



ACHOLI RELIGIOUS LEADERS PEACE INITIATIVE

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ARLPI Statement Regarding the Current LRA Conflict

Almost two years have passed since the collapse of the Juba Peace talks resulting from the launching of a regional military offensive known as, 'Operation Lightning Thunder' in December of 2008. Despite the confidence of the Ugandan government (GoU) that the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) would be fully wiped out within weeks, the military initiative failed to meet this core objective. Rather than containing the conflict, this offensive like the ones before it caused the LRA to flee to other regions in the Sudan, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and Central African Republic (CAR) where to this day, attacks against the civilian population continue unabated.

As individuals who have been laboring for sustainable peace in the region we, the Acholi Religious Leaders (ARLPI), are greatly concerned with the plight of those suffering as a result of the continued violence. As the peace talks were the closest the region has come to ending the war, we are calling on all actors to desist from hostilities, prioritize civilian protection, and engage in a **transformed** regional approach to ending the conflict that is based on the pillars of non-violence and dialogue.

To foster the achievement of such, we are asking all stakeholders of the conflict to create a conducive environment for dialogue between the LRA, the GoU, and other regional governments and for the establishment of a transformed regional approach to ending the conflict.

1) Create a Conducive Environment For Dialogue

- For dialogue to happen, all actors in the conflict must re-commit to the cessation of hostilities and prioritize civilian protection.
- Efforts to re-establishment contact with the LRA high command to determine needs and interests must be fully supported.
- The conflicting parties should engage in trust & confidence building initiatives.

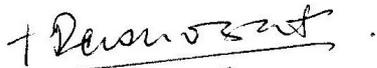
2) Establish a Transformed Regional Approach to Ending the Conflict

- Using the Juba Peace talks as a foundation, regional governments should coordinate and commit to employing a peaceful resolution to the conflict. Such a process needs to be **carefully designed** taking into consideration *lessons learned from previous talks and be rooted in the principles of dialogue and non-violence.*

- Identification of regional actors to participate in dialogue is required to ensure that the interests and needs of the affected countries are addressed. As the previous talks did not take into consideration such, it is important to develop another **agenda item** or to make amendments to the existing signed agreements.
- Re-establishment of the UN with a mandate to ensure a permanent cessation of hostilities in the region.
- All stakeholders in LRA related affairs be included in the anticipated transformed peace process.

In conclusion, we the Acholi Religious Leaders strongly urge all stakeholders of conflict involving the LRA to creatively determine a non-violent strategy to resolve the conflict.

Signed,



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