



Cover Note for Public Release of Carter Center Nepal Private Reports

October 2014

From 2009-2014, **The Carter Center conducted a mission to report on Nepal's peace process and constitution drafting.** Teams of national and international long-term observers were deployed in each **the country's five development regions.** **Over the course of the mission, the observations they produced** were shared with the Nepali public and international stakeholders in a series of reports.

B. BACKGROUND/METHODOLOGY

In early 2010, 2,973 combatants were officially disqualified from the PLA on the grounds that they were minors (under 18 or born after May 25, 1988) or late recruits, they entered the cantonments after the Ceasefire Code of Conduct was signed on May 25, 2006. Political deadlock enabled these combatants to remain in the PLA cantonments for over three years where they lived and trained with older PLA, many with the hope of being integrated into the Nepal Army. A two-step verification process carried out by UNMIN in late 2007 deemed them

monthly salary, while they themselves have been discharged with nothing to secure their future.

Neither the UCPN(M), the government, nor the UN seem to have effectively informed or discharged about why they were disqualified, and as a result some tend to blame the UN

society to be acknowledged by the government, rather than any of their packages or programs.” This was repeated by a Maoist representative in one of the comments, who said that discharged combatants were unhappy with the packages saying that becoming “bicycle mechanics” is an insult to their “sacrifice for the nation” and that combatants had expectations of receiving positions of higher importance in the views of their communities.

However, some ex-combatants expressed positive views towards the packages and a number expressed an

observers that dischargees had been given a one month "leave" from the party but were expected to be in contact subsequently. By contrast, in several districts, there did not appear to have been systematic attempts by the party to contact returned combatants.

While many interviewees seemed to indicate that discharged PLA were free to associate with the party or not as they chose, a small number noted significant pressure from the party on discharged PLA. Carter Center observers were unable to verify persistent reports from one district that discharged PLA were being pressured to rejoin the party. Several civil society sources believed that PLA who had rejoined were in a YCL camp while those who did not wish to rejoin were in "hiding" from the party. A senior journalist told observers that he also had difficulties finding discharged PLA despite repeated attempts, and used this as evidence that the discharged PLA were either being hidden by the UCPN(M) or were hiding from the UCPN(M). In at least one instance the UCPN(M) appeared to provide inaccurate information to the Carter Center, saying that ex-combatants were not in contact with the party when in fact observers met three discharged PLA working as security or volunteers during a party event in the same district.

Additionally, at least two interviews indicate a concern that potentially some number of discharged PLA are facing undue pressure from the Maoist party to rejoin. In one district, a family described mounting pressure from the UCPN(M) to send their daughter, who had been discharged, to work in the party office in the district headquarters. During the same interview, the combatant reported that after the UN finished the discharge process, the outgoing ex-combatants had a closed session with their PLA commander in which they were threatened with party action if any of them should talk to any outside organization or outside observer. She also reported that they were also discouraged to take up any of the UN packages.

A second dischargee from one district said that after dischargees instructed by the party to join the YCL and YCL members repeatedly came to summon him for work. As a result, he did join the YCL but he was unhappy with his low rank in the organization, and left. He did not stay at his home because he feared the YCL would come looking for him. The PLA commander instructed him to join the YCL.

There is little indication, despite concerns, that large numbers of dischargees have joined or criminal groups or

5. Give early consideration to extending the February 2011 end date for accessing the rehabilitation package. Given that many discharged PLA have not accessed the package as of yet, and should efforts to make the package more attractive be undertaken, consideration should be given sooner rather than later to extending the end date for enrolling in the rehabilitation package program. There should be due consideration to ensuring that facilities and trainers are secured for an extended period if necessary. Moreover, it is unlikely that all 4,008 disqualified PLA combatants will take up the rehabilitation package as individuals may have left the country, unilaterally enrolled in school, or gained employment. Efforts should be undertaken to determine the status of discharged PLA who have not contacted the UN hotline and do not intend to.
6. Set clear lines for international community engagement with the UCPN(M) that do not restrict the flow of information between international community representatives and those going through the rehabilitation process. The in

ANNEX: Former PLA Interviews

In order to assist readers of this paper in fully understanding and analyzing the data collected by The Carter Center, we have included summaries of the interviews done by observer teams around the country. Information regarding which districts the interviews took place in as well as all identifying details (age, caste, etc) has been omitted. A few relevant notes for context:

- x We have included a note at the top of the interview summary, wherever relevant, in cases where other people were present at the interview (in four cases family members were present, and in two cases Maoist or Matrika party members were present).
- x Some of the interviews are written in first person while others have been summarized by the Carter Center observers who conducted the interviews. All direct quotes are indicated by quotation marks.
- x In some cases, we have filled in missing parts of a sentence using brackets to help readers understand the flow of the conversation, or to indicate when the response was an answer to a question asked by Carter Center observers.
- x The information below is from interviews with former PLA and their families only. Other interviews (such as those conducted with community members, Maoist party members, neighbors, and district administration officials) are not included in this annex but are summarized in the white paper.

INTERVIEWS WITH FORMALLY DISCHARGED PLA MEMBERS (#1-18)

Interview #1

Gender: Female

Time lapsed since s/he left the cantonment: 1 month

Date of interview: 28 February 2010

"Yes. This is my husband's house. Where do I stay if not in my home? My parent's house is in [another district]. The address given to UNMIN is of my parent's house. My other friends are also returned and staying at their homes in this village."

"Although we have not faced any particular challenge from our family or village we still face many challenges after our return. Villagers might not talk directly to us but they still talk behind our back and question why we have 'failed.' This annoys us. The society will not easily accept our arrival after sacrificing our time and effort for nothing. We are not happy with the situation, don't have anything to live our lives by. Our future is not guaranteed even though we were promised many things."

"We don't have anything on hand to do for our future. Neither can we continue our study after such a long gap nor can our skills be applied at home. At the moment I don't have any plans."

"UNMIN discharged us as disqualified. There are people qualified by UNMIN but they actually don't know how to operate a gun. This is ridiculous. We know why UNMIN did this. However, our party did not disqualify us. At the time, a fight could have easily erupted with the UNMIN guys, but our party had convinced us to assist in the peace process, so we did. We won't forget our party. We'll wait to see what it does for us. So, we won't go far from our party. We will be ready for the 2nd round of movement/revolution if needed."

"My friends have also returned home after they were discharged. Most are angry about it. Some are planning to appear in the grade 10th examination this year. I don't think they will join any other group. At least I haven't heard about it. If they would join Matrika [CPN-M Matrika Yadav party], they will still face the same problems. They will still have to be able to look after themselves and provide for their families. I certainly will not go anywhere."

village, another lives in a neighboring VDC.

He seems frustrated, disappointed ~~abandoned~~ by his party. He says ~~that~~ villagers were unhappy with the lack of achievements of the PLA (including himself) ~~and~~ the party, but doesn't have problems to stay at home again.

He is waiting for a cook training of three months proposed ~~by~~ the UN. He is not interested in joining the YCL, as he considers them as inferior to the PLA with no serious training and activities.

He wished to be active for a better future of ~~his~~ country and joined the PLA nearly five years ago.

He is not in close contact with the party right now and ~~only~~ called for some party programs. He said that if the constitution is not written, there is a chance that discharged PLA could take up arms again, since they silently agreed to be discharged from the cantonments ~~as~~ part of a successful constitution writing process.

He seems unhappy since he is with no clear project ~~for~~ his and left alone after several years spent in a well structured environment. But even if angry with the ~~old~~ PLA, he doesn't plan to change party affiliation.

He is disappointed by all, the government, the UN and the Maoists for whom he invested his person and agreed to leave the camp as a part of the peace ~~agreements~~ but did not get anything in return.

He does not seem in close contact with his old friends, but knows that two have rejoined school. Many seem unemployed.

we studied up to grade 8/10 and are able to lead our lives.” They stated that they fought to end monarchy and feudalism. All three PLA were interviewed joined the party in 2003.

All three ex-PLA are planning to continue their involvement with the UCPN-M. In order to continue their affiliation with the party, the PLA contacted the party once they reached [their home district] and expressed their interest to work for the UCPN-M. They want to be active in one of the party organizations to establish a new people’s constitution and to change the existing political system. “This is what we fought for over several years.” The party responded positively to their wish to continue working for the UCPN-M. All interviewed PLA stated that they are ready to start protesting against the UCPN-M if the party fails to address its promises of establishing a new people’s constitution.

The interviewed said that to some extent the peace process in Nepal is moving in the right direction, and changes they have fought for are happening. For instance, elections have taken place, the monarchy has been abolished and Nepal has become a republic. They expressed however, that there are many other issues that have not yet been dealt with (e.g. a new constitution).

All discharged PLA are on holiday in their respective VDCs. The interviewed discharged PLA mentioned that they are in regular contact with other former PLA, including the ones that left the cantonments voluntarily. According to them most friends are in contact with the

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“[I will not retain my affiliation with the Maoists.] By leaving the cantonment I left the party.” The only group

She said her future is dark and doesn't know what she will do. (Her husband said she will raise her child with her family [in her home district], be a housewife and work in agriculture.) She gave her husband the UN toll-free number and he called but was only given information on education options. She sounded a bit dazed and

during his interrogation (occasional blackouts and mental instability). His wife was also ill-treated at the time of her husband's arrest and as a consequence has lost her hearing.

She wants to continue with her education. Although ~~she~~ she has lost several years, she joined school in her

when they are called.

Interview # 15

Gender: Male

Time lapsed since s/he left the cantonment: 1 month

Date of interview: 7 April 2010

"Yes. I came back straight to home on th25 Falgun 2066 (9 March 2010). But I stayed only one night there. The next morning I left for [a neighboring district headquarters] to take the tuition classes for the SLC exams. Except one I don't have any idea how many returned in this village."

"I don't think I was received well by my neighbors at my return. Even my parents didn't give me warm welcome. They all said to me, 'why you are back home now after many years which you had left without saying anything to anybody.' They also teased me asking what I got in return. This really frustrated me. That was the real challenge to tackle with. That's why I left the home very next morning and went to [the neighboring district headquarters]."

"Now they don't say like anything like that. However, I don't think their attitude has changed much. I have spent all the money that was given by UNMIN and the Party. Now I don't have any money left. I'm quite concerned about how I will continue my further study since my does support me. Therefore, I am not all happy. But I'm quite happy that I have got to take my SLC exams. Anyhow I want to continue the study. I want to study biology and want to become a medical doctor."

"I joined the Maoist party as PLA in Baishakh 2062 (May 2005). I joined PLA out of desire. As I grew up I would very often dream of joining the PLA. One more reason of joining the PLA was the killing of my own uncle by the (then Royal) Army who was a teacher in [a local school]. He was brutally killed by the Army around 2059 (2002-03). This incident had a deep impact on me and later on it instigated me to join the PLA. I have been a PLA member for almost five years."

"I'm still associated with the Maoist party. I do take part rallies and mass meetings. I also take part in YCL programs. I don't think if there are any kinds of restrictions to retain the affiliation with the party. I'll continue my affiliation with the party. My relations with the local leaders of the party are good. The party hasn't yet asked to come to rejoin the party."

"My opinion of the party has not much changed. It is the same. But I have a complaint against the party that it failed to take strong enough stance in our favor in the qualification process."

"[I blame the current government for my situation.] The peace process is not going right direction. It's really disappointing we have the Prime Minister who was elected from two constituencies. How can a man who was clearly discarded by the constituents from two constituencies be responsible to the people? The government is not paying serious attention to constitution writing. I don't expect any good from this government."

"The state must take good care of us. I would be thankful to you if you could take my message to them."

Interview # 16

Gender: Male

Time lapsed since s/he left the cantonment: Falgun 25 (around 5 weeks)

Date of interview: 8 April 2010

"Yes [this is my home village]. My family and neighbors have all treated me well. They do not have any negative perceptions."

"My only ambition is to serve my nation according to my capabilities and by continuing my work with the party. I sat for the SLC exam and plan to continue my studies."

"I joined [the Maoists] six years ago, in 2060 (2003-04). The Army came to my home, beat my family, and killed my maternal uncle. They called us Maoists. I became aware about the Maoists and decided to join the PLA."

"I contacted the party after I returned from cantonment and told them I would contribute. They have given me some responsibility in my village. The party did not contact discharged PLA; we contacted them. We are going to form a unit that is like the YCL but higher. Those former PLA who are truly dedicated have the skills to command the YCL. We know about command structures."

"The party tried its best to keep us in the PLA. They explained why we were disqualified. It is the UN who found us disqualified. The party and government should take care of us."

"Before we left the cantonment, we had a meeting with the party. The party assured us that the objectives for which we fought would be achieved. We told the party to continue the revolution and to write the constitution. I think our objectives will be achieved."

Some [of my friends from the PLA] will have difficulties to come because of their injuries from the war. But 75 percent of them have full dedication to the party."

"[Disqualified] is not a good label. I shared many medicines, and guns with my friends to win the war. But some of us have been called qualified and some disqualified. I feel sad and so do my friends who are still in the camps. My dedication is with the party, whether I am in or out of the cantonment."

"The government gave a small package but it is not enough. Many of my comrades lost their lives. The package will be meaningless unless we achieve the goals of the revolution."

"No [I have nothing else to add]. But I am glad that you contacted us; I feel good about this discussion."

Interview #17

Gender: Male

Time lapsed since s/he left the cantonment: 2.5 months

Date of interview: 13 April 2010

NOTE: Interviews #17, 18, and 19 were conducted jointly at a UCPN(M) office. The three interviewees were called by the local Maoist DIC to speak with observers. Interviewee #17 appeared well-informed and was the most outspoken of the three interviewed.

It was not his home village. He had returned to his home in [another district] for one month after being discharged and was now visiting his peers (other ex-PLA) in the district where the interview was held, "reuniting, planning for the future." He was uncertain of his plans, but would be returning soon to his family that currently lives in [another district].

He expressed unhappiness with his reception and current situation – "life is not normal at all." People in his village were disrespectful to him because he had been disqualified." He felt there was no place or work for him at home. He was unhappy that "five to six years of the most productive time in his life" had been wasted, asking, "What did I get out of this?"

He was also uncertain why he had been disqualified. Alluding to him, based on his age and participation with the PLA, he should not have been disqualified. When asked if he had raised the matter with the party or UNMIN he said, "We have not had a chance to speak with

today and had a long way to come.” He has apparently taken out loans to cover his expenses to do party work and is worried about paying them back.

He wants to receive further training in karate. “I am a well recognized sportsman,” and “would like to continue with my training in Japan or Thailand.”

According to him, UNMIN had promised during the discharge process to send him to Japan or Thailand to train with a karate coach. He was given the Kathmandu number to all the discharged and told to call it. He said he had tried, but was very frustrated because he had been unable to contact a representative. He also said that he had visited an OHCHR office, and all they had offered him was an education, carpentry and tailoring course. He was against all of these, and said if he was to receive an education he would want to be able to study through the Masters level. Apparently OHCHR said they would call him back about karate training, but never did. Overall, he was unhappy with the packages offered and the assistance he had received.

When asked [why he joined the Maoists], he said “No CPML could not become a peoples’ party.” He said he is very committed to the Maoists and will remain working for the party despite the hardships.

When asked [about the peace process in Nepal], he said “I don’t really believe a new government should be formed under the Maoists.”

He had little to say about other discharged PLA. He appeared less informed about the whereabouts of his peers.

Interview #20

Gender: Male

Time lapsed since s/he left the cantonment: 3 months

Date of interview: 24 April 2010

NOTE:

if they could guarantee his future. They have not gotten back to him.

He does not care about the 'Party' and feels that he spoiled his life by joining it. It's very unlikely that he will be joining any other party or group.

According to him, the current government and UN should take responsibility for the disqualified, as it was these entities that disqualified them. He also questioned the grounds of 'disqualifi

INTERVIEWS WITH PLA WHO WERE NO

his disillusionment with the UCPN-M he decided to join CPN-M Matrika. Since leaving the cantonment he has not returned back.

Both ex-PLA told us that they did not face any problems when returning home. They had good relationships with people in their respective communities. The former PLA said he had the chance to visit his home while in the cantonment. They further mentioned that due to their party's good work for the people and community they were normally well received.

The interviewees said that their main aim for the future is to work for the people as active members of CPN-M Matrika. Both ex-PLA expressed that they do not need any integration packages. Furthermore, they said the offered packages are not sufficient and that most PLA they know are not happy with them. "Instead of integration packages, we want a new people's constitution."

Both interviewed ex-combatants joined the PLA in 1976. They were active combatants until the end of the People's War.

As both interviewed joined CPN-M Matrika they have at this date no affiliation with the UCPN-M. However, both former combatants stated that along with other former PLA they were offered positions within the YCL or other party sister organizations. Both interviewed, along with many others, were not satisfied with the UCPN-M offers and declined it.

The ex-combatants also said that PLA are free to decide what to do in the future. They can join any other party or organization, go abroad to work or retain their affiliation with the UCPN-M.

The former PLA we met told us that they joined CPN-M Matrika because they were disillusioned with the direction the UCPN-M was taking. They claimed that in difference to CPN-M Matrika, the UCPN-M had abandoned revolutionary politics and was not fulfilling the expectations raised during the People's War. CPN-M Matrika gave them an opportunity to continue to work for the changes in society that they fought war during the People's War.

The interviewed PLA who had lived in the cantonment said he became deeply disillusioned with the UCPN-M while staying in the in camp. As mentioned previously, his opinion of the Maoists changed because they had left their revolutionary path, abandoning the issues (new people's constitution, revolutionary people's government) he had fought for.

During our conversation the former PLA expressed their dissatisfaction with the peace process. They said they do not expect the new constitution to be in favor of the people. They said they have to continue their struggle. What exactly the struggle will look like still has to be decided upon by their party.

While both ex-PLA blamed government and UN, they app

