



HOUSE OF LORDS

# Library Note

## **Question for Short Debate on 26 March: Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army**

This Library Note aims to provide background reading for the question for short debate to be held on 26 March:

**“To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they are taking with international partners to bring to trial Joseph Kony and other leaders of the Lord’s Resistance Army at the International Criminal Court”**

This Note provides an overview of the history and actions of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) under the leadership of Joseph Kony, the warrant issued for his arrest under the auspices of the International Criminal Court, and the ongoing efforts to apprehend him and other senior LRA commanders.

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16 March 2012  
LLN 2012/010

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## 1. Introduction

Joseph Kony is the founder and leader of the Lord's Resistance Army, a violent militia which, though it originated in Northern Uganda, has been responsible for brutal attacks on civilian communities across a large swathe of central Africa.<sup>1</sup> For the crimes committed by the LRA, arrest warrants from the International Criminal Court (ICC) have been outstanding for Joseph Kony and other senior LRA commanders since 2005. However, Joseph Kony has so far evaded all efforts at capture, and remains at large.

This Note explores the origins and development of the LRA under the leadership of Joseph Kony, including the way in which its strength, aims and geographical location have all shifted markedly since its inception. It also examines the brutal history of the LRA, and in the words of the UN Secretary General, the "enormous suffering it has inflicted on millions of civilians in several countries of the Great Lakes and Central African regions".<sup>2</sup> The current strength of the LRA and ongoing efforts to tackle it—and to apprehend Joseph Kony—are then evaluated, including the recent deployment of US non-combatant forces to the region in an attempt to aid these operations. The Note also details the charges faced by Joseph Kony in the ICC warrant for his arrest and examines the viral campaign *Kony 2012* which has generated significant interest in its stated aim to raise Joseph Kony's international profile and assist in bringing him to justice. Finally, the Note details recent UK Government statements on Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army.

The area in which the LRA is currently believed to operate is illustrated below:

**Figure 1. Primary Areas of LRA Activity in Central Africa**



(Source: US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011)

<sup>1</sup> The LRA is reported to have operated and committed attacks on civilians within at least four separate countries: Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic, and what is now South Sudan.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 1

## 2. History of the Lord's Resistance Army

### 2.1 Origins of and Tactics Employed by the LRA, and Dynamics of Joseph Kony's Leadership

The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) emerged in 1987 in Northern Uganda, led by Joseph Kony and his second in command, Vincent Otti. Kony modelled the LRA on the Holy Spirit Movement led by Alice Lakwena, a spiritual leader of the Acholi community in the North of the country. Following the rise to power of Yoweri Museveni in Uganda in 1986—a Southerner, ending almost ten years of Northern rule—Lakwena and the Holy Spirit Movement had been a key element amongst rebel factions seeking to overthrow the Museveni government and return power to the North. When the Holy Spirit Movement was defeated by the Ugandan military in 1987 and Lakwena forced to flee to Kenya, Kony—reported to be a relative of Lakwena<sup>3</sup>—laid claim to her legacy.

From the late 1980s the LRA targeted the civilian population of Northern Uganda, embarking upon a series of brutal attacks often on isolated villages and towns, and engaging in a series of violent clashes with the Ugandan military. During this time Joseph Kony sought support and aid from Southern Sudan, and Alex Arieff and Lauren Ploch—specialists in African Affairs at the US Congressional Research Service—attribute part of the early endurance of the LRA to what became a struggle by proxy between regional powers, particularly Sudan and Uganda.<sup>4</sup> However, the LRA has arguably never had a clear political or economic agenda. Indeed, Arieff and Ploch add that the operations of the group have often appeared to be motivated by little more than the infliction of violence and the protection of its leaders.<sup>5</sup>

Since its inception, in the words of the United Nations Secretary General, the tactics of the LRA have been “brutal” and “indiscriminate”.<sup>6</sup> The group has become particularly infamous for the level of violence it has employed in its attacks on civilians and for repeatedly engaging in mass abductions in order to perpetuate its ranks, as summarised by the Secretary General's 2011 report on the LRA:

LRA attacks, committed with impunity, have typically included killings, abductions (especially of children and women), the recruitment of and use of boys and girls as combatants and in other roles, serious sexual violence, including rape and sexual slavery, forced marriage, mutilations, looting and the destruction of property. Many women who were abducted and used as sex slaves face stigmatization and great difficulties in reintegrating into their communities of origin.<sup>7</sup>

There have also been reports of child soldiers being forced to commit atrocities, sometimes involving members of their own family, in order to prove their loyalty.<sup>8</sup>

The LRA itself, under the influence of Kony, has regularly been described as “cult-like” in its devotion to him and other senior command figures. Indeed, Kony himself has

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<sup>3</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 3

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*, p 4

<sup>5</sup> *ibid*, p 4

<sup>6</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 3

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*, p 3

<sup>8</sup> Eichstaedt, P, *First Kill Your Family: Child Soldiers of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army*, 2009

repeatedly claimed to have received commands from traditional spirits, and numerous times since the emergence of the LRA has, in the words of Arieff and Ploch, “cloaked his rhetoric in Christian and messianic terms”.<sup>9</sup> It is also reported that Kony has explicitly used such spiritual terms in order to explain why it is necessary to attack his own people—the Acholi—if they fail to support his cause.<sup>10</sup>

## 2.2 A Shifting Focus

Over time the strength and focus of the LRA, and the area in which it operates, has changed significantly, particularly as a result of action taken by the Ugandan military and other regional actors. In the 1990s and early 2000s, successive Ugandan People’s Defence Force (UPDF) operations were launched against the LRA across Northern Uganda. Under increasing pressure, in 2005 and 2006, the US State Department records that Joseph Kony ordered the LRA to withdraw completely from Uganda and move west into the border region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, the Central African Republic (particularly after 2008), and what is now South Sudan.<sup>11</sup> State Department official Johnnie Carson is clear that a key reason for this shift was Kony’s justifiable belief that it would be more difficult to track and pursue his forces in this remote region.<sup>12</sup>

Before and after this geographical shift, there have been several attempts to find peaceful resolution to the conflict. However, Joseph Kony has been accused of consistently paying lip service to such negotiations in order to buy his forces time to regroup and re-arm. For example, intensive efforts were launched between 2006 and 2008 to find a negotiated settlement between the Government of Uganda and representatives from the LRA. However, despite considerable concessions, including on the issues of amnesty and development assistance, those talks broke down when Joseph Kony refused to sign the final agreement.<sup>13</sup>

Following the collapse of these talks, in December 2008 Uganda and the Democratic Republic of Congo launched joint military operations named Operation *Lightning Thunder* against the LRA in the Garamba region of the DRC. The operation was specifically designed to capture or kill senior LRA leaders. However, Joseph Kony and many other senior commanders evaded these forces, leading not only to strong criticism of Uganda for poor planning, intelligence gathering and execution, but fierce reprisals against civilians by the LRA.

The UN Secretary General records that the apparent result of Operation *Lightning Thunder* and related initiatives was also the significant fragmentation and dispersal of the LRA:

Following the military operations, which officially ended in March 2009, LRA is believed to have fragmented into several highly mobile groups operating across a wide area, from Aba in Haut Uélé district across to Ango in Bas Uélé district in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; from Birao in Vakaga prefecture to Obo in

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<sup>9</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord’s Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 4

<sup>10</sup> BBC News, [‘Joseph Kony: Profile of the LRA leader’](#), 8 March 2012

<sup>11</sup> US State Department, [Remarks](#) by Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs to the United States Institute of Peace, December 7, 2011

<sup>12</sup> [ibid](#)

<sup>13</sup> Some analysts have suggested a key reason for Kony’s refusal was the outstanding International Criminal Court warrant for his arrest, which Kony wanted repealed. However, others doubted Kony’s sincerity from the outset of negotiations (US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord’s Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 6).

Haut Mbomou prefecture in the Central African Republic; and into Western Equatoria State and occasionally Western Bahr el-Ghazal State in South Sudan.<sup>14</sup>

Though embracing three separate nations, this broad geographical region shares the characteristics of extremely minimal domestic government influence and a very limited international humanitarian presence.

### 3. Lord's Resistance Army Today

#### 3.1 Strength of LRA Forces and Continuing Attacks on Civilians

The LRA's numbers appear to have declined greatly in recent years, particularly following initiatives such as Operation *Lightning Thunder*. From thousands of fighters in the late 1990s and early 2000s, LRA forces now appear to number in the several hundred (possibly as low as 250–300, according to Foreign and Commonwealth Office estimates<sup>15</sup>), travelling on foot and equipped with small arms.<sup>16</sup> These fighters travel in small bands, and remain highly mobile, continuing to move across a wide area.<sup>17</sup>

However, attacks by the LRA on civilian communities continue. Since 2008 the LRA has reportedly killed over 2,400 people, and abducted a further 3,400.<sup>18</sup> In the past year alone, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs received reports (between January and August 2011) of 254 attacks by the LRA on civilians in the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, resulting in 126 deaths, and 368 recorded abductions.<sup>19</sup> Further, the UN Secretary General states that an estimated 440,000 people are currently internally displaced or living as refugees owing to LRA attacks, 335,000 of those within the DRC.<sup>20</sup>

The majority of LRA attacks in recent years have taken place in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The UN Secretary General records that these have included large scale massacres, such as in December 2008 when reports indicated that over 700 people were killed in the districts of Faradje, Duru, and Doruma, and in December 2009 when more than 300 people were reportedly killed in Makombo. 206 people were also abducted in the same attack, including at least 80 children. In the Central African Republic, despite a reduction in the number of attacks, small groups of LRA soldiers continue to commit serious violent raids against civilian communities, marked by killings, looting and abductions. In South Sudan three incidents have been reported since July 2011, though the creation of self-defence groups with the support of the UPDF has helped to protect some communities against the LRA, particularly in Western Equatoria. In Uganda most of the 1.8 million people formerly displaced as a result of the LRA have returned to their villages, or integrated locally elsewhere. However, some 80,000

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<sup>14</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 2

<sup>15</sup> HC Hansard, 19 December 2011, col 970W

<sup>16</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 2

<sup>17</sup> See Figure 1 on page 1 of this Note.

<sup>18</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 4

<sup>19</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 3

<sup>20</sup> *ibid*, p 3

internally displaced persons remain in six camps in Northern Uganda, unable to return home as a result of obstacles such as the presence of land mines and land disputes.<sup>21</sup>

The motivation behind recent LRA attacks appears to be directed at ensuring the group's survival through the pillaging of food, medicine and arms, and the abduction of children. However, "copycat" opportunistic attacks by other armed elements in LRA-affected areas have also caused concern, and made it difficult to determine responsibility for specific incidents.<sup>22</sup> LRA attacks have also had a significantly adverse effect on humanitarian activities. The UN Secretary General has expressed concern over the limited movement of commercial goods in regions affected by the LRA, particularly in the Central African Republic, where goods and humanitarian convoys require military protection, and humanitarian personnel and light goods are required to be transported predominately by air.<sup>23</sup>

### 3.2 Action Currently Being Taken to Combat the LRA

In the wake of the failure of the decapitation strategy attempted by Operation *Lightning Thunder*, the UPDF has subsequently deployed to LRA-affected regions of South Sudan and the Central African Republic (CAR), with the permission of local authorities and ongoing logistics support from the United States. However, Arieff and Ploch suggest that while it has since succeeded in capturing or killing several LRA commanders, serious questions persist over the UPDF's capacity and will to co-ordinate effectively with other regional forces.<sup>24</sup> Tensions have repeatedly flared between Congolese officials and Ugandan military commanders. Despite the prevalence of LRA attacks in the DRC, the Congolese government has made repeated calls for the withdrawal of Ugandan troops, accusing them of having insufficient will to tackle the LRA and remaining in the DRC solely to profit from international support for military operations.<sup>25</sup> Consequently, UPDF movements within the DRC reportedly remain severely restricted.<sup>26</sup>

The difficulties in co-ordinating action in the region are compounded by challenges presented by a lack of capacity amongst regional governments and militaries, particularly within the remote and isolated regions affected by the LRA. Further, the difficult relations between the regional actors involved are exacerbated by competition for external financing and technical assistance, language and communication gaps, and by distrust linked to recent history—such as Ugandan incursions into DRC territory during the Second Congo War (1998–2003).<sup>27</sup>

The LRA is present within the area of operation of two UN peacekeeping missions, who, though the LRA is not the primary cause of their mandates, have also contributed to counter-LRA efforts and attempted to engender closer co-operation amongst regional partners. The UN Stabilisation Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) has supported the Congolese military in operations against the LRA and facilitated increased Ugandan-Congolese military and intelligence co-ordination. At the same time, the UN Mission in

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<sup>21</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 5

<sup>22</sup> *ibid*, p 3

<sup>23</sup> *ibid*, p 3

<sup>24</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 7

<sup>25</sup> *ibid*, p 18; United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 5

<sup>26</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p 7

<sup>27</sup> *ibid*, p 18

South Sudan (UNMISS) has not been as highly engaged, but has participated in regional anti-LRA coordination and demobilisation initiatives.

The United States has also directly supported regional operations since 2008 to capture and kill LRA leaders. This commitment was heightened—following the enactment of US legislation calling for such measures in May 2010<sup>28</sup>—when President Obama announced in October 2011 that he had authorised the specific deployment of 100 US armed forces representatives to the region. The President stated that these forces would not engage in combat (unless in self-defence) but would provide information, advice and assistance to partner nation forces in order to work “toward the removal of Joseph Kony from the battlefield”.<sup>29</sup>

The US forces will work primarily with the UDF as the principal military power in the region. However, concerns remain regarding the long-term effectiveness of the UDF in combating the LRA. Recent American analysis has described their involvement as “essential because no one else is prepared to send competent combat troops to do the job”.<sup>30</sup> However, that same analysis also stated that given fears regarding ongoing Ugandan commitment, and concerns over the reported actions of its soldiers, the UDF remains at best a “flawed and uncertain instrument for defeating the LRA”.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, Human Rights Watch has accused the UDF (in its campaign against the LRA) of “multiple abuses of the rights of northern Ugandans, including summary execution, torture, rape, child recruitment, and inhuman conditions of detention in unauthorized detention locations”.<sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch add that in the past UDF troops have rarely been prosecuted for crimes committed against civilians, leading to a perceived culture of impunity within its ranks.<sup>33</sup>

Difficulties also persist in bringing senior members of the LRA to justice if and when they are captured. In July 2011 the High Court of Uganda commenced the trial of former LRA commander Thomas Kwoyelo for war crimes. However, in January 2010 Mr Kwoyelo applied for amnesty under the Uganda Amnesty Act, and on 22 September 2011 the Constitutional Court ruled that the failure of the State to grant such amnesty violated his constitutional right to equal protection of the law. The State has filed an appeal to the Supreme Court, and the trial has been put on hold.<sup>34</sup>

#### 4. International Criminal Court

On 8 July 2005 the International Criminal Court (ICC) Pre-Trial Chamber II issued five warrants of arrest for five senior leaders of the LRA: Joseph Kony, Vincent Otti, Okot

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<sup>28</sup> US Government Printing Office, [The Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, P.L. 111-172](#)

<sup>29</sup> US Congressional Research Service, [The Lord's Resistance Army: The US Response](#), 21 November 2011, p2.

<sup>30</sup> *ibid*, p 17

<sup>31</sup> *ibid*, p 17

<sup>32</sup> Human Rights Watch, [Abducted and Abused: Renewed Conflict in Northern Uganda](#), July 2003, page 41

<sup>33</sup> Human Rights Watch, [Uprooted and Forgotten Impunity and Human Rights Abuses in Northern Uganda](#), 2005, p23.

<sup>34</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord's Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 6

Odhiambo, Dominic Ongwen and Raska Lukwiya.<sup>35</sup> The warrants accuse those charged of crimes against humanity and war crimes committed in Uganda from 2002 to 2005. Proceedings against Raska Lukwiya were terminated following confirmation of his death in 2007, and Vincent Otti is also presumed deceased, though the circumstances of his death remain contentious. In the words of the UN Secretary General, “the remaining three fugitives are still actively involved in the atrocities committed by [the] LRA in the subregion”.<sup>36</sup> The warrant of arrest for Joseph Kony lists thirty-three counts on the basis of his individual criminal responsibility (articles 25(3)(a) and 25(3) (b) of the Statute) including:

- Twelve counts of crimes against humanity (murder—article 7(1)(a); enslavement—article 7(1)(c); sexual enslavement—article 7(1)(g); rape—article 7(1)(g); inhumane acts of inflicting serious bodily injury and suffering—article 7(1)(k)); and,
- Twenty-one counts of war crimes (murder—article 8(2)(c)(i); cruel treatment of civilians—article 8(2)(c)(i); intentionally directing an attack against a civilian population—article 8(2)(e)(i); pillaging—article 8(2) (e)(v); inducing rape—article 8(2)(e)(vi); forced enlistment of children—8(2)(e)(vii)).<sup>37</sup>

Issuing a statement in 2006 following the unsealing of the warrants, the International Criminal Court’s Prosecutor, Luis Moreno-Ocampo, said:

We expect our evidence to show that the LRA systematically committed crimes against the civilian population, including abducting children to use them as soldiers and sex slaves. We also have evidence that rapes were committed directly by the LRA commanders. ... We believe the best way to stop the conflict and restore security to the region is to arrest the top leaders. The LRA is an involuntary army and the majority of the fighters are formerly abducted children. Arresting the top leaders is the best way to ensure that these crimes are stopped and not exported to other countries.<sup>38</sup>

## 5. Kony 2012 Viral Campaign

On 5 March 2012 the campaign group ‘Invisible Children’ posted a video on the social media site YouTube named *Kony 2012*.<sup>39</sup> The video, shot by American filmmaker Jason Russell and colleagues, explains how Joseph Kony and the Lord’s Resistance Army have operated, focusing on the story of Jacob Acaye, a young man from Uganda kidnapped by the LRA at the same time as his brother was killed in 2002. The aim of the video according to the Invisible Children website is to “make Joseph Kony famous, not to celebrate him, but to raise support for his arrest and set a precedent for international justice”.<sup>40</sup> In order to do this the video focuses on what it calls ‘culture makers’—

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<sup>35</sup> The warrants remained under seal until 8 October 2005, in order to “ensure the safety of witnesses and victims vulnerable to retaliatory attacks”. (Source: Situation in Uganda, Case No. ICC-02/04-01/05, Decision on the Prosecutor’s Application for Unsealing of the Warrants of Arrest, 4–27 (Oct. 13, 2005)).

<sup>36</sup> United Nations Security Council, [Report of the Secretary-General on the Lord’s Resistance Army-affected areas pursuant to Security Council press statement](#), 4 November 2011, p 2

<sup>37</sup> International Criminal Court website: [Uganda](#).

<sup>38</sup> [Statement](#) released by the Office of the Prosecutor, 6 July 2006.

<sup>39</sup> <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y4MnpzG5Sgc>

<sup>40</sup> <http://www.kony2012.com/>

celebrities such as the singer Rihanna and actress Angelina Jolie, and entrepreneurs such as Microsoft founder Bill Gates—and ‘policy makers’—US legislators such as Mitt Romney and Nancy Pelosi, and United Nations Secretary General Ban-Ki Moon—in an effort to raise awareness of Joseph Kony, and to help ‘bring him to justice’.<sup>41</sup> At the time of writing, the *Kony 2012* video has been viewed on YouTube more than 79 million times. The ‘hashtags’ #Uganda, #InvisibleChildren and #stopkony have also been among the top trending terms on the social networking and microblogging site Twitter worldwide for much of the time since its release.

However, the video has also attracted considerable debate and criticism. For some, given the video’s focus on Uganda and the US legislature, following the enactment by the US administration of the *Lord’s Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act* and the subsequent deployment of American forces, it demands a solution for a problem which no longer exists.<sup>42</sup> Others, including journalists within Uganda such as Rosebell Kagumire—who specialises in peace and conflict reporting—have said that the video is “highly irresponsible” and “paints a picture of Uganda how it was six or seven years ago, not today”.<sup>43</sup> For Kagumire, *Kony 2012* also oversimplifies complex problems, and which in themselves are no longer as pressing in need as other concerns such as severe healthcare issues in Uganda. Invisible Children have also been criticised for a perceived lack of transparency and accountability regarding their funding—receiving two stars out of a possible four for these measures from US charity watchdog Charity Navigator, though it received three stars overall<sup>44</sup>—and for much of the screen time in the video being devoted to the filmmaker Jason Russell (and his young son).

Invisible Children has responded by saying that many critics were ‘myopic’ and that the point of the film was that it was specifically directed at young people, which the response to the video showed had been “engaged with a grievous issue on the other side of the world, even though it doesn’t affect them”.<sup>45</sup> In addition, the group have released financial statements from the last five years on their website, rejecting in the process in their view any accusation of the misuse or unaccountability of funds.<sup>46</sup> ICC chief prosecutor Louis Moreno-Ocampo—who appears in the film—has also voiced his continuing support for the campaign, saying it had “mobilised the world”.<sup>47</sup>

## 6. Recent UK Government Statements on Joseph Kony and the Lord’s Resistance Army

UK Foreign Office Ministers have said that, though the scale of its activities has declined, the LRA “continues to pose an unprincipled and violent threat to the civilian populations in all areas in which it is active”,<sup>48</sup> and the UK “remains committed to helping the victims of the LRA and tackling the root causes of the conflict”.<sup>49</sup> In a statement to the ‘UN Security Council Open Briefing on the UN Regional Office in Central Africa (UNOCA)/Lord’s Resistance Army’ on 14 November 2011, Michael Tatham, Ambassador

<sup>41</sup> <http://www.kony2012.com/>

<sup>42</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, ‘[Joseph Kony 2012: an Unwelcome Spotlight on the Shadowy Hunt for a War Lord](#)’, 9 March 2012

<sup>43</sup> *Daily Telegraph*, ‘[Joseph Kony 2012: Growing Outrage in Uganda Over Film](#)’, 8 March 2012

<sup>44</sup> Invisible Children have asserted this is due to the fact that it has four rather than five independent voting members on its board of directors, a situation it has said it is rectifying. (Source: <http://www.invisiblechildren.com.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/critiques.html>).

<sup>45</sup> *Guardian*, ‘[Jacob, boy at heart of Kony film, defends makers](#)’, 9 March 2012

<sup>46</sup> <http://www.invisiblechildren.com.s3-website-us-east-1.amazonaws.com/critiques.html>

<sup>47</sup> BBC News website: <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-africa-17336033>

<sup>48</sup> HC *Hansard*, 28 November 2011, col [685W](#)

<sup>49</sup> HC *Hansard*, 5 December 2011, col [51W](#)

and Political Coordinator of the UK Mission to the UN, was even more explicit about the threat posed by the LRA and the consequences of its actions:

[T]he LRA continues to pose a substantial threat to regional security in Central Africa. The atrocities that they commit have serious humanitarian and human rights consequences. The United Kingdom condemns in the strongest terms their continued violations of humanitarian law and their human rights abuses, which have resulted in the displacement of 440,000 people across the region. The LRA's campaign has the potential to cause further instability in the DRC, South Sudan and the Central African Republic and hamper the efforts of these countries to progress towards peace and security. Removing the threat of the LRA is important in terms of creating and consolidating a secure and stable environment in the affected countries.<sup>50</sup>

Department for International Development Minister, Stephen O'Brien, outlined in response to a Parliamentary Question in May 2011 what steps DFID was taking specifically to support the countries and communities affected by the LRA:

In Uganda, the Department for International Development (DFID) is supporting post conflict recovery and national reconciliation. This year, DFID will fund the construction of over 1,000 new houses for teachers and health workers; create new vocational training and job opportunities for over 4,000 young people and provide grants to small businesses especially those run by women affected by the conflict.

In the DRC, where LRA activity continues to have a significant impact, DFID is one of the largest donors supporting a United Nations (UN) led effort to provide humanitarian assistance in areas most vulnerable to LRA attacks. The UK Government are supporting the UN peace keeping mission to encourage rebel combatants, including the LRA, to surrender and return to their communities. This has led to the disarmament of a steady number of LRA combatants.<sup>51</sup>

More recently, in December 2011 Foreign Office Minister Henry Bellingham gave an update of the funding the UK has allocated to regional initiatives to counter the LRA, including one led by the World Bank:

[The action being taken by the British Government] includes allocating £16 million of funding to help young and vulnerable individuals as part of a wider programme in Northern Uganda, and a contribution of US\$35 million towards a World Bank led effort to support the demobilisation and reintegration of ex-combatants in the greater Great Lakes region of Central Africa.<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> UK Mission to the United Nations, '[The UK condemns the Lord's Resistance Army's continued violations of humanitarian law and their human rights abuses](#)', 14 November 2011

<sup>51</sup> HC *Hansard*, 9 May 2011, col [978W](#)

<sup>52</sup> HC *Hansard*, 5 December 2011, col [51W](#)

