

**Directorate of Information and communications****MEDIA ADVISORY****3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA)**

**Addis Ababa, 23 April 2013:** Following the meeting of Experts and the Chiefs of Defence Staff (CDS), the Commission will hold the third Ministerial meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM), composed of the Ministers of Defense of the four LRA affected countries on Wednesday, 24 April 2013, at 9:00 a.m., at the AU Headquarters.

The JCM Meeting will be followed by "Support Forum to the RCI-LRA, at 2:00 p.m., with the objective towards increased mobilization of resources for the implementation of the RCI-LRA.

RCI-LRA Member-states (Democratic Republic of Congo, or DRC, South Sudan and Uganda), African Union Commission including the senior mission leadership of the Regional Task Force (RTF), partners, regional organizations (ICGLR, ECCAS) International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) will be in attendance.

The outcome of the meeting is expected to summarize the status of the RCI-LRA and forward recommendations for addressing the challenges and enhance RCI-LRA and RTF military operations. Besides, the meeting is expected to discuss the current political and security crisis in Central African Republic (CAR) in relation to the RCI-LRA.

***Journalists are invited to cover the opening ceremonies at 9:00 a.m., and 2:30 a.m.***

**Notes to the Editor****About RCI-LRA**

The African Union (AU) Assembly initiated the process to create the AU-led Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA)-during a meeting in Tripoli on 31 August 2009 wherein the Assembly called on Member States to renew their efforts, including military action, to neutralise the LRA. On 27 July 2010, the

AU Assembly requested the AU Commission to facilitate coordinated regional action to counter the LRA. On 14 October 2010, the AU Commission convened the first Regional Ministerial meeting on the LRA where the proposition was made to create a joint force against the LRA. Following an AU Technical Assessment Mission, a second Ministerial Meeting was held in Addis Ababa on 8 June 2011 recommending the formation of a Regional Task Force (RTF) against the LRA. Subsequently, in July 2011, the AU Assembly held in Kampala called on the AU Peace and Security Council to authorise the establishment of the RTF. Accordingly, on 22 November 2011, the PSC provided a detailed mandate and requested the AU Commission, in close consultations with the countries affected, to take the measures necessary to establish the components of the RCI-LRA, mainly:

- i. the Joint Coordinating Mechanism (JCM), chaired by the AU Commissioner for Peace and Security, and comprising the Ministers of Defence of the affected countries to coordinate efforts at the strategic level;
- ii. the Regional Task Force (RTF), composed of units provided by the affected countries, and whose total strength will be of a brigade size (5,000 troops);
- iii. the HQ of the RTF, including the Joint Operations Centre (JOC) composed of officers seconded by the affected countries

On 23 November 2011, the AU Commission nominated Ambassador Madeira, as Special Envoy for the LRA issues. Later, in March 2012, the AU opened the JCM Secretariat in Bangui and deployed the RTF/JOC senior leadership to Yambio. On 8 May 2012, during the first Ministerial meeting of the JCM, the Ministers adopted timelines and measures for operationalizing the RTF, including the nomination of Sector Commanders, the handover of national contingents to the RTF Commander and the development of the mission documents, namely the Concept of operations (CONOPS), Rules of Engagement (RoE), Strategic Directives and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) on the treatment of persons suspected to belong to the LRA by the RTF.

The Ministers also agreed that AUC should convene a Support Forum for the RCI-LRA, which would include regional countries and other interested African countries as well as bilateral and multilateral partners to mobilize the necessary support for the success of the Initiative. On 22 May 2012, the PSC renewed the mandate of the RCI-LRA for a period of one year whereas, on 29 June 2012, the UN Security Council, on its part, endorsed the PSC mandate through a Presidential Statement and called on the UN to support the RCI-LRA.

**Attached is the work program of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Ministerial Meeting of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the Lord's Resistance Army (RCI-LRA)**

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF MEETING**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE JOINT COORDINATION**  
**MECHANISM (JCM) OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION INITIATIVE**  
**FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (RCI-LRA)**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**  
**24 APRIL 2013**

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE MINISTERIAL MEETING**

WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2013: PLENARY HALL OF THE OLD CONFERENCE CENTRE OF THE AU

09:00 – 09:20	Opening
	- Opening remarks by the Commissioner for Peace and Security (10 min)
	- Presentation of the report of the CDS by the AU Special Envoy for the LRA issue (10 min)
09:20 – 10:30	Discussions
10:30 – 10:50	Coffee break
10:50 – 11:45 the JCM	Adoption of the Conclusions of the 3 <sup>rd</sup> Ministerial meeting of
11:45 – 12:00	Closure
12:30 – 13:00	Lunch

**SUPPORT FORUM TO THE REGIONAL COOPERATION INITIATIVE**  
**FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY (RCI-LRA)**  
**ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**  
**24 APRIL 2103**

**DRAFT PROGRAMME OF THE FORUM**

14:30 – 15:00	Registration of Participants
15:00 – 15:20	Opening
	- Welcome remarks by the Commissioner for Peace and Security (10 min)

- Speech of the Representative of the United Nations (by SRSG – Head of UNOCA, Mr. Abou Moussa) (10 min)

15:20 – 16:00

Activities of the Forum

- Presentation of the Forum Document by the Special Envoy for the LRA issue and the RTF Commander (5 + 10 min)
- Contributions of Ministers of Defense of the affected countries: DRC, South Sudan and Uganda: 5 + 5 + 5 (15 min)
- Note on the dispositions related to the Financial management of the resources collected through the Forum by the Head of PSD – Finance Division (5 min)

16:00 – 16:20

Coffee break

16:20 – 17:30

Announcement of contributions

17:30 – 17:45

Closure

- Closing remarks by the Commissioner for Peace and Security