way he could stay in Gaborone: refugees were not allowed to stay unless a local person had signed a surety and undertaken to look after them. Rias got to know Botswana well. Although he was not paid much, the team took care of his basic necessities. His wife joined him, but times were hard.

"The rest of the surviving, I do not know how I survived. There were times when we had no food."

But Rias was able to continue with his mission, which was to study Botswana and inform his organisation on how they could infiltrate South Africa. He befriended many Batswana men, especially those staying around the Tlokweng area, next to the Botswana-South African border. At some point he returned to South Africa, but he does not provide a lot of information about his return.

The period of demobilisation was stressful. Returning guerrillas had many expectations, most of which were not met. Rias feels he is one of the lucky few to be integrated into the new army, although a number of his APLA colleagues were excluded. He is dissatisfied with the demobilisation process.

Personal circumstances also presented challenges. Many men had left the country very young, and returned with families. They were not provided with accommodation and had to go back to their parents' homes. Those who came through Johannesburg International Airport were not provided with any transport, and families in South Africa had to arrange for them to be met. Rias felt that he was a burden to his family, and it would have been helpful if he had been provided with some means to set up his new life. Their communities labelled them exiles,

and many ex-combatants felt stigmatised, especially since there was little status or benefit attached to their situation. Many despaired, and felt that they were being exploited to further other people's aims.

"We are just foot soldiers who were supposed to further the aims of the organisation."

They received some money from the government about R800, Rias thinks which was meant to last for three to six months.

Rias stayed in touch with his organisation during the early 1990s, providing VIP protection up to and just beyond the first elections. But when they had to integrate, it was everyone for himself.

Rias feels that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) served no purpose, saying that "it stinks". He feels that a number of top people from the National Party government should have been punished for their deeds, but they got away. He does not see the need for him to have participated in the TRC proceedings.

Rias is now serving in the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). He is dissatisfied with the process of reintegration, as there were many problems. Ex-combatants were given a questionnaire to complete, but military training and experience from exile, or "outside", was not considered. Rias had been given the rank of major in 1979 by his organisation and had been in charge of a base of about 300 people, but during reintegration he was reduced to a junior. The frustration is that they did not have certified qualifications.

"[O]bviously, most of us that were trained were not in a conventional army."

The other frustration is that they did not receive enough support from their organisations when they came back. They were left to deal with the army system on their own. Most of Rias's colleagues could not be integrated and representatives from their organisations could do nothing about it.

"I felt so humiliated, you understand. To say my best youth years I have spent in this thing, and suddenly nobody recognises that I have played a role."

He felt that the situation was hopeless, and for him there were many unanswered questions. The foremost question in his mind was "If I defy this, what is left of me"? He conceded because he wanted to stay obedient to his organisation and its leadership.

In his view, there is a need for ex-combatants to be properly compensated, even if it is not with money. For example, they could be given training and some form of support to carry on with their lives. The veterans need to be taken into consideration more. If they have a skill, they should be helped to find employment. The government also needs to create programmes to prepare those who will leave the SANDF, since government cannot afford to have old people in the defence force. Existing structures could be used more to set up useful projects.

Rias is disappointed. Because he gave himself to the struggle, but his life has not moved forward. He has a family to take care of. His children are still young and must finish their schooling. The fact that his children were born in exile is not easy on them, as they are called names at school. He feels that his life was put on hold.

"[A]t our age you cannot be paying a house bond. At my age you are in arrears and your life is in arrears."

Although he has moments of frustration with his personal life, Rias is happy with progress in other areas of the South African community, although at times implementation seems to be moving too slowly. Rias has distanced himself from politics. And even though he keeps in touch with some of his former APLA colleagues, they avoid talking about their personal problems.

Jabu "Rias" Tshabalala is a major in the South African National Defence Force. He is married, with three children.

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Teddy's story[1]

"The last fight"

Researched and written by Nobayethi Dube[2]

Teddy was born and raised in Katlehong. He was a teenager enjoying his schooling before the violence began there.

"I was living okay with my parents and I loved going to school. I had friends as well."

The violence affected most townships in the country. Teddy's first exposure to it was in February 1990 when he saw hostel dwellers chasing people in the township. While he was unsure about the reason for this, he pinpoints this as the time that he began to be more politically aware.

In 1992 the violence began to escalate in Katlehong. At that time the community came together and said: "We are tired of running." Teddy and his friends organised themselves to fight what he calls the "opposer". It is not clear who the opposers really were, since there were a number of violent incidents at the time.

For example, a fight between a couple living in an informal settlement led to the husband being murdered. He was a Zulu man who used to live at Thokoza hostel, and on hearing of their friend's death, the Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers attacked the primarily Xhosa-speaking informal settlement. There was also some degree of taxi violence between the township taxi association and the taxi association representing the Zulu-speaking hostel dwellers, which escalated to the extent that it affected the entire Katlehong area. Teddy recalls the township residents and the informal settlement residents then joining forces to fight the hostel dwellers.

Teddy cannot recall at what stage in his life he decided to fight. Spurred on by the decision of the community to finally take up arms to protect themselves, he joined a group of other young people and became part of the SDU. Life in Katlehong had become unbearable. There was a great deal of violence, which impacted badly on people's lives.

Before he became a member of the SDU, Teddy was exposed to guns through his older brother. So when he was given a gun to handle, it was not new to him. As a member of an SDU, he was expected to be under a commander. The other commanders allocated them to areas to patrol, and showed them how to operate their guns and clean them.

The violence had affected the way people lived, and Teddy's family was no exception. They were also very concerned about him. His father was working at a company in Pretoria, and when the violence intensified his father suggested to the family that they should all move to town. Teddy's siblings, his mother and Teddy himself did not want to move, so in the end it was only his father who went to stay with Teddy's aunt. They would occasionally meet his father in a nearby industrial area to get money to buy necessities, and to give his father the opportunity of spending some time with the family. By that time, Teddy had stopped going to school, since schooling in the area was almost non-existent.

Fearing for his safety, Teddy's mother asked him to move away to stay with relatives, but he refused.

1 Not his real name
2 Edited by Laureen Bertin

"It was really scary for any parent. I mean, if you were in the house and you heard guns going on like they did, you were bound to be scared."

Teddy and his friends felt that they were being chased away from the place of their birth by "outsiders".

There were times when Teddy visited a friend in Orlando East, Soweto, just to have a break from the violence. He would sometimes stay for about a week, but he was never entirely relaxed as he was always worried about what was going on at home in Katlehong.

"We worried all the time; we were not free."

By then, most of Teddy's fellow SDU members had given up on life. They felt that death was imminent. Most of them were not living at home. Some families left their homes at night and came back in the morning. Other families had fled altogether, and the SDUs used those houses as a base, with a commander leading each group. Teddy became part of a larger group staying in the abandoned houses and taking turns to patrol.

People in the township supported the SDUs, for example by contributing money for guns and ammunition. The community also arranged for SDU members to get food, have their clothes washed, and have errands run for them. The SDU members do not seem to have been given any particular training. It was a matter of being given a gun and being shown how to pull the trigger while fighting on the street.

Although Teddy had become part of the SDU, it irritated him that he had to be under someone else's command, and he would sometimes patrol alone.

"I did not prefer this thing of commanders because I do not believe in them. I do not want to be controlled. I used to patrol by myself most of the time."

However, straying from the group was risky, as one could easily be killed.

"I did not like the idea, but I had to be part of the commanders, because when I looked at it, I could see that I was going to end up being shot by people from the community, seeing that I was all by myself, I had isolated myself."

Teddy handled some operations by himself with very little or no assistance from his fellow members. One that is etched in his mind happened on the night of 15 December 1992.

Teddy was stationed with his friend (using the friend's house as a base because the family had left the house), both with AK-47s, when they noticed a group of people approaching the township. It was too dark to see who the people were, but Teddy and his friend assumed they were the enemy. This was fuelled by the fact that the group of people did not use the usual entrance to the township. Teddy decided to confront them. First, he asked his friend to lend him his weapon. His friend refused because he was under the instruction of a commander, and so Teddy had to rely on his own weapon, which was not working properly.

A group of people had now started to set houses on fire. Teddy began to shoot at the group but realised that he would not be able to hold them back on his own, especially with his faulty weapon. He had to get reinforcements. In all the confusion Teddy heard someone calling out his name. His neighbour, a nine-year-old girl, came running towards them. The attackers had gone into the little girl's shack, but she had managed to run away. She wanted Teddy and his group to check on what had happened to her father.

Teddy and another boy went to the shack. The boy had a candle and when they opened the door they found the girl's father dead, with bullet wounds to his body. Teddy could not go back and tell her.

"We went out and told the older people that were around. The child's mother was not around, she was serving a sentence in jail. This child was nine years old. I could not help her: I only told the older people who had also gathered outside."

On that night, Teddy realised that he was a brave person.

"I experienced a lot of things in one night. We went as a group. I thought we were all brave, but no – we had cowards that were not showing themselves when the problem presented itself. I then realised that I am on my own. I realised that I could not rely on anyone but myself. I found out that we were not fighting side by side as a group, but some people were pushing others to be in the forefront when they were pulling themselves out, and that to me was selling out. I also realised that I can have a gun, but I could end up dead from the same gun.

On that particular night, I saved lots of families, saved houses that were to be burned down. I had given my all that night: I had my life laid for anything that was going to happen. In a war situation, I do not go back as long as I

have something to fight with, I go forward. That is me. I am that kind of a person.

It never crossed my mind that I should leave the township because of the fights and war that was going on. I was born living there. No-one was going to tell me to move: a person or any other thing was not going tell me to go."

On the same night, Teddy went home to his parents' house. His parents wanted to know where he was when all this was happening.

"I had to tell them that I was doing the shooting, as these people were about to attack them."

When Teddy relates these events of the night of 15 December 1992, there is no excitement, no sadness, no emotion - just a flat voice relating what happened.

When the violence was at its height, the SDU members were not close to the political structures, even though they had aligned themselves with the ANC and become ANC members. They only had visits from Tokyo Sexwale and Cyril Ramaphosa some time after the violence had subsided. This lack of political support angered Teddy.

"It is only after the violence subsided that they started coming. But when the situation was still bad, when fear ruled, they never came. There was no-one from the ANC that worried or bothered to come and see what was going on."

Initially, when the political leaders came to visit it was to observe what was taking place, but on later visits it was to persuade the warring groups to put down their weapons.

Teddy insists that the township dwellers and the hostel dwellers forged peace by themselves. In the end, he says, it was their own efforts that brought them together.

"[The hostel dwellers] realised that the life they were living was not the right one, it was not getting them anywhere. What they had started was becoming too heavy for them."

The release of Nelson Mandela brought excitement and many expectations. For Teddy and his friends, however, it was just the beginning of the violence. But they remained hopeful about "changes that were going to bring us life". Those who had been fighting in Thokoza had sacrificed their lives for the country, and they believed that a lot was now going to be done for them.

"We heard about the promises ... We thought they were going to bring us change, our lifestyles were going to be better. Some of the things happened and some did not. I cannot say I am happy - because we now have this freedom but my own situation is bad, and nothing has come right. I know that I have sacrificed for this country. I had already given everything to the fighting of my country. I nearly lived like a terrorist. I was ready and had accepted that at any given time I could be dead. I had set it in my mind that if I died, then I would have died for this country. For some of us it was too hard to hand over guns and we felt that the people that said we must hand them over did not know where and how we got them."

The demobilisation process is something that Teddy has never really understood. He heard from fellow SDU members that they had been requested to hand over their weapons. There was mistrust among all groups involved in the conflict. SDU members did not believe that the hostel dwellers would hand over their guns just like that. The hostel dwellers had traumatised the community since 1990, and Teddy did not believe that they would honestly hand over all their weapons.

For SDU members it was also hard to hand over their weapons. Since the community had contributed towards buying the guns, it seemed unfair that someone else was now dictating the terms. In any event, they were worried that the violence might flare up again.

"We did not know whether the opposition was also handing in theirs. And what if something caused the conflict and we were back at square one? How were we to defend ourselves?"

According to Teddy, the demobilisation process did not play any role in bringing about peace in Thokoza. The people brought peace by themselves. The last straw for everyone was 18 April 1994. Many people from the township died on that day.

The SDU had decided that enough was enough and they were going to break down the wall surrounding the hostel. A peace-keeping force had been deployed in Thokoza to separate the warring factions. The SDU had somehow managed to take the soldiers' guns by force. There were journalists all over taking pictures. One of the SDU members asked the photojournalist, Ken Oosterbroek, to put on a bulletproof vest as he was in an unsafe area. Half an hour later, they heard that Oosterbroek had been shot dead.

Teddy had no gun at the time. One of his comrades, who had an AK-47, was irritating him because he was hiding.

"I asked 'How can you hide when you have a machine on you?' I just grabbed the gun from him and I started shooting until the bullets were finished."

Many young men lost their lives. Teddy calls that day "the last fight" because from then shooting decreased in Thokoza.

Somehow, they all came to a realisation that the environment they were living in was not healthy: "*[W]e saw that it was not life*." The gunshots that had become a way of life subsided and were heard less frequently. People began to move around in the former "no-go areas".

"[T]he connection happened on its own. Both sides had had enough of fighting and killings."

Teddy tried to go back to school in 1996, but dropped out because of financial problems.

In 1994, Teddy had high hopes about the country and about himself in general, but little has turned out as he hoped. Some of the promises have materialised, but many have not. This sometimes makes him angry, when he stops to think about it. He feels that some of the promises were too big and that the people making the promises have limitations.

"I have come to a conclusion that I, personally, should not depend on these people. And there is a possibility that they promise, promise, promise, and eventually stop where they are tired themselves."

Teddy did not receive any compensation for being involved in an SDU. But this is not important to him. He explains that ex-combatants have many needs. His main concern at present is to get a job or training. He feels ex-combatants deserve to be provided with training so that they can get employment.

"What is of paramount importance for the ex-combatants is life, getting ourselves up and starting life, working and doing things for ourselves."

When he first became involved as an SDU member, Teddy did not feel that he was wasting his time. But now he sees that very little has changed and that frustrates him tremendously. He does not feel that he will ever get rid of the anger. And he feels that in order to get anywhere in life, one has to fight.

"I have realised that in life, to survive, you have to fight, fight, fight."

Teddy is still very close to his fellow SDU members, and spends most of his time with them. They have lived as one family and that is how they treat each other now - as family. They meet regularly to play chess, tell each other about what's happening in their lives, and so on. If they come across any information that they think will benefit the others, they share it.

Teddy believes that members of the community are scared of him because he was a member of the SDU. No-one will dare to upset him because the community knows what he was capable of doing. At times it frustrates him, since he does not want to be reminded of the past. He drinks heavily, mainly to cope with his situation.

As a group, Teddy and his SDU friends attended counselling sessions organised by the National Peace Accord Trust, participating in a three-day mountain trail, which Teddy felt had been very beneficial. The trail played a significant role in Teddy's life. Teddy feels that he is managing his anger better, and that his relationships with people around him have improved. He believes it will take time, but feels that he is making progress.

Teddy is 30 years old. He is single and unemployed. He is part of a group of ex-self defence unit members (SDUs) who underwent therapy through the National Peace Accord Trust.

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Warra

"To be honest, even today I still do not know why they were fighting."

Researched and written by Moagi Ntsime[1]

Warra Khumalo was a member of the self protection unit (SPU) affiliated to the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP) on the East Rand between 1991 and 1995. "Warra" is a Pedi word which means "my brother". Warra got this nickname because he used to play football at school, and this was the nickname of one of the South African football greats of the 1980s, Jan Malombo Lechaba, who played for Kaizer Chiefs.

Warra was born in Vryheid in KwaZulu-Natal, some 300 kilometres from Durban. He left school in 1988 after completing grade 11. Things were bad at home. No-one was working. So Warra left for the City of Gold, Johannesburg, and joined his brother who lived in a hostel on the East Rand. His brother was working and Warra was expected to be under his guidance. His brother was a member of Inkatha (later the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and referred to as 'the IFP' throughout this article), and Warra saw his brother and friends organising themselves every evening, becoming involved in the IFP's violent activities.

Warra himself had no intention of ever becoming involved in the violence. But because everyone who lived in the hostels was in one way or another involved, Warra had to participate. He did not understand why there were fights between IFP- and ANC-linked organisations, but he was expected to follow and do as everyone else was doing.

"There was no intention of joining, but the situation forced me to be with the IFP. The people that I stayed with were all IFP members so I had no choice of being with someone else other than the IFP. I liked the ANC, but there was no way that I could join them. Even when I went home, the situation was just the same."

Before joining the SPU, Warra worked at an aluminium factory. He was retrenched, but continued to live at the hostel with his brother, and it was during this period that he became a member of the SPU, in 1991.

Warra and other SPU members were given some political education by senior members of the IFP. But he was still not clear about why people were fighting. Even now he struggles to understand the causes of the violence.

"I asked myself that question. I try to piece together a picture, but it is not clear. I do not know why we were fighting."

After joining the SPU, Warra and other recruits were to undergo military training. They were transported in trucks to Caprivi in Namibia where they spent two weeks in training.

"Going there was not normal; we would leave by night and get there at night. Also, the trucks in which we were transported were closed, like the Correctional Services vans that are used to ferry prisoners to and from courts, closed up and only a small hole on top, and you could not see anything."

1 Edited by Laureen Bertin

He visited an area called Mandleni in KwaZulu-Natal to observe another group of recruits being trained. It was always very difficult to ask questions, or try and find out about the people who were training the recruits. This was supposed to be highly confidential and recruits did not have to divulge the details of their instructors or their activities.

Before going to Namibia, Warra's group received elementary training on how to use assault rifles at some place on the East Rand which Warra cannot now remember. He was good at shooting, better than most of his group. He could also follow instructions more easily than some of his peers, because he was more literate than most of them. Senior members gave Warra the responsibility of leading his peers. He was "good" and "in control". Warra does not want to disclose the names or organisations of those who trained the SPUs.

"We used a type of gun called HMC.[2] These were easy to use and learning how to operate them was also easy. For me, it was like playing, it was more of a play. You just pressed it and it sounded nice for me. At that time it really sounded nice. At that time I was feeling normal, feeling like myself. I felt like a big person, brave, and in fact braver than most of my peers. A feeling of being able to handle a gun at the time was really phenomenal."

Warra was deeply involved in the violence on the East Rand, especially at the hostel, and the SPUs were often helped by the police and soldiers. These were mostly white policemen working for the apartheid government.

"I was never really in a situation where I was almost killed. I remember one time, we were in one section, we were blocked in, and we had people that we could call our informers in the townships. They told us that, no, we should not use a car, because we were using a car at that time and we were waiting for it to pick us up. They had a system they used: they would dig holes in the ground, put corrugated iron sheets over, and then put soil on top, so that when you come in a car you would think you are just driving on a dirt road, but once you hit that, your car would go down on that hole we dug and they would come and shoot you from that angle. We were told that the hole had been dug, and they disguised that with the stones rolled on to some parts of the road, and where there were no stones you would be fooled and think that it is clear, and that is where you would be hit. We were helped there by the police because they were travelling in a hippo. You know, at those times, they were on both sides – helping us."

Warra saw many people being killed.

"A lot. I had seen that happen many times. Personally, while I am not sure how many people I think I shot and killed, they could be many. This is because you would just shoot into a crowd and the chances of killing were very high."

Where did the SPUs get their supply of weapons from?

"In training, you would not know where guns come from: you found them there. In the community, we knew of people that would supply us with them. Sometimes we would collect money and give it to the induna or any other person in a position of leadership, like the one that is responsible for young men or lads. He would go and buy the guns, and sometimes you did not even know where they were going to. At times, they would be brought by those in senior positions."

Warra's brother was killed during the violence. This was very traumatic for Warra, and a turning point in his life.

"Now, it is very hurting for me now, and that is why I even tried to change my lifestyle. I was not told to change my lifestyle; I did that myself. I did that because I thought of the situations that happened before. It is very hurting to see how my brother's children are suffering. There are two. They no longer have a mother and a father. I am responsible for them now, and I have to see to it that they have what they need, give them the basics they need. It is very sad, though. Also, some families that lost their loved ones are going through the same situation because of my doing, do you understand? Going back, trying to piece together this story and the death of my brother, even today, it is still bad, it is still hurting. He died at a bad time, when there were three of us alive. At that time, I was the only one working, the other two were not working. My parents are old and they are also not working. The situation was just very bad. It really worried me that he was attending meetings and all that when there was nothing on the table at home. It was very hard. Even his death, it was not clear how he was shot. The situation was not really good in that the family from my side and his wife's side, even today, are not talking to each other because of that story. Ever since he died, the families are not on good terms."

During the demobilisation period from 1990 to 1994,

2 Warra could only give this abbreviation, and did not seem to know the name in full.

there was a high level of violence for the SDUs and SPUs. It was different for ex-combatants outside South Africa, for example the APLA and the Umkhonto we Sizwe guerrillas. Warra was involved in violent activities in this time. Nevertheless he was fully convinced that the country was going to be ruled by a black majority government.

"From what I was thinking, since 1990, was that the country was going to go back to the black people. I think that was everybody's thinking. I thought we were going to have a better life, to have plenty of opportunities, and that no-one was going to be poor. But after that, it was just a handful that benefited. Because of the war, some of the people benefited, they gained a lot. And with some, you actually feel sad for them, by looking at them, you feel the pain. You find that during the war you respected them, but now it is a different story."

Between 1992 and 1994, Warra was not working; he was only doing SPU assignments. Life was tough at times because they did not have a reliable source of income. They sometimes had food delivered to them, but Warra cannot confidently confirm where it came from.

"Food, well, there were means of getting food. Sometimes, you would see a truck coming in and delivering food."

Warra was still involved with the SPUs during 1994. It was then that he started to think seriously about his future and well-being. He was becoming disillusioned and could not find any convincing reason to continue with the violence. He decided to quit in 1995, but continued to stay at the hostel for some time.

"This thing just happened like that: it was just natural. I was a grown-up and I was looking at the people of my age; some of them had cars and I had nothing, and we were of the same age. I looked hard and I said: if I can get myself a job, look after my kids, my parents as well, give them the right things. I had disappointed my parents. They brought me up and now that I am an adult, I am disappointing them. I said, 'At least if I can try and get myself a job, pay back my parents, and see them happy.'"

According to Warra, going to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) would have been a difficult decision to make. No-one in his group at the time considered going.

"No-one thought of it. And it was not easy, even for me; I was not going to go there anyway. You would go, but it happened that other people's names were dragged in the mud and you would find yourself in a very compromising situation."

Following his decision to quit, Warra immediately went for counselling at a trauma unit based at the Natalspruit Hospital where he would meet with former SDUs and SPUs - "… those who wanted to embrace life again". They participated in workshops together. Warra reported that a lot of social activities emerged during this process and they even formed a football team.

"The trauma people used to come there, and I remember this one lady by the name of Gloria. I first heard about counselling from her when she paid some indunas and ladies in the hostel a visit. There was this induna, and unfortunately the man is now late. She came and spoke to him and he, in turn, came to fetch me and some other young men. She explained to us what counselling was about and how we could benefit from it. I was taken; I was so interested and I had to see this happening before my own eyes. At that time, the Peace Accord was called Wilderness Therapy where they would have about ten people: five former SPUs and five former SDUs meet. We would go to the camps and talk about what happened, and on coming back to the township we would tell the others and then recruit them to have this discussion in camps. We would be telling the new recruits that the people on the other side were not as bad as we were led to believe. A lot of things we did because we were told: we never wanted to see that for ourselves. For example, we would be told that an ANC person is like this or that."

In Warra's view most of the leadership in the area exploited the ignorance of the young people. He regrets this. For example, they would be told that a person from the ANC was bad, and they would take that as fact without finding out the truth or otherwise for themselves. They always had a bad picture in their minds about what type of person ANC people were, and when they met such a person it would be inevitable that they would "lock horns".

Warra is now permanently employed by the National Peace Accord Trust. He found his way to the trust after he came back from the trauma clinic and wilderness therapy. He conducts workshops and trails within the youth development programme, works with schools and rehabilitation processes, and with children who are in

trouble with the law. He is positive about the process of healing. He feels it is good that people should move on and not live in the past.

The healing process changed Warra's life and his views about the world. The healing of his inner soul changed him into a better person.

"My work situation and how people see me now, they no longer see me as the arrogant person I was. In the past, I must say, when I was drunk, I promise you I would be hard to live with, and I was very difficult to deal with and had a bad temper."

Warra is critical of the situation that he found himself in. The fact that he could not decide for himself whether it was worth being involved in violent activities remains one of his many regrets.

"Most of us did not make decisions; we did not have the power to do that. I am saying this going back to the question as to why I have changed. I found that, at that time, I never made decisions; I was a follower. I have told myself now, whatever happens - I mean, we have people that never involved themselves in violence because they had made a decision. Okay, a war starts and I do not know what the cause of that was. But why not move to another place where there was no violence? At that time, I did not have the ability and know-how to make a good decision. I was foolish and I was like cemented in one place, and that says the mind was halted, if I can put it that way. I did what everyone did and this is a lesson too. I think if my brother was a minister, it means I would have wanted that for me as well, which was not possible, because I had to find my direction and goal for myself."

In terms of challenges ahead, Warra is concerned about the plight of young children as the future generation.

"We have kids that are without parents and I wish they could have a shelter, find a place for them to live in and be educated. Teach them that even not having parents, it does not mean life has ended for them. They can still make it, and make it very big in this world if they have their minds set on that. I would equip them with skills to face life and that they should not always blame the absence of parents and give that as a reason for their failures. For example, saying 'Mr President is not doing anything for us' - the president is a human being first, and has a Cabinet that he works with. They are trying as much as they can, and for now they are trying to close the cracks, and it is not easy."

Warra Mkhawuleni Vision Khumalo is 36 years old. He is married with two children, and works as an eco-therapy facilitator for the National Peace Accord Trust.

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SECTION 3
COUNTRY CASE STUDIES

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While the permanent presence of ex-combatants of all races is new to post-apartheid South Africa, the fact of ex-combatants - and attempts to demobilise and reintegrate them - is far from new, and is a worldwide phenomenon. As such, we thought it important to learn lessons from other countries. This had to be a limited exercise, but the two country case studies - from Zimbabwe and Kosovo - provide fascinating and challenging parallels and lessons, some of which we learned from in South Africa, many of which we have failed or refused to learn - and which we ignore at great cost to our new democracy. In addition, there is a background paper on the conflict in South Africa, to provide a broad context for the project as a whole.

REAPING THE WHIRLWIND

The demobilisation and reintegration of former combatants in Zimbabwe, 1979-2004

Guy Lamb
February 2005

Introduction

IN POST-CONFLICT DEMOCRATIC SOCIETIES, such as Zimbabwe, the consolidation and sustainability of democracy depends in part on how governments deal with the legacy of the armed conflict. The demobilisation and successful reintegration of former combatants into civilian society (two distinct but interrelated processes) is a crucial aspect of this challenge. If these processes are not effectively managed, then there is the possibility that those former soldiers, in an effort to survive, may return to arms and even destabilise the country or region. However, if the process of demobilisation is effectively handled, it can create opportunities for sustainable peace and human development.

Over the past 25 years, demobilisation and reintegration programmes in Africa have had mixed results. Some have been innovative and remarkably successful, as was the case in Ethiopia, Eritrea and Uganda. Others have been glaringly ineffective, with the result that many ex-combatants have been unable to secure employment, and/or make the necessary social and psychological adjustments for the successful transition to civilian life. As a result, these individuals have become marginalised members of their societies, and live in conditions of abject poverty, as was the case in Namibia, South Africa and Zimbabwe.

In Zimbabwe, there was no benefit of hindsight, as Zimbabwe's was one of the first comprehensive post-conflict demobilisation programmes to be designed and implemented by an independent African country. Zimbabwe did not have the luxury of drawing on the lessons of other African post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building programmes, nor did it have the relevant expertise. As a result, the Zimbabwean military planners had to experiment and often act on instinct.

The Zimbabwe case is of critical importance to planners of demobilisation and reintegration processes, as the Zimbabwe government's failure to successfully facilitate the of reintegration former guerrilla fighters into civilian life in the long term resulted in military veterans becoming a severe burden on the fragile economy and a disruptive political force more than 15 years after the end of the liberation struggle.

This paper critically considers the nature and impact of the demobilisation and reintegration process in Zimbabwe following the end of the liberation struggle in 1979; and highlights lessons (both positive and negative) for future demobilisation and reintegration programmes in Africa and other parts of the developing world.

Definitions and concepts

DEMOBILISATION

Demobilisation is a planned process by which the number of personnel under arms and in military command structures is significantly reduced. It includes the reduction in size of the regular military, of paramilitary forces, as well as of rebel groups (sometimes after their integration into new regular armed forces). In practice, demobilisation usually involves the assembly, disarmament, administration, counselling, skills assessment and then the discharge of former combatants, with a compensation package and/or assistance programme in place.

RESETTLEMENT/REINSERTION

Resettlement or reinsertion is the process that follows demobilisation, whereby former combatants are transported and settled in the areas and communities of their preference. In a number of resettlement processes in Africa, former combatants have been provided with money and/or other resources to assist them with this process either by national governments or donor agencies.

REINTEGRATION

Reintegration is a complex economic, political, social and psychological process by which former soldiers make the transition from a military life to a civilian life. Reintegration is generally a long-term process, as it may take several years for ex-soldiers and their families to adapt to a civilian way of life. Hence a distinction is often made between economic, political, social and psychological reintegration.

Economic reintegration is the process through which retired or demobilised soldiers achieve financial independence by securing a livelihood for themselves and their dependants through production or gainful employment. Economic integration is often difficult in areas where unemployment is high, economic growth is poor and the individuals in question do not have marketable skills.

Political reintegration is the process through which retired or demobilised soldiers participate in the political life of their communities, through interacting with, and/or participating in, community-based structures, processes and organisations. Examples include, amongst others, local councils, school committees, churches, trade and industry bodies and neighbourhood watches.

Social reintegration is the process through which former soldiers and their dependants consider themselves to be part of, and are accepted by, the communities in which they live and society at large. The attitudes of communities towards categories of former soldiers often depends on perceptions of the historical role these individuals played, and, if a major armed conflict has taken place, the degree of reconciliation in that society.

Psychological reintegration is the process by which former soldiers make the psychological adjustment from a military lifestyle - generally characterised by a hierarchical system of command and control, where an individual's life is defined by a clear set of rules and regulations - to a less formal and more flexible civilian lifestyle. Support and counselling may have to be provided to former soldiers who may be suffering from some form of psychological disorder as a result of being exposed to traumatic or life threatening events. In addition, some former soldiers may have lost the ability to be self-sufficient, as the military organisation to which they belonged consistently provided for their basic needs during the period of armed conflict.

Resettlement/reintegration support programmes

Traditionally the following have been provided by governments and/or donor agencies as areas for resettlement and/or reintegration support:

- cash payments
- foodstuffs (or coupons)
- healthcare
- clothing
- housing, furniture and housing equipment and building material
- seeds or agricultural equipment
- agricultural extension services
- scholarships and school fees for children
- counselling and vocational guidance
- legal and business advice
- job placement or apprenticeships
- general referral services
- access to land
- public works and public sector job creation
- wage subsidies
- credit schemes
- managerial and technical training.

The Zimbabwe civil war

A profitable colonial economy

Zimbabwe, like many southern African countries, has a long history of colonialism, racial discrimination and violence. Zimbabwe was formerly the British colony of Southern Rhodesia, which was created in the late-1800s following the annexation of the territory by Cecil John Rhodes. A profitable economy was developed through growing tobacco and maize, mining copper and gold, and farming cattle. However, black Zimbabweans, who constituted the vast majority of the population, were excluded from benefiting from this economic prosperity. They were forced off productive farming land, their labour was exploited, and they were denied fundamental human rights and freedoms.

Political resistance

In September 1957, the South Rhodesian African National Congress (SRANC), the first black Zimbabwean nationalist association, was launched in Salisbury (now Harare) as a movement to articulate the common grievances of black Zimbabweans. It called for universal suffrage, parliamentary democracy and an end to racial discrimination.[1] It was banned by the Rhodesian government in February 1959, at which time it had approximately 7,000 registered members and 40 branches. The SRANC was succeeded by the National Democratic Party (NDP), which was established in January 1960 and agitated for the decolonisation of Zimbabwe from Britain. The NDP also established an armed wing in that year, but was banned by the Rhodesian government in September 1961. It was reconstituted as the Zimbabwe African People's Union (ZAPU), which was also banned the following year after a series of sabotage acts.

Armed struggle

This state of affairs, combined with more repressive security legislation, frustrated the efforts of the leadership of ZAPU, which contributed to the outbreak of disputes among them. As a result, a group broke way from ZAPU to establish the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU), and ZAPU temporarily re-established itself as the People's Caretaker Council (PCC) in August 1963. Both organisations built on the resistance military capacity that the NPC had established by developing their own armed wings. ZANU's armed wing became known as the Zimbabwean African National Liberation Army (ZANLA), while ZAPU's armed wing was called the Zimbabwe People's Liberation Army (ZIPRA). They planned to use armed struggle to create chaos in Zimbabwe, so that Britain would intervene and negotiate for African majority rule. However, violent incidents between ZANU and the PCC stymied the effective implementation of such a plan. Both organisations were banned in August 1964, which brought a temporary end to the inter-organisational squabbles (Bhebe, 1999:10-12; Kriger, 1992: 82-85).

In 1964 ZANU and ZAPU moved their centre of operations to Zambia, but were prevented from training their cadres on Zambian soil by the Zambian government. However, transit camps near the Zambezi River were tacitly permitted (Kriger, 1992: 88). In 1965, after several attempts to persuade Britain to grant the colony independence, the white minority Rhodesian government announced the Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI). In response, ZANU and ZAPU escalated and intensified their strategy of armed struggle. From 1964 this armed struggle took the form of *ad hoc* attacks against white farmers, the destruction of crops, and sabotage, but by 1966 the liberation movements had begun to engage in coherent military operations against the Rhodesian Security Forces (RSF) (Dabenga, 1995: 24-27).

More effective guerrilla warfare

Until the end of 1968, the RSF out-gunned the ZAPU and ZANU forces and easily repulsed their attacks. At this point it was estimated that there were 160 insurgent casualties compared to 12 from the RSF (Kriger, 1992: 89). However, from 1969 ZANU insurgents became more proficient and better organised, due to military training and material from China. ZANU also began to pursue a more traditional Maoist guerrilla warfare strategy, and in particular started to develop support and recruitment networks among rural Zimbabwe communities. In 1971, ZANU opened a military front from Tete province in northern Mozambique (but maintained military camps in Zambia and Tanzania), which gave it easier access to

1 The SRANC was the product of the amalgamation of the Salisbury City League and the African Congress of Southern Rhodesia.

the north-eastern part of Zimbabwe (Dabenga, 1995: 30). ZAPU, despite receiving military support from the Soviet Union, was unable to develop an effective military capability at this time, and remained in Zambia (Kriger, 1992: 90).

Attempts to negotiate

In December 1974, ZANU's military strategy was frustrated by the intervention of the Frontline States[2], which sought to pressure ZANU to unite with other Zimbabwean nationalist movements to negotiate a peaceful settlement to the armed conflict with the Rhodesian government. In March 1975, ZANU military leadership was imprisoned in Zambia and ZANU military camps were shut down on instruction from the Frontline States, largely as a result of ZANU's resistance to participating in negotiations with the Rhodesian government. Within months, the negotiations failed, and the Frontline States subsequently permitted ZANU and the other nationalist movements to continue with a strategy of armed struggle.

Alliances

ZANU and ZAPU military forces were united under a joint military structure called the Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA) in November 1975, but this arrangement was short-lived due to infighting between the two forces. In October 1976 ZANU and ZAPU formed a tactical political alliance – the Patriotic Front – in their efforts to overthrow the Rhodesian government, and consequently were able to escalate their military operations inside Zimbabwe. By the end of 1979, there were approximately 20,000 ZANU and 8,000 ZAPU guerrillas operating inside Zimbabwe. (Bhebe and Ranger; 1995: 6-23; Kriger, 1992: 89-93; Tungamirai, 1995: 36-45.)

Severe casualties

According to official figures, between December 1972 and the beginning of 1979, 310 white civilians, 3,845 black civilians, 760 Rhodesian Security Force personnel and more than 6,000 guerrilla cadres were killed as a result of the war. However, it was later estimated that anywhere between 30,000 and 80,000 people died (Kriger, 1992: 92; Kriger, 1995: 139). This armed conflict was particularly traumatic for the guerrilla insurgents, as many had barely finished high school had only received basic military instruction before being deployed in the field. They had to contend with the relatively well trained and well equipped RSF, as well as air strikes by the Rhodesian Air Force, which used bombs and napalm (Rupiya, 1999: 9). A significant number of Zimbabwean civilians were also affected by the violent conflict through experiencing and/or witnessing human rights abuses and violence, loss and destruction of property and livestock, and the death of family members. A 1997 report by the AMANI Trust, based on studies undertaken in the Mount Darwin district, estimated that there were 50,000 primary victims of violence during the liberation war and between 200,000 and 250,000 secondary victims.

Compromises for independence

This cost of the war, in conjunction with external pressures such as sanctions, forced the Rhodesian government to enter into negotiations with black Zimbabwean political leaders. In 1979 the war was concluded with the signing of the Lancaster House Agreement, which made provision for a cease-fire agreement, the demobilisation and reintegration into civilian life of former combatants, and the creation of a new national military structure. The Lancaster House Agreement paved the way for democratic elections and the independence of Zimbabwe, which was officially declared in April 1980. The Lancaster House Agreement, however, resulted in a series of political compromises between the various parties to ensure political stability and economic growth. The new Constitution allowed for majority rule, but granted white Zimbabweans 20 seats out of 100 in the first post-independence parliament. Job security for those civil servants who had served under the Rhodesian government was guaranteed, and - critically - no large scale land redistribution was envisaged during the first post-independence term of government.

Results of the first democratic elections

With the support of ZANLA cadres (particularly in the rural areas), ZANU achieved an overwhelming victory, winning 57 out of 80 parliamentary seats, in the first democratic elections (Kriger, 2003). ZAPU joined ZANU as a junior partner in a government of national unity, and Robert Mugabe, the ZANU leader, was appointed head of state (a position which he still held at the time of writing this paper).

[2] The Frontline States was a diplomatic alliance between Angola, Botswana, Mozambique, Tanzania, Zambia and Zimbabwe to co-ordinate their efforts against and decrease their economic dependence on South Africa.

The creation of the Zimbabwe National Army

The importance of an impartial broker

The Zimbabwe National Army (ZNA) was established through the integration of personnel from the RSF, ZANLA and ZIPRA - called Operation Merger. At its inception the ZNA comprised 100,000 personnel (Musemwa, 1995). The process of integrating these three armed forces into the ZNA was facilitated by the British Military Assistance and Training Team (BMATT), in collaboration with the Joint Military Command (JMC), which comprised high ranking officers from all three armed forces. BMATT was involved because after 15 years of civil war there were intense feelings of animosity, distrust and hostility between the three armed forces, and an 'impartial broker' was required to ensure that integration of personnel into the ZNA was undertaken in a fair, transparent, inclusive and professional fashion. BMATT's primary integration methodology was the training of senior, middle and junior officers (Dennis, 1992; Nyambuya, 1996).

The use of BMATT was a wise move, as, according to the World Bank (1993):

In politically tense situations, a neutral monitor has been instrumental in verifying the numbers of combatants demobilised from each force (often a subject of contention by each side), in enforcing disarmament in camps, and in assuring the equitable distribution of benefits. Without such a neutral party, the demobilisation and reintegration programme process can succumb to factional disputes on these issues.

Challenges to integration

Reliant on established RSF structures

The RSF was the only armed force that had the administrative as well as command and control structures and processes on which the ZNA could be constructed.

Different ethos, traditions and structures

All three armed forces had a different ethos, tradition and structures. For example, the RSF had been a conventional military, while ZIPRA and ZANLA had been distinctly different unconventional militaries. ZANLA was an insurgent army born out of the Maoist school of guerrilla warfare, while ZIPRA had been highly influenced by Marxist-Leninist theories of revolution. ZANLA cadres had significantly more combat experience than members of ZIPRA, and ZANLA's recruits were largely drawn from the peasantry, while ZIPRA had been more successful in attracting working class and educated recruits (Bhebe and Ranger, 1995; Brickhill, 1995a).

Politically volatile region

Zimbabwe, as well as the rest of the southern Africa, was politically volatile at the time. Large numbers of personnel could not be released from the national military into civilian life without the creation and maintenance of the necessary mechanisms and support structures, otherwise some of these soldiers may have taken up arms, destabilising Zimbabwe, as well as neighbouring countries (Dennis, 1992).

Contingency plans

A further complicating factor was that both ZANLA and ZIPRA retained portions of their personnel and weaponry outside Zimbabwe during the ceasefire period and well into independence in the event that the independence process was sabotaged or did not suit their particular aspirations (Rupiah, 1995, 31).

The integration process

Profile of the ex-combatants

Prior to being integrated into the ZNA, the approximately 100,000 combatants were confined to areas known as Assembly Points (APs), where they were provided with basic food and shelter and paid a monthly cash allowance. Half of the ZANLA/ZIPRA soldiers were between the ages of 20 and 25; 80 percent were single; 13 percent had no previous education; and 75 percent were either unskilled or had no work experience (World Bank, 1993: 57).

No psychological assessment

Due to the number of soldiers to be integrated no comprehensive psychological assessment was undertaken. In fact, it was not until the mid-1990s that psychological assessments became a major component of demobilisation and reintegration programmes. For example, in a World Bank study published in 1993 on demobilisation and reintegration programmes in Angola, Chad, Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Uganda and Zimbabwe, there is virtually no mention of support for psychological reintegration.

Ordinary troops neglected

In a process called Operation Sausage Machine, members of ZANLA and ZIPRA were divided into two groups. Those with sufficient education and officer potential were placed in one group, with the balance being placed in the other. The former group underwent an intensive four-month training programme supervised by BMATT to provide them with opportunities to achieve an officer's rank in the ZNA. The latter group was divided into battalions, but their training was not prioritised (Alao, 1995: 108). However, there were inadequate command and control structures and processes, and as a result there were a number of incidents of ill discipline, which in some cases escalated into mutiny. There were also insufficient activities to keep the combatants occupied. Consequently Operation SEED (Soldiers Employed in Economic Development), based on a Chinese model, and a number of co-operative projects, were introduced, which sought to create agricultural opportunities for combatants who had been in the liberation struggle through the use of state resources (Tapfumaneyi, 2004; Alao, 1995: 108).[3]

Misunderstanding ex-combatants' aspirations

However, both Operation SEED and most of the co-operatives had failed by 1985. The reason for this was that Operation SEED, and other programmes, were poorly conceived, 'quick fix' solutions to the complex problem of not only integrating former guerrillas into a conventional army, but reintegrating former exiles with a diverse range of aspirations into the Zimbabwe state and society. They were premised on the romantic (but naïve) notion that the combatants, infused with a deep sense of patriotism, would swap their arms for farming implements, and work government-owned land for the benefit of the nation (Afrosoc, 1981: 42). These programmes were inadequately funded, and did not take into account the needs and aspirations of the combatants. In fact, many combatants perceived the agricultural work to be demeaning, and saw Operation SEED as a strategy by senior military offices to exclude them from being integrated into the ZNA (Musemwa, 1995:46).

Demobilisation as an alternative

Consequently, in order to reduce the possibility of mutiny, voluntary demobilisation was introduced as a means of reducing the number of ex-combatants in the APs (Nyambuya, 1996; Rupiya, 1995). Military authorities decided that a total of 36,000 combatants would be demobilised (Musemwa, 1995:46). The integration of personnel into the ZNA was completed by early 1982, at which point there was a total of 65,000 people employed by the Zimbabwean military.

Exclusions

The demobilisation and reintegration process did not take into account the 30,000 to 50,000 children and unknown number of women who had participated in the civil war by providing food, shelter and intelligence to the guerrilla forces. Some had received some basic military training in camps in Mozambique (Banana, 1989, 216).

Security consequences

In the early-1980s there were sporadic outbreaks of violence emanating from the APs countrywide, committed by both ZANLA and ZIPRA former combatants, sometimes against civilians and sometimes against each other. This arose from the slow pace of ZNA integration and rivalries from the liberation struggle era.

Unresolved differences

In early 1981, some 50,000 former guerrillas (with their weapons) were transferred from APs to low cost housing settlements in overcrowded townships in Harare and Bulawayo, where pre-independence ethnic and political differences had not been entirely resolved. The lack of housing space necessitated close co-habitation

[3] Other projects included the Tilcor project, the Silalabuhwa Irrigation Scheme Estate, Middle Sabi and the Copper Queen project.

by ZANLA and ZIPRA cadres, which exacerbated tensions between members of the two guerrilla armies. In February 1981 violence broke out in Entumbane, one of the areas where these soldiers had been settled (Alao, 1995: 109).

Small-scale dissident uprisings

In July 1982 ex-ZIPRA combatants fired shots at Mugabe's residence in Harare. In the same year, armed uprisings in Matabeleland and areas of the Midlands (the heartland of ZAPU support) by dissidents, many of whom were former ZIPRA members, resulted in a major security crackdown by the authorities. The government's view was that support for ZAPU equated with support for the dissidents, and hence unarmed civilians were viewed as legitimate targets by the security forces. Consequently, thousands of unarmed civilians were either killed, assaulted, or suffered property loss at the hands of the security forces, particularly the ZNA's 5th Brigade (Catholic Commission for Justice and Peace, 1997). Sporadic uprisings in Matabeleland continued to occur throughout the 1980s. The state consistently responded by deploying the security forces to crush this small scale resistance.

After integration

Following the end of demobilisation and the integration process in 1982, the new ZNA stood at 65,000 strong. However, with the end of the Cold War, coupled with the demise of apartheid in South Africa and the termination of the Mozambican civil war, the ZNA downsized considerably. The ZNA's personnel strength now stands at 40,000.

The Zimbabwe National Army's role is to protect Zimbabwe's territorial integrity, and more specifically to provide military support and assistance to the civil power, and to contribute to internal security (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 1992:2). The Army constitutes the bulk of the armed forces, while the Air Force currently has 5,000 personnel. The ZNA has been involved in both domestic and foreign operations.

Costly involvement in Mozambique

In 1982 the ZNA became embroiled in the Mozambican civil war, with more than 30,000 troops being deployed in Mozambique. The ZNA's primary objective was to protect Zimbabwe's trade routes through Mozambique (Zimbabwe is a landlocked country), but also to assist the Frelimo government in its military campaign against Renamo. According to Mlambo (2000) the Mozambican campaign was so costly that all other military activities in Zimbabwe (including training) were halted. The only exception was the 5th Brigade's counter-insurgency operations in Matabeleland. Even though the ZNA won a number of decisive victories against Renamo, it was unable to stem Renamo attacks along Zimbabwe's three main trade routes throughout the duration of its campaign. In 1992, with the end of the Mozambican civil war, ZNA troops returned to Zimbabwe.

In the early 1990s the ZNA's military barracks had fallen into a state of disrepair as a consequence of its expensive and protracted operations in Mozambique. In addition, following independence the increase in the size of the ZNA had not been met with a corresponding expansion and upgrade of defence facilities. In 1992 the Departmental Committee on Security Ministries found that ZNA officers and rank-and-file were being accommodated in 'inhumane conditions', with most of the accommodation structures consisting of field accommodation or condemned buildings. The committee recommended an increase in the size of the defence budget (which was implemented by Cabinet) to enable the ZNA to build and maintain the necessary structures and purchase additional military-related equipment (Parliament of Zimbabwe, 1992:2-3).

The DRC

In 1998, Zimbabwe deployed troops in the DRC in support of Laurent Kabila's regime. The Minister of Defence at the time, Stan Mudenga, justified the intervention in terms of the OAU's 1997 Resolution, which calls for resistance to a change of government by military means (PANA, 26/8/1998). Initially 600 ZNA members were deployed to protect Kinshasa, but over time Zimbabwe became increasingly embroiled in this conflict, and at the height of its involvement the size of Zimbabwe's military contingent was estimated to be in the region of 12,000 soldiers. The ZNA soldiers formed the backbone of the Kinshasa alliance's resistance to the various rebel groups supported by Rwanda and Uganda. ZNA personnel were withdrawn from the DRC in late 2002 following the establishment of a peace process.

Economic reintegration

Employment and skills training

In order to facilitate the demobilisation of the 36,000 combatants, a Demobilisation Directorate was established under the Ministry of Labour and Social Services. This directorate had two main reintegration functions. First, it was to assist former combatants with acquiring gainful employment in the public and private sectors, in which it was relatively successful. Second, it was to facilitate skills training for those former combatants who wished to pursue careers outside of the job placement margins of the directorate. In this regard, it lacked the capacity and resources to provide suitable and relevant training, and had not designed a long-term strategic plan (Masarire and Rupiya, 2000; World Bank, 1993: 38).

Further support required

However, despite this support, many of the business ventures failed, as numerous former combatants unknowingly bought insolvent or unprofitable businesses from unscrupulous individuals. Many who established new businesses did not have the necessary skills or expertise to convert them into profitable ventures. Accounting procedures were largely absent and illiteracy rates were high (Rupiya, 1995:7).

Consequently the Zimbabwe government intervened and overhauled its reintegration programme, implementing it through the Department of Co-operatives. Probationary periods were introduced and viability surveys were undertaken before any money was invested.

Table 1: Beneficiaries of reintegration programmes administered by the Demobilisation Directorate

Type of support	Number of personnel
Scholarships	*4,700*
Commercial programmes	*2,900*
Self-reliance projects	*4,333*
Self-employed	*1,579*
Formal employment	*3,041*
Unemployed	*19,160*
Total	*35,713*

(Source: Rupiya, 1995:7)

Stipends and co-operatives

Those combatants who were demobilised by the directorate received a $185 per month reintegration stipend over a two year period. They were encouraged to establish co-operatives and pool their resources to create and administer joint projects. By the end of 1982, more than 25,000 former combatants had taken advantage of the demobilisation facilities and programmes. The directorate was closed in June 1983, and its final report, published in 1984, recorded that 35,713 individuals had benefited from its programmes.

Management and consultancy courses were offered to former combatants, and Z$4 million was set aside as an emergency fund to assist ailing projects.

In 1989, the Zimbabwe government released figures on the economic reintegration of former combatants that indicated that 81.4 percent were either employed or had established co-operatives or had undertaken further training, and 18.6 percent were unemployed.

Table 2: Economic reintegration of former combatants into civilian life (1989)

Type of reintegration process	Number of personnel	Percentage
Former combatants in the employment of the state and private sector [4]	*43,000*	*61.4*
Former combatants who formed co-operatives or undertook further training	*14,000*	*20*
Unemployed former combatants	*13,000*	*18.6*
Total	*70,000*	*100*

(Source: Musemwa, 1995:46)

Gender impartiality

Throughout the entire demobilisation process a policy of gender impartiality was adhered to: both men and women from ZANLA and ZIPRA received the same monthly payments while in the APs, and the same demobilisation gratuities. In addition, no gender criteria were used in the allocation of government jobs to ex-combatants (Kriger, 2004).

Limits to success

At a cursory glace, it would appear that the economic reintegration of former combatants had been relatively successful. However, the figures in table 2 present a distorted picture, as most of the former combatants in the first category were actually part of the ZNA, and the second category does not indicate whether the co-operatives or training actually assisted former combatants with economic reintegration. A World Bank study, published in 1993, found that only 28 percent of former combatants had found employment outside of the public and military sector, and close to 40 percent of those participating in co-operatives had withdrawn from the programmes.

Failure of cash payments

In 1993, Musemwa (1995) estimated that there were in excess of 25,000 unemployed former combatants that were destitute, and that this number was growing. Many former combatants had found the demobilisation allowance to be grossly inadequate: after leaving the APs, many had to build new homes, feed and clothe themselves and their families, as well as pay school fees for their children and younger siblings. Consequently they could not make meaningful financial contributions to the co-operatives. In addition, many agricultural co-operative collapsed due to inadequate resources and drought. In Matabeleland, many co-operatives were adversely affected by the actions of the 5th Brigade (Masarire and Rupiya, 2000).

The demobilisation and reintegration literature suggests that if cash payments are not supplemented by other reintegration programmes, or at least accompanied by mechanisms to encourage spending on education and productive investments, a significant proportion of former combatants will experience difficulty using the payments to increase their long-term income. The reasons cited include: combatants' limited money management and investment experience (combined in many instances with a poorly developed financial sector), lack of practical skills, and family pressures. In fact, a former Zimbabwe cabinet minister stated that the cash payments were 'one of the most serious mistakes made in the demobilisation process' (Colletta *et al*, 1996a; World Bank, 1993: 63).

Education deficit

Many former combatants were unable to secure sustainable employment in the private sector or the non-military public sector, as many lacked the necessary educational requirements. Following independence, the Zimbabwe government set the minimum educational qualification for civil service employment at 5 Ordinary Level (O-Level) passes of C grade or better. Many former combatants had joined the armed struggle before attaining O-Level certificates, either due to the Rhodesian government's discriminatory educational policy or because they had left school prematurely when they were recruited for training. As a result, they were ineligible for employment. In addition, the government's

4 Former combatants were employed as soldiers, policemen, prison staff, general civil servants and private sector security personnel.

'education for all' programme was producing thousands of well-educated young people, with whom unemployed former combatants could not compete in the job market (Musemwa, 1995).

Inadequate research and planning

The literature indicates that new governments after periods of long-term civil war experience difficulties with long-term planning due to a variety of urgent and competing reconstruction demands, and may lack the necessary administrative capacity and financial resources to implement them, which was the case in Zimbabwe. In addition, surveys on the socio-economic profile, career aspirations and the preferred settlement destination of the various former combatants are often not undertaken, which means that reintegration programmes are inappropriately designed. In Zimbabwe early reintegration programmes focused primarily on agricultural co-operatives, while a survey of the career ambitions of ZANLA and ZIPRA combatants in 1980 indicated that only 2 percent expressed an interest in agricultural training, and only 4 percent showed an interest in becoming farmers. The majority of combatants wanted to pursue a career in industry and commerce (39 percent) or the civil service (21 percent), or return to school (15 percent) (World Bank, 1993: 57).

However, some initiatives, such as the Danhiko School, which combined education, vocational training and apprenticeships, secured high employment rates among graduates, some of whom were disabled. The school recruited ex-combatants directly from APs, and provided them with relevant training by established professionals and with apprenticeships in areas such as furniture design (for which a market feasibility study had been carried out). Statistics on the number of recruits, however, are not available (World Bank, 1993).

Lack of social and psychological support

Despite the reprioritisation of the reintegration programme by the Zimbabwe government, there was no provision for comprehensive social and psychological reintegration support. For example, in the case of post-traumatic stress and related psychological disorders, Martin Rupiya, a Zimbabwe military historian, comments that 'medical support, either from the traditional and formal sectors has been shown to be not only inadequate, but absent' (1999: 1). In fact, there was no comprehensive process by which victims of violence and torture from the war of liberation, let alone ex-combatants, could receive counselling and compensation (Buford and van der Merwe, 2004).[5]

War veterans as a political force

The early years of independence

Unequal benefits from the reintegration process

Throughout the 1980s the community of liberation struggle veterans could be described as fractious and disorganised. No representative military veterans association existed to look after their welfare and articulate their needs and grievances. Essentially the war veterans community could be divided into two loosely defined groups: the empowered and the disempowered. The former group, which was made up of predominantly ZANLA veterans had been able to benefit both financially and politically from the demobilisation and reintegration process. The latter group was mainly comprised of those numerous impoverished ex-combatants who lived in marginal rural areas and urban slums.

Deliberate political strategy

According to Kriger (2003), the empowered group of war veterans was the consequence of a deliberate strategy on the part of ZANU, which, following independence, had sought to build a power base within the civil service and the private sector, as well as take control of the labour movement. ZANLA guerrillas were the vehicles through which such control could be achieved. The white dominated government bureaucracy and business sector were consequently pressured and persuaded to employ ex-combatants.

In February 1981, ZANU facilitated the creation of the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) in a response to a number of militant workers strikes that had taken place without ZANU support. As part of this process, powerful workers committees were established in the workplace, which largely dealt with issues relating to working conditions, racism and salary issues. Ex-ZANLA cadres were able to obtain influential positions on these committees. However, by the late-1980s, ZANU, perceiving that it had cemented its control over the power over the civil service and private sector, withdrew its support of the worker committees, which left a number of veterans with a sense of betrayal (Kriger, 1993: 166-177).

Discontent in response to neglect

In March 1988 the Zimbabwe Parliament began to debate the ex-combatant issue, with some parliamentarians raising concerns about the large numbers of impoverished military veterans. National newspapers, such as *The Chronicle*, subsequently started to publish stories on the plight of ex-combatants, consistently referring to them as 'forgotten heroes' (Kriger, 1995:156-57).

Despite these developments, no ex-combatant policy was forthcoming, and in April 1989 discontented former combatants from both ZANLA and ZIPRA put aside their historical differences, and established the Zimbabwe War Veterans Association (ZWVA) to act as a voice for unemployed former combatants, as well as a trade union for employed former combatants who felt victimised in the workplace (and hence a response to ZANU's withdrawal of support for the workers committees). Its formation, however, was met with suspicion by some government and ZANU-PF[6] officials, as it was launched at the same time as an opposition political party, the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (Musemwa, 1995).

Negotiating legislative support

Realising that the ZWVA constituted a significant political and moral force, the Minister of Labour and Social Welfare legislated for the welfare of war veterans, and in July 1991, the War Veterans Administration Bill was drafted. This Bill was given to the ZWVA for their review, and they responded with anger and disdain: in their view, the Bill did not 'properly represent their needs and invests too much power in the Minister' (Kriger, 2000). It entitled only the Minister to decide the amount, nature and duration of the assistance that was to be granted to dependants of war veterans. In addition, the draft only dealt with destitute and unemployed war veterans instead of all ex-combatants. This objection was motivated by the claim that employed ex-combatants were mainly engaged in menial jobs which lacked future prospects. Following discussions with government, a compromise War Veterans Act was promulgated in July 1992 followed by the War Victims Compensation Act the following year, with both pieces of legislation providing compensation and benefits to unemployed as well as employed ex-combatants (Musemwa, 1995; Kriger, 2000).

Zimbabwe's political and economic crisis

For the first 12 years of its existence, Zimbabwe was hailed as an African post-colonial success story. Zimbabwe underwent a period of economic recovery, and government invested so substantially in education that Zimbabwe arguably had the best secondary schooling system in Africa. However, by the early 1990s recurring drought, structural adjustment programmes and government corruption had undermined these important initial successes.

In 1992 Zimbabwe experienced the highest post-independence unemployment rate (22 percent), which was linked with a lack of economic growth (CSO, 2000; CSO, 1998). Over the next few years, the situation was exacerbated due to an exponential increase in the cost of living in both rural and urban areas. By 1996, a Zimbabwe government study showed that 50 percent of Zimbabwe's rural population was living in extreme poverty (CSO, 1998:51). Large numbers of ex-combatants were living in rural areas, and as a result were adversely affected by these conditions.

Corruption and mismanagement

Between 1993 and 1997, the system for dealing with applications for war-related compensation in terms of the War Victims Compensation Act was haphazard and characterised by blatant corruption and mismanagement. Approximately Z$80 million was paid out to claimants, many of whom were high ranking members of ZANU-PF, who allegedly had falsified their claims. This acted to further alienate the grassroots former combatants from the ZANU-PF elite (Chitiyo, 2004: 63; Kriger, 2000: 35).

In 1997, Chenjerai 'Hitler' Hunzvi was elected as chairman of the ZWVA, and in a short space of time transformed the veterans association from a 'do nothing organisation of has-beens' to a powerful and militant force (Meldrum and McGreal, 2001). Hunzvi was able to mobilise the impoverished veterans community to actively campaign for a more equitable distribution of compensation and benefits for veterans. Violent street protests by war veterans were a direct result.

Government responds

Government responded by establishing the Commission of Inquiry into the Administration of the War Victims Compensation Act, more commonly referred to as the Chidyausiku Commission, after Mr Godfrey Guwa Chidyausiku, the Judge President of Zimbabwe, who chaired it. The terms of reference were to enquire into:

- the manner and circumstances in which claims for compensation under the Compensation Act were submitted, assessed and granted during the period beginning 14 November 1980 and ending on 30 November 1997
- cases of fraud, misrepresentation, corruption or any other abuse in the submission, assessment or granting of the aforementioned claims for compensation
- measures for recovering all such amounts of compensation as may have been inappropriately paid in contravention or in excess of the qualifications and requirements prescribed in the Compensation Act
- administrative deficiencies in the submission, assessment and granting of the aforementioned claims for compensation
- general or specific defects in the provisions of the Compensation Act and its regulations, which may have contributed to or facilitated any of the aforementioned abuses and administrative deficiencies
- measures for the reform of any general or specific defects identified in the provisions of the Compensation Act and its regulations.

The commission ruled that the administrators of the war compensation scheme were responsible for the mismanagement and corruption and had colluded with high ranking politicians to defraud the fund (Kriger, 2000). The result was that the ZWVA split, with one faction supporting the commission's findings and the other faction rejecting them. This was accompanied by leadership struggles between a number of prominent ZWVA members.

Following the outcome of the Commission of Inquiry, government awarded each legitimate war veteran a lump-sum payment of Z$50,000 and a pension of Z$5,000, the total cost of which was estimated to be Z$4 billion. This precipitated a national financial crisis (Chitiyo, 2004: 63).

Political opportunism

Meanwhile, under Hunzvi's leadership, the ZWVA became increasingly fractionalised, especially with Hunzvi articulating further demands for veterans benefits and compensation from government. In 2000, a group of war veterans split from the ZWVA to establish the Zimbabwe Liberators Platform to 'set up a forum of war veterans and war collaborators to refocus on the original aims and objectives of the liberation struggle'.[6]

With the intensification of the economic crisis, and the creation of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) - an opposition political party that emerged from the Zimbabwe labour movement with significant popular support in September 1999 - the ZANU-PF government began to feel increasingly besieged both domestically and internationally. Malleable political partners and supporters were sought, with war veterans and the rural poor being the obvious choices. In return for their assistance in securing a ZANU-PF victory in the 2000 parliamentary elections, war veterans were promised increased monthly pensions. Impoverished black people living in rural areas were offered white owned land in return for their support (Chitiyo, 2004: 65). The ZWVA subsequently led the invasion of approximately 1,800 farms by war veterans (Meldrum and McGreal, 2001).

Land invasions

Typically, a war veteran was responsible for commanding and directing a farm invasion, and would be supported by a group of ZANU-PF youth militia, ZANU-PF supporters and/or poor rural people. Intimidation, terror and force were used to gain control of a farm. War veterans were also deployed by ZANU-PF to intimidate Zimbabweans into voting for the ruling party in the 2000 elections. Numerous human rights abuses took place during both the land invasions and in the run-up to the elections. (Human Rights Watch, 2002.) The official number of legitimate war veterans involved in the land invasions is not publicly available, and it is not possible to obtain this information from independent sources.

After the 2000 elections, the war veterans have continued to be a disruptive and destructive force. They have been involved in the widespread intimidation and assault of MDC supporters, and were implicated in the 2000 sabotage of the printing press of the independent newspaper *The Daily News*. It was reported that Zimbabwe's then Vice-President stated that the war veterans had become 'a law unto themselves' and that government was planning measures to curtail their activities. However, to date, the Zimbabwe government has not taken decisive action against this group. The defence ministry is responsible for the financial administration of the war veterans, who have now become a 'reserve force' in the army. In addition, the ZNA played a facilitation role in the land invasions, as they often provided logistical support and transport to the land invaders.

Ongoing political and economic deterioration

Since 2000 the political and economic situation in the country has deteriorated rapidly. Mismanagement of the state's oil reserves has led to frequent fuel shortages. The annual inflation rate (at the time of writing) is close to 400 percent, unemployment is rife, and the Zimbabwe dollar has undergone devaluation on a regular basis. There has also been major international disinvestment, as well as a reduction in levels of donor aid. The Minister of Finance in his budget speech of 2000 painted a stark picture of economic catastrophe, and admitted that economic crisis had turned Zimbabwe into a 'caricature' of colonial-era oppression and poverty (http://www.iol.co.za; 16/11/2000).

Conclusion

The Zimbabwean experience is a sobering example of the long term implications of a poorly conceived and managed process for implementing a programme of demobilising and reintegrating former combatants.

Money is not the answer

Ironically, out of seven demobilisation programmes assessed by the World Bank in the early 1990s, Zimbabwe's was substantially more costly than the other six, with the cost per combatant being over $3,000, compared to $1,938 in Nicaragua and $840 in Uganda (World Bank, 1993). A key lesson to be drawn from the Zimbabwean experience is that it not how much money is devoted to a demobilisation and reintegration process, but how that money is spent that determines the success and failure of the process.

Address needs and aspirations of former combatants

In particular, it is critical that the needs and aspirations of the former combatants are addressed, but this should be balanced with the post conflict needs of the rest of the population.

The Zimbabwean government, through lack of foresight in terms of demobilisation and reintegration process, and the ruling party's political exploitation of former combatants, has left Zimbabwe to reap the whirlwind.

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BEATING SWORDS INTO PLOUGHSHARES

Reintegrating ex-combatants in Kosovo

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February 2005

Introduction

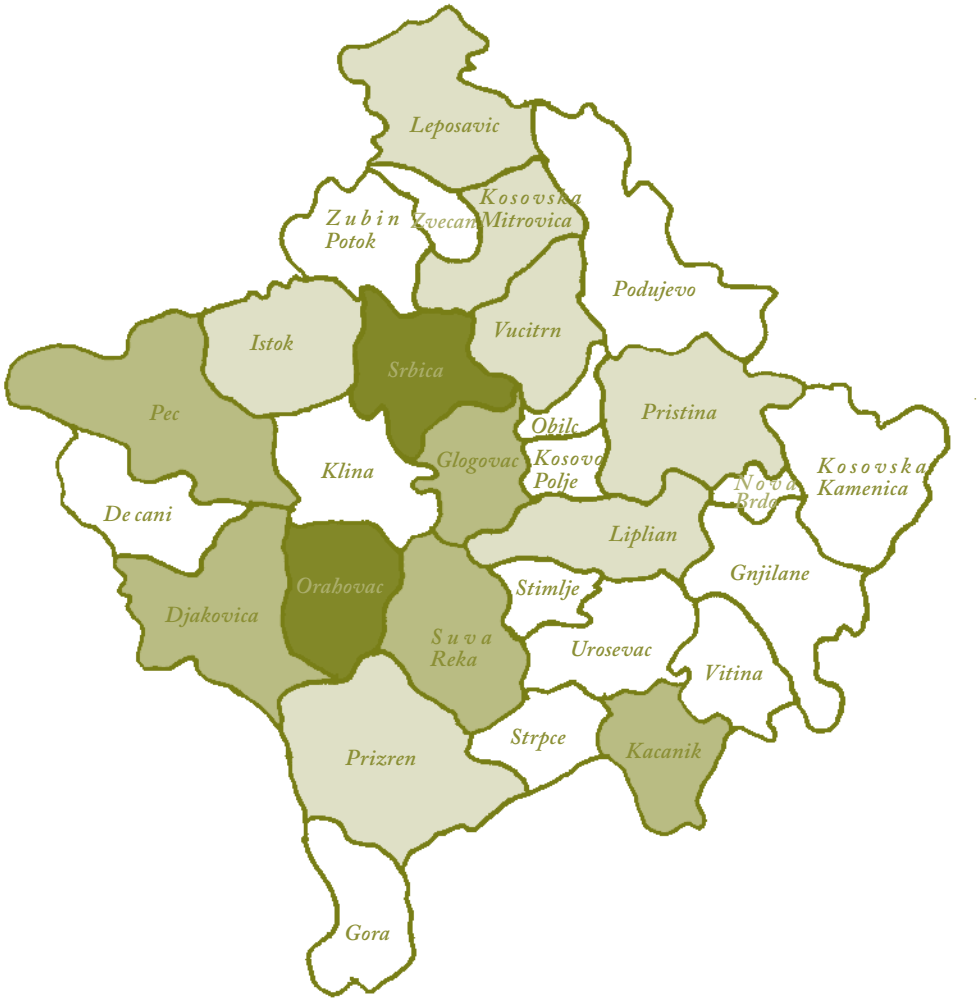
IN JUNE 1999, KOSOVO, A PROVINCE OF SERBIA, became an international protectorate governed by the UN Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) and guarded by the NATO-led Kosovo Force (KFOR). UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999), by which the international community established the present status of Kosovo, was preceded by:

- a protracted civil conflict between the majority Albanian population and the Serb government headed by Slobodan Milošević in the 1990s
- a short but intense armed conflict between an Albanian guerilla force KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) and Yugoslav/Serb police, military and paramilitary units in 1998-1999
- a NATO bombing campaign of Yugoslavia from March to June 1999.

The conflict left 20,000 to 25,000 ex-combatants, who had to return to normal life after months and, in some cases, even years, of underground existence and armed resistance. This number may not seem very high: it is about 1.5 percent of the entire Albanian population in Kosovo. But for a country like South Africa, for example, it would mean over 600,000 ex-combatants.

The international community was quick to realize the need for reintegrating ex-combatants in Kosovo and introduced special targeted programs. However, these were of limited scope, both geographically and in time. Rather soon, the international community lost interest and the programs were gradually phased out. The last substantive study of the reintegration process in Kosovo dates from August 2001.[1] Today, no Kosovo institution – local or international – deals with the reintegration of ex-combatants and there are no programs to facilitate this process.

Given the high stakes, why has the international community's interest in the reintegration of ex-combatants in Kosovo been so short-lived? Has reintegration been so successful that no additional effort is required? If yes, what made it so successful in such a short time (most programs were phased out in two years)? If not, why does society as a whole seem to be unconcerned? What has and what hasn't worked during reintegration? What could and should be done to address outstanding issues of reintegration if problems of reintegration still exist? Such are the questions that this study will endeavor to answer.



A few explanations are important for understanding the study:

- the ethnicity of the ex-combatants
- the interactionist theoretical framework
- the methodology.

The ethnicity of the ex-combatants

Firstly, the reader will notice that the study deals only with Albanian ex-combatants whereas combat, by definition, is an encounter between at least two parties. The Kosovo conflict was no exception, the other party being Serbs. Yet, there are good reasons for not including Serb ex-combatants in this study. For one, the bulk of Serb combatants belonged to the regular army and police units and withdrew from Kosovo in June 1999, pursuant to UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999). The other, paramilitary forces, the source of infinite fear for the Albanian population due to their ruthlessness, were limited in numbers and manned predominantly by Serbs from outside Kosovo.[2] The few local Serbs who did participate in combat activities withdrew with the rest of the Yugoslav/Serb forces for fear of repression on the part of Albanians.[3] Not that Serb ex-combatants are not an issue - they are, of course; however, this is a problem for Serbia rather than for Kosovo.

An interactionist theoretical framework

Secondly, the theoretical approach underpinning this study is interactionist. The reintegration of ex-combatants is viewed as a complex process of socialization *par excellence*, including secondary socialization and re-socialization.[4] Indeed, the very notion of reintegration is based on an assumption that at some point in the past a person developed values and attitudes differing from the prevailing social reality to the extent that they need to be reconciled through the reintegration process. This approach has proved to be a useful tool in analyzing the process of reintegration of ex-combatants in other countries.[5]

Secondary socialization

Secondary socialization is the internalization of institutional or institution-based sub-worlds. Secondary socialization is an ongoing life-long process of modifying subjective reality. It requires the individual to establish a degree of consistency between the original internalizations resulting from primary socialization and the new ones.[6] The intensity and depth of secondary socialization may differ very significantly, from minor modifications to radical changes in subjective reality. Berger and Luckmann called such fundamental transformations 'alternations', emphasizing that they require subsequent re-socialization for the actor to be able to return to the prevailing social reality.

Resocialization

The interactionist perspective emphasizes the following factors that condition the extent of personal re-socialization:

- the difference between the old reality and the new one: the more profound the difference, the more painful will be the subsequent return to the earlier plausibility structure.
- physical separation from the previous reality structure: the more impenetrable this separation, the more successful the person's alteration. On the other hand, incomplete separation and continuing contacts with the old reality substantially facilitate the reintegration process
- the time factor: the longer a person is exposed to a new reality, the deeper is the process of 'disculturation' from the old reality.

War or conflict, being a 'comprehensive social fact,'[7] places immense stress on the entire society, not just the combatants. The entire social reality changes to ensure the collective survival of an ethnic group or a nation: violence becomes a recognized and legitimate method of resolving conflicts; democratic institutions give way to rigid military structures; and people accept certain limitations of their rights and freedoms.

The necessity of reconstructing both personal and societal perspectives

The interactionist approach gives an additional dimension to the problem of reintegrating ex-combatants - reconstructing both personal and societal perspectives. Socialization always takes place in the context of a specific social structure. Not only its content but also its measure of 'success' have social-structural conditions and consequences.[8] It is not enough to ensure 'social and economic reintegration assistance in the form of access to productive assets (particularly land and capital), training and employment, and information and counseling services,' as the World Bank standard recommendations go.[9] Formal reintegration, which is measured by the number of ex-combatants who have joined civil society structures, found employment and reunited with their families after the conflict, will have little lasting impact unless it is complemented by the efforts of society as a whole to overcome the legacy of war and militarization and reconstruct society on a different basis.[10] No wonder that the UN Development Program, an organization supporting disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programs in a number of countries and in various contexts, has had to admit that 'many DDR operations fall apart in the reintegration phase',[11] the center of any DDR operation.

The more conventional approach

The more conventional approach to reintegration considers it to be just one of three major phases of stabilizing a post-conflict situation. In the context of peacekeeping operations (and this has been the context in Kosovo) these phases are characterized as follows:[12]

- **Disarmament** is the collection of small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone.
- **Demobilization** refers to the process by which parties to a conflict begin to disband their military structures and combatants begin the transformation into civilian life. It generally entails the registration of ex-combatants; some kind of assistance to enable them to meet their immediate basic needs; their discharge and transportation to their home communities; and may be followed by recruitment into a new, unified military force.
- **Reintegration** refers to the process which allows ex-combatants and their families to adapt, economically and socially, to productive civilian life. It generally entails the provision of a package of cash or in-kind compensation, training, and job- and income-generating projects.

A definition of reintegration

Proceeding from an understanding of successful socialization as the establishment of a high degree of symmetry between objective and subjective reality (as well as identity),[13] this study uses a wider definition of reintegration as a complex psychosocial, political and economic process of reinsertion of ex-combatants into civilian life that continues for an extended period, starting immediately after the termination of armed hostilities. This process represents a form of secondary socialization and consists of establishing a high level of correspondence between individual perspectives of ex-combatants and the prevailing social reality. The reintegration process is inevitably a long one, in which demobilization is but the first step in an essential, but very difficult process. Reintegration is viewed as part of a collective effort by the society to create a self-sustaining peace. It is a coordinated undertaking to demilitarize society in the deeper sense and to reconstruct it on a different, non-military basis by addressing the roots of militarization and undoing the legacy of war and militarization.[14] Militarization here is understood as the interiorization of 'war culture' - a zero-sum, power-centric culture of dealing with conflict situations[o] at both personal (subjective) and societal (objective) levels of reality.

KLA fighters in front of the Headquarters.

The overall framework of post-settlement peacebuilding

What exactly are the sectors of social reality most affected by militarization and, therefore, most in need of demilitarization? Literature on conflict resolution suggests that post-settlement peacebuilding (of which the reintegration of ex-combatants is an integral part), particularly in the context of UN peacebuilding efforts, includes making up for four major deficits characteristic of war-shattered countries:

- military/security problems
- political/constitutional incapacity
- economic/social debilitation
- psycho/social trauma.[16]

Whereas the individual elements in the UN's post-settlement peacebuilding efforts have varied in detail from time to time, the overall pattern is clearly recognizable. In 1992 the UN Secretary-General described the main tasks as:

> *disarming the previously warring parties and the restoration of order, the custody and possible destruction of weapons, repatriating refuges, advisory and training support for security personnel, monitoring elections, advancing efforts to protect human rights, reforming or strengthening governmental institutions and promoting formal and informal processes of political participation.*[17]

Relating the reintegration process to the overall framework of post-settlement peacebuilding is of particular importance for Kosovo. The reintegration of ex-combatants here was driven and implemented by the international community, specifically by the UN, and was conceived of as part of a larger multi-dimensional peacekeeping operation. The UN DDR manual underlines that disarmament and demobilization should be an integral part of the national post-conflict recovery strategy. Similarly, the reintegration of ex-combatants into civilian life should be planned and implemented within the national reconciliation, rehabilitation and resettlement strategy, and as part of the first stages of the national post-conflict development plan.[18] Table 1 presents specific measures in each of the four deficit areas in various phases of post-settlement peacebuilding.

Table 1. Post-settlement peacebuilding: A framework[19]

	Interim/short-term measures	Medium-term measures	Long-term measures
Military/security	*Disarmament, demobilization of factions, separation of army/police*	*Consolidation of new national army, integration of national police*	*Demilitarization of politics, transformation of cultures of violence*
Political/constitutional	*Manage problems of transitional government, constitutional reform*	*Overcome the challenge of the second election*	*Establish tradition of good governance including respect for democracy, human rights, the rule of law*
Economic/social	*Humanitarian relief, essential services, communications*	*Rehabilitation of resettled population and demobilized soldiers, progress in rebuilding infrastructure and demining*	*Stable long-term macro-economic policies and economic management, locally sustainable community development, distributional justice*
Psycho/social	*Overcoming initial distrust*	*Managing conflicting priorities of peace and justice*	*Healing psychological wounds, long-term reconciliation*

Ex-combatants are both the object and an indispensable agent of post-settlement building, which is completed with the reintegration process. Reintegration is deemed successful if it helps ex-combatants and their families become ordinary, active members of their former communities or in the new locations they have chosen, without special needs and, while possibly identifiable as a separate interest group, meaningfully contributing to post-settlement peacebuilding and the demilitarization of their society.[20]

Methodology[21]

The main method was to review and analyze academic literature and existing case studies. There is a vast body of literature describing all phases of the reintegration of ex-combatants in different environments and in various countries.

However, we discovered a deficit of Kosovo-specific material, particularly with regard to the actual situation of ex-combatants, including the social and economic aspects. Not only was this information not readily available but we also noticed some reluctance to release such information. To compensate, at least partially, a number of interviews were conducted with international and local officials, and ex-combatants themselves (in some cases on condition of anonymity).[22] The authors are grateful to all those who kindly agreed to share their expertise and experience on this subject.

Additionally, content analysis of Albanian-language printed media was used to identify the main patterns and trends in portraying ex-combatants in contemporary Kosovo society.[23]

Of course, the opinion of the International Labor Organization (ILO) should be taken into account – at least 10 years are necessary to conduct a valid study of the impact of reintegration.[24]

Burning fuel tanks in Pristina directly hit during a NATO air raid (1999).

The conflict: 1989 – 1999

1989 – 1997: Simmering

Kosovo loses its autonomy

Both Albanians and Serbs trace the history of their conflict in Kosovo (known to Albanians as 'Kosova' and to Serbs as 'Kosovo i Metohija') back centuries. Both ethnic groups have co-existed in the same territory for a long time, with periods of peaceful cohabitation and cooperation intermitting with times of troubles and open hostility.[25] Most students of Kosovo and the former Yugoslavia agree, however, that the starting point for the most recent conflict was 1989, when Serbia, ruled by Slobodan Milošević, abolished Kosovo's autonomy, granted to it under the Yugoslav Constitution of 1974.

A parallel society and shadow state

The Kosovo Assembly was disbanded, many ethnic Albanians were purged from state institutions and replaced with Serbs, education in Albanian was abolished and Serb curricula introduced. As the Serb nationalist rhetoric was hardening and police persecutions increased, the opposition of Kosovo Albanians to the oppressive regime grew. In July 1990, Albanian members of the provincial Assembly voted to declare Kosovo a republic, independent of Serbia but still part of Yugoslavia. As Yugoslavia plunged into turmoil in 1991, ethnic Albanians organized a referendum in September where 99.87 percent of the voters supported Kosovo's independence. In October, the unrecognized 'parliament', consisting of Kosovo Albanian representatives, declared Kosovo to be the independent 'Republic of Kosova'.[26] Kosovo Albanians created a parallel society and a shadow state, complete with education and health care, under Ibrahim Rugova, the leader of the Democratic League of Kosovo (LDK), who was elected President of the Republic of Kosova in 1992. Busy with fighting in Bosnia and plagued by growing opposition and a total disintegration of their domestic economy, rulers in Belgrade apparently tolerated the parallel Albanian society as it seemed to content itself with running its own affairs peacefully under the full control of Rugova and the LDK.

By late 1998, Kosovo had become a deeply divided society, in which the Albanian majority and the Serbian minority were organized in opposition. Even worse, both ethnic communities had developed fixed, stereotyped images of each other. The Serbs controlled the administrative and coercive organs of the state, while the Albanians withdrew into the world of parallel structures.

The number of armed incidents involving the two ethnic communities was surprisingly low in the period 1992-1995, and their intensity was limited to short exchanges of fire or harassment using firearms. Nevertheless, from the outset the supposedly pacifist Rugova government expected a confrontation with Serb forces and wanted to be prepared for major atrocities. The illegal 'Defense Ministry' under Rugova worked from 1990 to 1993 to build up Kosovar police and military units - the Armed Forces of Kosovo (FARK). The emerging FARK troops consisted mainly of former Albanian officers of the Yugoslav Army (JNA) with only few rank and file soldiers. However, the formation of a parallel territorial defense came to a sudden halt in 1993, when Serb authorities arrested almost all members of the FARK general staff. With the flight of remaining FARK members to Albania, this organization has effectively ceased to be a factor in the Kosovo conflict. [27]

The road to war: September 1997 – March 1998

The early strategies of the Kosovo Liberation Army

In the meantime, another armed group of ethnic Albanians set foot on the Kosovo scene – the Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA, or in Albanian, *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës, UÇK*). This group, whose political origins are rather obscure, came into being in 1994 when diverse illegal units joined their ranks. Most KLA fighters were allegedly drawn from ethnic Albanians, who had fought for the Muslim-Croat Federation against the Serbs in Bosnia.[28] The declared purpose of the KLA was to offer resistance to Serbian police and security forces in Kosovo and to pursue separatism by armed struggle.[29]

However, the early KLA groups did not for the most part attack the Yugoslav Army facilities, but concentrated rather on ambushing police patrols and attacking Albanians who collaborated with the Serbian authorities.[30] The KLA actions could count on growing

support from the local populace; its military strength was based on its intermingling with the local populace and the ensuing difficulties in precisely locating KLA forces.

Increasing activity and sophistication

From 1996, when in April four near-simultaneous operations were launched in different parts of Kosovo by gunmen, the KLA became increasingly active. According to the Serb Ministry of the Interior, it had increased the number of its operations from 31 in 1996 to 55 in 1997, and to 66 in the first two months of 1998. In the process, it had killed 10 Serbian policemen and 24 civilians.[31] The KLA was becoming more sophisticated in its methods. The most spectacular series of attacks, which gave the KLA real credibility, took place within four hours of each other on the night of September 10, 1997. No less than 10 coordinated attacks in locations up to 150 km apart, mostly targeting police barracks and vehicles, proved that there was a well-organized force, with the knowledge and resources to plan and execute relatively complex attacks in conditions made difficult by generally poor communications.

However, despite its growing popularity in the Albanian population, until early 1998 the KLA remained a loosely coordinated organization without a unified command center, numbering, according to various estimates, between 1,000 and 2,000 active members.[32] Judah describes the situation as follows:

> *There was no one supreme commander giving orders. Of those that were issued, some were obeyed, some were ignored; and some groups, although calling themselves KLA – because that was what everyone else was doing – were really village groups knitted together by clan connections and fear. Everyone knew the local commander, few knew who commanded the next level up and were often unwilling to obey the orders from unknown people who came from somewhere else.*[33]

A key element in the KLA's ascendance was the collapse of power in Albania, following the breakdown of its fraudulent pyramid schemes in December 1996, which drove about two thirds of the population into abysmal poverty and provoked widespread unrest. Armories were looted and about 600,000 small arms ended up in the hands of civilians. The arms price dropped dramatically in the regional arms market, which allowed the KLA to equip itself with Chinese and Russian-made small arms at a low price, significantly increasing its firepower. Besides small arms (mostly AK-47s), the KLA had a small arsenal of rocket-propelled grenades, shoulder-fired anti-tank rocket launchers, mortars and anti-aircraft guns, as well as telecommunications equipment and other supplies.[34]

The KLA intensified its activity in 1997 and early 1998, with attacks on police stations, police officers, Serb civilians and Kosovo Albanians working for or with the authorities, but in the two years up to mid-January 1998 it had only claimed the killing of a total of 10 Serbian police and other officials, and 11 Kosovo Albanians.[35]

The Serbs respond

The Serbian authorities brought in special security forces in January 1998. They responded to clashes with the KLA with reprisal attacks on villages, using military helicopters and armored personnel carriers, and with house-to-house raids and indiscriminate arrests. Two such attacks on villages in late February were followed by an assault on the village of Donji Prekaz/Prekazi i Poshtëm (Srbica/Skenderaj municipality) in early March. At least 54 people were killed, including a local KLA leader, most of his family and other women, children and elderly men. The reprisals continued with further attacks on villages in the central Drenica region, causing many villagers to flee their homes. In March 1998, in its resolution 1160, the UN Security Council condemned 'the use of excessive force by Serbian police forces against civilians and peaceful demonstrators in Kosovo, as well as all acts of terrorism by the Kosovo Liberation Army'. According to UN relief agencies, the escalation of attacks on Albanian villages resulted in the displacement of some 50,000 to 60,000 Kosovars by early June 1998.[36] In this spiral of violence, many Kosovo Albanians, including erstwhile supporters of the LDK's non-violent stance, became KLA members or active sympathizers.

The Kosovo war on the ground, lasting from late February to mid-October 1998, involved some 13,000 Serb police forces, 6,500 Yugoslav army troops and 400 Serb paramilitaries.[37] By June 1998, the KLA had launched a major offensive, controlling one third of Kosovo by early July 1998.[38]

Faced with the growing strength of the rival KLA, the Bukoshi government of President Rugova decided to join the military actions in Kosovo. At the end of June 1998, three FARK brigades, consisting of some 300 combatants, entered Kosovo, fighting two battles against Serb forces in the Kosovo villages of Lodja and Junik. Reportedly, some 3,000 fighters joined the FARK combatants in Kosovo.[39] Yet, from August 1998 onwards, the KLA faced serious losses when the Serb forces succeeded in taking back most of the territory the KLA had seized in the previous months.

International pressure

In September and October 1998, NATO increased its pressure on Serbia to compromise on Kosovo, threatening it with air strikes. The UN Security Council demanded in its resolution 1199 that the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia cease all action by the security forces affecting the civilian population and enable effective and continuous international monitoring in Kosovo by the European Community Monitoring Mission and diplomatic missions accredited to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (FRY). After negotiations with the US envoy, Richard Holbrooke, Milošević agreed to reduce Serb troops in Kosovo, to allow the return of IDPs and refugees, and to observe a ceasefire.

The OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission (KVM) was deployed to monitor the implementation of the October agreement. However, the mission had no mandate for controlling KLA activities, nor had the Holbrooke-Milošević agreement included any provisions for disarming the KLA. In the meantime, the KLA used the ceasefire to regroup and build up its strength. Undeterred by the OSCE mission, it continued with its attacks on Serb forces. From September 28 to October 19 the Serb authorities reported 117 attacks on the police and army resulting in the deaths of ten policemen and seven soldiers.[40] Civilians were targeted as well: on Christmas Eve a UN report noted that an estimated 150 civilians had been kidnapped by the KLA, whereas in the first eleven days of January 1999, 21 people died in what another UN report described as 'random violence in urban centers'.[41]

A temporary lull

In the last week in December and the first half of January 1999, it became clear that the reduction in fighting between Serb forces and the KLA had been no more than a temporary lull, which ended in December with a new Serbian offensive in the north-east. The KLA had used the time to rearm and retrain, while a large force of Yugoslav/Serbian troops was being assembled just outside the province in apparent preparation for a spring offensive. Inside Kosovo, security forces stepped up a campaign of repression. In mid-January, 45 people - some of them children – were found murdered in Račak/Reçak (Štimlje/Shtime), mostly shot in the head at close range. William Walker, the head of the OSCE Mission, immediately accused the Yugoslav authorities of responsibility despite Belgrade's claims that the KLA had faked the massacre scene.[42]

Talks

Faced with a deepening crisis and in a bid to break the impasse by diplomatic means, the Contact Group came up with the idea of a conference on the future of Kosovo, to be held in Rambouillet near Paris on February 6, 1999.

By stepping up its military operations, the KLA was able to take the leading position at the Rambouillet talks. At the behest of the United States, the KLA, under Hashim Thaçi headed the Kosovar team in Rambouillet, sidelining the Rugova government. In order to obtain the Kosovars' signature, the US guaranteed NATO's presence in Kosovo, direct aid, and also that the KLA would be assisted in its professionalization and in becoming part of Kosovo's new military forces.[43] After difficult and sometimes dramatic negotiations, at the end of February the Kosovo Albanian delegation eventually agreed in principle to sign the agreement. The Serbian side, however, did not.

NATO moves in

As fighting continued in Kosovo, and reports indicated that 30,000 more Yugoslav/Serbian troops were being deployed on the border of Kosovo, along with tanks and irregular militia units, the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission was pulled out on March 20.[44] NATO issued another ultimatum demanding Serbia's signature, but the Serbian parliament confirmed the rejection of the Rambouillet proposals, and on March 24 NATO forces began their campaign of aerial attacks on FRY targets.

Raging: March – June 1999

Ethnic cleansing

With the start of the NATO air campaign, the Yugoslav/Serb forces embarked on what appeared to be a well-planned and systematic operation of ethnic cleansing, code-named Operation Horseshoe (*Potkovica*).[45] Within days, tens of thousands of Kosovo Albanians were flooding across the borders of Albania and Macedonia.[46] By mid-April 1999, 620,000 ethnic Albanians had become refugees in neighboring countries, and 700,000 more were displaced inside the province.[47] The ethnic cleansing campaign by the Yugoslav/Serb forces included, besides physical expulsion of Kosovo Albanians from urban and rural areas believed to be KLA support bases, well-documented killings, torture and mistreatment, rape and other forms of sexual violence, arbitrary arrests and detention.[48]

Deliberate destruction of civilian property, looting and pillage were defining characteristics of the actions of the Yugoslav/Serb forces, and appeared to have had a threefold purpose: to weaken and undermine the Kosovo Albanian population; to provide an additional profit incentive for the military and security forces and their collaborators; and to destroy houses to ensure that the population did not return after expulsion.[49] The central part of Kosovo (Drenica) and the west of the province (Peć/Peja, Djakovica/Gjakova) were hit particularly hard. By the end of the conflict in June 1999, out of 210,000 residential properties in Kosovo, 120,000 were damaged or destroyed, 40,000 of them being razed to the ground.[50]

The guerilla response

According to the KLA chief-of-staff, General Çeku, he had 12,000 men under arms inside Kosovo with 8,000 outside being trained in Albania.[51] These numbers included hundreds of ethnic Albanians who came from Germany, Switzerland and the other countries of the diaspora, as well as new recruits from refugee camps in Albania. Numbers for the second armed group - the FARK - are less reliable and range from 600 to 3,000. The numbers are furthermore obscured by the fact that this force shed its own uniforms at some stage, preferring to operate under the KLA label.[52]

The real problem for the KLA, in the enclaves inside Kosovo, was that they were cut off. While small groups could trek out to Albania and FYR Macedonia and back, it was impossible to bring in large numbers of men, with arms, ammunitions and supplies. The Serbs largely succeeded in driving the KLA off the main roads, but they were unable to crush them, and increasingly the KLA operated in small guerrilla units, picking off soldiers here and there. Many KLA combatants, who had up to that point led almost normal lives, were forced to leave their villages, hiding in forests and suffering the hardships of scarce supplies.[53]

The situation in the interior was very different compared to that on the border with Albania, where the KLA managed to carve out a small enclave behind the village of Junik, re-supplied with volunteers and weapons from Albania. On May 26, the KLA began a major offensive to try and break out of the enclave and establish two corridors from the border to the interior. As the fighting intensified, on June 7 NATO intervened on the KLA side to bomb the Yugoslav/Serb forces.[54]

A negotiated solution

In the meantime, the international community increased its pressure on Belgrade to find a negotiated solution to the ongoing crisis. General principles for a solution were agreed at the Bonn meeting of the Group of Eight (G-8, the seven major Western industrialized countries plus Russia) in early May 1999. After further Russian and EU mediation, the peace plan was eventually accepted by the FRY government in early June and approved by the Serbian National Assembly on June 3. The combination of political and military pressure forced the Yugoslav/Serb authorities to sign the Military-Technical Agreement with NATO in Kumanovo (FYR Macedonia) on the evening of June 9. On June 10, 1999, after an air campaign lasting 77 days, NATO Secretary General Javier Solana announced that he had instructed General Wesley Clark, Supreme Allied Commander Europe, to suspend NATO's air operations. This decision was taken after consultations with the North Atlantic Council and confirmation from General Clark that the full withdrawal of Yugoslav forces from Kosovo had begun in accordance with the Military-Technical Agreement.[55]

On June 10, the UN Security Council passed resolution 1244 welcoming the acceptance by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia of the principles for a political solution to the Kosovo crisis, including an immediate end to violence and a rapid withdrawal of FRY military, police and paramilitary forces. The resolution, adopted by a vote of 14 in favor and none against, with one abstention (China), announced the Security Council's decision to establish international civil and security presences in Kosovo, under UN auspices. The principles included, among others: an immediate and verifiable end to violence and repression in Kosovo; the withdrawal of the military, police and paramilitary forces of the FRY; the deployment of an effective international civil and security presence, with substantial NATO participation in the security presence and unified command and control; the establishment of an interim administration; the safe and free return of all refugees; a political process providing for substantial self-government; and a comprehensive approach to the economic development of the crisis region. The KLA and any other armed Kosovo Albanian groups were to 'end immediately all offensive actions' and comply with requirements for demilitarization.[56]

The deployment of the international presence and the withdrawal of Yugoslav/Serb forces, which had been completed by June 20 1999, marked the end of the armed conflict between Belgrade on the one side and NATO and the KLA on the other. However, paradoxically, it did not mean the end of the KLA or the end of the KLA's involvement in subsequent political and military developments in Kosovo and the immediate neighborhood - Southern Serbia and FYR Macedonia.

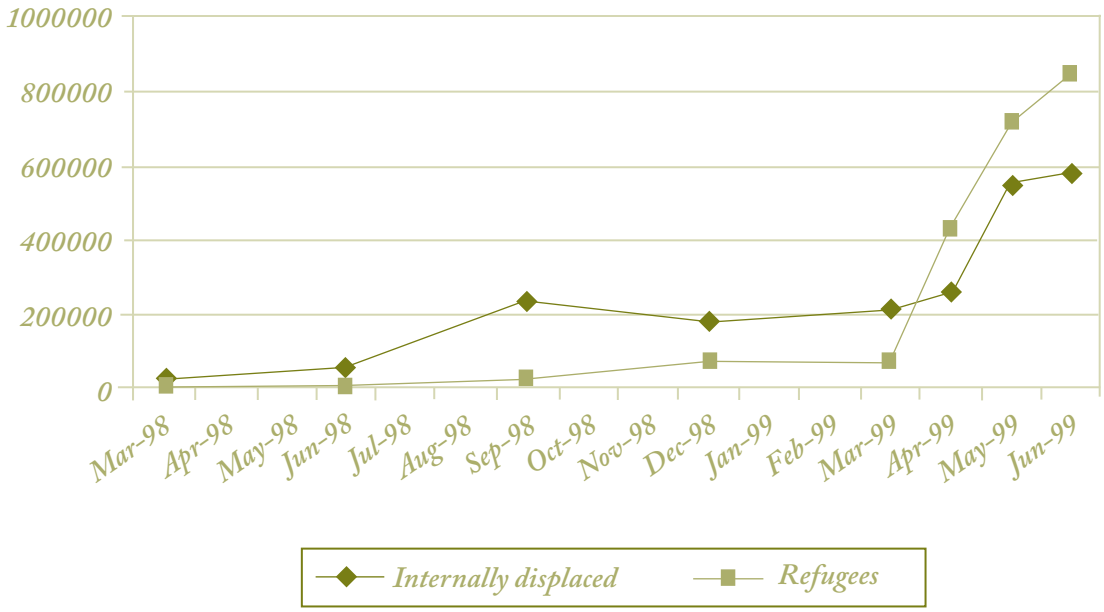
How the nature of the conflict shaped the reintegration process

In conclusion, a few general remarks should be made about the nature of the conflict, relevant for understanding the subsequent process of reintegrating ex-combatants.

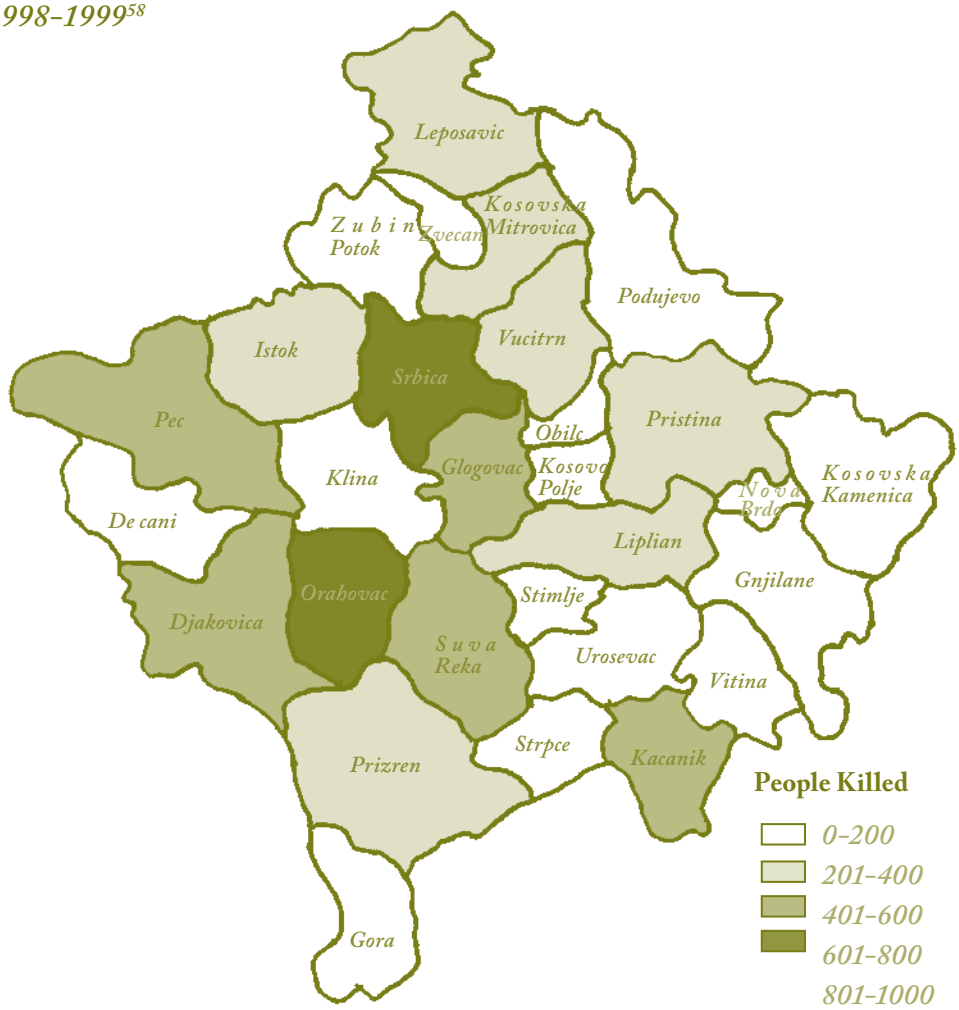
Temporal and geographic specificities

The conflict developed unevenly, both over time and space. While a general awareness of the ongoing conflict in all its forms - political, military, etc. - was a fact of life for the Albanian population from 1989, until March 1998 (and for many ex-combatants even until March 1999) armed conflict was not part of everyday reality, concentrated as it was in a few municipalities, mostly in the Drenica area. Even at the height of the conflict, in March-April 1999, about 25 percent of all Kosovo municipalities avoided direct armed confrontation (although it does not mean that those municipalities - with very few exceptions - were also spared forced expulsions). Graph 1 gives a general idea of the evolution of the conflict by the numbers of refugees and internally displaced people in 1998-1999. Graph 2 shows the geographical distribution of the conflict for the same period.

Graph 1. Kosovo's internally displaced and refugees (by time), 1998-1999[57]



Graph 2. Documented killings (by municipality), 1998–1999[58]



The temporal and geographic specificities of the conflict had two important consequences:

- Combatants were distributed across Kosovo very unevenly, concentrated in the western and central parts of the province.
- Most combatants joined the KLA rather late in the conflict, and their participation in actual combat operations was limited to a few months, at most a year.

From marginal guerilla attacks to a popular resistance movement

The nature of the conflict changed as its intensity increased after March 1998, but particularly with the mass expulsions of Kosovo Albanians after the start of the NATO bombing campaign. As more and more Albanian civilians found themselves affected, the conflict transformed from loosely coordinated small-scale attacks by relatively marginal guerilla groups into a popular resistance movement. More and more Albanians – predominantly young – started to join KLA units or village self-defence forces under KLA command.[59] Alarmed by what seemed to be the imminent danger of national extermination, many Kosovo Albanian men who worked abroad started returning.

The total number of combatants may not seem high (the maximum figure, which is bound to be inflated, does not exceed 26,000), but one should add to it all the people who supported KLA combatants with food, shelter, medication, etc. - foremost the relatives of KLA members but also other KLA champions. These people were acutely aware of the risk to which they exposed themselves: there are numerous reports of Kosovo Albanians having being maltreated and executed by Serb military and paramilitary forces for collaborating with the KLA or because a family member was known to be with the KLA. Given the large size of Albanian families, the total number of people more or less directly involved in the armed conflict could be over 100,000.

This change in the nature of the conflict had long-term political consequences: it legitimized the KLA's

fight - and the KLA itself as the advance guard of the popular struggle against the Yugoslav/Serb regime. From a small leftist group, not particularly scrupulous about its means, the KLA turned into a political force to be reckoned with by other Kosovo Albanian political parties and the international community. It established itself as intrinsic to any political settlement and post-conflict peacebuilding.

The role of ideology

Considering the rather short period of involvement with the KLA for most ex-combatants, how influential was the ideology to which they were exposed? Was it strong enough to change the subjective reality of KLA members to the degree that their subsequent reintegration into the prevailing social reality would be problematic? What were the ideological fundamentals of the KLA in general? How important is this for post-conflict reintegration?

Due to its particular history, the KLA absorbed widely varying views and trends, encompassing the entire political spectrum. Leftist elements (the LPK in particular) played an important role in the establishment of the KLA, but by the time the KLA became a force to be reckoned with, their ideological influence had been significantly diminished due to a massive inflow of people with different political and social backgrounds. Because of its loose structure, the KLA could not establish a uniform program of ideological education, delegating this responsibility to the local commanders and 'political commissars', and the nature and intensity of ideological education (where it existed) differed greatly from one place to another. In any case, according to the ex-KLA members interviewed for this research, there was little ideology *per se* even when some form of ideological training took place. Only 20 percent of our interviewees mentioned some form of ideological education during their time with the KLA.

The *leitmotif* of any discussion which went beyond the immediate needs of survival was the legitimate right of the Albanian population to self-determination and independence from Serbia - to 'put an end to the ages of foreign oppression and enslavement'.[60] It seems, however, that as the prospect of Kosovo's independence became more real by the end of 1998, the KLA started incorporating 'progressive' rhetoric in its official statements and communiqués, making references to democracy, political pluralism, a market economy, etc. Still, KLA statements and the behavior of its representatives in Rambouillet clearly indicate the lack of any specific ideological concepts beyond one all-encompassing goal - liberation from Serb rule.

Such an emphasis on 'negative freedom' (to exploit Marx's dichotomy) had certain advantages, because it allowed the KLA to recruit supporters from ideologically different elements of the Albanian population. The other positive consequence of the lack of a strong ideological orientation was that it minimized the influence of radical Islamic elements, quite a remarkable fact in a predominantly Muslim territory such as Kosovo – and particularly in comparison with neighboring Bosnia and Herzegovina, where Islamic ideology (including its fundamentalist variant) became an important factor in the war of 1992-1995 and has, to a certain extent, remained so.[61] In the longer term, however, such ideological ambivalence merely postponed ideological disputes and did not resolve them.

While one can conclude that the KLA's ideological influence was minimal and could not have had a lasting effect on its members, with the exception of a small core group, it does seem that a number of KLA members viewed their participation in the KLA as their only means of vertical mobility - in particular those coming from the traditionally impoverished (and generally despised as backward) areas such as Drenica in central Kosovo and Llapi in the north-east. As the emerging regional political elites fought for more influence and tried to wrest political power from the old 'communist' elites, to increase support among the local population they promised substantial economic and social benefits. It follows that a number of KLA members had unrealistically high expectations from the post-conflict future, instilled by the local KLA commands. The reality after June 1999 was different: as hundreds of former KLA members rushed from rural areas into the cities in search of the promised blessings, they discovered, to their dismay, an inadequate social infrastructure that could not accommodate them, exacerbated by the reluctance of the old elites to share scarce resources.

Socio-demographic characteristics and post-conflict intentions of ex-combatants

Definition: What this study means by 'Kosovo ex-combatants'

UN Security Council resolution 1244 identified the KLA and 'other armed Kosovo Albanian groups' as a military force opposing Yugoslav/Serb units in the Kosovo conflict and thus demanded that the KLA put an immediate end to all offensive actions and comply with the requirements for demilitarization, as laid down by the head of the international security presence in consultation with the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General. As discussed above, by the end of the Kosovo conflict there were two armed factions of ethnic Albanians - the KLA and FARK. By June 1999, the KLA had brought all other previously independent or semi-independent armed formations under its umbrella, substantially surpassing the FARK in numbers and significance. Furthermore, all ex-combatants, regardless of their organizational affiliation, were registered in 1999 as 'KLA members' by the International Organization for Migration. This study follows the same approach, referring to all ex-combatants as 'the KLA' or 'KLA members'. (The ethnic aspect of the situation has been dealt with in the Introduction.)

Socio-demographic characteristics

Two important factors for reintegration

When describing the ex-combatant population, two factors are of special importance to successful reintegration in the context of the interactionist approach:

- the reliability of ex-combatants' peacetime plausibility structures
- the intensity and length of ex-combatants' exposure to the conflict reality.

The reliability of peacetime plausibility structures may be explored through the following socio-demographic characteristics:

- **age:** younger people have fewer and less rigid plausibility structures and are more susceptible to new influences
- **marital status and the number of dependents:** the family serves as a permanent link with peacetime reality and provides the psychological and material support necessary for post-conflict reintegration
- **education and professional experience:** higher levels of education and professional background normally mean more and better developed plausibility structures and improved employment opportunities after the conflict.

The intensity and length of ex-combatants' exposure to the conflict reality is best described by:

- the length of time spent in the ranks of combatants
- ex-combatants' post-conflict intentions, especially
- a) place of residence (an intention to return to the home is an important indicator of a strong connection with the pre-conflict environment), and
- (b) intended professional activity (a large proportion of ex-combatants interested in continuing a military career most likely implies advanced interiorization of combat reality and a greater degree of disculturation).

There is a comprehensive database on Kosovo's ex-combatants, developed by the IOM as part of its program on reintegrating ex-combatants.[62] The data comes from the 25,723 ex-combatants[63]who were registered under the program between July and November 1999. The following description of the ex-combatant population in Kosovo is based on this reintegration database.

Age and sex

The collected profiles in the reintegration database indicate that the caseload is predominantly male (96.7 percent), with 857 female combatants (3.3 percent). They are quite young, with 88.3 percent under the age of 39, and 62.7 percent under the age of 30.

Table 2. Age and sex of ex-combatants (by percentage)[64]

Age	Male	Female	Total	Cumulative
14-17	1.50	0.15	1.50	1.50
18-19	8.05	0.61	8.67	10.17
20-24	28.74	1.17	29.92	40.09
25-29	22.00	0.64	22.64	62.73
30-39	25.04	0.56	25.60	88.33
40-49	9.33	0.17	9.50	97.83
50-59	1.89	0.02	1.91	99.74
60-64	0.16	0.00	0.16	99.9
N/A	0.10	0.00	0.10	100

There are more registered females than males among the 14 to 24 year olds; that is, more women than men under the age of 25 joined the KLA. But most ex-combatants joined the KLA between the age of 20 and 24 years, with males contributing 28.7 percent to the total caseload and females 1.2 percent.

Marital status and dependents

43.5 percent of registrants are single (although taking into consideration that 9.2 percent did not answer this question, the number would actually be almost half of the total caseload). This is not surprising, given the youth of the combatants.

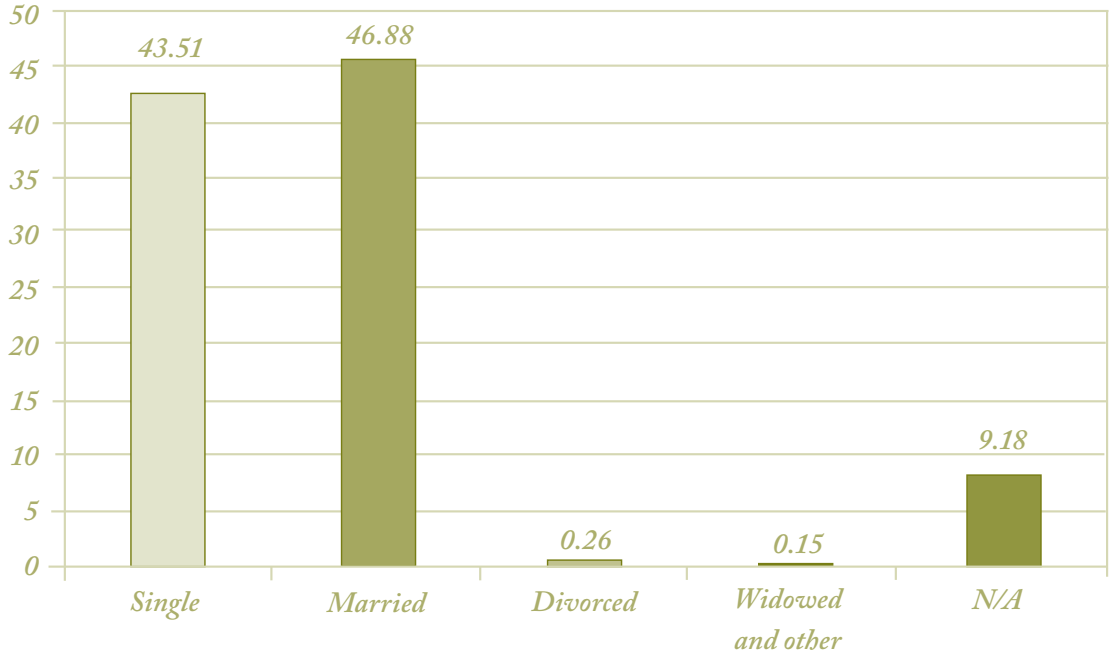
More than 70 percent of the single registrants are under 25 years of age, with 51.4 percent of these in the 20 to 24 year old age group. 21.8 percent of the single registrants are between 25 and 29 years old. Only 6.7 percent are over 29 years old.

The average number of children is 3.24, while the average number of other dependents (per head of family) is 8.04.

While 43.5 percent of those registered are single, the 25,723 registrants have indicated that they are supporting just over 200,000 dependents between them. Of this number, 35,424 are children and 164,803 are other dependents. This emphasizes the fact that efforts towards reintegration into civilian life affected the lives of nearly a quarter of a million people throughout Kosovo.[66]

The data on the marital status and the number of dependents are complementary, reflecting one specific feature of the Kosovo Albanian society - large extended families. Unlike in individualized Western societies, Kosovo Albanians in most situations are mindful of being part of collectives as the family and clan (*fis*). The years of persecution and neglect by the Serb authorities

Graph 3. Marital status of ex-combatants (by percentage)[65]



and the conflict itself strengthened these ethnic Albanian traditional institutions.[67]

Education

In addition to being young, the majority of former KLA combatants are highly educated, with only 24.5 percent of the caseload having less than high school education. Of the rest, 34.2 percent are high school graduates, 18.5 percent are specialized (trade) school graduates, 11.8 percent have not finished their university studies, and 5.9 percent are university graduates.

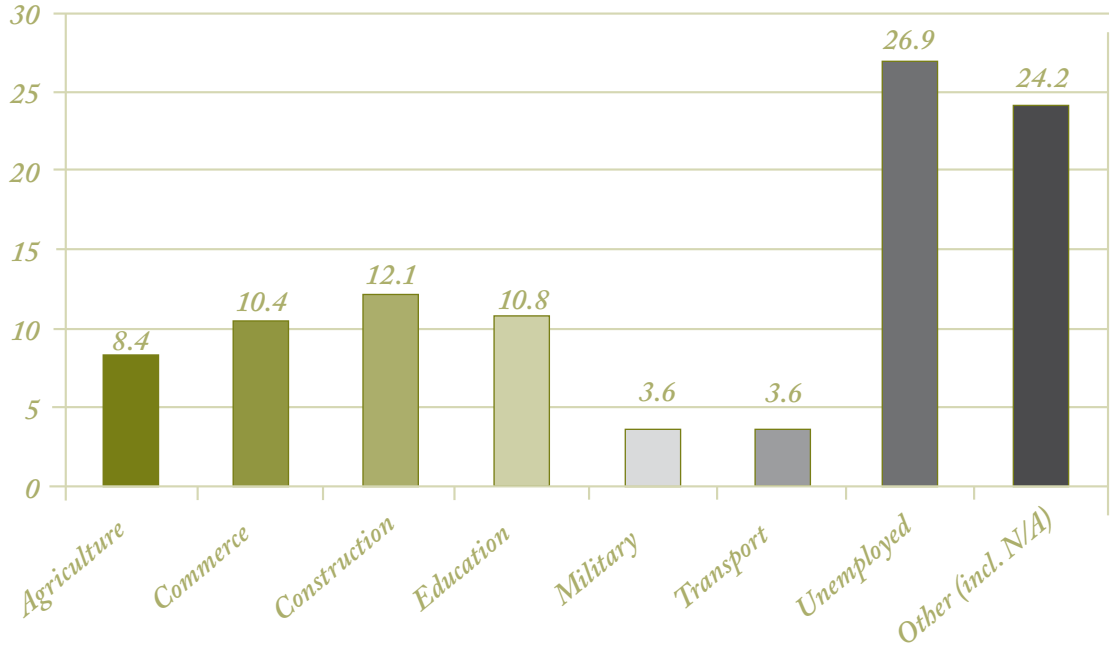
Table 3. Education level and age group of ex-combatants (by percentage)[68]

	Total (%)	Less then high school	High school graduate	Trade school (unfinished and graduate)	University (unfinished)	University (graduate)
Total	*100.0*	*26.4*	*34.2*	*21.7*	*11.8*	*6.0*
14-17	*100.0*	*73.5*	*11.9*	*13.3*	*0.8*	*0.5*
18-19	*100.0*	*45.4*	*29.6*	*19.3*	*5.3*	*0.3*
20-24	*100.0*	*25.1*	*37.5*	*21.0*	*14.7*	*1.7*
25-29	*100.0*	*21.6*	*36.0*	*25.2*	*13.4*	*3.8*
30-39	*100.0*	*21.2*	*34.5*	*23.6*	*10.9*	*9.7*
40-49	*100.0*	*26.1*	*29.9*	*16.0*	*10.4*	*17.6*
50-59	*100.0*	*43.3*	*17.7*	*13.0*	*5.7*	*20.3*
60-64	*100.0*	*70.0*	*22.5*	*2.5*	*2.5*	*2.5*
N/A	*100.0*	*65.4*	*19.2*	*7.6*	*7.7*	*0.0*

Employment

Nearly 30 percent of the total registrants indicated that they were unemployed before joining the KLA. The majority of respondents declared they were employed in construction (12.1 percent), education (10.8 percent), commerce (10.4 percent), and in agriculture (8.4 percent).

Graph 4. Pre-conflict professional activity of ex-combatants (by percentage)[69]



Affiliation with the KLA

Only 2 percent of registered KLA members stated that they were associated with the KLA before 1998. More than half the total caseload (57 percent) joined in 1998, 36 percent during the first six months and 21 percent from July to December 1998. Thus, 93.95 percent of those registered had been with the KLA for a maximum of 17 months maximum (from January 1998 through May 1999) before the combat activities were effectively terminated in June 1999.

Post-conflict intentions

Going home

Despite the fact that 77 percent of registrants declared that their houses had been totally or partially destroyed, a high percentage (70 percent) indicated that they plan to return to their place of habitual residence. This affirms that the habitual residence of registrants was quite stable. Furthermore, it indicates traditional and economic bonds to their habitual place of residence.

Table 4. Current place of residence and return plans of ex-combatants (by percentage)[70]

Current place of residence	Plan to return to habitual residence	
	Yes	No
Total	*69.8*	*30.2*
Own house	*68.8*	*31.2*
Someone else's home	*71.1*	*28.9*
Not known	*73.5*	*26.5*

Employment

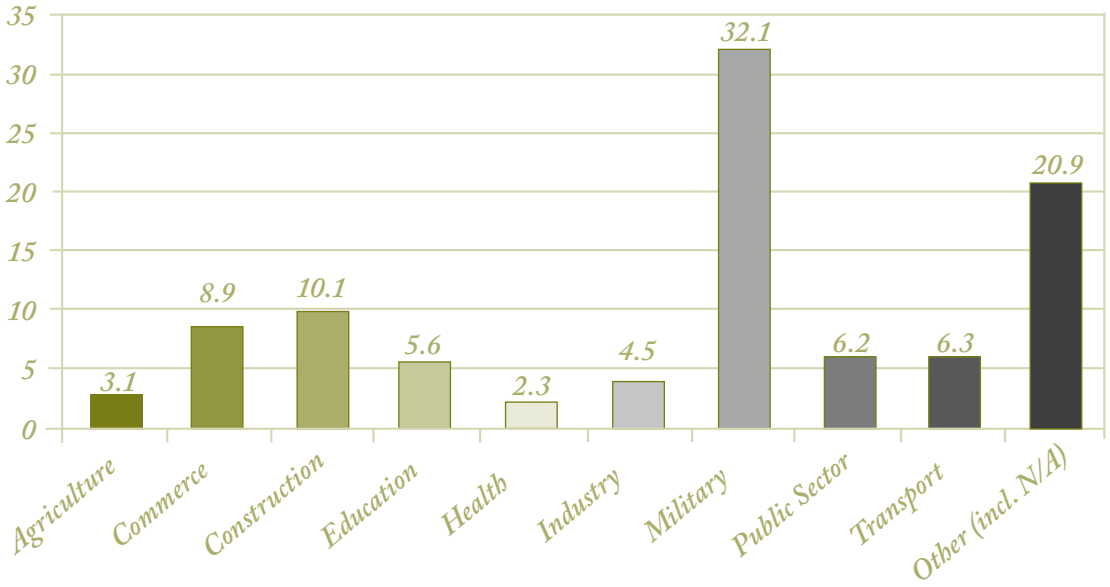
Preferred professional activity remained largely unchanged compared to before the conflict, with one important difference: the military (armed forces and police) was the first choice of 8,254 (32 percent) of registrants. This is an alarming fact, which may signify advanced interiorization of the combat reality and therefore difficult reintegration.

With numbers in other areas of professional activity only slightly changed, the ranks of those who preferred the military option were apparently swelled by those who had been unemployed before the conflict. Most of the positive responses (38 percent) came from those between 20 and 24 years old. According to the Kosovo demographic survey carried out at about the same time, this age group was also the least active in the labour market, with unemployment rates reaching 80.1 per cent.[71] This means that the majority in this age group, which is considered one of the most active both socially and economically, did not see much prospect of integration into the civilian sector.

It is noteworthy that registrants were very optimistic about reintegration opportunities and the socio-economic recovery of Kosovo, with 26 percent unemployed pre-KLA and only 0.3 percent unemployed post-KLA. A comparative query on pre-KLA and post-KLA unemployment figures reveals that 99 percent of registrants who stated that they were unemployed pre-KLA, foresaw employment post-KLA, either in the military or the civilian sector. This optimism may be viewed as an expression of ex-combatants' strong intention to reintegrate. On the other hand, it may reflect inflated expectations of the post-conflict future.

Post-conflict employment intentions reveal a strong reliance on state-supported jobs. The number of ex-KLA members (53percent) counting on employment in state-supported sectors (education, health, military, transport) was twice as high as the number (27 percent) employed in these sectors before the conflict. These high expectations bring with them the possibility of conflict if they are not met.

Graph 5. Ex-combatants' intended post-conflict professional activity (by percentage)[72]



Training and education

Registrants showed a strong interest in receiving various types of training to achieve individual reintegration goals. 44 percent stated that training would allow them to return to and do better in their former job; 15 percent declared that further training would allow them to get a new job in a different profession; and 6 percent showed an interest in training to finish their formal studies or education.

Prospects for successful reintegration

Overall, the situation of ex-combatants immediately after the conflict suggested relatively good prospects for their successful reintegration:

- a small percentage of ex-combatants in the total population (just about 1.5 percent)[73]
- their relatively high level of education (only one quarter had less than high school education)
- strong attachment to the family and their pre-conflict place of residence
- a short exposure to the combat situation (only 6 percent of ex-combatants stayed with the KLA for more than 17 months and even fewer were engaged in actual combat activities)
- their overall optimism about reintegration opportunities (only 0.3 percent of ex-combatants had doubts about finding a job after the conflict).

The less encouraging facts include:

- a lack of professional experience before the conflict (almost one third of ex-combatants were unemployed)
- a high percentage of those who preferred to further a career 'under arms' (over 30 percent).

These factors may inhibit the reintegration of ex-combatants, but much depends on the overall situation - political, economic and social. In the best circumstances, post-conflict developments provide better employment opportunities in non-military sectors and would mitigate the negative factors. Unfortunately, in the case of Kosovo, the negative factors have been compounded by the precarious political situation and difficult economic conditions.

KLA (Kosovo Liberation Army) fighters during the 1999 conflict.

Reintegration

This section will focus on reintegration programs implemented by various international agencies from the perspectives of three of the four areas of post-conflict peacebuilding, namely military/security problems, economic/social debilitation, and psycho/social trauma. The fourth area - political/constitutional incapacity - is analyzed in the next section, which describes the current situation of ex-combatants. Not that the international community paid less attention to this area - quite to the contrary: of all post-conflict priorities this was one of the most prominent. However, political and constitutional capacity building was addressed in Kosovo as a whole and there was no specific program that targeted ex-combatants.

The KLA after June 1999

The KLA was quick to seize the moment and fill the power vacuum created by the departure of the Serb structures in June 1999. As early as April 1999, when the war was still raging, the KLA's news agency, Kosovapress, announced the establishment of a provisional government with the chief of the KLA's 'Political Directorate', Hashim Thaçi, as its 'prime minister'.[74] Immediately after the war, Thaçi became the head of the self-proclaimed Kosovo provisional government. As Serb forces withdrew from Kosovo, followed by most of the Serb administrative elite, and with the Rugova-led government structures in Kosovo weak and disorganized, the KLA took over local administration in 27 of Kosovo's 29 municipalities (those where the Albanians formed the majority of the population) even before UNMIK (the UN Interim Administration Mission, the civilian international presence under Resolution 1244), could establish its presence.

While the majority of former KLA combatants, especially those who had been loosely attached to the KLA, were happy return to civilian life, a number of hard-liners stuck to the original political aims of the KLA - political independence for Kosovo - and tried to turn their military victory into political clout. There was a sharp increase in armed attacks by KLA fighters on retreating Serbs, and KLA rebels beat, imprisoned and expelled Serb and Roma civilians and attacked suspected collaborators and political rivals, especially LDK activists.[75] Following the massacre of 14 Serb farmers in July 1999, Human Rights Watch declared the KLA responsible for this and other 'most serious incidents of violence' against ethnic minorities.[76] The International Crisis Group (ICG) noted that the burning of 300 minority owned houses in Prizren could not have happened without planning and the knowledge of the local KLA leadership.[77]

Moreover, it seems that some KLA commanders (including Thaçi himself) used the power vacuum to benefit materially, establishing economic control over public and private businesses, most notably petrol stations, restaurants and retail outlets. The KLA was behind an organized campaign of political pressure and persecution. Local journalists were called in for interrogation by KLA police forces and even subjected to direct threats when suspected of acting against 'KLA values'. One of the most notorious incidents like this was Kosovapress's virtual death threat against the publisher and chief editor of Koha Ditore, Kosovo's highest-circulation independent daily newspaper; Ditore had issued a statement condemning ethnically motivated violence.[78]

No less importantly, there was an apprehension in the top echelons of the international community that, unless it was disbanded, the KLA could resume hostilities and turn its arms against the international presence as an occupation force.[79]

The demobilization and disarmament of the KLA were therefore widely seen as fundamental to any future peace, autonomy or protectorate agreement. After the NATO-led KFOR (Kosovo Force) troops entered Kosovo on June 12, 1999, a key question for reinstating public order concerned the KLA's willingness to disband. This could not be taken for granted, as the KLA was not a disciplined army with clear-cut command structures and a guiding political leadership.

UN Security Council Resolution 1244 obliged the international presence in Kosovo to disarm the KLA. Following disturbing reports of KLA activities, NATO urged the KLA to disarm. On June 21, 1999, KFOR commander, General Jackson, and Hashim Thaçi, acting as commander in chief of the KLA, signed the Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation, under which the KLA would cease to exist as a military organization from September 20, 1999. On that date KFOR duly confirmed that demilitarization was complete. [80]

Military and security problems

The Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation committed the KLA to cease all hostile acts and to hand over all weapons, other than pistols and hunting rifles, to KFOR within 90 days. The KLA agreed not to carry weapons of any type within a mile of Yugoslav security forces, on main roads, or outside the borders of Kosovo. Furthermore, it agreed to close all fighting positions and checkpoints, as well as to mark all minefields and booby traps. The core of the KLA was to be transformed into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), a uniformed but unarmed disaster relief organization.[81]

Disarmament

The overall disarmament strategy in Kosovo followed the standard post-conflict peacebuilding pattern, which includes two phases: 'disarmament by command' and 'voluntary weapons collection'.[82]

Disarmament by command

In Kosovo, disarmament by command was rather quick but not entirely free of difficulties: in June 1999 US Marines disarmed by force some 200 KLA fighters and arrested their chiefs near the south-eastern Kosovo village of Zegra after they refused to turn in their weapons.[83] Whereas the international community was of the opinion that all armed groups, both in and outside the KLA, should be unconditionally disarmed, the KLA leaders insisted on transformation of the KLA rather than disarmament. Negotiations between KFOR and the KLA on this issue were tense and sometimes dramatic: Ramush Haradinaj, one of the KLA commanders, who became Kosovo's prime minister in 2004, recalls that on one occasion the KLA representatives even walked out of the negotiation room in protest against the plans of the international community to disband the KLA.[84] Eventually, under significant international pressure, the KLA accepted the terms of the Undertaking on Demilitarization and Transformation, which Taqi signed on June 21, 2004.

By the end of September 1999, the KLA had handed over to KFOR some 9,000 small arms, 800 machine guns, 300 anti-tank mines, 178 mortars, 27,000 hand grenades, 1,200 mines, 1,000kg of explosives, and over 5 million rounds of ammunition.[85] This seems impressive, but the numbers are surprisingly low given that there were roughly 20,000 KLA fighters at the end of the conflict.

Weapon caches continued to be found by KFOR patrols, the largest consisting of 60 tons of arms and ammunitions, including mortars, anti-tank rockets, mines and machine guns, found in June 2000. Immediately after this discovery, a crowd of up to 1,000 ethnic Albanians used trucks to block the road into the village of Lapushnik/Lapušnik in an attempt to prevent the confiscation of the weapons. They waved banners saying 'These weapons belong to the Albanian people' and 'KFOR out of Kosovo'. KFOR troops found documents such as issue and receipt vouchers which identified the stash as KLA property.[86] In November 2000, a group of Ukrainian and Polish KFOR troops discovered one of the biggest illegal weapons caches, allegedly belonging to the disbanded KLA and allegedly containing 43 mortar rounds, 38 D40 rockets, 2 rocket-propelled grenade launchers, 25 mines, 9 boxes of machine-gun ammunition, and 170 blocks of dynamite.[87] In August 2002, international peacekeepers found a large ammunition cache buried in a field in south-east Kosovo, close to the Macedonian border. More than 800 hand grenades were discovered, together with a collection of fuses and mortars.[88] One night in August 2003, a team of KFOR soldiers netted three tonnes of ammunition packed into two boats floating on the river Drini on the border with Albania.[89] There was no one on board, and it remains unclear what the story was behind this find, the largest since KFOR took charge in 1999.

Analysts note that all this is probably just a fraction of the armory available to the KLA leadership in times of need. By the end of the 1999 conflict, weapons caches had been established both in Kosovo and in neighboring Albania and Macedonia. The end of the conflict in June 1999 caught the KLA by surprise. As a result, most of the weapons collected by KFOR during the initial disarmament came from KLA units 'that had been isolated behind Serb lines inside Kosovo during the war, rather than the new weapons bought during the war and stockpiled in Albania.'[90] A number of these 'hidden' weapons, originally from KLA sources, have found their way to the insurgents in Southern Serbia and Macedonia or are being used by Albanian militants for political and other crimes. In 2000, Macedonian police estimated that 20,000 to 30,000 arms were cached in the western part of the country by KLA operatives and sympathisers.[91]

Another factor substantially hampering the disarmament of the KLA was the large number of weapons in the private possession of KLA fighters. The 'weapon culture' is deeply engrained in Albanian history and traditions, and has only been strengthened by 10 years of persecution and instability under the Milošević regime between 1989 and 1999. General Çeku's complaints that the KLA was underarmed[92] seem to reflect the poor quality of weapons and the lack of heavy weaponry, rather than the amount of weapons at the KLA's disposal. According to the former KLA fighters interviewed for our research, many of them joined the KLA with their own weapons and most of them admitted to having some sort of weapon (usually hunting guns and pistols) in their homes before the conflict. Naturally, after the KLA was disbanded in September 1999, such fighters left for home with their weapons.

The large number of weapons owned by Kosovo civilians has always been a matter of serious concern for the international community, particularly in view of continuing discoveries of more and more. In the six months before September 2000, KFOR troops seized 4,000 assault rifles at vehicle checkpoints and during house searches.[93] The same trend, albeit on a lesser scale, continued in the following years: in January 2004 alone, KFOR seized 78 rifles, 24 pistols, 20 grenades or mines, one anti-tank weapon, and 3,981 rounds of ammunition.[94] By late 2003, KFOR peacekeepers had seized and destroyed 18,000 illegally held weapons since entering Kosovo in June 1999. UNMIK police have also played a significant role in confiscating weapons. Between June 1999 and the end of February 2003, they confiscated 3,361 illegal guns, including automatic and sniper rifles.[95]

Voluntary weapons collection

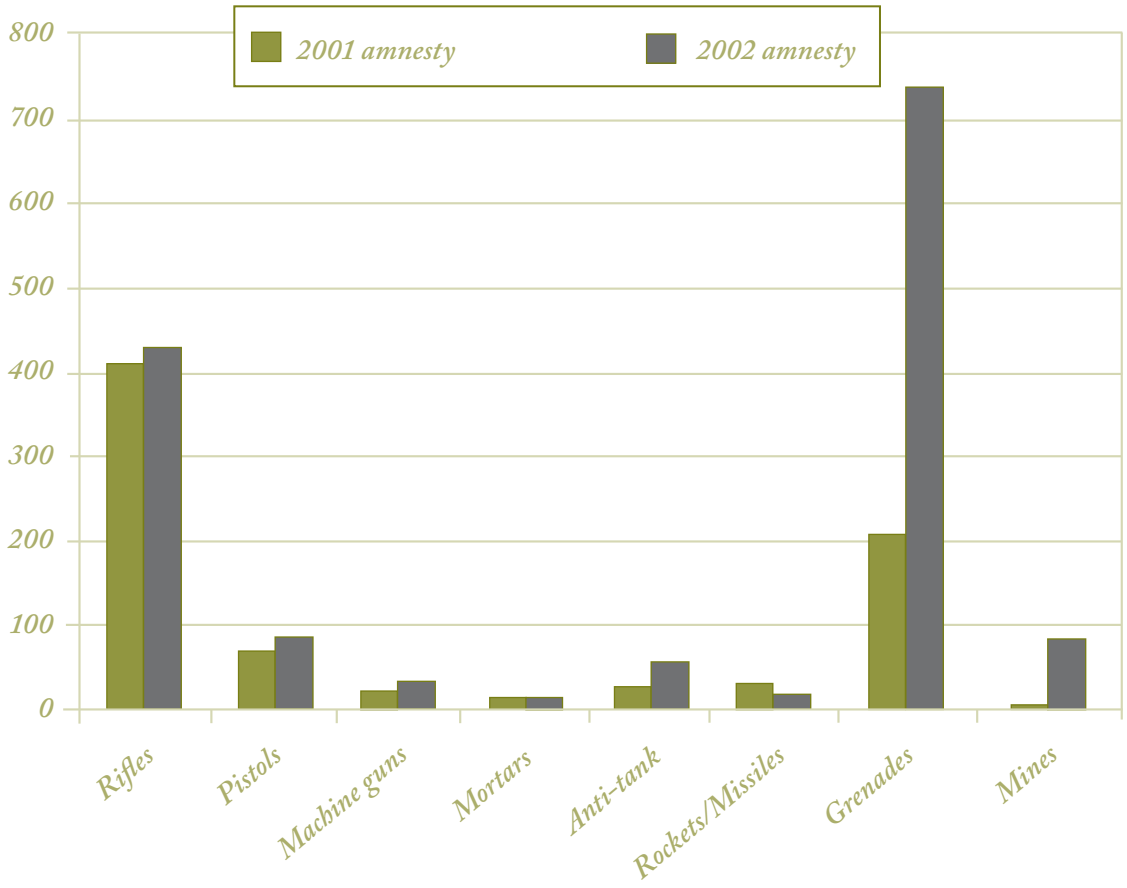
KFOR and UNMIK have conducted three voluntary weapons collection campaigns in an attempt to collect surplus weaponry, in particular military weapons, from the civilian population, similar to the campaigns in Bosnia. Essentially, the public was informed of an amnesty period through a public awareness campaign and encouraged to surrender illegal weapons at collection points operated by NATO troops. During the amnesty period, those surrendering illegal weapons would be granted amnesty and assured anonymity. All weapons collected would be destroyed.

The first campaign followed the introduction of a law in February 2001 regulating the possession of firearms and lasted for one month in May-June 2001. KFOR representatives called the weapons amnesty programme 'a success', emphasizing the flurry of weapons being turned in to KFOR patrols and at checkpoints. The total collected amounted to nearly 400 rifles, 65 pistols, 75 support weapons, 21 anti-tank weapons, 16 rockets, over 200 hand grenades and anti-personnel mines and some 31,000 rounds of ammunition. According to UNMIK representatives, the end of the amnesty period should have marked the beginning of the strict application of the new legal provisions.

The second campaign was conducted from March 15 to April 15, 2002. This amnesty yielded 427 rifles, 75 pistols, 24 machine guns, 1 mortar, 45 anti-tank weapons, 726 hand grenades, and about 59,000 rounds of ammunition. It was the first amnesty campaign publicly supported by the Kosovo leaders elected by that time: President Rugova appealed to the population to hand over their weapons, calling it 'the last chance for the common people to get rid of weapons'.

In 2003, the UNDP conducted a public awareness campaign on small arms in Kosovo. Running from July through September, it was designed to 'raise awareness on this problem, provoke debate and begin changing attitudes'.[96] The campaign enjoyed impressive official support from local and international representatives, including the prime minister, the KFOR commander, the SRSG, and other dignitaries. It covered schools, public institutions and homes, culminating in a one month weapons amnesty period in September. The results were utterly frustrating: a mere 155 guns from all over Kosovo[97] were surrendered to the authorities despite substantial financial incentives (the UNDP had promised to divide US$675,000 between the three municipalities that collected the highest number of weapons).

Graph 6. Results of weapons amnesties (by type of weapon), 2001 and 2003



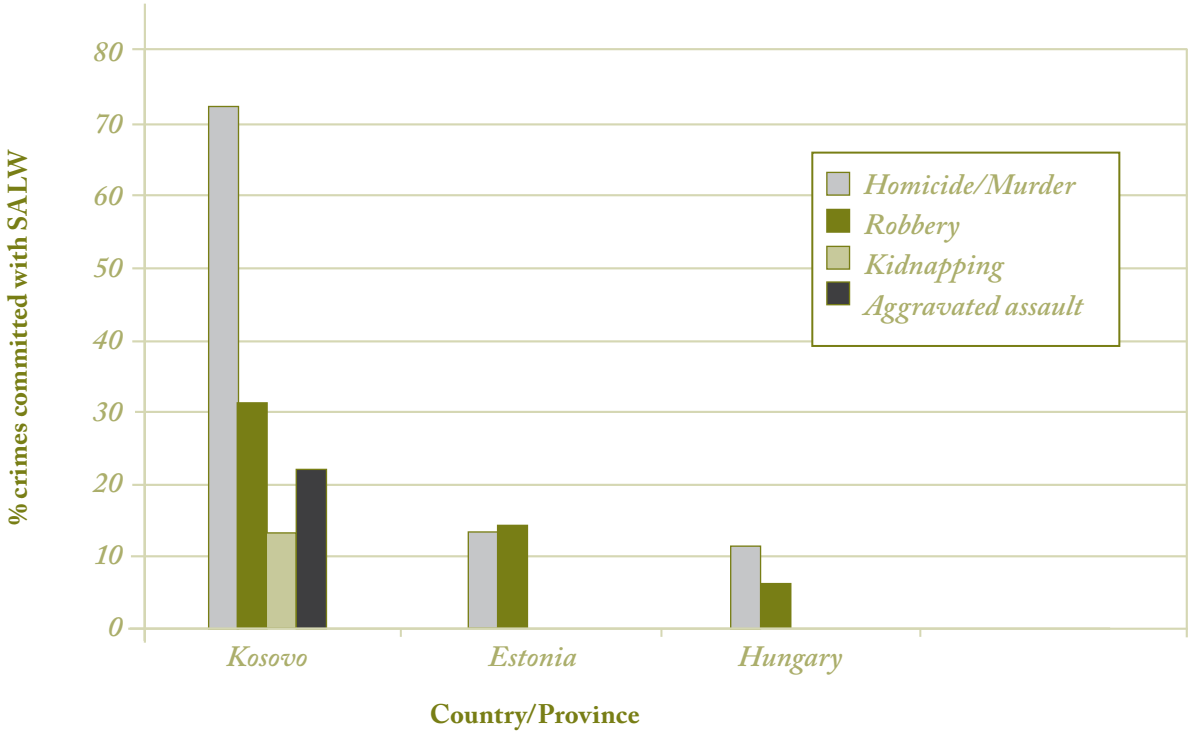
The drastic criminal penalties introduced by UNMIK for the illegal possession of firearms have not had any substantial impact on the handover of illegal weapons. Besides, despite the ubiquitous presence of weapons in Kosovo and the danger they present, UNMIK addressed the problem rather late. It was only in February 2001 that UNMIK promulgated a regulation on the possession of weapons, declaring illegal the possession or use of a weapon without a weapon authorization card (WAC) issued by the police authorities. The regulation penalized the illegal possession of weapons with imprisonment for up to eight years or a fine of up to 15,000 Deutchmarks (approximately US$9,000 at the time) or both. The regulation declared it a criminal offence for any person to 'use or brandish any weapon in a threatening, intimidating or otherwise unauthorized manner,' punishable by up to 10 years in prison, a fine of up to 20,000 Deutchmarks (about US$24,000), or both.[98]

Effects of the availability of guns

The widespread availability of guns has had a number of consequences for Kosovo society, even in the years since the end of the war. The direct effects include fatal and non-fatal injuries, as well as psychological and physical disabilities due to the misuse of small arms. Guns in Kosovo play a much more important role in crime in Kosovo compared to in other post-communist European countries. The indirect effects are even more numerous - including in the social, economic, and human development dimensions - and are sometimes more difficult to quantify.

Vandalized Serb cemetery.

Graph 7. Selected categories of reported crimes committed with small arms and light weapons (by percentage)[99]



The Kosovo Protection Corps

Thaqi's policy on the transformation of the KLA, as expressed in numerous public statements over the summer of 1999, was that it would divide into three components: a new political party, a new Kosovo Police Service (KPS), and a new armed force –not quite a new army but the embryo of one, usually likened to the US National Guard. In addition, many members of the KLA would leave it entirely, to be assimilated back into Kosovo Albanian society.[100]

Spontaneous demobilization

Immediately after the hostilities ceased in June 1999, with the withdrawal of Serb/Yugoslav forces and the arrival of NATO troops, many KLA members started returning to their homes. In fact, many of them had never left their habitual residence, having been engaged in self-defence forces in their own villages.[101] The IOM, responsible for registering ex-combatants, recognizes that it was 'extremely difficult to properly gauge the number of KLA combatants, as many of them returned directly to their homes immediately after the conflict instead of presenting themselves in the designated assembly areas set up by KFOR'.[102] Besides, a number of KLA fighters were volunteers from abroad,[103] with foreign passports and established lives outside Kosovo. Most of them returned to their countries, thus reducing the caseload of ex-combatants in Kosovo. In other words, the demobilization was spontaneous rather than organized according to a plan.

Lack of financial support

It is also remarkable that there was no mechanism for providing cash pay-outs to ex-combatants, even though KLA combatants were supporting more than 200,000 dependants, according to IOM statistics. Reintegration assistance was stalled for several months in 1999, due to the simultaneous screening process for the Kosovo Protection Corps, into which the KLA was transformed, and so former fighters were largely left to their own devices until the beginning of 2000. Unfortunately, due to the timing of the arrival of funding and how much funding there was, stipends could not be offered to ex-combatants and only members of the newly formed KPC could be paid. This forced many ex-combatants to remain dependent upon the KLA for support, negating some of the intended outcomes of demobilization. As many ex-combatants were used in reconstruction projects as possible, in order for them to earn quick income and contribute to reconstruction efforts. However, due to a certain degree of reluctance from agencies, during the emergency period, to become involved with the KLA

(something that has improved over time), not enough combatants were used in such projects.[104] The majority of ex-fighters found work on their own during this period or were supported by their families.[105]

Setting up the KPC

Immediately after the war, a commission for transforming the KLA was set up, including representatives of KFOR, UNMIK, the KLA, and the FARK. It met approximately 40 times. The understanding achieved was that some members of the KLA (together with the FARK elements) would become the backbone of a future force modeled on a national guard or a Yugoslav-type territorial defence force, or their combination, and others would be guaranteed a quota of places in the future Kosovo police force.

Eventually, in November 1999, the international community took a decision that the KLA was to be transformed into the Kosovo Protection Corps (KPC), modeled on the French *sécurité civile*. For the international community this was a civilian emergency service agency, whereas for the Kosovars it was the 'nucleus of a future Kosovo army.' The formation of the KPC signified a compromise between KFOR and the KLA leadership - a reward in exchange for disbanding the KLA as a fighting force. The ambiguity about the future role of the KPC was accepted by both sides.[106] It is no coincidence that the Albanian name of the organization - *Trupat Mbrojtëse të Kosovës (TMK)* - can also be translated as Kosovo Defence Forces. As agreed between KFOR, UNMIK and the KLA, the KPC consists of active members, to a maximum of 3,000, as well as reserve members, to a maximum of 2,000, who may be called upon when required.[107]

Membership in the nascent organization was open to all qualified persons, and UNMIK decided that 10 percent of positions would be reserved for civilian applicants, including people from minority populations. A competitive process was organized for interested applicants. UNMIK and KFOR entrusted the IOM's ICRS program with the administration of the KPC recruitment battery test to screen and assess prospective members. To ensure that the KPC was established without undue delay, the testing of candidates began in the second week of November 1999, with the selection process scheduled to conclude by the end of January 2000. Altogether some 18,000 people applied for 5,000 posts. The IOM provided the names of 13,739 qualified persons to a joint commission (made up of UNMIK, KFOR and the KPC), which made the final selection. (The final selection of a candidate into the ranks of the KPC followed a 'bargaining process' between KFOR and the KPC leadership.)[108] The KPC was officially constituted on January 21, 2000. Initially, 4,552 former KLA fighters entered the KPC, of which 1,798 later became reservists.[109]

Contributing to the community

According to UNMIK regulations, the KPC is responsible for the following tasks: provide disaster response services; perform search and rescue; provide capacity for humanitarian assistance in isolated areas; assist in demining; and contribute to rebuilding infrastructure and communities. UNMIK Regulation 1999/8 specifically states that the Kosovo Protection Corps shall not have any role in law enforcement or the maintenance of law and order.

An extensive training program (including deployment in and outside Kosovo) was prepared and implemented by the IOM to provide KPC members with new skills and the relevant expertise for the organization's mandate. In addition to training, KPC members put their experience to work by supporting their communities with humanitarian aid and community assistance initiatives. The KPC supported all of Kosovo's municipalities by working in areas such as water sanitation, waste disposal, building repair, road and bridge construction, Earth Day clean-up campaigns, the rehabilitation of schools and houses, and reforestation. An illustrative case is the KPC's construction of seven new municipal fire stations throughout Kosovo, an initiative that not only dramatically improved community safety, but also provided urgently needed employment opportunities for members of the Kosovo Fire and Rescue Service. df

UNMIK officials working with the KPC emphasize that unequivocal compliance with the KPC mandate as a civil emergency force remains a major challenge. But the KPC has developed the necessary disaster relief capacities and has been recognized on numerous occasions for its valuable performance and professional response to emergencies. Its rapid response and search and rescue units have been put to the test in a variety of crises throughout Kosovo, and they were major players in several serious events, including the Gjilan/Gnjilane

earthquake, the Obiliq/Obilić electrical fire, the Mitrovica industrial accident, the Gjilan/Gnjilane forest fire, and numerous major automobile accidents.[111]

Aspirations to be a defence force

Still, the KPC is a matter of substantial controversy. On the one hand, it enjoys public recognition and support. Four years after its establishment, the KPC has a track record of interventions in civil emergencies and a positive public image as a professional civil protection organization. Opinion polls show that it is the most popular and widely supported of the new Kosovo institutions (as well as the institution that is most disliked by the 5 percent Kosovo Serb minority).[112] On the other hand, there is a strong public perception that the current civilian mandate of the KPC does not reflect its true destiny. In interviews and informal conversation between the IOM team and KPC members in 2003-2004, KPC members all stressed that while working within the limit of the civil emergency mandate, they saw their future differently. The leadership in particular has never looked at the KPC merely as an avenue for employment in the civil sector. Moreover, the KPC's aspiration to become a defence force is in fact consistent with the broader political context. Public opinion surveys and in-depth interviews with Kosovar Albanians reveal that the transformation of the KPC into an army is a foregone conclusion (and a strongly held dream).[113]

Suspected illegal links and activities

The international administration is of the opinion that the former KLA and the KPC have links with illegal organizations and activities. It is alleged that the KPC has acted as a 'nursery' for KLA offshoot organizations, such as the UÇPMB (Liberation Army of Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedje, or in Albanian *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Preshevës, Medvegjës dhe Bujanovcit)* in Southern Serbia in 2000-2001, and the National Liberation Army (*UÇK or Ushtria Çlirimtare Kombëtare* in Albanian) in the 2001 conflict in FYR Macedonia.[114] Some studies report an astonishingly extensive connection between members of the KPC and ethnic Albanian fighters in Macedonia and Southern Serbia as clear evidence of demobilization's failure, although the figures are not adequately substantiated. The report, *A Review of Peace Operations,* argues that 'between 10% and 20% of the KPC [between 500 and 1,000 men] - including its deputy commander - are believed to have fought in Macedonia in 2001', but no source is quoted.[115] Other reports say that about 60 members of the KPC had crossed the border and harassed civilians in Southern Serbia during the same year.[116]

While there is no certain account of the number of KPC members who remained mobilized as guerrillas and fought in nearby countries, at least some KPC members have been identified as such and dismissed from the organization. Most notable among them was Macedonia-born Gëzim Ostremi, who fought in 2001 with the National Liberation Army, the insurgent guerilla organisation opposing the Macedonian government, while serving as the KPC chief of staff. Another KPC general, Shukri Buja, was dismissed, following charges that he had helped smuggle arms into southern Serbia. In connection with the regional unrest during the same period, 22 KPC members (including 4 generals) were suspended, after a strongly worded Executive Order issued by President George W. Bush blacklisted them for posing a threat to US security.[117] The order stated that actions of these KPC members 'threaten US and international efforts to promote regional peace and stability and pose a potential danger to US military forces and other Americans supporting peacekeeping efforts'.[118]

In April 2003, a failed terrorist attack on a railway bridge in the northern part of Kosovo led to the death of the perpetrator, a KPC officer, and revived suspicions of institutional KPC involvement in nationalist political violence. A shadowy organization, AKSh (Albanian National Army, *Armata Kombëtare Shqiptare* in Albanian) claimed responsibility for this operation, calling the killed KPC officer its 'soldier'. This event prompted UNMIK to officially declare the AKSh a terrorist organization and to suspend 12 KPC members, suspected of being connected with the AKSh, for six months.[119]

Four other KPC generals and a number of active KPC members have been arrested since the organization officially came into being in early 2000. The charges ranged from armed robbery and theft to torture, kidnapping and the inhuman treatment of civilians during the Kosovo conflict in 1998 and 1999, and political assassinations after June 1999.

The KPC commander strongly denies that the KPC is institutionally linked to extremism and crime. He is purportedly ready to investigate corrupt individuals,

while insisting on avoiding the politicization of KPC reform. Public opinion among Kosovar Albanians also has it that KPC members engaged in terrorist activities are individual 'bad apples' and should be recognized as such. To neglect this fundamental distinction, they say, would be tantamount to criminalizing the KPC. These views are supported by the fact that there is no hard evidence of an institutional connection between the KPC and any guerrilla group or criminal organization. However, the KPC has not been able to make a compelling argument in its defence, and instead demonstrates that it lags behind the standards demanded by the rule of law. For example, the KPC leadership has judged accusations of war crimes leveled against former KLA fighters and KPC members - most notable among them the four generals Daut Haradinaj, Seli Veseli, Rustem Mustafa and Selim Krasniqi - as unfair indictments.[120]

An uncertain future

The opinion of the international community is summarized in a report recently submitted to the US House of Representatives: 'professionalism within the KPC is lacking; criminals and extremists remain within its ranks; civilian control, eventually by Kosovo's elected authorities, is needed'.[121] The IOM report on the KPC training program remarks that suspicions of KPC involvement in political violence both inside and outside Kosovo turned into a collective condemnation of the KPC and have had a certain negative impact on reintegration.[122] They have certainly weakened international support; donor funding, which was already lacking, has dried up. The IOM also believes that by making the transformation of the KPC into a 'national defence' structure appear unacceptable, the international community might seriously undermine KPC members' resolve to perform their tasks, slowing down the development of the organization.

In Kosovo, the international community did not have to face many of the problems that mar most other demobilization and reintegration programs. There was no need for establishing quartering sites, no group with special needs, like child soldiers, no competing insurgent groups, no major problem in identifying who had been a combatant, no health hazard or epidemic, and solid family structures acted as a substitute for the lack of infrastructure and economic development. But complicating factors such as the uncertain political status of Kosovo and the subsequent uncertainty surrounding the longer term definition of the KPC cannot be underestimated.

The Kosovo Police Service

The international community saw the early development of the Kosovo police as a key element in the restoration of law and order. After June 1999, law enforcement became the responsibility of the UN, and a multinational corps of about 4,000 police officers was deployed to Kosovo. However, the UNMIK police force was rife with problems, such as slow deployment, lack of local expertise and insufficient coordination. In these circumstances, the establishment of a local police force, the Kosovo Police Service (KPS), became a top priority.

Integrating KLA members

While the KPS - unlike the KPC - was not meant to be a KLA successor organization, a set of quotas was negotiated to ease access into the new police force for former KLA fighters. According to international police officers involved in the selection process, 50 percent of training places were set aside for KLA veterans, another 20 percent for former Yugoslav policemen, of which 20 percent were allocated to minorities and 20 percent to women.[123] Initially, more than 29,000 people applied for the 4,000 positions in the KPS. 1,668 ex-combatants entered the KPS in the beginning, according to the quotas.[124] As of October 31, 2004, the KPS had reached a total strength of 6,282, of which 84.5 percent were Kosovo Albanians, 9.4 percent Kosovo Serbs and 6.0 percent from other ethnic minorities.[125] The precise number of KLA members in the KPS is not known, but sources within the international police confirm that the number has dropped as the total strength of the KPS has increased, and that it is close to 40 percent of the total number of members. Consequently, the KPS may have accommodated about 2,000 ex-KLA members. They appear to be well integrated into the KPS and in no way differ from other members of the force. There are no reports of disciplinary problems related to KLA veterans.[126]

Although some reports speak about the development of informal linkages between the KPS and the KPC,[127] international police officials interviewed for this research could not confirm it. According to one of them, past membership of the KLA is just a fact of personal biography like any other and does not have any significance for the current police service. In general, former KLA members

are not distinguishable as a specific category within the KPS, although in some regions (such as western Kosovo) their influence may be more perceptible.[128] At the same time, UNMIK officers mention reluctance on the part of some KPS officers to become involved in any incident that would entail a physical challenge or law enforcement action against members of the Kosovo Protection Corps.

The future

The KPS's performance during the March 2004 riots[129] has been severely criticized: approximately 100 KPS officers are the subject of allegations of misconduct, including direct involvement in the violence.[130] KFOR spoke of a 'police collapse' and complete loss of trust in the KPS.[131] However, according to the UN, the overall professional conduct of the Kosovo Police Service during the violence was a significant indicator of the professional growth of the service.[132]

The progress made by the KPS cannot be denied. The last report of the UN Secretary-General describes the progressive handover of policing responsibilities from the International Police to the KPS: the Kosovo Police Service manages 15 police stations all over Kosovo, and the first KPS special police unit is being established with another two to follow in June 2006. Yet much remains to be done to transform the KPS into a force capable of providing efficient policing under any conditions anywhere in Kosovo and enjoying the trust of all ethnic groups.

Economic and social debilitation

The transformation of the KLA into the KPC (3,000 persons) and KPS (2,000 persons) has left as many as about 20,000 ex-combatants in search of other reintegration opportunities. Taking into account many indications that the total number of ex-combatants had been overestimated, the actual figure of ex-combatants outside the KPC and KPS programs was just over 15,000.

The IOM Information Counseling and Referral Service and the Reintegration Fund

As early as July 14, 1999, UNMIK and KFOR decided to consider measures to reintegrate into civil society those demilitarized KLA members who would not be absorbed into the KPC or KPS. The International Organization for Migration was approached by UNMIK and KFOR to act as the focal point for the design and implementation of a reintegration program. The program was named the IOM Information Counseling and Referral Service (ICRS), and was based on similar demilitarization, demobilization and reintegration programs previously undertaken by the IOM in other parts of the world. The program began on August 1, 1999, after initial surveys and the registration and profiling of former KLA combatants.

The ICRS aimed to assist with reintegration through providing timely, accurate and unbiased information, at different levels, about available reintegration opportunities, including access to counseling, referrals, training, capacity building, and employment and other income-generating opportunities. The service also aimed to support ongoing overall reconstruction and economic development efforts in the heavily war-damaged Kosovo. The Reintegration Fund, working in tandem with the ICRS, was established to identify and develop additional opportunities for those demilitarized KLA combatants facing specific reintegration difficulties in areas where there was no assistance from other organizations. Media networking was used to promote positive reintegration stories in order to bolster the overall confidence of the demilitarized KLA combatants, as well as to strengthen linkaging and synergies between all concerned stakeholders.

The IOM program included the following components:[133]

- **A reintegration database** contained all the data on the official registration of demilitarized KLA combatants and was accessible to demilitarized KLA combatants, their partners, potential employers and other stakeholders.
- **Counseling and referral** supported demilitarized KLA combatants by offering brokering services linking them with potential employers. This component also looked at identifying the psycho/social needs of the combatants and provided a timely response through psycho/social counseling.
- **The Reintegration Fund** offered sub-grants to private, public and non-profit making organizations. It was also used to target ex-combatants who had not chosen a particular reintegration opportunity,

or who were finding it difficult to overcome certain reintegration problems due to a lack of absorption capacity within the community.

- **Capacity building** guaranteed the implementation of all reintegration initiatives in close cooperation and collaboration with all concerned stakeholders, at all levels, in order to ensure sustainability.

All the components of the ICRS worked in tandem with the reintegration needs of the community in general and sought to enhance the direct participation of local authorities and community structures.

The Reintegration Fund

Of particular interest is the Reintegration Fund, which was developed and implemented in two phases.

Phase 1 focused on reconstruction and rehabilitation. Interventions of this type were geared towards the collective betterment of the demilitarized KLA and included fellowships and vocational training during the winter months in preparation for the bulk of the reconstruction phase to be initiated in Spring 2000. These projects aimed to enrich the ex-combatants' quality of life, as well as that of their families and communities, by making available resources that addressed their immediate needs beyond food security and relief assistance, particularly household income and community needs.

Phase 2 addressed income generation and job creation. Although the focus of the Reintegration Fund was on community revitalization, projects to enhance job creation and income generation (through land improvement, joint enterprise development, training, capacity building and collective supplies) needed to be contemplated in areas where experience suggested the possibility for this existed. The IOM established 11 vocational training centers throughout Kosovo, teaching an impressive range of new skills to ex-combatants: arc and gas welding, auto-electrics, auto-mechanics, carpentry, computers, civil construction, electrical installation, hairdressing, plumbing tailoring, TV and video repair, vulcanizing, etc. This phase was also designed to promote conflict resolution through the implementation of a mechanism that allows for rapid intervention in areas of potential or identified disturbance, thereby preventing small and isolated incidents from developing into crisis situations.

The results

By the time the program was phased out in 2002-2003, the following had been achieved:

- 14,339 ex-combatants (56 percent of the entire caseload) had been helped to reintegrate into civilian life through employment referral/job placement (including entry to the KPC and KPS), on-the-job training, micro and small business start-up, vocational training, business training, and psychological or psychosocial support.
- 1,961 ex-combatants were referred to short-term employment, and 2,881 to long-term employment. (4,552 entered the Kosovo Protection Corps, of which 1,798 later became reservists.)
- 420 ex-combatants benefited from targeted on-the-job training.

Table 5. ICRS beneficiary projects financed by the Reintegration Funded[134]

Classification	No. of projects	Direct beneficiaries	Indirect beneficiaries
Agriculture	*572*	*2,152*	*13,848*
Education	*14*	*528*	*1,478*
Employment/apprenticeship/on-the-job training	*221*	*1,544*	*8,021*
Personal housing	*12*	*173*	*1,526*
Psychosocial assistance	*2*	*15*	*105*
Rehabilitation therapy	*6*	*380*	*232*
Small and micro-enterprise	*659*	*2,676*	*16,987*
Vocational training	*29*	*2,317*	*16,078*
Total	*1,515*	*9,785*	*58,275*

- 1,515 urban and rural businesses were successfully supported to the benefit of those ex-combatants with the most immediate needs, providing 9,785 employment positions, in most cases with vocational training graduates, and securing the socio-economic survival of 58,275 indirect beneficiaries (dependents).

- 2,317 ex-combatants undertook vocational training in skills ranging from agriculture to computing.
- 69 special needs cases of persons suffering from acute stress and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) were assisted through specialist counseling and referral to specialized service providers.
- 214 women (25 percent of the total female caseload) benefited from a specialized program addressing the needs of female ex-combatants.

EAR Housing Reconstruction Program

While the IOM program specifically targeted various categories of ex-combatants, other agencies and organizations contributed to reintegration of ex-KLA members through programs aimed at stabilizing the social and economic situation. The housing reconstruction program funded by the EU and implemented by the European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) was of the greatest significance.

The loss of homes

During the 1999 conflict, nearly half of Kosovo's housing stock of 250,000 was damaged or destroyed. An assessment made in July 1999 by IMG on behalf of the European Commission indicated that 41,000 houses were partially damaged, 32,000 were seriously damaged (walls standing but roofs and interior burned), and 47,000 were completely destroyed (down to and often below the foundations). The houses of an estimated 500,000 people were badly damaged or destroyed, with these people consequently being made homeless.[135]Furthermore, the most extensive destruction took place in the areas where the KLA resistance was most fierce and where most ex-combatants lived before the conflict. Four western and four central municipalities account for almost one half (47.2 percent) of the entire caseload of totally destroyed houses. These eight municipalities produced 35.7 percent of all registered KLA fighters, whose combined population, according to the latest reliable statistics, makes up 21.8 percent of Kosovo.[136]

This situation was hardly conducive to the reintegration of ex-combatants, and if urgent measures had not been taken to address the issue of shelter, the reintegration program might have faced a major challenge. As it happened, emergency efforts by the European Commission's Humanitarian Aid Office (ECHO) and other donors before the winter of 1999-2000, which came early and was unusually cold, provided shelter for the worst affected families who could not move in with relatives. They were housed in partially repaired houses, temporary tents, pre-fabricated units, and collective centers. The European Commission Task Force for the Reconstruction of Kosovo (EAR's predecessor) began a major rehabilitation program in 1999 to assist Kosovars in the rehabilitation of some 3,600 war damaged homes. The program was taken over by EAR in 2000.

The benefits of reconstruction

During 2000, the European Agency for Reconstruction spent 60 million Euros to complete the reconstruction of 8,170 housing units. A further 2,000 were at roof completion stage at the end of December, with another 1,530 in the earlier stages of reconstruction. By reconstructing nearly 12,000 housing units, an estimated 100,000 beneficiaries were able to return to a more normal life by December 2000. All in all, the EAR housing reconstruction program has rebuilt over 17,000 homes, benefiting more than 120,000 people. Meanwhile, EC-funded housing loans were made available to families who were not eligible for assistance.[137]

For many of the inhabitants of rural villages, the reconstruction effort has led not only to their return to a habitable dwelling, but also to improved standards compared to before the conflict. Significant building employment opportunities have been created throughout Kosovo. In addition, the involvement of municipal housing committees in the selection and approval of beneficiaries has helped to facilitate the emergence of democratic decision-making bodies at the municipal level, and to address, to a certain extent, the urgent needs of ex-combatants. Given the widespread geographic coverage of the EAR housing reconstruction program, the Kosovo population has witnessed a significant and lasting contribution by the EU to the lives of those families worst affected by the war.

Official data on how many ex-combatants benefited from the EAR program are not available (these programs did not consider ex-combatants as a specific category). However, our interviews with municipal officials and NGO workers involved in identifying beneficiaries for housing reconstruction in 1999-2001 suggest that ex-combatants as well as the families of KLA members killed during the conflict were, as a rule, given priority over other cases.[138] According to the War Veterans' Organization in Prishtinë/Priština at least 50 percent

of ex-combatants were able to benefit from the EAR program.[139] Considering that EU reconstruction efforts in general were focused in the areas most severely hit by the conflict (and with a high concentration of ex-combatants), it would be fair to suggest that most ex-combatants benefited from the reconstruction process one way or another.

Addressing psychosocial trauma

The conflict – relatively short, but intense and accompanied by a massive ethnic cleansing campaign – was obviously experienced by the population as a psychosocial trauma. Two surveys, carried out in Kosovo by experts from the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in Atlanta in September 1999 and May 2000, highlighted the high number of persons suffering from some form of trauma in the aftermath of the conflict. The surveys estimate that one person out of four exhibits one or several of the symptoms of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), whether they were refugees, internally displaced or not displaced during the conflict. Women and people living in rural areas appeared to be most affected by the problem (which is an important fact, considering that most former KLA combatants originated from rural villages).[140]

Experiences that could have more or less traumatic consequences were various, ranging from serious, life-threatening situations to prolonged unstable living conditions. They included, for instance: witnessing or experiencing combat, torture, abuse, injury, imprisonment, rape or sexual abuse; the murder of family members or friends; isolation and forced separation from family members; prolonged deprivation of food and water, and lack of shelter; and illness and lack of access to medical care.[141]

Post traumatic stress disorder

Opinions on the relevance of treatment for PTSD for ex-combatants in Kosovo are rather controversial.

On the one hand, many studies have convincingly demonstrated that combat activities are associated with battlefield stress and that although most soldiers readjust to their civilian lives without serious pathology after a war is over, between 10 and 20 percent develop PTSD. This condition is marked by a variety of intrusive, avoidance, and hyperarousal symptoms and is often accompanied by heightened anxiety, depression, and hostility. Of those who develop PTSD, some recover within a brief period of time, while in others the condition becomes chronic.[142] This suggests that between 1,000 and 2,000 Kosovo ex-combatants could be suffering from PTSD. There is only anecdotal evidence of the extent of psychological disorders among ex-combatants in Kosovo[143] and no reliable statistics are available. If psychosocial disorders in ex-combatants are similar to the general pattern discovered during the CDC survey, then the symptoms also include 'feeling of hatred and a desire for revenge'.[144]

On the other hand, only two cases of the suicide of ex-combatants have been reported after the war,[145] and the *opinion communis* of the officials and ex-KLA members interviewed for this study was that very few ex-combatants experience psychosocial problems. This, in turn, may be an underestimation caused by a particular attitude to mental disorders in traditional Albanian society, which considers such disorders a strictly private business and disapproves of their public disclosure.[146]

The IFRC psychosocial program

Be that as it may, during 1999, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) started the Kosovo Psycho-Social Program and established five Red Cross centers and five mobile outreach teams to provide psychosocial services. The program aimed at strengthening individual, family and community development by reducing the likelihood of psychological disorders through providing traumatic stress interventions, psychological support and therapeutic social activities. It was also used as a vehicle to develop the local Kosovar Red Cross branches, with all five centers and outreach teams integrated into branch structures. The program was supported by the American, Swedish, German, Belgian, Swiss and Japanese Red Cross societies.

Over 30,000 beneficiaries received the program's vital services from January to October 2000, with a general upward trend demonstrating the need for such a program. The program also ran services for former detainees in the different regions of Kosovo, many of whom actively participated in the KLA, and included organized trips to Banja Peja rehabilitation centre, which was particularly appreciated by the beneficiaries. Furthermore, women

from the program's centers graduated from their six month sewing classes, receiving diplomas.[137] In total, over 55,000 Kosovars had benefited from the IFRCR program by the end of 2003 when it was transformed into a more sustainable Community Resource Center Initiative and handed over to the local partner, the Red Cross of Kosovo.

The UNMIK social assistance scheme

Family support was an indispensable factor for the survival of one particularly vulnerable group of ex-combatants - war invalids.[138] To address their immediate and most urgent needs, UNMIK launched a rudimentary social assistance program in 1999, which targeted a large group of households considered to be most vulnerable, including those where one of the members was a disabled person (but not necessarily a war invalid). Between November 1999 and April 2000, monthly cash payments of up to DM100 [139] per family were provided to the elderly (over 70 years old), to single parent families, and to families with a handicapped person. By the end of the scheme, over 80,000 payments had been made, totalling DM30 million.[140]

It took UNMIK one and a half years to address the particular situation of war invalids - a regulation on benefits for Kosovar war invalids was only promulgated in December 2000, but payments did not start before late 2001. Under this regulation, the benefits for war invalids (and other categories of person, such as the next of kin of those who died in the conflict) included: financial payments for war invalids; free access to the medical care provided in government health centers and rehabilitation centers in Kosovo for war invalids and their next of kin; exemption from sales tax, excise tax and customs duties on vehicles adapted for the specific disability of a war invalid; and financial payments for the next of kin of those who died as a result of the armed conflict in Kosovo. [151]

A town in western Kosovo destroyed by the Serb military and paramilitary forces during the conflict.

Ex-combatants in Kosovo today

As discussed in the introduction, reintegration can be conceived of as a form of secondary socialization, consisting of establishing a high level of correspondence between the individual perspectives of ex-combatants and the prevailing social reality. Since reintegration is part of a collective effort by the society as a whole to create a self-sustaining peace, ex-combatants are necessarily both the object and an important agent of post-settlement building, including the reintegration process. From this point of view, and bearing in mind the four major deficits that need to be overcome in post-conflict societies according to the UN peacebuilding blueprint, the reintegration process can be analyzed in terms of:

- the contribution of ex-combatants to the deficit areas
- the contribution of society (or rather its institutions) to the reintegration of its members who served as soldiers in an armed conflict.

The first aspect of the reintegration process reflects the subjective side of reintegration, i.e. how ex-combatants perceive their situation in society. The second aspect relates to the objective side: how society views ex-combatants and treats former members of armed formations.

Our study explores the first aspect - analyzing ex-combatants' contribution to the major deficit areas - by describing their role in politics and crime. These two cross-cutting social phenomena allow a probe not only into political and security deficits, but also into more subtle and less quantifiable areas of economic/social and psychosocial integration. The second aspect – the social perspective - is examined through the ex-combatants' relationships with three major socializing institutions: the family in the private sphere, and the government and civil society in the public sphere. It ensures the necessary link between a social-psychological analysis of internalization phenomena and a macro-sociological understanding of their structural aspects.[152]

Politics

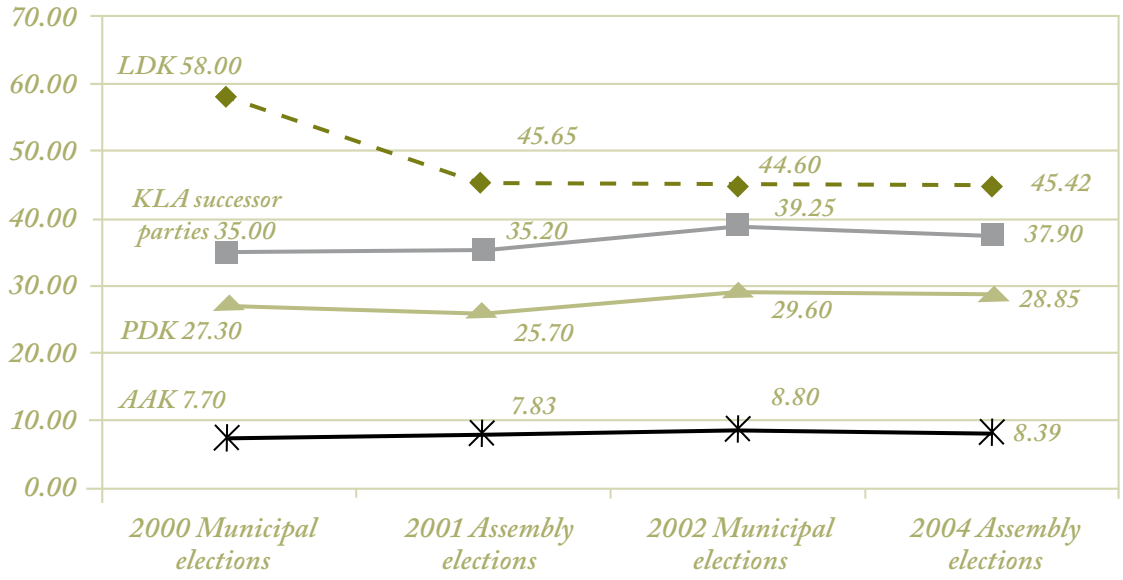
Political pluralism propelled by local politics is a condition *sine qua non* for a healthy political process and eventual constitutional reform. From this point of view, the integration of former KLA combatants may be estimated by the contribution of the KLA successor parties to the building of modern democratic institutions.

The KLA successor parties

Four political parties succeeded, to various degrees, the KLA - PDK (Democratic Party of Kosovo), the AAK (Alliance for the Future of Kosovo), the LPK (National Movement of Kosovo), and the LKÇK (National Movement for the Liberation of Kosovo).

The Democratic Party of Kosovo claims to be the transformed KLA: 'The PDK is the successor of the KLA war and is committed to realizing its goals in peace'.[153] Most of the PDK's political leadership held high-ranking positions in the KLA during the conflict, including the party's most powerful politician, Hashim Thaqi. The Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, despite being headed by a prominent ex-KLA commander and one time deputy KPC commander Ramush Haradinaj, is less pretentious. From the AAK's point of view, the KLA war was the culmination of the century-long struggle of the Kosovo people to live in freedom, but this party makes no claims to be a political reincarnation of the KLA. The other two parties, the LPK and the LKÇK profess strong nationalist sentiments, but can hardly pretend to the KLA heritage due to their small numbers and marginal status: in the Assembly elections of 2004, the LPK received 0.66 percent of votes and the LKÇK refused to participate at all. (In the 2002 municipal elections, the LKÇK received 0.25 percent of votes.)

Graph 8. Performance of KLA successor parties in Kosovo elections (by percentage), 2000-2004



Regional connections

A characteristic feature of all the KLA successor parties is their strong regional connections. The PDK exercises the greatest influence in central Kosovo (Drenica area) and Podujevë/Podujevo municipality. The AAK is closely associated with the Dukagjini/Metohija area in western Kosovo. The LPK has practically no influence outside three municipalities in the south of Kosovo: Ferizaj/Uroševac, Suharekë/Suva Reka and Dragash/Dragaš. Whatever authority the LKÇK enjoys is limited to three small municipalities: Obiliq/Obilić in central Kosovo and two other neighboring municipalities on the border with Serbia proper - Podujevë/Podujevo and Novobërdë/Novo Brdo.

Beyond the borders of Kosovo

When discussing the role of the KLA successor parties, one important fact should not be overlooked: their political influence extends beyond the present borders of Kosovo into southern Serbia and Macedonia. In southern Serbia, home to a large Albanian population, the Democratic Party of Albanians (DPA) has developed close links with Thaqi's PDK, and the Party of Democratic Progress (PDP) has allied itself with Haradinaj's AAK.[154] This fact gains particular significance in light of the September elections of 2004 in three Serbian municipalities - Preševo, Bujanovac and Medvedja. In Preševo, the moderate PDD (Party for Democratic Action) lost seven seats, gaining 12 instead of 19, while the DPA won 15 seats and the PDD 5, which allows them to control the local municipal assembly of 38 seats. The Macedonian DPA, whose vice-president is Menduh Thaqi, Hashim's cousin, is a natural ally of the Kosovo PDK, while the National Democratic Party (NDP, known also by its acronym PDK) is believed to have close connections with the LPK and the LKÇK.[155]

The Democratic Party of Kosovo (PDK)

The PDK, formed as the PPDK (Party for the Democratic Progress of Kosovo) in October 1999, traces its political origins back to the Popular Movement of Kosovo (LPK), which played an important role in setting up the KLA in the 1990s. In the beginning, the PDK was seen as a vehicle for Thaqi's personal political ambitions as well as those of his family clan and the inner circle of the KLA's political and military leadership. Writing in June 2000, *Jane's Intelligence Review* characterized the new party as follows: 'The PPDK failed to present itself as a genuine political party, being seen rather as a façade for the powerful and influential "Drenica group". Traditionally scorned by Kosovars as "hillbillies", the Drenica Albanians avenged themselves and earned a new reputation after UÇK actions in the winter of 1997-1998 brought the problem to the attention of the international community.156

Since then, the PDK has established itself as the second most influential Albanian political party in Kosovo, with a steady percentage of the electorate between 27 and

29 percent. In the 2002 municipal elections, the PDK captured outright majorities in four municipalities and is the largest single party in two other municipalities, giving the party majorities in six municipal assemblies (out of 27 Albanian municipalities). In the first Kosovo Assembly elections in 2001, the PDK got 26 seats and formed the government together with the LDK and AAK (with 47 and 8 seats respectively), and held the post of the prime minister from 2002 to 2004. In the last Assembly elections of 2004, the PDK got 30 seats, but was left out of the governing coalition in opposition as a result of an LDK-AAK agreement.

Commitment to 'KLA values'

To say that the PDK's political goal is an independent Kosovo means nothing: this is the goal shared by any Kosovo Albanian political party. What distinguishes the PDK from other successor parties is its special commitment to 'KLA values', its emphasis on its pre-eminence among other Kosovo Albanian parties, and its excessive reliance on force to resolve conflict.

For the PDK, the Kosovo conflict was a 'heroic war conducted by the KLA against the Serbs'[157] (rather than a conflict between Kosovo Albanians and the Serb regime). The PDK program puts special stress on the military aspects of state-building, such as the modernization of the Kosovo Protection Force. ('PDK is very much engaged in the modernization of the Kosovo Protection Force, on the existing conditions, aiming towards its integration in the Euro-Atlantic structures'.) The social protection of ex-combatants also figures prominently: the PDK program emphasizes 'support to the families of martyrs, war invalids and all those who were persecuted by the authorities'. The party has pledged to 'take care of the employment of former KLA members' and 'work in earnest for their integration into society'.[158] The program also includes 'politically correct' statements, such as: 'for PDK, dialogue and democratic confrontation of ideas will be privileged means for the realization of emancipation and continuous activities in the process of Kosovo becoming a state'; 'PDK is committed to establish Kosovo as a state of parliamentarian democracy and rule of law'; and 'PDK will defend and guarantee the rights and freedom of minorities that live in Kosovo according to the standards, which derive from the International Conventions'.[159]

Heterogeneous membership and leadership

These are very general remarks, of course, and in practice the PDK has demonstrated various patterns of behavior in different situations. There seems to be one serious obstacle preventing the PDK from formulating and pursuing a uniform policy under different circumstances and at different levels - the heterogeneity of its membership and leadership. Its membership represents the ideological mix of the KLA, encompassing both radical right and left wing ideas. The PDK's leadership also speaks with different voices, at least two: that of Hashim Thaqi, the party's president and that of Jakup Krasniqi, the party's general secretary. The group around Thaqi (the former prime minister Bajram Rexhepi belongs to this group too) includes relatively young and practical, rather than ideologically predisposed, politicians, who became prominent in the late 1990s. The group around Krasniqi comprises representatives of the older generation, who are ideologically more rigid and trace the beginning of their political activities to the LPK and other Marxist-Maoist groups in the 1970s and 1980s.

Thaqi's group has proved to be more cooperative with the international community and more open to compromises. Rexhepi was the first high-ranking Kosovo Albanian official to visit Serb areas after his appointment as prime minister in 2002. He did not hesitate to address an angry mob attacking a Serb village near Prishtinë/Priština on March 18, 2004, and persuaded them to disperse. Rexhepi was also the first high-ranking PISG official to visit a place where violence occurred against the Serbs after March 18 (the so-called YU building in Prishtinë/Priština). Thaqi, on a number of occasions, has demonstrated surprisingly untraditional thinking on important issues. Thus, he suggested a moratorium on the Kosovo status issue in 2003 to ease tensions between the international community and local political structures. On another occasion he suggested that the Ohrid model of self-government, applied by the international community to resolve the ethnic conflict in FYR Macedonia, could be used for predominantly Serb areas in Kosovo.

The differences between Thaqi and Krasniqi have become evident on several occasions. When Prime Minister Rexhepi was on leave in July 2003, Krasniqi, the acting prime minister, wrote the UN Secretary-General a letter

full of grievances against UNMIK. In this letter - which seemed to be on Krasniqi's personal initiative, agreed with neither Thaqi nor Rexhepi - he harshly criticized UNMIK for its failures, particularly in the fields of security and justice. (The letter was written in the wake of arrests and war crimes trials of some high-profile ex-KLA fighters.) Krasniqi accused UNMIK of continuing the policy of official Belgrade and of failing to establish control over 30 percent of the territory in the province, referring to northern Kosovo, where the Kosovo government does not exercise any control. Interestingly enough, Thaqi hurried to disavow the letter, calling it a stance of the government and saying that his party's position and that of the Kosovo government are 'very different in some areas'.[160] In the absence of Thaqi (he was on a visit to the USA) the PDK presidency under Krasniqi issued a statement on March 17, 2004, blaming 'the parallel structures directed by Serbia' for organised violence and declaring 'the expression of dissatisfaction on the part of the citizens' legitimate. The statement said: 'The Serbs are abusing Albanian goodwill to create a society equal for all. Proof of this is yesterday's [children drowning] and today's [Mitrovica violence] events. Their will has remained in the previous five years only will for violence against Albanians. *This cannot be tolerated any longer.*'[161] This statement seemed to be at odds with a much more balanced and less inflammatory statement made on the same day by the PDK caucus leader in the Kosovo Assembly Arsim Bajrami.[162] But to make his point as clear as possible, Krasniqi refused to sign a joint statement condemning violence issued by the 'The Quint' (the US, the UK, France, Germany and Italy) and all the major Kosovo political parties, and stormed out, failing to appear on television when the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Harri Holkeri, read the statement in the presence of The Quint states' heads of offices and other Kosovo leaders on the evening of March 17.

Ethnic reconciliation

If there is a political party capable of advancing ethnic reconciliation in Kosovo, it is the PDK. Publicly recognized as a political continuation of the KLA and the custodian of liberation values, the PDK can afford conciliatory gestures, unlike the LDK, which, in the eyes of many ex-KLA fighters has forever tarnished its image by 'collaboration with the Serb occupation regime'. Even more significantly, the PDK has made such gestures not only to please the international community with politically correct actions but also in its internal meetings. As Graph 11 shows, the PDK was the only Kosovo Albanian political party that publicly spoke about the need to respect the rights of all communities during the 2004 election campaign.

Almost 200,000 people voted for the PDK in the last Kosovo Assembly elections, many of them former KLA members. The PDK's influence extends far beyond the party structures: many municipal organizations of war veterans and war invalids are headed by local PDK leaders. There are special relations between the PDK and KPC, which is reflected in the party's program. Very close personal relations between PDK leaders and the KPC command are no secret, and although the Kosovo Protection Corps does not allow any formal political membership, some sources suggest that as many as 60 percent of KPC members may still be loyal to Thaqi (another 30 percent stay loyal to Rugova and 10 percent to Haradinaj).

However, the KLA roots of the PDK are as much an advantage as a disadvantage. Both Belgrade and, more importantly, Kosovo Serbs have no trust in the PDK and strongly doubt the sincerity of its reconciliation statements. For the Serbs, Thaqi is a convicted criminal (he was sentenced *in absentia* to 10 years in prison by the Prishtinë/Priština District Court in July 1997 'for the criminal acts of terrorism'), and references to Thaqi as a terrorist by Serb politicians from Belgrade and Kosovo are not unusual. Moreover, the international community continues to be suspicious about the PDK's intentions: in the beginning of 2002, the then Special Representative of the Secretary-General in Kosovo, Michael Steiner, blocked the appointment of Thaqi as Kosovo's prime minister, forcing him to cede this position to Rexhepi. There are persistent rumors about the possibility of an ICTY indictment against Thaqi (though lately overshadowed by rumors of an imminent indictment against Haradinaj) for war crimes committed by the KLA in 1998-1999. The allegations that Thaqi himself and other high-ranking PDK officials may be involved in a wide range of illegal activities - from smuggling of arms and stolen cars to racketeering and prostitution - have not subsided.

At the same time, according to the OSCE (Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe), the party's internal statutes and procedures conform to Kosovo party law, which was written with the help of the international

community. The party's performance in the Kosovo government in 2002-2004 shows that it is a political force, capable of admitting to its share of responsibility and taking reconciliatory actions, which may not be that popular in Kosovo Albanian society. On March 20, 2004, when Kosovo Albanian institutions were still very much in denial about their responsibility for the violence against minorities, the government made a decision, on its own initiative, to finance the repair of destroyed homes and other buildings, allocating €5 million to this. UNMIK representatives in the municipalities, where the PDK is in the minority, emphasize that the party has proved to be an effective opposition, meaningfully contributing to the work of municipal assemblies by scrutinizing municipal actions and suggesting alternatives.[163]

Uneven potential to address the political/ constitutional deficit

Thus, the PDK may be a potentially significant factor in making up for the political/constitutional deficit in Kosovo. In the past four years, this potential has been realized very unevenly, to different degrees and in different directions, the party sending controversial messages to its electorate. In the future, the PDK's ability to contribute positively to political developments in Kosovo is likely to be substantially limited by its mixed composition and contradictory tendencies both supporters and leadership.

Alliance for the Future of Kosovo (AAK)

If the PDK was dubbed as a vehicle for the personal political ambitions of Hashim Thaqi, many analysts considered the AAK as having been created to promote the political career of Ramush Haradinaj, another prominent KLA commander. Haradinaj, who commanded the KLA Dukagjini zone in western Kosovo, was, for a short time in 1999, deputy KPC commander, but left the organization in 2000 to concentrate on politics.

A more detailed party programme

While the AAK program makes several references to 'the liberation war of the Kosovo people and its army, the KLA', the party's program does not lay claim to KLA heritage. The program is also more detailed and less declarative than the PDK's, suggesting specific measures to support the development of family enterprises and small and medium enterprises; facilitate the privatization process; ensure better regional integration and cooperation; promote effective social programs; etc. The social part of the program includes measures aiming to support the categories of the population who suffered most during the armed conflict: war invalids and the families of martyrs. The proposals cover assistance to their household economies; allocating construction land for them or for their household economies; credit for housing; provisional exemption from taxes; etc.[164] Some analysts find 'communitarian' tendencies in the AAK political platform as well as a focus on individual freedom and responsibility.[165]

A moderate alternative

Organizationally, the AAK has a unique history. It was founded for the 2000 municipal elections as a coalition of five disparate, though primarily nationalist, parties, including the LPK and the LKÇK (the other parties were the PPK – the People's Party of Kosovo, *Partia Popullore e Kosovës,* and UNIKOMB – the Party of Albanian National Unity, *Partia e Unitetit Kombëtar Shqiptar*). The idea of the alliance, according to Haradinaj, was neither to promote 'narrow identities', as the small parties did, nor to be based on 'opposition and mutual rejection', as was the case between the LDK and PDK, but to create an alliance of all political forces that had something useful to offer for the future of Kosovo.[166] From this position, Haradinaj defended his coalition, criticized by many from within his own party as 'extremist'. He said that the coalition was not accidental, and that those parties had their own contribution to make to the future of Kosovo through their 'idealism' and 'vision'.[167] However, the AAK proved to be too moderate for its coalition partners, and by the 2001 Assembly election they had withdrawn, dissatisfied with the AAK's 'conciliatory' position. For the 2002 municipal elections, what was left of the original coalition registered as an independent party under the same name. By this time, the AAK had worked to establish a reputation as a moderate Kosovo-wide alternative to the LDK and the PDK.

The AAK is firmly based in the Dukagini region of southwest Kosovo. This region includes the municipalities of Pejë/Peć, Deçan/Dečane and Gjakovë/Đakovica. Although the AAK is a major presence in all three of these municipalities, it only has a governing majority in Deçan/Dečane. Where the AAK is strong it most often displaces the PDK rather than the LDK.

Significant political influence

The AAK has a stable electorate of about 8 percent (in the last Assembly elections in 2004 it received 8.39 percent of votes). However, the party has more political influence at the Prishtinë/Priština level than its electoral results would indicate. First, the AAK, more than many of the other parties, including the LDK and PDK, has developed a respected political professionalism. International and local political observers credit the party with solid organization and clear, effective and largely democratic internal governance. Its internal policy development has been characterized as ground-up, or mutually constructed between the center and the party branches.[168] Second, the AAK has significant youth and female membership, which is institutionally integrated into the party's decision-making process and gives the party an air of being future-oriented. This has great appeal for the international agencies and donor governments working in the province. Finally, the AAK's participation in the government in 2002-2004 has been an important factor in promoting the party's public image.

Potential for reconciliation

The party's response to the violence in March 2004 was measured: during the Kosovo Assembly session on the second day of the riots, the AAK representative condemned all killings, although he blamed 'Serb gangs' for the violence. Haradinaj aligned himself with the Quint statement, condemning violence, and appeared on television with the Quint states' heads of offices and other Kosovo leaders on the evening of March 17. The next day, the AAK presidency issued a statement encouraging citizens to stay calm and not to engage in conflict with KFPR peacekeepers nor with Kosovo law-enforcement agencies.[169]

The AAK demonstrated its political responsibility and reconciliation potential again after Haradinaj's appointment as Kosovo's prime minister in December 2004. Unlike the previous government, Haradinaj identified the following most important tasks: to ensure free movement for all Kosovars, Serbs and Albanians, to provide security for all, and to resolve the issue of people who need to return to their homes.[170] Turning specifically to the thorny issue of Kosovo's Serb minority, he promised to work hard to promote the full integration of Kosovo Serbs by extending government services equally into all areas inhabited by Serbs. He also confirmed his readiness for dialogue with Belgrade.

Allegations against the party's leader

Considered by many to be one of the most talented political leaders in Kosovo, Haradinaj, like Thaqi, has had to maneuver clear of accusations of post-war crimes. On several occasions, he has had to respond to these accusations publicly. He strongly objected to allegations that he was controlling a prostitution network[171] and denied his involvement in smuggling cigarettes and fuel.[172]

Haradinaj is clever and tough enough to have survived both war against the Serbs and the infighting endemic to Kosovo's violent politics, but what may prove to be a fatal blow for him are allegations of his involvement in war crimes during and immediately after the conflict.

In the spring of 2002, his brother, Daut Haradinaj, also a prominent member of the party and former KLA commander, was given over to local war crimes prosecutors (after the conflict, Daut joined the KPC and replaced his brother Ramush as the KPC commander of western Kosovo). In November 2002, he was convicted and sentenced to five years in prison as part of the so-called Dukagjini Group. The court found the group guilty of abducting, torturing and finally executing four Albanians in June 1999 in the village of Ratish in western Kosovo. The victims belonged to the FARK, the armed group which rivaled the KLA during the 1998-1999 conflict and was associated with the influential LDK.

Potentially, Ramush Haradinaj's situation is even more precarious then his brother's. He was questioned twice by investigators in Prishtinë/Priština in November 2004, and speculation about his imminent indictment by the tribunal had been around for a few months by the end of 2004. Moreover, on December 25, 2004, Serb media reported that the indictment had been signed by the prosecutor. Serb sources say that the indictment may charge Haradinaj with personally perpetrating 67 murders and ordering another 267, as well as with ordering the kidnappings of about 400 civilians, Albanians and Serbs. Allegedly, Haradinaj ordered that the basement of the Pastrik Hotel in Gjakovë/Đakovica (the KLA headquarters for western Kosovo) be turned into a prison for non-Albanians, in which the captives were tortured, raped and killed.[173]

Haradinaj's appointment has incensed the Belgrade government, diminishing chances of dialogue to zero. The Serbian president Boris Tadić has called Haradinaj's appointment 'a failure of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo' and 'a direct provocation that could destabilize the state-of-affairs in the Balkans and threaten to stop a political solution of the Kosovo issue'.[174] His appointment has also strained relations between the AAK and the main KLA successor party, the PDK. On the day following Haradinaj's election as prime minister, the pro-PDK newspaper *Epoka e Re* called Haradinaj, on its front page, 'a traitor' for galvanizing a 'political corpse' (Rugova). The paper said that tough times lay ahead and warned that the new coalition would not survive.[175]

An attractive political partner

With Haradinaj's future still uncertain, the political fortunes of the AAK are also rather vague, although the party seems to have gained enough ground to withstand most dramatic events, including the arrest of its leader. In many respects the AAK is less controversial than the PDK - it lays no claims to the KLA heritage, which helps it to avoid possible negative connotations. The AAK is thus more acceptable as a political partner, most recently demonstrated by its coalition with the LDK. Faced with a choice between the PDK and AAK, the LDK had no doubts about who to choose. On the other hand, the KLA background of many AAK leaders makes the AAK a more likely partner in a coalition with the PDK, if the PDK had to choose between the AAK and the LDK.

The party's work at establishing a reputation as a moderate alternative has been largely successful. Although it does not have a clearly defined ideological stance - not unlike the other major parties - it claims a centrist position. In practical terms, rather than indicating any sort of economic or social policy position, this centrism means that the party is more likely to employ reasonable, non-vitriolic rhetoric in pushing for Kosovar independence. The post-conflict political experience has demonstrated that no single political party in Kosovo commands a clear majority and has enough popular support to govern alone. The AAK is therefore likely to be a member of any governing coalition in the future and will continue to influence Kosovar politics, albeit on a limited scale.

The Popular Movement of Kosovo (LPK) and the National Movement for the Liberation of Kosovo (LKÇK)

Radical response to the March 2004 violence

The March violence of 2004 tested Kosovo political parties where they are most vulnerable: their ability to overcome a victimization mentality and assume responsibility for non-majority communities, particularly the Serbs. It is thus particularly relevant to analyze the reaction of the other two KLA successor parties, the LPK and the LKÇK to the March events.

By March 2004, both parties had been marginalized: the best result the LPDK had in any given municipality after the 2002 elections was 1.72 percent (in Rahovec/Orahovac), and the LKÇK result was even more modest - 1.26 percent (in Novobërdë/Novo Brdo). Each party had just one member in the Kosovo Assembly following the parliamentary elections in 2001. This, however, did not prevent them from vocally expressing themselves during the March events.

In a press conference on March 18, the LPK issued an ultimatum, demanding an immediate end to 'the Serb aggression', the dismantling of the Serb parallel structures, the termination of the UN mission, and the immediate proclamation of Kosovo's independence by the Assembly.[176] The LKÇK reaction was no less radical. In a pamphlet issued on March 24, when the damaging effect of the riots on the international image of Kosovo Albanians had dawned on most Kosovar politicians, the LKÇK stubbornly referred to the events as a ' justified revolt' provoked by Serb criminal gangs, UNMIK police and KFOR. In the LKÇK interpretation what had happened was a 'Serb aggression and invasion' against peaceful Albanians. The pamphlet is a fine example of complete denial despite obvious facts: 'Not now, not in the past, Albanians ever dishonoured the rights of Serbian minority in Kosova. Our people never hit the weak, isolated or mistreat them.' In light of this, their genuine indignation over the negative reaction of the international community is understandable (but not acceptable):

> UNMIK and the international and national institutions do not just obstruct the future, peace and progress of our nation, but even severely attack us

for the revolt. The people are left at the mercy of the others. The nation is beaten, offended, denigrated; its sons have been arrested, its tradition, culture, language and the national identity is attacked; it is left unemployed and without any perspective and each day told it is a part of Serbia. And after all these, it is again accused for the rebellion.[177]

This particular political blindness came as no surprise, given the history of the two parties.

Prominent role in the KLA

The LPK was formed in 1982, modeled on the Irish Republican Army, having evolved from a party called the LPRK (Popular Movement for the Republic of Kosova), founded in 1979 as a Marxist-Leninist youth group and supported by the communist government of Albanian dictator Enver Hoxha. In 1991, when the communists fell in Albania, Kosovo's underground LPK movement shed its Marxist associations, but retained its core IRA-type belief that for Kosovo to achieve independence from Serbia it could not rule out violence.[178] The LPK's program, approved in August 1993, states that 'to achieve the national aspirations, LPK will use all the forms of liberation war: democratic, peaceful, political and armed resistance. LPK combines legal and illegal forms in accordance with the circumstances and the situation that will be created.' Characteristically, the program has not changed since then: the website prepared by the OSCE for the Kosovo elections in October 2004 displays the same program.

No wonder that of all Kosovo political parties the LPK was most intimately involved in the creation of the KLA. In the introduction to the book *The Kosovo Liberation Army*, published in Prishtinë/Priština in 2003, the LPK president, Emrush Xhemajli, says: 'The creation of the KLA was not achieved at once … rather, it was a relatively long process, planned, studied, and implemented by the LPK. The LPK fully controlled it until the second part of 1998 and partly until its transformation in the KPC.[179] Although the LPK's claims to be recognized as the sole spiritual and organizational force behind the KLA are exaggerated (and it is definitely even less true for today's LPK), many independent sources note the party's prominent role in the KLA.[180]

LPK representatives hold important positions in the KLA political directorate and joined Thaqi's provisional government in April 1999. After the conflict, leading LPK members joined the newly established PDK (then PPDK) under Thaqi's leadership: 14 out of 21 members of the presidency of the PPDK came directly from the LPK.[181] This move left a much less influential and more radical LPK, which was in opposition to the PDK and blocked with Haradinaj's AAK in the first elections in 2000. When the AAK proved to be too moderate for it, the LPK decided to explore the stormy waters of Kosovo politics on its own. However, it has not achieved any success worth mentioning: the Assembly elections in 2001 brought the LPK 0.56 percent of votes, and in the last elections in 2004 it gained 0.66 percent.

Wartime alliance with the KLA

Another KLA-linked group that participated with the LPK in Thaqi's provisional government in 1999 was the LKÇK. Both parties had the same origin, but split over ideological and tactical issues in 1993.[182] Originally a movement separate from the KLA, the LKÇK joined forces with the KLA during the war, but retained its own identity. When peace came, it resumed its activity as a separate party. Its members resigned from the provisional government on December 15, 1999, over lack of consultation on the agreement to create a unified authority. The LKÇK leaders had always disliked Thaqi, though they respected Remi, the KLA wartime commander in the Llap zone where most of the LKÇK served.[183] The LKÇK then allied itself with the AAK and, as had the LPK, then left this coalition before the Assembly elections in 2001.

In terms of election results, the party's success has been very modest: 1.11 percent in the 2001 elections and 0.25 percent in the municipal elections of 2002. Upset by the 'unfair treatment' of Albanians by the international community in the wake of the March violence, the LKÇK refused to participate in the 2004 Assembly elections and actively campaigned against them under the slogan 'Do not vote for the sovereignty of Serbia over Kosovo'. 'By boycotting these elections, we reject the political process governed by [UN Security Council Resolution] 1244,' said the party's president, Sabit Gashi.[184]

Political extremism

Notwithstanding their lack of noticeable political achievement by democratic means, both political parties have become well known for their political extremism. As the interethnic conflicts in Southern Serbia and

Macedonia developed in 2000-2001, reports about the active involvement of the LPK and the LKÇK - through providing funds and through direct participation in the armed confrontation - became more and more frequent.[185]

As a result, the LPK president and vice-president, Emrush Xhemajili and Gafurr Elshani respectively, and the LKÇK president, Sabit Gashi, were singled out in June 2001 in a harshly worded Executive Order issued by President George W. Bush. The three men were barred from entering the US and American citizens were prohibited from having any financial or business dealings with them because of their role in fomenting an armed insurgency in Macedonia, Kosovo's neighbor to the south. In the words of Bush's order, the actions of the three 'threaten US and international efforts to promote regional peace and stability and pose a potential danger to US military forces and other Americans supporting peacekeeping efforts'.

As mentioned previously, the LPK and the LKÇK (together with the three 'war associations') were the main driving force behind the anti-UNMIK protests preceding the March riots. On October 14, 2003, they protested against the UNMIK-organised dialogue with Belgrade, underway in Vienna that day. On November 12, 2003, they staged a more general purpose anti-UNMIK demonstration. Despite their persistence, they were never able to gather crowds of more than 3,000 to 4,000 at their Pristina demonstrations, and many of those were brought in from outside the city. The LKÇK exuded hostility towards UNMIK; the LPK emphasised anti-PISG credentials. Meanwhile, the LPK raised its profile by establishing a day to day presence in the centre of Pristina over many weeks in the last months of 2003, collecting signatures near the Grand Hotel for a petition demanding a Kosovo-Albania state union.[186]

During the pre-election campaign of 2004 both parties focused on the 'unresolved national issue' and 'liberation of all Albanians'. The LPK campaigned under the slogan 'United towards the Union of Kosovo-Albania' and criticized the UN Mission as 'an obstacle to the development of Kosovo.'[187] The most recent statements by the leaders of both extremist parties show no change in their negative perception of the political arrangements underpinning developments in Kosovo. In December 2004, one of the LKÇK leaders stated that 'liberation and national union' remained the only solution and accused the international community (in particular, the UN) of aligning itself with the 'occupants', reiterating the LKÇK's rejection of UN Security Council Resolution 1244.[188]

Potentially dangerous

As a political factor, the two parties are negligible, and their political influence is furthermore diminished by their lack of a geographical base. However, together with the 'war associations' they represent a dangerous catalyst force, whose role may increase, albeit for a short period, in a time of turbulence similar to that in March 2004. Those who support these parties despite the strong condemnation of the parties' extremist views by the international community (8,725 voted for the LKÇK in 2001 and 4,526 voted for the LPK in 2004) are likely to be at the forefront of any potential violence against minorities or the international presence in Kosovo.

Crime

Whereas most former KLA members seem to have reintegrated reasonably well into the post-conflict reality of Kosovo, there are numerous indications of involvement in criminal activities, both political and economic. It is worth noting that the KLA absorbed a number of criminals during the war who were never resocialized.[189] The Serb authorities have worked particularly hard to present the KLA as a criminal organization. While such an accusation would be unfair with regard to all KLA members (particularly considering its diverse membership in the later stages), independent sources confirm that the KLA did resort to highly questionable sources of funding.

Organised crime during and after the war

It would be naïve to expect exemplary behavior from a clandestine organization persecuted by a government. It seems, however, that on more than one occasion the KLA crossed the line dividing, on the one side, necessary measures to maintain the organization as a combat force and legitimate efforts to defend the civilian population, and, on the other, terrorist acts[190] and crime for profit. Incomes from criminal activities were extensively used for equipping and supporting the KLA before and during the conflict. In July 1998, the Sarajevo weekly *Svjjet* ran an article under the title 'Narco-arms', outlining the KLA's financing routes. About a third came from the

Albanian diaspora, which set aside between 1.5 and 3 percent of its income and sent it to 10 banks worldwide. The rest was collected through racketeering and drug trafficking, using the 'southern route' through Bulgaria, Macedonia, Kosovo, Albania, and the Adriatic ports of Ploče and Uljcin.[191] In May 1999, the *Washington Times* remarked that KLA involvement in drug smuggling was 'long standing'. Quoting the US Drug Enforcement Administration, the newspaper said that the KLA has aligned itself with an organized crime network in Albania that smuggles heroin to buyers throughout Western Europe and the US, and was 'second only to Turkish gangs as predominant heroin smugglers along the Balkan Route'.[192]

The same criminal trend continued after June 1999, particularly in the first few months when law enforcement was nonexistent. Commenting on the situation in Kosovo after the deployment of the international presence, the International Crisis Group remarked:

> Much more sinister are the organised gangs that appear able to operate with impunity in Kosovo. But the issue of crime is elusive. The international community has spent much time and effort trying to assess how much of the criminal activity in Kosovo is due to official or unofficial KLA actions, and over the months the sheer weight of anecdotal and circumstantial evidence has made it harder to believe that the KLA is entirely clean at any level.[193]

Representatives of the international community in Kosovo, military and civilian alike, agree that organized crime is spread all over the province and that there is a substantial risk of Kosovo becoming 'a breeding ground for corruption and organized crime'.[194] This danger is also realized by many local intellectuals, who fear that lack of experience could lead to a failed state and a criminal haven - 'Colombia in Europe … an El Dorado for organised crime'.[195]

Just how much ex-combatants are involved in crime, and organized crime in particular, cannot be reliably established for obvious reasons; but the facts of their involvement in such crime have repeatedly come to light in the period after June 1999. Between 2001 and 2003, 27 ex-officers and senior KLA commanders have been charged with murder and other crimes by KFOR and the UN police. Eleven have been released for lack of evidence, according to the KPC's commander general, Agim Ceku.[196] As was mentioned above, some former KLA leaders (Haradinaj and Çeku) have had to publicly defend themselves against allegations of involvement in organized crime, ranging from racketeering to political assassinations.

A high-ranking representative of the UNMIK police in Kosovo mentioned that 'especially in Kosovo … organized crime is intertwined with politics, but is also intertwined with terrorism and with extremism'.[197] Bearing this qualification in mind, organized criminal activities, in which ex-KLA members are known to be involved, can be analysed in terms of political crime and economic crime.[198]

Political crime

The role of former KLA members in destabilizing the situation in southern Serbia and Macedonia as well as their involvement in terrorist actions in the territory of Kosovo after June 1999 have been analysed in the section dealing with the transformation of the KLA into the KPC. It is relevant to mention here that from over 200 people arrested on suspicion of involvement in the March violence in 2004, about 50 percent were former KLA members, including some high-ranking officials of the LPK, PDK and AAK.[199]

Political crime focuses on settling accounts with former and current political opponents and silencing witnesses testifying against former KLA members in court processes. By early 2003, the LDK had lost at least eight prominent members, including Rugova's chief of election campaign, who was assassinated in the doorway of his apartment shortly after the 2000 ballot. In June 2001, Alil Dresaj, a senior LDK politician, was shot dead by persons wearing insignia of the former KLA. In November 2002, an international panel of judges in Prishtinë/Priština convicted KLA general, Daut Haradinaj, (Ramush Haradinaj's brother) and four other former KLA members, known as the Dugagjini group, for torturing and executing four Albanians, members of FARK, in June 1999, at the end of the Kosovo war. Two months later the key witness for the prosecution in the trial, Tahir Zemaj (a former FARK member), was killed in an ambush near Peja/Peć in western Kosovo. Another key witness, Ilir Selimaj, a former KLA fighter and member of Daut Haradinaj's Dugagjini unit, was shot dead in an ambush in the village of Nabergjan/Pobrdje, near Peja/Pec in April 2003. Yet a third witness - most unusually in Albanian tradition, a woman - was

ambushed and shot to death in November 2003. In March 2003, the regional court in Prizren found Sali Veseli, a former KLA commander and later a KPC general, guilty of 'encouraging, planning and paying for' the murder of Ekrem Rexha (another former KLA commander). Veseli was sentenced to 10 years in prison. Three other defendants were acquitted of murder but found guilty of the illegal possession of firearms. The prosecution argued that it was Rexha's good relationship with the UNMIK that led to his assassination.[200]

Economic crime

Typical forms of economic crime in Kosovo include smuggling excise goods and arms, racketeering, drug trafficking and human trafficking. Although no reliable statistics are available, Serb sources claim that the core of Kosovo's criminal organization includes former members of the KLA and other armed Albanian groups in southern Serbia and Macedonia.[201] Reportedly, the networks developed and used to support combat activities in Kosovo still exist, and allow ex-combatants greater flexibility when making arrangements with other similar organizations as well as ensuring support from some local politicians and officials in certain governmental agencies (customs, the KPC and the KPS).

One example to illustrate the complex nature of organized crime in Kosovo: In late August 2000, the Italian Carabinieri, acting as part of KFOR, raided 10 homes in the town of Djeneral Jankovic, near the Macedonian border. Peacekeepers arrested 10 men, all former members of the KLA, including a member of the Kosovo Protection Corps and one from the Kosovo Police Service. In the raid, peacekeepers seized more than 50,000 DM, four AK-47 assault rifles, a sniper rifle with a silencer, 514 rounds of ammunition, hand grenades, and fake passports. The search was the result of a long-term Carabinieri investigation that targeted the gang's smuggling activities, extortion and at least three murders.[202]

Generally speaking, the territory of Kosovo is divided into three main zones as far as economic crime goes: Drenica, Dukagjini/Metohija and Llapi/Lab. Criminal activities are reportedly controlled by leaders of the former KLA who are now active in political structures, as well as by former close associates of the KLA, who financed its operations.

Drenica - located on the strategic routes connecting Montenegro with Macedonia through Prizren, Klina and Istog/Istok, towards Kosovska Mitrovica - is controlled by the so-called Drenica group, loyal to Thaqi. This group is mainly involved in arms trafficking, smuggling stolen vehicles, and trafficking in human beings, excise goods and, above all, cigarettes and fuel.

The areas of the Peja/Peć, Deçan/Dečani and Gakovë/Djakovica municipalities make up the Dukadjin zone, where the so-called Dukagjini group, loyal to Haradinaj, is active. The group is oriented mainly toward the illegal trade in weapons, drugs, excise goods and stolen cars, but also toward business racketeering. Smuggled goods are distributed in Macedonia, in the south of Serbia, the Raška territory and in Montenegro, where they come via the Peja/Peć-Kula-Rožaje route. Taking into account the close links between Haradinaj and ex-KLA members, who joined the KPC and the KPS after the KLA had been demilitarized, Haradinaj is allegedly in a position to have indirect control over the border in these areas, as well as over criminal and terrorist activities.

The group loyal to Rrustem Mustafa, aka 'Remi', one of the most influential commanders of the KLA and later the KPC, operates in the Llapi/Lab area, which is made up of the areas of the Gjilanë/Gnjilane, Vitina and Kacanik municipalities. This group is mainly involved in drug smuggling and is closely connected to the Dukagjini group.[203]

The family

The role of family support in the reintegration of ex-combatants in Kosovo, particularly in the early stages of the process, cannot be overestimated. It has been repeatedly noted in a number of cross-cultural experiences that reintegration is more successful where there are stronger supporting societal networks. For example, in the rural areas of Ethiopia a key factor for successful social reintegration was acceptance by and support from the community and extended families.[204]

The extended socializing influence of the traditional Albanian family

The family is the primary agent of socialization; however, in traditional Albanian society the socializing influence of the family extends far beyond the early stages of life. The traditional Kosovo home (*shtëpi*, in

Albanian) is made up of an extended family, consisting of the parents and their married sons, as well as, possibly, the father's brothers and some other relatives. The most recent Kosovo demographic survey shows that over one half of all Kosovo households (56.1 percent) have at least six members, and in the urban areas this figure reaches 63.2 percent.[205] Such a family is a complex and rigid system, acting as a multi-functional social group with many responsibilities: economic, political, judicial, traditional, etc.[206] The authority of the head of the family is almost total, and the son never contradicts his father. Even today among Kosovo Albanians, the son, regardless of his education and social success, will never leave the family group against his father's will, without the consequences of rupture and rejection, which rarely happens.[207]

The second level of the Albanian kinship system is the *fis*, a patrilineal descent group which is usually described as a group of related households tracing their descent along the male line from a common ancestor. The *fis* may develop into a clan or it may represent only a small local lineage.[208] The *fis* is at the heart of the patriarchal mode of reproduction, which is defined as the 'family system with *fis* origin but combined with territorial unity. The larger is the *fis*, the more self-sufficient and less integrated into other, non-kinship social institutions it becomes'.[209]

Strategy for coping with threats to survival

Many researchers note that the pre-conflict exclusion from state structures and the conflict itself reversed the trend towards nuclear family formation among Kosovo Albanians, which began during the 1970s and 1980s. The reemergence of the 'Kosovo-type' patrilocal extended family and the strengthening of the kinship institutions during the crisis was a strategy for coping with economic scarcity and threats to survival.[210] It was particularly expressed in the villages, but also in larger towns, where more modern nuclear families tended to remain in the same neighborhood as their relatives.

The most important factor in reintegrating ex-combatants

These family and kinship relationships explain the return *en masse* of KLA fighters to their homes after the conflict and the lack of any public protests after June 1999 before payments to ex-combatants were instituted at the end of that year. According to our respondents, both ex-KLA members and governmental officials, the family continues to play the most important role in reintegrating ex-combatants, particularly in the absence of government support and the underdevelopment of other institutional mechanisms.

Role in organised crime

Yet, the family, like any other social organization, is the means to an end, not an end in itself, and it can be used for the worse or for the better. The less known (and certainly less popular) aspect of traditional Albanian kinship structures is their role in organized crime. Reportedly, most criminal activities in Kosovo are conducted by members of the family clans (*fis*) who control their respective territories. The clans are connected with and closely cooperate with similar criminal groups from other European countries, especially from Turkey, Albania and Bulgaria, due to the fact that the main smuggling routes run through these countries.[211]

What makes the kinship system particularly 'suited' for criminal activity is, firstly, its almost complete impenetrability. It is based on blood relations, and, as result, the number of clan members is restricted and the bonds between members are very strong. Getting close to and infiltrating such groups becomes almost impossible for an outsider. Secondly, inherent in the kinship structure is strong inner discipline, achieved by punishment for every deviation from the internal rules and making sure that fear guarantees unconditional loyalty to the clan. Thirdly, this structure, based on traditional common law, considers official laws secondary, unimportant and executable only to the degree that they do not contradict common law provisions.

The government

Lack of government support

The most prominent characteristic of the present situation of ex-combatants in Kosovo is the almost total disregard for their situation by UNMIK and government structures, both at the central and municipal levels. The result of this institutional neglect is the lack of a coordinated approach and unified policy to guide the actions of other international and national agencies dealing with ex-combatants. Ex-combatants (with the exception of invalids) are not treated as a specific category by the relevant laws, which seems to have been the

intention of the international community from the very beginning. While apprehensions about strengthening the self-perception of ex-combatants as a distinctive social group are understandable, institutional oblivion is the other extreme - that may lead to dissatisfaction, disenchantment and, as a result, to a stronger group identity, as seems to be the case with the so-called 'war associations', discussed below.

Government assistance in neighboring countries

The absence of centralized management of the issues pertaining to ex-combatants in Kosovo is especially conspicuous against the regional background. All neighboring countries, including Serbia itself, have established a governmental agency responsible for reintegrating and supporting ex-combatants: the Ministry for Issues of Veterans and Disabled Veterans, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina; the Ministry of Labor and Protection of Veterans and Invalids, in Republika Srpska; the Ministry of the Family, Veterans' Affairs and Intergenerational Solidarity, in Croatia; and the Sector for Protection of Veterans and Invalids, in the Serbian Ministry of Labor, Employment and Social Policy. These agencies are responsible for a wide range of issues concerning war veterans, their families and other categories of the population who suffered as a result of armed conflicts: developing a uniform policy and regulations to ensure the wellbeing of disabled veterans, families of deceased fighters and unemployed veterans; administrative and financial supervision of implementation of such regulations; provision of funds to ensure functioning of the welfare system for war veterans, invalids and their families; construction, arrangement and maintenance of memorial cemeteries; etc. These agencies operate on the basis of national legislation, which contributes to the reintegration of ex-combatants by defining their status and addressing their various areas of concern: health care, education, social welfare, professional rehabilitation, employment, etc.[212] The rights and privileges of war veterans and war invalids range from special payments and specialized health care services to scholarships and free textbooks to priority in employment and housing.[213]

Legislation almost nonexistent

Not only is there no central agency responsible for veterans' affairs, but individual ministries do not deal with the problem either. Legislation related to ex-combatants is practically nonexistent. In fact, there is only one law that refers directly to war veterans, already mentioned: the UNMIK Regulation on Benefits for War Invalids of Kosovo and for the Next of Kin of Those Who Died as a Result of the Armed Conflict in Kosovo. While this law has addressed the situation of the most vulnerable category of ex-combatants, this is only a small fraction of them (less than 10 percent) and it provides rather limited support. The right of war invalids to free health care services in the public health institutions has been recently reconfirmed in the Kosovo Health Law promulgated in August 2004 - but that is all. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare has prepared a Draft Law on the Rights of War Participants for Freedom and Independence, which concerns several categories of the population who suffered as a result of the Kosovo conflict and the preceding years of repression.[214] This draft law was presented to the Kosovo Assembly in August 2004, but has not been heard of since.

Ad hoc efforts

Presently, Kosovo has no standing program aimed specifically at ex-combatants, with the exception of the social assistance scheme under UNMIK Regulation 2000/66, which supports war veterans. Other than that, neither the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare nor the Ministry of Health has any projects specifically for ex-combatants.[215] The International Labor Organization (ILO) is currently implementing a limited vocational training program, worth 2 million Euros and funded by the Italian government, for 1,200 beneficiaries from vulnerable groups (including about 200 ex-combatants) in order to teach them new skills and improve their employability.[216] The Association of the Friends of the Kosovo Protection Corps, funded by voluntary contributions from the diaspora, is known to provide episodic small-scale training programs and one-time payments to disadvantaged ex-KLA fighters.[217]

Civil society

War veterans' organizations

Difficult economic conditions and outstanding political issues, coupled with the institutional neglect of the least integrated categories of ex-combatants, have brought to life and strengthened three local organizations that have made the protection of the rights of ex-KLA members and the families of deceased fighters their primary *raison*

d'être – the Organization of KLA War Veterans,[218] the Association of KLA War Invalids, and the Association of the Families of Martyrs.

The Organization of KLA War Veterans

The Organization of KLA War Veterans, the most organized and vocal of the three, has proclaimed in its program that it aims at 'recognition and advancement of the status of KLA fighters, fallen comrades, their families, at protection of their integrity and dignity, at assisting KLA fighters and their families in attaining their rights and at protecting and advancing the sacred values of the liberation war'.[219]

However, the organization seems to be targeting a much wider range of issues, struggling, in particular, to ascertain its own political role in Kosovo. In interviews with its representatives, they insisted that the special position of this organization in contemporary Kosovo should be defined by law, including an entitlement to reserved seats in the Kosovo Assembly and specific functions in 'protecting the territorial integrity of Kosovo'.[220] The organization has established branches in all Kosovo municipalities (with the exception of three Serb municipalities in the north), and has been actively reacting to Kosovo developments, issuing statements and organizing mass rallies. When the start of direct talks between Pristina and Belgrade was announced in March 2003, the organization called the then head of UNMIK, Michael Steiner, an 'anarchist', and threatened a 'revolt'. It organized numerous rallies all over Kosovo to protest against the arrests and trials of ex-KLA members, demonstrating a high degree of coordination. When the famous KPC commander, Selim Krasniqi, was arrested in February 2004, the Organization of KLA War Veterans convened demonstrations in four different locations in Kosovo, including Pristina.

Role in the March 2004 violence

By mid-March 2004, when Kosovo found itself immersed in anti-Serb and anti-UN rioting, all three associations that 'emerged from the war' had been at the forefront of anti-UNMIK protests and agitation for many months. Together with the small, fringe political parties - the LPK and the LKÇK – the associations raised their profile in the last quarter of 2003 by staging anti-UNMIK protests in the centre of Pristina. There are numerous reports that the war veterans' associations played a prominent role in the March violence: in some places they spearheaded riots and in others they were actively involved. Following appeals by the international community and local institutions to stop the violence (a few famous ex-KLA leaders added their voices, including Hashim Thaqi and Agim Çeku), local war veterans' associations prevented attempts to resume demonstrations in several places on March 19. The important role of the associations in the March riots is emphasized by a statement issued on behalf of themselves and the Students' Union: it announced the suspension of the 'protests' and published lists of demands, threatening to 'protest' again if these were not met within eight days. The demands included the complete transfer of governmental competencies to the PISG, the release of all former KLA fighters from prison (no matter what crime they had been convicted of), and the 'removal' of Serb enclaves.[221]

Active political role

After March, the Organization of KLA War Veterans (together with the two other associations) continued to play an active, but hardly constructive, political role. Its rhetoric remains belligerent and its position vis-à-vis political rivals and minorities intransigent. The organization staunchly objects to the decentralization of local government (one of the major demands of the Serb community) and refuses to be involved in reconciliation projects. It has organized several rallies since March; the most recent was in November 2004, during the war crimes trial of three ex-KLA fighters in the UN Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia, and attracted about 10,000 people.

General attitudes to ex-combatants

Post-war society in Kosovo seems to be torn between active participants in the military campaign (or persons claiming to be that) and non-combatants. Former members of the KLA strive for public recognition as war heroes. War memorials, mass publications and public processions celebrate the heroism of KLA commanders, individual fighters and 'martyrs'. Former membership in the KLA is thus a source of social prestige, particularly if the person served in a leading position.

What the media reveals

Our content analysis of the Kosovo printed media reveals two major trends in contemporary Kosovo society: unconditional support for the war as the 'national war for liberation', (and therefore almost unconditional

support for the KLA as the major driver of the war) and a more cautious attitude to individual KLA members, particularly after the conflict. At the same time, society in general appears to be unconcerned with the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Almost 60 percent of all references to the KLA in the media we analyzed are about war crimes accusations and attempts by the international community or Serb authorities to bring individual ex-combatants to justice, including about indictments by the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY), arrests made by the ICTY or UNMIK, and trials of ex-KLA members in Kosovo or abroad (in Serbia or in The Hague). Rarely does this reporting go uncommented on: in most cases (69 percent), the prosecution of former KLA members is strongly objected to as 'incited by anti-Albanian circles' and described as 'Serb demonization of the KLA' and 'framed political court processes'. 14.3 percent of the references glorify the KLA for its role in the conflict. The KLA is described as 'our glorious army', 'righteous fighters and liberators', 'the liberating army of the people', etc.

Only 10 percent of references are critical (most of them coming from media supported by the LDK, the major political rival of the PDK now and the target of the KLA's attacks during the war). The criticism concerns the KLA's alleged involvement in the political assassinations of prominent LDK figures and the misbehavior of ex-KLA members after the conflict (mostly criminal activities). But the number of critical references is on the increase: 2004 saw three times more critical publications about the KLA than the previous year.

The problems of ex-combatants receive very limited coverage: only 7.1 percent of references mention such issues as unemployment, psychosocial trauma and inadequate housing for ex-combatants. With rare exceptions, these references appear in PDK supported media.

Local Albanians welcoming KFOR forces entering Kosovo

Failure to demilitarize

Despite doubtless success in several important directions, the overall picture of the reintegration of ex-combatants in Kosovo can hardly be called perfect. (This is also the opinion of our interviewees, who assessed the current situation of ex-combatants between 2 and 3 on a 5-point Likert-type scale, where 5 corresponded to 'excellent'.) It is true that most ex-combatants immediately returned to their homes after the conflict and became reintegrated, but obviously not all of them. Out of a total of about 20,000 active KLA members, 3,000 have been absorbed into the KPC and about 2,500 became KPS officers. If about 70 percent of the remaining group were successfully reintegrated (which is a fairly generous assumption, given the poor economic situation of Kosovo and unemployment at over 50 percent), there may be as many as 4,000 ex-KLA members with reintegration problems, ranging from poverty and lack of shelter to psychosocial trauma.

What happened to the weapons?

As discussed above, disarmament has been only partial, and it is feared that many more arms, including heavy weapons, are stockpiled both in Kosovo and outside, waiting for their hour. The UNDP analysis of the KLA armory by the end of the conflict suggests that the organization may have had up to two weapons or more per combatant, which would bring KLA stockpiles to 40,000 in June 1999.[222] If the KLA did indeed possess around 32,000–40,000 weapons, and only about 10,000 were either handed in (8,500) or seized (1,500), this means that at least 22,000–30,000 weapons are unaccounted for. The question thus remains: What happened to the remaining weapons?

The KLA no longer exists as one single group, and KLA weapons are thus likely to be in the control of various groups and individuals. According to some analysts, some remaining weaponry is stored in Albania proper.[223] Other reports suggest that very large weapons stocks may exist in Albania, near its eastern border with Kosovo, around places such as Bucaj and Krumë.[224] These weapons would be an important concern should armed clashes resume in the region. The UNDP Small Arms Survey, published in June 2003, indicates that, despite all the efforts of the international community to disarm Kosovo, there are an estimated 330,000–460,000 civilian small arms in Kosovo today, and an estimated 65 percent of households possess at least one firearm. Though the Kosovo Police Service, the Kosovo Protection Corps, international security providers, various private security companies, and a select group of political actors have access to or own weapons, the overwhelming majority are held by civilians.

Not all KLA members have been demobilized

The KLA as an organization ceased to exist, but to say that all of its members have been demobilized would be an obvious exaggeration in the light of the active participation of ex-KLA fighters in armed clashes in Southern Serbia, Macedonia, and most recently in Kosovo in March 2004. There are persistent allegations that some elements within the KPC maintain contact with armed Albanian groups outside Kosovo, providing information and military expertise. The Organization of KLA War Veterans and the Association of War Invalids demonstrate little propensity for reconciliation and have not renounced the threat of violence against the international community. Moreover, it is alleged that the associations of ex-KLA members maintain an effective operational chain of command and weapons caches. UNMIK and KFOR placed these groups under scrutiny, concerned that they represent the public face of a loose constellation of extremist networks, with aggrieved, marginalized rural communities at one end, and criminals and violent extremists at the other.[225]

Militarized thinking

However, the major failure has been the inability of Kosovo society to demilitarize itself, despite earnest efforts by the international community and many Kosovars. Unfortunately, the post-conflict situation was not particularly conducive to such a task. Three major factors have determined the post-conflict development of Kosovo, producing a negative effect on virtually every aspect of social progress:

- the unresolved status of Kosovo
- the unstable situation in the region - in Southern Serbia and FYR Macedonia
- the continuous ethnic division of Kosovo into the northern (Serb) part and the rest (predominantly Albanian).

More than anything else, these three factors have preserved militarized thinking in the population.

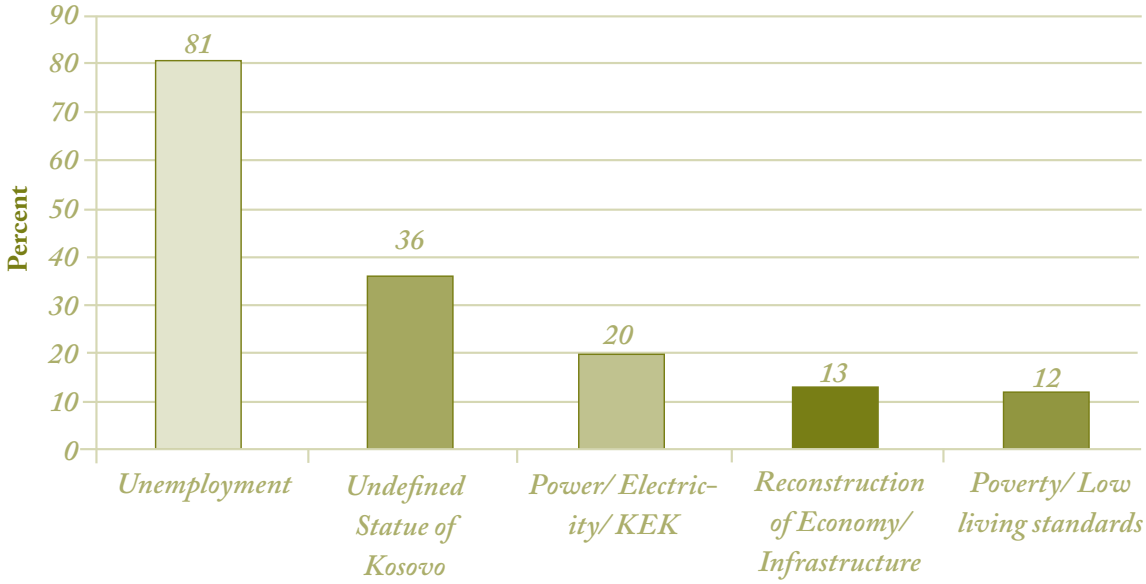
An independent Kosovo

The unresolved status of Kosovo seems to be the major obstacle to the complete reintegration of ex-combatants. More than five years after the conflict, Kosovo remains an international protectorate administered by the UN, and the international community still does not have a clear vision of Kosovo's future. While the status issue has been recognized as urgent,[226] the only achievement of the international community on this thorny path so far has been to identify mid-2005 as the time to start preparations for the process to determine the future status of Kosovo, subject to the overall assessment of progress until then. As long as ambiguity over the future status of Kosovo persists, the possibility that Serbia may reclaim Kosovo exists, no matter how theoretical.

This situation keeps the entire Kosovo society under significant psychological stress, helping radicalized elements to boost their image and to suppress moderate voices.[227] It is indicative that during the 2003 UNDP Small Arms Survey, Kosovo Albanian men, speaking about their prevailing security concerns, tended to stress political factors - such as the final status of Kosovo, the limited power of the governing bodies, non-functional courts, and enclaves.[228]

The March riots of 2004 convincingly demonstrated how fast the militant potential of a society can be transformed into outright violence. Former KLA fighters are particularly sensitive to the uncertainty of Kosovo's future, which feeds their mistrust and suspicion of the international community. Ex-combatants, interviewed by the Friedrich Naumann Stiftung team in Kosovo in April 2001, voiced their common opinion that the ultimate goal - an independent Kosovo - has not been achieved, and that a new war of liberation would be necessary if Kosovo were re-included in Serbia or Yugoslavia. The independence of Kosovo remains the final goal, and most ex-combatants are prepared to take up arms to achieve it.[230] Our interviews in December 2004-January 2005 were not much different: the feeling of betrayal by the international community and their own political structures is very strong among ex-combatants. They accuse both of the failure to deliver the much cherished independence for which the KLA fought, and they suspect the international community of secret plans to put Kosovo under the rule of Belgrade again. The report of the International Crisis Group in the wake of the tragic events in March 2004 gives the following summary:

Graph 9. Most important problems in Kosovo (by percentage), December 2004 [229]



The suspension of Kosovo's final status, and the resulting failure to end the war, as opposed to freezing it, has preserved the political dominance of political parties and figures who either draw their authority from their KLA wartime exploits or who rely on nationalist myths and independence rhetoric. In this atmosphere of semi-mobilisation, Kosovo Albanians will read any encroachments against the KLA heritage as attacks upon their hopes for independence. [231]

A volatile region

The situations in Southern Serbia and Macedonia remain volatile despite some signs of stabilization. Macedonia is awash with weapons while implementation of the internationally-brokered Ohrid agreement, which put an end to 2001's armed ethnic conflict, generates much tension between Slav Macedonians and Albanians.[232]

Victory in the September 19, 2004, local elections by Albanian political parties advocating the inclusion of three predominantly Albanian municipalities in Southern Serbia into Kosovo has fuelled Serb concerns that they may one day find themselves marooned in an independent, Albanian-run Kosovo. Serb media discuss the rumors that armed Albanian groups in the three Serb municipalities are preparing a major offensive in the spring of 2005 to 'resolve their final status in Serbia'.[233] After a 16-year-old boy was shot by Serbia-Montenegro Army border guards in early January 2005, the three major Albanian political groups in South Serbia put their differences aside to agree on a strategy to resolve tension in the region. Demands include a rapid diplomatic response, the stationing of international military and police troops in the Preševo Valley, the withdrawal of Serbian security forces from the region and the opening of new border crossings with Macedonia and Kosovo.[234]

The appointment of Ramush Haradinaj, former KLA commander, as Kosovo's prime minister in December 2004, has added to the tension. Serb authorities claim that they have very strong evidence of Haradinaj's involvement in war crimes against the Serb population in Kosovo, and his indictment by the ICTY seems quite possible. The Serbian president, Boris Tadić, has called Haradinaj's appointment 'a failure of the United Nations Mission in Kosovo' and 'a direct provocation that could destabilize the state of affairs in the Balkans and threaten to stop a political solution of the Kosovo issue'.[235] The new prime minister has been accused by Serb leaders of being 'a proven criminal against Serb civilians, women and children'. Following this controversial appointment, Serbs in the northern part of Kosovo reiterated their demand for their own 'parallel' political and administrative institutions, and the NATO secretary general demanded that Haradinaj and his supporters 'behave responsibly if he is indicted by the ICTY'.[236]

Siege mentality

The first statements of the new Kosovo prime minister are encouraging: he is speaking about the need to ensure security and freedom of movement for all ethnic groups in Kosovo, to increase returns, and to develop the economy. Realizing these promises will depend on his ability to dismantle the roots of militarization in the Kosovo society, and this will remain an extremely difficult task as long as the hopes of Kosovo Albanians for an independent Kosovo are neglected by the international community, and the fears and concerns of Kosovo ethnic minorities are not adequately addressed. Furthermore, his positive statements may not sound very convincing to Kosovo Serbs and other ethnic minorities as long as they live in the seclusion of their enclaves - like the Serb residents of the village of Bice in western Kosovo, who are protected by barbed wire barricades and the 24-hour presence of peacekeeping troops. In addition, the statements of Belgrade officials will hardly make the new prime minister's life easier. Summarizing Serb feelings, Nebojša Čović, the head of the Serbian Committee for Kosovo, said in early January 2005 that none of the causes that had led to the escalation of violence in March 2004 had been removed. Moreover, he called on Kosovo Serbs to be ready for 'anything, pressure and provocations, and possible violence similar to the one of March 17 last [2004] year'.[237]

The failure to demilitarize Kosovo is total, affecting all ethnic groups. It is also one of the main reasons why so little attention is given to the reintegration of ex-combatants.[238] Kosovo shows numerous signs of a mentality characteristic of a society under siege - insecure of its future and wary of its enemies, external and internal. This mentality feeds a latent but strong feeling that the reason for the militarization of society is still present and it is therefore too early to fully demobilize ex-combatants.

Conclusions

Immediate recognition of the need to reintegrate former combatants

Upon deployment of the international presence in Kosova, the international community immediately understood the importance of reintegrating former KLA members. In general, reintegration efforts focused in three of the four deficit areas in a post-conflict society: military/security, social/economic and psychosocial. The fourth area - the political/constitutional deficit - was addressed at the level of Kosovo as a whole and there was no specific program in this area that would have targeted ex-combatants.

Demobilization prioritized over other components of reintegration

The leading agency responsible for reintegration was the International Organization for Migration. The major (and best funded) component of the reintegration program was the demobilization of the KLA and its transformation into the KPC. The other components (such as employment referral/job placement, on-the–job-training, micro and small business start-up, vocational training, business training, and psychological or psychosocial support) were limited in scope and suffered from chronic underfunding.

Commitment to reintegration quickly waned

According to the IOM,[239] other concerned stakeholders did not maintain the expected commitment. UNMIK and KFOR quickly lost interest in the former KLA, thought they maintained their focus on the Kosovo Protection Corps, which had become the public's image of the KLA. Coordination meetings were only maintained for the KPC. Despite this, the IOM-ICRS was able to maintain its own commitment while also developing commitment on behalf of other agencies through its network of field offices and through outreach visits. Over time, the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC), the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Dutch KFOR, Swiss Contact, and the Workers Educational Association in Denmark (AOF) became successfully involved with reintegration projects. As a result, about 10,000 ex-combatants, or 50 percent of the total caseload, benefited from IOM-supported reintegration programs to various degrees.

Ex-combatants did benefit from general peacebuilding programs

The other programs implemented by various internationals agencies have had a substantial impact on the successful reintegration of ex-combatants, without targeting them as a specific group. These programs included the EAR Housing Reconstruction Program, the IFRC Psychosocial Program, and the UNMIK social assistance scheme. According to some data, as many as 50 percent of former KLA members became beneficiaries of EAR housing reconstruction, which was of critical importance to prevent the eruption of mass discontent among ex-combatants in the winter of 1999-2000. The UNMIK social assistance scheme addressed the needs of the most vulnerable cases, but was also important as institutional recognition of ex-combatants' status (at least some of them).

No stipends

Whereas it is standard practice in DDR programs to provide demilitarized combatants with stipends so they can support themselves and their dependents until reintegration and income generating activities begin, this was not the case in Kosovo. Due to the timing of the arrival of funding and the amount of funding, stipends could not be offered. Payments started at the end of 1999 and were only for KPC members. The UNMIK social assistance scheme became operational much later, at the end of 2001. This forced many ex-combatants to remain dependent upon the KLA structure for support, hence negating some of the intended outcomes of demobilization.

Failure to disarm the population

Disarmament is another sensitive area where the results have not been so impressive so far. Despite all the efforts of the international community to disarm Kosovo, there are an estimated 330,000–460,000 civilian small arms in Kosovo today, and an estimated 65 percent of households possess at least one firearm.

Dangerous disillusionment

Most ex-combatants have been successfully reintegrated into civilian life - partly due to the efforts of the international community, but mostly thanks to their

own efforts. Because the conflict was relatively short and no ideological indoctrination was systematically applied, most ex-combatants did not undergo substantial resocialization and had little difficulty returning to their previous lives. However, there are a number of former KLA members who feel disfranchised and betrayed in their expectations about Kosovo's future. They may number just 3,000-4,000, but they are well organized and concentrated in certain locations in Kosovo, which allows their quick mobilization in a crisis. As the events of March 2004 have demonstrated, these disillusioned ex-combatants can attract large masses of young people, albeit for a short time, exploiting the heroic image of the KLA.

KLA monument

Recommendations

Involve ex-combatants in the development of Kosovo

While global political issues such as the final status of Kosovo are beyond the scope of this paper, it seems clear that the key issue is to involve ex-combatants positively in the development of Kosovo. For example, ex-combatants should become an active participant in the 'Standards for Kosovo' proclaimed by UNMIK as the prerequisite for any further discussion of the Kosovo future.

Institutionalize reintegration programs

Lack of local participation seems the most serious shortcoming of the international reintegration programs. For reintegration to succeed, local Kosovar institutions should be made responsible. Instead of marginalizing the issue (as is the case now), it should be institutionalized.

Co-ordinate reintegration from a central body

A central coordinating body should be established to deal with the problems of ex-combatants. Such a body (probably in the Office of the Prime Minister) would serve as the focal point to counsel and assist ex-combatants, and could potentially neutralize the negative influence of the war veterans' associations.

Do an overview of reintegration programs so far

This body should conduct a comprehensive overview of reintegration programs so far and identify the weak spots. A proper census of all ex-combatants is required in order to identify the most vulnerable and less integrated cases. These cases constitute the main recruiting base for the radical elements and are likely to be the first recruits in a disturbance.

Develop a comprehensive program

The coordinating body should embark on developing a comprehensive program, together with the international community and relevant local actors, to improve the reintegration of ex-combatants.

Pay urgent attention for the least integrated ex-combatants

An urgent program should be developed to assist the least integrated cases, through grants, training, loans and other means.

Provide adequate funds

Adequate funds should be made available for implementing such reintegration programs. Depending on the actual needs, the Kosovo budget may not be enough to provide adequate funds (as is already the case with the KPC), and donor contributions may be necessary.

Develop legislation

It is time to reflect legislatively the public recognition of the contribution KLA fighters made to the future of Kosovo. The Kosovo government is already taking some steps in this direction and a draft law on war veterans and war invalids has been submitted to the Assembly. Addressing the situation of ex-combatants through a legislative Act would contribute to furthering their integration as well as to overall social stability. Such a law (or regulation) should facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants by providing additional opportunities in the sphere of education, employment and housing.

Pay special attention to families of deceased combatants

However, in legislating these issues it is important not to create a privileged group, but to address the real needs of ex-combatants as caused by their participation in the conflict. Special attention should be given to the families of KLA members killed during the conflict and to war invalids.

Apply the principle of personal responsibility

Also, there should be no blanket amnesty - the principle of personal responsibility for crimes during and after the conflict should be applied without deviation.

Encourage moderate and reconciliatory political trends

The political aspect of reintegration should not be overlooked. The international community should not hesitate to use a system of incentives and disincentives to encourage moderate and reconciliatory trends in the KLA successor parties.

Facilitate public, transparent reconciliation activities

Another important task is to involve ex-combatants in reconciliation activities through transparent and publicly accountable 'Truth and Reconciliation Commissions'.

Take ownership of the disarmament processes

Disarmament looms large: without substantive disarmament there can be no guarantees for a peaceful Kosovo. The international community, for as long as it stays in Kosovo, is responsible for disarmament, but it is critical that local government institutions take ownership of disarmament programs and programs addressing the prevailing 'gun culture'.

Eliminate political extremism and criminals

It goes without saying that these other measures should be accompanied by the identification, isolation and unwavering prosecution of political extremists and criminals

Protect minority communities

Robust policies aimed at protecting minority communities are required.

Tens of thousands of ethnic Albanians marching on the northern (Serbian) part of the divided town of Mitrovica in February 2000.

Appendix: More on methodology

There are two major methods to evaluate the reintegration process: interviews and official statistics.

Interviews

The primary method for investigating the personal perspective is through the interview. An interview should be able, firstly, to demonstrate the self-assessment of his or her situation by the ex-combatant, and, secondly, to provide data for subsequent analysis of reintegration from the macro-sociological perspective. Interviews can assess attitudes toward the value of DDR programs and particularly reintegration programs. Special attention should be focused on the ex-combatants' perceptions of the benefit of programs to their personal social and economic reintegration.

Indicators

Table 6 sets out indicators which can be used to measure various aspects of reintegration at both the personal and societal levels. The list is not exhaustive, and in fact the categorization of the reintegration process into four aspects is relative. Many aspects overlap and mutually reinforce one another. Thus, the social integration of ex-combatants is not conceivable without their political reintegration, both having significant implications for the security aspect. Some indicators (such as readiness to denounce the culture of violence) need additional operationalization to become measurable.

Table 6. Indicators to track/evaluate reintegration process

Aspects of reintegration	Long-term goals	Indicators	
		Personal	*Social*
Military/security	*Demilitarization of politics, transformation of cultures of violence*	• *Readiness to demilitarize and denounce culture of violence* • *Assessment of the security situation by ex-combatants*	• *Number of ex-combatants absorbed into military, security or police forces* • *Position of ex-combatants in military/security structures* • *Criminal statistics: involvement of ex-combatants in crime, including organized crime* *Public perception of ex-combatants' role in maintaining peace and security*
Political/constitutional	*Establish tradition of good governance, including respect for democracy, human rights, and rule of law*	• *Trust in and acceptance of the existing political/governmental institutions* • *Assessment of the political situation by ex-combatants*	• *Political role and activities of ex-combatants* • *Platforms of political parties claiming to represent ex-combatants* *Voting patterns of ex-combatants*

Aspects of reintegration	Long-term goals	Indicators	
		Personal	*Social*
Economic/social	*Stable long-term macro-economic policies and economic management, locally sustainable community development, distributional justice*	• *Self-assessment of ex-combatants' economic/social situation* • *Economic/social needs of ex-combatants* • *Personal relationships and marital status* • *Ex-combatants' optimism for the economic future* • *Ambitions and plans for the future*	• *Education and training received after the conflict* • *Legal provisions regulating the status of ex-combatants* • *Involvement of society (government, NGOs, etc.) in reintegration programs* • *Participation in community activities, including membership in civil society organizations* • *Employment statistics. Income figures (compared to the average)*
Psychosocial	*Healing psychological wounds, long-term reconciliation*	• *Perception of former adversaries* • *Readiness to support reconciliation activities*	• *Psychological health of ex-combatants (especially ex-combatants with PTSD symptoms)* • *Participation in reconciliation activities*

Official statistics

Official statistics may be used where they are available, but our experience proves that statistical data are extremely scarce, even basic information. Thus, the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare does not know the number of the KLA war invalids, and the Organization of KLA War Veterans has no data on the employment and housing needs of its members.

Analysis of the public discourse

Analysis of the public discourse on ex-combatants and their role is also an important indicator. Particularly telling may be a comparison between the self-assessments of ex-combatants and statistical data for the entire population. If the relevant indicators for ex-combatants do not differ from those for the population as a whole, but their self-assessment is low, this may signify some disorder on the structural level.

Endnotes

1 Heinemann-Grüder, Andreas and Paes, Wolf-Christian (2001) *Wag the Dog: The Mobilization and Demobilization of the Kosovo Liberation Army*. Bonn: Friedrich Naumann Stiftung

2 Various sources mention a number of paramilitary groups which operated in Kosovo, most notably Arkan's *Tigri* (Tigers) and Šešelj's *Beli Orlovi* (White Eagles), both groups notorious for their crimes in Bosnia and originating from Serbia proper (1999. 'Recent Background to Current Crisis in Kosovo' *Jane's Sentinel*, March, pp.7-8). Some other groups, such as Delta Force, arrived from Republika Srpska in Bosnia (Human Rights Watch (2001) *Under Orders: War Crimes in Kosovo*, p.14) Tim Judah says that there were some local Serbs among the paramilitaries and that 'an unknown number were recruited from Serbian jails where they were given amnesties in exchange for fighting'. (Judah, Tim (2002) *Kosovo: War and Revenge*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, p.245-246). Although the number of paramilitaries in Kosovo cannot be reliably established for obvious reasons, most sources agree that members of paramilitary groups numbered hundreds not thousands, and only a small proportion were Kosovo Serb recruits. According to Human Rights Watch, in some places local Serbs also participated in the 'cleansing' campaign, although in no way can this be said for the Serbian population in Kosovo as a whole (Human Rights Watch (2001), p.15).

3 The Fund for Humanitarian Law, a Serbian NGO, reported in November 1999 that after the conflict most notorious Kosovo Serb paramilitaries had moved to Serbia proper or Montenegro (Tadić, Milka (1999) 'Paramilitaries From Kosovo Move Into Montenegro' http://www.iwpr.net/index.pl?archive/bcr/bcr_19991116_2_eng.txt).

4 Boudon, Raymond and Bourricaud, François (2002) *Dictionnaire critique de la sociologie*. Paris: PUF, p.530-532

5 Pozhidaev, Dmitry (1999) 'From Combat Activities to Civil Life' *Sotsiologicheskiye Issledovaniya,* February. The article discusses the social adaptation and rehabilitation of Afghan and Chechen war veterans in the USSR and Russia. The focus of the study is different modalities for constructing social reality under prevailing ideological conditions - first in the Soviet Union and then in post-communist Russia - and their impact on the (un)successful reintegration of war veterans. (Incidentally, the author himself is a veteran of the Afghan war.)

6 Berger, Peter and Luckmann, Thomas (1991) *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. London: Penguin Books, p.160

7 Moss, Marcel (1989) 'Essai sur le don' in *Sociologie et Anthropologie*. Paris: PUF

8 Berger and Luckmann, p.183

9 Nat, J. Coletta (1997) Demilitarization, Demobilization, and the Social and Economic Integration of Ex-Combatants: Lessons from the World Bank Africa Experience. USAID Conference Promoting Democracy, Human Rights, and Reintegration in Post-Conflict Societies, October 30-31

10 Clark, Howard (2001) Demilitarising Minds, Demilitarising Societies. Discussion paper presented at the second seminar on post-war peacebuilding of the Committee for Conflict Transformation Support. http://www.c-r.org/ccts/

11 Note of UNDP DDR Policy and Practice. www.undp.org/surf-kathmandu/cprp-asia/resources/ddrpolicy.doc

12 United Nations (2000) The Role of United Nations Peacekeeping in Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration. Report of the Secretary-General, S/2000/101

13 Berger and Luckmann, p.183

14 Clark, Howard (2001)

15 Galtung, Johan, Carl G. Jacobsen and Kai Frithjof Brand-Jacobsen (2002) *Searching for Peace: The Road to Transcend*. London: Pluto Press, p.103-107

16 Miall, Hugh, Ransbotham, Oliver and Woodhouse, Tom (2004) *Contemporary Conflict Resolution*. Cambridge: Polity, p.202-210

17 United Nations (1992) The Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peacemaking and Peacekeeping. Report of the Secretary-General pursuant to the statement adopted by the Summit Meeting of the Security Council on 31 January 1992

18 United Nations (1999), p.25

19 Miall et al. (2004), p.203

20 International Organization for Migration (1996) Study of Demobilized Soldiers Facing Difficulties in the Reintegration Process. Final Report prepared for the IOM by Creative Associates International Inc., September, pp.36-37

21 See 'Appendix: More on methodology', p.[00] of this paper.

22 The authors conducted 27 semi-structured in-depth interviews with the following categories of respondents: governmental officials (6), representatives of the Organization of War Veterans and War Invalids (3), international police (2), KFOR (NATO-led Kosovo Force) (2), and former combatants (14). The governmental officials included representatives of the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and municipal representatives of Prishtinë/Priština and Gjilanë/Gnjilane.

23 Content analysis was based on daily media reports issued by UNMIK in 2001-2004. Daily media reports include the most significant media items from all major Albanian-language printed media (dailies and monthlies). Content analysis was done on 1,267 randomly selected media items between April 2001 and August 2004, considered as the unit of analysis.

24 King (2001), p.11

25 For an excellent and balanced historical overview of Kosovo developments from the earliest times until 1997, see Malcolm, Noel (1998) *Kosovo: A Short History*. London: Papermac.

26 Judah, Tim (2002) *Kosovo: War and Revenge*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, p.65

27 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes (2001), p.10

28 Hedges, Chris (1999) 'Kosovo's Next Masters?' *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 78, No 3, pp.24-42

29 Despite the obscure pedigree of the KLA, most authors recognize its ideological connections with the LPK (Popular Movement for Kosovo, or in Albanian, *Lëvizje popullore të Kosovës*). In its program, published in September 1993, the LPK stated that its final goal was to 'liberate and establish an independent state of Kosovo, using all forms of liberation war: democratic, political and armed resistance, and combining illegal and legal methods' (Elshani, Gafurr (2003) *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës. Dokumente dhe artikuj*. Prishtinë: Zëri i Kosovës, p.24-25).

30 For example, KLA Communiqué No 13 dated July 1995 mentions the execution of an ethnic Albanian as an 'old spy of Serbia'. Communiqué No 21 of July 1996 speaks about two successful attempts - on an Albanian described as a 'collaborator of the Serb regime' and on a Serb characterized as a 'criminal policeman' (Elshani, pp.32, 71).

31 International Crisis Group (1998) Kosovo Spring, ICG Report, Pristina-Sarajevo, p.30

32 ICG (1998), p.30

33 Judah, p.147

34 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.13

35 OSCE (1999) Kosovo/Kosovoa: As Seen, As Told: The Human Rights Findings of the OSCE Kosovo Verification Mission. http://www.osce.org/kosovo/documents/reports/hr/part1/.htm

36 Imami, Petrit (2000) *Srbi i Albanci kroz vekovi*. Beograd: K.V.S., p.357

37 Troebst, Stefan (1999) 'The Kosovo War, Round One: 1998' *Südosteuropa*, Vol.48, No. 3/4, p.156-190

38 The author visited the so-called 'liberated territory' of Mališevo/Malisheva (in central Kosovo) in June 1998. Despite being surronded by a double cordon of Serb security forces, the interior seemed to be orderly and well organized, with major institutions (mayor's office, clinic) functioning, including traffic control by the KLA military police.

39 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.11

40 Judah, p.190

41 Judah, p.190-192

42 OSCE (1999) http://www.osce.org/kosovo/documents/reports/hr/part1/ch1.htm

43 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.16

44 OSCE (1999) http://www.osce.org/kosovo/documents/reports/hr/part1/ch1.htm

45 Imami, p.359

46 Macedonia is officially known as the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (Turkey recognizes Macedonia under its constitutional name). For the sake of brevity, we use 'Macedonia'.

47 International Crisis Group (1999a) "War in the Balkans: Consequences of the Kosovo Conflict and Future Options for Kosovo and the Region," ICG Balkans Report No. 61, p.2.

48 OSCE (1999) http://www.osce.org/kosovo/documents/reports/hr/part1/ch4.htm

49 OSCE (1999) http://www.osce.org/kosovo/documents/reports/hr/part1/ch12.htm

50 Imami, p.359

51 Judah, p.282

52 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.14

53 Interview with Shefki Gashi, Deputy President of Pristina Municipality and a former KLA commander. November 24, 2004

54 Judah, p.283-284

55 NATO's Role in Relation to the Conflict in Kosovo http://www.nato.int/kosovo/history.htm

56 UN Security Council Resolution 1244 (1999)

57 The graph is a compilation of data from the following sources:

Amnesty International (1998) Federal Republic of Yugoslavia: A Human Rights Crisis in Kosovo Province. Document Series B, No.4: Tragic Events Continue - The Protection of Kosovo's Displaced and Refugees

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Kosovo Crisis Updates, 1998-1999 http://www.unhcr.ch/news/media/kosovo.htm

OSCE (1999)

Council of Europe (1999) Crisis in Kosovo and the Situation in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Opinion. Doc.8309, January 27, 1999

58 American Bar Association Central and East European Law Initiative (ABA/CEELI) and the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) (1999) Kosovo Survey. http://shr.aaas.org/kosovo/pk/p1_2.html

59 This is what one Kosovo Albanian, living in The Bronx, reported in summer 1998: 'As my family, together with the other villagers, was leaving in an unknown direction, two of my brothers together with some other men stayed behind and took up arms to defend the village. How should I call them? "Freedom fighters?" Or desperate people, backed against the wall while trying to defend the hearths of their ancestors, who have lived here for ages.' (Janet Reineck (2000) 'Preparations for War: Quiet Siege of Kosova', in Halpern, Joel M. and David A. Kideckel (eds.) *Neighbors in War. Anthropological Perspectives of Yugoslav Ethnicity, Culture and History*. Philadelphia, PA: Pennsylvania State University

60 Elshani, Gafurr (2003) *Ushtria Çlirimtare e Kosovës. Dokumente dhe artikuj*. Prishtinë: Zëri, p.24

61 For the role of the Islamic factor and Islamization of the Bosnian Army, see U.S. Senate Republican Policy Committee (1997) Clinton – Approved Iranian Arms Transfers Help Turn Bosnia into Militant Islamic Base, January 16, 1997, http://www.senate.gov/~rpc/releases/1997/iran.htm

62 The IOM Program on Reintegration of Former Combatants through the Information Counselling and Referral Service (ICRS) and the Reintegration Fund (RF) started in 1999 and was completed in 2003. The data on former combatants is presented in two volumes titled *Socio-Economic and Demographic Profiles of Former KLA Combatants Registered by IOM* (2000) IOM: Pristina.

63 The total figure of almost 26,000 combatants requires some explanation in view of the conflict-time assessments, putting the KLA numbers between 15,000 and 20,000. Firstly, for the purposes of the IOM database, KLA and FARK members were both registered under the KLA. Secondly, a significant number of those registered may have been 'nominal' combatants, enlisted in a KLA unit inside Kosovo but actually outside - in Albania, FYR Macedonia or in the West. According to one of our respondents, some units had as many as 30 percent of such 'soldiers'. (Interview with Shefki Gashi, November 24, 2004) This may explain the recent statement of the president of the KLA War Invalids Association that there 'should be around 30,000 veterans who have been KLA members' ('KLA War Combatants to be Protected by a Special Law' *Epoka e Re*, August 14, 2004

64 The table is compiled by the author based on the IOM data (IOM (2000) Vol.1, p.8

65 The graph is constructed by the author based on the IOM data (IOM (2000), Vol.1, p.12).

66 IOM (2000), Vol.1, p.15.

67 International Crisis Group (2000) "What Happened to the KLA?" ICG Balkans Report N°88. Pristina/Washington/Brussels.

68 IOM (2000) Vol.1, p.19.

69 The graph is constructed by the author based on the IOM data (IOM (2000), Vol.2, p.23).

70 IOM (2000), Vol.1, p.17.

71 United Nations Population Fund, Statistical Office of Kosovo and International Organization for Migration (2000) Demographic, social, economic situation and reproductive health in Kosovo following the 1999 conflict. Results of a household survey, November 1999 – February 2000, p.91.

72 The graph is constructed by the author based on the IOM data (IOM (2000), Vol.2, p.25).

73 In mid-2000 the total resident population of Kosovo was roughly estimated at about 2 million persons, 88% of them being ethnic Albanians (Statistical Office of Kosovo (2002) *Kosovo and Its Population*. SOK; Pristina).

74 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.17.

75 According to official KFOR data, from June 12 to November 10, 1999 Kosovo saw 379 persons killed, including 145 Albanians and 135 Serbs, and 137 kidnapped (77 Albanians and 43 Serbs). The Serb sources reported higher figures for the same period:

447 Serbs and other non-Albanians killed and 645 kidnapped (Imami, p.367).

76 Judah, p.290.

77 International Crisis Group (2000) "What Happened to the KLA?" ICG Balkans Report No. 88, p.16.

78 ICG (2000), p.16.

79 Kouchner, Bernard (2004) Les guerriers de la paix. Du Kosovo à Iraq. Paris: Bernard Grasset, p.160.

80 ICG (2000), p.2.

81 Undertaking of Demilitarization and Transformation by UCK signed on June 20, 1999.

82 Faltas, Sami and Di Charro III, Joseph (eds.) (2001) *Managing the Remnants of War*. Bonn

InternationalCentreforConversion/NomosVerlagsgesellschaft: Baden-Baden.

83 "U.S. Marines Disarm, Arrest KLA fighters," *News Services,* June 16, 2004.

84 Hamzaj, Bardh (2001) *Paqja e gjeneralit (Dialog me Ramush Haradinajn)*. Prishtinë: Zeri, p.21.

85 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.19.

86 http://www.balkanpeace.org/cib/kam/kam22.shtml

87 *European Stars and Stripes*, November 9, 2000.

88 http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/2220633.stm

89 Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) (2003b) 'Armed to the Teeth', November 27, 2003, www.iwpr.net

90 Ripley, Tim (2000) "The UCK's Arsenal." *Jane's Intelligence Review*, November, p.22-23.

91 Small Arms Survey 2001: Profiling the Problem (2001) Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.177

92 Heinmann-Grueder and Paes (2001), p.19

93 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.20.

94 UNMIK press briefings, January 2004, http://www.unmikonline.org/press/pressb04.htm

95 IWPR, November 27, 2003.

96 'UNDP starts a three-month long public awareness campaign against small arms in Kosovo and introduces the "Kosovo and the Gun" Report', http://www.undp.org/bcpr/smallarms/news/kosovo_jul_03.htm

97 Institute for War and Peace Reporting (IWPR) (2003a) 'Kosovo Gun Amnesty Setback', October 16, 2003, www.iwpr.net

98 UNMIK Regulation 2001/7 On the Authorization of Possession of Weapons in Kosovo.

99 UNDP (2003), p.37.

100 ICG (2000), p.1.

101 All our interviewees, former KLA fighters, had returned home by early July 1999. It appears that by that time the KLA had not more than 5,000 members under arms, occupying Serb/Yugoslav barracks.

102 International Organization for Migration (2002) "IOM Programme on Reintegration of Former Combatants through the Information Counselling & Referral Service (ICRS) and Reintegration Fund (RF)." A Background Paper.

103 ICG mentions as many as 11,000 volunteers from 'other countries' but this figure is highly questionable (Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.14).

104 IOM (2002) p.15

105 Interview with Fatmir Sopi, President of the Pristina branch of the Kosovo Organization of War Veterans, November 25, 2004.

106 Bernard Kouchner, who was the Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General in Kosovo at that time, says, referring to the KPC formation: 'This artful arrangement allowed to take account of what was for the international community an impassable red line, at the same time offering to general Çeku and half of his men a structure and means that would allow them to prepare an armed force one day.' (Kouchner (2004), p.161)

107 UNMIK Regulation No. 1999/8 On the Establishment of the Kosovo Protection Corps.

108 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.23

109 IOM (2002), p.6. A KPC Reservist is someone who was a full-time active member of the KPC that has, through reductions, become a part-time member of the KPC and effectively is only employed for 36 days a year by the KPC unless called to active service in the event of an emergency.

110 International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2004) *Kosovo Protection Corps Training Program*. Pristina, p.18-19.

111 IOM (2004), p.21.

112 Pettifer, James (2003) *The Kosovo Protection Corps in Transition*. Conflict Studies Research Center (Defence Academy of the United Kingdom), p.3. According to Index Kosova, in July 2003 the KPC had the highest index of trust (1.8 on a scale from -2 to +2) whereas UNMIK Police had 0.8, the Parliament 1.5 and the Government 1.4. (www.indexkosova.com)

113 IOM (2004), p.34-35.

114 This is not surprising, considering the KLA ideological roots. The LPK (Lëvizja Popullore e Kosovës), the KLA's founding party, never concealed that its final goal was 'liberation of the enslaved Albanian population under the occupation of Serbia, Macedonia and Montenegro'. The LPK therefore claims that during the Kosovo conflict the KLA operated in five zones: Zone One included Kosovo as such, Zone Two meant Macedonia, Zone Three referred to the so-called 'Eastern Kosovo' (three municipalities in Southern Serbia on the border with Kosovo with predominantly Albanian population), Zone Four included Montenegro, and Zone Five Serbia proper.

115 Conflict, Security and Development Group, King's College London (2003) *A Review of Peace Operations: a Case for Change. Kosovo.*

116 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.35.

117 IOM (2004), p.33.

118 IOM (2004), p.33.

119 International Crisis Group (ICG) (2004) "Collapse in Kosovo" ICG Europe Report No. 155, p.9.

120 IOM (2004), p.36.

121 Institute for War and Peace Reporting (2003) *Policing the Protectors*. Balkan Crisis Report 440, June 30, 2003.

122 IOM (2004), p.35.

123 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.27.

124 IOM (2002), p.6.

125 United Nations (2004b) *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo,* S/2004/907.

126 Interview with Vladimir Tkachenko, former international KPS instructor, December 3, 2004.

127 Peake, Gordon (2004) *Policing the Peace: Police reform experience in Kosovo, Southern Serbia and Macedonia*. Safeworld, January 2004, p.27.

128 Interview with Malcolm Ashby, Prishtinë/Priština Regional Police Liaison Officer, February 9, 2005.

129 The riots lasted for two days, on March 17-18, 2004. The violence was triggered by reports about three Albanian boys, who drowned after having being chased into the River Ibar by Serbs on March 16. Violence quickly spread all over Kosovo, Albanian mobs attacking Serbs and other minority groups as well as KFOR and police units, who protected minority areas. UNMIK police counted 33 major riots over March 17-18, involving an estimated 51,000 participants, some of whom used military weapons. By March 18 the violence had mutated into the ethnic cleansing of entire minority villages and neighbourhoods. The two-day rampage of partly coordinated arson, looting, shooting, and stone-, petrol bomb- and grenade-throwing left nineteen dead, nearly 900 injured (more than twenty gravely), over 700 Serb, Ashkali and Roma homes, up to 10 public buildings and 30 Serbian churches and two monasteries damaged or destroyed, and some 4,500 Kosovo Serbs displaced. (International Crisis Group (ICG) (2004) "Collapse in Kosovo" ICG Europe Report No. 155, p.1.)

130 United Nations (2004a) *Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo,* S/2004/613.

131 ICG (2004), p.22.

132 UN (2004a).

133 IOM (2002), p.3-5.

134 IOM (2002), p.6.

135 European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) (200) *Annual Report 2000 to the European Parliament and the Council*, p.16.

136 Vjetari statistikor i KSA të Kosovës (1986). Pristina, p.486.

137 European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR) (2002) *Annual Report to the European Parliament and the Council. January to December 2002*, p.57.

138 Interview with Dr. Salih Gashi, former President of Prishtinë/Priština Municipality in 2000-2002, December 18, 2004.

139 Interview with Fatmir Sopi, November 25, 2004.

140 The cross-sectional cluster sample survey was conducted from August to October 1999 among 1358 Kosovar Albanians aged 15 years or older in 558 randomly selected households across Kosovo. The survey did not treat ex-combatants as a specific group. (Lopes Cardozo, B., Vergara A., Agani, F., & Gotway, C.A. (2000). 'Mental health, social functioning, and attitudes of Kosovar Albanians following the war in Kosovo'. *Journal of the American Medical Association, 284,* 569-577).

141 International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2000) *Psychosocial and Trauma Response in Kosovo. Achievements and Plans 1999-2002*. Pristina, p.5.

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144 Lopes Cardozo et al., p.569.

145 Interview with LtCol Adrian Mehmeti, Assistant to the KPC Deputy Commander, December 7, 2004.

146 Lynne Jones remarks that the western model of psychological assistance, with its focus on the individual and on the ventilation of feelings through talking therapy, is culturally alien in many parts of the Balkans, and particularly in rural Muslim societies. She reports that one of her Bosnian patients, a deeply religious man, informed her that crying would impede his dead son's passage to paradise, and that what he wanted was help in maintaining his stoical approach. (Jones, Lynne (2001) "What are the Psychological Domain and the Role of the mental health Professionals in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations?" in Natale Losi, Luisa Passerini and Silvia Salvatici (eds.), *Archives of Memory: Supporting Traumatized Communities through Narration and Remembrance.* Geneva: International Organization for Migration, p.63.

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149 UNMIK introduced Deutsche Mark as the legal tender for all public debts in October 1999 (UNMIK Administrative Directive No 1999/2 of October 4, 1999).

150 World Bank (2001) *Kosovo Poverty Assessment*, Vol. 2, p.80.

151 UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/66 On Benefits for War Invalids of Kosovo and for the Next of Kin of Those Who Died as a Result of the Armed Conflict in Kosovo.

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153 Democratic Party of Kosova (PDK) (2000a) *Program of the Democratic Party of Kosova*, http://www.pdk2004.org/PROGRAMI

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155 International Crisis Group (ICG) (2001) 'The Macedonian Question: Reform or Rebellion', Report 109, April 5, 2001.

156 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.32.

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158 Partia Democratike e Kosovës (2000b) *Programi*, www.pdk-kosova.org

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160 *Koha Ditore,* August 2, 2003.

161 *Epoka e Re*, March 18, 2004.

162 *Koha Ditore*, March 18, 2004.

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164 Alliance for the Future of Kosova (AAK) (2002) *Program of the Alliance for the Future of Kosova*, www.kosovoelections.org

165 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes, p.32.

166 Hamzaj, Bardth (2001) *Paqja e generalit (Dialog me Ramush Haeadinajn).* Prishtinë: Zëri, p.154.

167 Hamzaj, Bardth (2001), p.154.

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169 *Epoka e Re*, March 19, 2004.

170 *The Washington Times*, December 13, 2004.

171 Hamzaj, Bardth (2001), p.119.

172 *Koha Ditore*, March 23, 2000.

173 *Evropa*, December 16, 2004.

174 *Večernje novosti*, December 5, 2004.

175 *Epoka e Re*, December 5, 2004.

176 *Koha Ditore*, March 19, 2004.

177 'We will gain the freedom regardless to its prize,' LKÇK pamphlet, March 24, 2004 (kindly provided by the OSCE Mission in Kosovo).

178 Rozen, Laura (1997) 'Politics the KLA way,' *The New York Times,* July 7, 1999.

179 Elshani (2003), p.6.

180 Judah, p.115-117.

181 ICG (2000), p.4.

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183 ICG (2000), p.4.

184 *Epoka e Re*, September 6, 2004.

185 Chiclet, Christophe (2001) 'L'UCK cherche une revanche en Macédoine', *le Monde Diplomatique*, April 2001.

186 ICG (2004), p.10.

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194 Statement of Peter Rondolf, Head of the German Office in Prishtinë/Priština, June 8, 2004, http://www.balkanpeace.org/hed/archive/jun04/hed6502.shtml

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203 Security Information Agency of Serbia (2003), p.17.

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210 World Bank (2001) *Conflict and Change in Kosovo. Impact on Institutions and Society*. World Bank, June 7, 2001.

211 Security Information Agency of Serbia (2003), p.17.

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213 Cf. Law on the Rights of Croatian Veterans of the Patriotic War and Their Families passed by the Croatian National Assembly in 2001, http://www.nn.hr/clanci/sluzbeno/2001/1586.htm

214 The Associations of KLA Veterans, KLA War Invalids and the Families of Martyrs rejected this draft law because it failed to address the status of former KLA members and insisted on a special law for ex-KLA combatants ("KLA War Combatants to Be Protected by a Special Law." *Epoka e Re*, August 14, 2004).

215 Interview with Dragudi Buwa, International Health Advisor in the Ministry of Health, December 6, 2004.

216 Interview with Ylber Shabani, Director of Labor and Employment Department (Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare), December 8, 2004.

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219 *Zeri*, August 30, 2004.

220 Interview with Fatmir Sopi, President, and Dula Salahu, Secretary of the Pristina branch of the Kosovo Organization of War Veterans, November 27, 2004.

221 ICG (2004), p.52.

222 UNDP (2003), p.14.

223 Heinemann-Grüder and Paes (2001), p.20

224 UNDP (2003), p.14.

225 ICG (2004), p.53.

226 The report submitted by the UN review team headed by Ambassador Kai Eide in July 2004 states as follows: "Seen from an internal Kosovo perspective, the longer we wait, the more would be the frustration in the Kosovo majority population increase. The economic situation would deteriorate further. The lack of a political perspective—a clear future—would be felt even more intensely than today." (*The Situation in Kosovo. Report to the Secretary-General of the United Nations*. Brussels, July 15, 2004.)

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231 ICG (2004), p.8.

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236 "NATO warns against violence in Kosovo if Kosovo PM is indicted by ICTY." *AFP*, December 9, 2004.

237 *Politika*, January 10, 2005.

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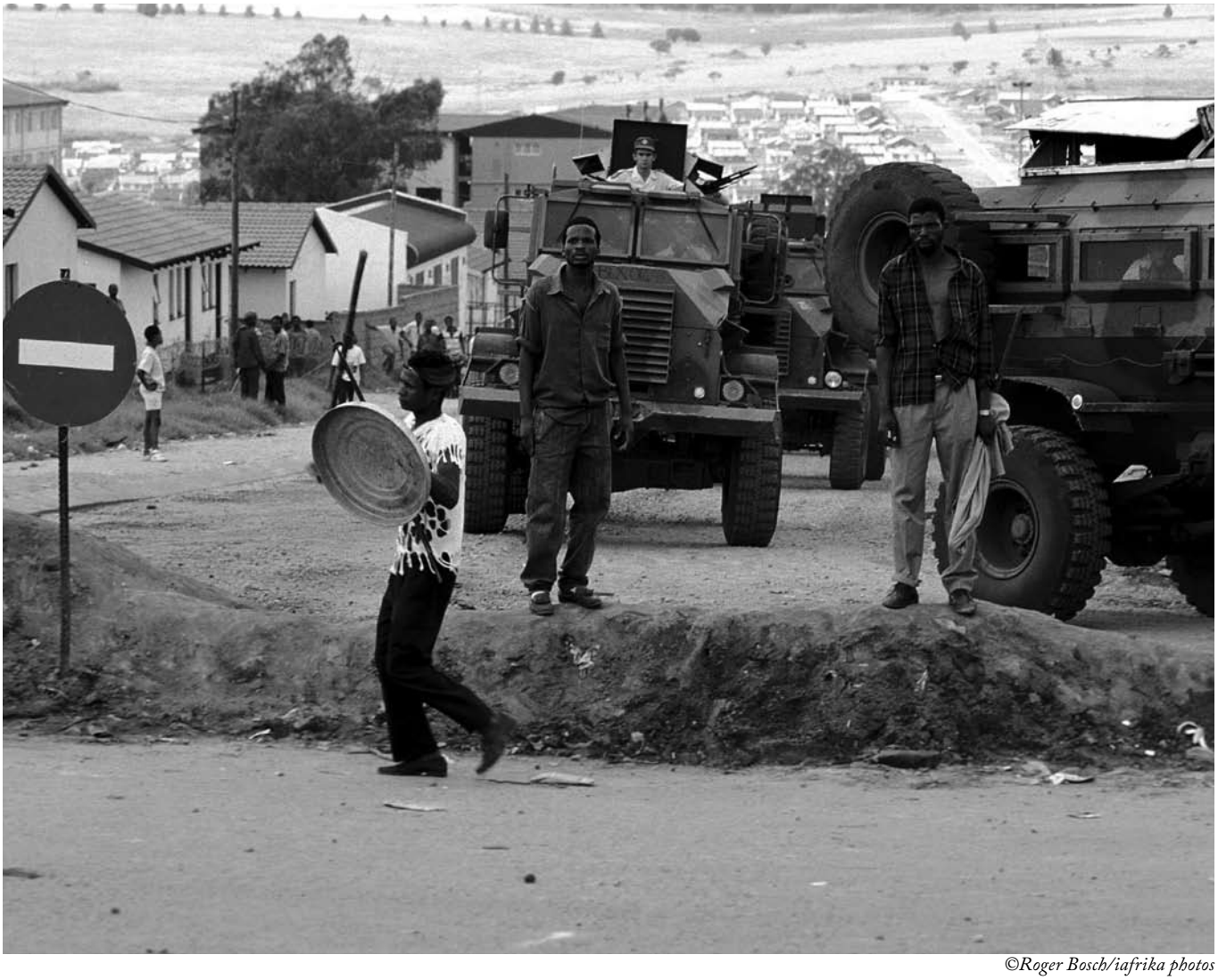
239 IOM (2002).

International police officers with their Kosovar colleagues.



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THE STRUGGLE FOR DEMOCRACY AND EX-COMBATANTS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Laura Heideman

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Introduction

THIS PAPER LOOKS FIRST AT THE HISTORY of the armed conflict in South Africa between 1960 and 1994. It then examines the situation of ex-combatants from 1994 onwards – once the armed conflict was over. The first part looks at who the players were, notably the apartheid state on the one side, and its opponents on the other. The history of the conflict is broken down into four distinct periods: 1960 – 1976, 1976 – 1985, 1985 – 1990, and 1990 – 1994. The second part looks at the processes of demobilisation and integration of the newly created South African National Defence Force (SANDF) for the combatants who had fought for democracy. It highlights the problematic nature of the two processes, and their political, social and economic effects on ex-combatants today.

The history of the conflict

The contemporary history of political conflict in South Africa can be broken down into four periods: 1960-1976, 1976-1985, 1985-1990, and 1990-1994. Those involved, their ideological objectives, the methodologies employed and the respective strength of contesting forces varied within each of these periods. Although the essential conflict is invariably portrayed as a battle between those opposed to white minority rule and apartheid governance, and those who supported it, the trajectories of the conflicts and the rationale of elements within them were often more complex.

The players

The state and its supporters

Among those who defended apartheid governance, the South African government and its security and intelligence forces were the principal actors. This included the South African Defence Force (SADF), the South African Police (SAP), and the Bureau for State Security (BOSS), which subsequently became known as the National Intelligence Service (NIS). In addition, the establishment of the homeland system[2] allowed for the emergence of homeland

1 Edited by Piers Pigou of the South Africa History Archive.

2 The apartheid government claimed that black South Africans were citizens of homelands, known as Bantustans, rather than citizens of the South African state. Of the 10 homelands, four (TVBC) were pressured by the government into accepting status as separate nations, thereby giving up all claim to South African citizenship. Outside of South Africa, the nation status of these regions was not recognised.

security forces (both police and military) that often (but by no means always) played a supportive role in efforts against insurgents and their supporters. And there is evidence that apartheid security forces also made use of and supported conservative vigilante groups and even criminal gangs.[3]

Between 1960 and 1990, the South African government consistently argued that it was defending the country against a revolutionary and communist threat, spearheaded by the African National Congress (ANC). It argued that the ANC was under the direct control of the South African Communist Party (SACP), which received most of its funding from the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc countries[4], while the Pan Africanist Congress (PAC), its secondary rival, received most of its training and funding from China. The late 1980s and early 1990s also witnessed the emergence of right-wing organisations and informal militias, such as the Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB), which opposed the reform of apartheid and the subsequent negotiation process. Despite their high profile and vocal belligerence, they did not present a major security threat to the state, and were not involved in large-scale conflict. These groups were also anti-communist, but were somewhat blunter in citing the maintenance of South Africa as a white nation as their main objective. For these groups, the conflict was understood in racial terms.[5]

Opponents of apartheid

Among those who fought against apartheid, the primary actors were the exiled ANC with its armed wing Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the (also exiled) PAC, with its armed wing the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA).[6] These organisations, once unified, split in 1959 over the issue of race: while the ANC advocated a non-racial approach to social change, the PAC advocated an African-only approach. However, both groups were committed to overturning the apartheid social order in favour of a democratic state. In addition, during the 1970s and 1980s several internal political organisations were also actively engaged in resistance. These included: several black consciousness groupings (such as the Black Consciousness Movement and subsequently the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO[7])), the burgeoning trade union movement, and hundreds of civic structures that came under the banner of the ANC-aligned United Democratic Front (UDF). Self Defence Units aligned to the ANC also emerged during the early 1990s in response to violent attacks in many township communities.

The lines between supporters and opponents of apartheid are somewhat blurred by evidence of divided loyalties among the security forces of some of the "independent" Bantustans (i.e.Transkei and Bophuthatswana) and in particular the role played by Inkatha, later known as the Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP). While the TVBC[8] armies officially supported the system of the apartheid government, they were not fighting directly for the government. The Transkei military government of General Holomisa actively supported the ANC; the March 1994 insurrection of the Bophuthatswana army demonstrated that the loyalties of the army members did not necessarily lie with the apartheid state or the homeland rulers.

Inkatha and "black on black violence"

The IFP's position is more ambiguous. Its leader, Mangosuthu Buthelezi, was for most of the 1970s recognised as an important black voice within South Africa speaking out against apartheid.[9] The ANC initially endorsed Inkatha, but the public split between these organisations in the late 1970s resulted in polarisation and an evolving internecine struggle that resulted in thousands of deaths, injuries and displacement over the next fifteen years. Although Inkatha presented itself as a liberation movement that promoted peaceful change and was opposed to the ANC's (and PAC's) armed struggle, its credibility was repeatedly tested following exposures about its apparent willingness to work with the apartheid state and its security agents from the mid-1980s onwards. Indeed, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) found that Inkatha "participated in state-sponsored violence and acted as a surrogate for

3 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 6*, Section 3, Chapter 3, paragraph 62

4 McKinley 1997

5 Because of the minor role of the militias, their relatively short lifespan, and the overlap between SADF ex-combatants and militia members, the presence of this sector will be noted but not focused on in this paper.

6 During the 1960s, the armed wing of the PAC was known as Poqo, but this structure was dissolved and replaced by APLA in the late 60s (Kondlo 2004).

7 AZAPO's armed wing AZANLA was hardly visible and had a very limited impact on the conflict. While there are no official estimates available on its size, ISS estimates it had "only a handful of fighters, the majority who possess only rudimentary 'in-country' training" (Mills 1992).

8 Transkei, Venda, Bophuthatswana, Ciskei.

9 Sparks 1996

the state against the ANC and its allies".[10] At the same time, the UDF and ANC were also held responsible for deliberately targeting IFP office bearers, something they had actively denied.[11]

The conflict between the ANC and IFP was often cast in the media as "black on black" violence or alternatively an ethnic conflict between the Zulu IFP and the allegedly Xhosa ANC. The conflict is better understood in political rather than racial or ethnic terms, and easily morphed into low intensity conflict in the late 1980s in Natal and the early 1990s in the then Transvaal.

1960-1976: The call to arms

Until 1960, the ANC and PAC had used non-violent means to protest apartheid policies. It was the Sharpeville Massacre on March 21, 1960, in which 69 peaceful protesters were killed by the police, that changed the tactics of both organisations. The South African government banned both the ANC and PAC and declared a state of emergency, giving the police powers to detain suspects for 90 days without charging them. Robert Sobukwe, the leader of the PAC, was arrested. Other leaders of the PAC and leaders of the ANC went underground or into exile. It is at this time that both organisations decided to turn to violence as a way of taking on the apartheid state. The ANC formed Umkhonto we Sizwe (MK) and the PAC formed Poqo.[12]

The formation of MK

The ANC launched a sabotage campaign that prioritised structural damage and the avoidance of human casualties. During its first year in action, MK committed 134 acts of sabotage.[13] However, MK's effectiveness was severely undermined after the arrest of its internal leadership at a Rivonia farm in Johannesburg on July 11, 1963. The organisation then became completely crippled within the country after the arrest of the second leadership in 1964. By this time, there were approximately 800 MK guerrillas in exile.[14] Because there was not MK-friendly territory along the border of South Africa, there was little movement between South Africa and exile camps. Between 1965 and 1976, MK could do little but train in exile and help other liberation armies, such as Zapu in Rhodesia. This generation of MK cadres, known as *umgwenya*, did not succeed in infiltrating South Africa, but developed a respected reputation that helped them recruit later generations of MK cadres.[15]

[The formation of APLA

During the early 1960s, Poqo was also active. Unlike MK, Poqo did not try to avoid human casualties and encouraged its comrades to attack the police and army. Poqo militants on the ground widened this directive to include white civilians.[16] Poqo did not complete many successful attacks and the organisation was virtually wiped out as a result of mass arrests in 1963. Those who escaped arrest fled to exile in Lesotho. By 1968, the PAC's armed wing had approximately 200 trainees, who became known as the Azanian People's Liberation Army (APLA). The name change was accompanied by changes in military strategy, which now included attacks on white farmers in the hopes of creating a base for APLA in rural areas from which they could launch guerrilla attacks. [17] During the 1960s and 1970s, APLA also fought alongside other liberation armies: notably, COREMO (Mozambique's Revolutionary Committee, a rival organization to FRELIMO). However, after a disastrous battle with Portuguese security forces in 1968, APLA became largely inactive until the 1980s.

1976-1985: Renewed vigour after June 16 1976

The Soweto Uprising that began on June 16th, 1976 brought about a major change for the ANC in exile. Thousands of schoolchildren rose up against the state after police gunned down students protesting the compulsory use of Afrikaans as a teaching medium in township schools. In the months that followed, students targeted individuals and institutions they associated with the state. The ensuing clampdowns by the state security forces led to thousands of arrests and hundreds of deaths. Many students fled the country, finding refuge in MK camps. This new generation of MK cadres, estimated at

10 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 6*, Section 3, Chapter 3, paragraph 4
11 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 2*, Chapter 4, paragraphs 71-88
12 It is unclear whether Poqo was intended to be a name change for the PAC or if it was formed as a separate unit within the PAC (Kondlo 2004).
13 Barrell 1990
14 Barrell 1990: 19
15 Barrell 1990: 25
16 Kondlo 2004: 288
17 Kondlo 2004: 292

3 000, became known as the June 16th Detachment.[18] Between 1978 and 1988, MK continued to receive around 1 250 new recruits per year in exile.[19] These recruits all received basic military training and approximately half were selected to undergo advanced training, usually in East Germany or the Soviet Union.

MK activities intensify

Despite failing to capitalise optimally on the Soweto uprisings, during the late 1970s, MK was able to re-establish itself internally due to the influx of young people into the movement and the release from Robben Island of several MK cadres who had been incarcerated in the early 1960s. For the next few years, MK activities consisted of acts of sabotage and armed clashes with police in rural areas.[20] Until 1982, MK policy dictated that acts of sabotage were to avoid loss of human life when possible. Interventions focused on "legitimate military targets," mainly installations and other infrastructure such as phone and railway lines. This is not to say that some civilians were not injured in attacks: occasionally, MK personnel would disobey orders and hit human targets, but in their trials they stated that they were acting strictly against policy. In 1982, the ANC leadership decided to extend the definition of legitimate military targets to include police stations, courts, and other institutions that supported the apartheid regime.[21]

Armed sabotage thus became more complex and effective. In the early 1980s, MK launched successful attacks on the Sasol oil refinery; Voortekkerhoogte, the largest military installation in South Africa; the Koeberg nuclear power plant; and the South African Air Force and Military Intelligence Headquarters. Between the late 1970s and early 1980s the number of attacks also increased. From 1977 to 1980, there were 82 incidents of sabotage, and between 1981 and 1984, that number more than doubled to 194 incidents.[22] Establishing itself as the "only serious liberation movement", this intensification of the armed struggle was complemented by greater efforts to mobilise the general population.[23]

The ANC and the IFP

The PAC and its armed wing secured some recruits from the 1976 exodus, yet APLA remained largely inactive during this period, having been unable to recover from the defeats of the 1960s. Within the country, the only active black opposition group was Inkatha (later Inkatha Freedom Party or IFP), at that time a Zulu "cultural" movement led by Mangosuthu Buthelezi. During the late 1970s, Buthelezi provided a strong anti-apartheid voice from within South Africa. While the IFP and ANC were initially close and the IFP was often perceived as the internal voice of the ANC, the two groups became increasingly estranged in the late 1970s, culminating in total alienation after a 1979 meeting.[24] Buthelezi advocated non-violent means to overthrow the state and was vocal in his opposition to the ANC's armed struggle and confrontational agenda.

The UDF

In 1983, a new group, the United Democratic Front (UDF) was created. The UDF was an umbrella organisation of anti-apartheid groups such as youth groups, churches, and women's organisations. The UDF was commonly seen as the internal face of the ANC, although the two groups officially denied this at the time. Because the UDF, like Inkatha, was not a banned organisation, it was free to organise marches and protests within the country. Tensions between the ANC/UDF and Inkatha mounted during the early 1980s following violent attacks by Inkatha supporters on UDF-led protesters. These incidents were at first isolated, but the number of violent attacks started to increase from 1984 onwards.[25]

The role of the South African government and the SADF in the region

In 1973, the Namibian independence movement, the South West African People's Organisation (SWAPO) began fighting for the independence of South West Africa (now Namibia), which was then a "protectorate" of South Africa. At this time, the role of the SADF was also rapidly changing. And a coup d'état in Portugal in 1974 precipitated a rapid and messy process of decolonisation in Mozambique, Angola and Portugal's other overseas territories. With majority rule achieved in both countries, the ANC and PAC finally had access to friendly territory adjacent to South African borders. This significantly improved the organisation's ability to effectively infiltrate the country from exile.

18 Barrell 1990: 37
19 Barrell 1990: 42
20 Williams 1994: 28
21 Williams 1994: 29
22 McKinley 1997: 49
23 McKinley 1997: 50
24 Jeffery 1997: 31
25 Jeffery 1997: 46-50

For the apartheid government, this situation prompted a shift in military strategy, in line with the South African government's policy of "total strategy". This included a comprehensive economic and military destabilisation campaign aimed at securing allies and compliance among governments in the region.[26] In 1975, South Africa invaded Angola, but in the face of international pressure withdrew to the southern border areas. The now ANC-friendly Angolan border meant that the SADF had to increase troop presence in South West Africa in order to effectively fight SWAPO. South Africa's continued support of the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) enabled the organisation to wage a civil war in that country that was to last for more than 20 year. The South African government also sponsored Renamo in Mozambique against an ANC-aligned Frelimo government.

Deteriorating security conditions inside the country in the wake of the Soweto uprisings intensified South Africa's external security concerns. This led to the formation of new structures in the SADF, including the SWA Territory Force (SWATF) made up of residents of South West Africa. Manpower was dramatically increased, with the establishment of eight combat battalions and the support units, and the reserve forces were boosted through the establishment and expansion of the Citizens Force Brigade and the Commando system.[27] During this period, the SADF also formed the first black battalions, many of which later became the homeland armies, which numbered approximately 11 300 by 1994.[28] In addition to this measure, in 1978 the SADF increased the period of service for conscripts to 24 months. This was increased again in 1983 to 720 days, excluding training. The system of conscription, which began in 1968, required all able-bodied white males to report for national service at the age of 18. The conscripts were known as part-time forces, or the Citizen Force. There was an annual intake of approximately 20 000 conscripts per year,[29] in addition to the full-time voluntary service members.

The role of the SAP in internal security

Internal security remained the primary function of the South African Police and in particular its increasingly powerful security branch; this was responsible for "political policing" and became notorious for its brutality during the 1960s and 1970s. Between 1960 and 1973 there had been a 600 per cent increase in reported "offences against the state."[30] A critical component of the state's strategy to combat subversion, the SAP was expanded significantly in terms of manpower and expenditure after 1976. The Riot Unit, established in 1975, worked closely with a new, elite, urban anti-terrorist corps, called the Special Task Force established in 1976. The SAP's commanders strongly believed that internal instability warranted a heavy handed response. The standard policy of "shoot first, ask later" was underscored in the words of police commissioner Mike Geldenhuys, who in 1980 announced that the police would "shoot to kill" when they encountered either arsonists or rioters.[31] The ongoing militarisation of the police saw more counter-insurgency efforts that intensified during the 1980s. The SAP grew in size from about 39,000 members in 1980 to about 49,000 members in 1985. Four years later, the SAP had over 80,000 members.[32]

1985-1990: 'Ungovernability'

MK activities escalate

In 1985, the ANC president Oliver Tambo declared a further extension of MK activities, authorising ANC operatives to strike targets such as courthouses and police stations where civilian casualties were more likely.[33] As before, most new MK recruits received formal training in training camps in other parts of Africa as well as in the Soviet Union and other parts of Eastern Europe. Following the agreement in 1988 between the United States and the Soviet Union agreed to end their cold war involvement in the Angolan civil war, the ANC was forced to shut down their camps in Angola and relocate to Tanzania.[34]

Cycle of increasing violence and repression

During this period, protest and insurgency, and repression and counter-insurgency intensified within South Africa. Tens of thousands were arrested and detained, many of whom were subjected to physical or

26 Stott 2002, 11
27 Sass 1995:124
28 For a more detailed examination of the history of the homeland military, see Reichardt and Cilliers
29 Sass 1995: 126-7
30 Brewer 1994: 259
31 Cawthra 1990: 101
32 Seegers 1996:178
33 Mufson 1990: 201
34 McKinley 1997: 81

mental abuse. Between September 1984 and the end of 1989, 3 500 people were killed in political violence within the country.[35] UDF/ANC and Inkatha supporters clashed with growing frequency in KwaZulu and Natal. Elsewhere in a number of townships in South Africa and so-called "self-governing territories", rightwing vigilante groupings clashed with other township residents. Depicted by many as "black-on-black" violence, "the links and relationships between the conflicting parties and apartheid structures were buried".[36] As the TRC was to later find, the security forces actively encouraged these divisions and in some instances created vigilante groups to combat pro-ANC forces.[37] These clashes usually involved untrained civilians rather than trained combatants. However, it was later revealed that a military intelligence unit within the SADF had secretly trained at least 200 Inkatha supporters in sabotage, guerrilla tactics, and assassination techniques.[38]

The formation of self-defence units

Within South Africa, the escalating conflict gave rise to a new internal infrastructure for the ANC. MK cadres and UDF supporters began to organise self-defence units (SDUs) in the townships and the ANC leadership called for citizens to make the country ungovernable. In areas outside of KwaZulu and Natal, ANC/UDF supporters were clashing with the police and military. Within KwaZulu and Natal, the SDUs were also clashing with Inkatha supporters, who were organised into vigilante groups known as 'amabutho'. Many of them were from rural areas and bussed into urban townships to take on those involved in boycotts and anti-apartheid activities.[39] In townships in several other parts the country, UDF supporters were engaged in violent clashes with AZANLA supporters, known as ZimZims. By the end of the decade, many townships around the country were virtual war zones.[40]

APLA's focus

During this same period, the PAC/APLA was attempting to build up its underground structures. Following internal dissent in the late 1970s and early 1980s, APLA's leadership became more coherent in the mid-1980s. In 1985 it started to try to infiltrate cadre into South Africa from camps in Tanzania. While these attempts were unsuccessful at first, by the late 1980s, APLA was active in the Soweto area and extended its activity into the Western Transvaal. APLA focused on violence against state supporters such as the police and military.[41]

The SADF in the townships

In addition to combat in Angola and Namibia, and covert operations in other neighbouring countries, SADF soldiers were also involved in the township violence of the time. Soldiers, usually conscripts, were sent to control crowds during marches and events such as mass funerals. Often, these events turned violent, leading to new rounds of marches and funerals. In 1985, over 35 000 troops were deployed in 96 townships around the country. In 1986, this figure rose to 40 000.[42]

South Africa reduces involvement in Namibia and Angola

The end of cold war involvement in southern Africa also meant major changes for the SADF and the influence of South Africa's securocrats in the late 1980s. South Africa was forced to end its direct military presence in Angola (although its support for UNITA continued) and to facilitate independence in Namibia. The SWATF was disbanded in 1989 to significantly reduce its involvement in destabilising the region.

The SAP expands

Not surprisingly, the 1980s witnessed a massive increase in the police budget. In 1980/1981 the state allocated R346.4 million to policing. By 1984/1985 this had risen to R795.6 million, and by 1987 to R1,530 million. In 1989 this would jump again by over 41 per cent to almost R2,5 billion.[43] The SAP remained a source of considerable antipathy and black SAP members living in the townships were increasingly targeted. Before 1985 there were very few reports of politically motivated attacks on police homes, but by mid-1985 over 300 police homes had been destroyed. This number increased to over 1 000 by mid-August 1986.[44]

35 Stott 2002: 51
36 Haysom 1986: 1
37 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 6*, Section 3, Chapter 3, paragraph 62
38 Sparks 1994: 177
39 Haysom 1986: 80-100
40 McKinley 1997: 111
41 Kondlo 2004: 308-310
42 Brewer 1994: 302
43 Brewer 1994:277
44 Cawthra 1994: 108

The ongoing expansion of the South African Police during the mid to late 1980s led to the creation of two new policing structures. The SAP created a contingent of about 8 000 special constables who received little training and were deployed only in the townships. These "kitskonstables" (instant constables) fell under the command of the riot squads and were given the same sweeping powers. The Department of Constitutional Development and Planning created another force of 14 000 municipal police officers. The municipal police were given six weeks of training, armed and subsequently deployed mostly in the Witwatersrand area.[45] SAP expansion continued in 1990, swelling the numbers to a reported 123 000 in 1991.[46]

1990-1994: Negotiations and further conflict

The negotiation process formally began in early 1990, following the release of former ANC leader and MK commander Nelson Mandela, and the unbanning of all political organisations that had been banned under apartheid, including the ANC and MK.[47] Between 1990 and 1994, the primary business of MK was to prepare for its members' integration into the armed forces after the free elections.[48] Official negotiations on the military began only in late 1992, leading to three distinct yet interrelated (and fraught) processes: the creation of a Transitional Executive Council subcommittee on Defence, the creation of a National Peacekeeping Force, and the establishment of Assembly Areas to facilitate the integration and demobilisation process.[49]

Although MK was not disbanded, the ANC officially suspended the armed struggle during negotiations. Starting in 1991, MK cadres began to return from exile, aided by the United Nations. During this same period, however, the ANC continued to recruit new cadres for training in exile in order for MK to have greater representation in an integrated military following the transition.

45 Seegers 1996:178
46 Brewer 1994: 276
47 Williams 1994: 30
48 McKinley 1997: 116
49 Frankel 2000:20

Growing violence in KZN

After Mandela's release, violence in KwaZulu and Natal escalated and in July 1990 this spread rapidly across numerous townships on the Witwatersrand and Vaal Triangle. Inkatha supporters were consolidating their power bases in the hostels on the Witwatersrand, which in turn led to clashes with local community members.[50] MK cadres, many of whom were newly returned to South Africa, became active in these conflicts and continued to play a role in the organisation of SDUs.[51] Between 1990 and 1994, over 14 000 people were killed in political violence within the country, an annual rate four times higher than in the late 1980s.[52]While the protagonists and victims of the violence were ostensibly from the membership and support base of either the ANC or IFP, many of those targeted were random victims of terror. The logic of this violence went beyond the somewhat two-dimensional analyses of those who argued ethnic rationales, or the ubiquitous "black-on-black violence" description so superficially attributed by large sections of the media. Violence was clearly stoked in many areas by external forces, mainly the apartheid security forces, with and/or without their allies in Inkatha, criminal gangs and elsewhere.[53]

The alleged "Third Force"

The role of the government and security elements in acts of omission and commission were also subject to increasing scrutiny. There were an escalating number of reports that security force elements were actively assisting the IFP in what was euphemistically labelled the "Third Force". Although the TRC subsequently found "little evidence of a centrally directed, coherent or formally constituted 'third force'" the evidence presented revealed "a network of security and ex-security force operatives, acting frequently in conjunction with right wing elements and/or sectors of the IFP, were involved in actions that could be construed as fomenting violence and which resulted in gross violations of human rights, including random and targeted killings."[54] In its final report, the TRC found further evidence of complicity

50 Jeffery 1997:102
51 "While this has not been written into official ANC or MK histories, several ex-combatants I interviewed mentioned taking part in these activities. Reliable sources who weren't involved, including my government and NGO contacts, mentioned this as a problem faced by MK ex-combatants" (Heideman 2003).
52 Stott 2002
53 Everatt and Sadek 1993
54 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 2*, Chapter 7, paragraph 551

in violence and cover-up. The TRC also made the important observation that "while allegations of "third force activities" in no way account for all or even the bulk of violent incidents during this period, these attacks were particularly significant as they appeared to be largely indiscriminate, and consequently spread terror among hundreds of thousands of township residents."[55]

Returning MK, APLA and AZANLA soldiers from exile

As the violence continued during this period, arrangements were made through the United Nations and other organisations for APLA, MK, and AZANLA soldiers in exile to be disarmed and returned to the country. This process was supposed to involve regular support payments of R300 to returning cadres, but distribution of the funds was irregular. A 1992 survey with 180 out of the 5 000 former MK who were demobilised and returned to the country found that only 19.4 percent of these ex-combatants had managed to find employment and that most who found employment during this time were working for the SACP and/or MK.[56] Clearly, ex-combatants were not integrating into the civilian labour market. The survey also revealed widespread discontent among MK cadres and alienation between the MK soldiers and the ANC leadership.[57]

While MK had officially suspended its activities, APLA had not. The PAC eschewed the multiparty negotiation process and its armed wing took advantage of new opportunities; it escalated its activities and continued to target police, military, and, increasingly, white civilians. During the early 1990s, APLA was responsible for prominent attacks such as the St. James Church massacre, in which 12 people were killed and 56 injured during a church service in Cape Town, and the killing of Amy Biehl, an American Fulbright scholar. The slogan "One settler, one bullet" was used to justify the killing of white civilians. It was not until 1994 that the PAC suspended armed actions.[58]

The SADF meanwhile, was shedding personnel. The evolving international and national contexts made it clear that conflict within the country would soon decrease.[59] In the late 1980s, the force levels for SADF included a part time force of 500 000 and 13 600 "non-white" members[60], as well as over 75 000 full time permanent force members and 76,000 reservists in commando units.[61]

The democratic election in 1994 resulted in the official disbanding of MK, APLA, and the SADF, and a new military, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF) was created. Despite relatively peaceful elections, violence continued between ANC and IFP supporters in KwaZulu/Natal. The number of political deaths per year in KwaZulu/Natal, which had averaged 1 500 per year from 1990 to 1993, continued to be high, with 1603 deaths in 1994, 905 in 1995, 536 in 1996 and 334 in 1997.[62] While the violence was officially condemned by both the ANC and IFP, there are reports that some MK cadres continued to "assist" in the conflict even after the election in 1994.[63]

55 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 6*, Section 4, Appendix paragraph 12
56 Cock 1993: 4
57 Cock 1993: 8
58 Kondlo 2004: 282
59 ISS 2001a: Chapter 3
60 Sass 1995:127.
61 Stott 2002, 5
62 Stott 2002
63 Heideman 2003

Ex-combatants in 1994

Integration of statutory and non-statutory forces into the new South African National Defence Force

During the negotiations, it was agreed that the major forces from under apartheid—SADF, MK, APLA, and the TVBC armies—would be dismantled, and replaced by the creation of a unitary force, the South African National Defence Force (SANDF). Each armed formation was tasked to submit its own Certified Personnel Register (CPR), listing *bona fide* combatants from within their ranks. Those whose names were included on the CPRs would be eligible for integration into the SANDF, provided they met certain age, education, and health requirements, as well as subsequent demobilisation options.[64] Those from the statutory forces (SADF and TVBC) would be absorbed directly into SANDF. Those from the non-statutory forces (MK and APLA) would have to undergo bridging training courses to introduce them to non-guerrilla, conventional army structures.

Compiling the lists for the non-statutory forces proved difficult for a number of reasons. First, for obvious security reasons, there was no existing centralised list of guerrilla combatants. Moreover, it was not always clear who was a formally trained combatant and who was a non-trained combatant from within the SDU formations. Because MK and APLA cadres were operating underground, it was difficult to determine who belonged to the organisations. Some ex-combatants make claims that they were left off the lists but should have been on them; conversely, others claim that many of those listed on the CPRs did not actually belong to MK or APLA. Compiling the lists became even more complicated because many combatants signed up using their "struggle names" (*nom de guerre*) rather than their given names. A number of cases of fraud were noted as well, where ex-combatants would show up at the assembly areas only to find that someone else had already reported using their name. The ex-combatants affected could only rectify this situation if they located the individual who had stolen their identity and then subsequently prove the fraud. Situations like these made the integration of MK and APLA into the SANDF more difficult.

The long process of integration

It was originally estimated that the SANDF would include 138 000 soldiers: 90 000 former SADF, 32 000 former MK, 6 000 former APLA, and 11 000 former TVBC.[65] These estimates were considerably higher than the actual enlistment numbers. At its strongest, the SANDF consisted of 101 000 personnel. The combined CPRs for MK and APLA consisted of 44 143 names. However, only 10 619 MK and 5 022 APLA members actually joined the SANDF in 1994. Integration processes were extended, and over the next few years more joined. However, even with the 9 771 who opted for voluntary demobilisation and the 5 859 who retired, resigned, were discharged, or died accounted for, there is still a discrepancy of 12 872 former MK and APLA whose names are on the CPRs but who did not come forward and therefore remain unaccounted for. No one is sure who those individuals are or why they did not participate in the integration and demobilisation process. Williams (2002) notes that during the early 1990s, MK had weak command and control structures, and few material resources within South Africa.

Moreover, many of the officers from MK were involved in political ANC activities rather than military MK activities during the negotiations period. This meant that many of the MK combatants would not have been in touch with their command structure. Indeed, some MK ex-combatants who did not participate in the integration of the SANDF mentioned that they were not aware of their options and had little communication with the leadership during this period. This created a dual problem: not everyone knew they were eligible for inclusion on the CPRs and not everyone who was on the CPRs was aware of their status and/or knew how and where to report for duty in SANDF.[66]

Of the 82 705 SADF combatants in 1994, just over half, 43 036, opted to join the newly formed SANDF.

64 ISS 2001a: Chapter 7

65 ISS 2001a: Preface (inconsistency of totals noted)
66 Heideman 2003

Similarly, the TVBC forces ended up contributing only 5 931 combatants to SANDF, over 5 000 short of their estimated contribution. The SANDF also eventually made an effort to incorporate former IFP combatants, referred to as KwaZulu Self Protection Forces (KZSPF). These forces had to enlist as new forces in the SANDF and had to complete basic training and move up in the ranks like new recruits, rather than training and rank being acknowledged as was the case with MK and APLA combatants. KZSPF forces contributed 1 599 new members to the SANDF (as well as others to the police force), although it is not known how many of these personnel did not participate.

The problematic integration process

The SANDF integration process was fraught with problems. Former SADF commanders taught the bridging courses. Because the non-statutory forces were all required to participate in these courses, there were many accusations that rather than creating a new army, the non-statutory forces were simply being absorbed into the old apartheid structures. Williams (2002) notes that "Not infrequently, arrogance and racism were used by white officers to obstruct the activities of non-SADF officers within SANDF. The continued use of Afrikaans as a medium of instruction and command and control also has the effect of disempowering many non-SADF officers".[67] A number of mutinies by MK cadres at assembly areas illustrates the extent of these problems.

The problems of integration were further compounded by the diminishing need for military deployment. Following the 1994 elections, the defence budget decreased from 3.4 percent of the annual budget in 1989 to 2.2 percent in 1995 and to 1.6 percent in 1999. The need to cut forces was accompanied by the almost 35 percent increase in personnel following the integration of SANDF. This led to a rationalisation process, which had the goal of decreasing the force level from 98 806 in 1997 to 70 700 by 2001. This was to be achieved by the combined factors of natural attrition, voluntary severance, voluntary retrenchment packages and limiting recruitment to replacing key personnel. However, as these processes did not reach the intended reduction targets, employer-initiated retrenchment packages were added to the process in 2000, resulting in an additional reduction of 13 600 personnel.[68]

67 Williams 2002: 20
68 ISS 2001 b: Chapter 3

Personnel voluntarily leaving the new SANDF

The number of personnel leaving the SANDF voluntarily indicates that APLA veterans were disproportionately exiting from service. In a speech in 1999, Defence Minister Joe Modise stated that of the 37 000 members to have left the SANDF since integration, 6 000 were former APLA, 1 700 were former MK, 4 270 were former TBVC, and 28 000 were former SADF.[69] An ISS survey of 2 000 out of the 20 000 "most likely to be retrenched" soldiers found that 42.5 percent were former MK, 12.8 percent were former APLA, 32.5 percent were former SADF, and less than 5 percent were former TVBC.[70]

Demobilisation plan for ex-combatants not involved in integration

The government had a demobilisation plan in place for ex-combatants who were not involved in the integration. This group included those who were not inclined to join the SANDF and those who were unable to join due to age, health, or education. The government defined demobilisation as, "the disbanding of members of the former non-statutory forces who do not enter into agreements for temporary or permanent appointment with the South African (National) Defence Force."[71] There were a number of requirements for eligibility in the demobilisation programme. The most important was that one had to be a former member of the non-statutory forces. Those applying for demobilisation could not be current employees of the SANDF, and once demobilised, they were no longer eligible for service in the SANDF.[72]

The demobilisation plan involved a gratuity, counselling and skills training

The demobilisation process involved three phases. The first was a one-time gratuity that varied in size according to the number of years spent in the liberation army (see Table 1). The second was the opportunity to participate in limited counselling. The third component was the opportunity to participate in the SANDF's Service Corps, which provided skills training.[73] The demobilisation package was standard for all ex-

69 ISS 2001 a: Chapter 8
70 ISS 2001a: Chapter 9
71 Demobilization Act 1996: Part 1, section v
72 Demobilization Act 1996: Part 3, sections 5 and 6
73 Mashike 2000: 66

combatants and the administrators of the programme were not given the flexibility to adapt the programme to individual circumstances.[74]

After receiving the money, the ex-combatants had a chance to continue in the demobilisation programme. The second aspect of the programme, voluntary counselling, consisted of two weeks of free counselling.[75] And the government launched the third component of the demobilisation package, the Service Corps, in 1995. The Service Corps programme was 18 months long and designed to provide demobilising soldiers with the skills necessary for their integration into the non-military arena of society. The programme included assessment and career profiling, exploration of career path options, programmes to help with reflection and self-knowledge, and programmes to "sensitise trainees about issues in the broader environment that have an impact on the decisions they make".[76]

The programme had three components. The first, which lasted three months, provided trainees with basic literacy courses as well as a life skills course designed to help with issues of reintegration. In the second part, also three months long, the participants received training in a skill of their choice, including training in welding, providing security, and firefighting. Other skills offered by the Service Corps include agriculture, catering, driving, and dressmaking.[77] The third component of the course was a year-long practical experience programme, where the trainees gained experience using their newly acquired skills.[78]

The Service Corps did not prove very helpful at reintegrating ex-combatants. Mashike (2000) outlines three characteristics that must be present in order for such a programme to function effectively: demand for the skills ex-combatants are being trained in; ex-combatants want to work in the field they are being trained in; and that there are no outside obstacles that prevent them from using the skills. Heideman (2003) found that ex-combatants who participated in the Service Corps programme expressed dissatisfaction with the process. They complained that the Service Corps steered ex-combatants towards blue-collar work, that the choice of skills for training was too limited, that there was no work available for them when they finished their training, and that the Service Corps failed to assist them in locating employment after their training.

74 Motumi and McKenzie 1998: 198
75 Mashike 2000: 66
76 Motumi and McKenzie 1998: 200
77 Service Corps
78 Motumi and McKenzie 1998: 200

Ex-combatants and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

In 1995, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was established by parliamentary edict to deal with the legacy of human rights abuses in the country. As part of the Interim Constitution, both sides had agreed that there would be some form of amnesty for political crimes committed before the 1994 elections.[79] The TRC legislation provided for a conditional amnesty, whereby those who committed human rights abuses would be released from prison and would be immune from prosecution and civil suits for their crimes if they submitted an application to the TRC committee telling the whole truth about the incident. Of course this was provided that the committee judged the abuses to be politically motivated.[80]

The process was seen as highly political, as most of the commissioners had been active anti-apartheid activists. The former leaders of the SADF were especially hostile to the commission, claiming that their actions were non-political and that all political decisions were made at the level of the government.[81] Thus, while the TRC had a relatively strong response from the ANC militants, other groups were much less likely to come forward seeking amnesty. In total, out of the 1 712 amnesty applications that were given full review by the commission, 998 (58 percent) were ANC/MK, while 204 (12 percent) were PAC/APLA, 109 (6 percent) were IFP and 107 (6 percent) were from right wing groups. Only 31(2 percent) of the applicants were former SADF members.[82] This is in spite of the fact that the TRC had determined that the former apartheid military was a primary perpetrator of human rights abuses.[83]

The ex-combatants who were most affected by the TRC were those who were in prison for their political involvement before April 1994. This group was disproportionately

79 South African Interim Constitution, 1993
80 Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act 1995
81 Stott 2002: 16-17
82 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 6*
83 *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of South Africa Report: Vol 5*, Chapter 6, paragraph 77

made up of former liberation army members and IFP supporters. Release from prison was the major incentive offered to amnesty applicants. However, it should also be noted that a number of prisoners convicted for political crimes remain incarcerated because the acts for which they are imprisoned occurred after the April 1994 cut-off date. These prisoners are mostly concentrated in KwaZulu-Natal, where the violent conflict between ANC and IFP supporters continued for several years after the 1994 elections.

Profile of demobilised ex-combatants

The diffuse components of the ex-combatant population in South Africa make it difficult to define its demographic characteristics. Two surveys by the Institute for Security Studies (ISS), two 2001 surveys of demobilised SANDF soldiers and a 2003 study of former MK and APLA soldiers provide important insights.[84]

Both studies included all of the target populations (SADF, MK, APLA, and TVBC), but surveyed only those who were demobilised from the SANDF: that is, those who joined the integrated SANDF and subsequently demobilised. Thus, it is not a representative sample of all of those who served in an armed capacity during the apartheid conflict. The 2001 surveys do, however, provide some indication of age and gender composition, levels of education, and current employment status of these groups. The study finds that 35 percent are age 21-30, 36 percent are 31-40, 15 percent are 41-50, and 16 percent are over the age 50. Of the demobilised soldiers, 14 per cent are female and 86 percent are male. In terms of education, 15 percent of respondents had completed Grade 8 or less, 35 percent completed grade 9-11, and 40 percent completed grade 12 or more. Of those demobilised, the ISS found that 50 percent were former MK, 16 percent were former APLA, 2 percent were former TVBC, and 14 percent were former SADF.

The ISS also made the important finding that of the demobilised SANDF members surveyed, only 10 percent were employed full time. A further 135 were employed part time, 6 percent were self employed, and 3 percent were studying. Many of the soldiers apparently made their way into the Service Corps: 27 percent indicated that they were currently being trained in a skill. The remaining 42 percent were unemployed.[85] Given the ineffectiveness of the Service Corps in providing job opportunities, it is expected that many of those who were currently in skills training would also eventually join the unemployed group.

Mashike and Mokalobe's 2003 study sampled 410 ex-combatants from APLA and MK across all nine provinces in South Africa. Because of the difficulties in determining the population, they used a snowball sampling methodology, limiting the representative nature of the sample (especially in terms of gender), but still providing strong indicative insights and information.

Of the former MK and APLA members they surveyed, 88 percent were male and 12 percent were female. Just over half the soldiers were under the age of 35, and almost a quarter were over the age of 46. Almost 60 percent completed 11 years or less of schooling. Employment numbers were also very low in their survey: only 16 percent indicated that they were employed or self-employed, while 66 percent said they were unemployed.[86] The proportion of unemployed respondents was very similar to the combined total of unemployed and those in skills-training from the ISS survey.

While these two studies offer some indication of the demographic characteristics of the ex-combatants, there are fundamental problems that make their demographic data not completely reliable. However, they both indicate that low educational attainment and high unemployment continue to be major problems facing ex-combatants today.

Ex-combatants' experience of society

Qualitative studies by Gear (2002) and Heideman (2003) indicate that many ex-combatants face problems of social stigmatisation. Gear found that this was equally true of former SADF members, who complained about their reputation as brutal killers, and liberation armies, who

84 Institute for Security Studies. (2001a). "Demobilisation and its aftermath I: A profile of South Africa's demobilised military personnel." Institute for Security Studies Monograph 59. (http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No59), and Institute for Security Studies. (2001b). "Demobilisation and its aftermath II: Economic reinsertion of South Africa's demobilised military personnel." Institute for Security Studies Monograph 61. (http://www.iss.co.za/Pubs/Monographs/No61)

85 ISS 2001b: Chapter 4

86 Mashike and Mokalobe 2003: 16-19

had a reputation as terrorists or criminals. Heideman's study of MK ex-combatants noted that this social stigma was present both in the social and the economic spheres, with ex-combatants telling of alienation within their neighbourhoods and difficulties experienced in gaining or holding onto employment when their ex-combatant status was disclosed.[87] It is difficult to determine how widespread this problem is: Mashike and Mokalobe's survey indicate that 88 percent of the ex-combatants said their communities' treatment of them is the same now as it was at the end of the struggle.[88]

Heideman's study also reports that relations within the families of ex-combatants were frequently strained, either because of continued disapproval about involvement in MK or because of economic strains caused by the ex-combatant's employment status.[89] Mashike and Mokalobe make a similar finding, noting that while 68 percent reported good relations with their families, 10.7 percent reported that their relations with their families deteriorated after their return, while a further 4 percent said they were completely rejected by their families.[90]

87 Heideman 2003: 25-27
88 Mashike and Mokalobe 2003: 29
89 Heideman 2003: 27
90 Mashike and Mokalobe 2003: 18

Conclusion

The issues affecting the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants have still not been resolved. Previous studies have shown that low educational attainment and economic insecurity remain major obstacles for ex-combatants. In addition, there is still a very strong need for reintegration into the community. With violence in some parts of the country continuing after the 1994 TRC amnesty cut-off date, there are also many ex-combatants in prison for what are widely regarded as political crimes. Exact numbers for this group are not known and getting more certainty about this requires additional research.

Moreover, the various ex-combatant groups need to be recognised as qualitatively different groups, with differing levels of combat experience, differing levels and types of training, differing command structures, and differing opportunity structures in the post-apartheid era, and consequently, very different needs. Regional violence also needs to be examined in a way that will draw out some of the particularities of the violence. Gear (2002) recognises this in her work with the Thokoza SDU in the East Rand. Violence in KwaZulu-Natal also needs to be given this type of special attention.

While the potential of ex-combatants turning to violent crime or mercenary activity has always been cited as a reason for providing aid to ex-combatants, previous research has not fully examined this issue. It is clear that some ex-combatants are involved in crimes, such as cash-in-transit heists, and others are involved in mercenary activities, such as the abortive coup attempt in Equatorial Guinea. But it is unclear what proportion of the total ex-combatant population is actually involved in these activities. While negotiations committees in the early 1990s made strong efforts to secure the weapons stashes of the various non-state combatant groups, large numbers of weapons are still unaccounted for.

For any new research to make a valuable contribution to the field, it needs to look at issues that previous research has not examined. It also needs to provide clear solutions to problems such as unemployment, incarceration, weapons security, educational attainment, and community reintegration. The challenge for researchers is twofold: first, to provide accurate demographic data on the ex-combatant population in South Africa so that the population can be effectively targeted by programmes, and second, to determine the extent to which the social and economic problems faced by ex-combatants can be effectively bridged by intervention programmes.

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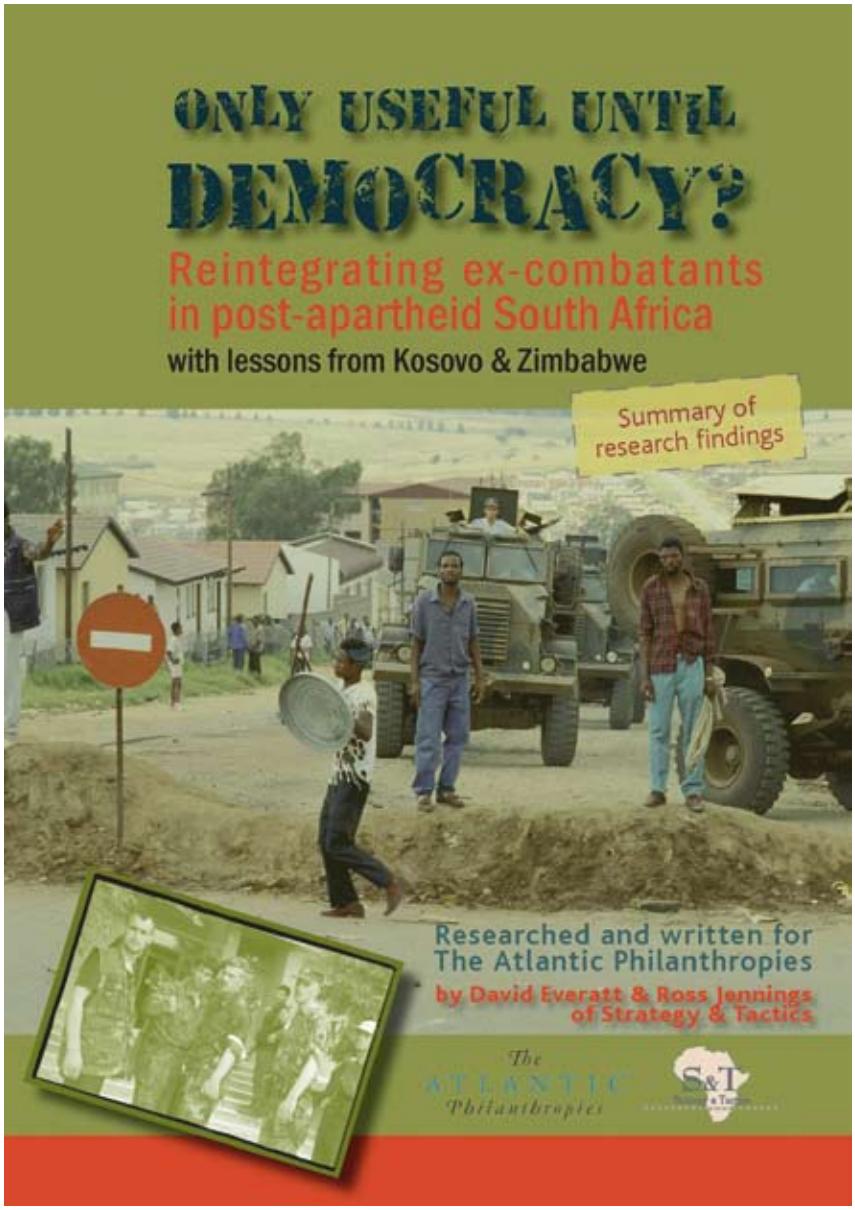
These research findings are summarised in a booklet...



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