

Statement by H.E. Mr. Francis K. Butagira, Permanent Representative of Uganda to the United Nations, during the Security Council Debate on "Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict", 28th June, 2006

Mr. President,

In Uganda we view the deliberate targeting of civilians in armed conflict as totally unacceptable regardless of whatever motivation, be it fight for freedom or otherwise.

The international community must resolve to fight this menace. For a long time people of Northern Uganda have been victims of vicious attacks perpetrated by the so-called Lord's Resistance Army (LRA). There is nothing 'Lord's' about it. The apt description should have been 'Satanic army'. Under their leader Joseph Kony, they have cut off people's limbs and lips, abducted and defiled children, and committed all manner of atrocities. For sometime they were regarded as a Ugandan affair, until recently when they started committing the same atrocities in Southern Sudan. Because of military pressure by Uganda armed forces, with co-operation of government of Sudan, most of them have been flushed out of Sudan and have relocated to Garamba National Park in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. They have thus become a regional threat.

In Uganda they have been defeated. They are few remnants on the run. But unless something is done to arrest and disarm them in DRC, they may re-group and pose a threat again. The United Nations together with countries of the region concerned should act together to arrest especially those who have been indicted by the International Criminal Court. They rest could be encouraged to take advantage of amnesty which is in place.

I thank you.