

Government) to enhance this process by educating civilian and military defence officials in the management of defence. Other initiatives include regional workshops and proposals to bring together the parliamentary defence committees of all the SADC states to explore ways in which their roles both domestically and on an interstate level might be enhanced.

### **Supporting Demobilization and Reintegration of Military Personnel**

This has of necessity been a feature of change in several Southern African countries in the past 15 years, most recently in Angola and South Africa. There are many lessons to be learned from the experiences in Zimbabwe, Namibia and Mozambique (as well as elsewhere in Africa, especially the Horn and Uganda). Demobilization in each of these countries was achieved with varying degrees of effectiveness: while the process was generally smoother than might have been anticipated, the end results in terms of reintegration into civil society (productive employment) often fell short of expectations.

The process of demobilization in South Africa is especially complex and has features which differ from those of all other Southern African countries, where the principal challenge was to relocate soldiers on the land in a productive way. A Service Corps has been established with funding from the Government of the Republic of China (Taiwan) but this is aimed at meeting the needs of unskilled or semi-skilled soldiers; the rationalization of thousands of senior officers and NCOs from the SANDF in the next three years will pose new challenges. Experience has shown that it is crucial that there is a long-term commitment to reintegration and reskilling.

Demobilization and rationalization programs are a reality; they are occurring anyway and do not have to become a condition for development assistance. Instead, they provide a remarkable opportunity for successful demilitarization, provided the defence forces and civil society can seek a common interest in utilizing the skills of former soldiers, in particular officers. Donors could play an important role here in promoting a common interest through funding