

COMMEMORATION OF 51st LOKIRIAMA PEACE ACCORD.

The Event is coordinated by Members of IYRP in Karamoja, Uganda in support of IYRP 2026 .

Background:

Every year on 21st September, for the past few years, the Ateker Cluster from Uganda, Kenya and their neighbors convene at Lokiriama in Loima District of Turkana County in Kenya to celebrate and commemorate as well as assess progress in achieving sustainable peace initiatives agreed upon on the 17th December 1973 during the Lokiriama Peace Accord.

The event and celebrations have always been pushed to coincide with the United Nations (UN) International Day of Peace.

The Ateker cluster comprises of Karamojong of Uganda; Pokot and Turkana of Kenya; Toposa of South Sudan; Dasanesh (Merille) and Nyangatom of SouthWest Ethiopia who for many decades have been characterized by inter and intra community conflict arising from a myriad of historical and cultural factors. These include insecurity, scarcity of resources for livestock and human survival, poor infrastructure, recurrent droughts, floods, livestock diseases, livestock theft and poverty.

In the late 1960s and early 1970s the Matheniko and Turkana used to raid each other with devastating effects. The most notable one was the Nakiloro encounter where both persons and livestock were lost in hundreds. This brought a big challenge to the two communities that eventually begun looking at other means of survival by making peace with each other and begun to establish a social contract of peaceful living together because of losses on both sides.

It is in this light that the two communities appreciated the peace and coexistence as a felt need demanding collective responsibility. The Matheniko emissaries camped at Lokiriama for almost a month negotiating for ceasefire and peace with the Turkana. After unconditional consent from the Turkana community, elders from the two communities met at Lokiriama to discuss details of burying the hatchet. As a good gesture of new relationships, Turkana young men were tasked to escort the Matheniko emissaries back to their land.

Later, the two groups of elders traveled to Lodwar to seek approval from Mr. White House, by then area District Commissioner of the current Greater Turkana sub-region. The District Commissioner (DC) depicted his government's applause and support for the initiative by slaughtering unspecified number of camels for the teams. The DC advised the elders to mobilize their respective communities for a general inter community meeting at Lokiriama. On the 19th December, 1973 a final meeting was convened at Lokiriama under the guidance of the Tepeth seer. The function attracted Matheniko, Tepeth, Turkana and Government representatives from Kenya and Uganda.

The pact was signed on the **19th December 1973** with the sealing of the pact by burying of the hatchet that consisted of an assortment of broken arrows, guns, spears, bows and ammunitions in a deep pit at Lokiriama, Loima District, Kenya.

Introduction

Following the Lokiriama Peace Accord celebrations and commemorations of 41stto44th traditional leaders, civil society leaders and government leaders' meetings held Moroto District in Uganda, Lodwar and Kapeguria in Kenya respectively. The senior government, community, cultural, Kraal and civil society leaders who work and live among the Karamoja cluster communities in Kenya, Uganda, South Sudan and Ethiopia agreed and developed a joint official communiqué after noting many decades of inter-ethnic (tribal) conflicts and cross-border raids; perpetuated by interconnected and mutually reinforcing factors of poverty, insecurity, illiteracy and inadequate service delivery, coupled with insufficient mechanisms of information sharing and inadequate resources for livestock leading to unacceptable levels of underdevelopment and stubbornly persistent harmful cultural practices of Cattle rustling and its negative impacts. The appreciation of the historic interdependence of the people and close working relations and regional integration of the governments motivated by the unshakable commitment to reclaim the right to human dignity, sustainable peace proved to be the driving force to develop a 23 resolutions by the senior government leaders and 8 resolutions by elders and Adakar¹ leaders to forge local initiatives to ensure durable peace, security, joint resource sharing and development among the communities in Karamoja cluster.

Rationale

This year 2024, development stakeholders working across the Karamoja region are to facilitate the process of developing a work plan and operationalizing the resolutions agreed upon by both the governments' leaders and Elders within the cluster. Recognizing the cardinal role leaders' play, who are pillars and dependable allies in peace building and economic emancipation of families and communities, stewards of the dividends of Lokiriama Peace Accord; thus the mandate of this process is entirely led and championed by the respective governments within Karamoja cluster.

Recognizing the role of Adakar and kraal leaders across the region in sustaining the Peace and securing rights to joint resource sharing for livestock, the adakar, kraal leaders elders, women and reformed youth will meet to re-awaken their thoughts and commitments and discuss the operationalization of logical resolutions agreed upon in the last Peace Accord celebrations and commemorations.

Theme

¹ Adakar is a cluster settlement of several kraals hosted in one communal grazing area.

This year's theme, like for the past years is obtained from the UN International Day of Peace; **"Fit for the Future: Building Together."** This is a clarion call for stakeholders (adakar, kraal, Civil Society and government leaders) commitment to embrace diversity and resolve conflicts through dialogue and empathy.

For the Ateker cluster, it is only a reminder of the Lokirama Peace Accord and emphasis to act on the last agreed resolutions as a sign of commitment and contract to deliver, and this year 2024 creates and presents an opportunity for leaders and people to commit to these agreements and resolutions.

Purpose

To strengthen regional peace initiatives to generate multiplier effect across Ateker cluster and the neighboring countries.

General objective

To promote peace, human security, joint resource sharing and development in the Ateker cluster region through the use regional peace initiatives.

Specific Objectives

1. To engage the Adakar leaders, reformed youth, women and elder in providing alternative ways and mechanisms in conflict prevention and management of joint resource sharing in Ateker cluster;
2. To encourage the civil society and government representatives to effectively advocate for regional responses to conflict through cross-border linkages, networks and the regional network for peace;
3. To build peace networks and linkages in Ateker Cluster;
4. To document and disseminate peace building best practices in the region pointing clear sustainability measures.

Justification:

Lokirama is the biggest cross border peace accord that has stood the test of time between the Matheniko of Moroto and Turkana of Kenya. This event brings all the representative of Ateker cluster which includes but not limited to Karamojong and Iteso of Uganda, Turkana and Pokot of Kenya, Topoth of South Sudan and the Nyangatom of Ethiopia.

Target Participants:

This year 2024, celebrations and commemorations of the Lokirama Peace Accord will be three phases. There will be a leader meeting in Lowdar; the Adakar meeting Lokirama primary school

and preceding the main celebrations; the show cause pronouncement of agreements to implement the resolutions at Lokiriama Peace Accord monument.

The event is targeting political and civil leaders, academicians, civil society organizations, development partners, cultural leaders, media, women and youth among others.

Expected Outputs/Outcome.

1. Resolutions of the 2019 commemoration reviewed;
2. Joint Commitment by Civil Society and government representatives to effectively advocate for regional responses to conflict through cross-border linkages, networks and formation of regional network for peace enhanced;
3. Regional Peace networks and linkages strengthened;
4. Peace Building best practices documented and disseminated in the region;
5. Steering committee constituted to develop operational work plan for the Lokiriama resolutions.

I. Activity Dates:

- a) Leaders meeting in Lowdar is scheduled from 19th – 20th September, 2024
- b) Elders, Youth and Women meeting is scheduled from 19 – 20th September, 2024 in Lokiriama primary school.
- c) Finally, the Commemoration will be held on 21st September, 2024 at Lokiriama