



U.S. Africa Command

U.S. Military Support to African Efforts to Counter the Lord's Resistance Army

Updated February 2012



Overview

In May 2010, President Obama signed into law the Lord's Resistance (LRA) Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act. According to the [U.S. Department of State](#), The United States' strategy aims to assist the Governments of Uganda, Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan, as well as the African Union and United Nations "mitigate and end the threat posed to civilians and regional stability by the LRA. The strategy outlines four key objectives for U.S. support: (1) the increased protection of civilians, (2) the apprehension or removal of Joseph Kony and senior LRA commanders from the battlefield, (3) the promotion of defections and support of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters, and (4) the provision of continued humanitarian relief to affected communities."

To that end, the decision, announced Oct. 14, 2011, to send U.S. military advisers to assist the forces that are countering the LRA forms one part of the United States' overall continuing effort to achieve these strategic objectives.

The role of the U.S. military

It is widely recognized that there is no purely military solution to the efforts of African security and administrative officials from throughout the region to protect the civilian population from the threat posed by Joseph Kony and the LRA. The U.S. military role is in support of a combined effort that involves the U.S. embassies in the affected countries, U.S. Agency for International Development's programs, as well as contributions from nongovernmental organizations.

The collective intent is to supplement host nation efforts with advice and assistance that maximizes the flow of information to, and synchronizes the activities of, host nation efforts. The U.S. military forces can enable intelligence fusion, facilitate more efficient means for delivering and managing logistics, and offer improved staff coordination capabilities. Ultimately, we each remain committed to our partners' efforts to counter the LRA threat and provide improved security for their respective populations.

After deployments in 2011, approximately 100 U.S. military personnel are now in forward locations with the national militaries of the region, living and working side-

by-side with their military peers as guests in African camps run by African security officials. Their mission is focused on finding ways to enable Uganda, CAR, DRC, and South Sudan to more effectively collaborate, coordinate and synchronize their efforts to remove the threat of the LRA. The U.S. advisors seek to strengthen cooperation among the national militaries, assist them to collaborate more effectively, and enhance their capacity to improve operational planning. While this is not an open-ended commitment, nor is there a specific timeline associated with it, we will regularly review and assess whether the advisory effect is sufficiently enhancing our objectives to justify continued deployment.

According to General Carter F. Ham, commander of U.S. Africa Command (AFRICOM), the U.S. military contributions to countering the LRA are "best done through support, advising and assistance, rather than U.S. military personnel in the lead actually conducting the operations to try to find Kony and capture him. We are an enabling force to facilitate and advance the capabilities of the African forces."

AFRICOM conducts a variety of operations, exercises, and security cooperation activities similar to this that focus on assisting African states and regional organizations build defense institutions and military forces to more effectively address security threats.

Additional Sources

[Oct. 14, 2011 - Text of President Obama's announcement](#)

[Dec. 15, 2011, Text of Letter Regarding the War Powers Resolution](#)

[Dec. 7, 2011 - U.S. efforts to counter the LRA - Remarks by Johnnie Carson, Assistant Secretary, Bureau of African Affairs](#)

[Feb. 7, 2012 - U.S. Department of State Fact Sheet: US support to regional efforts to counter the LRA](#)

[Feb. 22, 2012 - Press Brief: United States' support - in coordination with the African Union and the United Nations - of regional efforts to counter the LRA](#)