

**U.S. POLICY TO COUNTER THE
LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY**

HEARING
BEFORE THE
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS
OF THE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
UNITED STATES SENATE
ONE HUNDRED TWELFTH CONGRESS
SECOND SESSION

APRIL 24, 2012

Printed for the use of the Committee on Foreign Relations



Available via the World Wide Web: <http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/>

U.S. GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE

75-023 PDF

WASHINGTON : 2012

For sale by the Superintendent of Documents, U.S. Government Printing Office
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TUESDAY, APRIL 24, 2012

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AFRICAN AFFAIRS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:07 a.m., in room SD-419, Dirksen Senate Office Building, Hon. Christopher Coons (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Present: Senators Coon, Isakson, and Inhofe.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. CHRISTOPHER A. COONS, U.S. SENATOR FROM DELAWARE

Senator COONS. I am pleased to chair this hearing of the African Affairs Subcommittee examining U.S. policy to counter the Lord's Resistance Army.

I would like to welcome my good friends, Senator Isakson, Senator Inhofe, as well as our distinguished witnesses today: Principal Deputy Secretary of State for African Affairs, Donald Yamamoto; Assistant Administrator for Africa of USAID, Earl Gast; and Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for African Affairs, Amanda Dory. Thank you very much for being with us today and welcome.

And our second panel: Ms. Jolly Okot, Regional Ambassador for Invisible Children; and Mr. Jacob Acaye, a former LRA abductee who will share with us on the second panel their personal experiences of working to help communities in Uganda recover from the LRA and their personal experiences of being victimized by the LRA, which I think will add some strength and breadth to today's hearing.

As we all know, for more than 2 decades the Lord's Resistance Army has committed brutal attacks against civilians in central Africa that have destabilized the region, resulted in systematic killings, displacement, kidnapping, mutilation, and rape. Joseph Kony and his commanders have abducted tens of thousands of children to serve as child soldiers and sex slaves, forcing them to commit terrible acts. And today, as I mentioned, we are privileged and humbled to hear from two victims of the LRA, Jacob and Jolly, both about their enduring, horrific experiences in Uganda and their courageous efforts to move forward and to make positive change in the world from that experience.

Joseph Kony epitomizes the worst of mankind and evil in the modern day, and as I mentioned, while the LRA has left Uganda in 2006, it continues to burn a path of destruction through the

whole region. As you can see from this chart, in the past 4 months alone, the LRA has committed 132 attacks in three countries, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan, despite an increased U.S. presence and regional efforts to counter them.

There has been and continues to be broad and bipartisan support for stopping Kony. This was demonstrated in May 2010 with the overwhelming passage by Congress of the Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, which made it U.S. policy to work with regional governments to remove Kony and his top lieutenants from the battlefield and protect civilians.

There is also bipartisan support for the recent deployment of 100 U.S. military advisors which just yesterday President Obama in his speech at the Holocaust Museum announced would continue in their mission to train regional militaries.

Bipartisan support for this issue is so strong that six of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including the two Senators with me on the dais at the moment, joined last week in releasing a video about the Senate's longstanding commitment to countering the LRA that I would like to make a part of these proceedings. And with the consent of the other Senators, I had hoped at this point we would show that video for the benefit of this hearing today.

[The transcription of the video follows:]

Senator COONS. In the last month, tens of millions of young Americans have stepped up to take on a humanitarian crisis on the other side of the world. The attention has been unparalleled. The level of interest is unprecedented and it hasn't gone unnoticed.

I'm U.S. Senator Chris Coons of Delaware and I'm the chair of the African Affairs Subcommittee of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that meets here in this room on Capitol Hill. In hearings held here Senators have, for many years, tackled issues of justice, war, peace, and America's role in the world. And in particular, how to tackle the ongoing crimes against humanity committed by the Lord's Resistance Army and their leader, Joseph Kony. It's work that a broad coalition of Senators and Congressmen have worked on for many years, important work that continues today.

Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army have wreaked havoc in Uganda and its central African neighbors for more than 25 years.

Senator ISAKSON. He is now thought to be somewhere in the Central African Republic, possibly the South Sudan, maybe the Congo, but the area is tightening and he has been separated somewhat from his soldiers, which is a good sign.

Senator COONS. For millions of Americans, the Kony 2012 Campaign was the first they'd heard of the LRA's terrible crimes. But many in Washington had been trying for years to get the world to notice and to act.

Senator LEAHY. I saw a report way back in 1997 by Human Rights Watch. It talked about the abduction of children by a heavily armed Ugandan rebel group called the Lord's Resistance Army.

Senator INHOFE. I was working in Uganda when I found out that up north in the area called Gulu, this guy named Joseph Kony had been, for about 20 years, mutilating kids.

Senator LANDRIEU. I remember knowing about it specifically in 2004 when I, in fact, traveled to Uganda for the express purpose of looking into the terrible orphan situation and also seeing what I could do about the LRA running rampant at the time through that country.

Senator INHOFE. What he did, he'd go out into the villages and he'd kidnap and he'd abduct children, turn the girls into prostitutes—and we're talking about 12- and 13-year-old kids—and then make soldiers out of the boys. And once the kids learned how to kill people, they had to go back to their villages and kill their parents and all their siblings and if they didn't do that, they cut their lips off and they cut their noses off.

Senator LANDRIEU. It is beyond comprehension that this single man, with a relatively small group of followers, has been able to just run havoc through this part of the world.

Senator FEINGOLD. Well, I've heard of a lot of tragedies all over the world and in many places in Africa, Eastern Congo and Sudan and of course Darfur, but this was one of the worst in terms of brutality.

Senator COONS. In 2009, frustrated by the lack of progress being made by regional forces, Senator Feingold introduced S. 1067, The Lord's Resistance Army Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, a bill to make it the policy of the United States to work with governments in the region to stop the LRA and help central Africa to recover.

Senator FEINGOLD. We have to remember this isn't just about invading or military action, especially by the United States. It has to do with diplomatic efforts, it has to do with intelligence, and it has to do with restoring the lives and the situation of the people in the area affected. Especially in Northern Uganda.

Senator LEAHY. Senator Feingold's bill, the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, which passed in 2010, was a real breakthrough.

Senator FEINGOLD. In a time when there's so much gridlock and partisanship, this is an issue that we have bipartisan support. It passed relatively easy. It was signed by President Obama.

Senator COONS. Senator Feingold's bill laid the groundwork for President Obama's decision last fall to send a hundred U.S. military advisors to central Africa to help armed forces from Uganda, the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Sudan, and the Central African Republic to hunt down Joseph Kony and the LRA.

Senator ISAKSON. On my trip to Uganda 2 weeks ago I met with some of the special advisors that are United States personnel in Uganda, advising the Central African Republic, the Sudan and Uganda. They're adding a great bit of ability to the troops over there and a great bit of intelligence.

Senator KERRY. We are currently working with the Defense Department, the State Department, other agencies to try to figure out what we can do and how we can be more effective. And we're going to continue to work with the State Department and others in an effort to provide the focus on this issue.

Senator ISAKSON. It may take time. You have to understand the area where he is thought to be is densely vegetated foliage. It has hardly any roads. There are no telephone poles. There are no lights at night. He's separated himself from a lot of his followers. So tracking him is difficult.

Senator INHOFE. They're getting very, very close. Hopefully this will be the year.

Senator COONS. President Obama, Congress, and our U.S. soldiers in the field aren't the only Americans determined to help stop the LRA. The Kony 2012 Campaign has inspired millions of young people to get involved in a humanitarian cause for the first time.

Senator LEAHY. Things that I heard about in 1997 finally the rest of the world is hearing about it. And they're hearing about it because of students and citizens in Africa and across America who have taken the time to watch and learn and share information about Kony.

Senator ISAKSON. I'm proud of our young people in America who are so compassionate about the African children and the African people, and I'm proud to be a part of the United States Senate that's seeing to it that we go after him and try and make sure he's brought to justice.

Senator COONS. Last month, we introduced a resolution in the Senate, S. Res. 402. In it, we condemned Joseph Kony and the Lord's Resistance Army for their horrific crimes against humanity.

Senator LEAHY. We can all work to help victims of war rebuild their lives. We can all work to bring the perpetrators of atrocities to justice. And we can all work to help make the world a better place.

Senator COONS. We can stop Joseph Kony and the LRA. We just need to keep at it and we need to keep working together.

Senator INHOFE. There are so many people who are joining together now that he is literally on the run.

Senator KERRY. I believe we can stop Joseph Kony if we focus on it intently, and we are, in the Foreign Relations Committee, increasingly going to up our level of that focus. We're going to provide visibility to this issue. We're going to try to push countries and push our own Government into recognizing that we have to commit more.

Senator ISAKSON. It's only a matter of time.

Senator COONS. Stopping Kony and the LRA is a mission that has deep bipartisan support in the Senate, in the House of Representatives, and in Washington. Our challenge now is sustaining that support. That's where you come in.

Senator KERRY. There's no country on the face of the planet that allows people as much freedom of choice and as much opportunity to go make a difference.

Senator COONS. Please, stay informed. Be engaged. Help make sure that we finish the job, that we find Joseph Kony, that we remove him from the battlefield, that we bring him to justice, and that we commit to the ongoing work of healing the communities, the young people, the families, who have been hurt by the crimes of this terrible man and his horrific group.

And remember, there's so much more we can and should do in Africa and around the world to promote American values. We welcome your voice. We're listening to your concerns, and we look forward to working together.

[End of video.]

Senator COONS. That video was in large part motivated by a desire to respond to the millions of young people around the world who have been engaged by and encouraged to be active on this issue by Invisible Children, by Resolve, by the Enough Project, and by their joint efforts to publicize this ongoing, decades-long scourge in central Africa. It really is, I think, a once-in-a-generation moment when we have the attention of millions of folks around the world.

And so I want us to now move to our first panel to hear about the status of the hunt for Joseph Kony, the multilateral effort against the LRA, America's investments in recovery.

And I want to thank the two Senators to my left, both for your participation in the video and for their long leadership on this issue.

With that, I would like to ask Senator Isakson for his opening statement before we go to the first panel.

**OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. JOHNNY ISAKSON,
U.S. SENATOR FROM GEORGIA**

Senator ISAKSON. Well, I will be very brief because I want to hear from the panelists.

But to Assistant Secretary Yamamoto, Administrator Gast, and particularly Amanda Dory, I am delighted that you are here today. You gave me a great briefing before I went to Uganda early in the month of April, and I am pleased to report, coming back from that trip, that our United States forces under DOD that are in Uganda and other parts of central Africa assisting the various armies and the African Union are doing what our troops always do: They are making America proud. And they are bringing resources for the use by those armies that would not otherwise be available, and the assets they have deployed and the intelligence that they are gathering is being very, very helpful in terms of the pursuit of Joseph Kony.

And I want to particularly recognize Jolly who is here today and Jacob. Thank you for being here. We are anxious to hear your story. I would much rather hear from you than me. So, Mr. Chairman, I want to turn it back to you to conduct the hearing.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Inhofe.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JAMES M. INHOFE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA**

Senator INHOFE. I will be very brief. I have another hearing across the hall I am going to have to be attending.

I just returned from the east African community, and as Ambassador Yamamoto will tell you, that was my 123rd African country

visit in 15 years. The most revealing one was back in 2005. And I really want to mention this because I think it may have gone kind of unnoticed.

My first up to Gulu was in 2005 when we heard there is a guy up there named Joseph Kony. When I got up there, there were three guys who I really believe we would not be where we are today if it had not been for them. They were the Invisible Children guys. They had their camera going up there. Jason Russell, Loren Pool, and Bobby Bailey. And when they put together their first thing and went out and engendered the support, I can tell you right now we ended up getting 64 cosponsors to 1067. I did most of that and could not have done it without those kids harassing all the Members of the Senate to get them to be interested in this mission.

So I joined them and I am just glad, hopefully, this will be the year. We are going to do all of the resources we can. I want to remind people, as I always do, that the amendments that we put on the 2012 national defense authorization language was one that precludes Americans from engaging in combat. And I think that is very important for people to know because we get a lot of criticism for getting places like Libya and other places where perhaps we should not be, but they need the support, they have the support.

And I will be visiting with President Kabila later this afternoon on a plan that he has. You have not just five countries, but you have included in that the additional five countries of the east African community all working together to make this happen.

Thanks for all your support on this.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Inhofe.

I would like to now move to our first panel. Ambassador Yamamoto.

STATEMENT OF HON. DONALD YAMAMOTO, PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE FOR AFRICAN AFFAIRS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, for this great opportunity to speak to you today on our efforts to counter the Lord's Resistance Army.

The LRA is a weakened force, but its humanitarian impact remains disproportionate. It continues to terrorize and uproot communities across three countries, primarily the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and Southern Sudan.

And, Senator, let me say that we are all very grateful to you, Senator Coons, Senator Isakson, and Senator Inhofe, for everything that you have done. It is very humbling to be here before you and the work that you have done to inspire us in our work here.

Consistent with the legislation that you all passed in 2010, we continue to pursue a multifaceted strategy to support regional efforts to end the threat posed by the LRA.

Let me stress that the governments of the region are in the lead. Their troops are making the most important sacrifices and their people are confronting the LRA's terror. These governments are the ones that are ultimately responsible for ending this threat and protecting local communities. The United States is trying to help them fulfill these responsibilities.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to look for ways in which we can enhance the capacity of these militaries to succeed. Last October, President Obama authorized the deployment of a small number of U.S. military forces to serve as advisors to the regional forces pursuing the LRA. The President announced yesterday that the United States will continue this deployment. My colleague from the Defense Department will go into more detail on this work of the advisors.

We are coordinating closely with the United Nations peacekeeping missions in the region, especially to promote civilian protection. We have encouraged the U.N. to scale up its efforts when possible.

We are also working very closely with the African Union to increase its efforts to address the LRA. Last month, the AU officially launched the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA.

These new initiatives, united together, offer real promise. However, as Chairman Kerry wrote earlier this month, ending the LRA threat is not an easy mission. The LRA operates in very small groups across vast territories, roughly the size of California, and very heavily forested.

Mr. Chairman, effectively ending the LRA threat requires simultaneously removing the top leadership from the battlefield and addressing the conditions that leave the communities so vulnerable to the predatory groups such as the LRA. That is why the United States is seeking to pursue a multifaceted, four-pillar program, and that is to increase protection of civilians, the apprehension and removal of Joseph Kony and others, the promotion of defections of the LRA and support of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters, and No. 4, the provision of continued humanitarian relief to affected areas.

And in partnership with USAID, the State Department is supporting projects to increase civilian protection to enhance early warning capabilities and strengthen the overall resilience of communities.

We also believe that the targeted efforts to encourage the LRA fighters to peacefully surrender can have a great effect on reducing the LRA's number.

Mr. Chairman, we believe there is an opportunity for further U.S. support using the State Department's War Crimes Rewards Program. We welcome legislation that would expand the authority of this program to that end.

In closing, let me reiterate that our partners in the region are in the lead in countering the LRA threat and its impacts, but the United States can provide a critical, capable support to these efforts.

Mr. Chairman, I submit a longer version for the record.

And I also just want to take this time just to say thank you to Ben Keesey and the Invisible Children and to Jacob and the others who are here today.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ambassador Yamamoto follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF AMBASSADOR DONALD YAMAMOTO

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to update the committee about our ongoing efforts to help end the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Over the last several years, the governments of the region have made progress dispersing the LRA and reducing its numbers. However, despite this progress, the LRA continues to abduct, terrorize, and uproot communities across three countries—the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Sudan. The LRA is a weakened force, but its humanitarian impact remains disproportionate. The U.N. Office of Coordination for Humanitarian Affairs estimated that more than 465,000 people were displaced or living as refugees during 2011 as a result of the LRA threat.

Mr. Chairman, we believe that the LRA's actions are an affront to human dignity and a threat to regional stability. Joseph Kony and the LRA's top leaders should be brought to justice.

We appreciate Congress' strong interest and longstanding concern about the LRA, especially the attention given by this committee over the years. We view Congress as a critical partner in our ongoing efforts. The United States has worked for many years to help address the suffering caused by the LRA. Consistent with the legislation passed in 2010, we continue to pursue a multifaceted strategy to help the governments and people of this region in their efforts to end the threat posed by the LRA and address the human consequences of the LRA's atrocities.

Let me stress that the governments of Uganda, CAR, DRC, and South Sudan are in the lead. Their troops are making the most important sacrifices, and their people are confronting the LRA's terror. These governments are the ones that are ultimately responsible for ending this threat and protecting local communities. The United States is trying to help them fulfill that responsibility. We have a strong interest in enhancing the capacity and cooperation of our partners in Africa to address threats to peace and security, such as the LRA, and to better protect their citizens.

Continued leadership and cooperation by these governments is essential to keep the pressure on the LRA. As we have seen in the past, the LRA can exploit any reduction in military or diplomatic pressure to regroup and rebuild its forces. Over recent years, the State Department has provided support to enable counter-LRA operations by our regional partners. Since 2008, we have obligated approximately \$50 million in logistical support to help the Ugandan military sustain its operations and increase its mobility. We continue to provide this support.

In the DRC, the State Department funded training and equipment for a light infantry battalion of the Congolese army that is now operating in LRA-affected areas of the DRC. This battalion is engaged in targeted military operations against the LRA in coordination with the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The State Department continues to fund two mentors who are working with this battalion. We are also engaging with the militaries of CAR and South Sudan as they increase their efforts to counter the LRA and protect their populations.

Mr. Chairman, we continue to look at ways that we can improve our security assistance and enhance the capacity of these militaries to succeed in their mission. Last October, President Obama authorized the deployment of a small number of U.S. military forces to serve as advisors to the national military forces pursuing the LRA and seeking to protect local populations. The President announced yesterday that the United States will continue the deployment. My colleague from the Department of Defense will go into more detail on the work of these advisors. We believe they are helping the partner forces to enhance their cooperation, intelligence-sharing and fusion, and operational planning.

The U.S. military advisors are coordinating closely with the U.N. peacekeeping missions in the region, especially to promote civilian protection. MONUSCO, in particular, has stepped up its efforts to address the LRA in the DRC. MONUSCO conducts targeted military operations unilaterally as well as jointly with the Congolese military to help protect civilians. We have encouraged the U.N. to scale up its efforts, when possible, to help address the LRA threat in CAR and South Sudan. The new U.N. Regional Office for Central Africa is overseeing the developing of a regional U.N. strategy for addressing the LRA, which will be presented to the U.N. Security Council next month. We have been working with the U.N. to develop this strategy and look forward to helping the U.N. implement it.

We are also working closely with the African Union as it increases its efforts to address the LRA. Last month, the AU officially launched its Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA. Although many operational details are still being worked out, we believe the AU's involvement can strengthen coordination, information-sharing, and trust among the four militaries pursuing the LRA. We also

believe the AU can help the governments in the region to develop a common approach to encouraging LRA defections and ensuring effective repatriation and reintegration of those who defect. Our military advisors in the field are coordinating with the AU staff as they stand up this initiative on the ground, and our embassies are working closely with the AU's Special Envoy on the LRA issue, Francisco Madeira.

These new initiatives, united together, offer real promise. However, as Chairman Kerry wrote in The Huffington Post earlier this month, we have to level with the American public that ending the LRA threat is not an easy mission. The LRA operates in very small groups across vast territory roughly the size of California, much of it densely forested. Regional forces have had success in tracking down LRA groups, but the LRA's leaders are savvy. They exploit communal conflicts and attack remote communities, which lack basic road, telecommunications, and governance infrastructure. Moreover, the governments in this region have limited capabilities and numerous security challenges.

Mr. Chairman, effectively ending the LRA threat requires simultaneously removing the top leadership from the battlefield and addressing the conditions that leave communities so vulnerable to predatory groups such as the LRA. This is precisely why the United States is seeking to pursue a multifaceted strategy to enhance both military and civilian capacity in the region. In partnership with USAID, the State Department is supporting projects to increase civilian protection, enhance early warning capabilities, deliver humanitarian relief, and strengthen the overall resiliency of communities. We also continue to encourage other international donors to increase their efforts in these areas. As we have seen in northern Uganda and parts of South Sudan, development can play a critical role in pushing out the LRA and keeping it from returning.

We also believe that targeted efforts, in coordination with increased military pressure, to encourage LRA fighters to peacefully surrender can have a great effect on reducing the LRA's numbers. Since 2000, more than 12,000 fighters and abductees have left the group and been reintegrated and reunited with their families through Uganda's Amnesty Commission. The successful rehabilitation and reintegration of those who leave the LRA creates a positive feedback cycle that encourages others to defect.

MONUSCO is undertaking critical efforts in the DRC to encourage LRA defections, including by setting up assembly points where LRA fighters and associated persons can safely surrender. The mission is publicizing the locations of these assembly points through targeted radio broadcasts and leaflets. We strongly support these efforts and have encouraged the U.N. to initiate similar, coordinated activities in CAR and South Sudan. We are also looking at ways that we can augment these activities through our programs and presence on the ground. The State Department has deployed a civilian officer to the region who is working with our military advisors and embassies to identify critical gaps and opportunities for further U.S. support. We plan to deploy a second officer soon.

Mr. Chairman, we believe there is an opportunity for further U.S. support to the counter-LRA effort using the State Department's War Crimes Rewards Program. This program allows the Secretary of State to publicize and pay rewards for information leading to the arrest and/or conviction of targeted war criminals. This program has been very effective in bringing fugitives to justice, but the present statutory authority is limited to fugitives indicted by the International Criminal Tribunals for the Former Yugoslavia and Rwanda and the Special Court for Sierra Leone.

We welcome legislation that would expand the authority for the War Crimes Reward Program so it could be used to target foreign nationals accused of war crimes, crimes against humanity, or genocide by any international criminal tribunal, including hybrid or mixed courts. This would shift the program from being court-specific to crime-specific. Fugitives would only be added to the program after careful review and approval by an interagency committee, and ultimately the Secretary of State.

Under this expanded authority, we could use the program to target Joseph Kony and other top LRA commanders. We could publicize rewards for information about LRA leaders using leaflets, radio broadcasts, and other communications mechanisms. We believe, and our colleagues at the Defense Department agree, that this would provide an important tool to generate information about the whereabouts of top LRA leaders, especially to encourage nonindicted LRA fighters to defect and provide such information.

In closing, let me reiterate that it is our partners in the region—governments and civil society organizations—who are in the lead in countering the LRA threat and its impacts. But the United States can provide critical capabilities and support to help them succeed in their efforts. We believe doing so puts us on the right side

of history, on the right side of our values, and on the right side of our strategic interests. We appreciate Congress' strong commitment to countering the LRA, and we look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Ambassador Yamamoto.
Assistant Administrator Gast.

STATEMENT OF HON. EARL GAST, ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA, U.S. AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. GAST. Good morning, Chairman Coons. Good morning, Ranking Member Isakson. Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today. It is a pleasure to be back here again so soon.

For over two decades, the Lord's Resistance Army terrorized communities across huge swaths of northern Uganda, abducting civilians and forcing children to become soldiers. The LRA was finally driven out of Uganda in 2006, and since then northern Uganda has undergone a transformation that is tangible. People can move freely. Banks and stores are open, and fields are being cultivated. Poverty declined from 61 percent in 2005 to an estimated 46 percent in 2010. And 95 percent of the more than 1.8 million Ugandans who were displaced by the conflict have returned to their homes.

Working with the Government of Uganda and civil society organizations, the United States has done a tremendous amount to solidify this progress by supporting the rebuilding of communities and economies.

Today the LRA's numbers are significantly reduced, but it continues to commit atrocities throughout large parts of central Africa, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Republic of South Sudan. LRA violence has displaced more than 445,000 persons in an area the size of California that is harsh, remote, and underdeveloped.

As the threat has shifted from northern Uganda to the Central African Republic and the Congo and South Sudan, USAID has adjusted its response to address humanitarian needs and increase the protection of civilians in these areas, which is at the core of our strategy. Our programs, which aim to assist nearly a quarter of a million persons, are having a significant impact. Because the LRA preys on vulnerable communities, we are supporting coordinated efforts to reduce the vulnerability of those communities. In the DRC, USAID has engaged 24 villages to form local protection committees that are identifying security threats and assessing what they can do to mitigate those problems. Once these protection plans are in place, the use of high-frequency radios will reinforce and extend an existing network of radios managed by the Catholic Church as an early warning system.

USAID also supports the reunification and reintegration of formerly abducted children into their families and communities and is helping to meet their significant psychosocial needs with therapy and life skills training.

USAID is also helping women purchase sewing machines, fabric, and basic accessories. Most of these women are the sole providers for their children and they can now earn a living through tailoring and producing clothing for clients in and around their communities.

USAID has been heavily engaged in LRA-affected areas of Uganda since the late 1980s and our efforts have shown that development can flourish once stability and security have taken root. As the conflict first began to exact severe economic losses, caused mass displacement, and weakened governance in northern Uganda, USAID focused on providing lifesaving assistance to those affected by the conflict. When the LRA was finally driven out of northern Uganda, our programs shifted from relief to recovery and then to longer term development which is taking place now.

USAID's Northern Uganda Transition Initiative was a critical step in this evolution from relief, humanitarian assistance, to development. This flagship program renovated public service buildings throughout war-affected regions including government office buildings, schools, and teacher housing, health clinics, markets, police and justice facilities, and at a time of tremendous risk and uncertainty, the initiative quickly became a cornerstone of our strategy in northern Uganda and was highly valued by our Ugandan partners for its speed, for its flexibility, and its impact.

By partnering directly with government offices, the initiative not only helped communities begin to rebuild but also increased the visibility of and confidence in all levels of government. This effort sent a clear message that peace had returned to the region and the Government of Uganda was now at the helm of the reconstruction process.

In northern Uganda, USAID's strategy is now woven into the Government of Uganda's Peace, Recovery and Development Plan which has ushered in the return of stability to the region. And we are working closely with the Departments of State and Defense, as well as other donors and regional governments and civil society organizations that are on the ground, to make this a truly concerted push to help communities cope, recover, and rebuild.

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today, and I welcome any questions. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Gast follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR FOR AFRICA EARL W. GAST

Good morning, Chairman Coons, Ranking Member Isakson, and members of the subcommittee. Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today.

For over two decades, the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) terrorized communities across huge swaths of northern Uganda, abducting civilians and forcing children to become soldiers. The LRA was finally driven out of Uganda in 2006, and since then, northern Uganda has undergone a transformation that is tangible. People can move freely, banks and stores are open, and fields are being cultivated. Poverty declined from 60.7 percent in 2005 to 46.2 percent in 2010, and the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees estimates that 95 percent of the 1.8 million Ugandans displaced by the conflict have returned to their homes.

Today the LRA's numbers are significantly reduced, but it continues to commit atrocities throughout large parts of central Africa—the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), and the Republic of South Sudan. It is an area the size of California, and it is harsh, remote, and underdeveloped. Reported LRA attacks and abductions have increased in the first quarter of 2012—particularly in the DRC—and the LRA's violence has now displaced more than 445,000 people.

As the threat of the LRA shifted from northern Uganda to CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan, USAID accordingly adjusted its response to address humanitarian needs and supplement ongoing efforts by regional governments and the United Nations to increase the protection of civilians in these areas. In LRA-affected populations in CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan, the United States life-saving humani-

tarian assistance, health services, food aid, civilian protection, and economic recovery totaled more than \$18 million in FY 2011.

USAID remains committed to promoting stability and economic development in northern Uganda while also addressing the immediate needs of communities in LRA-affected parts of CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan—though insecurity presents a significant challenge to providing humanitarian assistance and promoting development in these areas.

USAID aims to provide at least 240,000 people with humanitarian assistance in LRA-affected parts of CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan, and these programs are having a significant impact on women and children. USAID is addressing the psychosocial needs of children who have either been abducted or displaced by the LRA by supporting the participation of nearly 1,000 children in play therapy and life-skills training. In CAR, DRC, and South Sudan, USAID supports protection for LRA-affected children through reunification and reintegration of separated and formerly abducted children into their families and communities. In CAR, one of our grantees supports protection activities for LRA-affected individuals, including gender-based violence sensitization and psychosocial support for displaced and formerly abducted children. In the Haut Uélé District of the DRC, USAID is providing assistance to the Kpezu Women's Tailors Association to purchase sewing machines, fabric, and basic accessories. Made up primarily of women who are the sole providers for themselves and their children, the women of the association can now earn a living through tailoring and producing clothing for clients in and around the community. Kpezu's activities also include training young women who have not had the opportunity to attend school in sewing and basic literacy.

The protection of civilians continues to be central to the overall U.S. Government strategy to help counter the LRA. Because the LRA preys on vulnerable communities, we are supporting the efforts of regional governments and nongovernmental organizations to reduce the vulnerability of those communities.

In LRA-affected areas of the DRC, the United States is incorporating high-frequency radios into community-based protection programs to provide early warnings to conflict and violence. Although implementation of this work has been delayed by severe logistical challenges, including undependable air service, negligible road and communication infrastructure, and acute insecurity, the project is progressing. USAID has engaged 24 communities based on their level of insecurity, willingness to take part in the project, and gaps in coverage with other similar programs. All 24 communities have formed local protection committees that are identifying security threats and assessing what actions they can take to mitigate the threats. Each committee consists of around 15 members, including an average of four to six women and representation from displaced populations and youth. USAID is assisting them in developing protection plans tailored to specific needs of their communities and will provide some funding to support priority activities within the plans. For example, a committee in Yassa formed in February 2012 reported that the police had been abusive toward the population, stealing from and harassing them. Since the committee began to work to improve relations between community members, the police, and the DRC Armed Forces, the police have significantly improved their behavior and are now working closely with the community to address their concerns. Once these community protection plans are in place, the use of high-frequency radios will reinforce and extend the existing network of radios managed by the Catholic Church as an early warning network.

Additionally, USAID is piloting an innovative cell phone tower project that aims to diversify the communications options available for use in early warning systems and humanitarian efforts. USAID funding partially supports the construction of four low-cost base transmission stations in strategic towns in Haut and Bas Uélé. Each of the four towers will provide at least 20 square kilometers of cell phone connectivity to 1,200 mobile phone users living in areas previously lacking coverage. Although the DRC's main mobile network operators have the potential to expand their operations, their unfamiliarity with the technology has precluded any investment. Despite these challenges, Vodacom accepted the challenge and expects the towers to be operational by fall 2012.

The benefits will be well worth the investment. Vodacom recently sent a team to Ango to begin to educate the community about the project; the residents were excited and believe it will significantly reduce their isolation. Additionally, this project will be a model for how to introduce low-cost cell phone coverage to remote areas located outside of cellular networks. Mobile companies do not typically invest in remote areas because of the difficulty in earning a profit. In this project the low-cost, light-weight AltoPod "stations" replace large, costly towers and are easier to transport into areas which are logistically difficult to access. In terms of long-term development impact and innovation, this pilot project could catalyze additional pri-

vate-sector investment in rural areas by demonstrating the technical and economic viability to mobile network operators.

USAID has been heavily engaged in LRA-affected areas of Uganda since the late 1980s, and our intervention evolved over the years to reflect changing needs and priorities. With the LRA's departure, we have had significant success in helping affected communities in Uganda make the transition from conflict to relief to recovery to development.

As the conflict in northern Uganda first began to exact severe economic losses, cause mass displacement, and weaken governance and social structures in Uganda, USAID focused on providing humanitarian assistance to those affected by the conflict. Between 1997 and 2009, USAID provided more than \$436 million in humanitarian assistance to Uganda, including \$370 million in food aid. Food, health services, camp management, and other aid provided by the American people saved lives and helped communities survive the worst of the conflict.

In 2006, when the LRA was finally driven from northern Uganda, we shifted our programs from relief to recovery. We helped internally displaced persons return to their homes and reestablish their livelihoods. Investments in seed distribution programs improved food security, the rehabilitation of water points reduced health risk, and road repairs opened up access to markets, supporting local economies. As a result of these investments, in 2009, we were able to shift our programs in northern Uganda to focus on long-term development.

USAID's Northern Uganda Transition Initiative was a critical step in this evolution. This 2008–11, \$23-million flagship program renovated public service buildings throughout war-affected regions, including government office buildings, schools and teacher houses, health clinics and health clinic housing, markets, boreholes, and police and justice facilities.

In Agago district, physical additions to congested court and police buildings strengthened the rule of law by allowing courts to process more cases. As a result of USAID's infrastructure support, in 2011, the Kiryandongo court received 10–15 cases a day, as opposed to one or two cases before the court construction. Officials used to send cases to Masindi—over 70 kilometers away—and the complainant was forced to pay for the travel of the accused, police officers, and witnesses. The cost forced many people to opt to settle cases, but now that the facility has facilitated speedy trials, more cases are being reports, and witnesses even come willingly.

In addition, USAID worked with media, especially radio stations, to communicate correct and timely information on issues such as public services and land rights to returnees in northern Uganda and to support traditional and cultural reconciliation processes, which helped communities heal from the wounds of war. Radio messages on amnesty helped the return of former combatants and the disarming of civilians; in fact, in Kitgum and Pader districts, guns were found surrendered after these messages had aired.

At a time of tremendous risk and uncertainty, the initiative quickly became a cornerstone of USAID's strategy in northern Uganda and was highly valued by Ugandan partners for its speed, flexibility, and impact. By partnering directly with government departments and offices, the initiative not only helped communities begin to rebuild, but also increased the visibility of, and confidence in, all levels of government. At the same time, local officials appreciated how the new infrastructure, especially markets, increased their revenue, making them less dependent on allocations from the district government and giving them more flexibility in development planning. This effort sent a clear message that peace had returned to the region and the Government of Uganda was now at the helm of the reconstruction process.

In northern Uganda, USAID's strategy is now woven into the Government of Uganda's Peace, Recovery, and Development Plan, which has ushered in the return of stability to the region. USAID has helped nurture this progress by providing medical care and counseling to abductees, promoting reconstruction, supporting transitional justice and reconciliation, increasing opportunities for ex-combatants, and addressing key issues such as HIV/AIDS, malaria, water, and sanitation. In addition, USAID is helping northern Uganda to redevelop its farms; in 2010, agricultural training and projects helped increase the region's crop sales by more than \$7 million. USAID's unique Northern Uganda Development of Enhanced Local Governance, Infrastructure, and Livelihoods program enables local governments to expand basic services to areas with ex-combatants, abductees, and returnees, while at the same time infusing capital into the recovering economy by using labor-intensive methods of construction. In FY 2011, this program supported the construction of 70 boreholes, six schools with latrines and teacher housing, and contracts for 19 farm-to-market roads in four districts.

Our efforts in northern Uganda demonstrate that development can flourish once security has been assured. However, the north remains the poorest region in the

country. Underlying grievances over land rights, the discovery of oil, poor political processes, and ethnic divisions have the potential to slow development and raise tensions. Recognizing these challenges, USAID continues to take a conflict-sensitive approach. We continue to dedicate resources to address some of the remaining drivers of conflict and to build local government capacity to deliver services. USAID's new Supporting Access to Justice, Fostering Equity and Peace program will continue our efforts while also proactively addressing emerging development issues and sources of tension, such as land disputes. Our field office in Gulu, northern Uganda, not only remains open, but is expanding its staff numbers.

The United States is committed to continuing its long-term support to the people of central Africa in their efforts to respond to the threats of the LRA. Although we have made progress in addressing humanitarian assistance needs and increasing the protection of civilians in LRA-affected areas, critical gaps remain in CAR and parts of the DRC and South Sudan. USAID and the State Department are working together to determine how best to utilize the \$5 million in 2012 Economic Support Funds to address gaps in the region. We have determined that programming will focus on the LRA-affected areas of CAR, where the greatest gaps remain, although some funds may be programmed in the DRC and South Sudan. USAID's efforts in LRA-affected areas in the region and northern Uganda are closely coordinated with the Departments of State and Defense, as well as other donors, such as the European Union and the United Kingdom, regional governments, and civil society on the ground, to make this a truly concerted push to help communities finally begin to rebuild and recover.

Thank you for inviting me to speak with you today on this critical issue, and I welcome any questions you might have.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Ms. Dory.

STATEMENT OF AMANDA DORY, DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE, AFRICAN AFFAIRS, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, WASHINGTON, DC

Ms. DORY. Thank you and good morning, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member. I appreciate this opportunity to update the subcommittee on the Department of Defense's role in countering the Lord's Resistance Army. I particularly appreciate the chance to appear before this committee in my first hearing in my new capacity as Deputy Assistant Secretary for African Affairs.

Consistent with the legislation passed by Congress in 2010 and signed into law by the President, the United States continues, as you know, to pursue a comprehensive, multiyear strategy to help our regional partners mitigate and eliminate the threat posed by the Lord's Resistance Army.

DOD's contribution to this multinational effort is consistent with the new Defense Strategic Guidance, which states, whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives on the African Continent, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities. In this operation, U.S. forces are combat-equipped for self-defense purposes but do not have an operational role. U.S. advisors are supporting the regional forces in an advisory capacity and seeking to enhance our partners' capabilities to achieve their objectives against the LRA.

The militaries of Uganda, the Central African Republic, South Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, in collaboration with the African Union, continue to pursue the LRA and seek to protect local populations. They are leading this effort.

As you know, approximately 100 U.S. military personnel are deployed for Operation Observant Compass across the four LRA-affected countries. There is a command and control element in

Uganda that is working to synchronize and oversee DOD's counter-LRA efforts and to coordinate at the headquarters level with Ugandan forces.

Small teams of U.S. military advisors are also now working with Ugandan military and national military forces in field locations in LRA-affected areas of the Central African Republic and South Sudan. In these two countries, U.S. advisors have helped to set up Operations Fusion Centers to enable daily coordination, information-sharing, and tactical coordination. The U.S. advisors are also integrating local civilian leaders into the work of the partner forces to improve the effectiveness of the civil-military relations.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, United States advisors are supporting efforts by MONUSCO, the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission, in the DRC, as well as the Congolese military, to increase the protection of civilians and address the LRA. Our advisors there are working with MONUSCO's Joint Intelligence Operations Center which serves as the intelligence fusion hub for these efforts in the DRC. United States advisors are connecting the work of the JIOC and that of the Operations Fusion Centers in the Central African Republic and South Sudan to increase cross-border analysis and regional coordination on LRA movements.

We believe our support is helping the partner forces to improve their operations, but they continue to face significant challenges in terms of their capabilities to quickly pursue LRA groups across this vast area.

DOD appreciates the support provided by the authority in section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2012, which allows the expenditure of \$35 million to provide enhanced logistical support, supplies, and services to our regional partners. DOD intends to use this authority to provide enhanced mobility support to the regional forces, as well as supplies to upgrade the Operations Fusion Centers.

I will close for now by saying that we believe the U.S. military advisors have established a good foundation and made initial progress, especially considering the complexity of the operating environment, the number of partners involved, and the remoteness of the operational areas. We will continue to monitor the situation closely with our interagency partners to ensure our support is having the intended impact.

DOD appreciates Congress' strong commitment to countering the LRA and your support for the efforts of our deployed personnel. And we look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Dory follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY AMANDA J. DORY

Mr. Chairman, thank you for this opportunity to update the subcommittee on the Department of Defense's (DOD) role in implementing the U.S. strategy to help our regional partners counter the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Consistent with the legislation passed by Congress in 2010 and signed into law by the President, the United States continues to pursue a comprehensive, multiyear strategy to help our regional partners mitigate and eliminate the threat posed by the LRA.

The U.S. strategy outlines four pillars for our continuing support: increasing the protection of civilians; apprehending or removing Joseph Kony and senior commanders from the battlefield; promoting the defection, disarmament, demobilization,

and reintegration of remaining LRA fighters; and increasing humanitarian access and providing continued relief to affected communities.

The militaries of Uganda, the Central African Republic, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and South Sudan, in collaboration with the African Union, continue to pursue the LRA and seek to protect local populations. They are leading this effort. They have made progress, but there are significant challenges to pursuing LRA groups across this vast, densely forested region. To enhance their efforts, the President authorized a small number of U.S. forces to deploy to the LRA-affected region to serve as advisors to the forces pursuing the LRA and seeking to protect local populations. U.S. forces began this deployment in October 2011 and small teams of advisors moved to forward operating locations in LRA-affected areas at the end of 2011 and early 2012.

DOD's contribution to this multinational effort is in line with the new Defense Strategic Guidance, which states, "Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small-footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives on the continent, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities." In this operation, U.S. forces are combat-equipped for self-defense purposes, but do not have an operational role. U.S. advisors are supporting the regional forces in an advisory capacity and seeking to enhance our partners' capabilities to achieve their objectives and accomplish their mission against the LRA.

Approximately 100 U.S. military personnel are deployed for this operation across the four LRA-affected countries. There is a command-and-control element in Uganda that is working to synchronize and oversee DOD's counter-LRA efforts and to coordinate at the headquarters level with the Ugandan forces.

Small teams of U.S. military advisors are also now working with the Ugandan military and national military forces in field locations in LRA-affected areas of Central African Republic and South Sudan. In these two countries, U.S. advisors have helped to set up Operations Fusion Centers to enable daily coordination, information-sharing, and tactical coordination. The U.S. advisors are also integrating local civilian leaders into the work of the partner forces, to improve the effectiveness of civil-military relations.

In the Democratic Republic of the Congo, U.S. advisors are supporting efforts by the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) and the Congolese military (FARDC) to increase the protection of civilians and address the LRA. The advisors are working at MONUSCO's Joint Intelligence Operations Center (JIOC), which serves as the intelligence fusion hub for these efforts in the DRC. U.S. advisors are connecting the work of the JIOC and that of the Operations Fusion Centers in CAR and South Sudan to increase cross-border analysis and regional coordination on LRA movements.

Over the last few months, the main body of U.S. advisors began the actual work of advising and supporting partner operations. In the DRC, U.S. advisors are helping MONUSCO and the FARDC to develop their operations in LRA-affected areas. For example, U.S. advisors assisted with the planning for a joint FARDC-MONUSCO operation in December 2011 to help deter the LRA from committing large-scale attacks during the Christmas season, as they have done in the past. In CAR and South Sudan, U.S. advisors are providing planning, training, and intelligence support for the ongoing efforts to track and intercept LRA groups.

We believe our support is helping the partner forces to better locate LRA groups and improve their operations. But, the partner forces continue to face significant challenges in terms of their capabilities to quickly pursue LRA groups across this vast area approximately the size of California. DOD appreciates the support provided by the authority in Section 1206 of the National Defense Authorization Act for FY 2012, which allows the expenditure of \$35 million to provide enhanced logistical support, supplies, and services to the regional partner forces. DOD intends to use this authority to provide enhanced mobility support to the regional forces and supplies to upgrade the Operations Fusion Centers.

U.S. forces have also been helping our regional partners to increase their engagement with local civic leaders and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to increase the flow of information and effectiveness of operations. U.S. forces are also working with partner militaries to integrate civilian protection into operational planning. The State Department has deployed a civilian field officer who is working with U.S. military advisors in this regard.

In coordination with our embassies in the region, U.S. military advisors are coordinating closely with the U.N. in their efforts to promote the defection, disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration of former LRA fighters and associated persons. For example, U.S. military advisors have recently helped to transport MONUSCO leaflets encouraging LRA defections for distribution in the CAR. In addition, the U.S. Africa Command (USAFRICOM) has developed

plans for how they can reinforce existing information operations by the U.N. and nongovernmental actors to encourage LRA defections.

USAFRICOM also plans to utilize its existing rewards program and fund small-scale efforts to increase information-gathering efforts throughout LRA-affected areas. We believe that the use of the State Department's War Crimes Rewards Program to target Joseph Kony and top LRA commanders would significantly enhance and complement this effort. We support legislation that would expand the authority for this program for these purposes. This program would provide an additional tool to help generate information about the location of LRA leaders, and encourage more LRA fighters to defect.

I will close by saying that we believe the U.S. military advisors have established a good foundation and made initial progress, especially considering the complexity of the operating environment, the number of partners involved, and the remoteness of the operational areas. As the President said on April 23, upon ordering the deployment last year, he directed his National Security Council to review our progress after 150 days. Having completed this review, the President announced that our advisors will continue their efforts to support the regional forces. However, we want to continue to stress that this is just one component of the overall U.S. strategy and that our regional partners are the ones in the driver's seat. This is not an open-ended deployment and we will continue to regularly assess their commitment to this mission and whether we are making sufficient progress collectively to justify the continued deployment of U.S. advisors. DOD appreciates Congress's strong commitment to countering the LRA and your support for the efforts of our deployed personnel, and we look forward to working with you in the months ahead.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dory, for your testimony and for appearing before us today.

Let me, if I could, start a first round of 7 minutes with you, if I could, because I am very interested in this sort of particular set of questions.

What is the level of cooperation at this point between the four regional governments in terms of sharing information, intelligence coordination now that these fusion centers are set up, now that the 100 U.S. advisors are sort of facilitating communication? Where are they in terms of collaboration? And what are the main practical and operational challenges associated with the U.S. mission that we might be aware of and might be engaged in supporting either additional logistical support or intelligence assets that might be needed to strengthen AFRICOM's role and to strengthen cooperation and effectiveness with our regional partners?

Ms. DORY. Thank you. On the collaboration question, I can speak at the tactical operational level, and I know the State Department will want to add from the diplomatic and strategic level.

I would say the level of collaboration is growing. The advisors that have gone into these operations centers engaging with partner forces arrived, for the most part, in the December and January timeframe, and the first period of time has been involved in establishing their operations and developing the relationships, building rapport and trust with each of the partner militaries. As we all know, you cannot surge trust. That is something that happens with time, and I think they have made tremendous progress in this initial period of time.

I think at the tactical level, the level of communication and cooperation is quite close. We see that in terms of the closing between the provision of information and intelligence and then the connection with the operations that are undertaken by the partner militaries. So I think we have increasing numbers of tangible incidents to point to where there have been LRA engaged directly, where there have been abductees who have been released as a re-

sult of the collaboration and the cooperation at the tactical operational level.

In terms of the challenges, I highlighted a couple already and, as you know, the terrain itself is perhaps challenge No. 1. Challenge No. 2 is perhaps our collective expectations management on how quickly we will be able to succeed, given the terrain, given the multiplicity of the partner forces, and given the challenges associated with gathering actionable information during this operation.

I think in terms of some—specific to Operation Observant Compass, logistics and ISR are challenge areas for us. There are logistics support being provided at the present time thanks to the State Department's peacekeeping operations funding support. That is something that DOD will be taking over via our 1206 counter-LRA authority, and we intend to increase the amount of the logistics support provided to the partner forces themselves.

When it comes to ISR, as you are well aware, there is not enough ISR to go around for any of our combatant commanders. They are constantly making difficult choices within their areas of responsibility. AFRICOM has dedicated assets to the LRA mission and is looking at other ways to increase the amount of ISR coverage that could be provided going forward.

Senator COONS. Thank you very much.

If I could, just a follow-on question, and then I would like to go to Ambassador Yamamoto for the same question.

But what are benchmarks for success that will determine the duration of this deployment? You mentioned expectation management as one of the major challenges, right up there with terrain. What is the timeline? What could you suggest in terms of benchmarks that would determine when you would think it was appropriate for the DOD role to wind down?

Ms. DORY. I think in terms of benchmarks of success, when we look across the four pillars of the counter-LRA strategy, there are quite a few benchmarks to look at. Some of those relate to the total number of defections over time. Some of them relate to the number of LRA successfully engaged. Some of them relate—these are specific in the DOD realm—to the capacity-building of the partner forces and their ability to increase the effectiveness of their information and intelligence gathering operations and then to translate that into operational activities on the ground. Those are some specific ones to the DOD lane.

I think there are also metrics or benchmarks when you look at the level of overall development in the areas in terms of the access for humanitarian assistance and the ability to engage in development activities over time along the lines of what we have heard from USAID.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much.

Ambassador Yamamoto, if you would just speak to the same basic question, what sort of progress we are making in terms of getting the regional partners we have to collaborate, to coordinate. To what extent is some ongoing hesitancy or distance between the DRC and Uganda contributing to operational challenges in the field? And then to what extent is collaboration and coordination in the development and recovery mission also critical to our long-term success?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. And thank you very much, Senator.

One of the main issues is that the four governments are committed. So that is really kind of the first step in trying to get them together. You are obviously correct. Trying to get all these countries to coordinate and cooperate and to have an integrated military force that can coordinate and cooperate is going to be tough. We are talking to Defense Minister Mbabazi last week from the Central African Republic. In his troops, they need equipment. They need training. They need a lot of logistical support. But then in comparison to the Ugandan UPDF, they have a much more advanced operation. And so how to integrate these are going to be a challenge, but we are trying to overcome those. I think the special forces group has been very good about enhancing coordination and cooperation.

The other issue, too, is—of course, you are actually correct. The Ugandan troops have not been in the DRC since the elections last year. That is going to take some time. But they are committed. We have spoken to President Kabila and Museveni and they are going work together to make this happen.

But one thing that is really important is that as long as we remain committed—the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, and the African Union—that is going to be important. And I think the AU especially setting up a regional task force in Yambio, South Sudan is one step. The United Nations peacekeeping operations contributing—that is another step. And right now is, we are building that trust, and I think that trust will continue to expand.

One thing, just going back to what Amanda Dory was saying on the benchmarks, is if we can engage the enhanced capabilities, coordination, and cooperation, that is one level of success and benchmark.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Ambassador.

I am going to turn to Senator Isakson. Then we can resume.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, first of all, Administrator Gast, I want to describe what I saw in the Gulu area of northern Uganda because your organization and the NGO's you are contracting with have made a remarkable turn in coordination with the Ugandan Government. We flew into Gulu by a local puddle jumper—I guess is the best way to put it—but we got there from Kampala. But one of the things we saw along the way, Museveni and the government, since Kony has been out of northern Uganda, which is about 5 to 6 years, have built a better road access between Kampala and Gulu where access is now somewhere between 7 and 8 hours, whereas it used to be nonexistent before, which has kind of connected the north to the capital city.

And in the Gulu area, USAID, through its contractor CARE, is doing some remarkable village improvements in terms of their savings and loan concept and other things having to do with microfinance, if you will, at the villages and bring about economic recovery. And the Pathfinder Group that is in that area is doing the same thing. And then CDC is doing a great job in terms of PEPFAR and the AIDS problem that is in Uganda.

But I have to say if you talk about the horror of Joseph Kony in northern Uganda 5 to 6 years ago and the savagery and the de-

struction and the terrible things that were going on, a lot of credit has to be given to the renaissance that has now taken place in the Gulu area in northern Africa, and a lot of that credit goes to USAID.

You might want to comment on some of those contractors.

Mr. GAST. Thank you, Senator, and thank you for your praise. I look forward actually to going to Gulu. I have heard about the tremendous impact that we collectively, the U.S. Government, have made in partnership with NGO's, international NGO's, local NGO's, and certainly the Government of Uganda.

USAID programmed more than \$100 million last year into northern Uganda, and that was about 50 percent of the United States resources that went into northern Uganda last year. And it is all coordinated under the Ugandan Government's peace and reconstruction development program, and AID is a major contributor. Other donors and the government itself are as well.

Before I get into commenting on some of the specific programs of our implementing partners, I do want to say that this is one area where we are being forward-leaning, recognizing that there is some good capacity within some of the local governments there. And so when Administrator Shah was before you and discussed some of the USAID Forward reforms, this is one area where we are actually piloting the reforms. And so we are programming resources directly through the local government so that the local governments can build infrastructure projects to support the community, and at the same time, we have an independent verifier, one of the NGO's, Winrock, provides that oversight to make sure that there is strict accountability of the money that USAID is providing. So I just wanted to highlight that as one success on the reforms of AID.

In addition to working directly with the local governments, we are also working with a wide range of partners, some 20 NGO's, to include CARE which is doing microfinance. We have had a tremendous impact in economic growth, as well as in agricultural growth. So, for example, just the interventions and loans that we have made in the agricultural sector last year resulted in an increase in 7 million dollars' worth of agricultural products last year.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, you are causing a lot of economic improvements to take place in the lives of those people which really helps for the political stability in the area.

Ms. Dory, I want to comment on ISR for a minute. Intelligence, reconnaissance, and surveillance is critically important, as we have learned in many battlefields. That is being enhanced now a little bit and I understand will be enhanced a little bit more. And that is the real key the United States, I think, can give to the AU and the U.N. and the other forces that are there.

But it should be underscored for everybody that has an interest in this where he is believed to be is a very heavily vegetated, very underdeveloped part of the world where even surveillance sometimes is very, very difficult because of the canopy that literally covers the Central African Republic and South Sudan and that area. I am very proud of what I saw and what our 100 advisors, plus or minus, are doing there and the cooperation and the aid they are giving to the Ugandan people themselves.

One example—by the way, you talked about the reward program. But they are also doing a great flyer drop program like we used in a lot of battles all the way back to World War I and World War II, but they are dropping leaflets offering amnesty and recovery to abductees of Joseph Kony who will come back. And that is starting to bear fruit, which is one of the great programs. And I want to commend the advisors for doing that. We saw firsthand some of the flyers and some of the inducements to really provide these people with the confidence to leave where they are in terms of in support of Kony and come back and bring us the information necessary.

And I also want to say one other thing. I appreciate the President extending the stay of those advisors in Uganda. Joseph Kony can be within our reach sooner than we might have thought in the past, and in large measure, it is because of blending the ISR with the capabilities of the African countries.

So any comments you want to add to that and the reward program I would appreciate.

Ms. DORY. Thank you, Senator.

Your comments about the ISR and some of the challenges there really underscore the need for all forms of information and intelligence to be fused together and I think underscore further the importance of the engagements with the local populations, the engagements with the defectors and the kinds of information that comes as a result of the defections. So the defectors are a key part of the information picture that helps the partner forces vector on the whereabouts of the LRA leadership. So very complementary to the use of assets, ISR-type assets, is the human picture, so to speak, derived from information and intelligence. And to that end, the rewards program—the proposal to expand the State Department's version of the rewards program is well supported by the Department, by General Ham and AFRICOM, as a way of inducing additional defectors who in the end help tighten the net in terms of the whereabouts of Joseph Kony.

Senator ISAKSON. Just a comment. I think DOD is very supportive of the resolution of Senator Kerry and Coons, myself, and others to expand the information leading to the capture and conviction of the Kony rewards program, which has been very helpful as I understand. And your fellows who were deployed over there made it known to me how much they would appreciate that opportunity. So I hope we can do that soon, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson.

That is, I think, our next step here legislatively, not just to pass a resolution continuing to express support for the mission and for the undertakings, express gratitude to the regional armies, but also Senator Kerry's legislation that will authorize the justice rewards program to also include Joseph Kony and his coindictes at the ICC.

I would be interested in a series of answers, if I could. Ambassador Yamamoto, the one country we have not talked about is Sudan. Sudan played a role in arming the LRA and in providing them some support years ago. There have been some reports that suggest Kony might be trying to seek some kind of safe haven in Sudan.

What is the status of our diplomatic efforts to pressure Khartoum to prevent any efforts by Kony to seek sanctuary in Sudan?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. I think now the situation, of course, in Sudan is very fluid because of the situation in Heglig and the other areas.

We have been following very closely the reports and allegations that the Khartoum government is supporting the LRA for some time. We have not seen the evidence. We are looking, but every information that we receive we are following and if we do find verifiable evidence, we are going to act on it immediately.

Senator COONS. And in your view, what would the consequences be for the International Criminal Court and for its stature going forward were Kony to be captured, taken to The Hague, and tried as opposed to removed from the battlefield in a way that prevented his being brought to justice?

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. I think the legislation by Senator Kerry and by you, sir, has been extremely helpful as far as the Rewards for Justice program because it does limit and isolate Kony, not only Kony but also the other senior officials. And we are supportive and receptive to how they are going to handle Kony. I know that the Ugandans are very much involved in trying to determine the ICC and other programs for Kony. But getting him off the battlefield is No. 1.

Senator COONS. I would be interested in an answer from the whole panel, if I could, in series to the next set of concerns I have. If you could give me some more detail about the AU, the African Union's role, how you see their engagement, how sustained it will be, what sort of collaborative role they are going to play, and that is both intergovernmental and then in terms of recovery and development and then, most centrally, in terms of the actual deployment. Is this simply rebranding troops who are already in the field with a different command structure? Will there be some additional troops sent to the field? What kinds of capabilities and origin do they have? First.

Second, civilian protection I think is a very important part of the long-term strategy. I would be interested particularly, Assistant Administrator Gast, in some comment about what you have been doing around civilian protection.

And then last, how can folks who might be watching this hearing who are interested—how they can be supportive? How can they be engaged? What difference can they make in America's effort at supporting our regional allies?

If you would first, Ambassador.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. We commend the African Union's efforts because their involvement is going to be very important not only in coordination and cooperation of these four countries, but also in bringing the entire African Union to bear on this issue. As you know, the African Union selected recently the Mozambique diplomat, Madeira, as the Special Envoy to the LRA. And also in that context, they have also established operations, a task force in Southern Sudan.

But what is going to be important, of course, is bringing the other groups together, the European Union, and funding and help in assisting, also the African Union to help coordinate much more.

And as you were saying, is it going to bring more troops? And I think what they are going to do is bring a better coordination and cooperation among these four countries and then bring other support from outside.

And also the other issue is that our special forces unit is working very closely with the African Union. So that involvement is one element of helping to support and to sustain and to close in on Kony and his team.

Mr. GAST. With regard to your question on the African Union, they are certainly playing a very valuable role in helping to coordinate on the humanitarian side with the U.N. organizations, with the host country governments, and also with the donor countries themselves, and also with the EU, which is also a major provider of humanitarian assistance to those four areas, those four countries.

But with regard to your question on protection, this is something that we have put increased emphasis on over the past couple of years, and we appreciate your earmarking of some \$5 million in 2012. Most of that assistance will be going into supporting protection programs mainly in the Central African Republic where we feel that there is a gap at this time.

With regard to specific activities that we are doing in enhancing civilian protection, it is certainly on the humanitarian side, going in, providing relief services, also providing psychosocial health services, and then reintegration services livelihoods.

But one of the innovative things that we are doing with the State Department and with the international community and also with the Catholic Church is the early warning system. We will be working with 24 communities in the LRA-affected areas of Orientale Province in the DRC, and in those areas there are about 60,000 inhabitants. And the early warning system is one critical component that we found missing, how do we alert villages that an attack or guerillas may be on the way, how can they enhance communications between the villages. So that is something that we are doing.

We are also working Vodaphone in a private partnership. Vodaphone will be providing the retail services, and we are going to help with some state-of-the-art, low maintenance cell phone towers that we will be putting out in the eastern DRC to facilitate additional communication so that community protection committees can then get in touch with either U.N. forces, either with their own government forces, or with other villages.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Assistant Administrator Gast.

Deputy Assistant Secretary Dory.

Ms. DORY. Senator Coons, on the issue of the growing AU role, I think we can only express our optimism at this point that they are increasing their role, going from declaring the LRA a terrorist organization at the end of last year to now, the designation of an envoy, the gradual mobilizing of forces to bring to bear. I think a parallel is interesting to consider when you look at Somalia. In the first instance, the neighbors are the ones who feel the impact and act first, but then over time, the full force of the AU is brought to bear, as we have seen with the AMISOM mission. I think we could envision that that is a possibility for the counter LRA mission as

well so that it is not a rebranding exercise. It does become more than the sum of the existing parts.

Senator COONS. Is it clear yet whether there will be additional troops actually deployed under the AU umbrella or is this still a work in progress?

Ms. DORY. I think this is still very much a work in progress. We see encouraging signs of shuttle diplomacy happening among all of the different leaders in the region at the political level, at the military level. So I think I would say stay posted.

Senator COONS. And then if I could, just a closing question to all three of you. Both what could we, as concerned and engaged Senators, do to be more supportive of the effort multilaterally and then what could anyone watching or interested do to continue to be supportive? If you would first, Deputy Assistant Secretary Dory.

Ms. DORY. Thank you.

In the first instance, the continuation of the bipartisan support for this mission is fundamental and this hearing today demonstrates that yet again. So we would just thank you for that support and sustained engagement. The visits to the region that helped bring back the personal witness of what you have seen, how you have observed the U.S. Government comprehensive strategy in action, again just to encourage that.

We have talked about the expansion of the State Department's rewards program already. The Department of Defense fully supports that expansion.

The sustainment of the title 22 appropriations that are so key to the efforts for many years now and going forward.

And then just the support from your last question, encouraging the role of the U.N. and the African Union as they increasingly come on line going forward.

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Assistant Administrator Gast.

Mr. GAST. Very similar. One is continued hearings and speaking out on the issues, as you have done. Visits to the region certainly help. And third, resources.

Senator COONS. Last, Ambassador Yamamoto.

Ambassador YAMAMOTO. Again, thank you very much, Senator, what you have been doing with the legislation, our Rewards for Justice. Your videos, your outspoken advocacy is important.

And also the efforts of Mr. Ben Keeseey and others at Invisible Children has been very supportive.

And also in continuation on their civilian protection and what we can do is really work with the regional states because they are the ones that are taking the lead, are taking the hits, and doing the battles and the fighting and the protection. I know that the Ugandans, for instance, in the last couple years have devoted about \$50 million for reconciliation and protection, and Earl and his group and the U.S. Government has done about \$500 million since 2008 just for protection and humanitarian assistance. So those are things that are continuing in support, and those are really critical issues.

Thank you.

Senator COONS. Terrific. Thank you very much. I just want to thank our first panel. I am grateful for your testimony today and

for appearing before the committee both for your thorough and detailed written and prepared testimony and for your availability to answer questions. I very much look forward to continuing to work with you as we sustain this very vital multilateral mission in central Africa. Thank you very much.

We are now going to turn to our second panel, and I see that we have a guest, Senator Mary Landrieu, who I am going to invite to come and join us in introducing our second panel. And as our first panel is preparing to leave, I just want to suggest that we might show a short video. We have prepared just a summary of video that has already been made available that helps highlight the stories of Ms. Jolly Okot, who is now the Regional Ambassador for Invisible Children, who I invite to the table, and Mr. Jacob Acaye whose stories have inspired millions around the world. If you would join at the table Senator Mary Landrieu.

[The transcription of the video follows:]

JASON RUSSELL. It's been almost 10 years since Jacob and I became friends. But when my friends and I first met him in Uganda in central Africa, it was in very different circumstances. He was running for his life.

You go to school here?

JACOB ACAYE. Yes.

MR. RUSSELL. Yes? That's how you know English so well?

MR. ACAYE. Yes, I know.

MR. RUSSELL. How many nights have you stayed here?

SECURITY GUARD. Hello. Hello. You are making our work here very difficult. You stop that thing now.

MR. RUSSELL. The night I first met Jacob, he told me what he and the other children in northern Uganda were living through.

MR. ACAYE. We worry. The rebels, when they arrest us again, then they will kill us. My brother tried to escape. Then they killed him using apanga. They cut his neck.

MR. RUSSELL. Did you see it?

MR. ACAYE. I saw it.

AFRICAN BOY. We fear that if we sleep at our home, we can be abducted by the rebels because our home is far away from town.

MR. ACAYE. They will catch us. Then they will take us there in the bush. We come here to save our life.

MR. RUSSELL. What is it that you want to be when you grow up?

MR. ACAYE. For me, I wanted to be a lawyer, but I don't have money to pay my school fees so that I learn and then become a lawyer.

MR. RUSSELL. After spending a few weeks with Jacob, he told me something I would never forget.

MR. ACAYE. So it is better when you kill us, and if possible, you can kill us, you kill us. For us, we don't want now to stay.

MR. RUSSELL. You don't want to stay on earth.

MR. ACAYE. We are only two. No one is taking care of us. We are not going to school, so—

MR. RUSSELL. You would rather die than stay on earth?

MR. ACAYE. Yes.

MR. RUSSELL. Now? Even now?

MR. ACAYE. Even now. How are we going to stay and have a future?

JOLLY OKOT. The world should know that this war is complex. If it wasn't complex, it wouldn't have stayed for 26 years. I have been in the forefront from day one with the filmmakers. I felt that this can be an opportunity for someone else to see what was in northern Uganda. I felt that let's do something and let the world know. That is why our advocacy has been very strong.

NARRATOR. So while Jolly launched Invisible Children's programs on the ground, we came home and in 2005 began telling true stories with our friends affected by LRA violence because we have seen that stories can change lives.

[End of video.]

Senator COONS. Thank you.

Now, I am in awe of Jolly and Jacob's courage and strength and indeed agree that their stories have touched and saved millions of lives just by participating in these videos. I am certain that you have had that global impact. And now I am grateful that you have the opportunity to join us here today.

I would turn to my good friend and colleague, Senator Landrieu of Louisiana, to introduce our distinguished panel. Senator Landrieu has been an outspoken, engaged, and effective advocate on these issues for many years. I am honored she could join us here at the committee hearing today because in a very real sense, it is because of her that we have had the opportunity to have you with us today.

Senator Landrieu.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARY L. LANDRIEU,
U.S. SENATOR FROM LOUISIANA**

Senator LANDRIEU. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I sincerely appreciate your leadership as the chair of the African Subcommittee on this very important committee of the United States Congress to use this platform and your time and attention to build support for those suffering the atrocities going on in this part of the world.

They may not be the greatest, most widespread atrocities, but they are atrocities nonetheless, and they have been brought to our attention in a very special and significant way, through the voices of children. It is very unusual for children of the world. Maybe it has been done before in this way. I am not sure. But this issue, with hundreds and millions of children around the world, led by a child himself, has brought these atrocities to our attention. And that in itself, Mr. Chairman, should be honored.

We struggle to make democracy relevant to the children in our country. We struggle to make democracy make sense to people in the world who are not used to it. And it is moments like these that need to be captured and promoted. When children, not even able to vote, can recognize truth when they see it and, if given an opportunity, will press and use the rights that we try to start teaching them in kindergarten, but by honoring their words in middle school and high school, we strengthen and make true what we say to them not only as parents but as Senators.

I was led to this by two children, one, my niece, Kelsey Cook, who is now married and her husband is serving overseas. But when she was 14, she told me about a friend of hers that was going to school with her, Johannis Oberman, who was working for an organization that was trying to help the night walkers in Uganda. Of course, I had read about them and had been working with orphans in that country. And she said, Aunt Mary, could you do something? And I said, well, yes, I will try.

So I began work here with other Senators and then, as you know, traveled to Uganda myself and met the UNICEF Director, Carol Bellamy, at the time. We tried to get to the northern part to actually see the night walkers. But when we were there, one of the priests who had been their great advocate—Episcopal priest—had been murdered by the Kony forces and our State Department did not allow us to go.

But we came back and you know that some of us have been working over the course of the time to help. I have stayed in touch with Invisible Children and the nonprofit that was created after the plea that Jacob said to Ben, who is here in the audience. He looked at Ben—and you saw it on the video. He said, Ben, I would rather die than live on an earth with no justice. And he is absolutely correct, Mr. Chairman.

And the sad thing is there are millions and millions and millions of children and families living in places where there is no justice.

And this might not be the greatest atrocity that ever occurred, but it is most certainly worth our time and worth our action. I do not know what the State Department said, but I hope they have stepped up their efforts. I do not know what the Defense Department has said. I hope they step up their efforts. And I hope that your committee and the work that we can do here will keep the focus on this tragedy, will stop this raging maniac of a terrorist who believes that he is being led by some higher spiritual calling which, of course, is not related to any church or religion that you and I would be familiar with, but evidently there is some higher spiritual calling that empowers him to slice 5-year-olds in half in front of their mother and then drag the brother and sister into servitude, that allows children or forces children to kill their own fathers in front of their family by slicing them to pieces and then terrorizes children. I have never really truly in my life ever heard of such horrors.

And the fact that all the governments of the world cannot seem to catch him and to bring him to justice is a real puzzlement to me.

But I am going to turn the mic over to two people who are far more eloquent on this subject than I am who have literally given their life for this cause. And with the Invisible Children—that is one of the greatest NGO's I have ever known, and they have my full and complete and undying loyalty to the work that they do to inspire children to act and respond.

I want to introduce you to Jacob who has been presented in the video. But at the age of 11—now Jacob is 21. He is studying to become a human rights lawyer. I am confident that he will be one of the greatest human rights lawyers ever to practice on the planet. He was one of the 41 youth taken from a Ugandan village by Joe Kony. Fortunately, Jacob escaped. He can tell you how, and his moving story is the emotional centerpiece of the video that you just saw.

I want to also recognize Ms. Jolly Okot, who is the on-the-ground coordinator for Invisible Children. She is the former Ugandan Country Director. Now she is working in a more regional way because, as you know, we believe Joe Kony has left Uganda and is now terrorizing an area the size of France in the middle of a jungle with very few roads. But you know, he can be caught if we would put our mind to it. And just by catching him and his few followers, this whole reign of terror for 25 years could come to an end. This is not, contrary to what some of the experts say, that complicated in my opinion.

Among her many qualifications, Jolly holds a degree in business administration, is experienced in program development and coordination and logistics. How she has managed to continue all of this

work all of this time is beyond me. She is focused on all children, but particularly girls in the subregion of the country.

And I will close with this. If we cannot find and honor the voices of the children in our country, your daughters and my daughters—the second child was my own daughter, Mary Shannon Snellings, who came home from Easter break this year and said, “Mom, do you know Joe Kony?” And I said, “I know you don’t think your mother knows much, but I do know Joe Kony.” And we talked about it. She encouraged me to watch the video which inspired me to reenergize myself.

So, Mr. Chairman, I thank you. Let us stay energized. Let us not have to rely on our children to shake our conscience to stay energized.

And I turn it over to these two extraordinary people. And I thank again Invisible Children and the leaders that are here representing this extraordinary nonprofit and the work that they are doing to bring truth to the eyes of the world by the voices of very small children.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Landrieu, and thank you for your long and effective and engaged advocacy on this issue, for bringing the voice of the children who have touched you, your daughter, your niece, and help to encourage and inspire work by this subcommittee and by all of us in the Senate. Thank you for your legislative leadership as well. I very much look forward to working together over the long haul to restore a sense of justice and security to the children all over the world who have been haunted by this.

And let us now turn, if we could, first to Ms. Jolly Okot and then to Mr. Jacob Acaye.

Jolly.

**STATEMENT OF JOLLY OKOT, REGIONAL AMBASSADOR,
INVISIBLE CHILDREN, KAMPALA, UGANDA**

Ms. OKOT. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to appreciate so much the big efforts that you have made to make sure that this will come to an end. It has been going on for the last 26 years.

I want to thank Senator Isakson for personally being involved. When I met you in Gulu, I was also touched to see that.

And I want to thank you, Mary, for the passion you have to ensure that the children who are still suffering in the hands of Joseph Kony get rescued and also get a second chance, like the way I am right now.

And I want to thank the U.S. Government so much for being involved and putting this agenda on top of all the other issues that they have. It means a lot to us. That has shown that there is a lot of love for the people, especially the people of northern Uganda, Central African Republic, and Democratic Republic of Congo.

I want to share my personal story. I grew up in northern Uganda, and from day one, when this war started, I saw as it transitioned to what is now called the LRA. And I lost my teenage years to this war. I could not finish it up because I got involved, I would say I got abducted, and started fighting alongside the rebel

group. That was my life as a young girl. I got so tortured so much, and repeatedly, I was raped.

And today, when I go back to my community, I am still being called the market officer because I was being forced to go and get money and food forcefully for the rebel group. And up to today, as much as I try to transform my community, I am still filled with guilt of what I did more than 20 years ago as a child and as a child soldier.

For the past 26 years, you know, it has been very hard, but not only on me. I am just one person, but there are thousands and thousands of people who have their own stories to share about what has happened with the LRA.

When I left my village after being abducted, I escaped and I rescued my dad, and we walked for 60 miles to look for safety. The LRA retaliated in my village, first of all, by killing my uncle who was taking care of our property, and then second, in one night, I lost 21 of my cousins, because my parents come from a family of seven people and each one of them had an average of about five or six children. And these are my cousins that I grew up with, but I entirely could not see them after that one night.

And as I talk, their graves are still shallowly buried, 2 months ago when I went there, I asked my dad: "I said why cannot we re-bury these people properly?"

So, this pain is still in me, and then I still see the same pain happening in Central African Republic. And that is why I still stand very loud and why I said this war has to come to an end no matter what it takes.

When I went to Congo last year, toward the end of my trip, I met up with the victims. What touched me the most was a young girl, who was 14 years old who came, and when I turned to her, I said I thought she speaks French as we do not share any language with the Congolese people. But when I turned to her and I started speaking to her in Acholi, and she turned to me, answering me in Acholi. That made me break down because I exactly saw in her eyes what happened to me when I was growing up, and that became very, very hard on me.

And then, when I met up with a group of women who were in a workshop in a civil society meeting, I could see in their eyes. I was the only Ugandan seated there, and all of them had these questions of like, "why are we being fought by this one guy, Joseph Kony, that we do not understand?" And the thing that they raised, they said, "Our voices cannot be heard. How did you people do it, so that the world heard your voice, and now the war in northern Uganda is able to get it stopped?"

And one thing that they all said was that because their voices cannot be heard, they feel that this is a trick of eliminating their ethnic group, which is the Azande Tribe. Because when you look in Central African Republic, Sudan, and Congo, it is only the Azande Tribe. that Joseph Kony is apparently harassing. And this was very difficult for me, especially hearing it from them. And I told them, "You know, there are people out there who can listen. We need to do advocacy and we need to speak loud so that your voices can be heard."

And I have dedicated my life to work for these young people right now, even if northern Uganda is relatively peaceful. But when I go to the Congo, and see the Congolese girls who have come out, speak to them in my own language, and to the people from Central African Republic, I want to urge the world to stand strong. The war of the LRA, whatever approach it is going to take, we need to take a holistic approach of making sure that this will come to an end. Because if we do not do that, there are people who are suffering every day in the same life.

One thing that I ask the world, is to come strong—and I want to appreciate the effort of the U.S. Government—if we had an HF radio a long time ago, I would not have been abducted because the information would have come to me early enough and then I would have heard. If I had, you know, a communication that could stop me from going out, I would not have suffered as a girl.

And then I ask also the international community to push the Governments of Central African Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, and Uganda to take ownership so that the population, the local population, whose voices are not being heard. If you narrate it, the world cannot understand, but the life there is so difficult, especially seeing young kids who their future have been lost. So that pressure can help the intervention of eliminating Joseph Kony.

I know that time is not so much on my side. But I know that this is a story which is very difficult, and why I appreciate the effort of the American Government. And yesterday, when I heard the President speak, I was very, very impressed because I relate with my own story. One day, when my son was 12 years, called Davis, read a story about me in the African Woman magazine, he asked my Daddy, “Daddy, where were you when Mommy was being taken? Mommy, couldn’t Daddy protect you?” And that is what has compelled me to do what I do today, no matter what it will take. There are people out there that have their own opinions about how this war has to be ended, all those opinions can be taken together, but we have to give a timeline because the atrocities will not end unless the perpetrators are brought to book.

So, I think briefly this is what I have to share. My story is very big. I cannot share it within a short amount of time, but this is briefly what I have to share with people out there and people in this house. Thank you so much.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Okot follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JOLLY OKOT

My name is Jolly Okot and I’m an Acholi from Uganda who has seen the effects of war firsthand. I grew up with Joseph Kony as children in the same village, not knowing what he would one day turn into.

In 1986, as a teenager, I was walking the 10 miles home from my boarding school in northern Uganda, and came across a roadblock set up by a group of rebels. They detained me, and I began to hear gunshots. I turned to see a commander draw a pistol and shoot two people in their feet. This was my introduction to what was then called the Holy Spirit movement, and what soon after took shape as the Lord’s Resistance Army. That day, I myself was abducted.

I spent the next 2 years with the rebels, forced to fight, forced to steal from my own people at gunpoint, and repeatedly raped by commanders.

When I finally managed to escape, the LRA retaliated by going to my village and killing my uncle. A year later, they returned to my village and killed 21 of my cousins in a single night.

What was done to my family is still happening today in central Africa. The LRA started out as a popular rebellion in northern Uganda to overthrow the government, but they quickly lost support as Kony attacked our own people, abducting children as young as 5 to join his ranks. Since 2006, the LRA has been pushed out of Uganda, which is now peaceful. Yet Kony continues to terrorize communities in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Central African Republic, and South Sudan.

As a Ugandan who grew up with Kony, it is especially painful to witness this conflict now impacting Uganda's neighbors. Kony has no achievable political agenda; he and his top commanders are fighting only for survival, and they are doing it at the expense of the local population. Since 2008, the LRA have killed over 2,400 people in central Africa, and abducted over 3,400 others. Nearly a half a million people are currently displaced in the region, still living in fear. These people are living in the remotest parts of the countries, and their own governments have done little to stop the LRA. Late last year, I heard testimonies from many local leaders during a civil society workshop held in Dungu. People came from DRC, CAR, and South Sudan, and nearly all of those in the workshop are part of one ethnic group, the Azande. Because of the inaction of regional government on the issue, delegates expressed the feeling that the LRA war is an attempt by their governments to eliminate the Azande people. It is being perceived by the local population as an attempt at genocide.

I have dedicated my life to working with communities affected by LRA violence. After I escaped abduction, I went back to school, realizing that education is the key to creating change. I began supporting Sudanese refugees and started working with organizations such as Oxfam, MSF, InterAid and UNHCR before meeting the founders of Invisible Children and taking on the role as the director of Invisible Children's programs in Uganda. For the last 2 years, I have helped to expand programs in DR Congo and CAR to work directly with the currently affected population.

This past December, I was in the town of Dungu, DRC meeting with women's groups from South Sudan, Congo and Central African Republic. In the meeting, most of them discussed the level of atrocities committed by the LRA in their different villages. I met with several girls who had just returned from abduction, and when they talked to me about what they had gone through—being given forcefully as wives to commanders—it broke my heart. It was a fresh reminder of exactly what I had gone through, and what we in Uganda suffered for two decades. I met a young Congolese girl of 14 years who had been abducted by the LRA. Coming from Uganda, we don't share even a single word in our languages, so normally having a translator is necessary to communicate. But when I met this young Congolese girl, I found that she spoke my language perfectly, as a result of her time with the LRA. It was shocking to be in a foreign place, seeing such a high level of trauma, and realizing that the language spoken by the LRA had been exported to innocent young people in Congo. It made me realize that these people from South Sudan, Congo, and Central African Republic are my brothers and sisters, just as much as my Ugandan brothers and sisters. They are suffering the same terror that we suffered for so many years. Although Kony has moved out of northern Uganda, he is still terrorizing innocent victims and we must join together and stand up for them.

Despite recent advances by the African Union, there has been little cooperation between the countries that have been affected by the LRA on a joint solution. Victims and local leaders are asking for the intervention of the international community—and especially the U.S. Government—to encourage better regional coordination, and to pressure President Kabila to acknowledge the threat of the LRA and allow regional forces the opportunity to pursue them in DR Congo. Likewise, the LRA should not be given safe haven in Darfur, or anywhere else in the region, and the United States should help diplomatically to ensure this.

As we focus on bringing LRA atrocities to an end, we should embrace a holistic approach to bringing to an end to this war that has been going on for the past 26 years. Since peace came to northern Uganda in 2006, we have seen a rapid increase in development. Poverty rates dropped from 65 percent in 2004 to less than 45 percent today. I acknowledge the great support of the U.S. Government and the American people on the ground. There is a lot that has been done to support the victims of the LRA directly through USAID, U.S.-based NGOs and private funding from young people across the country who have supported Invisible Children and our local partners to carry out life-changing work. Recently, young Invisible Children supporters have raised funds for the expansion of 27 high-frequency radios that provide an early warning of LRA attack to communities in the countries where the LRA now operates. Young people have funded the region's first rehabilitation center in DR Congo, and they have helped us to fund construction of community-led FM projects that encourage safe LRA defection. Young people—particularly young Amer-

icans—are changing the landscape for LRA affected communities, and they should be commended for their dedication and enthusiasm.

The United States has been at the forefront of international efforts, and we have welcomed this leadership. But progress has been slow to reach the ground, and in some areas altogether absent. More efforts are needed, especially in currently affected areas like southeast CAR.

Defeating Kony requires more than just seeing his arrest. LRA forces survive by exploiting the remoteness and lack of infrastructure in the areas of operation. Addressing this requires a multifaceted approach. I speak on behalf of the victims in central Africa to call for four things in particular. One, increased civilian protection, including early warning systems and infrastructure projects like the rehabilitation of key roads. Two, expanding demobilization, disarmament, and reintegration (DDR) efforts, particularly in CAR, where FM radio broadcasts and leaflet distribution can be effective at encouraging peaceful LRA surrender. Three, increased support for rehabilitation and reconstruction initiatives, ensuring that the highest levels of trauma can be addressed. And finally, strengthened intelligence and logistical support to the regional forces pursuing top LRA leadership. The deployment of advisors has been a positive development in this regard, though we have received numerous reports that there should be fewer restrictions in their mobility to provide better support to regional efforts in the field.

Now, words have to translate into results. The solutions being discussed should be acted upon swiftly and courageously, so that peace can be restored to the region. The world is watching and waiting to see what will happen this year, and we have the opportunity to join together, after 26 years, to deliver the results.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Jolly. And thank you also for your written testimony which goes into great detail about your personal sufferings and experience and your tremendous work of recovery and then of regional strength and then of investing your life in making sure that others do not suffer similarly.

Mr. Acaye, if you would—

Senator LANDRIEU. Mr. Chairman, may I just say before Jacob speaks, I am going to have to leave to go to an Energy and Water markup, of which I am one of the ranking members, and I am going to have to leave. But I am so grateful for Jacob for telling his story. And I thank this committee again.

And I want to mention Resolve as well, which is one of the non-profits that has been working closely. They are here in Washington with Invisible Children.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Senator Landrieu, for joining us today.

Jacob, Mr. Acaye, if you would like to offer your testimony today.

**STATEMENT OF JACOB ACAYE, FORMER LRA ABDUCTEE,
GULU DISTRICT, UGANDA**

Mr. ACAYE. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

On behalf of the survivors and those who are still going through hardships in Central African Republic, Congo, and Sudan, I want to testify and share my story in the struggle of bringing this war, which has lasted for more than 2 decades, to an end.

Being someone who was born during the war, I went through a lot. And some of them were directly to my life and some were indirectly. And when I say “indirectly,” I mean it has touched many of my friends, relatives, and people like Jolly Okot—she is here right now with me—and many of the people who are back at home.

And I will basically go into the direct way which it has touched my life and try to connect to the many who it touched as well.

At the age of 12, I was abducted from my village by the Lord's Resistance Army and taken to serve as a child soldier. And the way I was abducted was that the rebels came at around midnight, just in the middle of our sleep, and they broke down our door and got inside where I was sleeping with my cousin, and tied us up. And they also went ahead and woke my parents who were sleeping the next door over, and they saw us being taken. But knowing that the rebels' orders were always final, they could not do anything that would stop the rebels from taking us away from them.

And we walked through the whole night, because always, when they do attack one place, they try to go far away as fast as they can because they know the next morning someone might be following them up. So we walked through the whole night and we continued walking like that for the next 3 days. We were in the next district which was neighboring to Gulu, and that was Kitgum District, which is about 90 miles away from my village.

And when we got there, it was surprising that I actually met with my brother who was abducted a year before mine. That was in Tusanwan. And I was shocked to see him again, because I had stayed for a whole year not knowing where he was, not even expecting to see him again. But when I saw him, I again became a little happy. I was like, "Wow, so I can see my brother again today."

And a week after staying together with him—my brother had always been thinking of escaping and coming back home, but it is so hard to do it because someone who brought you forcefully knows that you are likely to escape. And he tried it. Unfortunately, the same group recaptured him in a few minutes after had tried to escape. And they brought him back to where he tried to escape. And to scare us, who have been abducted alongside the 42 kids who were with us, they said whoever tried to escape will suffer as an example to those who are still here in order to encourage them to not to try to escape.

And when they brought him back, they tied him. They knew very well that he was my brother, and they tied him. They killed him in front of us when we were seeing. It was so hard in my sight. And when I saw that happening, I could not cry because they would think that I would have that negative feeling toward them and escape as well. So I was to pretend and act as if I was liking what they are doing which was so hard on my sight.

But the next day, we met with a group that came from Sudan that brought ammunition. We call it bullets. But I think the group that abducted us was running short of ammunition. So, the next group that came from Sudan came and brought just ammunition. And their commander wanted someone who was young to carry for him a chair. And by then I had stayed with this group that had abducted me for like—that was the second week. And then this guy came and the commander came and was interacting, talking with the other commander who abducted me. He asked him, "Do you have any kid who can come and help me carry my chair?" The commanders always have small chairs that would help them sit in the jungles.

So me, being the youngest among the group, the person who abducted me handed me over to this new guy who came from Sudan.

“Jacob, you are going to go with this guy, and he is heading back to Sudan, I will find you when we get there. Safe travel on your way to Sudan.”

I had no option. I had no decision. I had to go with this guy. And for me, when I was going, I felt so bad because when I was being abducted, I was abducted alongside 41 kids who, I knew them. They were from the same village with me. So I was a little bit comfortable with them, we could talk, and be like, “OK, there is nothing we can do.” As much as we wanted to escape, it was hard. But then, I was being taken away from this group. I was going to the next one—Sudan—where I know nobody. So, I was a little scared.

But at some point, I realized that it was my luck that made me come back home, that made it easy for me to escape, because they met actually briefly, and they had no time to discuss more about me with this commander who abducted me. So while staying with this new commander, he wanted to know more from me. He wanted to get to know how long I had stayed with the other commander who abducted me. Then to gain his trust, I had to lie to him because, the more time you stay with LRA, the more freedom they give you because they think you are now loyal to them. And he wanted to know how long I had stayed with other commander. That is when I told him, I said, “OK, I have been with the other commander for like, 3 months, and I am liking how you guys operate. And actually, I think I am willing to stay.”

So, on hearing that, he gave me freedom of movement that I could do what I want since I have stayed for so long now. I know how they operate, but then I should always come early and wake him up wherever he is sleeping and carry his chair and we go wherever we are going.

So I did that for like 2 or 3 days, but every time I take a new move. Like when he was sleeping here, I made sure to go a distance from him and then see if he will react negatively toward it. But all the time, he had trusted me, based on the fact that I had stayed for 3 months. So, he thought maybe I would not do anything, like escaping. So I would go a distance, come back, and wake him up, and then I would carry his chair and we go.

I did that for 3 days, and then on the 4th day, we were actually heading toward the border of Sudan. And he told me, “Jacob, you need to get ready. Tonight we are not going to go anywhere. We are going to be in the same position because we want everyone to prepare their food. Tomorrow very early in the morning, we are going to take a long journey which is going to be about 3 days, and if we are resting in between, it will be less than an hour. So, you need to pack all what you need for 3 days, like food because we are crossing the border, and we have to go straight to Sudan.”

So I was like, “Yeah, that is fine. I have to get ready. Is it OK if I stay up late tonight because I want to get ready.” He was like, “Yeah, you are fine. You just get ready because it is not going to be easy.”

So, what I did was what I had in my mind right from day one—that I need to find a way out. I do not need to go to Sudan. Fighting is not the way of solving any problem. But I could not tell them to their face. So, I thought that was the last night that it was going to be possible for me to escape because I was going to cross to

Sudan, a tribe I did not know. The language they speak was different, and it would be so hard for me to escape from them, and they would look at me like, “These are Acholi people who are from Gulu. They are terrorizing us in Sudan, and you escape and come to our village.” It would have been so hard for me.

So, I had to find my way out that very night. I was so scared, but I felt like that was the only chance that I had. I should try. And, bearing in mind that if they get me, I will suffer as an example. But I decided I would rather die in Uganda than go to Sudan and die in Sudan, a country that I have never been.

So that way, I kind of got encouraged and tried to find my way out. And the way I found my way out was really hard because being a server to a commander, we would always stay in the middle of the group, and there were all these intelligence officers who would gather and are trained to guard the commander. But because of the freedom of movement that I had, during that day, I tried to move and see how they were setting up, how they were trying to guard the commander. So at least I knew where to go and how to dodge the people who were trying to guard the commander. So at night, I was trying to move and dodge all these things.

But, I thank God that I made it out and it was very far from the IDP camp, Atiak—it is on the border. And it took me the whole night walking, trying to find out how I can get to the public who can notify—the authorities who can bring me back home.

But I was so happy that when I got to the IDP camp, I had that knowledge. At least I knew how to read, and I saw a police post. So, I ended there and told them my problem and about how I got there. And I was brought back to my village.

So, when I came back to my village, it was so hard for me to sleep and stay in the same house where I was abducted from. And I felt like the town was a little safe. The city center was a little more safe, and that was where thousands of kids used to go and sleep at night because the abductions were mainly done during nighttime. So, to avoid being exposed at night to abduction, people would go and sleep in the city center. But I could not move to stay in town since my parents are still in the same place where I was abducted.

So what I did, alongside thousands of kids, was, every 6:00 in the evening, we would walk to town, which is about 4 to 5 miles, and sleep in the city center, and then we would come back in the morning.

So, I did that for about a year. And during the process when I was sleeping in the bus park, that is when I met the filmmakers. The city center was flooded by kids, all these kids who feared the abduction. And when these guys came, they were shocked because, coming from the United States seeing how children are valued, and then they were in the middle of this town where children were sleeping outside in the cold and it was raining, they were like, “Wow, we need to find out why are these kids sleeping outside.” And that is when I kind of felt like, oh, maybe they want to know about why we sleep here.

And it was not my first time doing that. Being someone could speak a little language, like a little English, I always told these

things to journalists who usually came, almost every night, from different countries.

So, when I told these three boys, I did not expect anything this big to come. I could never imagine myself being where I am right now. But, I just wanted them to know why we were sleeping outside. And the fact that they had the camera, was not a big deal to me because the camera is like a brother to white men in Africa— whoever is going there at least carries a camera. So it was not a big deal.

So these guys, after I told my stories, I think they felt touched and they really wanted to help. And they asked me—I think you saw the clip in the video—“Jacob, what would you want to be and what do you want us to do, how can we help?” It was a very challenging question because I think 80 percent of the kids in northern Uganda look at white people as being money. So, it was a very challenging question because the first thought was like maybe they should give me money and I move away from northern Uganda. And I realized that it was not good for me to get money because it will not last. You can give me thousands of dollars, but remember, I will be spending it, and I will not be getting more.

So, I realized that the way these people could help me was to put me in school, and that is what I asked from them. I said, “Put me in school since I want to be a lawyer and try to work toward it.” So, they started paying my school fees.

And when I met them, that is when I came to meet Jolly who brought them to the bus park where we used to sleep, and she opened up a scholarship program that has helped thousands of kids, me being one of them. And Education has changed my life, and I feel like there are still so many who need the same thing, after going through what I went through, being put in school after coming back and having parents who are displaced—they had no money to like pay their kids in school since education is very expensive. So, all these kids need to go to school. And I feel like an idle mind is always a place for the devil because I see Kony went to the bush as a frustrated youth. And if we leave all these kids to stay at home, it is likely that one of them might again go somewhere, like Kony.

And because of fact that the war is still terrorizing people around the world, the same war, I am calling upon the world to come up and join the youth who are advocating for the end of this war. And I also know that you leaders are our representatives, and if there is something that we want, we go through you people. And if we send our voices out, then you should care about what we are demanding for.

And then the second thing that I want to say is, I want to thank all the people, all the different organizations that are working alongside me toward bringing this war to an end. We have so many organizations that I cannot mention them now. But also thank you guys for letting us share our story and tell the world what is going on.

Thank you very much. I welcome any question. But this story is something short—the war has been going on for the last 26 years. I cannot summarize it all in 10 minutes or 5.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Acaye follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF JACOB ACAYE

I was abducted by the Lord's Resistance Army when I was 12 years old, from my village of Koro, in northern Uganda. The rebels came at midnight and broke down the door where my cousin and I were sleeping. We were both abducted in the presence of our parents, who could not do anything to stop the LRA, knowing that the orders they are given to carry out are always final.

The rebels tied our hands together and we walked through the whole first night. They made us keep walking for the next 3 days until we reached Kitgum district, about 90 miles away from my village. It was here that I met with my brother, who had been abducted 1 year earlier. It was a shock when I saw him, but at the same time it made me so happy to see that he was okay. After 1 week together, my brother tried to escape, but unfortunately he was caught. My brother was brought back to the group where I was and was killed in front of me, to serve as example for others who would want to escape.

We then met with another LRA group who brought ammunition from Sudan, and the commander of this group wanted someone young to carry his chair. Being the youngest, I was selected to go with this commander. To gain his trust, I lied about how long I had been with the LRA, telling him I had already been with the LRA for 3 months. On hearing that, he thought I was loyal to them, and he gave me freedom to move. Our group approached the border of South Sudan, and that is when I decided to escape. I was so scared. I had been thinking about it from day one, but this was the first time I had the opportunity to escape. I left while the others were asleep and walked the whole night until reaching a large displaced camp called Atiak, where authorities helped me get back home to my village.

When I came back home, I had the fear of being abducted a second time, which would have resulted in me being killed for having escaped. So I joined the thousands kids who used to walk miles each night to go to the town center to sleep, where there was some security. We used to sleep at the bus park and under verandas—anywhere in the center of town was safer than being exposed to abduction in our village at night. This is where I first met the founders of Invisible Children, and I told them the importance of education in my future. I knew that education was the only thing that could change the situation in northern Uganda. Through the filmmakers I met Jolly Okot, the Country Director of Invisible Children, who began setting up a scholarship program for kids like me in northern Uganda. I joined the scholarship program and was supported through my studies for 6 years, alongside thousand of other kids from northern Uganda.

For so long, I thought that I was alone and that our situation was forgotten by the rest of the world. I thought people did not care about what we were going through or about stopping the LRA. But when I came to the United States in 2006 for an advocacy event called Displace Me, I was encouraged. Thousands of youth in America came from all over and slept outside in the cold, trying to bring attention to what was happening with victims of the LRA. Many similar campaigns have followed and now the whole world knows about the LRA. The youth from around the entire world are demanding that the LRA be stopped.

Through education, my life has been transformed. Education has made me independent, and it has changed my future. As a boy, I dreamed of being a human rights lawyer, so that I could fight for others who have suffered injustices just as I have. I have traveled the world as an advocate, sharing my story and making people aware of what is still happening today in central Africa. Now, I am proud to say that I have received my diploma in Law, and am working for a law firm in Uganda. I am happy to pay forward what has been done in my life to many who still need the same.

I feel I should join the world and do what has been done for me not only in Uganda, which is now peaceful, but also to my brothers and sisters in the DRC, CAR, and South Sudan, who are now going through the same suffering that I went through. Their children are now being taken; it is their brothers now who are being killed. I stand before you today to advocate on behalf of those in central Africa, to call upon the world to get involved in stopping this war, and to urge that we stand together to provide a brighter future for the victims of the LRA.

Senator COONS. Thank you so much, Jacob. Thank you, Jacob, and thank you, Jolly, for your testimony which both in writing and in speaking is powerful. One of my objectives as the subcommittee chair was to include, more regularly in our hearings, African voices to help, as we discussed on the train the other day, Ms. Okot, strengthen the understanding and appreciation in the United

States, not just in the Senate, but amongst all who watch the committee hearings that many of these challenges have African solutions and that the folks who are leading and doing the work and in the forefront of responding to the atrocities of the LRA are African and are our allies whom we need to support.

As was mentioned by Senator Landrieu and also by you, Ms. Okot, I was very pleased that President Obama, in speaking yesterday at the Holocaust Memorial, emphasized the ongoing commitment and support and ranked the Lord's Resistance Army among the great morally challenging atrocities of the last 50 years and emphasized his commitment to continuing.

You have both spoken about the importance of being able to defect, to escape, and then the previous panel spoke about how important that is both so that we have intelligence about what is going on within the LRA, but also so that we can help those who have been abducted recover.

I would be interested in hearing from each of you, if I could. How can we encourage defectors? How can we help encourage and support escapees who are currently in the hold of the LRA? What more could we be doing?

And then second, what more should we be doing to help with recovery and development efforts in which you have been very active?

Please, Ms. Okot.

Ms. OKOT. I want to say thank you so much for that question.

The first thing that I think we need to encourage, which I think worked very well in northern Uganda, is the effort to support the information flow, especially to those who are still in the jungle, like building up more FM radio stations and sending a message of peace.

And as well, one thing that we always encourage someone who is formally abducted, is that when they have hope that when they get back, there is a second chance in life, and this second chance comes with a lot of issues here. One, they have to be given the opportunity to go back and live as a child once again. And then another opportunity that is good and strong is that these people need rehabilitation because from my personal experience, it took me 10 years to get over it, but up to now, I am not completely over it. When I go back to my home, even the sight of a tree that I saw 20 years ago is a reminder of what happened in my life. But the fact that I got through education and I was rehabilitated and now I have a skill and I am able to get a job—these are some of the ways that has moved me forward very positively.

And also, one thing that I feel we need is more support more in how to reintegrate these people in the community. Today as I talk, in northern Uganda, as much as the guns have gone silent, there are many more formally abducted who have returned home, but have not had the same opportunity as others to reintegrate fully and have something to do in the community. Imagine a girl who came back with a kid who is very young, and these kids are now being called bush children because these are kids that were not wanted. How do we as a community, as NGOs, as governments, come up with an approach that will help these people get an opportunity in life?

As someone who has taken leadership in the programs on the ground, we are trying, but that is not enough. There are many people out there. There are social services, which are not enough. You know, like roads, especially in Central African Republic and the Democratic Republic of Congo—road conditions or lack of roads have made it very, very hard for even the troops on the ground and the people on the ground to access social services so that they are able to move and get the best they can have in their life.

I still say this, as we discussed in the train, as you still referred to, I said your voice as American Government to the four Presidents of the areas affected by the LRA to take full ownership. The Ugandan Government should not turn its back because the war is no longer on Ugandan soil. I watch our President say we pushed the LRA away. But what about in the Congo where it is still very fresh? What about in Central African Republic where people are still being displaced? Is it enough comfort for President Museveni to say we have pushed the LRA away and yet there is another group who are still being affected?

So, I think you putting a lot of force and emphasis on them taking ownership and collaborating and bringing their forces together to apprehend Joseph Kony is the best way forward that I would request you people to do—and be strong on a diplomatic approach because when I spoke to the civil societies in CAR and DRC, the women there think their voices are not being heard. And in that workshop, there are even people who are saying, no, the LRA is not a big threat, but every day there are people who are sleeping out in the rain. And you can see the fear. There are children in Central African Republic that have no future and have not been able to go to school. And how do we give them a second opportunity? The displacement in Central African Republic is such a huge problem. How do we get humanitarian intervention into Central African Republic?

So those are the few questions that I would answer.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Mr. Okot.

If I might just interrupt for one moment. Senator Isakson has been called to the floor, and he would like to give just a brief closing comment. He has to depart. I am going to stay and we will continue the conversation.

Senator ISAKSON. Well, first of all, Jolly, thank you for meeting me in Gulu when I was in Uganda. I really appreciated and enjoyed our meeting.

And, Jacob, your testimony is compelling.

As I listened to both of you, I reflected on last Thursday in the Rotunda of the Capitol where we had the Holocaust remembrance and honored a Swede—I am part Swedish—Raoul Wallenberg who saved tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews in World War II from Auschwitz. And I thought about history is littered with individuals who speak out, who take risks, who work to right wrongs, and both of you are just in that courageous category.

And I want to thank you for your willingness to make this issue visible because, as the chairman knows, out of sight is out of mind, and Africa is a long way away from the American media. It is a long way away from our country, and some of the tragedies that have gone on in that country are terrible. You are helping to bring

visibility to those issues and that will help us ultimately shine the light of day on Joseph Kony and bring him to justice. So you both are heroes as far as I am concerned, and I appreciate your willingness to do that.

I have a tough question to ask you, Jolly, but I want to ask one before I go back. I know the Sudan is in deep trouble in the south now and the north, and there is a possibility of further deterioration there. But I also know in Darfur the Chadian rebels and Janjaweed and some of those organizations use rape against women as a military tactic. Is that what Joseph Kony does?

Ms. OKOT. Yes, that is what Joseph Kony does. And as I speak right now, Joseph Kony, according to some of the people who have defected, including his wife who defected recently, has more than 50 wives around him. And the wives are what he uses as protection, as a shield. So these are young girls that have been raped, and many of them have returned with children. So Joseph Kony is still continuously—himself as the leader, having 50 wives, and what about the other commanders who have even many more wives? So Joseph Kony is still raping and abducting children.

Senator ISAKSON. The reason I asked the question is that one of the good things USAID is doing through its NGOs in Uganda that I have personally seen, but also in Darfur, is to empower women and to help recognize the abuse that has taken place in many places in Africa, like what Joseph Kony is doing. In fact, when we were there in Kampala, the day after I met with Jolly, we had the Speaker of the House or the Parliament of Uganda as a woman, and women are becoming empowered in that country and rising to power out of respect and equality for them, which is an important thing in a nation that has been the victim of people like Joseph Kony.

And Jacob, I have to leave to make a speech on the floor, but you are my hero. Thank you for being willing to tell the story. Thank you for being willing to come here. And I do not blame you if you want to sit next to a pretty lady like Jolly. I would be there too.

[Laughter.]

Senator ISAKSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Senator Isakson. As always, you are a terrific partner and I am grateful for our opportunity to work together on this.

If I could, just by way of conclusion, since we need to bring this hearing to a conclusion. But, Jacob, if you have got any input for us on whether you think Joseph Kony and the LRA commanders should be brought to justice in Uganda or in The Hague—if you have got any advice on what measures are most helpful as we try to help those who have escaped or defected to rebuild their lives.

And I, last, just would be interested to hear how it has turned out for you, your study of law, your interest in becoming a human rights lawyer. And I think many, upon first hearing of your personal story in the video, then also are hopeful to hear about the progress that you have made in your own life, not just in recovering but in becoming educated and strengthened and skilled to be able to use your experience to fight for justice.

Mr. ACAYE. Thank you very much again.

I think I will start with what can be done to encourage these people to come back home. And being someone who was abducted when I was young, for sure, they did try to brainwash me, but because I was staying in the IDP camp by the time they abducted me, there were some people who were returning from the bush; from the captivity with the LRA. So, they were trying to tell me that, "Jacob, you know we bring you here, and when you go back home, the government actually will kill you. There is nothing like welcoming you people back home." And what he does most to these kids that he is keeping, he tries to deny them access to, media, like radio stations, and all these other things that can let them know the truth that is outside, what is happening actually when people come back home.

So these kids—some of them are fighting not because they want to stay with the LRA, but because they feel like, "Now that he has forcefully brought us here, the government looks at us as being rebels. And when I try to go back home, they will just kill me straightaway. So I would rather fight for my dear life and die in the battle." So thereby, he has been able to keep a lot of kids around him.

And, if there is any way that these kids can be reached and by people telling them that, "I escaped sometime back. I was with you, and now I am still living a positive life. I have changed my life. I am involved in doing this." If these people get to know that when you come back home, nothing actually happens to you, it will encourage them to come back home.

And then, the second thing that I want to bring forward is that Kony has been able to keep some of the kids because this war has been going on for so long, so there are kids who were born and raised in the bush, and they have both parents in the bush, thereby making it very hard for them to feel like they can even come back home because they feel totally comfortable there. They are like 18 and their mothers are there with them and the father is there. So all they know is fighting.

So, if there is a way they can be reached and told of another type of life, which is coming back home, sitting down at a table, and solving things in a good way, that would be a perfect way of encouraging them to come back home.

And on my education side, I am so proud of Invisible Children because they made me who I am. When I came back, it was so hard for my parents to me back in school because the school was expensive, and Invisible Children took the responsibility of my parents and made sure that me, alongside hundreds and thousands of other kids, went to school and pursued our dreams.

I am still advocating for the rest because Invisible Children has been operating for less than 10 years, and this war has been going on for the last 26 years. So it has affected thousands of kids. But now, it is going to affect more, and that is why I feel like we should not leave it to Invisible Children and we should not leave it to Enough, we should not leave it to Resolve, and all these organizations. We should come as a team, as the whole world, and make sure we rebuild and heal the war victims.

So, that is what I feel like me, who has been helped out, I should do something to pay forward. And I will only stop paying forward

when the war ends. So, I would love to stop paying forward because then the war will end, and I will have to do my things. I will not have to depend on any other person.

So, I am willing to be a human rights lawyer because I feel like we should have value of human rights. People are always the same; no matter what color you are, we all have the same red blood and we are all born with the same right. So the same right that people have in the United States, in China, in Sudan, in Uganda, or in Congo has to be promoted by those who are in authority. And no matter where you come from, if there is a problem somewhere, you are affected in one way or the other. So I find that I feel like if I am a human rights lawyer, I can reach out to so many people, not only in my community, not only in Uganda, but in the whole world.

Senator COONS. If I could, a last question. Jacob and Jolly, what difference do you think it would make to those who have been directly affected to those in the countries of the region and then to the world—what difference would it make for Joseph Kony and his top lieutenants who have been indicted by the ICC—what difference would it make for them to be captured, removed from the battlefield, and tried? How would it effect change?

Mr. ACAYE. I think I will start and then you will conclude.

I think it will make a very big difference because, right now, personally I feel like Uganda is a little safe, and I kind of want to forget about the past that I went through, but it is very hard. It is not only me, but I am speaking on behalf of the victims of northern Uganda. We are trying to forget what we went through. But it becomes so hard when you wake up in the morning and you hear that people are still being abducted in Congo. It takes my mind back to where I was abducted. And if someone's brother is being killed in Congo, it takes my mind back where I saw my brother being slaughtered. And this is not only to me. It applies to all those victims.

So when this case and this rebel group are brought to justice, I think finally and slowly people will forget because they will not hear it again in any way. So it will bring a very big difference. And there are those who are still living in very big fear, and those are the people who are still getting—it will encourage them when the war ends and the fear that they used to live in will actually go away, and they will turn to the second version of life of knowing that, oh, I can still be someone.

And personally, I had no hope in my life to the extent that I was almost dead instead of living in the industrial world. So now that I have received the second type of life that I can actually help, I can actually do something—like right now I know that all these kids who are with the rebels and all these people who are living in fear, if given a chance, they can still do something better. They can still achieve their dreams. But it is hard because themselves, they do not know that. They do not know that they can still have a different life—like if they are given a chance, they can still have a life that is very positive, that is fit for a human being. They do not know about it. And that is what I did not know until when I was introduced to school and now I know.

So the challenge is, how are we going to let them know? It is by stopping this war and bringing them that, you know, “Look here, you can still do this. You can go to school and you will not have to fight to get money. You will not have to go and grab people’s money. You will have to work hard to get what you want, rather than picking a gun and forcing someone to give something to you. But, if you work hard, you will enjoy it and no one asks for the account. Like the money that they pay me right now in my place where I am working—I can actually spend it, and do what I want. Jolly does not come and say, “Jacob, we are paying for your school fees. You are the beneficiary. We gave you this money to go and pay in the school. Where is the receipt?” But it is my money, I work for it. I can wake up and say, “Oh, my leader is here. This is a beer. Drink.”

[Laughter.]

Mr. ACAYE. And no one would ask for it.

So that is what I want. I want people to be independent. I do not want children to think that they will have to pick up a gun to get money, they will have to pick up a gun to get food. I want them to work towards it.

Thank you very much.

Senator COONS. Thank you, Jacob. It is great to be reminded that part of what our President Obama was speaking about yesterday was the importance, first, of ending the conflict, second, of bringing the leadership to account, but then third, of remembering. Even today it is important for us to remember the Holocaust, one of the worst atrocities in known human history. But in this particular case, in central Africa with the Lord’s Resistance Army, as we said at the outset, there are still attacks going on today. There are still communities that are not safe today. There are still children who were abducted, as you said, Jacob, who have now grown up in the bush and know no other life. Our first order of business must be to end the conflict by bringing him to justice.

Jolly, you have the last word today. How do you think it will make a difference for the world? You, yourself, shared with me that you knew Joseph Kony as a child, that you grew up in the same village. I am sure it was hard to imagine that he would turn into this monster he has become. And so on some level, ending his violence and his actions would help close a chapter and then hopefully bring some justice and then some peace and then serve as an example to the rest of the world of the possibility of restoring justice. How do you see it? What difference would it make if he were actually captured and brought to justice?

Ms. OKOT. Thank you so much, Mr. Coons.

I think bringing Kony to justice will show the world that impunity is not a way forward—to let human souls suffer. And I think bringing him to justice will, I think in the long run, stop people around the world who are so brutal. And people will stop thinking that playing around with the lives of a fellow human being is the way forward to gain authority and, you know, threatening the other people. But, also I think letting the world know that justice, when people come together, can be brought to anyone. So I think this will also serve to many African leaders who have, you know,

turned their backs toward the local population and they will know that the world will also be watching them.

So, I feel like bringing Kony to justice is one way forward of stopping any atrocity in the future that will happen in the world. And to me, I feel this is key because I think as much as Joseph Kony is still out there at large, I feel that it is very important to bring him to books and let him answer for the crimes he has committed.

But, also I think it is a responsibility as well to other leaders to realize that it is very, very important, when people are in leadership, to also protect the lives of the people they lead.

And I think the coming together of everyone around the world and focusing on this one man and bringing him out will also, in the future, cause fear to prevent other people who might think they should stand up and rise and terrorize people. So I think that is the most key, important element.

And also I think bringing Kony to justice is a way of promoting democracy in Africa because I think that is one area where we have all these wars springing up because of lack of transparency in the government system as well, bring people to start fighting amongst themselves. So, I think bringing Kony to justice is one way forward that will save so many lives. And besides, why is he not fighting his own country? Why does he have to take suffering to a country where people have no idea why he is fighting?

Senator COONS. With that, thank you both very much. Thank you, Jolly. Thank you, Jacob, for sharing your stories with us today, for your personal journey of recovery from being abducted by the LRA to turning your personal experiences to positive contributions not just to Uganda but to the whole world. And we are grateful to Invisible Children, to Resolve, to Enough for their very hard work in partnership with you in advocacy.

I am going to hold the record of this hearing open until Friday, April 27, for any member of the committee who was unable to join us but wants to submit.

And without objection, I am going to also enter into the record a written statement from the Enough Project that they wanted made a part of the record of the hearing today.

Thank you so much for your witness, your testimony, and your vision.

Ms. OKOT. Thank you.

Senator COONS. With that, this hearing is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:03 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

ADDITIONAL MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

RESPONSES OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF STATE DONALD YAMAMOTO AND USAID ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR EARL GAST TO QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. A considerable number of programs and accounts provide assistance for the USG effort to assist in countering the LRA in Central Africa as well as responding to the humanitarian and redevelopment needs ascribed to the threat.

- Provide a breakdown of all USG assistance for the above purpose from 2005 to the present, including that assistance provided through international and regional organizations and missions.
- List the number and home agency of U.S. personnel assigned to manage or implement this multilateral effort, as well as where they are assigned.

Answer. Over the years, the United States has provided assistance to help the governments and people of central Africa in their efforts to respond to the threat and impacts of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). Over the past decade (FY02–FY11), the United States has provided more than \$560 million in humanitarian assistance to populations affected by the LRA in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the Republic of South Sudan, and Uganda. These funds have supported the provision of food assistance, humanitarian protection, health, livelihoods initiatives, and other relief activities for internally displaced persons, host community members, and other populations affected by the LRA.

In addition to this humanitarian assistance, the United States has recently funded projects to help remote communities in LRA-affected areas to develop civilian protection plans, better anticipate LRA threats, and make their own decisions related to safety. The State Department and USAID are spending approximately \$1.7 million and \$1 million respectively to fund ongoing projects to help approximately 48 remote communities in LRA-affected areas of the DRC to develop community-based protection plans and connect with other communities through a High Frequency Radio Network. In addition, USAID is spending approximately \$300,000 to launch a pilot project to install four cell phone towers in LRA-affected areas to increase the flow of information. USAID is also spending \$200,000 to establish a community radio correspondents' network to increase the availability of accurate information on the LRA for local community and humanitarian actors in the CAR.

In addition, the United States has also provided over \$750 million to support northern Uganda's post-conflict recovery since 2007. Northern Uganda has undergone a dramatic positive transformation since the LRA's departure in 2006. According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, an estimated 95 percent of people once living in internally displaced peoples' camps have now left and moved to transit sites or returned home. According to the Uganda Bureau of Statistics, poverty in northern Uganda declined from approximately 61 percent in 2005–2006 to 46 percent in 2009–2010, representing the largest decline in poverty for all regions in Uganda during that period. Challenges remain, but tremendous progress has been made.

The Governments of Uganda, the CAR, the DRC, and South Sudan, in coordination with the African Union, continue to undertake efforts to bring an end to the LRA threat. Over the years, the United States has provided assistance to enhance their efforts. Since 2008, the State Department has obligated just under \$50 million of Peacekeeping Operations funding to provide logistical support and limited, non-lethal equipment for the Uganda People's Defense Force's (UPDF) continued operations against the Lord's Resistance Army. The United States also obligated \$4.4 million of FY11 1206 funding to provide communications and combat engineer equipment to the UPDF for counter-LRA operations.

In addition, in 2010, the United States provided approximately \$13 million of PKO funding to train and equip a light infantry battalion of the Congolese Army, which was subsequently deployed to LRA-affected areas of the DRC. This battalion is currently engaged in targeted military operations against LRA elements in the DRC, in coordination with the U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO). The State Department has also provided approximately \$300,000 of PKO funding to provide two mentors to the battalion who continue to provide training and support. We also continue to engage with the militaries of the CAR and South Sudan as they increase their counter-LRA efforts. The State Department used PKO funds to provide just under \$570,000 worth of uniforms and other personal gear to the CAR forces deployed to the LRA-affected area.

Since October 2011, the United States has deployed approximately 100 U.S. military personnel to serve as advisors to the national military forces pursuing the LRA and seeking to protect local populations. These personnel are working in Uganda and in field locations throughout the LRA-affected area with partner forces to enhance cooperation, information-sharing and synchronization, operational planning and overall effectiveness.

Over the years, the United States has provided significant amounts of funding to the U.N. peacekeeping and political missions in the CAR, the DRC, Sudan, and South Sudan as part of our obligations as a member of the United Nations. From FY05 to present, the United States has provided nearly \$3.1 billion in assessed contributions to MONUSCO and its predecessor, MONUC. During the same period, the United States has provided approximately \$1.9 billion in assessed contributions to the UN Mission to Sudan (UNMIS), and its successor, the UN Mission to South Sudan (UNMISS). A fraction of our assistance to these missions goes to help their activities and operations in LRA-affected areas.

There are a large number of U.S. Government personnel that work on the counter-LRA strategy and these various programs, as part of their regular duties. This includes officers in the four U.S. Embassies in the LRA-affected region, the U.S. Mission to African Union, the U.S. Mission to the United Nations, U.S. Africa Command, the Defense Department, USAID, the National Security Staff, and multiple bureaus at the State Department. To enhance coordination and implementation of this effort, the State Department has deployed an officer from the Bureau of Conflict and Stabilization Operations (CSO) to the region to work full-time with our embassies and the U.S. military advisors on the counter-LRA effort. CSO has also provided a full-time subject matter expert to support interagency policymaking and planning efforts for the counter-LRA effort in Washington, DC.

Question. The region affected by the LRA is considerable as well as being very remote and undeveloped. The threat to the region's dispersed population is evident.

- How does the concept of operations define the "protection of civilians" as made preeminent in the President's Strategy and what specific role does the United States have in it?
- What means of protection are being considered and what personnel or technological resources will be required?
- What expectations are there of the United States by the local population in these remote areas?
- What role and what concrete resources are being assumed by other donors, and what are the specific expectations of the countries affected by the LRA threat in this regard?

Answer. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) preys on remote, vulnerable populations in the Central African Republic (CAR), the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), and South Sudan who lack basic protection services and early warning capabilities. The U.S. strategy to support disarmament of the LRA, provided to Congress in November 2010, defines the increased protection of civilians as a strategic objective for U.S. efforts. The strategy defines civilian protection as "(a) freedom from imminent threat of physical violence and abduction, and (b) freedom of movement to pursue livelihoods." The strategy states that the protection of civilians encompasses civilian and military efforts to improve the security and safety of civilians exposed to LRA violence, including "actions to reduce the threat itself, to minimize civilian vulnerability to the threat, to reduce the frequency of their exposure to the threat, and to increase their ability to anticipate and react to the threat."

National governments bear responsibility for the protection of their citizens. Although they face significant challenges in protecting all populations given their limited resources, lack of mobility, and the poor transportation and communications infrastructure in the region, there are steps they can take to empower communities and reduce the risk of large-scale LRA attacks. Although locals have high expectations that U.S. involvement will improve the situation, we continue to make clear in our public messaging and our private engagement with our partners and local communities that the governments in the region are in the lead, and the United States is playing a supporting role.

U.S. military advisors do not have a direct operational role, but they are seeking to emphasize the importance of civilian protection in their engagement with the partner forces. They are integrating civilian protection into training and operational planning, and seeking to promote greater information-sharing and collaboration between military and civilian actors. U.S. military advisors are also coordinating closely with the U.N. peacekeeping missions in the region and other actors who undertake protection activities. The U.N. Organization Stabilization Mission in the DRC (MONUSCO) carries out unilateral and joint operations with the Congolese military to help increase civilian protection in LRA-affected areas of the DRC. U.S. advisors provided information fusion and planning support for a joint operation that was carried out in December to help deter the LRA from committing large-scale attacks in the DRC during the Christmas season, as they did in 2008 and 2009.

At the same time, the United States is funding civilian projects to help remote communities to develop protection plans, better anticipate LRA threats, and ultimately make their own decisions related to their safety. In the DRC, the State Department and USAID are funding projects to help approximately 48 remote communities in LRA-affected areas to develop community-based protection plans and connect with other communities through a High Frequency (HF) Radio Network. The Catholic Church currently manages an HF Radio Early Warning Network to which communities tune in twice a day to share information about LRA attacks and threats. In the CAR, USAID is funding a new project implemented by Internews to establish a community radio correspondents' network, which will increase the availability of accurate information on the LRA for local community and humanitarian

actors. USAID and the State Department are working together to determine how best to utilize \$5 million in FY12 Economic Support Funds to address further gaps in the region. We have determined that programming will focus on the LRA-affected areas of the CAR, where the greatest gaps remain, although some funds may be programmed in the DRC and South Sudan.

The United States is encouraging other donors to increase their funding for activities and programs to increase civilian protection. In 2010, we formed an International Working Group on the LRA to enhance coordination among all of the international donors and to encourage our partners to fill critical funding gaps. We co-chair this Working Group with the European Union. The European Union and its member states have provided considerable humanitarian assistance for LRA-affected populations, including for protection activities, and support for the U.N.'s efforts in the region. We are working with the World Bank as they plan new programs to assist LRA-affected communities. Finally, we continue to partner with a number of international and local nongovernmental organizations, who have undertaken innovative efforts to increase civilian protection.

RESPONSES OF DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AMANDA DORY TO
QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY SENATOR RICHARD G. LUGAR

Question. Section 1206(b) of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2012 (Public Law 112–81) provides as follows: “No United States Armed Forces personnel, United States civilian employees or United States civilian contractor personnel may participate in combat operations in connection with the provision of support under subsection (a) [relating to support for foreign forces engaged in anti-LRA operations], except for the purpose of acting in self-defense or rescuing a United States citizen (including any member of the United States Armed Forces, any United States civilian employee, or any United States civilian contractor).”

- Have U.S. military personnel deployed in support of anti-LRA operations since October 12, 2011, engaged in combat operations, for the purpose of self-defense, rescue, or any other purpose?

Answer. Since their deployment began in October 2011, U.S. forces have not engaged in any sort of combat operations. As noted in the President’s report to Congress, consistent with the War Powers Resolution in October and December 2011, U.S. forces deployed in support of counter-LRA operations are combat-equipped for self-defense purposes only and will not engage LRA forces unless necessary for their self-defense.

- Does the administration believe that U.S. personnel deployed in support of anti-LRA operations should be authorized to participate in combat operations?

Answer. The advisors are filling the role that was intended for them, which is to provide advice and assistance in an effort to enhance the capacity of the national militaries that are pursuing the LRA and seeking to protect local populations. It is important to remember that governments in the region are in the lead of this effort. As sovereign states, they are responsible for protecting their citizens and addressing threats to their security and we are trying to help them fulfill that responsibility.

Question. In an October 14, 2011, letter to Congress, President Obama stated that the total number of U.S. military personnel deploying to central Africa to assist the anti-LRA efforts of regional forces “is approximately 100.”

- What is the number of U.S. personnel currently deployed to central Africa in support of regional anti-LRA efforts?

Answer. As of the latest operational update on April 18, 2012, there were 91 military personnel deployed in support of regional counter-LRA efforts.

- Does the administration believe there is a need for deployments of additional U.S. personnel in excess of the numbers currently deployed in order to provide effective support to regional anti-LRA efforts? Please describe any current plans to increase the number of U.S. personnel deployed in connection with these efforts.

Answer. Current force deployments are considered to be at an appropriate level, and there are no current plans to increase the number of U.S. personnel deployed for counter-LRA efforts.

Question. President Obama announced on April 23, 2012, that U.S. military personnel would remain deployed in central Africa following a review of the progress of their mission during its first 150 days.

- How long does the administration anticipate that U.S. military personnel will remain deployed in central Africa in support of anti-LRA activities?

Answer. There continues to be a robust interagency review process within the U.S. Government and on-going dialogue with our partners in the region to ensure that our military support is having the intended effect—namely, enhancing the capacity of the forces in the region to succeed in their mission to end the LRA threat.

While there are no plans at this time to pull back the U.S. military advisors, this is not meant to be an open-ended commitment. We believe that U.S. forces can provide critical capabilities to help regional forces conduct more effective operations against top LRA leaders and better protect civilians in the near-term. Our continued support is contingent on the continued leadership and collaboration of the affected countries in the fight against the LRA.

- What is the annual cost of the U.S. military deployment in support of anti-LRA activities?

Answer. It is difficult to project total annual costs for contingency operations that may change according to unpredictable factors. That said, our initial estimate indicated the operation would cost approximately \$4.5 million per month, and recent cost data indicate an expenditure rate of about \$3.5 million per month for this operation. The majority of the cost is for sustainment and airlift support for DOD personnel. As for any contingency operation, costs may fluctuate from month to month.

Question. While the President issued a strategy paper on the U.S. effort as part of a multilateral campaign to counter the LRA in 2011, a concept of operations with particulars was not provided.

- Describe the concept of operations as it relates to the strategy the President provided on addressing the LRA, including the responsibilities of U.S. personnel and their bilateral and multilateral partners.

Answer. The United States is pursuing a comprehensive, multifaceted strategy to help the governments and people of this region in their efforts to end the threat posed by the LRA, and to address the impacts of the LRA's atrocities. To advance that strategy, the United States has deployed a small number of U.S. military forces to the region to serve as advisors to the partner forces pursuing LRA top leaders and seeking to protect local populations. The regional militaries are in the lead. They are responsible for protecting their citizens and addressing threats to their security, and we are trying to help them fulfill that responsibility.

The U.S. military forces do not have a direct operational role against the LRA; they are advising the regional partner forces and seeking to enhance their overall effectiveness. Specifically, the U.S. military advisors are working to strengthen relationships between regional military officials and civilian actors, enhance information-sharing and synchronization, and help with training and operational planning. U.S. forces are also providing planning, training, and intelligence support for on-going Ugandan military operations against LRA groups in the Central African Republic (CAR) and South Sudan.

The mandates of the U.N. Security Council-authorized peacekeeping missions in the DRC and South Sudan, United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO) and United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan (UNMISS), include support for efforts to disarm and demobilize the LRA and to help protect affected communities. We continue to encourage the U.N. to increase its efforts focused on the LRA where possible. The U.S. military forces are coordinating closely with MONUSCO as it undertakes operations to help increase civilian protection in LRA-affected areas of the DRC.

The African Union (AU) officially launched its Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA) in March 2012. Although many operational details are still being worked out, we believe the AU's involvement can strengthen coordination, information-sharing, and trust among the four militaries pursuing the LRA. Our advisors are coordinating with the AU staff as they implement this initiative. To the extent possible, our advisors are seeking to establish sustainable mechanisms that could eventually be taken over by the AU or other bilateral or multilateral partners.

- Enumerate the equipment expected to be provided and the costs associated with the equipment and the overall costs of the U.S. portion of the effort from predeployment to date and expected over the period of expected implementation as extended April 23, 2012.

Answer. Proposed assistance to be provided to partner forces under the authority provided in Section 1206 of the FY12 NDAA will be notified to Congress once approved by the Secretary of Defense.

The current average expenditure rate for U.S. forces deployed in support of counter-LRA efforts is \$3.5 million per month.

- Provide a timeline as well as any redlines for the United States as it relates to implementation of the strategy and the concept of operations.

Answer. Consistent with the LRA Disarmament and Northern Uganda Recovery Act, the United States is pursuing a comprehensive strategy to help our regional partners in their efforts to mitigate and eliminate the threat posed by the LRA. This strategy is meant to provide direction for U.S. assistance to the region over multiple years. To advance that strategy, the President authorized a small number of combat-equipped forces to deploy to the region in October 2011 to serve as advisors to the national military forces pursuing top LRA commanders and seeking to protect local populations. On April 23, 2012, the President announced that the United States was continuing this deployment of U.S. forces. There is no specific timeline for concluding the deployment but our continued support is contingent on the continued leadership and collaboration of the affected countries in the fight against the LRA, as well as the availability of the necessary resources.

- Please expand upon your statement at the hearing that “a comprehensive and multiyear strategy” has been implemented in addressing the LRA. What is that strategy and what elements of it are the respective responsibilities of State, USAID, DOD or other USG entities?

Answer. Pursuant to the Lord’s Resistance Army and Northern Uganda Recovery Act of 2010 (Public Law 11–172), the President submitted to Congress in November 2010 a comprehensive strategy to guide the United States support across the region for viable multilateral efforts to mitigate and eliminate the threat to civilians and regional stability posed by the LRA.

The strategy outlined four strategic objectives for U.S. support: (1) the increased protection of civilians; (2) the apprehension or removal of Joseph Kony and senior LRA leaders 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. The strategy provided considerable details on each of these objectives and implementation priorities, including engagement with bilateral, regional, and multilateral partners.

There continues to be strong interagency collaboration to implement this strategy. The Department of State leads the diplomatic engagement and international coordination necessary to advance and sustain the above objectives. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) oversees assistance programs to advance civilian protection, reintegration of ex-combatants, and humanitarian relief. The Department of Defense leads the operation to advise and assist the partner military forces in their on-going efforts to apprehend top LRA leaders and better protect civilians.

Pursuant to Public Law 111–172, the Secretary of State submitted to Congress in November 2011 a report on implementation of the U.S. strategy.

Question. AFRICOM and CJTF–HOA have become far more prevalent actors in Africa and U.S. policy in the region since their inception.

- What role and effect does AFRICOM have in security cooperation and how would you characterize the evolution of their engagement over the last few years in the region?

Answer. USAFRICOM conducts a variety of operations, exercises, and security cooperation activities, including the counter-LRA operation that focus on building the professional capacity of African forces to protect their civilians and address security threats more effectively. These engagements help African nations build capable and professional militaries and security forces that respect human rights, adhere to the rule of law, and more effectively contribute to stability in Africa.

These engagements are also in line with the January 2012 strategic guidance for the Department of Defense, which states: “Today’s security challenges require adaptable and strategically targeted approaches. Whenever possible, we will develop innovative, low-cost, and small footprint approaches to achieve our security objectives, relying on exercises, rotational presence, and advisory capabilities.”

USAFRICOM’s core mission remains one of helping to strengthen defense capabilities of partner nations. USAFRICOM supports security programs that reflect U.S. interests and does so primarily through military-to-military activities and assistance programs. This reduces the threats to U.S. interests and enables Africans to address their security challenges.

The Command’s efforts are centered on two over-arching principles: (1) a safe, stable, secure Africa is in the best interest not only of the African states, but that of the United States as well; (2) Africans, in some cases with partner support, are best

able to address the continent's security challenges. USAFRICOM recognizes the importance of multilateral solutions to many of these security challenges and works to promote regional cooperation to strengthen the ability of African militaries to work together.

We welcome the Command's increased involvement on the continent as USAFRICOM and CJTF-HOA have built its necessary infrastructure and its component commands have found their stride. The U.S. military's limited footprint on the continent is welcomed in large measure, the relationships it has created are productive, and its partnerships spanning the continent are enhanced by its engagements.

- Are there any instances in which AFRICOM or CJTF-HOA have failed to maintain communication with the Embassy and Chief of Mission? What has been done to improve their interaction and safeguard U.S. interests?

Answer. USAFRICOM and CJTF-HOA strive to support key Embassy goals and to maintain excellent communication with Chiefs of Mission and other Department of State colleagues. USAFRICOM and CJTF-HOA Commanders regularly visit nations in the region and engage in dialogue with Chiefs of Mission, their staffs, and military personnel at various locations. With Department of State leadership, they meet with host nation representatives and visit USAFRICOM-sponsored projects to ensure that objectives further U.S. goals. CJTF-HOA has a Department of State political adviser (POLAD), and it deploys country coordinating element (CCE) staff to embassies to represent CJTF-HOA and improve its communications. CCEs complement the work of U.S. defense attachés and U.S. office of security cooperation chiefs, and are generally collocated with them. The CJTF-HOA commander has a biweekly secure teleconference with all CCEs, affording opportunities to exchange information that facilitates embassy activities.

To improve coordination further, CJTF-HOA has worked with embassies in the region to inaugurate regular "3D"—diplomacy, defense, development—meetings among State Department, USAID, and DOD staff so that the three key elements of U.S. policy in Africa are pursued in a coordinated manner. These efforts, pursued by dedicated staffs, help minimize communications disconnects.

- What role and effect has CJTF-HOA had in Uganda? What has or might be improved since their first years in the country?

Answer. In Uganda as elsewhere in the region, CJTF-HOA conducts a wide variety of military-to-military, civil-military, and other engagements aimed at assisting the Ugandan Peoples Defense Force (UPDF) to enhance stability and security, increase capacity, and offer greater support for U.S. initiatives and regional stabilization. CJTF-HOA and the UPDF have a particularly close relationship.

CJTF-HOA works with the UPDF in three areas. At the Kasenyi Training Base, CJTF-HOA cooperates with SOCAFRICA to facilitate SOCAF Joint/Combined Exchange Training (JCET). In the past, the facility has been used for an Advanced Infantry Combat Course (AICC), giving the UPDF the targeted field skills it needs for a variety of missions, including the African Union Mission in Somalia (AMISOM). At the Singo Training Center, CJTF-HOA provides mentors that augment the Department of State's African Contingency Operations Training and Assistance (ACOTA) program, helping the UPDF prepare for its mission in Somalia. Among the courses taught have been those addressing combat life-saving, tactical combat casualty skills, and various soldiering and peacekeeping skills. Finally, CJTF-HOA operates a civil affairs team in the Karamoja region of northern Uganda. This team has sponsored projects ranging from civil assistance construction at schools, clinics, and hospitals to veterinarian assistance projects designed to help the largely pastoralist population in the region. The team is preparing to conduct human rights/rule of law training to UPDF units in the region and to expand contacts at orphanages and among vulnerable youth later this year.

In addition to activities in these locations, CJTF-HOA continues to send traveling contact teams to Uganda to assist in the overall security assistance mission of improving capacity and professionalism of the host nation forces. Since in-country engagements began, CJTF-HOA has become a valued partner of the UPDF.