



**The Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism
(CEWARN)**

in the

**Inter Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD)
Region**

CEWARN Alert:

Ugandan Side of the Karamoja Cluster

November 23rd 2006
CEWARN, Addis Ababa

CEWARN ALERT: Kaabong District - impending Reprisal against Jie Warriors by Dodoth Warriors

Introduction

This is an alert from Kaabong district following a brief produced on 23 February 2006 about the clashes between the UPDF and the warriors from both districts of Kotido and Kaabong in which many lives both of the military-UPDF and the civilians were lost and property looted and damaged. The situation has remained tense as UPDF continues to carry out the forceful disarmament and has reinforced troops in Karamoja, The New Vision Saturday, November 18, 2006.

Background

Local leaders and some MP's from the region have opposed the forceful disarmament exercise which involves abuses of peoples' rights especially cordon and search exercises, rounding up of men and taking them to military detaches and ask their wives or relatives of the detained people to produce guns in order for them to regain their freedom. This has created a scenario where even innocent people are being forced to look for guns and buy them in order to regain their freedom. While appearing before Parliament's Defence and Internal Affairs members of Parliament from the Karamoja sub-region demanded for parliament to reconvene for a special session dedicated to the Karimojong 'warrior affairs' and president Museveni's attention drawn to the matter, The Dairy Monitor, November 14, 2006. On 20th November, 2006 the local leaders that is the local council five with all the councilors from the nine sub counties, elders, some members from the civil society organizations, and owners of the raided livestock, some warriors, the military-UPDF, the two MP's of the area that is Hon Simon Lokodo and Hon Christine Nakwang of Kaabong district held a security meeting. The issues discussed concerned about the forceful disarmament, protection of people and their property and the raided livestock by the Jie from the protected kraals or gazetted areas by the UPDF.

Current Situation

In a positive effort to provide better security the government had made arrangements to protect people's property in particular cattle and their livestock by putting in place gazetted areas safeguarded by UPD. But unfortunately the raiders continue to raid these animals in the 'protected areas'. On 2nd November, 2006 the Jie warriors from Kotido district raided Kaabong district and took 2675 head of cattle, 121 goats and two donkeys and on 15th November, 2006 Jie warriors raided the 'protected kraals' again and took 62 head of cattle and killed two herds' men. This has left the Dodoth people extremely annoyed and planning for a counter raid against the Jie raiders from Kotido district not only because they had lost their livestock but UPDF has failed to recover the raided livestock.

The security meeting held failed to resolve the matter and the Dodoth warriors walked out of the meeting protesting, they are now regrouping, rearming and planning a counter raid against the Jie warriors. In the meeting the two MP's agreed with the local leaders to take the matter to the presidents office.

Disarmament exercise has affected the family set up as most men who voluntarily surrendered their guns, have fled to the bushes, while some have migrated to other districts because they found themselves vulnerable to attacks by other warriors who still have guns. Those who did not surrender their guns fled their homes for fear of persecution by those collecting the guns. Whereas it's appreciated that food shortage could be one of the factors forcing Karamoja women and children out of Karamoja, the massive exodus could be largely due to gross human rights abuses during the disarmament exercise involving cordon and search. The investigation commissioned by the Uganda Human Rights Commission said UPDF soldiers had raped, tortured, looted and destroyed property through its operations.

Following the killing of 29 Turkana warriors from Kenya on 4th November, 2006 by UPDF helicopter, Kenyan Turkana leaders and elders surprised Ugandan officials when they came to Moroto district to protest the alleged killing of their kinsmen, *The Daily Monitor*, November 22nd, 2006.

Recommendations

In view of the gravity of the matter which cuts across the entire Karamoja region of Uganda, the following immediate measures are proposed to be taken:

1. To trace and recover the Dodoth raided head of cattle 2737, 121 goats and 2 donkeys and return them to the owners in order to avert the counter raid that is being planned by the Dodoth warriors against the Jie from Kitgum district.
2. The protected kraals should be given adequate security in order to give enough protection to the herd's men and their livestock as this would in turn give confidence to the warriors about the whole arrangement.
3. Disarmament should be done with the assistance of the local leaders in order to avoid arresting innocent people. For example in Nakapiripirit district a local government district driver was allegedly arrested in the cordon and search exercise and was taken to the military detach and asked to produce a gun. In order for the district to have their driver released they had to purchase a gun at 500,000= Ug shs and handed it over to UPDF.
4. Mistreatments during disarmament exercise should cease especially for the women who are at cross-roads; to reveal the where about of the guns and be battered by their husbands or to keep quite and be harassed by the soldiers.
5. Civic education to security forces as well as communities involved in disarmament with emphasis on human rights, obligations of communities and on the general disarmament programme should be given.
6. Involve civil society, elders and other influential stakeholders in an effort to create understanding and cooperation to lessen the apprehension between UPDF or the whole exercise and the community.