

Report to Congress on Implementation of P.L. 111-172

The Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament & Northern Uganda Recovery Act

Introduction and Summary

The Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, Public Law 111-172, requires the Secretary of State to submit a report to Congress on implementation of the President's strategy to support disarmament of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and assistance provided toward a lasting solution to the conflict in northern Uganda.

The United States has worked over the last year with our bilateral and multilateral partners to advance the President's strategy. With our encouragement, the African Union (AU) and United Nations (UN) are working to enhance regional coordination toward addressing the LRA threat. We have also continued to support regional efforts to increase diplomatic and military pressure on the LRA. We have deployed U.S. military personnel to the region to serve as advisors to regional militaries pursuing the LRA. Meanwhile, we continue work with partners in the region to increase civilian protection, facilitate LRA defections, and address humanitarian needs, while also supporting the recovery of northern Uganda.

The United States remains committed to pursuing the multi-year, comprehensive strategy submitted to Congress last year. Any reduction in regional cooperation or military pressure could enable the LRA to regroup and rebuild its forces. However, the extent of U.S. efforts to implement the strategy remains a function of available and consistent resources. Given our budget constraints, we continue to encourage other members of the international community to join this effort and help fill funding gaps. We co-chair the International Working Group on the LRA, a mechanism established to enhance coordination among all donors.

Enhancing Regional Efforts to Apprehend LRA Top Commanders

Over the last year, the United States has worked with regional governments to enhance their military operations to apprehend or remove top LRA commanders from the battlefield. We continue to provide critical logistical support and non-lethal equipment to assist the Ugandan military's counter-LRA operations. With our encouragement, the government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) has deployed a U.S. trained and equipped battalion to participate in counter-LRA efforts in the LRA's area of operations in the DRC. As the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan increase their efforts to counter the LRA, we are engaging with and supporting their militaries. We have provided some equipment to the CAR forces deployed to the LRA-affected area.

Although regional militaries have reduced the LRA's numbers to an estimated 200 core fighters and an unknown number of accompanying children and abductees, the LRA will remain a serious regional threat as long as Joseph Kony and the LRA's top leaders remain in place. Over the last year, sustained military pressure has limited the LRA's opportunities to regroup and rearm. Abductees and low-level fighters have continued to escape and reintegrate into their communities. Nonetheless, the LRA is still terrorizing communities and undermining regional security across a broad swath of central Africa. According to the UN, there have been over 250 attacks attributed to the LRA this year alone.

In line with the President's strategy, we have reviewed how we can improve our support to the coalition of LRA-affected countries to increase the likelihood of successful operations to apprehend or remove LRA top commanders from the battlefield and bring them to justice. On October 14, the President reported to Congress that he had authorized a small number of U.S. forces to deploy to the LRA-affected region, in consultation with the regional governments, to act as advisors to the regional militaries that are pursuing the LRA. These advisors will enhance the capacity of regional militaries to coordinate and fuse intelligence with effective operational planning. The U.S. forces will not themselves engage directly against LRA forces unless necessary to defend themselves.

This is a short-term deployment with clear goals and objectives. We believe the U.S. advisors can address critical capabilities gaps to help the regional forces succeed. Additionally, our advisors are sensitive to civilian protection considerations and will work closely with our embassies to ensure they remain cognizant of local and regional political dynamics. The State Department has deployed a Civilian Response Corps officer to the region to work with the advisors in this regard. We will regularly review and assess whether the advisory effort is sufficiently enhancing the regional effort to justify continued deployment. Our embassies will also continue to consult with the regional governments and ensure their consent as we move forward. Continued deployment is conditional on regional governments' sustained commitment and cooperation to bring an eventual end to the LRA threat.

To further assist ongoing efforts to target LRA top commanders, the State Department will soon begin consultations with Congress on a proposal to expand the statutory authority for the Department's existing Rewards for Justice Program. This program allows the Secretary of State to publicize and pay rewards for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of designated war criminals.

This proposed expansion would allow the Department to use the program to target top LRA commanders and others indicted by international, hybrid or mixed tribunals for genocide, war crimes, or crimes against humanity. Having a visible rewards program could generate better human intelligence and thereby assist regional efforts to apprehend senior commanders, while also promoting LRA defections. We hope to work with Congress to move this initiative forward.

Enhancing Civilian Protection

The protection of civilians continues to be central to the U.S. strategy. We are mindful that the LRA has often responded to increased military pressure by retaliating against vulnerable communities. The national governments bear primary responsibility for civilian protection, and we are encouraging them to increase their efforts. The United States is also working to help the UN peacekeeping missions in the DRC (MONUSCO) and South Sudan (UNMISS) to augment their protection efforts in the LRA-affected areas. No UN peacekeeping mission operates in CAR, but we have encouraged the UN Integrated Peacebuilding Office for CAR to play a greater role in facilitating information-sharing and coordination of counter-LRA efforts in CAR. We also support the efforts of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa to enhance information-sharing and coordination among UN actors across the affected countries.

The United States and our partners have focused on steps to reduce the vulnerability of affected communities. In the DRC, Invisible Children and other non-governmental organizations have done impressive work to enhance an early warning high frequency radio network established by the Catholic Church. The State Department and USAID are funding projects in the DRC to expand that network and help communities develop protection plans. We realize the same kind of network does not yet exist across the border in CAR, but we hope to work with partners to address this gap. USAID is also implementing a pilot project to install low-cost cell phone towers in LRA-affected areas of the DRC that will enhance early warning capabilities.

Encouraging and Facilitating LRA Defections

The promotion of defections and support for disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) is another important area of focus. Over the course of this conflict, more than 12,000 former LRA fighters and abductees have been reintegrated and reunited with their families through Uganda's Amnesty Commission. In Fiscal Year 2011, USAID provided nearly \$2 million to support the rehabilitation of former abducted youth in CAR and the DRC and their reunification with their families. Providing mechanisms to facilitate surrender,

repatriation and reintegration is critical to creating an environment where defection is encouraged, safe and feasible. MONUSCO has taken a lead role in carrying out these tasks in the DRC, but no organization is playing a similar role across the border in CAR or South Sudan. A coordinated regional approach to promoting defections and supporting DDR across the LRA-affected area is needed. We have raised this issue with the AU and UN, and we are working with our partners to address these gaps.

Providing Continued Humanitarian Relief

As of August 2011, the UN estimated 440,000 people were displaced or living as refugees across CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan due to LRA activity. Insecurity and poor roads make it difficult for humanitarian organizations to access these populations. The United States provided over \$18 million in Fiscal Year 2011 to support the provision of food assistance and implementation of food security, humanitarian protection, health, and livelihoods initiatives for LRA-affected populations. In addition, a portion of the State Department's funding to UNHCR and ICRC goes to assist these populations. The European Union and other donors also provide significant humanitarian assistance to LRA-affected areas.

Supporting Post-Conflict Recovery and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda

Finally, the United States remains committed to supporting efforts to promote comprehensive reconstruction, transitional justice, and reconciliation in northern Uganda, where the LRA carried out its brutal campaign for nearly two decades. In Fiscal Year 2011, USAID provided approximately \$102 million in assistance to northern Uganda, including:

- \$2 million to assist internally-displaced persons (IDPs) and returnees to secure durable return solutions;
- \$2.1 million to enhance accountability and administrative competence of local governance institutions, including the civilian police and judiciary;
- \$4.2 million to help former LRA combatants with vocational education and employment opportunities; and
- \$15 million to promote rural rehabilitation and food security.

Northern Uganda has undergone a visible transformation since the LRA's departure from Uganda in 2005, especially in terms of infrastructure and social services. The population is able to move freely, stores are open, and fields are being cultivated. According to UNHCR, an estimated 95 percent of people once living in IDP camps have moved from camps to transit sites or returned home. According to the Ugandan Bureau of Statistics, poverty in northern Uganda

declined from 60.7 percent to 46.2 percent between 2005/6 and 2009/10, representing the largest decline in poverty of all regions in Uganda during that period. Yet, even with this impressive decline, the north remains the poorest region in the country. Furthermore, land issues, tensions between tribes and sub-tribes in the region, and widespread psycho-social trauma, among other issues, need to be addressed to ensure the sustainability of peace in northern Uganda.

From 2009 to 2011, the Government of Uganda (GoU) contributed approximately \$ 110 million to its Peace, Recovery and Development Plan for Northern Uganda (PRDP). This is less than the government's original pledge to provide 30 percent of the PRDP's total budget, but GoU officials state that they will continue to earmark funds for northern Uganda's recovery. During this period, non-USG donors have provided significant funding in support of the PRDP.

The GoU has taken steps to increase oversight of PRDP funds through regular multi-stakeholder coordination meetings. However, challenges remain, including district staffing shortages, inadequate capacity to monitor and evaluate implementation, and the lack of qualified contractors, generating concerns about the quality, usefulness, and sustainability of projects. To address these challenges, the GoU, with donor support, established a monitoring and evaluation unit to assess progress and provide oversight. Although the PRDP ends in June 2012, the GoU is preparing a second phase of the PRDP, in consultation with donors.

GoU officials acknowledge that more needs to be done to advance the PRDP's fourth strategic objective: peace-building and reconciliation. The GoU has set up the International Crimes Division of the High Court of Uganda to try individuals alleged to have committed serious crimes during the conflict. The GoU has not yet established mechanisms to promote truth-telling and reconciliation at local or national levels. Earlier this year, the donor-supported Justice Law and Order Sector (JLOS) organized a series of country-wide consultations to develop an action plan for national reconciliation.

Among all donors, the United States has led support for northern Uganda's transformation. A summary of USAID-funded programs is available in the Appendix. To advance transitional justice activities, USAID has funded the Public International Law and Policy Group since 2008 to help establish a special division of the High Court and build the capacity of JLOS. In addition, USAID's Office of Transition Initiatives successfully implemented the Northern Uganda Transition Initiative, which facilitated the return and reintegration of displaced persons and

promoted peace, recovery, and development in the region. USAID has largely transitioned its work in northern Uganda to longer-term development but will continue to take a conflict sensitive approach. USAID will continue to dedicate resources to address some of the remaining conflict drivers in northern Uganda, such as land disputes, and to build local government capacity to deliver services.

Appendix I: Summary of USAID-Funded Programs in Northern Uganda and Accomplishments, Fiscal Years 2008 – 2011

Program	Objectives	Accomplishments
Northern Uganda Transition Initiative (NUTI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the return and reintegration of displaced persons; • Increase the visibility of, and confidence in, all levels of government through the delivery of targeted, strategic interventions; • Increase access to information on peace, recovery and development issues through strategic communications activities and support to the media; and • Provide support to transitional justice processes. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allocated more than 200 grants to local government and community-based organizations, benefitting more than 150,000 people and enabling local governments to be at the forefront of service delivery; • Worked directly with radio stations to help disseminate correct and timely information on issues such as public services and land rights to returnees in northern Uganda and supported strategic communications that conveyed messages of peace, recovery, and development; and • Helped GoU establish war crimes legislation and a special division within the Ugandan High Court, the International Crimes Division, to try senior LRA commanders for violations of international humanitarian law.
Stability, Peace and Reconciliation in Northern Uganda (SPRING)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase Ugandan capacity to mitigate conflict and promote peace and reconciliation; • Enhance economic security and social inclusion among vulnerable and conflict-affected populations, including vulnerable children; and • Improve access to justice by vulnerable and conflict-affected populations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established frameworks for effective community relations practices resulting in positive engagement between members of farmer groups and the various community agencies representing the needs of resettling communities; • Increased productivity of SPRING supported enterprises by 59 percent, while income or revenues from sale of such crops has doubled (98.7 percent) over the last two harvest seasons; and • Enhanced land tenure security for SPRING's economic security beneficiaries.
Northern Uganda Development of Enhanced Local Governance, Infrastructure, and Livelihoods (NUDEIL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage and facilitate the return process in northern Uganda by financing activities that will resettle agricultural lands, increase incomes, and improve family well-being; • Contribute to economic recovery of target populations by employing local labor on labor-intensive infrastructure reconstruction and rehabilitation projects; and • Strengthen service provision and infrastructure rehabilitation and maintenance capabilities of 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amuru District completed the construction of 15 boreholes in vulnerable communities and is currently constructing 3 major farm-to-market roads. These roads will allow greater access to markets, schools, and other necessary services to those who need them most; • Oyam District completed a number of rehabilitation projects including new classroom blocks, teacher housing, the District Engineering Office, and numerous boreholes. In

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	<p>participating District Governments.</p>	<p>addition, the District completed 11 road projects financed by the NUDEIL program;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gulu District completed 39 boreholes in vulnerable communities and is currently constructing 6 labor based road projects in rural communities; • Kitgum District complete 10 boreholes and fully funded the rehabilitation of two schools; and • At least 85 District lead projects are ongoing and next funding cycle will increase that number to over 200 projects in former LRA- affected areas.
<p>Strengthening Democratic Linkages Program (LINKAGES)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen linkages among local governments, civil society, and Parliament by increasing the capacity of various stakeholders to effectively participate in a multi-party system of government; • Increase democratic participation in political processes; improve institutional transparency and accountability; and • Increase and improve essential service delivery to constituents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supported 400 local and national civil society organizations to build advocacy skills and watchdog functions; • Trained 90 percent of the Members of Parliament (MP) in the Eighth Parliament, and all members of the Ninth Parliament to appropriately respond to civil society requests; and • Overall, 533 MPs were trained during the Program. Within local government, a total of 1,048 women and 3,749 men were trained to participate in local and national political systems to increase their representation and build the capacity of local organizations, district local governments and Parliament.
<p>Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build the capacity of the GoU to draft transitional justice legislation, including laws related to war crimes prosecutions and truth-telling; • Support the GoU in creating transitional justice institutions, including a special war crimes division in the High Court and a truth-telling mechanism; • Enhance the capacity of all key actors involved in the prosecution of war crimes, including prosecutors, defense attorneys, judges, and court support staff; and • Assist the GoU and civil society organizations in the design of a national strategy for the dissemination of information regarding the creation of transitional justice mechanisms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Built GoU capacity to handle war crimes cases domestically, including advice on the establishment of the High Court International Crimes Division; • Provided tailored trainings and coaching on law and practice issues to judges, prosecutors, defense counsel, court administrators and justice sector officials; and • Helped to develop the Government’s community consultation process across the country.