



ACHOLI RELIGIOUS LEADERS PEACE INITIATIVE

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Response to the Deployment of U.S. Military Advisors to LRA Affected Regions

For us, the Acholi Religious Leaders' Peace Initiative (ARLPI), President Obama's October 14th announcement that 100 U.S. troops have been deployed to the region to assist with the capture of Joseph Kony and the dismantling of his Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) leaves us concerned. Over the past two decades, the people of Northern Uganda have endured horrific violence as a result of the war between the LRA and the Government of Uganda (GoU). Despite numerous attempts at resolving this dispute, to date, these measures have not only failed to result in the hoped for peace but led instead to the broadening of the conflict to neighboring countries.

In response to the White House's recent announcement, we would first like to reiterate our sincere appreciation to President Obama and the American Congress for your attention to the plight of our people. We are thankful for your desire for peace and justice in the world. Your efforts to achieve reconciliation and meet humanitarian needs in LRA affected regions cannot be understated and loudly communicates that we are not forgotten.

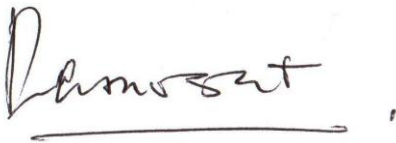
We also, however, feel the need to express our concern over the military nature of the current strategy. As history has taught us, military intervention is not the way to resolve the LRA conflict and achieve a sustainable peace. In the past, such approaches have directly resulted in the intensification of LRA violence and the increased endangerment of civilians.

While many have lost hope in any peaceful resolution to the conflict, the reality is that the peace process, in particular the Juba peace talks which began in 2006, is responsible for the relative calm being experienced in northern Uganda today. We, therefore, strongly implore all concerned parties to prioritize and creatively explore non-violent means to resolve the conflict. Instead of relying on military intervention, let us redouble our efforts to engage in dialogue. We believe this is the only way to bring

about a lasting solution that will foster healing and reconciliation in a region of the world that has long experienced instability and deserves peace.

In conclusion, we strongly urge all participating entities to enter into and remain in consultations with regional CSO's, NGO's, grassroots leaders and their communities about the best ways forward to bring an end to one of the world's longest running conflicts. We also ask policy makers in the United States, Africa and elsewhere to heed the lessons of history and focus their efforts on dialogue rather than force, engagement rather than confrontation. We sincerely believe that this is the only way that the LRA will be brought to an end, a sustainable peace will be reached, and the clouds of violence and chaos that have darkened our region for so long be dissipated.

Together for peace,



+ *Rt. Rev. Johnson Gakumba*
((Chairman ARLPI) Bishop Diocese of Northern Uganda)
* *All Hajji Sheik Musa Khalil (the Khadi Acholi) - Vice Chairman ARLPI*
+ *Most Rev. John Baptist Odama (Archbishop of Gulu) - Member ARLPI*
+ *Rt. Rev. Macleod Baker Ochola II (Retired Bishop Diocese of Kitgum)*
+ *Fr. Julius Orach (the Dean of Orthodox Church) - Member ARLPI*
+ *Rt. Rev. Benjamin Ojwang (Bishop of Kitgum Diocese) - Member ARLPI*
+ *Rt. Rev. Nelson Onono Onweng (Retired Bishop Diocese of Northern Uganda) - Member ARLPI*
+ *Pr. Lisa David (SDA Resident Pastor Gulu)*
+ *Pr. Patrick Okecha (Overseer Born Again Faith Federation)*