

Fight against the LRA: continuing implementation of the UN strategy and AU Regional Cooperation Initiative

Entebbe (Uganda), 16 September 2014 – The United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) organised on 15-16 September 2014, a coordination meeting of focal points from organisations dedicated to ending the regional threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Co-chaired by Abdoulaye Bathily, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of UNOCA, and Lieutenant General (Rtd.) Jackson Tuwei, the African Union (AU) Special Envoy for LRA Issues, the meeting focused on the continuing implementation of the United Nations regional LRA strategy and African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA). Participants in the meeting included LRA focal points from UN entities, the AU, bilateral government partners, non-governmental organisations, and civil society representatives from LRA-affected countries.

Presentations regarding a number of counter-LRA initiatives were made, including military operations performed by the African Union's Regional Task Force (RTF), ongoing actions to encourage LRA defections, and efforts regarding reintegration and social services for LRA defectors and escapees.

Key recommendations that emerged from the meeting concerned the continuation and stepping up of military tracking efforts against the LRA, the urgent need for financing and implementation of reintegration projects, and increased humanitarian and long-term development assistance for LRA-affected areas. The achievements of the RTF, including the significant contribution of the Ugandan People's Defence Force (UPDF), were underlined during the meeting. Stakeholders commended the engagement of AU-RTF troop contributing countries and the dedication of their soldiers.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the AU Special Envoy stressed the need for continuing and increasing momentum in order to realize the goals outlined in the UN and AU strategies -- building on the successes already achieved by the individuals and institutions represented at the meeting – to achieve peace, security, and development in the areas currently affected by the LRA.

The Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the AU Special Envoy hailed the exemplary coordination of efforts by the UN; AU; bilateral partners, including the European Union and the United States; AU-RTF troop contributing countries; humanitarian partners; non-governmental organisations; and civil society organisations in addressing collectively the continuing menace posed by the LRA.