



SECURITY COUNCIL REPORT UPDATE REPORT



20 March 2007 No. 2

UGANDA

Expected Council Action

Council members will be briefed by Special Envoy of the Secretary-General Joaquim Chissano on Thursday, 22 March. The briefing is expected to cover the latest developments in the peace talks between the Ugandan government and the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

Members are currently negotiating a draft presidential statement circulated by the UK. The draft largely builds on the November 2006 presidential statement and reinforces Chissano's role.

Key Recent Developments

On 16 November 2006, the Council adopted a presidential statement in which members, *inter alia*:

- welcomed efforts aimed at bringing an end to the long-running conflict in northern Uganda;
- called on all parties to commit themselves fully to further a long-term and peaceful solution to the conflict;
- demanded that the LRA immediately release all women, children and other non-combatants, and that the peace process be concluded expeditiously; and
- invited member states to support efforts to bring an end to the conflict and to ensure that those responsible for serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law are brought to justice.

The Secretary-General appointed Chissano as his special envoy in late November with a mandate to:

- facilitate the search for a comprehensive political solution to address the root causes of the conflict in northern Uganda and the implications of LRA activities in the region, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), southern Sudan and northern Uganda;

- help develop a cohesive and forward-looking policy approach among all external actors; and
- liaise with the International Criminal Court (ICC), UN missions in the Great Lakes region and regional actors concerned with matters pertaining to the indicted LRA leaders.

Since November, progress with the peace talks has faltered. The LRA's security concerns and mistrust among the parties seem to have hindered progress with substantive issues in the peace talks, despite the mediation of southern Sudanese Vice-President Riek Machar.

The LRA leadership cited attacks by Ugandan armed forces and a statement from Sudanese President Omar al-Bashir that he would "get rid of the LRA from Sudan" as a justification for its threats to walk out of the talks and for the frequent suspensions in negotiations. (Under the August 2006 ceasefire agreement, LRA fighters were to assemble in two sites near the Sudan-DRC border. Independent monitors have found that both sides have violated the terms of the August truce.)

In January, the LRA requested a change of venue and a new mediator, which threatened to reignite the conflict.

Following reports that the LRA had left the assembly sites and concern with the expiration of the truce in late February, a string of efforts from Chissano, Ugandan leaders and the southern Sudanese mediators led to reengagement by the parties.

In early March, agreement was reached on continuing the talks in south Sudan with reported support for the mediation team from South Africa, Mozambique, Tanzania, Kenya and the DRC. At the time of writing, the truce had not been renewed, but the LRA had agreed to return to talks provided its negotiating team and fighters received security.

Council Dynamics

At the time of writing, reactions to the UK draft were still unknown. Nonetheless, there seems to be wide sympathy and support for the mediation efforts. There is consensus that the current negotiations are the most promising initiative so far for a solution to the twenty-year conflict in northern Uganda.

In the past, the Council had adopted an extremely cautious approach to the northern Uganda issue. Divisions among Council members on whether to include the conflict in the Council's agenda—in particular given Uganda's opposition to Council involvement—led to the absence of Council discussions on that matter.

But the emergence of the regional dimension of the conflict (involving primarily the DRC and Sudan, especially after the death in 2006 of UN peacekeepers deployed in the DRC), and the start of the peace talks slowly opened avenues for Council involvement

through support for the mediation efforts. That approach was crystallised in the presidential statement and Chissano's appointment in November 2006.

Nonetheless, a concern with the outcome of the talks regarding accountability issues looms in the background. Some members have already indicated that a solution that undermines justice and the ICC is unacceptable.

Underlying Problems

Negotiations between the government and the LRA face a number of challenges, including:

- the lack of trust between the parties and the absence of clarity as to their commitment to ceasing hostilities and the LRA's release of abducted women and children;
- the need to address the disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration (DDR) of LRA fighters;
- the rebels' demand for the lifting of ICC arrest warrants as a precondition for a comprehensive agreement. The government so far insists that the agreement be signed first. The LRA has signalled willingness to stand trial in Uganda;
- the disconnect between the LRA negotiating team and the LRA leadership in the bush, and the resulting lack of clarity on the former's negotiating mandate; and
- the distance between the parties' positions on substantive issues such as power-sharing and security arrangements.

(For more extensive analysis of the peace talks and related Council issues, please refer to our 14 November 2006 *Update*.)

UN Documents

Selected Security Council Resolutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/RES/1663 (24 March 2006) and 1653 (27 January 2006) requested a report on the LRA.
Selected Security Council Presidential Statement
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/PRST/2006/45 (16 November 2006) welcomed the efforts to solve the conflict in northern Uganda and indicated the Council's intention to monitor developments closely.
Selected Meeting Records
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/PV.5415 (19 April 2006) was a briefing by the Ugandan government on the LRA.
Selected Secretary-General's Reports
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/2006/478 (29 June 2006) was the LRA report.
Other
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• S/2006/930 (1 December 2006) was a Secretary-General's letter informing the Council of Chissano's appointment and mandate.• S/2006/861 (3 November 2006) and 944 (6 December 2006) contained the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement and its addendum.

Historical Background

January-February 2007 Peace talks stalled over LRA security concerns and demands for a new venue and mediation team.

30 November 2006 Chissano was appointed as Special Envoy of the Secretary-General.

16 November 2006 The Council welcomed the peace efforts in a presidential statement.

1 November 2006 The parties signed an addendum to the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

Mid-October 2006 Skirmishes between the parties took place in south Sudan.

28 September 2006 LRA fighters left one of the assembly sites.

26 August 2006 The parties signed the Cessation of Hostilities Agreement.

12 August 2006 ICC-indicted LRA commander Raska Lukwiya was reportedly killed.

4 August 2006 The LRA announced a unilateral ceasefire.

14 July 2006 Peace talks started.

4 July 2006 Kampala offered amnesty to LRA leaders in the event of a peace agreement.

For the full historical background and a complete list of UN documents, please refer to our 18 April 2006 *Update*, and our June and July 2006 *Forecasts*.

Other Relevant Facts

Special Envoy of the Secretary-General

Joaquim Chissano (Mozambique)
