The Use of Vigilance Committees In Cameroon: From The Operational Effectiveness to Necessity of Thinking the Post-War

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Abstract: *The involvement and the paramount role played by the vigilance committees in the fight against Boko haram in the far north of Cameroon are clearly proved. These self-defense groups, made up of civilians with no specific military training, have over time become serious opponents of Boko Haram alongside the defense and security forces. Having had the opportunity through conflict to be both respected and feared actors, is there any risk that these committees will restructure into militias after the conflict to continue living violence? The purpose of this article is to show the capacity of Vigilance Committees to transform according to the security environment and therefore the need to plan today a process of disarmament, demobilization and, above all, socio-economic reintegration of these members at the end of war.*

Keywords - *Popular defense, Vigilance committee, Armed conflict, constructivism.*

I. INTRODUCTION

Historically, the state formation analysis stressed on the national and urban conditions in which states monopolize the means of coercion, generate legitimacy and mobilize sufficient economic resources to wage war on enemies while supporting new forms of national solidarity and citizenship [1]. Nowadays, the mobilization of the civil defense forces (called Cameroon vigilance committee) by the states is not a novelty. States around the world (Algeria, Sierra Leone, Sudan, Pakistan, Colombia, Nigeria, India, Guatemala, Indonesia, Turkey, etc.) have often used civilian defense groups invariably called counter-insurgency militias, volunteer self-defense committees, self-defense groups, self-defense forces, civilian self-defense patrols, etc. Since 1989, they have often directly or indirectly effectively helped government forces in two-thirds of civil wars [2]. These civilian defense units participate in the war and form an important part of the states' political and military strategy. These pro-government self-defense units have in common excepted the Cameroonian vigilance committees the fact of receiving arms from the government to fight a state enemy. For this reason,

the authors consider them as Armed Groups or even Pro-Government Armed Groups (GAP) [3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10]. In a case of asymmetrical warfare, these groups play a decisive role near of the state armed forces. They are also used as sources of government intelligence on eventual threats.

In Cameroon, the creation, organization and deployment of vigilance committees in the field is similar to the case of lashkars in Pakistan which, although tribal militias, were temporary security structures mobilized to protect local territories from Taliban attacks [4]. Thus, Cameroon's vigilance committees have the role of informing, informing and denouncing suspicious situations to the authorities and the security forces to take decisions within a reasonable deadline [11]. They are not armed with Kalashnikovs or any other weapons of war by the government. They are equipped with motorbikes and mountain bikes accompanied by helmets, metal detectors, binoculars, flashlights, megaphones and machetes. In addition, these committees never lack traditional tools such as bows, arrows and homemade rifles previously intended for hunting [12]. Although not having conventional weapons of war, it is clear that the vigilance committees are equipped with white weapons (machetes) and traditional weapons of wars that can allow them to kill especially in cases of self-defense.

Since the beginning of their participation in this conflict, they shine by their effectiveness; even if drifts and slips are often observed[1]. They contribute enormously to the civilian victims decrease of the war. During the conflict, this civil defense operation is recognized and supported by authorities. Some members of these committees (previously unemployed) consider this activity as job because of the many related rewards. They are also adulated, respected a little like the heroic citizens (since they

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[1] Case of settlement of accounts via slanderous denunciations to the security forces. In Amchidé for example, the Christian members of the first vigilance committee set up by the BIR in 2014 carried out racketeering, slanderous denunciations and blackmail against Muslim inhabitants. It was dissolved after six months and reconstituted on a joint basis [41].

are often awarded medals) [2] . Faced with the commitment and courage of these civilian units, which are also feared by the population as "little warlords", several questions can emerge prospectively around post-war management. Once the threat is remoted, will they agree to return to anonymity, idleness, the loss of certain privileges? In other words, if at the end of the conflict, their expectations from the state for services rendered to the nation are not satisfied, will they not be able to turn against their allies today?

The purpose of this article is to show the proficiency of transformation or mutation of Vigilance Committees according to the security environment and therefore the need to plan the post-conflict period. It is logical that the expectation of any rewards for service to the nation be strong within the vigilance committees. In case of disappointment, once the conflict is over, the risk that members of these self-defense groups are as formidable and dangerous as Boko Haram are high. Jennifer Hazen thinks that pro-government armed groups often start out as civil protectors, sometimes risking their lives [7]. Only post-conflict government treatment determines the criminal future or not of the group. In the context of strategic foresight, it is necessary to plan now, taking into account the progressive weakening of Boko Haram, a process of disarmament, demobilization and socio-economic reintegration of these civilian combatants.

On the theoretical level and within the framework of sociology of action, we use in this study the theory of rational choice and structuralist constructivism. Indeed, the theory of rational choice as a variant of methodological individualism is inscribed in the perspective of models of rational action analysis as implemented by economists, but with an inflection. According to economists, a behavior is considered as rational as soon as it can be modeled using the benefit-cost optimization postulate. However, for the sociologists of the "rational choice", the optimization is done under constraint, which leads to redefining a "social rationality"; that which supposes that individuals mobilize resources to achieve very different objectives, under variable constraints. When these objectives are "substantial" (monetarily translatable), the maximization is postulated: the profit / cost calculation can be applied according to the homo œconomicus model [13].

Structuralist constructivism, on the other hand, highlights patterns of perception, thought and action that constitute what Pierre Bourdieu calls habitus, and social structures, particularly fields [14]. Pierre Bourdieu seeks to reconcile the objective (the social) and the subjective (the individual) within the "structuralist constructivism". The individual thus

interiorizes very early the social organization in which he fits, which configures his cognitive organization. Objective structures base subjective representations. In return, these representations model the social under certain conditions. Structuralist constructivism is also part of an individual / society dialectic, but it gives primacy to the social over the cognitive [15, 16]. This primacy, taken without precaution, constitutes a form of social determinism. It is society that shapes the individual. Pierre Bourdieu uses the concept of "field", which allows institutions to be conceived not as substances, but in a relational way, as configurations of relationships between individual and collective actors. In this context, the security field is both a force field - it is marked by an unequal distribution of resources - and a balance of forces between dominant and dominated. It is a field of struggles where the social actors clash to preserve or transform these power relationships. Each field is marked by competitive relations between actors. Social actions are therefore part of a constructed social world whose consistency is the result of both previous actions and societal dynamics [17].

In this theoretical configuration, it appears that vigilance committees as they are perceived today are evolving in a complex "security field" where the Cameroonian government is in a dominant position and currently distributing roles or task to members of the vigilance committees (dominated actors). However, we must take seriously in the analysis of the movement of the actor in the security field, the reality of the "pragmatic reflexibility" of the dominated actor. The theory of rational choice allows us to understand that the actor in his personal calculations takes the opportunity to also draw a benefit / cost of the environment available to him. In the local security field of the fight against Boko Haram in Cameroon, vigilance committees in this context are the result of construction. Faced with a lack of clear regulations on all aspects of the practice of this activity, they do not hesitate as rational actors to rush into the flaws. In the end, the national and regional security environment (Lake Chad Basin) plays an important role in the decision-making choices and actions of ones and others in this war.

In the remainder of our analysis, we will first discuss some balance sheet aspects related to the undisputed operational efficiency of these vigilance committees (I); aware of the undeniable effectiveness of these self-defense groups, we will present in a second step, the long-term risks related to the use of such actors, which will allow to see the need to think about the progressive dismantling and the reintegration of their members. Indeed, it is necessary for the State of Cameroon to begin to plan a strategy for disarmament, demobilization and socio-economic reintegration (II) and operationalize gradually in areas where the threat is first removed and then in all

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[2] Happy with the bravery of these citizens, their patriotic spirit and their sense of sacrifice, the Cameroonian head of state introduced them to the nation as models (2015 end-of-year speech to the Nation).

areas in conflict with Boko Haram today once the fighting stopped.

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II. FROM THE POPULAR DEFENSE TO THE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY OF THE VIGILANCE COMMITTEES IN THE FAR NORTH OF CAMEROON

Popular defense is the combination of the efforts and actions of the regular forces, the armed and unarmed population. It is also the participation of an entire people in the defense effort to oppose by all means the invasion of the national sanctuary as foreseen in the preamble to the 1996 constitution of Cameroon. Schematically, popular defense is the reaction of the peasant, the engineer, the teacher, the merchant, the marabout or the pastor who, without much grumble, gives his life or that of his children to defend his field, his laboratory, his school, his business, his minaret or his steeple. It is the reaction of the citizen who, by putting all his ardor, is ready to be killed to defend his homeland in danger against any aggressor or invader. In this scheme, the emphasis is on the implementation of effective collaboration between Cameroonian populations and armed forces and police. While suicide bombings were both worrying and deadly for civilians, the State of Cameroon had to implement effective measures as well (A). From this point of view, the activation of the vigilance committees, supporting the defense and security forces, has proved necessary (B).

A. Cameroon facing the ultra-violence of Boko Haram and the need for a quick reaction

The Boko Haram action modes have significantly changed due to fact of the countries' military actions of the region, which have considerably weakened it [18]. Avoiding direct engagement, he now relies on ambushes, the use of improvised explosive devices and suicide attacks to target vulnerable groups. This change of strategy, allowed him to maintain an immense capacity of nuisance. From July 12, 2015 when the first suicide bombing was recorded on July 12, 2016, for example, there were 38 suicide bombings in Cameroon. Globally, during this period, 22 localities were affected by this type of terrorist attack, especially Fotokol, Seradje, Kangueleri, Bornorie, Maroua, Mora, Kolofata, Kerawa, Dabanga, Waza, Kouyape, Ganse, Mozogo, Nguetchewe, Tolkomari, Bodo, Achigashia, Bargaram, Granny, Biabline, Homaka and Jakana. During this period, the locality that recorded the largest number of suicide bombings is Kolofata in Mayo-Sava division, hit six times, followed by Nguetchewé in Mayo-Tsanaga, targeted four times.

These attacks are usually accompanied by significant loss of life. In this regard, it is the border town of Kerawa, targeted three times in the same space-time, which has paid the highest price recorded in a single suicide bombing. About fifty people were killed in this terrorist act on September 3, 2015. In Jakana, the suicide bomber targeted a place frequented by vigilance committee members. The final balance was heavy: 12 dead [19]. Similarly, from July to November 2015, Boko Haram perpetrated at least 16 suicide bombings in the region, killing more than 100 people. In addition, other forms of sporadic attacks were reported in Gouderi, a village in the locality of Kolofata. In August 2017, 11 civilians were slaughtered by Boko Haram terrorists [20]. In January 2018, thirty or so incursions by the terrorist group in the far north of the country killed at least 26 people, according to a report drawn up on the basis of local reports. Ten civilians were also killed in the Mayo-Moskota district of Mayo-Tsanaga Department. For the Cameroonian authorities, these sporadic attacks mainly reflect the desire of the Islamists to stand up despite the difficulties they face. Surprised, they are more like settlements and revenge against repentant ex-combatants. Similarly, some incursions are aimed at allowing jihadists to stock up on food and other basic necessities [21].

However, the balance sheet would be much higher if, in some cases, members of vigilance committees had not intervened in time. The activation of the vigilance committees, which was a government reaction to the ultra-violence of Boko Haram, has attracted a great deal of community support. These young people organized into self-defense groups have thus avoided a dozen suicide bombings and contributed to the arrest of a hundred members of Boko Haram[3]. Since 2016, they have been associated with some military operations (including in Nigeria) against the jihadist group [22]. Likewise, ecumenical vigilance committees have emerged. They patrol localities and villages in search of intruders or suspicious elements and whistle the alert or take specific initiatives in case of very probable or proven risks. In the end, it is obvious that these vigilance committees have proved their effectiveness in a very short time but also at very low cost.

B. The activation of vigilance committees as a better recourse against the asymmetrical nature of the threat

The emergence of the state system and the increasing control over the use of violence by states, through the creation of professional armies, has led to a decline in the use of non-state violence by

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[3] The Rapid Intervention Battalion (BIR) has formed several vigilance committees to collect information. Crisis Group interview, Senior BIR Officer, Kolofata, March 2016.

individuals and groups [23]. From this point of view, the use of non-state groups to carry out national security missions is in fact an "outsourcing" of security and military affairs that should be the exclusive domain of the State. However, in the context of unconventional wars and counter-insurgency, the use of this strategy proves to be effective [7]. This delegation of security tasks to these informal groups allows the government to address the information problem that states face when they have to crush terrorists on their territory. Authors especially [24] finds that these groups are particularly effective at gathering local information because they come from co-ethnic networks within the population. Although the Cameroonian government does not provide them with weapons of war, the use of vigilance committees offers operational efficiency and strategic advantages: they often have an excellent knowledge of the local situation, especially since they operate in their own community; they quickly identify foreigners, exploit local networks and act with knowledge of geography, language and local culture. These civilian defense forces are often more determined to defend their region than non-indigenous forces and are less likely to leave their villages. They can also serve as a multiplier for state forces in situations where the size of the national army is not sufficient to contain the threat [7].

However, choosing to use these groups presents unfortunately some risks. Among these risks, one can note the potential inability to control the group, a penchant for violence and lack of training in the "morality of fighting" that could lead to widespread violations of human rights. The biggest threat is the risk that the group will restructure into a post-conflict militia to continue to depend from the earnings inherent to violence. From there, his funding may even become independent and he may end up turning against the government [25].

This evidence highlights a key question: what will happen to these committees when their services become redundant? According to studies, a given group can follow four possible paths. First, the group can be dismantled as soon as its mission is accomplished. Secondly, the government can integrate these self-defense groups into the official forces and thus legitimize and legalize the existence and continuation of the operations of the members of the group. Third, the group can be transformed into another type of organization, such as a group opposed to the government or a criminal organization. The group can finally become a political party. The chosen path often depends on the circumstances in which the group evolves, the balance between economic and political motivations and perceived threats. In some cases, self-defense groups dissolve when the mission is completed. This does not always imply a complete dissolution of the group, but rather a return to more localized community affairs. Civil

defense forces in Sierra Leone are an example. The Sierra Leonean government appealed to the country's traditional hunting organizations to fight alongside the government during the 1991-2002 civil war. These various organizations have been called Civil Defense Forces. They fought as state forces during the war, receiving salaries and state support, before being disbanded during the post-conflict disarmament process. Hunting organizations still exist but have returned to their communities; in some cases, they could be mobilized if needed [7].

In other cases, however, things did not always go well. Other groups have escaped the control of their political masters to oppose the government. Examples abound. In India, the government financed militias in Punjab to crush the separatist movement in Khalistan. These militias have developed so much that the government has become unable to control them; consequently, they have had allowance to attack the rich with impunity [26]. In Algeria, many of the Self-Defense Groups (GLDs) have undergone a shift in focus and turned into profit-driven militias, more concerned with looting and harming than protecting the local population [27]. In Guatemala in the 1980s and 1990s, the government used voluntary self-defense civil defense committees and civilian self-defense patrols to carry out a counter-insurgency strategy, but it proved incapable to control forces after the war [26]. From these palpable examples, the Cameroonian state, in order to avoid this drift after the war against Boko Haram, must absolutely and gradually taking into account the weakening of the threat recover the exclusive use of the force, by the gradual implementation, of the disarmament, the demobilization and the socio-economic reintegration of these combatants.

III. FROM THE GRADUAL RECUPERATION OF THE EXCLUSIVE USE FORCE BY THE STATE TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF DISARMAMENT, DEMOBILIZATION AND REINTEGRATION PROCESS (DDR)

The recourse of civil defense groups, often inclined to commit human rights violations and other abuses, threatens the security of the population and the stability of the government. Groups created to assist and support a government often end up challenging it. Very few governments have shown their willingness or ability to effectively control these groups and punish them when they go beyond the limits [28]. It is for this reason that the long-term use of vigilance committees is a threat to the conventional principles of state sovereignty (A). It is necessary, in order to consolidate peace, once the war is over to implement progressive Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) of vigilance committees (B).

A. *The long-term use of vigilance committees, a threat to the conventional principles of state sovereignty*

Vigilance committees are meant to be a temporary security force so that the investment is minimal and of limited duration [27, 29]. This view is essentially based on an understanding of the state defined by its ability to maintain a monopoly on the use of force [22]. These self-defense units, despite the popular support they have, can sometimes pose a significant risk to the safety of other civilians or other communities (snowshoes, settling of scores, etc.) during the conflict; especially when the authorities allow them to act on their own initiative out of control and with impunity. Although it must be recognized that in practice this control is often difficult to establish and maintain [30]. This is a reality that governments often face only afterwards.

They are often considered by the authorities as tools that are useful but malleable, allowing them to achieve their objectives while declining any responsibility for the violence committed. The deficit of a clear framework is actually done on purpose to show the sometimes-uncontrollable nature of these groups and to be able to profit from the fallout of their successes without accountability [31]. In this context, the scenery thus planted by the dominant actor that is the Cameroonian state and maintained by the insecurity environment, the committees of vigilance as rational as they are in an environment built by external actors take advantage to draw from benefits not only economic [4] but also by making themselves indispensable by their operational efficiency. However, the political and security consequences of this long-term strategy must be taken seriously. As long as it responds to a need to counter the threat that is a reality and especially to the extent of operational efficiency, problems do not arise. Difficulties will probably arise once this threat is removed. The committees of self-defense live from this activity and that would imply for a good number of them the return to inaction, to a warlike absence, to an invisibility and especially to unemployment.

These civil defense groups can be invariably dangerous. They are poorly trained in military matters, human rights and humanitarian law. They display varying levels of discipline ranging from weakly organized and directed structures to hierarchical chains of command. They often hold and use knives, hunting rifles and other arrows and spears. However strategic lucidity wants to recognize that behind the bows and arrows put forward, there cannot be no Kalashnikovs circulating, dispersed over successive wars in Libya, Sudan, Chad and the Central African Republic, as well as weapons recovered in battles against Boko Haram. The mere presence of these groups, who eventually become armed, can lead to an escalation of violence within communities, exacerbate tensions between ethnic groups and contribute to increased levels of crime. Once the conflict recedes, these armed civil groups can resort to self-defense to solve personal or intercommunity problems. Finally, it is not excluded that once the war is over, groups turn into anti-government forces, criminal groups [32], militias or terrorist organizations [7]. Given all these reasons, it seems necessary to plan the implementation of a progressive DDR.

B. *Prospects for implementing a DDR after the fight against terrorism*

Since the 1990s, with the fall of Berlin wall and the proliferation of internal conflicts in Africa particularly, the United Nations has instituted the need to consolidate peace to avoid a return to conflict. The traditional DDR program has the strategic objective of supporting the peace process, providing political space and contributing to a climate of security. It has as a prerequisite: the signing of a negotiated peace agreement providing a legal framework for DDR, confidence in the peace process, the willingness [33] of the parties to the conflict to join the DDR, as well as minimum guarantees of security [34].

Yet today, with the complexity of contemporary conflict, new models are being doing designed to handle post-conflict situations. These new contexts are characterized by levels and a more intense spread of violence against unarmed civilians perpetrated by militias, rebel groups or terrorists. In this context, the practice of DDR has evolved in recent decades to adapt to the varied natures of current conflicts. This situation has necessitated a number of institutional changes. Prior to the 1980s, the Cold War shaped an approach to post-conflict security issues focused on the disarmament and demobilization of military institutions and the reconfiguration of the armed forces. During the 1990s, more comprehensive goals were introduced in DDR programs as part of peace processes aimed at ensuring the transition from war to peace. En 2000, le rapport Brahimi a souligné l'importance d'assigner de solides mandats à l'appui de l'adoption de stratégies intégrées de DDR ; et les Normes intégrées de DDR, publiées en 2006, ont offert de très précieuses orientations aux réponses à apporter aux aspects politiques, militaires, sécuritaires, humanitaires et socio-économiques des situations post-conflits [35].

While traditional DDR focuses mainly on combatants within the military structures, second-generation programs turn to all other forms of combatants, but also to communities affected by armed violence [36]. Rather than implementing the relevant provisions of a peace agreement as provided for in first-generation DDRs, second-generation activities no longer necessarily come into play

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[4] Most members of these vigilance committees were unemployed before the war and with the conflict found an occupation in the name of defending the homeland [30].

following the signing of a peace agreement, given the asymmetrical natures of certain current conflicts.

The Lake Chad Basin Commission has itself grasped this problem by including a related measure in its regional stabilization framework. In fact, in August 2018, a regional strategy was adopted for the stabilization, reestablishment and resilience of the areas of the Lake Chad Basin affected by Boko Haram. It recognizes the interdependent experiences of the communities bordering the Lake Chad Basin and the benefits of a common approach. The strategy is based on nine priority pillars and aims to develop relevant policies and programs to ensure, in the short and medium term, the stabilization and development of the Lake Chad Basin region, including management and management of Boko Haram ex - associates [33]. This regional strategy document of the Lake Chad Basin mentions in its second pillar on security and human rights and its 7th objective the question of "management of self-defense groups". Indeed, it states that: "*The disarmament and demobilization of self-defense groups are supported through appropriate national initiatives to ensure the peaceful reorientation and reintegration of their members*". Cameroon, given the national security emergency has by a decree of the President of the Republic dated November 30, 2018 created a National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (CNDDR) but only for ex-combatants Boko Haram and armed groups in the North-West and South-West regions (Decree No. 2018/719 of 30 November 2018). This original decree in terms of DDR in Cameroon, although essential for an efficient contribution to the return of peace and security in these parts of Cameroon, unfortunately does not mention anything about a possible DDR process of self-defense groups called in Cameroon vigilance committees.

Yet DDR with respect to vigilance committees is strongly recommended. It represents a set of activities that are integral to post-conflict peacebuilding efforts. Fighters must absolutely commit themselves to no longer taking up arms and must be helped in this way. In Cameroon, once the war against Boko Haram has passed, it will be necessary that the pro-government civilian fighters of this war (vigilance committees), deposit all the material resources (machetes, arrows, traditional weapons, etc.) that enabled them to achieve the operational efficiency we know.

DDR consists of three interrelated phases: disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. These three steps require the implementation of concrete activities. The Decree of the President of the Republic of Cameroon of 2018 for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants of Boko Haram and the armed groups of the North-West and South-West regions, precisely specifies in its article 2, the prerogatives of the DDR Committee, in particular:

(1) With regard to disarmament: - to welcome and disarm Boko Haram ex-combatants and armed groups in the North West and South West regions; - to collect, catalog and store arms and ammunition surrendered voluntarily by ex-combatants; - to take all appropriate measures for the destruction of such weapons, ammunition and explosives, in liaison with the competent administrations.

(2) With regard to demobilization: - set up cantonment sites for ex-combatants and manage them; - ensure the supervision of ex-combatants; - provide multidimensional assistance to ex-combatants as they prepare for a return to civilian life.

(3) With regard to reinstatement: - to make the necessary arrangements for the de-radicalization of ex-combatants; - to raise awareness and provide multidimensional assistance to communities of origin to facilitate the reintegration of ex-combatants; - assisting the reintegration into civilian life of ex-combatants, in particular by organizing, training, providing tools or means of production and assisting in the creation of income-generating activities (Decree No. 2018/719 of November 30, 2018).

In the context of a DDR for the vigilance committees, it is important to return to the dismemberment of DDR concept.

Traditionally, disarmament includes the development of responsible arms management programs. It consists of collecting, recording, controlling and disposing of small arms, ammunition, explosives, small arms and light weapons held by combatants, but often also by the civilian population [34]. As part of the fight against Boko Haram vigilance committees also, must be able to hand over the homemade rifles, arrows, machetes, spears and other weapons available to the DDR program that could be put in place; when knows that one million Tutsi were stabbed almost to the point of extermination in Rwanda in 1994 [35]. Thus, having recourse in the context of this war with "white weapons", it would be necessary to take advantage of the second-generation DDR.

Second generation disarmament therefore appears relevant. According to the United Nations, it is a question of "*disarming hearts and minds*"[5]. This implies beyond a material and technical deposit of weapons, to carry out a work of deconstruction of a "habitus" [14, 36], disorganization, once the finished conflict, of consolidated social experiences within a violent environment and in a context of war. The aim here is to teach ex-combatants how to live normally without weapons and without violence; accompany them in a process of rebuilding a normal and peaceful life. Progressive disarmament reduces the mistrust

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[5] Interview in September 2017 with an expert from the UN DDR section currently serving at the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Central Africa (MINUSCA) after working in the DDR section of the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL).

that fuels a security dilemma, allows peaceful social and economic activities to resume.

In this perspective, demobilization will consist in the destructuring of the internal organization of vigilance committees; to release in a controlled manner; to demotivate ex-combatants by giving them solid reasons to turn their backs on violence. This process includes a "reintegration" phase during which short-term assistance is provided to former combatants [37]. Reintegration is emergency assistance to meet the basic needs of populations in difficult situations and is characterized by a short-term intervention, limited in time and without continuation, therefore so lacking in sustainability [38].

Since reintegration is short, only reintegration appears as a process of re-appropriating the rules and renewing of the community membership.

The DDR handbook of United Nations [39] defines reintegration as "measures of assistance provided to ex-combatants in order to increase the potential for economic and social integration the society of these ex-combatants and their families ". In 2000, the UN Secretary-General expanded the concept and stated that "the goal of reintegrating combatant members into civilian life requires not only direct assistance to demobilized combatants, but also broader support to efforts of the country concerned so that it can adapt its social and economic environment and be able to integrate these ex-combatants"[40]. It is for this reason that in the handbook: *Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards* (IDDRS), reintegration is a process that, while occurring at the local level, is still an integral part of overall development [41].

The reintegration process is therefore implemented by a project or program aimed at job creation through the development of income-generating activities [38]. Reintegration also means integrating again. Reintegration therefore implies adhering again to common values defined independently of individuals. The purpose of this resocialization is not a strict re-leveling of the combatants in the group, it is ultimately to reinitiate them, to make them pass from the "other side of the mirror" [42].

Reintegration therefore involves the deconstruction of the warlike reflexes of vigilance committees, deconstructing their relations to violence, to enable them to re-socialize themselves in civilian life. More technically, according to the United Nations procedure, it is the process of restoring veterans' civilian status and helping them obtain regular employment and income. It is a political, social and economic process of indefinite during that will have to take place primarily within communities, at the local level. It will be a question of finding them an occupation, returning to school for some, having a job that will allow them to earn a living for others without necessarily resorting to

violence. It is also true that some hope at the end of the war to be enlisted in the Cameroonian army [31]. The authorities will need to start planning for the possibilities and limitations of this option. Obviously, some may have this chance, but not all of them will be able to join the army after the war, given a set of regulatory and institutional constraints (especially the required conditions for doing such jobs).

Therefore, it is necessary for the State of Cameroon to begin to limit the use of vigilance committees. Disarm and demobilize them progressively if the weakening of Boko Haram continues; provide for the gradual return of better-equipped police and gendarmerie units to the borders as Boko Haram weakens; plan for sustainable socio-economic reintegration of ex-combatants in a peaceful society.

Overall, the objective of this DDR approach is to contribute to security and stability in a post-war context, so that the focus is definitely on peace and development. This approach generally helps to create a climate that is more conducive to political progress and peace. This step actually attacks to safety issues that inevitably arise when veterans try to adjust to a normal life during the important and delicate transition period between the end of a conflict and sustainable peace establishment. The DDR process encourages veterans to become active participants in the peace process.

IV.CONCLUSION

At the end of this analysis, the findings are clear on the advisability of using vigilance committees to fight Boko Haram. Therefore, the lack of clear supervision of this activity, the operational efficiency, the characteristics and the organization mode of these committees raise a certain number of concerns about the future of their members in the long term, once the fight is over. against Boko Haram completed. Inspired by structuralist constructivism and the theory of rational choice, the use of vigilance committees appears as a social construct. The expectations of their members in terms of rewards for the noble services rendered to the Cameroonian nation are strong. Experience elsewhere has shown that such hope when it is unfulfilled poses significant risks to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. So, Cameroon runs the risk that members of these civil defense units will become militias or other long-term criminals if their post-war expectations are not met. They will not only attack the population but also pose security problems as serious as Boko Haram. It is therefore important that the Cameroonian government also put in place a legal framework allowing vigilance committees also to be integrated in a similar process so as not to generate frustrations and resentments. Moreover, the use of these self-defense groups must, as a result of this analysis, be a circumstantial solution that should begin to disappear with the Boko Haram threat.

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