



Press Release : 29 January 2004

ICC - President of Uganda refers situation concerning the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) to the ICC

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Situation: Uganda

In December 2003 the President Yoweri Museveni took the decision to refer the situation concerning the Lord's Resistance Army to the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court. The Prosecutor has determined that there is a sufficient basis to start planning for the first investigation of the International Criminal Court. Determination to initiate the investigation will take place in the coming months.

President Museveni met with the Prosecutor in London to establish the basis for future co-operation between Uganda and the International Criminal Court. A key issue will be locating and arresting the LRA leadership. This will require

the active co-operation of states and international institutions in supporting the efforts of the Ugandan authorities.

Many of the members of the LRA are themselves victims, having been abducted and brutalised by the LRA leadership. The reintegration of these individuals into Ugandan society is key to the future stability of Northern Uganda. This will require the concerted support of the international community – Uganda and the Court cannot do this alone.

In a bid to encourage members of the LRA to return to normal life, the Ugandan authorities have enacted an amnesty law. President Museveni has indicated to the Prosecutor his intention to amend this amnesty so as to exclude the leadership of the LRA, ensuring that those bearing the greatest responsibility for the crimes against humanity committed in Northern Uganda are brought to justice.

According to the Rome Statute, the Prosecutor has to inform all States Parties to the Statute of the formal initiation of an investigation. Following this the Prosecutor may seek an arrest warrant from the Pre-trial Chamber. To take this step, the Prosecutor must determine that there is a reasonable basis to proceed with an investigation. The Prosecutor will work with Ugandan authorities, other states and international organisations in gathering the necessary information to make this determination.

President Museveni and the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court will hold a press conference on Thursday 29 January 2004 at 18:00 at the Hotel Intercontinental Hyde Park, London.