



PRESS RELEASE

MEETING OF THE JOINT COORDINATION MECHANISM OF THE REGIONAL COOPERATION INITIATIVE FOR THE ELIMINATION OF THE LORD'S RESISTANCE ARMY

Addis Ababa, 8 May 2012: The Ministers of Defense and Heads of Delegation of the countries affected by the atrocities of the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) held the first meeting of the Joint Coordination Mechanism (JCM) of the Regional Cooperation Initiative for the Elimination of the LRA (RCI-LRA), under the chairmanship of the Commissioner for Peace and Security, H.E. Ambassador Ramtane Lamamra, in Addis Ababa, on Tuesday 8 May 2012, with the participation of representatives of the United Nations Office for Central Africa (UNOCA), the United Nations Office to the AU (UNOAU), the International Conference for the Great Lakes Region (ICGLR) and the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). This ministerial meeting was preceded by a meeting of the Chiefs of Defense Staff of the Armed Forces of the concerned countries.

The Ministers reaffirmed the commitment of their countries to take the necessary measures for the effective operationalization of the AU-led RCI-LRA, in cooperation with the UN and with the support of multilateral and bilateral partners. In this context, they discussed and endorsed the recommendations of the meeting of the Chiefs of Defense Staff, including those relating to the command structure of the Regional Task Force (RTF) and the effective deployment of troops in their operational sectors.

The conclusions of this first ministerial meeting will be brought to the attention of the Peace and Security Council (PSC) of the AU, which, in line with the communiqué of its 299th meeting, will be seized by the Commission in order to extend its authorization of the RCI-LRA, as well as to formally request the UN Security Council to provide an effective support towards the implementation of this Initiative.

Moreover, the first meeting of the JCM decided to organize a support forum for the Initiative, comprising the neighboring countries of the affected countries, other concerned African countries, as well as bilateral and multilateral partners, in order to mobilize the necessary support for the success of the RCI-LRA, and requested the Commission to make appropriate arrangements for this purpose.

The Ministers adopted a timeline of activities and a number of measures with a view to urgently operationalizing the RTF.