

**Testimony for Senate Foreign Relations Subcommittee on African Affairs**  
*“Countering the Lord’s Resistance Army”*

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**Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs**

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to update the committee about our ongoing efforts to help end the threat posed by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA). Over the last several years, the governments of the region have made progress dispersing the LRA and reducing its numbers. However, despite this progress, the LRA continues to abduct, terrorize, and uproot communities across three countries – the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Sudan. The LRA is a weakened force, but its humanitarian impact remains disproportionate. The UN Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs estimated that more than 465,000 people were displaced or living as refugees during 2011 as a result of the LRA threat.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that the LRA’s actions are an affront to human dignity and a threat to regional stability. Joseph Kony and the LRA’s top leaders should be brought to justice.

We appreciate Congress’ strong interest and longstanding concern about the LRA, especially the attention given by this Committee over the years. We view Congress as a critical partner in our ongoing efforts. The United States has worked for many years to help address the suffering caused by the LRA. Consistent with the legislation passed in 2010, we continue to pursue a multi-faceted strategy to help the governments and people of this region in their efforts to end the threat posed by the LRA and address the human consequences of the LRA’s atrocities.

Let me stress that the governments of Uganda, CAR, DRC, and South Sudan are in the lead. Their troops are making the most important sacrifices, and their people are confronting the LRA’s terror. These governments are the ones that are ultimately responsible for ending this threat and protecting local communities. The United States is trying to help them fulfill that responsibility. We have a strong interest in enhancing the capacity and cooperation of our partners in Africa to address threats to peace and security, such as the LRA, and to better protect their citizens.

Continued leadership and cooperation by these governments is essential to keep the pressure on the LRA. As we have seen in the past, the LRA can exploit

any reduction in military or diplomatic pressure to regroup and rebuild its forces. Over recent years, the State Department has provided support to enable counter-LRA operations by our regional partners. Since 2008, we have obligated approximately \$50 million in logistical support to help the Ugandan military sustain its operations and increase its mobility. We continue to provide this support.

In the DRC, the State Department funded training and equipment for a light infantry battalion of the Congolese army that is now operating in LRA-affected areas of the DRC. This battalion is engaged in targeted military operations against the LRA in coordination with the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The State Department continues to fund two mentors who are working with this battalion. We are also engaging with the militaries of CAR and South Sudan as they increase their efforts to counter the LRA and protect their populations.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to look at ways that we can improve our security assistance and enhance the capacity of these militaries to succeed in their mission. Last October, President Obama authorized the deployment of a small number of U.S. military forces to serve as advisors to the national military forces pursuing the LRA and seeking to protect local populations. The President announced yesterday that the United States will continue the deployment. My colleague from the Department of Defense will go into more detail on the work of these advisors. We believe they are helping the partner forces to enhance their cooperation, intelligence-sharing and fusion, and operational planning.

The U.S. military advisors are coordinating closely with the UN peacekeeping missions in the region, especially to promote civilian protection. MONUSCO, in particular, has stepped up its efforts to address the LRA in the DRC. MONUSCO conducts targeted military operations unilaterally as well as jointly with the Congolese military to help protect civilians. We have encouraged the UN to scale up its efforts, when possible, to help address the LRA threat in CAR and South Sudan. The new UN Regional Office for Central Africa is overseeing the developing of a regional UN strategy for addressing the LRA, which will be presented to the UN Security Council next month. We have been working with the UN to develop this strategy and look forward to helping the UN implement it.

We are also working closely with the African Union as it increases its efforts to address the LRA. Last month, the AU officially launched its Regional

Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA. Although many operational details are still being worked out, we believe the AU's involvement can strengthen coordination, information-sharing, and trust among the four militaries pursuing the LRA. We also believe the AU can help the governments in the region to develop a common approach to encouraging LRA defections and ensuring effective repatriation and reintegration of those who defect. Our military advisors in the field are coordinating with the AU staff as they stand up this initiative on the ground, and our embassies are working closely with the AU's Special Envoy on the LRA issue, Francisco Madeira.

These new initiatives, united together, offer real promise. However, as Chairman Kerry wrote in *The Huffington Post* earlier this month, we have to level with the American public that ending the LRA threat is not an easy mission. The LRA operates in very small groups across vast territory roughly the size of California, much of it densely-forested. Regional forces have had success in tracking down LRA groups, but the LRA's leaders are savvy. They exploit communal conflicts and attack remote communities, which lack basic road, telecommunications and governance infrastructure. Moreover, the governments in this region have limited capabilities and numerous security challenges.

Mr. Chairman, effectively ending the LRA threat requires simultaneously removing the top leadership from the battlefield and addressing the conditions that leave communities so vulnerable to predatory groups such as the LRA. This is precisely why the United States is seeking to pursue a multi-faceted strategy to enhance both military and civilian capacity in the region. In partnership with USAID, the State Department is supporting projects to increase civilian protection, enhance early warning capabilities, deliver humanitarian relief, and strengthen the overall resiliency of communities. We also continue to encourage other international donors to increase their efforts in these areas. As we have seen in northern Uganda and parts of South Sudan, development can play a critical role in pushing out the LRA and keeping it from returning.

We also believe that targeted efforts, in coordination with increased military pressure, to encourage LRA fighters to peacefully surrender can have a great effect on reducing the LRA's numbers. Since 2000, more than 12,000 fighters and abductees have left the group and been reintegrated and reunited with their families through Uganda's Amnesty Commission. The successful rehabilitation and reintegration of those who leave the LRA creates a positive feedback cycle that encourages others to defect.

MONUSCO is undertaking critical efforts in the DRC to encourage LRA defections, including by setting up assembly points where LRA fighters and associated persons can safely surrender. The Mission is publicizing the locations of these assembly points through targeted radio broadcasts and leaflets. We strongly support these efforts and have encouraged the UN to initiate similar, coordinated activities in CAR and South Sudan. We are also looking at ways that we can augment these activities through our programs and presence on the ground. The State Department has deployed a civilian officer to the region who is working with our military advisors and embassies to identify critical gaps and opportunities for further U.S. support. We plan to deploy a second officer soon.

Mr. Chairman, we believe there is an opportunity for further U.S. support to the counter-LRA effort using the State Department's War Crimes Rewards Program. This program allows the Secretary of State to publicize and pay rewards for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of targeted war criminals. This program has been very effective in bringing fugitives to justice, but the present statutory authority is limited to fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

We welcome legislation that would expand the authority for the War Crimes Reward Program so it could be used to target foreign nationals accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide by any international criminal tribunal, including hybrid or mixed courts. This would shift the program from being *court-specific* to *crime-specific*. Fugitives would only be added to the program after careful review and approval by an interagency committee, and ultimately the Secretary of State.

Under this expanded authority, we could use the program to target Joseph Kony and other top LRA commanders. We could publicize rewards for information about LRA leaders using leaflets, radio broadcasts, and other communications mechanisms. We believe, and our colleagues at the Defense Department agree, that this would provide an important tool to generate information about the whereabouts of top LRA leaders, especially to encourage non-indicted LRA fighters to defect and provide such information.

In closing, let me reiterate that it is our partners in the region – governments and civil society organizations – who are in the lead in countering the LRA threat and its impacts. But the United States can provide critical capabilities and support to

help them succeed in their efforts. We believe doing so puts us on the right side of history, on the right side of our values, and on the right side of our strategic interests. We appreciate Congress' strong commitment to countering the LRA, and we look forward to working with you in the months ahead.