



Security Council

SC/11390

Department of Public Information • News and Media Division • New York

Security Council
7171st Meeting (AM)

VIOLENCE IN CENTRAL AFRICA THREATENING EFFORTS TO ELIMINATE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY.

SECURITY COUNCIL NOTES. INCREASED COOPERATION AT REGIONAL LEVEL VITAL

In a presidential statement adopted today, the Security Council expressed concern at the deterioration of stability in parts of Central Africa, particularly in the Central African Republic, as well as maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, and called upon all stakeholders to increase cooperation to challenge the threat of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) and other armed groups.

Oh Joon (Republic of Korea), the Council's President for May, presented the statement, which, among others, had the 15-nation Council thank Obou Moussa of Chad, the outgoing Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Central Africa and Head of the United Nations Office of Central Africa, noting his leadership and support towards consolidating peace and preventing conflict in the region. The Council also welcomed the appointment of Abdoulaye Bathily of Senegal as the new Special Representative and Head of Office.

However, the Council condemned, once again, the appalling crimes against humanity carried out by LRA, and demanded an immediate end to all attacks and the release of all those abducted by the armed group. The diplomatic efforts of Mr. Moussa and Francisco Madeira, the African Union's Special Envoy on the LRA Issue, had helped strengthen regional cooperation and had facilitated continued African Union-Regional Task Forces operations. Such enhanced operations against LRA had recently resulted in several significant defections of LRA fighters and the rescue of women and children from their ranks.

Nonetheless, because of the creation of potential security vulnerabilities resulting from the increased instability in South Sudan could be exploited by LRA, the Council urged all regional Governments to fulfil their commitments under the Regional Task Forces, providing basic provisions for their security forces. International support was important in such operations, and a continuing advisory and logistical support by the United States, as well as funding by the European Union, was noted.

The Council also urged all relevant United Nations and African Union missions in the region, notably the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and United Nations Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central Republic of Africa (MINUSCA) to continue their efforts to combat LRA. As well, the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) was mandated to cooperate and share information related to the regional threat of LRA and to coordinate its operations with the Regional Task Force, as well as with non-governmental organizations involved in tackling the threat of LRA.

Preceding the issuance of the presidential statement, Council members heard a briefing by Mr. Moussa, who introduced the Secretary-General's report on the matter. The political and security

situation in the region remained fragile, and since his last briefing before the Council, violence had continued to undermine efforts to stabilize the area, in particular community violence. The violence in South Sudan had jeopardized the initiatives of the African Union to eliminate LRA, with the Governments of Uganda and South Sudan having to withdraw troops from the African Union's regional intervention forces. Further, the Boko Haram in Nigeria was a grave concern, with its exploiting vulnerable borders of Cameroon and Chad, and with its abduction of Nigerian schoolgirls near those borders.

However, he noted that the Office's collaboration with the African Union, and its coordinating of international efforts within the United Nations regional strategy framework to address LRA had resulted in a decrease of LRA-related deaths, abductions and displaced persons, while military operations and the defections campaign had furthered weakened the armed group. Further, the recent convening of the first Interregional Working Group on the establishment of the Inter-regional Coordination Centre had reaffirmed the commitment of Gulf of Guinea States to combat maritime insecurity.

Among some of the Office's achievements during his three-year tenure, Mr. Moussa highlighted the Framework of Cooperation the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA) had signed and elaborated with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in 2012. Yet, despite Central Africa being rich in resources, it remained one of the most underdeveloped and volatile subregions in Africa. Its potential, however, was unlimited, and the political commitment of ECCAS member States to address critical challenges, such as the crisis in the Central African Republic and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea was evident. Still, underscoring that the subregion remained fragile, he said that, with the Council's continuing guidance, UNOCA would continue to play an instrumental role in supporting States in the area.

Also speaking today were representatives of the United Kingdom, France, Chile, Australia, United States, Rwanda, Lithuania, Chad, China, Luxembourg, Jordan, Nigeria, Argentina, Russian Federation and the Republic of Korea. The meeting began at 10:09 a.m. and ended at 11:51 a.m.

Background

The Security Council had before it the report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa and on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas (document S/2014/319).

Briefings

ABOU MOUSSA, Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), introduced the Secretary-General's report, saying that the political and security situation in the region remained fragile. Since his last briefing before the Security Council, violence continued to undermine efforts to stabilize the area. Community violence since 2013 had increased, creating a humanitarian crisis. The violence in South Sudan had jeopardized the initiatives of the African Union to eliminate the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), with the Governments of Uganda and South Sudan having to withdraw troops from the African Union's regional intervention forces. Further, the Boko Haram in Nigeria was a grave concern, with its exploiting vulnerable borders of Cameroon and Chad, and with its recent abductions of Nigerian school girls near those borders.

His missions to Chad, Cameroon, Congo and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, he said, highlighted the regional consequences of the crisis in the Central African Republic and the humanitarian challenges faced by Governments and United Nations agencies. The Office's collaboration with the African Union, and its coordinating of international efforts within the United Nations regional strategy framework to address the LRA had resulted in a decrease of LRA-related deaths, abductions and displaced persons, while military operations and the defections campaign had furthered weakened

LRA. During the fourth Ministerial Meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism of the Regional Coordination Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA, participating countries had renewed their political commitment, endorsing his proposals for a high-level summit on LRA. Further, the recent convening of the first Interregional Working Group on the establishment of the Interregional Coordination Centre had reaffirmed the commitment of Gulf of Guinea States to combat maritime insecurity. The 2014-2016 road map and action plan for operationalizing the Interregional Coordination Centre was, as well, a welcomed development.

He then highlighted some of the Office's achievements during his three-year tenure as Special Representative, among them, the organizing of five Ministerial Meetings of the United Nations Standing Advisory Committee for Security Questions in Central Africa. UNOCA had also signed and elaborated a Framework of Cooperation with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) in 2012, supporting capacity enhancement in the area of mediation, as well as its inclusion in joint missions within the subregion. In addition, the Office, along with the Department of Political Affairs had spearheaded the development of the regional strategy to address the threat and impact of LRA. Routine joint diplomatic missions, with the African Union Special Envoy for the LRA Issue and the convening of twice-yearly LRA focal points had ensured the integration of political, military and civilian efforts.

He noted that despite Central Africa being rich in resources, it remained one of the most underdeveloped and volatile subregions in Africa. Its potential, however, was unlimited. Further, he had observed firsthand the political commitment of ECCAS member States to address critical challenges, such as the crisis in the Central African Republic and piracy in the Gulf of Guinea. However, despite such efforts, the subregion remained fragile and continued to require ongoing support from the international community. He said that with the Council's continuing support and guidance, UNOCA would continue to play an instrumental role in supporting States in the area.

XXX (United Kingdom) said the Central African subregion was beset by a wide range of security problems which crossed borders and required the support of neighbouring countries. LRA had struck fear into the hearts of civilians for nearly 30 years and remained an abhorrent threat to peace and security in the region. The goal must be the permanent eradication of that threat. And until that happened, LRA would continue to evade capture by passing through the porous borders of the subregion. Cross-border cooperation must be enhanced to eliminate safe havens. Poaching and the illegal trade of wildlife were also wide-spread problems. As of late, there had been an alarming number of troubling developments in the wider region, including the situation in the Central African Republic. The United Kingdom was concerned about recent developments in Burundi and urged the international community to maintain a continued presence in that country. In Nigeria, Boko Haram was a repugnant organization that had committed vile acts of terrorism. The United Kingdom was increasingly concerned that its influence outside of Nigeria was growing.

GÉRARD ARAUD (France) said the LRA movement had exploited the security vacuum in parts of the Central African Republic and was working with other armed groups. Members of LRA should not be permitted to flourish. The African Union regional force operations had proven their worth and France hoped the commitment of the primary countries concerned would continue until the threat was eliminated. The number of internally displaced persons had fallen. France encouraged regional Governments to address the plight of persons who had returned to their homes, often having lost nearly everything. The global community must not forget the need for justice. France encouraged States to work with the International Criminal Court so that Kony could be arrested. While the LRA threat had faded, other movements had emerged, including Boko Haram. Terrorism remained a threat, while the trafficking in endangered species, the drug trade and piracy were other cross-cutting issues that plagued the entire subregion.

EDUARDO GÁLVEZ (Chile) said that some items in the Secretary-General's report, in particular, the crisis in the Central African Republic and Uganda and South Sudan's withdrawal of troops, had created vulnerabilities that LRA could take advantage of, and he called for efforts to be stepped up to eliminate that armed group. Many non-governmental organization and humanitarian

groups had limited their activities due to the violence, and accordingly, it was important that donors re-established services in those affected areas. Further, arrest warrants against Kony and the LRA commanders should be stepped up. The wide-spread unemployment of youths in the region made them vulnerable to recruitment by armed groups and terrorists. Although aware of staffing restraints, he urged the Office to take measures with regional organizations and other stakeholders to address that matter, and further urged UNOCA to establish initiatives to combat the illegal trade of wild flora and fauna that financed terrorist and armed groups.

PHILIPPA KING (Australia) urged that the momentum and support for eliminating LRA be maintained, expressing concern that the crisis in the Central African Republic and in South Sudan risked undermining progress achieved by diverting attention and resources elsewhere. Reports that senior LRA leaders might be based in the north-eastern part of the Central African Republic, and that some ex-Séléka combatants had been suspected of collaborating with LRA, was also of great concern. It was imperative that the Organization and the African Union missions in the region deepen information sharing, coordination and cooperation in their efforts to combat LRA. Lastly, she called for support for the Office and regional-led efforts to address other, often-related challenges to Central Africa's peace and security, including the proliferation of small arms and light weapons and the poaching and trafficking of wildlife.

SAMANTHA POWER (United States) said the Central African region must be a priority for the international community. The world watched with horror and outrage the path of destruction perpetrated by Boko Haram. The abduction of 200 public school girls had shocked the world to the core. The United States was prepared to assist the region to develop a comprehensive plan to defeat Boko Haram and would do all it could to support Nigeria's efforts to ensure the missing school girls were returned. For decades, LRA had disrupted the way of life for people across four countries. The goal now was to bring this scourge to a complete and decisive end. In the past few years, efforts by the African Union Regional Task Force and others had reduced LRA combatants from 1,000 to a small fraction of that number. Since 2012, more than 180 men, women and children defected or were released from LRA. Because of that progress, LRA was becoming less relevant. However, the international community must be prepared to work with local leaders to promote their community's recovery and ensure areas ravaged by LRA could enjoy the benefits of peace. Reports of possible LRA-collusion with former Séléka fighters was extremely concerning. The LRA should not be tolerated or helped by anyone, let alone a Member State of the United Nations.

EUGÈNE RICHARD GASANA (Rwanda) said the situation in the region had deteriorated mainly due to the conflicts in the Central African Republic and South Sudan. Despite those crises, several countries had registered tremendous economic growth, which showed that the region had the potential to escape the current negative development spiral. However, the LRA terrorist organization still had the capacity to destabilize the subregion, therefore, the international community must make sure that LRA was eradicated once and for all. Coordination was critical to ending the threat posed by LRA. It was also important to sustain the progress made thus far by supporting peacebuilding activities and the development of a comprehensive anti-LRA strategy. Financial support to the African Union Regional Task Force was also important. The world was shocked by the abduction of more than 200 school girls in Nigeria, and the international community must remain committed to supporting the country in its efforts to "bring back our girls". The efforts of UNOCA in preventing conflicts in the Central African region should be commended and supported.

RITA KAZRAGIENE (Lithuania) said that, although efforts to fight LRA had enjoyed some success, the threat posed by the group had not passed, as some 160,000 civilians remained under constant threat. She noted with concern the increase in LRA activities in the Central African Republic, where the group's leaders were reportedly based. UNOCA would continue to play a leading role in fostering the development of long-term programmes to address the humanitarian problems in LRA-affected areas. She stressed the importance of promoting disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in LRA-affected areas. The successful reintegration of children abducted by LRA remained a challenge, while her country commended the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) for its work on child protection and the prevention of sexual and gender-based violence.

MAHAMAT ZENE CHERIF (Chad), while noting success by the Organization and stakeholders in combating armed groups, including that of the Democratic Republic of the Congo with the 23 March Movement, said that those efforts must continue, in particular with Boko Haram. Condemning the abduction of the girls by that group, he stated his country's solidarity with Nigeria. The violence in the Central African Republic, as well, had reached unheard levels, with thousands of children being taken from their homes by rival armed groups. The Central African Republic was "now emptied of its people", he said, with armed groups sharing the capital and the entire country. In that context of total insecurity, MINUSCA'S role was critical; however, it was also vital that the United Nations, with the African Union and all stakeholders, come up with steps towards consolidating State authorities and ensure security of all pertinent personnel and humanitarian staff, as well as pay salaries of civil servants. Acknowledging the efforts of the Office, all regional and international stakeholders, and their collaboration so critical to joint mechanisms in border control, he called for enhancement of resources in those efforts.

WANG MIN (China), noting mixed results in the region, including the situation in the Central African Republic becoming more volatile, called for continued coordination from the international community. However, in order to address such challenges, the region must be stabilized. The trouble caused by LRA in the Central African Republic had been disastrous and the international community needed to expedite its support to that country in order to restore order. Economic development was fundamental to long-term stability. The lack of such development was a root cause for the violence the region was experiencing. In that regard, his Government would be giving \$10 billion in loans towards infrastructure, development and agriculture in order to accelerate development. Lastly, ownership by African countries should be respected, supporting a self-reliance to prosper in an African way. To that end, the international community should fully heed the guidance of regional organizations and help build capacity with them toward them solving their own problems.

OLIVIER MAES (Luxembourg) said that over the last three years, significant progress had been made in the fight against LRA, however, as a result of the crisis in the Central African Republic, the group had been able to renew its forces. Luxembourg commended the work of the United States and the European Union in the fight against LRA, while coordination and knowledge-sharing remained essential between all parties involved. Particularly, it was vital for coordination between the two African Union forces operating in the area. All States must implement the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court, including against Joseph Kony. As women and children were the primary victims of LRA, his country stressed the need to fully implement childhood protection programmes. Luxembourg was concerned by the links between the trade of wildlife and armed groups in the Central African region. Neighbouring countries were impacted by the events in the Central African Republic and risked destabilizing the entire region. Luxembourg noted with concern that Boko Haram had expanded its activities to other States in the subregion and condemned the abduction of more than 200 school girls.

EIHAB OMAISH (Jordan) said the challenges facing the Central African region exceeded the capabilities of States in the region to manage them. International efforts must address the root causes of the situation. Jordan hoped that the crisis in the Central African Republic would stabilize and that the consequences of the crisis, such as regional displacement, the expansion of extremist groups and the trade of national resources would be addressed. Tackling such challenges would require cooperation between international, as well as regional organizations, and the commitment of States in the region to the promotion of peace and security. While the decline in LRA operations was remarkable, the reorganization of LRA into smaller groups showed the organization's ability to adapt to the field situation, which could enable it to launch dispersed border attacks.

KAYODE LARO (Nigeria), focusing his remarks on the Secretary-General's report, took note that, not only had the LRA not committed any mass atrocities within the reporting period, but that there had been a decline of abductions by them and a decrease in displaced persons. Such improvements had been due to improved security by the African Union's Regional Task Force, as well as the support of international partners and stakeholders. He also noted the lack of LRA in South Sudan during the

review period. However, in the Central African Republic and in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, challenges remained, with an upward trend of more abductions and attacks by LRA. Further, the LRA leadership was taking advantage of the Central African Republic's instability and regrouping itself in the country's north-east area. With reported collaborations with other armed groups, LRA posed a great threat and he expressed hope that the Regional Task Force would take all necessary measures to address that situation. The full implementation of the regional strategy was crucial if LRA was to be neutralized and resources should be provided towards capacity-building of those countries affected. Further, the international community was called to support efforts in line with the African Union's framework and country-owned initiatives.

FRANCISCO JAVIER DE ANTUENO ([Argentina](#)) called upon the Office to continue working with the Central African Republic's transitional Government and its neighbouring countries to overcome the current crisis. It should also cooperatively work addressing cross-border movement of terrorist groups and the trafficking of arms and resources. Condemning the Boko Haram, he called for the establishment of a multi-national task force. On the issue of the Gulf of Guinea, which was most affected by piracy, organized crime and illegal fishing, UNOCA must step up its efforts as such illegal activities posed a real threat to regional security. It was encouraging that LRA had not carried out assassination and mass violence in the reporting period, and he commended the efforts by the African Union combating that group, targeting and demobilizing its forces and repatriating former members. However, LRA was still active and efforts addressing their activities needed to be increased. Countries should address security vacuums which that armed group could use to its advantage.

PETR V. ILICHEV ([Russian Federation](#)) noted with concern the surge in Boko Haram activities and the increased threat to maritime activity in the Gulf of Guinea. The Russian Federation supported the efforts of States in the region to combat those threats and supported the work of the United Nations office in the region. His country noted with satisfaction the fading threat posed by LRA, which was now down to less than 350 people. What remained was a handful of militants that were in survival mode and living off petty crime. The activities of the group no longer seemed to pose a threat to peace and security in the region, although the crises in South Sudan and the Central African Republic could pose a risk to those efforts. Regional players must play a decisive role going forward. What was necessary were comprehensive approaches that tackled pressing social and humanitarian problems and bolstered the institutions of the States in the region.

JOON OH ([Republic of Korea](#)) said that, while LRA had been substantially weakened, to eliminate their lifeline, the further coordination and cooperation of all stakeholders would be crucial. His country was concerned that the situation in the Central African Republic and South Sudan might provide the LRA with "breathing space". The Security Council had made clear its strong commitment to multidimensional efforts to address the situation in the Central African Republic, although, other subregional threats remained unabated. Of particular concern were the unacceptable criminal activities of Boko Haram, whose activities his country strongly condemned.

Presidential Statement

The full text of presidential statement S/PRST/2014/8 reads as follows:

"The Security Council expresses its concern at the deterioration in the security situation in parts of Central Africa within the remit of the UN Regional Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), in particular the crisis in the Central African Republic (CAR) and its growing regional impact, and the threat of terrorism, including the expansion of Boko Haram terrorist activities into countries in the sub-region. The Council also expresses its continuing concern regarding maritime insecurity in the Gulf of Guinea, the illegal wildlife trade and transnational organised crime.

"The Security Council pays tribute to the outgoing Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG) for Central Africa and head of UNOCA, Abou Moussa of Chad, for his leadership in support of consolidating peace and preventing conflict in the Central African region and important accomplishments of UNOCA during his tenure, and welcomes the appointment of Abdoulaye Bathily of

Senegal as the new SRSG for Central Africa and head of UNOCA.

“The Security Council reiterates its strong condemnation of the appalling attacks, war crimes and crimes against humanity carried out by the Lord’s Resistance Army (LRA) and its violations of international humanitarian law and abuses of human rights, including the LRA’s recruitment and use of children in armed conflict, killing and maiming, rape, sexual slavery and other sexual violence, and abductions. The Council demands an immediate end to all attacks by the LRA and urges the LRA to release all those abducted, and to disarm and demobilize. The Council welcomes the progress made with regard to ending LRA war crimes and crimes against humanity in Central Africa and reiterates its resolve to maintain the current momentum until a permanent end to the threat posed by the LRA has been achieved.

“The Security Council welcomes the diplomatic efforts of outgoing SRSG Abou Moussa and African Union (AU) Special Envoy on the LRA Issue Francisco Madeira to strengthen regional cooperation and facilitate continued AU-Regional Task Force (AU-RTF) operations in the region. The Council urges UNOCA, in its coordination role, as well as the United Nations political and peacekeeping missions in the region and other relevant United Nations presences to enhance their efforts in support of the implementation of the United Nations Regional Strategy to Address the Threat and Impact of the Activities of the LRA (the UN strategy), as appropriate and within the limits of their mandates and capacities. The Council encourages the Secretary-General to optimise UNOCA’s efforts in this regard, including through the use of staff and provision of support to anti-LRA efforts.

“The Security Council reiterates its strong support for the African Union Regional Cooperation Initiative against the LRA (AU RCI-LRA), and commends the significant progress made by the AU-RTF. The Council notes in particular the reported death in late 2013 of the LRA’s second-in-command Okot Odhiambo, who was indicted by the International Criminal Court and the capture of LRA mid-level commander Charles Okello in April 2014. The Council welcomes the AU-RTF’s enhanced operations against the LRA in recent months, which have increased pressure on the LRA command structure and resulted in several significant defections of LRA fighters and the rescue of women and children from the LRA’s ranks. The Council expresses its concern at the creation of potential security vulnerabilities resulting from the increased instability in South Sudan that could be exploited by the LRA. The Council urges all regional governments to fulfil all their commitments under the AU RCI-LRA and to provide the necessary basic provisions for their security forces. In this regard, the Council welcomes the decisions of the recent AU RCI-LRA to hold quarterly meetings as well as a Summit of RCI-LRA Member States. The Council notes the importance of continued international support for the AU-RTF’s operations, logistics, and headquarters. In this regard, the Council welcomes the continued advisory and logistical support provided by the United States, as well as funding provided by the European Union. The Council underlines the need for all military action against the LRA to be conducted in compliance with international law, including international humanitarian law, human rights law and refugee law, as applicable, and to minimize the risk of harm to civilians in all areas of operation and to take into account the association of children with the LRA. The Council also reiterates its encouragement to deploy child protection advisers within the AU-RTF.

“The Security Council strongly encourages neighbouring states to cooperate with the AU-RTF, in order to end the LRA threat. The Council further encourages all States in the region to take measures to ensure that the LRA is not able to operate with impunity in their territory. The Council takes note of the statements in the Secretary-General report on UNOCA and LRA (S/2014/319) that senior LRA leaders are believed to be based in the north-eastern part of CAR and that credible sources suggest that the LRA leader Joseph Kony and senior LRA commanders have recently returned to seek safe haven in Sudanese-controlled areas of the Kafia Kingi enclave. The Security Council expresses its continued concern that the instability and security vacuum in the CAR continue to negatively affect counter-LRA operations. The Council further notes with concern reports of LRA attacks, as well as interactions between the LRA and other armed groups, in areas of the CAR outside of the AU-RTF’s principal area of operations. In this regard, the Council emphasizes the need for strong coordination and information-sharing between the AU-RTF and the African-led International Support Mission for the Central African Republic (MISCA), as well as with the United Nations Integrated Stabilization Mission in

CAR (MINUSCA), in the context of their protection of civilians activities, human rights monitoring and counter-LRA operations, as appropriate.

“The Security Council welcomes the steps taken to deliver an enhanced, comprehensive and more regional approach to the humanitarian situation, including assistance to victims of sexual violence and other attacks and urges further progress in this regard.

“The Security Council underlines the primary responsibility of States in the LRA-affected region to protect civilians. The Council welcomes the efforts undertaken by the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), the Republic of South Sudan, Uganda and CAR, in coordination with the African Union, to end the threat posed by the LRA and urges further efforts from these countries, as well as from other countries in the region.

“The Security Council welcomes the efforts by the UN Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) in tackling the LRA. The Council notes continued reports of LRA attacks in the DRC, despite an overall decline in LRA violence there. In this context the Council encourages further and reinforced efforts by MONUSCO, working closely with the AU-RTF, to address the LRA including through improved responsiveness to imminent threats to civilians, increased and coordinated patrols, training and capacity building of the Congolese Army (FARDC), support to the Joint Information Operations Centre (JIOC) and implementation of the Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement (DDRRR) programme to encourage and facilitate further LRA defections.

“The Security Council urges relevant UN and AU missions in the region, notably MONUSCO, United Nations Mission in South Sudan (UNMISS) and MINUSCA, to continue their efforts to combat the LRA. The Council also notes the mandate of the United Nations–African Union Hybrid Operation in Darfur (UNAMID) to cooperate and share swiftly information related to the regional threat of the LRA and the mandate of MINUSCA to coordinate its operations with those of the African Union Regional Task Force on the Lord’s Resistance Army, and share relevant information with the AU-RTF and with non-governmental organizations involved in tackling the threat of the LRA. In this regard, the Council urges these missions to collect and share information on LRA movements with relevant partners, to enhance cross-border cooperation and to adopt standard operating procedures, in order to better anticipate LRA movements and imminent threats of attack.

“The Security Council strongly reiterates its calls for the UN, AU and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), to continue to work together, including through joint field assessments, to further develop and maintain a common operating picture of the LRA’s current capabilities and areas of operation, as well as to investigate the LRA’s logistical networks and possible sources of military support and illicit financing, including alleged involvement in elephant poaching and related illicit smuggling. The Council expresses its concern at the link between illicit trafficking in wildlife and armed groups in the sub-region, including the Lord’s Resistance Army, and in this regard, welcomes UNOCA’s efforts to support the sub-region to identify collaborative approaches to address this issue.

“The Security Council urges MONUSCO, MINUSCA, UNMISS and other United Nations actors in the LRA-affected region to continue to work with regional forces, national Governments, international actors and non-governmental organizations, as appropriate, to develop a common approach to the promotion of defections and support for DDRRR efforts across the LRA-affected area. The Council highlights the importance of programmes in support of the release, return and successful reintegration of children abducted by the LRA, in particular those that target community acceptance of such children. The Council welcomes the defection in December 2013 of 19 LRA members, including nine LRA fighters, which is the largest single defection in over five years.

“The Security Council encourages the AU-RTF to maintain its operations against all LRA groups, while working with the UN and non-governmental organizations to expand the coverage of safe reporting sites and delivery of information to assist LRA who demonstrate a genuine commitment to

demobilization and disarmament via radio, leaflets and other means.

“The Security Council commends efforts by international donors to provide humanitarian assistance to LRA-affected populations in the CAR, the DRC and the Republic of South Sudan. The Council reaffirms its call for all parties to allow safe and unhindered humanitarian access, consistent with the relevant provisions of international humanitarian law and the United Nations guiding principles of humanitarian assistance.

“The Security Council notes the overall marked decline in the number, intensity and violence of the LRA attacks, killings and abductions and the significant decrease in UN OCHA’s estimate of the number of people displaced by the LRA threat, from 420,000 in March 2013 to 160,000 in March 2014. The Council encourages donors to increase funding for early recovery projects to help affected communities restore stability and rebuild their livelihoods as the LRA threat begins to recede. The Council requests that UNOCA work with the AU, World Bank, the UN Development Program, the UN Children’s Fund and other international experts to develop a development framework for international efforts to promote the long-term stabilization of formerly LRA-affected areas in South Sudan, the DRC and the CAR, including through early recovery projects and programs to strengthen community cohesion.

“The Security Council reiterates its call for the swift and full implementation of the conclusions of the working group on children and armed conflict concerning the situation of children and armed conflict affected by the Lord’s Resistance Army. In this regard, the Council encourages those countries affected by the LRA which have not yet done so to establish Standard Operating Procedures for the reception and handover of LRA children to civilian child protection actors.

“The Security Council recalls that the International Criminal Court’s arrest warrants for LRA leaders, including Joseph Kony on charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity, including murder, rape cruel treatment, intentionally directing attacks against a civilian population and forced enlistment of children, have yet to be executed, and calls upon all States to cooperate with relevant national Governments and the International Criminal Court, in accordance with their respective obligations, in order to execute those warrants, and to bring to justice those responsible.

“The Security Council requests that the Secretary-General keep it informed on the activities of UNOCA, progress made in conducting assessments of the LRA’s evolving area of operations and logistical and support networks, and the efforts being undertaken respectively by missions in the region and other relevant United Nations agencies to implement the UN’s Regional Strategy, including through a single report on UNOCA and the LRA to be submitted before 15 November 2014.”

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